

# HÄNDEL

## Solomon

Oratorio in three Acts

HWV 67

Klavierauszug  
nach dem Urtext der Hallischen Händel-Ausgabe von  
Piano Reduction  
based on the Urtext of the Halle Handel Edition by

Andreas Köhs



Bärenreiter Kassel · Basel · London · New York · Praha  
BA 10709-90

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Zu vorliegendem Klavierauszug sind die Dirigierpartitur  
und das Aufführungsmaterial (BA 10709, leihweise) erhältlich.

In addition to the present vocal score, the full score  
and the performance material (BA 10709, on hire) are also available.

Ergänzende Ausgabe zu: *Georg Friedrich Händel, Hallische Händel-Ausgabe*, herausgegeben von der  
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# BESETZUNG / ENSEMBLE

## PERSONEN / CAST

Solomon, king of Israel.....	Mezzosoprano
Zadok, the High Priest.....	Tenore
A Levite.....	Basso
Pharaoh's daughter, his wife, Queen.....	Soprano
First Woman.....	Soprano
Second Woman.....	Soprano
Nicaule, Queen of Sheba.....	Soprano
Chorus of priests	

## ORCHESTER / SCORING

Flauto traverso, Oboe I, II, Fagotto I, II;  
Corno I, II, Tromba I, II, Timpani;  
Violino I, II, Viola I, II,  
Bassi (Violoncello, Contrabbasso, Fagotto, Archiliuto, Cembalo, Organo);  
Violino I, II, Viola I, II, Violino I, II ripieno, Viola I, II ripiena,  
Bassi ripieni (Violoncello, Contrabbasso)

# VORWORT

Händel komponierte sein Oratorium *Solomon* (HWV 67) zwischen dem 5. Mai und dem 13. Juni 1748. Nur am Ende des 1. Akts notierte er die Abschlussdaten der Entwurfsfassung (23. Mai) und der Endfassung (26. Mai). Das Oratorium zeigt vier Episoden aus dem Leben des israelitischen Königs Salomo, die durch das 1. Buch der Könige und das 2. Buch der Chronik überliefert sind: die Weihe des von Salomo erbauten Tempels in Jerusalem, das Eheglück Salomos an der Seite der Tochter des ägyptischen Pharaos, das Urteil Salomos im Streit zweier Frauen um ein neugeborenes Kind und den Besuch der Königin von Saba. Die Uraufführung fand am 17. März 1749 im Londoner *Covent Garden Theatre* statt. Weitere Aufführungen folgten am 20. und 22. März.

Händel führte ausgewählte Sätze aus dem *Solomon* am 27. Mai desselben Jahres bei einem Benefizkonzert im *Foundling Hospital* London auf. Eine andere Auswahl verwendete er in den Fastenzeiten der Jahre 1756 bis 1758 als ersten Teil seines Oratoriums *Israel in Egypt* (HWV 54). Für die Oratorien-Spielzeit von 1759 bearbeitete er das Werk im Herbst 1758 textlich und musikalisch von Grund auf. Dabei strich er den ersten Akt und beschränkte sich auf die dritte und vierte Episode der ursprünglichen Handlung. In dieser Gestalt wurde das Werk am 2. und 7. März 1759 im Londoner *Covent Garden Theatre* unter der Leitung von John Christopher Smith jun. aufgeführt.

Der Verfasser des Librettos ist bis heute unbekannt. Die Wahl des Sujets ist dagegen leicht zu erklären: In den drei vorausgegangenen Spielzeiten hatten der Österreicher Erbfolgekrieg und die jakobitische Rebellion die Wahl der Stoffe bestimmt: Das *Occasional Oratorio* (HWV 62, 1746) diente der Ermutigung der Nation in der Not; die Helden der Oratorien *Judas Maccabaeus* (HWV 63, 1747) und *Joshua* (HWV 64, 1748) waren Feldherren und Retter Israels. Im Mai 1748 aber wurde ein Ende der Kampfhandlungen absehbar: Da ist die Wahl des israelitischen Königs Salomo, unter dessen Führung das Land seine längste Friedenszeit erlebte, sicher kein Zufall.

*Judas Maccabaeus* war dem Führer der Truppen gegen die jakobitischen Rebellen, Prince William, Duke of Cumberland, gewidmet. Ein Widmungs-

adressat für *Solomon* aber fehlt. Es liegt nahe, in der Wahl Salomos eine Anspielung auf König Georg II. zu sehen. Bei seiner Krönung in der Westminster-Abtei hatte Bischof John Potter, der spätere Erzbischof von Canterbury, die Stellung Georgs als Stellvertreter Gottes mit der Salomos verglichen, und der Text von der Salbung Salomos durch seinen Priester Zadok (1. Buch der Könige, I, 38–40) lag dem bekanntesten der vier Anthems (HWV 258) zugrunde, die Händel für die Krönung Georgs II. komponiert hatte. Vermutlich hatte der unbekanntere Verfasser eine solche Analogie beabsichtigt; denn er verzichtete teilweise auf überlieferte Charakterzüge und Handlungen, die Salomo in einem ungünstigen Licht hätten erscheinen lassen.

Händel hat den vorgeschlagenen Stoff wohl nicht nur aus Dankbarkeit gegen seinen Förderer Georg II. aufgegriffen, sondern vor allem, weil er ihm musikalisch ergiebig erschien. Die dem Stoff innewohnenden Anreize zur Vertonung, zeremonielle Chöre in Salomos Tempel, die Anknüpfung an das Hohe Lied der Liebe, die Darstellung eines arkadischen Friedens, müssen Händel bewogen haben, das vorgeschlagene Libretto anzunehmen, obwohl es ihm als Dramatiker wenig Entfaltungsmöglichkeiten bot. Für das Fehlen einer durchgehenden Handlung musste ihn eine einzige Szene entschädigen: die hochdramatische Gerichtsverhandlung, in der zwei Frauen um ein Kind streiten. Mit dem Terzett der streitenden Frauen und des Richters, mit der Arie, in der der Entschluss der wahren Mutter heranreift, durch ihren Verzicht das Leben ihres Kindes zu retten, weist diese Szene weit in die Zukunft des Musikdramas. *Solomon* war zwar, wie Winton Dean urteilt, das letzte von Händels Gelegenheitsoratorien, aber dasjenige, das über diese Gelegenheit am höchsten hinausgewachsen sei.

Nur dank außergewöhnlicher Bedingungen konnte Händel einen solchen Reichtum entfalten. Selten standen ihm so viele Chorsänger zur Verfügung, dass er achtstimmige Doppelchöre auführen konnte. Der Orchestersatz ist reich instrumentiert und berücksichtigt das Vorhandensein zusätzlicher Streichinstrumente, deren Aufgabe es ist, als Ripieno in besonders bezeichneten Takten

# PREFACE

Handel composed his oratorio *Solomon* (HWV 67) between 5 May and 13 June 1748. At the end of the first act he recorded the completion dates of the draft (23 May) and the final version (26 May). The oratorio deals with four episodes in the life of the Israelitish King Solomon, as described in the 1<sup>st</sup> Book of Kings and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Book of Chronicles: the dedication of the temple which Solomon built in Jerusalem, his wedded bliss with the daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh, his judgement in the dispute between two women over a new-born child, and the visit of the Queen of Sheba. The first performance took place on 17 March 1749 at Covent Garden Theatre in London; further performances followed on 20 and 22 March.

Handel gave a selection of movements from the work on 25 May of the same year in a benefit concert at the Foundling Hospital, and another one in Lent in the years 1756 to 1758 as the first part of the oratorio *Israel in Egypt* (HWV 54). In the autumn of 1758 he completely rearranged it, both textually and musically: for this revival he cancelled the first act and used only the third and fourth episodes of his original scheme, and the work was given in this form on 2 and 7 March 1759 in the Covent Garden theatre in London, directed by J. C. Smith junior.

The identity of the librettist is unknown, but the choice of subject is easy to explain: in the three previous seasons the War of the Austrian Succession and the Jacobite rebellion had been influences. The *Occasional Oratorio* (HWV 62, 1746) served to inspire the nation in its need; the heroes of *Judas Maccabaeus* (HWV 63, 1747) and *Joshua* (HWV 64, 1748) were military commanders and saviours of Israel. In May 1748 an end to military actions was foreseeable, so the choice of Israel's King Solomon, under whose rule the nation experienced its longest period of peace, was surely no coincidence.

*Judas Maccabaeus* was dedicated to the commander of the troops who fought against the Jacobite rebellion, Prince William, Duke of Cumberland, but there is no dedication for *Solomon*: it is reasonable to see in the choice of subject an allusion to King George II. At his coronation in Westminster Abbey, Bishop John Potter, later Archbishop

of Canterbury, had compared George's position as God's representative with Solomon's, and the text of Solomon's anointing by his priest Zadok (1<sup>st</sup> Book of Kings, 1, 38–40) was the basis of the best-known of the four anthems (HWV 258) which Handel had composed for George II's coronation. Presumably the unknown librettist had intended such an analogy, for he mostly avoided some of the traditional characteristics and actions which might have placed Solomon in an unfavourable light.

Handel certainly did not adopt the suggested subject merely out of gratitude towards his patron George II, but above all because it seemed to him musically promising. The incentives for a musical setting inherent in the theme, ceremonial choruses in Solomon's temple, verses which recall the *Song of Solomon*, the depiction of an Arcadian peace, must have prompted Handel to take up the suggested libretto, although it offered him few opportunities as a dramatist. One single scene had to compensate for the lack of a consistent plot throughout: the highly dramatic trial in which two women fight over a child. With the trio of the quarrelling women and the judge, and the aria in which the true mother is revealed by her surrender of the child in order to save his life, this scene looks far into the future of music drama. *Solomon* was, as Winton Dean judges, the last of Handel's occasional oratorios, but the one which transcended the occasion for which it was written.

Only unusual circumstances enabled Handel to deploy such large forces. Seldom did he have so many chorus singers at his disposal that he could perform eight-part double choruses. The orchestral parts are richly scored, and take account of the availability of additional stringed instruments whose task is to reinforce the usual players as ripieni in specifically indicated bars of some movements.

Handel's involvement in the libretto of the oratorio becomes clear in the scene in which Solomon demonstrates the power of music to his royal guest in the form of a court masque. In so doing he was able to connect with the theme of another work which was high in the esteem of the public, *Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music*, HWV 75,

In some movements Handel wrote the indication *senza Ripieni per tutto*, others have no Ripieno indications. Clearly all these movements should be performed without the participation of the Ripienists.

In no. 35, the chorus "Praise the Lord" Handel wrote above the bass stave the indication *Chor I / Chor II*. That may be read simply as an instruction for the copyist about which of the relevant upper parts should be copied into the organ score, for such scores were always reduced to two staves. In no way can it be assumed that Handel had intended a separate organ for each choir.

The use of two separate viola parts is very rare in Handel. Undoubtedly the division of the violas is connected with Handel's desire to place a strong orchestra against the large choir with multiple parts. This involved on the one hand the more powerful sound and on the other the fullness of the harmony, which was anyway a typical task for violas in Handel.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries there had always been attempts to fill in the sound gap between the instruments played *da braccio*, and those played *da gamba*. Larger violas, mostly called tenor violas, were made, but did not become common. To what extent such instruments were available in London in Handel's time is difficult to assess. From Handel's score it is clear that, in spite of the notation in the tenor clef, their compass (with *c* as the lowest note) was that of the normal viola: for the Viola II part in the chorus no. 23, "From the East unto the West", which in bar 24 doubles Viola I in the lower octave, Handel moved the consequent low *B* to the higher pitch. The Viola II part can and should be played by violas, but that does not mean that if historic or reproduction larger violas are available, they should not be used.

Hans Dieter Clausen  
(Translation: Terence Best)

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