



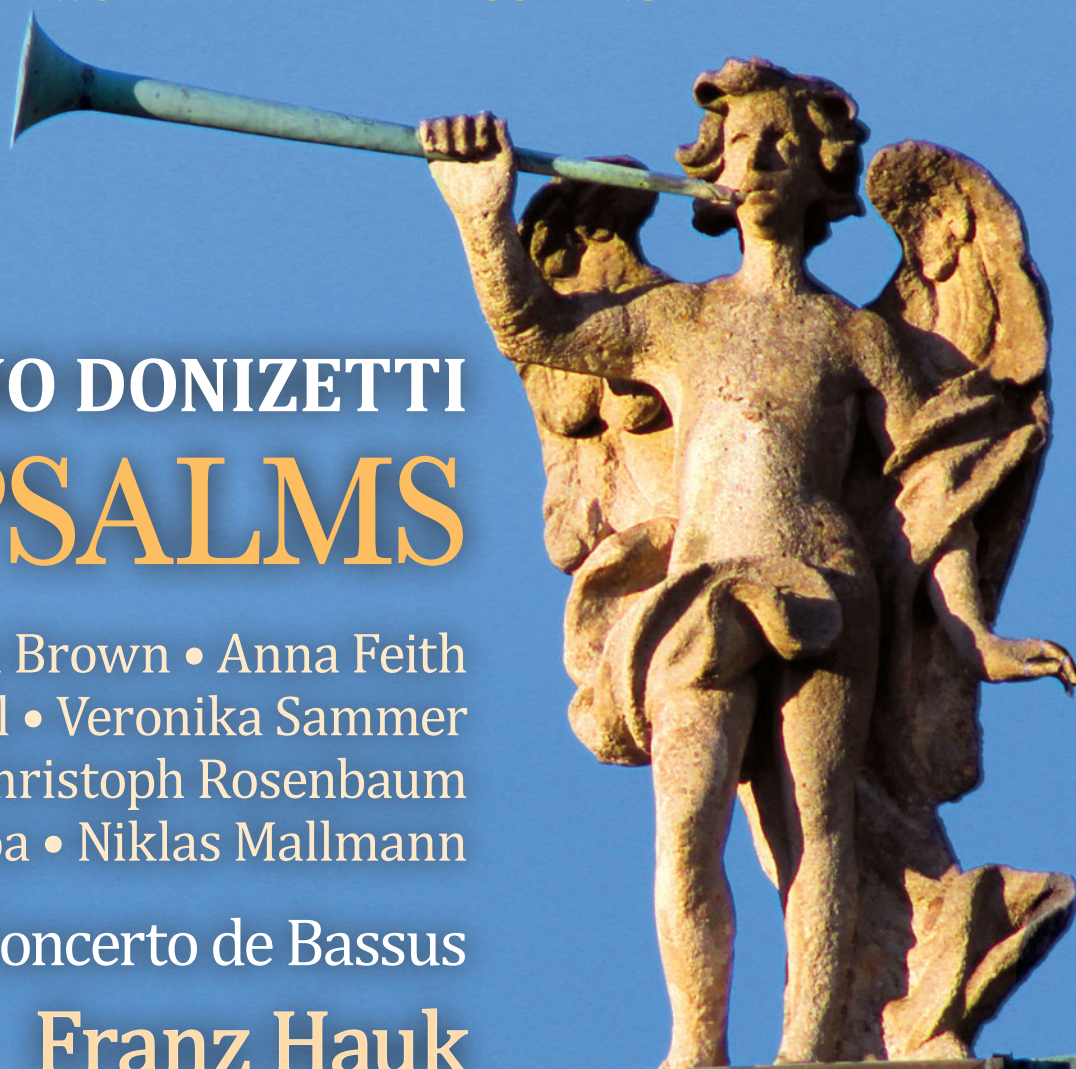
WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

GAETANO DONIZETTI VESPER PSALMS

Andrea Lauren Brown • Anna Feith
Johanna Krödel • Veronika Sammer
Markus Schäfer • Christoph Rosenbaum
Daniel Ochoa • Niklas Mallmann

Simon Mayr Chorus • Concerto de Bassus

Franz Hauk



Gaetano
DONIZETTI
(1797–1848)
Vesper Psalms
(c. 1819–20)

1	Domine ad adjuvandum in C major	2:08
2	Dixit Dominus in C major	6:35
3	Tecum principium in F major	5:04
4	Dominus a dextris in D minor	7:56
5	De torrente in F major	4:25
6	Gloria Patri e Sicut erat	4:52
7	Beatus vir in F major	6:53
8	Laudate pueri in C major	5:25
9	In convertendo in C major	5:23
10	Nisi Dominus in D major	5:43
11	Iste confessor in D major	1:41
12	Magnificat in D major	6:10
13	Salve Regina in F major	4:09

Andrea Lauren Brown **1 3 5 8 11 12 13**, **Anna Feith** **2 6**, **Soprano**
Johanna Krödel **1 8 11 12**, **Veronika Sammer** **2 6**, **Alto**
Markus Schäfer **1 4 5 7 8 10 11 12**, **Christoph Rosenbaum** **2 6**, **Tenor**
Daniel Ochoa **1 8 9 11 12**, **Niklas Mallmann** **2 6**, **Bass**
Simon Mayr Chorus **1 8 11 12**

Concerto de Bassus

(Concertmaster: Theona Gubba-Chkheidze, Solo Violin **4**)

Franz Hauk

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)
Vesper Psalms

The background to Donizetti's Vesper compositions: history, genre and liturgy

Even in the early days of Christianity there was a tradition of offering praise and thanks to God, in words and in song – particularly at the end of the day [cf. Baroffio, in the sources listed]. This time of prayer became established in the medieval Church as Vespers, particularly in monasteries – as an hourly prayer in the late afternoon or early evening. The main component of this solemn liturgy was always a series of psalms – of which generally five in sequence would be sung starting from Sunday, beginning with Psalm 109. In conjunction with the customary canonical hours, 150 Biblical psalms would be sung on a weekly basis in the Liturgy of the Hours – the Divine Office. Of particular significance are the Sunday Psalms 109 to 113 (according to their listing in the Vulgate), featuring as their central Vesper song the *Canticum Beatae Mariae Virginis*: the Magnificat. Mary, to whom the angel Gabriel had already announced that she will conceive Jesus as the son of God, has visited her relative Elizabeth, who will herself give birth to John the Baptist. In this encounter of the two women and their as yet unborn children Mary bursts forth with jubilation (Luke 1, verses 46–55): 'My soul extols the Lord/and my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour'. Here her song of praise in the Gospel text again follows the characteristic style of the Old Testament psalms, and therefore the Magnificat in the liturgy is in turn sung to the traditional notes of the psalms, concluding with the doxology: Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto ('Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit'). Like the other hourly prayers, the Vespers tend to begin with the opening versicle 'Deus in adiutorium meum intende' and its response 'Deus ad adjuvandum me festina' (Psalm 69.2 and 70.2 respectively 'Hasten, God, to redeem me./hurry, Lord, to help me!'), with the doxology then following.

The basic model of recitation used in psalms and Magnificat within this tradition of liturgical monophony – characterised by syllabic declamation using consistent tonal pitch with set formulae used for initial and concluding phrases and where a break is indicated – was first deployed in a 'harmonic' form of musical setting from the late 15th century as a *falso bordone*, that is to say in a simple form

of triad-based polyphony. Vesper songs – in Italy first of all – then increasingly became an indicator of an elevated register of composition in the 16th century. A particularly good schematic example of the 'antiphonic' practice of psalmody – splitting a song structure initially intended for a chorus of monks effectively in half, to produce an alternating play of choral sounds – might be found in the settings for multiple Venetian choirs collected under the name '*Salmi spezzati*', which were probably first published in 1550 in the collection *di Adriano* [Willaert] *et di Jachet* [from Mantua]. *I salmi appartenenti alli vesperi ... a duoi chori* [a more detailed description can be found in Hermann Zenck's writings – see bibliography]. By the 17th century the composition of Vespers had truly begun to attain a lasting level of significance, over a period of several decades, in Venice – and indeed in northern Italy in general, which is reflected in a number of printed scores [cf. Marx-Weber, col. 1466ff.]. Claudio Monteverdi's *Marian Vespers*, from the Venetian edition of 1610, are the outstanding example from this period. This, alongside a Mass on motet themes by Nicolas Gombert, contains not only five psalm movements and two Magnificats, but also a setting of the Vesper hymn *Ave maris stella*, an instrumental sonata with a vocal litany *cantus firmus* and, most notably, several vocal concertos with basso continuo. This work of Monteverdi's therefore represents this musical genre in its most modern form at the time: it is possible that the concertos could have substituted for the antiphons, the general liturgical settings of the psalms [see Bonta].

As the concert tradition continued to develop throughout the basso continuo era, there was a particular trend in Italy around 1700 for more and more extended settings of individual Vesper psalms with orchestra. These compositions subdivided the sequence of text and music into numbers, in a comparable way to the new trend in settings of the Mass text. Antonio Vivaldi was one composer who wrote a number of these *Salmi concertati*. Another outstanding work in the genre was Handel's setting of the first Vesper psalm *Dixit Dominus* (Rome, 1707): the musical form of this work develops, rather in the manner of a cantata, over nine movements (including the doxology), with occasionally varying vocal line-ups – in other words, the predominant choral sections are interspersed with pure solo numbers. In general, the Vesper

music of this time was not primarily associated with strictly uniform works, but tended also to produce compilations of a variety of compositions – originating from a wide range of sources – for an equally varied range of uses [cf. Marx-Weber, col. 1467ff.]. Settings of the Magnificat continued to be very popular through the 18th century, so much so that it is impossible to give a clear overview of its compositional history: this, it should be added, was the case in both Catholic and Protestant contexts north of the Alps [cf. Wolf, p.45]. In the wake of secularisation after 1800, it was only in Italy that settings of the Vespers as a genre continued to enjoy popularity and even on occasion further develop their musical tradition.

Donizetti's psalm settings, probably composed c. 1819–20 [cf. Bellotto, p.492/Bini col. 1274] belong in this context. In genre terms they follow the pattern of the *Salmi concertati*. The setting of *Dixit Dominus* (Psalm 109) refers back, with its subdivision into different movements, to the pattern of settings with individual musical numbers, whereas *Laudate pueri* (Psalm 112), together with its doxology with chorus and additional interludes for soloists, is through-composed – as too is *Beatus vir* (Psalm 111), but this time purely as a tenor aria. The *Magnificat*, for chorus and soloists, also plays through without a break. As for the opening psalm *Dixit Dominus*, it opens with an imposing choral movement with orchestral introduction and solo interludes (in C major). *Tecum principium* (lines 3–4), follows, in aria form; likewise, *Dominus a dextris* (lines 5–6), on a strikingly grand scale. Both these aria movements are also notable for their respective introductory sections, with their concert-style instrumental character, with oboe, clarinet or first violin providing the solo element and thus as it were effectively modernising the 'aria concertata' genre towards something more akin to an instrumental concerto. The next movement *De torrente* (seventh and final line) extends the solo aspect to its duet for soprano and tenor – while likewise something approaching an instrumental double concerto appears here too, several steps ahead, with two clarinets and flute (the latter mostly playing in unison with the second clarinet). The doxology, with its chorus and solo parts, concludes the work, bringing it full circle. The subdivision into separate numbers proceeds according to a range of tonalities that seems to be consciously chosen – C major, F major, D minor/D major, F major and C major. The through-composed psalm *Beatus vir* again incorporates a solo instrumental part for woodwind, albeit this time without a long concerto-style introduction.

At the time of these compositions Donizetti, who had returned to Bergamo in 1817 at the age of 20 following a period of study in Bologna, was already writing his first operas – one of which was *Enrico di Borgogna* for Venice (cf. Steiner-Ilsenmann, pp. 39 ff.). It soon became clear that Donizetti would take his chief inspiration in this genre from his teacher Johann Simon Mayr. However, he differed from Mayr in that liturgical music would subsequently remain a secondary area of his output. His Vesper compositions featured in the present collection have survived in manuscript form, in a range of different places (libraries in Bergamo, Naples and Paris). The response to the opening versicle including the doxology has also been preserved in the source material. In addition to the material just mentioned, this compilation of works by Donizetti includes a through-composed *Salve Regina* for high voice, Psalms 125 and 126, *In convertendo* and *Nisi Dominus* for bass and tenor solo respectively, and the hymn *Iste confessor*, again as a choral movement with vocal soloists. All of these works are performed with orchestra. The first verse and a mixture of verses 2 and 5 (final verse) of the poetic text, together with the doxology, are set to music contiguously. All the pieces included here are liturgically suited to the Vespers; the Marian antiphon *Salve Regina* was originally sung, historically speaking, at the end of Compline, but could also serve as the conclusion of the Vespers, when Compline was not observed as the final canonical service of the day.

Donizetti's music in these liturgical works follows the Italian style of the time, with its clearly structured scores, uncomplicated harmonies and rhythmic concision. Their expressive capabilities are conspicuously operatic in character, clearly influenced by the bel canto style – which explains why there is no lack of virtuosic passages for the voice in the solo arias. The lively movements are spirited and agile, as evinced on the one hand by the melodic flexibility of both the vocal and indeed, as often, the solo instrumental parts, and on the other hand by the march rhythms, or simple repetitions in the orchestra. This often gives the music a vigorous tapping beat suggesting typical parallels with Rossini. These obviously energetic features of the composition are set against relatively measured choral diction, intermingled with some more declamatory moments, sometimes divided up among the vocal group. The individual Latin phrases are, however, often concentrated into moments of real rhetorical force (as immediately shown in the response to 'adiuvandum' or in *Dixit Dominus* at 'scabellum

pedum tuorum', after the solo section in question. There are noticeable echoes of the use of the traditional psalmic '*falso bordone*' as a chordal text recitative in the *Laudate pueri* and even more so in the *Magnificat*; in the aria *Beatus vir* the fourth verse of the psalm ('exortum est in tenebris') is, unusually, performed as a pure solo recitative, during which the orchestra stops playing altogether for four bars. The first song sections of individual choruses or solo aria numbers sometimes appear – following a traditional compositional technique – as a 'vocal insert' in repeated groups in the orchestral introductions (as with *Dixit Dominus* and *Dominus a dextris*). The overall orchestral sound is noticeably different as a result of the winds, in particular the colourful and expressive solo parts for clarinet – as was already familiar in Italy through the works of Simon Mayr. Ultimately the young Donizetti reveals himself in many ways, in these compositions, to be a faithful student of Mayr.

Claus Bockmaier
Translation: Saul Lipetz

Bibliography: Giacomo Baroffo, *Die einstimmige Vesper* ('Concordant Vesper settings'), in *MGG*, Vol. 13, Kassel etc. 1966, col. 1558–1561; Francesco Bellotto, *Donizetti*, in *The New Grove Dictionary*, second edition, London 2001, pp. 471–498; Annalisa Bini, *Donizetti*, in *MGG*, second edition Vol. 5, Kassel/Stuttgart 2001, col. 1266–1290; Stephen Bonta, *Liturgical problems in Monteverdi's Marian Vespers*, in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Year 20 (1967), pp. 87–106; Magda Marx-Weber, *The Vespers*, in *MGG*, second edition, technical section Vol. 9, Kassel/Stuttgart 1988, col. 1464–1472; Robert Steiner-Ilsenmann, *Gaetano Donizetti: Sein Leben und seine Opern* ('Gaetano Donizetti: his life and his operas'), Bern/Stuttgart 1982, pp. 39 ff.; Uwe Wolf, Überlegungen zu den mehrsätzigen Magnificat-Vertonungen des 18. Jahrhunderts ('Reflections on the multi-movement settings of the Magnificat in the 18th century'), in *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* ('Annual of Liturgical Music'), Year 82 (1998), pp. 43–53; Hermann Zenck, *Adrian Willaerts 'Salmi spezzati' (1550)*, in *Die Musikforschung* ('Musical Research'), Year 2 (1949), pp. 97–107.



Photo: Martin Peterdamm

Andrea Lauren Brown

Born in Delaware, soprano Andrea Lauren Brown holds a Master of Music degree from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and a Bachelor of Music degree from West Chester University, in Pennsylvania. She has been awarded prizes at the International Summer Academy of the Mozarteum, Salzburg in 2002 and the 2003 ARD International Music Competition, Munich. Brown has sung in a variety of prestigious theatres and festivals in Europe, performing both opera and concert repertoire in collaboration with leading conductors, and in 2006 took the principal role of Pamina in Bernhard Lang's opera *I Hate Mozart*. She has a number of successful recordings to her credit, including Thomas Larcher's *Ixxu*, Thomas Hengelbrock's version of Handel's *Dixit Dominus* and Schütz's *Symphonie Sacrae*. **www.andrea-brown.de**



Anna Feith

Anna Feith studied for a music theatre diploma and a masters degree in concert singing with Monika Bürgener at the Hochschule für Musik Würzburg. Her extensive repertoire ranges from Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Mozart's *Exsultate, jubilate* to Elgar's *The Kingdom*. She also dedicates herself to Lieder, and gave a recital of songs by Mendelssohn and Josephine Lang in the 2018 Munich Residence Weeks. In addition to her activities as a soloist she collaborates with ensembles such as the Vocalconsort Berlin, and has appeared at the Berliner Philharmonie and the Early Music Days festival in Herne. **www.annafeith.de**



Photo: Markus Horn

Johanna Krödel

After the completion of her first state examination, the contralto Joanna Krödel took a diploma as a singing teacher, completing her vocal training with master courses in French song and early music. Among significant engagements, in 2015 she sang in Handel's *Messiah* in Eastbourne, together with the soprano Evelyn Tubb, under Michael Fields. Her various appearances have included Bach's *Mass in B minor* with Concerto Köln. She was a co-founder of the Hanover Chamber Choir with whom she recorded Glaubenslieder ('Songs of Faith'), which was nominated ECHO Classic Best Choral Recording of the Year in 2010. **www.johannakroedel.de**



Photo: Studioline Photo

Veronika Sammer

Munich-born mezzosoprano Veronika Sammer first trained as a singer with Tanja d'Althann in the Bavarian Regional Youth Choir, where she took part in various projects and made several appearances as a soloist. She went on to study music education and then singing at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, where her teachers included Barbara Ebel and Monika Riedler. Whilst there, she acquired valuable experience in the madrigal choir. She has also performed with the Vocalconsort München and as a soloist. Much of her concert activity has been in oratorio.



Photo: Werner Kmettsch

Markus Schäfer

The tenor Markus Schäfer studied singing and church music in Karlsruhe and Düsseldorf with Armand McLane. He was a prizewinner in Berlin and Milan and made his debut at the Zurich Opera Studio, followed by engagements at the Hamburg State Opera and the Düsseldorf Oper am Rhein. His subsequent career has brought appearances in major theatres and concert halls in Europe and America, collaborating with distinguished conductors, and a number of award-winning recordings. He teaches singing at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Hanover. **www.tenor-markus-schaefer.de**



Christoph Rosenbaum

Tenor Christoph Rosenbaum is much in demand as a Baroque soloist. He appears regularly as the Evangelist in J.S. Bach's *Passions*, and as a soloist in Handel's *Messiah*. In 2011 he joined the Baroque Vocal course at the College for Ancient Music, Mainz School of Music, where he worked with musicians such as Wolfgang Katschner, Andreas Scholl and Ton Koopman. He attended master courses with Margreet Honig, Marjana Lipovšek and Peter Kooy, among others. As an opera singer he has worked with distinguished directors Calixto Bieito and Peter Konwitschny. He is a co-founder of Filum alongside baritone Roman Tsotsalas.



Photo: Christian Palm

Daniel Ochoa

The baritone Daniel Ochoa had his vocal training in the Gewandhaus Children's and Youth Choir. He has participated in recordings with the Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Thomas Choir, the Stuttgart Chamber Choir and the Munich Bach Choir. He has also collaborated with the Staatskapelle Dresden and the Dresden Philharmonic, the Bach Collegium Stuttgart, the Prague Symphony Orchestra, the Halle Staatskapelle, the Tokyo Telemann Chamber Orchestra, the Berlin Lautten Compagny and the Leipzig Baroque Orchestra, working with leading conductors. In 2003 Daniel Ochoa won First Prize in the Leipzig Albert Lortzing Competition and in the following year received the award of the Richard Wagner Scholarship Institute. **www.daniel-ochoa.de**



Photo: Lars John

Niklas Mallmann

The bass-baritone Niklas Mallmann began his musical training as a chorister in the Tölz Boys' Choir. He has appeared in various opera houses under distinguished conductors, including Claudio Abbado, Sigiswald Kuijken and James Levine, both as a boy (*Die Zauberflöte*) and as a page (*Parsifal*). He later sang as a bass-baritone in the Men's Choir of the Tölz Boys' Choir, regularly taking solo parts. Concert tours have taken him throughout Europe, America and Asia. After graduation in engineering at the Munich Technical University, in 2014 he entered the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich as a vocal pupil of Frieder Lang. In the 2013 to 2015 seasons he undertook rôles at the Bavarian State Opera in *Die Soldaten* and *Arabella*. Since May 2015 he has been a member of the Extra-Chorus of the Bavarian State Opera.

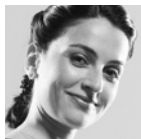


Photo: Andy Frank

Theona Gubba-Chkheidze

Theona Gubba-Chkheidze, the daughter of a violinist and an internationally distinguished theatre director, was born in Georgia. She completed her violin studies with a Distinction at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich and was awarded a Meisterklasse-Diploma in Modern Violin and a master's degree in Baroque Violin ('Historically Informed Performance'). She currently performs in concert throughout Europe with groups such as Concerto München, Ensemble Phoenix, Musik Augsburg and the Pera Ensemble. She is a co-founder of Concerto de Bassus. As concertmaster of this group and the Simon Mayr Ensemble she has made more than 20 recordings for Naxos.



Photo: Anna Götz

Franz Hauk

Born in Neuburg an der Donau in 1955, Franz Hauk studied church and school music, piano and organ, at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich and the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. In 1988 he took his doctorate with a thesis on church music in Munich at the beginning of the 19th century. Since 1982 he has served as organist at Ingolstadt Minster, and since 1995 also as choirmaster. He has given concerts in Europe and the United States and made a number of recordings. Since 2002 he teaches in the historical performance and church music department of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich. He founded the Simon Mayr Chorus in 2003.



Photo: Lorenz Ziegemeier

Simon Mayr Chorus

The Simon Mayr Chorus was founded by Franz Hauk in 2003. The repertoire of the choir includes works from the 16th to the 20th century. A special emphasis is placed on authentic historical performance and on the promotion of music by Simon Mayr at the highest cultural level. Members of the choir are vocal students from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich and singers selected from Ingolstadt and the region.

www.simon-mayr-chor.de



Photo: Lorenz Ziegemeier

Concerto de Bassus

Concerto de Bassus is an international ensemble engaging young musicians in historical performances of music from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Many members of the ensemble are outstanding students or graduates of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Munich, with wind instruments constructed on historical principles. The ensemble takes its name from the fundamental element of Baroque music: the Bassus.

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)

Vesper-Psalmen

Zum liturgisch-gattungsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund von Donizettis Vesper-Kompositionen

Schon die frühe Christenheit hatte die Gewohnheit, nicht zuletzt am Tagesausklang dem Herrn Lob und Dank zu sagen und zu singen [vgl. mitfolgend BAROFFIO]. Diese Gebetszeit verfestigte sich in der mittelalterlichen Kirche, besonders in den Klöstern – als Stundengebet des Spätnachmittags oder Frähabends – zur Vesper. Hauptbestandteil dieser Feier war stets eine Folge von Psalmen: Und zwar wurden vom Sonntag an, beginnend mit Psalm 109, täglich der Reihe nach meist deren fünf gesungen. In Verbindung mit den übrigen Horen kamen wöchentlich alle 150 Psalmen der Bibel im Stundengebet, dem »Offizium«, zum Vortrag. Von herausgehobener Bedeutung sind die Sonntagspsalmen 109 bis 113 (nach Vulgata-Zählung), zu denen als weiterer zentraler Vespergesang das Canticum Beatae Mariae Virginis tritt: das Magnificat. Maria, der ihre Empfängnis Jesu als Gottes Sohn bereits von dem Engel angekündigt worden ist, hat ihre Verwandte Elisabeth besucht, die Johannes den Täufer zur Welt bringen wird; und in dieser Begegnung der beiden Frauen und ihrer noch ungeborenen Kinder bricht sich Marias Jubel Bahn (Lukas 1,46–55): »Meine Seele erhebt den Herrn, / und mein Geist freut sich Gottes, meines Heilandes ...« (Luther-Übersetzung). Dabei folgt ihr Lobgesang im Evangeliumstext wiederum dem poetischen Duktus der alttestamentlichen Psalmen, weswegen das Magnificat in der Liturgie seinerseits auf die üblichen Psalmstöne gesungen und mit der Doxologie »Gloria Patri, et Filii, et Spiritui Sancti ...« abgeschlossen wird. Wie die anderen Stundengebete beginnt die Vesper in der Regel mit dem Eingangsversikel »Deus in adiutorium meum intende« und seiner Respons »Deus ad adiuvandum me festina« (Psalm 69,2 bzw. 70,2: »Eile, Gott mich zu erretten, / Herr mir zu helfen!«) nebst anschließender Doxologie.

Die Rezitationsmodelle, an welche Psalmen und Magnificat in der liturgischen Einstimmigkeit gebunden sind – geprägt durch syllabische Deklamation auf gleichbleibenden Tonhöhen mit bestimmten Initial-, Zäsur- und Schlussformeln –, konnten seit dem späteren 15. Jahrhundert schon als »Falsobordone«, d.h. in einer schlichten Form von Mehrstimmigkeit dreiklangsbezogener Faktur »wohltönend« verklunglicht werden. Zunächst in Italien wurden dann

die Vespergesänge im 16. Jahrhundert zunehmend auch Gegenstand hochrangiger Komposition, wobei die »antiphonische« Praxis der Psalmodie, der versweise häufige Wechselgesang eines ursprünglichen Mönchschors, sich werkhaf besonders in der venezianischen Mehrchörigkeit unter dem Begriff »Salmi spezzati« verkörperte, im Notendruck wohl erstmals 1550 in der Sammlung *Di Adriano* [Willaert] *et di Jachet* [von Mantua]. *I salmi appertinenti alli vesperi ... a duoi chori* [nähere Beschreibung der Quelle bei ZENCK]. Erst recht mit der Wende zum 17. Jahrhundert gewann die Vesper-Komposition in Venedig wie überhaupt im nördlichen Italien für viele Jahrzehnte eine anhaltend hohe Bedeutung, die sich auch in zahlreichen Druckproduktionen spiegelt [vgl. MARX-WEBER, Sp. 1466f.]. Aus diesen ragt Claudio Monteverdis »Marienvesper« in der venezianischen Edition von 1610 hervor, die – neben einer Messe über Motettenmotive von Nicolas Gombert – nicht nur fünf Psalmensätze samt zwei Magnificat, sondern darüber hinaus eine Vertonung des Vesperhymnus »Ave maris stella«, eine instrumentale Sonata mit vokalem Litanei-Cantus-firmus und vor allem mehrere vokale Generalbass-Concerti bereitstellt. Damit repräsentiert dieses Werk Monteverdis den modernsten Stand der damaligen Musik, wobei die Concerti möglicherweise die liturgisch regulären Rahmengesänge der Psalmen, die Antiphonen, ersetzen konnten [nach BONTA].

Mit der weiteren Entwicklung des konzertierenden Prinzips während der Generalbasszeit kam es dann in Italien vor und nach 1700 insbesondere auch zu ausgedehnten Vertonungen einzelner Vesperpsalmen mit Orchester, die nun den textlich-musikalischen Ablauf, analog zur Tendenz bei der Messvertonung, in Nummern gliederten. Etwa Antonio Vivaldi komponierte derartige »Salmi concertati«. Ein hervorstechendes Werk in dieser Gattungslinie ist indes Händels Komposition des ersten Vesperpsalms »Dixit Dominus« (Rom 1707): Einschließlich der Doxologie entfaltet sich hier die musikalische Form kantatenartig in neun Sätzen mit teils wechselnder Vokalbesetzung, d.h., zwischen den überwiegenden Chorpartien erscheinen auch reine Solonummern. Allgemein verband man die Vespermusik zu dieser Zeit nicht primär mit dem Anspruch einheitlicher Werke, sondern stellte oft verschiedene Kompositionen, gegebenenfalls ganz unterschiedlicher

Herkunft, für den jeweiligen Gebrauch zusammen [vgl. MARX-WEBER, Sp. 1467f.]. Weiterhin großer Beliebtheit erfreute sich im 18. Jahrhundert gerade das Magnificat, dessen Kompositionsbestand unüberblickbar ist – übrigens auch nördlich der Alpen auf katholischer wie evangelischer Seite [vgl. WOLF, S. 45]. Im Horizont der Säkularisation, nach 1800, konnte allerdings die konzertante musikalische Vesper nur in Italien eine nennenswerte Rolle behaupten und ihre Tradition allfällig noch fortsetzen.

Donizettis Psalmkompositionen, entstanden wohl um 1819–1820 [vgl. BELLOTTO, S. 492 / BINI, Sp. 1274], gehören in diesen Zusammenhang. Gattungsbezogen schließen sie sich dem Typus der »Salmi concertati« an. Die Vertonung von »Dixit Dominus« (Psalm 109) rekurriert durch Unterteilung in verschiedene Sätze zudem auf das Nummernprinzip, während »Laudate pueri« (Psalm 112) zuzüglich Doxologie mit Chor und solistischen Einlagen durchkomponiert ist – wie auch »Beatus vir« (Psalm 111), dieses aber rein als Tenor-Arie. Das Magnificat mit Chor und Soli läuft ebenfalls in einem Zug durch. Der Anfangspsalm »Dixit Dominus« wird seinerseits von einem repräsentablen Chorsatz mit Orchestervorspiel und Soloeinlagen (in C-Dur) eröffnet. »Tecum principium« (Vers 3–4) folgt als Arie, ebenso »Dominus a dextris« (Vers 5–6) in auffallend großer Dimension. Dabei zeichnen sich diese beiden Ariensätze gewichtig auch durch jeweils instrumental konzertierende Einleitungspartien aus, solistisch zu bestreiten von Oboe oder Klarinette bzw. von einer Prinzipalvioline, sie aktualisieren den Typus der »Aria concertata« somit nahezu in Richtung Instrumentalkonzert. Der nächste Satz »De torrente« (Schlussvers 7) erweitert die solistische Ebene zum Sopran-Tenor-Duett – entsprechend tritt hier vorauslaufend quasi ein instrumentales Doppelkonzert in Funktion, mit zwei Klarinetten und Flöte (Letztere spielt meist unisono mit der zweiten Klarinette) –, bevor die Doxologie als Chor inklusive Solopartien den zyklischen Rahmen schließt. Tonartlich geht diese Nummergliederung im mutmaßlich bewusst gewählten Radius C-Dur, F-Dur, d-Moll/D-Dur, F-Dur, C-Dur vor sich. Der durchkomponierte Psalm »Beatus vir« bezieht, wenn auch ohne großes konzertantes Vorspiel, wiederum eine instrumentalsolistische Holzbläser-Partie ein.

In der Zeit dieser Kompositionen schrieb Donizetti, der 1817 als 20-Jähriger von einem Studienaufenthalt in Bologna nach Bergamo zurückgekehrt war, bereits seine ersten Opern, so 1818 *Enrico di Borgogna* für Venedig [vgl. STEINER-ISENMANN, S. 39ff.] – es zeichnete sich ab, dass er vornehmlich

auf diesem Gebiet in die Fußstapfen seines Lehrers Johann Simon Mayr treten würde. Anders als für Mayr blieb die Kirchenmusik bei Donizetti im Weiteren ein Randgebiet seines Schaffens. Seine hier zusammengestellten Vesper-Kompositionen sind, zum Teil an verschiedenen Orten, handschriftlich erhalten geblieben (Bibliotheken in Bergamo, Nepael und Paris). Auch die Respons auf den Eröffnungsversikel mit Doxologie ist auf dieser Quellenebene vorhanden. Außer dem bereits genannten Bestand bringt die vorliegende Donizetti-Kompilation, jeweils mit Orchester, ein durchkomponiertes »Salve Regina« für hohe Singstimme, die Psalmen 125 und 126, »In convertendo« und »Nisi Dominus«, für Bass bzw. Tenor solo sowie den Hymnus »Iste confessor« wiederum als Chorsatz mit Vokalsolisten. Zusammenhängend vertont sind bei diesem Hymnus Strophe 1 und eine Mixtur aus den Strophen 2 und 5 (der letzten) des dichterischen Textes sowie die Doxologie. Alle einbezogenen Stücke passen liturgisch in den Kontext der Vesper; die Marianische Antiphon »Salve Regina« stand zwar historisch ursprünglich am Schluss der Komplet, konnte aber, wo diese als letzte Tagesshore nicht gefeiert wurde, auch am Ende der Vesper gesungen werden.

Die Musik Donizettis in diesen Kirchenkompositionen entspricht mit ihrem klar strukturierten Partiturbild, ihrer unkomplizierten Harmonik und rhythmischen Prägnanz dem italienischen Stil der Zeit. Ihr Ausdrucksvermögen ist, in ästhetisch deutlicher Nähe zur Oper, wesentlich durch den Belcanto bestimmt, so dass die Sologesänge zumindest auf einzelne vokalvirtuose Passagen nicht verzichten. In der lebendigen Agilität der Sätze, die einerseits durch die melodische Beweglichkeit der vokalen wie gegebenenfalls der konzertant-instrumentalen Solostimmen entsteht, andererseits oft von Marsch- oder einfachen Repetitionsrhythmen im Orchester ausgelöst wird, zeigen sich recht typische Parallelen zu Rossini. Diesen vorrangig aktiven Komponenten der Musik tritt gegebenenfalls der Chor eher in gemessener Diktion, tendenziell breiter deklamierend gegenüber – mitunter im Stimmenverband aufgefächert –, doch verdichtet er immer wieder auch die lateinischen Textglieder zu regelrechten Sprechakten (wie gleich in der Eingangsrespons bei »adjuvandum« oder in »Dixit Dominus« bei »scabellum pedum tuorum« nach der betreffenden Solistenpassage). Anklänge an den traditionellen psalmodischen Falsobordone als akkordische Sprachrezitation fallen im »Laudate pueri« und verstärkt im Magnificat auf; in der Arie »Beatus vir«

wird der vierte Psalmvers (»exortum est in tenebris ...«) ausnahmsweise sogar in einem rein solistischen Rezitativ vorgetragen, während dem das Orchester für vier Takte ganz pausiert. Die ersten Gesangsteile einzelner Chöre oder arioser Solonummern erscheinen teilweise, nach Art einer geläufigen Kompositionstechnik, als »Vokaleinbau« in Wiederholungsgruppen der Orchestervorspiele (so bei »Dixit Dominus« und bei »Dominus a dextris«). Der Orchesterklang differenziert sich im Ganzen wesentlich durch die Bläser und insbesondere durch farbwirksam hervortretende Klarinettenpartien – wie man es in Italien gerade von Simon Mayr her kannte. Letztlich erweist sich der noch junge Donizetti in diesen Kompositionen unter nicht wenigen Aspekten als getreuer Schüler Mayrs.

Claus Bockmaier

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Also available



8.573605

Gaetano Donizetti is renowned as a leading composer of the Italian romantic bel canto opera style during the first half of the 19th century. But in his earlier years and as a student of Simon Mayr his dramatic genius came to the fore in his settings of psalm texts for Vespers, a form then still popular in Italy both in secular and liturgical contexts. Donizetti's *Vesper Psalms* are characterised by beautifully shaped operatic melodies and colourful orchestration on a grand scale, creating moments of real rhetorical force – outstanding features of works that have lain undiscovered in manuscript form for two centuries.



Gaetano
DONIZETTI
(1797–1848)



VESPER PSALMS

1	Domine ad adjuvandum in C major	2:08
2	Dixit Dominus in C major	6:35
3	Tecum principium in F major	5:04
4	Dominus a dextris in D minor	7:56
5	De torrente in F major	4:25
6	Gloria Patri e Sicut erat	4:52
7	Beatus vir in F major	6:53
8	Laudate pueri in C major	5:25
9	In convertendo in C major	5:23
10	Nisi Dominus in D major	5:43
11	Iste confessor in D major	1:41
12	Magnificat in D major	6:10
13	Salve Regina in F major	4:09

Playing Time

66:54

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

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Markus Schäfer, Christoph Rosenbaum, Tenor • Daniel Ochoa, Niklas Mallmann, Bass
Simon Mayr Chorus • Concerto de Bassus (Concertmaster: Theona Gubba-Chkheidze)

Franz Hauk

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