

Unsere Ausgabe

Die Manuskripte zu den vier Cello-Duetten von Joseph B. Zyka sind in der Königlichen Hausbibliothek zu Berlin überliefert:

Edition Güntersberg G238 (Heft 1)

D-B⁹ KHM 5776 N^o 1^{mo} | *Duetto Ex G-Dur* | *Violoncello 1^{mo}* | *Violoncello 2^{do}* | *di Gius. B. Zyka*

D-B KHM 5777 N^o 3^{tio} | *Duetto Ex D-Dur* | *Violoncello 1^{mo}* | *Violoncello 2^{do}* | *di Gius. B. Zyka*

Edition Güntersberg G239 (Heft 2)

D-B KHM 5778 N^o 4^{to} | *Duetto Ex F-Dur* | *Violoncello 1^{mo}* | *Violoncello 2^{do}* | *di Gius. B. Zyka*

D-B KHM 5779 N^o 6^{to} | *Duetto Ex A-Dur* | *Violoncello 1^{mo}* | *Violoncello 2^{do}* | *di Gius. B. Zyka*

Es handelt sich um gut lesbare Einzelstimmen von der gleichen unbekanntenen Hand. Es sind nur diese vier Duette überliefert.

Unsere Edition folgt der Vorlage sehr genau mit diesen Einschränkungen: Den für höhere Lagen in der Vorlage verwendeten oktavierten Violinschlüssel haben wir durch den heute eher gebräuchlichen Tenorschlüssel ersetzt. Im Duetto F-Dur gibt es allerdings eine besonders hohe Stelle, bei der wir den normalen Violinschlüssel schreiben. Die Vorzeichen gelten in unserer Ausgabe generell für den ganzen Takt und die Schreibweise der dynamischen Zeichen haben wir vereinheitlicht. Bei Triolen steht in der Vorlage immer ein Punkt in der Mitte des Bogens statt einer „3“, wohl eine Art Kurzschrift. Wir schreiben eine normale Triolendreier. Die Daumenauflage-Symbole, siehe Einführung, und die (sehr seltenen) Fingersätze haben wir aus dem Original übernommen.

Die Bezeichnung der Vorlage mit Bindebögen und Staccatopunkten erscheint uns heute an manchen Stellen lückenhaft bzw. inkonsequent. Vielleicht verstand sich für die Spieler damals manches von selbst. Wir denken auch, dass Parallelstellen nicht unbedingt gleich phrasiert wurden. Unsere Ergänzungen (gestrichelte Bögen, Staccatopunkte in Klammern) beschränken sich daher auf wenige Fälle, in denen sie uns aus strichtechnischen Gründen oder bei analogen Stellen sinnvoll erscheinen.

Wir danken Michael O’Loughlin für die Einführung und Monika Schwamberger für ihr unermüdliches Korrekturspiel.

Günter and Leonore von Zadow
Heidelberg, Juni 2013

Introduction

This composer, Joseph B. Zyka, was the founder of an impressive musical dynasty in Berlin, where the *Hofkapelle* employed him and his seven sons, all string players.¹⁰ His first name was often given in its Italian form, Giuseppe. There is also some confusion about his second name: most early sources give it as Baptist, but he may also have been referred to as Benedikt or Benedetto. Born in Bohemia, he lived and presumably studied in Prague, and in 1743 obtained a position as a violoncellist in the Dresden *Hofkapelle*. In 1764 he was appointed in Berlin together with his eldest son Friedrich, also a cellist; the younger sons were apparently born in Dresden, Berlin or Potsdam. According to one source he died in 1791,¹¹ but it seems more likely that he survived into the nineteenth century. His youngest son, Joseph Zyka junior, was also a composer.¹²

Zyka appears to have been highly regarded in Berlin: from the date of his appointment, 1 July 1764, he was paid three times the basic rank-and-file salary of 300 Taler. This may have been in recognition of his outstanding ability as a cellist, or it may have included recompense for his compositions

⁹ Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv

¹⁰ For more information on Zyka see Michael O’Loughlin, *Frederick the Great and His Musicians: the Viola da Gamba Music of the Berlin School* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 189–193.

¹¹ Eduard Mutschelknauss, ‘Zyka’, *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd ed., vol. 17 (2007), col. 1607–8

¹² See Joseph Zyka jun., *Drei Duos für Violoncelli* (Heidelberg: Güntersberg, 2013, G237)

or other duties. Unlike Italian and French centres, Berlin did not have a strong solo cello tradition. In Prague and Dresden Zyka would have been exposed to the newest Italian trends exemplified by composers such as Vivaldi and Tartini, and he may have brought a new level of virtuosity to Berlin. His compositions demand the use of the relatively new thumb position, which was first mentioned in Corrette's 1741 treatise, although it seems to have been in use in Italy since the 1730s.¹³ Zyka also composed cello concertos, three sonatas for cello and basso, and six trios for violin, viola da gamba and cello. The Berlin State Library also holds cello concertos, three sonatas for cello and basso, and six trios for violin, viola da gamba and cello by Zyka.

These duos match quite closely the definition of the true duet offered by Koch in 1802, and based on earlier writers such as Schulz and Quantz: “. . . a piece of music for two obbligato voices, either one of which must actually, and in fact continuously and with equal right, claim the character of a main voice.”¹⁴ Koch also points out that these true contrapuntal duets require and allow no other bass line, but had recently been replaced by a type in which the voices alternate between a melody and a bass line.¹⁵ Both types of compositional technique are found in Zyka's cello duets, but the former clearly dominates: he succeeds in keeping both parts interesting throughout.

Zyka uses two interesting and unusual notational devices in these duets. The first is a circle placed at a certain pitch on the staff. This is a guide to placing the left thumb in order best to accomplish the following passage in thumb position. Zyka's most common placement for the thumb is e' on the A string, which is the only position Corrette recommends. However, for higher passages Zyka also suggests a'. This notation gives us an interesting insight into performance practice in this particular time and place, and perhaps generally for the period. The first use of it is on e' in bar 5 of the Duet in G in the first cello part. This passage is quite playable without the use of the thumb; however Zyka seems to have marked it this way to avoid shifting within the fast run in bar 6. Unfortunately these passages have no indication as to where to abandon the thumb position. The placement of the thumb on a' for the passage commencing in bar 28 (with upbeat) in the first cello seems logical, but retaining the position in bar 31 would be arguably less elegant than playing it on the A string. However, Zyka would probably want one of his two thumb positions to be used for bar 32, which is similar to bar 6. There are other passages which could have been so identified, but were not. Performers will no doubt make their own decisions on the use of the thumb, informed by Zyka's ideas.

Zyka's other unusual notation is the use of the word *flasinetto* towards the end of a section to indicate a passage of natural harmonics, to be played an octave higher than written. It is interesting that Zyka's contemporary Carl Friedrich Abel also used this term in cello sonatas which, like Zyka's duets, are found in the Berlin Royal Library.¹⁶ This term is derived by a standard consonant shift of “g” to “s” from the Italian *flagioletto*, the flageolet.¹⁷ Zyka always indicates the end of the *flasinetto* passage by the term *Violonc.*, as if the player were actually playing the other instrument rather than merely imitating its sound. The passage in the *Pastorale* involving simultaneous double-stopped harmonics in both cellos is particularly effective, as are the cuckoo calls in the *Allegretto* of the G major duet.

Zyka's cello pieces are generally technically less demanding than those of his younger contemporary Luigi Boccherini, but can perhaps stand beside those in terms of interest for the player and charm for the listener.

Michael O'Loghlin,
Brisbane, Australien, Juni 2013

¹³ Michel Corrette, *Méthode, théorique et pratique pour apprendre en peu de tems le violoncelle dans sa perfection op.24* (Paris, 1741), p. 41.

¹⁴ Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Musikalisches Lexikon* (Frankfurt am Main, 1802; facs. rep. Hildesheim: Olms, 1964), p. 497.

¹⁵ Koch, *Versuch einer Anleitung zur Composition* (Leipzig, 1782–93; facs. rep. Hildesheim: Olms, 1969), vol. 3, pp. 320–322.

¹⁶ See Carl Friedrich Abel, *Zwei Berliner Sonaten für Violoncello und Bass* (Heidelberg: Güntersberg, 2007, G107)

¹⁷ I thank Dr Belinda Mackay for her expert advice on this point.