

The *Atti* of the**1° Convegno Internazionale Mayriano Città di Bergamo, 1993**

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It now clear that once we were able to get the city of Ingolstadt to launch the first Mayr Symposium in October of 1992, it would not be long until Bergamo responded. And they certainly did so with the above-mentioned conference and again in 1995 with a conference on Mayr's operas and sacred music. Like a tennis ball shooting across the net, Ingolstadt responded with two more conferences, one in 1995 on Mayr's music in general and then in 1998 with 'Mayr and Venice'. Ingolstadt is to hold another conference in October 2001 with the theme, 'Mayr and Vienna'. Now Bergamo is lagging behind!

Thus the first 1992 Ingolstadt Symposium laid the foundations, whilst the 1993 Bergamo *Convegno* helped to put up the scaffolding. It is a pity that we have had to wait so long for the publication of these papers for they help to focus Mayr and his re-emergence into the music world of today.

The German contribution is fascinating; it reveals the grass roots feeling for Mayr before the 'heavy' musicologists muscled their way in. Adam Dierl and Max Suss contribute a charming paper on the background to Mayr in his own land and the peasant ambience that he knew in and around Mendorf. It is clear that he shared all his life in the common sense of those who toiled the soil. For example, the local prophecies regarding the future are fascinating. Mayr's own insight into the nature of his times is one of the major themes of his *Notebooks (Zibaldone)*. The prophecies recorded on p. 47 send a chilling cold down the spine when we consider the ecological predicament of our own days. Karl Batz (the editor of the 1992 Ingolstadt *Atti*) contributes a fundamental study on Mayr's student days in Ingolstadt, whilst Siegfried Hofmann (who make the first symposium possible) concludes the book with an essay on Ingolstadt as Mayr would have known it. With great perception Dr Hofmann ends with the importance of the composer's education with the Jesuits and perceptively notes how their influence would have given him a deep love of the Liturgy and the Ignatian tradition of meditation. Both points are of paramount importance for

understanding the composer, helping to focus the sources of his spirituality as revealed in the *Notebooks*.

From the musical point of view, Leopold Maximilian Kantner provides us with a commentary on the *Grande Messa di Requiem* (available on CD). Pieralberto Cattaneo contributes a paper on his own particular speciality, the wind ensemble pieces and concertos for wind instruments. Valeriano Sacchiero provides the reader with a precious insight into the kind of musical education that Donizetti would have experienced under his master. Pierangelo Pelucchi perceptively writes on Mayr's settings of the psalms. Pierluigi Forcella writes on Mayr and all the musical institutions that he set up in Bergamo, especially the *Unione Filarmonica*. Gabrielle Rocchetti's essay on Mayr and his fascination with the development of the horn is masterly and fundamental, reproducing excellent appendices, together with the complete text of Mayr's 'Bologna' manuscript. [Just for reference, there are extra notes on the French horn and its development with illustrations by the Master in his *Musical almanac* (N. 9. 6/1)]. Marcello Eynard writes on the re-cataloguing of the *Fondo Mayr*, an undertaking that is now well underway, special attention at present is being given to the vast collection of correspondence. Annalisa Bonazzi writes on Mayr's correspondence with Marco BONESI. The fruits of her research is now available in *Bergomum* 1992, number 2. Bernardino Zappa guides his reader through the *Zibaldone* volume published in 1997. Regarding my paper I would only mention that there is a mistake in the general index. *Elisabetta (Elisabeth)* is referred to as *Elisabetta al castello di Kenilworth!*

This is a volume to have on one's bookshelves and above all to read. There is a danger that Mayr musicologists are now falling into the medieval trap of trying to number how many angels may rest on the tip of the composer's quill – a fair number indeed, when all the manuscripts of the *Fondo Mayr* are considered! It is imperative for a German or an Austrian musicologist to begin deciphering Mayr's German script and getting it ideally translated into English. Then in about five to ten years time all the work that is now being produced will have to be distilled and a new monograph written, but even then our work will not have been exhausted.

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John Stewart Allitt