



Agostino Steffani

Europäischer Komponist, hannoverscher Diplomat
und Bischof der Leibniz-Zeit

European Composer, Hanoverian Diplomat
and Bishop in the Age of Leibniz



V&R Academic

Claudia Kaufold / Nicole K. Strohmann /
Colin Timms (eds.)

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With 10 figures and 48 music examples

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Inhalt / Contents

Geleitwort / Foreword	7
Einleitung / Introduction	11

Agostino Steffani als Komponist / Steffani as Composer

<i>Colin Timms</i> Steffani and his Church Music	21
<i>Berthold Over</i> Spurensuche. Agostino Steffanis vokale Kammermusik in Rom	41
<i>Reinhard Strohm</i> Agostino Steffani und die Oper in Deutschland	55
<i>Graham Sadler</i> Agostino Steffani and the French Style	67

Musik und Musikerpersonal am Hof von Hannover / Music and Musicians at the Hanover Court

<i>Nicole K. Strohmann</i> <i>Simulatio</i> und <i>dissimulatio</i> : Agostino Steffanis <i>La superbia d'Alessandro</i> im Spiegel der höfisch-politischen Klugheitslehren	91
<i>Helen Coffey</i> Opera for the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg: Italian Singers at the Hanover Court	107
<i>Matthew Gardner</i> Steffani's Italian Opera Singers in Hanover: Recruitment and Vocal Style ...	123
<i>Reinmar Emans</i> Die Situation der Musiker an den Welfenhöfen Wolfenbüttel / Braunschweig und Bevern	139

Steffani als Diplomat und Bischof / Steffani as Diplomat and Bishop

Claudia Kaufold

„Unser Envoyé extraordinaire am kurbayerischen Hofe“:
der Diplomat Agostino Steffani 155

Rashid-S. Pegah

Zwei Steffani-Studien. Ergänzungen zu Biographie und Werk von
Agostino Steffani 169

Michael F. Feldkamp

Agostino Steffani – Priester und Bischof 183

Bettina Braun

Die Reichskirche im Nordwesten um 1700: Bedingungen für die Tätigkeit
Agostino Steffanis als Weihbischof in Münster und Paderborn 197

Hans-Georg Aschoff

Agostino Steffani als Apostolischer Vikar des Nordens: Grenzen und
Möglichkeiten seines Amtes 207

Margherita Palumbo

„Il gran negotio“. Die theatralischen Konversionsprojekte von Agostino Steffani 221

Musiktheorie, Rezeption und Nachwirkung / Music Theory, Reception and Influence

Michael Kempe

„Auch der Zitherspieler wird verlacht, wenn er immer auf derselben Saite
spielt.“ Zur Bedeutung von Musik und Musikmetaphorik bei G. W. Leibniz 235

Stephen Rose

The Contest of Reason versus the Senses: Steffani's *Quanta certezza* and
German Musical Thought 249

Hansjörg Drauschke

Agostino Steffanis Hannoveraner Opern als dramaturgische Modelle
für deutsche Komponisten. Zwei Fallbeispiele 263

Wolfgang Hirschmann

Steffanis Rezitativ – ein Modell für deutsche Komponisten? 295

John H. Roberts

Steffani's Hanover Operas as Handel Sources 313

Autoren / Authors 341

Register / Index 351

Geleitwort

Im Namen des FORUM AGOSTINO STEFFANI (FAS) begrüße ich das Erscheinen dieses Buches ganz herzlich. Es ist die Dokumentation des weltweit ersten internationalen, interdisziplinären Symposiums, das zum Thema Agostino Steffani, zur festlichen Eröffnung der Arbeit des FAS, im September 2014 stattfand. Die Förderung des Symposiums war der VolkswagenStiftung zu verdanken, sie ermöglichte zudem die Nutzung des von ihr rekonstruierten Schlosses Herrenhausen und damit auch, dass das Schloss, die Gartenarchitektur und das Wirken Agostino Steffanis als historisch-kulturelle Einheit nach verflorenen Jahrhunderten wieder erlebbar wurde. Es war ein Höhepunkt all der Aktivitäten, die im Laufe von 35 Jahren in Hannover für Steffani entfaltet worden waren.

War die Idee eines internationalen und interdisziplinären Steffani-Symposiums allein schon innovativ, so prägte das Neue auch die gesamte Konzeption: Die Behandlung der ganzen Bandbreite von Steffanis Wirken war ebenso ein Novum wie die dadurch bedingte Zusammenkunft der Steffani-Forscher und Historiker aus dem In- und Ausland. Damit wird dieses Buch auch die erste gedruckte Gesamtschau der weltweiten Forschungstätigkeit um Agostino Steffani. Planung und Durchführung des Symposiums lagen in den Händen desselben wissenschaftlichen Teams wie die Redaktion des Bandes. Für dessen Bewältigung der überaus vielschichtigen Aufgaben gebührt an dieser Stelle nachdrücklichste Anerkennung! Ein ganz persönlicher Dank geht an Prof. Dr. Colin Timms (Birmingham), den international führenden Steffani-Experten, für seinen unentbehrlichen Einsatz für Symposium und Tagungsband, aber auch für seine Unterstützung des FAS – dessen Ehrenpräsident und Kurator er ist – und nicht zuletzt für den jahrzehntelangen persönlichen Kontakt und Austausch!

Der interdisziplinär-internationale Grundzug des Symposiums war gleichsam eine Spiegelung der Persönlichkeit Steffanis. Er war ja die Interdisziplinarität in Person, ein Genius Europas, ein integrierender Dialektiker von überragendem Format. Als wahres Pendant zu Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz trug er maßgeblich dazu bei, dass Hannover sich als kulturelle Drehscheibe Europas und insbesondere als „Werkstatt europäischer Musik“ profilierte – mehr als 300 Jahre vor dem UNESCO-Prädikat „City of Music“. Es steht fest: Agostino Steffani könnte heute wieder ein wirksamer,

nunmehr auch symbolträchtiger Trumpf bei allen Mühen der Profilfindung sein, für Stadt und Land, für Europa und für Kirche und Ökumene! Möge dieses Buch auch dazu beitragen!

Hannover, Januar 2017

Prof. Lajos Rovatkay
Künstlerischer Leiter
FORUM AGOSTINO STEFFANI

Foreword

On behalf of the FORUM AGOSTINO STEFFANI (FAS) I extend a hearty welcome to this book. It represents the proceedings of the first international, interdisciplinary symposium in the world to have been dedicated to the subject of Agostino Steffani – a symposium that inaugurated the work of the FAS in September 2014. We are deeply indebted to the VolkswagenStiftung for their financial support of the symposium, for enabling us to use the Royal Palace of Herrenhausen, of which they had funded the reconstruction, and for thus allowing us to experience the palace, the architecture of the gardens and the work of Steffani as a historical-cultural whole for the first time in several centuries. It was a high point among all the Steffani-related activities that have unfolded in Hanover during the course of the last thirty-five years.

If the idea of an international and interdisciplinary Steffani symposium alone was not already an innovation, the whole conception was marked by the stamp of the new. The treatment of the entire breadth of Steffani's work was just as original as the necessary coming together of Steffani researchers and historians from Germany and other countries. As a result, this book is also the first printed overview of current research activity on Steffani from across the world. The planning and management of the symposium lay in the hands of the same team of scholars as has edited this book; for their masterly fulfilment of such extremely diverse responsibilities they deserve the strongest acknowledgement here. An entirely personal word of thanks goes to Professor Colin Timms (Birmingham), the foremost international expert on Steffani, for his indispensable involvement in the symposium and the book, for his support of the FAS, of which he is the honorary president and a curator, and, last but not least, for decades of personal contact and exchange!

The interdisciplinary and international character of the symposium was, in effect, a reflection of Steffani himself. He was the personification of interdisciplinarity, a genius of Europe, an integrative dialectician of exceptional distinction. His decisive contributions, along with those of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz ensured that Hanover was seen as a cultural hub of Europe, and especially as a workshop of European music, more than 300 years before it was designated by UNESCO as City of Music.

There is no doubt that Steffani could act once again as an effective and a symbolically pregnant trump card in the struggle to find a profile for the city and the region, for Europe, and for the church and the oecumenical movement. It is to be hoped that this book will make a contribution in these contexts!

Hanover, January 2017

Professor Lajos Rovatkay
Artistic director,
FORUM AGOSTINO STEFFANI

Einleitung

Steffani war eine Ausnahmeerscheinung – ein Italiener, der fast sein ganzes Leben in Deutschland verbrachte und auf drei Tätigkeitsfeldern zu großem Ansehen kam. 1654 in Castelfranco im Veneto geboren, sollte er später bedeutende Ämter an drei deutschen Fürstenhöfen bekleiden. Zunächst als Musiker ausgebildet, wurde er Kammermusikdirektor in München und später Kapellmeister am Hof von Hannover, für den er auch einige Jahre als ständiger Gesandter am Hof des Kurfürsten von Bayern in Brüssel wirkte. Neben der Musik befasste er sich mit Theologie und verfolgte eine kirchliche Karriere, wurde Bischof von Spiga und beschloss seine Tage 1728 als Apostolischer Vikar für Norddeutschland, als einer der ranghöchsten Vertreter der katholischen Kirche in dieser Region.

Weil er auf so unterschiedlichen Gebieten reüssierte und immer im Fokus der Öffentlichkeit stand, war Steffani zu Lebzeiten weithin berühmt in Europa und erhielt Aufmerksamkeit auch noch nach seinem Tode. In Deutschland wurde er einerseits von dem Kritiker Johann Mattheson und dem Verfasser der ersten musikalischen Enzyklopädie, Johann Gottfried Walther, als Musiker gerühmt; andererseits widmete Johann Heinrich Zedler „Steffani“ zwei Einträge in seinem *Universal-Lexicon* (1744), weil er den Kapellmeister und den Gesandten für zwei unterschiedliche Personen hielt. In Italien wurde Steffanis Musik von den Theoretikern Giovanni Battista Martini und Giordano Riccati bewundert. In England erschienen um 1750 John Hawkins *Memoirs of the Life of Sig. Agostino Steffani*, was das britische Interesse an einem Komponisten widerspiegelt, der in Hannover gewirkt hatte, bevor Georg Ludwig König von Großbritannien wurde und bevor Georg Friedrich Händel Hannover oder London betrat.

Den Ursprung der akademischen Beschäftigung mit Steffani kann man bis zu Friedrich Chrysander zurückverfolgen, der ihm in seiner Händel-Biographie, der allerersten überhaupt (1858–1867), einen prominenten Platz einräumte. Chrysander oder vielmehr sein Werk mögen W. G. Cusins – Master of the Queen’s Music mit Zugang zur Royal Music Library, die die meisten Partiturnhandschriften Steffanis aufbewahrt – dazu veranlasst haben, einen wertschätzenden Artikel über den Komponisten zu schreiben, der in der ersten Auflage von Groves *Dictionary of Music*

gedruckt wurde (Band 3, 1883). In den Jahrzehnten um 1900 herum erschienen zahlreiche Veröffentlichungen aus Archiven: Franz Wilhelm Woker schrieb zwischen 1885 und 1899 über Steffanis kirchliche Tätigkeit, Georg Fischer (1903) über Steffani in Hannover, Alfred Einstein (1910) über Steffani in München (1910) und seine Korrespondenz mit Zeitgenossen, vor allem mit Sophie Charlotte, Königin in Preußen. Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg legte Josef Loschelder (1951, 1952) Auszüge aus musikalischen Quellen aus dem „Fondo Spiga“ vor, aus den Archiven der Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide (Vatikanstadt); diese Registratur wurde später von Michael Feldkamp verzeichnet (1992), einem der Autoren des vorliegenden Bandes. Eine Monographie über Steffani als Diplomat in hannoverschen Diensten und eine über sein Leben und Werk – beide von Herausgebern dieses Buches – erschienen 1997 bzw. 2003.

Mit dem Zuwachs an Forschung über Steffani hielt die Anzahl von Musikeditionen nicht Schritt. Die drei Bände seiner Werke in den *Denkmälern der Tonkunst in Bayern* (1905, 1911 und 1912) sind immer noch unverzichtbar. Einige seiner Kammerduette sind zwar seither in kritischen Editionen erschienen, andere in Faksimile-Ausgaben; ferner gibt es eine Edition der Instrumentalsätze aus seinen Opern. Der Großteil seines geistlichen Schaffens wurde – teilweise digital – aufgelegt, so zuletzt 2011, jedoch zu seinem gefeierten *Stabat mater* fehlt bislang eine vollständige Partitur.

Trotz des relativen Mangels an Editionen hat Steffanis Musik schon lange Bewunderer und Vorkämpfer gefunden. Newell Jenkins dirigierte in den 1970er-Jahren Operaufführungen in Italien und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, und Lajos Rovatkay führte *Henrico Leone* 1989 in Hannover auf. Querschnitte dieser Aufführungen wurden eingespielt. 1982 legte Alan Curtis eine bahnbrechende Aufnahme von Steffanis Kammerduetten vor. Seit 2000 gab es weitere Operaufführungen in England, Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten, zahlreiche Aufnahmen seiner Duette und einige seines *Stabat mater*. Der Mangel an leicht erhältlichen Notenausgaben beschränkt vermutlich die Anzahl an Aufführungen und Aufnahmen sowie die Auswahl der aufgeführten Werke; nichtsdestotrotz wird Steffanis Musik nun zunehmend öfter zu Gehör gebracht und beginnt, einen Eindruck auf die Musikliebhaber zu machen – eine Entwicklung, die zuletzt von Cecilia Bartoli gestärkt wurde.

Während Steffani die Aufmerksamkeit der Musikwissenschaftler, der Künstler und des Publikums erregte, widmeten sich ihm auch Frühneuzeit- und Kirchenhistoriker. Allerdings ist es für einen einzelnen Wissenschaftler schwierig, zu einem ausgewogenen Urteil über den gesamten Menschen und sein Werk zu gelangen. Aus diesem Grunde eignet sich gerade Agostino Steffani für interdisziplinäre Forschungen. Diese Erkenntnis führte nicht zuletzt zur Gründung des FORUM AGOSTINO STEFFANI (FAS), dessen Zweck in der Beschäftigung mit Steffanis Leben, Werk und dessen Einfluss in all seiner faszinierenden Vielfalt liegt. Das FAS wurde im Septem-

ber 2014 feierlich eröffnet mit mehreren Konzerten und einem interdisziplinären Symposium im Schloss Herrenhausen. Dieses war die erste Konferenz überhaupt, die gänzlich Steffani gewidmet war; über 20 Vorträge wurden von international tätigen Forschern aus England, Deutschland, Italien und den Vereinigten Staaten gehalten. Das Symposium wurde veranstaltet vom FAS in Zusammenarbeit mit der Abteilung für Historische Musikwissenschaft der Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover, der Leibniz-Forschungsstelle der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen beim Leibniz-Archiv der Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek Hannover und mit der Leibniz-Stiftung Hannover. Es wurde großzügig gefördert von der VolkswagenStiftung. Das FAS hat seitdem zwei Steffani-Festwochen mit Konzerten und Vorträgen durchgeführt: im September 2015 und im Februar 2017.

Der vorliegende Band versammelt nun die Vorträge des Eröffnungssymposiums 2014. Die Beiträge spiegeln die Weite und Tiefe von Steffanis Interessen und Leistungen wider. Was die Musik betrifft, konzentriert sich ein Beitrag auf seine geistlichen Werke der Münchner Zeit und seiner späten Jahre; ein anderer – über seine vokale Kammermusik – erkundet seine Beziehungen nach Rom, während ein dritter neues Licht auf eine seiner Düsseldorfer Opern wirft. Das Hauptaugenmerk liegt auf seinen Opern, speziell denen für Hannover. Dabei werden Steffanis Rolle für die Entwicklung der italienischen Oper in Deutschland diskutiert, der Einfluss hannoverscher Machtpolitik auf die Libretti, die er vertonte, seine Beziehungen zu Sängern und Instrumentalisten in Hannover sowie die Anwerbung und Fähigkeiten derer, die in seinen Hofopern mitwirkten. Einige Beiträge richten die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Besonderheiten seiner musikalischen Sprache, besonders auf seine Adaption des zeitgenössischen französischen Stils, oder auf die Bedeutung seiner Dramaturgie als Vorlage für Keiser, Mattheson, Telemann und Händel. Weitere Kapitel untersuchen seine Abhandlung über Musiktheorie (und ihre Wirkung) oder die Bedeutung von Musik für Leibniz. Ein lebendiges Bild von Steffanis Geschäften mit seinen Zeitgenossen wird in einem Kapitel über seine Rolle als hannoverscher Diplomat dargestellt und in Beiträgen über sein Wirken als Vertreter der Kirche: seine Tätigkeit als Weihbischof für Münster, sein ehrgeiziger Plan, Norddeutschland für den katholischen Glauben zurück zu gewinnen, und die Erfolge seiner Bemühungen. Angesichts der Zeit und der Energie, die er für alle drei Stränge seiner vielfältigen Laufbahn aufgewendet hat, ist es nicht überraschend, dass spätere Generationen es als Herausforderung empfanden, Steffani adäquat zu würdigen. Seine Wahrnehmungsgeschichte ist keine ungetrübte Erfolgsgeschichte.

Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass das vorliegende Buch durch seine interdisziplinäre Anlage das Interesse an Steffani sowie seinen Leistungen als Ganzes fördern und zeigen wird, dass die unterschiedlichen Stränge seines Lebensweges doch miteinander verbunden sind. Steffani wusste mit Zahlen und mit Worten umzugehen, wobei ihm mehrere Sprachen zu Gebote standen (daher auch dieses zweisprachige Buch). Jeder, der eine seiner musikalischen Handschriften, politischen Denkschriften

oder einen seiner privaten Briefe gelesen hat, wird beeindruckt gewesen sein von der Klarheit seiner Denkweise. Er war ein Meister der Rhetorik, mit überragender Fähigkeit, ein Thema in Musik oder Sprache zu strukturieren und es kraftvoll in Noten oder geschriebenes Wort umzusetzen. Außerdem besaß er die persönlichen und sozialen Fähigkeiten, über die sowohl ein Diplomat in hannoverschem Dienst verfügen musste als auch ein einflussreicher Vertreter der katholischen Kirche in Deutschland oder auch ein Operndirektor. Er muss eine innere Stärke gehabt haben, um all das zu erreichen, und überdies konnte er anscheinend gut mit anderen Menschen umgehen. Es ist anzunehmen, dass seine diplomatischen und kirchlichen Leistungen nach seinem Tode aufgrund der historischen Entwicklung in Vergessenheit gerieten; seine Musik jedoch hat sich bis heute erhalten, manches sogar in seiner eigenen schönen, eleganten Handschrift, welche noch immer die Kraft besitzt, uns direkt anzusprechen.

Unser Dank gilt zuerst den Autorinnen und Autoren dieses Bandes, deren Beiträge das Bild auf Agostino Steffani beträchtlich zu erweitern helfen. Die Veröffentlichung des Buches wurde ermöglicht durch die Unterstützung des Handel Institute in London und des Kulturbüros der Landeshauptstadt Hannover, durch Spenden von Manfred Willy Jäckel, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Krüger und Peter Schmechmann sowie durch anonyme Spenden, wofür die Herausgebenden hier ihren herzlichen Dank ausdrücken. Ferner sei Peter Jones für den Satz der Musikbeispiele und dem Team von V&R unipress für die kompetente Betreuung während der Drucklegung herzlich gedankt.

Januar 2017

Claudia Kaufold
Nicole K. Strohmann
Colin Timms

Introduction

Steffani was an exceptional figure – an Italian who spent virtually all his life in Germany and rose to prominence in three distinct spheres of activity. Born in 1654 at Castelfranco Veneto, he went on to hold positions of responsibility at three German courts. Trained first as a musician, he became Director of Chamber Music in Munich and later Kapellmeister at Hanover, where he also served for several years as special envoy to the Bavarian court in Brussels. Alongside music he studied theology and pursued a career in the church, becoming Bishop of Spiga and ending his days, in 1728, as Apostolic Vicar of North Germany, one of the most senior representatives of the Catholic church in the region.

Because he worked in such diverse fields and in the public eye, Steffani was known throughout Europe during his lifetime and attracted comment after his death. In Germany, on one hand he was praised as a musician by the critic Johann Mattheson and the compiler of the earliest musical dictionary, Johann Gottfried Walther; on the other hand, Johann Heinrich Zedler included two ‘Steffani’ entries in his *Universal Lexicon* (1744), because he was unable to reconcile the Kapellmeister with the special envoy. In Italy Steffani’s music was admired by the theorists Giovanni Battista Martini and Giordano Riccati. In England, John Hawkins’s *Memoirs of the Life of Sig. Agostino Steffani*, published in about 1750, reflects British interest in a composer who had worked in Hanover before Georg Ludwig became king of Great Britain and before George Frideric Handel moved to Hanover or London.

The origin of current academic interest in Steffani can be traced back to Friedrich Chrysander, who accorded him a suitably prominent position in his pioneering biography of Handel (1858–1867). Chrysander or his work may have prompted W. G. Cusins – Master of the Queen’s Music with access to the Royal Music Library, which holds most of Steffani’s autograph scores – to write the appreciative article on the composer that appeared in the first edition of Grove’s *Dictionary of Music* (vol. 3, 1883). The decades around 1900 saw the publication of much archive-based research – Franz Wilhelm Woker (between 1885 and 1899) on Steffani’s work for the church, Georg Fischer (1903) on Steffani at Hanover, Alfred Einstein (1910) on Steffani in Munich – and of his correspondence with contemporaries, notably

Sophie Charlotte, Queen of Prussia. After World War II Josef Loschelder (1951, 1952) published extracts from documents relating to music in the Fondo Spiga, in the archives of the Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide (Vatican City); this 'fondo' was subsequently inventoried by Michael Feldkamp (1992), a contributor to the present volume. A monograph on Steffani as a Hanoverian diplomat and a life-and-works study of the man – both by editors of this book – appeared in 1997 and 2003, respectively.

The growth of scholarship on Steffani has not been matched by a corresponding increase in the number of published editions of his music. The three volumes of works by him in the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Bayern* (1905, 1911 and 1912) are still indispensable. Some of his chamber duets have since appeared in a critical edition, others in facsimile, and there is an edition of the instrumental movements from his operas. The bulk of his sacred output was issued, partly in digital form, as recently as 2011, but his celebrated *Stabat mater* has never been published in full score.

Despite the relative shortage of editions, Steffani's music has long had admirers and champions. Newell Jenkins directed performances of his operas in Italy and the United States of America in the 1970s, and Lajos Rovatkay conducted his *Henrico Leone* at Hanover in 1989; extracts from these performances were recorded. In 1982 Alan Curtis made a ground-breaking recording of Steffani chamber duets. Since 2000 there have been further opera productions in England, Germany and the United States, numerous recordings of his duets and several of his *Stabat mater*. The paucity of readily available editions of his music presumably limits the number of performances and recordings, and the range of works presented; nevertheless, Steffani's compositions are now being heard increasingly frequently and are beginning to make an impact on the music-loving public – a process recently assisted by Cecilia Bartoli.

While Steffani has attracted attention from musicologists, performers and music-lovers, he has also been studied by political and ecclesiastical historians. It is difficult, however, for any individual to reach a balanced assessment of the man and his work as a whole. If ever there was a case for interdisciplinary study, Steffani is it! This is the premise that led to the foundation of the Forum Agostino Steffani (FAS), the purpose of which is to encourage the study and appreciation of his life, works and influence in all their intriguing variety. The FAS was launched in September 2014 by a number of concerts and by an interdisciplinary symposium at the palace of Herrenhausen. At this, the first conference ever devoted entirely to Steffani, over twenty papers were read by an international line-up of scholars from England, Germany, Italy and the USA. The symposium was promoted under the aegis of the FAS by the Musicology Department of the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover in co-operation with the Leibniz-Forschungsstelle der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen beim Leibniz-Archiv der Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek Hannover and with the Leibniz-Stiftung Hannover, and

was generously supported by the VolkswagenStiftung. The FAS has since mounted a Steffani 'Festwoche' with concerts and a conference in September 2015 and another in February 2017.

The present volume includes the papers read at the inaugural conference in 2014. The essays illustrate the breadth and depth of Steffani's interests and achievements. So far as music is concerned, an essay on his sacred works concentrates on his Munich period and his final years; another on his vocal chamber music explores his connections with Rome, while a third sheds new light on one of his Düsseldorf operas. The spotlight is firmly on his operas, especially those for Hanover. Among the subjects discussed are his role in the development of Italian opera in Germany, the influence of Hanoverian power politics on librettos that he set, his relations with singers and instrumentalists at Hanover, and the recruitment and ability of those who took part in his operas for the court. Some contributions draw attention to the distinctive nature of his musical language, especially his assimilation of contemporary French features, or to the importance of his dramaturgy and music as a model for Keiser, Mattheson, Telemann and Handel. Further essays examine his treatise on music theory (and its influence), or the significance of music for Leibniz. A vivid picture of Steffani's dealings with his contemporaries is painted by an essay on his role as a Hanoverian diplomat and by essays on his work as a representative of the church – his activity as suffragan of Münster, his ambitious plan to reconvert North Germany to the Roman Catholic faith and the scale of his achievement. Given the amount of time and energy that he devoted to all three strands of his varied career, it is not surprising that later generations have found it difficult to make sense of the man: the history of his reception is not a tale of unalloyed success.

It is hoped that this book, by its interdisciplinarity, will promote an interest in Steffani and his accomplishments as a whole and demonstrate that the various strands of his career are somewhat interlinked. Steffani had a way with numbers and with words, including a command of several languages (hence this volume's bilingualism). Anybody who has read one of his musical scores, political memorandums or personal letters will have been struck by his clarity of thought. He was a master of rhetoric, with an outstanding ability to structure an argument in music or prose and deliver it lucidly and powerfully via notation or the written word. In addition he possessed the personal and social skills required of a diplomat in Hanoverian service, a senior representative of the Catholic church in Germany or even a director of opera. He must have had some inner strength to have achieved as much as he did, yet he seems to have got on well with other people. It is probably not unfair to say that, as a result of historical developments, his diplomatic and ecclesiastical achievements were overtaken by events after his death; his musical compositions, however, survive to this day, many of them in his own fine, elegant hand, and they still have power to speak directly to us.

Our thanks are due first to the authors of the essays in this volume, which significantly enlarges and enriches the portrait of Steffani as a whole. The publication of the book was made possible by contributions from the Handel Institute in London, the Kulturbüro der Landeshauptstadt Hannover, Manfred Willy Jäckel, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Krüger and Peter Schmeemann, and by a number of anonymous donations. For all this assistance the editors express their heartfelt gratitude here. Finally, the editors are grateful also to Peter Jones for his meticulous engraving of the music examples and to everybody at V&R unipress who provided such expert assistance during the preparation of this volume for publication.

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Agostino Steffani als Komponist / Steffani as Composer

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Steffani and his Church Music

European composer, Hanoverian diplomat, Catholic bishop: three careers in one. This essay is concerned with the first and the third of these callings. As a composer Steffani cultivated what might be described as a European style and certainly acquired a European reputation, but since his work as a representative of the church in North Germany occupied more of his life than did music (or diplomacy), it would not be unreasonable to assume that he regarded his church music as more valuable or important than his influential Hanover operas or his universally admired chamber duets. Is there any evidence that he did? How did he regard his sacred compositions, and how do they relate to his career in general? In addressing such questions, this essay sheds new light on Steffani's church music, his beliefs and the workings of his mind.

First, it is necessary to look at his career as a whole (see Table 1). This can be divided into five main periods. Steffani was born and spent his early years in the Veneto, excelling as a treble (boy soprano). Between the ages of thirteen and thirty-four he was based in Munich, where he was taught by the Kapellmeister, Johann Caspar Kerll, and served the court as a singer, organist and composer. During this formative 21-year period he spent two years in Rome, studying composition with Ercole Bernabei, director of the Cappella Giulia, and about ten months in Paris, immersing himself in music by Jean-Baptiste Lully and, especially, Marc-Antoine Charpentier; he also became a priest, was appointed Abbot of Löpsingen and was sent to Hanover on a diplomatic mission relating to the possibility of a marriage between Elector Maximilian II Emanuel and Princess Sophie Charlotte. Moving to Hanover in 1688, he was engaged as Kapellmeister and subsequently appointed 'envoyé extraordinaire' to the Bavarian court in Brussels; his diplomatic duties became so demanding that he ceased to act as Kapellmeister after 1695, although he retained his title and salary. By 1695, also, he was an apostolic protonotary, while in the early 1700s, at Düsseldorf, he held government positions with responsibility for religious affairs and became titular Bishop of Spiga. Following his success as a negotiator in Rome in 1708–9, he was appointed Apostolic Vicar of North Germany, in which capacity he based himself in Hanover; from 1710 he served also as suffragan

of Münster and Paderborn.¹ His election as president of London's Academy of Vocal Music, subsequently known as the Academy of Ancient Music, was due partly to Giuseppe Riva, the Modenese diplomatic resident in London: Steffani had met Riva at Hanover in 1719, and corresponded with him until a month before his death.²

Date	Career (outline)	Compositions (sacred in bold type)
1654–67 1654 1664–67	Early years Born at Castelfranco in the Veneto Sings treble in choir of Basilica del Santo (Padua), in other churches in the area, and in operas in Venice	
1667–88 1668 1672–74 1674 1676 1678–79 c. 1680 1681 1683/4 1685	Munich Appointed 'Hof- und Cammer Musico'; studies organ and composition with Johann Caspar Kerll Studies composition in Rome with Ercole Bernabei Describes himself as 'musico-organista' to the Bavarian elector and electress Spends roughly ten months in Paris Is made a priest Appointed 'Camer Music Director' Appointed Abbot of Löpsingen	<i>Psalmodia vespertina</i> (Rome 1674) 1673–4 Five pieces (MS) First of many chamber cantatas and duets <i>Beatus vir</i> (MS) First of five Munich operas (1681–8) <i>Sacer Ianus quadrifrons</i> (Munich 1685)
1688–1703 by 1695	Hanover Appointed Kapellmeister From 1693 also Hanoverian 'envoyé extraordinaire' to the Bavarian court in Brussels Appointed Apostolic Protonotary	Six full-length and two one-act operas (1689–95); another opera, not performed. Many chamber duets, some revised

1 See the essay by Bettina Braun in this volume, pp. 197–205.

2 The present essay builds on material in my monograph *Polymath of the Baroque: Agostino Steffani and His Music*, New York 2003, esp. ch. 6.

Date	Career (outline)	Compositions (sacred in bold type)
1703–9 1703	Düsseldorf Appointed ‘Kurpfälzischer, auch jülich- und bergischer geistlicher Raths-Präsident’	
1707 1708–9	Consecrated Bishop of Spiga Mediates in Rome between the Emperor and the Pope	<i>Arminio</i> (pasticcio)
1709	Appointed Apostolic Vicar ‘ad partes Septentrionales et per Saxoniam’	1709: two operas, includ- ing the unperformed Hanoverian work ?Confitebor tibi Domine (MS)
1709–28 1710–18 1722–25 1726 1727	Hanover Apostolic Vicar of North Germany Suffragan of Münster and Paderborn Semi-retirement, mainly in Padua Elected first president of Academy of Vocal Music (London)	?Non plus me ligate (MS) <i>Gettano i re dal soglio</i> (MS) Qui diligit Mariam (MS)
1727–28 1728	Dies in Frankfurt am Main	Stabat mater (MS)

Table 1: Steffani’s Sacred Works in the Context of his Career

So far as church music is concerned, the Table indicates that Steffani’s surviving output is relatively small, comprising two printed collections – *Psalmodia vespertina* and *Sacer Ianus quadrifrons* – and between eight and ten manuscript pieces. His sacred works are the least well-known portion of his *œuvre*. Modern editions have not been easy to come by, and presumably for this reason his compositions for the church have been neglected by music historians.³ The Table also suggests that the bulk of Steffani’s sacred music dates from his Munich years. In his *Memoirs* of the composer John Hawkins wrote:

³ For example, Steffani’s sacred music is given one sentence in Karl Gustav Fellerer, *Geschichte der katholischen Kirchenmusik*, vol. 2: *Vom Tridentinum bis zur Gegenwart*, Kassel 1976, but not a word in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Tim Carter and John Butt, Cambridge 2005. Steffani is not even in the index to John Walter Hill, *Baroque Music: Music in Western Europe, 1580–1750*, New York 2005.

‘In the course of his studies he had composed several masses, motets, kyries, magnificats, and other essays in the church style, which he thought proper now to exhibit; and accordingly they were occasionally performed in the chapel at Munich [...]’.⁴

If this statement is true, some works by Steffani must have been lost or remain to be discovered, but as things stand, the sacred output of his Munich period consists of motets, psalm settings and other liturgical items, but no Masses or Mass sections. After moving to Hanover he seems to have composed a maximum of four pieces of church music – the motet *Qui diligit Mariam*, the *Stabat mater* and two doubtful attributions.

Steffani’s earliest surviving sacred works are probably to be found in his *Psalmodia vespertina volans octo plenis vocibus concinenda* (Rome 1674).⁵ Since the dedication of this collection was dated on 1 January, its contents must have been written in 1673, and some of them, at least, must have been composed before three manuscript pieces, discussed below, that originated in late November or December that year. The *Psalmodia* includes settings of thirteen vesper psalms and of the Magnificat, all for two four-part choirs of Cantus, Altus, Tenor and Bassus voices (CATB), accompanied by organ. Many composers published similar collections in seventeenth-century Rome.⁶ Steffani’s psalms display a full command of simple choral composition and lend themselves to everyday performance by church choirs of modest ability. For the most part, the word-setting is syllabic, the melodic writing conjunct, the harmony diatonic and the texture chordal; the choirs are treated antiphonally but are brought together for important cadences. The *Magnificat* is more varied, frequently using melisma and counterpoint and occasionally *cantus firmus* technique. The final section, from ‘Sicut erat in principio’, was included by Padre Martini in volume 2 (1775) of his *Esemplare, ossia Saggio fondamentale pratico di contrappunto fugato*.⁷

Of the contemporaneous manuscript works, five are preserved at Cambridge in what is evidently an autograph score.⁸ The earliest pieces are set for two choirs and organ but differ from each other in their scoring and approach to composition.

4 [John Hawkins], *Memoirs of the Life of Sig. Agostino Steffani, some time Master of the Electoral Chapel at Hanover, and afterwards Bishop of Spiga* [London c. 1750], p. ii. The *Memoirs* were reprinted in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* 31 (1761), pp. 489–492.

5 An edition by Michele Geremia is published on CD-ROM by Diastema editrice, Treviso 2011 (www.diastemastudiericerhe.org). Steffani’s original is available online at <http://bildsuche.digitale-sammlungen.de/index.html?c=viewer&bandnummer=bsb00082319&pimage=2&v=100&nav=&l=en> (accessed 26 June 2016).

6 Rainer Heyink, *Al decoro della Chiesa, & à lode del Signore Iddio: I vespri concertati nella Roma del Seicento*, Rome 1999.

7 Giovanni Battista Martini, *Esemplare o sia Saggio fondamentale pratico di contrappunto fugato sopra il canto fermo*, 2 vols., Bologna 1774–5; facsimile edition, Ridgewood 1965, vol. 2, pp. 311–315. For fuller discussion of the *Magnificat*, see Timms, *Polymath* (as n. 2), pp. 146–148.

8 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum (GB-Cfm), Mu MS 94.

Triduanas a Domino is a piece of eight-part polyphony in *stile antico*, of which the first half is contrapuntal and the second antiphonal. The text is an antiphon for Second Vespers on the feast of St Cecilia (22 November), and the setting was completed two days earlier.⁹ Steffani was a member of the Congregazione dei Musici di Roma, which celebrated the feast every year.¹⁰ *Laudate pueri Dominum* may have been composed for the same occasion, for it is dated ‘Nouembre [1673]’ and followed by the inscription ‘Laus Deo / Beateque Virgini Marie / Sancteque Ceciliae’. Here the psalm verses are set as distinct sections or short movements, characterised by contrasts of scoring, metre and, occasionally, key. Movements for one, two or three solo voices are sung by members of Choir I (CCATB); Choir II (CATB) joins in for full passages. The structure of *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* (‘30 Decembre 1673’) for eight ‘Canti’ (actually CCCA / CCCA) is less fragmentary, but there are infelicities in the counterpoint, and sequential modulation leads the composer into dangerous water. In bars 144–149 the music moves from D major to E, but it is not clear whether the chord at the beginning of bar 149 is meant to be minor or major: if it is minor, the G-natural comes as a shock; if major, the next chord is a surprise (see Ex. 1).

Sperate in Deo (1674) and *Beatus vir* (undated) are Steffani’s first sacred settings for a single vocal ensemble rather than antiphonal choirs. These small-scale *concertato* works were obviously intended for solo singers (with organ) – the former for CCATB, the latter for CCB and two violins. The text of *Sperate in Deo*, which

144 C 1, C 2 Soli C 3, A 1 Soli

C 1, 2, 3, A 1 et in sae - cu - la sae - cu - lo - rum, et in

C 4, 5 Tutti sae - cu - lo - rum, A - men,

C 6, A 2 sae - cu - lo - rum, A - men,

Org. 4/2 6 [#] 4 # [#]

⁹ It is dated ‘20. 9br. [November] 1673’.

¹⁰ Sergio M. Pagano, ‘La Congregazione di S. Cecilia e i Barnabiti: Pagine inedite della prima attività cecilianica’, in *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* 15 (1981), pp. 34–49; Remo Giazotto, ‘Da Congregazione ad Accademia: Momenti, aspetti, progetti e personaggi’, in *Studi musicali* 14 (1985), pp. 5–23.

Ex. 1: Steffani, *Laudate Dominum* (GB-Cfm), bars 144–149

is concerned with St Anacletus (or Cletus), pope and martyr, is set as eight movements – four for the full ensemble, two for the pair of *Canti* and one each for the *Tenore* and *Basso*. The tenor and bass solos begin with the earliest recitatives in Steffani's sacred works. *Beatus vir* (CCB, two violins) is the first piece of any kind in which he calls for additional instruments. The violin writing does not test the players' technique, but by anticipating, accompanying and echoing the voices, the instruments help articulate the musical structure. The last of the early manuscript works is another setting of 'Beatus vir', preserved in Assisi.¹¹ The bulk of this score was copied by an unidentified scribe, but the composer wrote the words, most of the organ part and the heading 'A8 Pieno Agostino Steffani 16 7:bre [September] 1676'. The setting is scored for the same forces as are used in *Psalmodia vespertina* but is much more resourceful in style and texture.

Some insight into Steffani's approach to composition can be gained from a comparison of his three 'Beatus vir' settings. After the intonation, the *Psalmodia* version remains in common time, moves mainly in crotchets and quavers and consists of chordal antiphony in G major. At the words 'misericors, et miserator, et justus' in verse 4, however, the choirs join forces, the note-values are mostly minims and semi-breves and the music modulates from G to A minor. Steffani thus draws attention to these words, provides a springboard for those that follow ('Jucundus homo') and puts down a structural marker (see Ex. 2).

11 Assisi, Biblioteca Comunale (I-Ac), MS N. 322 / 4.

C 1
A 1
ex - or - tum est in te - ne-bris, mi - se -

T 1
B 1
ex - or - tum est in te - ne-bris, mi -

C 2
A 2
sae - cu - li, lu - men rec - tis:
lu - men rec - tis:
lu - men, lu - men rec - tis:

T 2
B 2
sae - cu - li, lu - men rec - tis:

Org.

10 - ri - cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, mi - se -

mi - se - ri - cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

mi - se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

mi - se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

mi - se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

mi - se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

mi - se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

mi - se - ri-cors, et mi - se - ra - tor, et

Ex. 2: Steffani, *Beatus vir* (from *Psalmodia vespertina*), bars 7–18

In the Cambridge setting, structural divisions are marked by single voices: verse 1 is set for *Canto I*, verse 4 ('Exortum est') for *Basso*, and verse 6 ('In memoria') for *Canto II*; the other verses are either for two or for all three of the singers. In this setting Steffani emphasises not the end of verse 4 but the beginning, treating it as the start of a new section. But the most powerful moment occurs at verse 9 ('Peccator videbit'), which begins, after a cadence in A, with an exposed D# in the bass (see Ex. 3); the effect is strengthened by omission of the violins and by changes of metre and tempo. Further changes of metre, tempo and scoring illustrate the rest of this verse,¹² the last before the 'Gloria Patri'.

12 The words are exceptionally vivid: 'Peccator videbit, et irascetur, dentibus suis fremet et tabescet: desiderium peccatorum peribit' (*Biblia sacra vulgata*, Psalmus 111, v. 10) – 'The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish' (*The Holy Bible [...] Authorised King James Version*, Psalm 112, v. 10).

147

Vn I, II

C 1

C 2

B 1

B. c.

ex - al - ta - bi-tur,

ex - al - ta - - - - bi-tur,

ta - - - - bi-tur,

149

ex - al - ta - bi-tur in glo - ri-a.

ex - al - ta - bi-tur in glo - ri-a.

ex - al - ta - bi-tur in glo - ri-a.

152