

NEWSLETTER of the American Handel Society

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REPORT FROM HALLE 2022

Graydon Beeks

The 2022 Handel Festival in Halle adopted as its theme “100 Years of the Handel Festival in Halle” in celebration of the first such festival held in 1922. The opera staged that year was *Orlando*, only one year after *Rodelinda* had been staged at Göttingen—the first Handel opera to be staged in modern times. The new opera production this year, premiered on Friday, May 27th, was again *Orlando*, and it was musically a great success—one of the best performances I have heard in the Halle Opera House in 30 years. Christian Curnyn elicited distinguished playing from the Handel Festival Orchestra, which was mercifully shorn of percussion,



Above: Ki-Hyun Park, Xavier Sabata;
Below: Franziska Krötenheerdt, Vanessa Waldhart.
© Bühnen Halle, Photography: Federico Pedrotti

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J. MERRILL KNAPP RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Blake Johnson

With the support of the American Handel Society’s J. Merrill Knapp Research Fellowship, I was able to travel to London in early July 2022 to conduct research for my master’s thesis at the University of Missouri—Kansas City, titled “The Influence of Foreign Oboists on English Musical Life, 1700–1750.” During my time in London, I was able to collect a number of valuable sources which will benefit my work greatly.

My thesis explores how foreign-born oboists came to make London their home in the early eighteenth century and the ways in which they benefited from and contributed to the musical life of the city through the instruments, musical styles, and compositions they brought with them. Rather than simply tracking the development of the careers of these performers and the circles in which they moved, I engage deeply with the music written by and for them to understand the place of this repertoire in the development of the oboe as a solo instrument throughout the first half of the century.

Chapter 2 tracks the development of music written specifically for the oboe by looking at its use in three contexts: the court, public concerts, and in the theaters. While the instrument’s assimilation into the music being performed in the city has been covered extensively in previous scholarship, one stone has been left largely unturned: a thorough analysis of the music these oboists would have performed. Beginning with works for unspecified combinations of instruments and

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