

Preface

David Popper (1843–1913) achieved international renown as a solo cellist, a status which brought his own compositions to a wide and appreciative audience. He became a student of Julius Goltermann (1825–1876) in Prague at the age of 12, auditioning on the violin but switching instruments due to a shortage of cello students at the conservatory. His studies were succeeded by a number of prestigious orchestral posts, and in 1868 he was appointed principal cellist at the Vienna Hofoper and in the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, remaining to this day the youngest player ever to have held that post. He eventually resigned from his orchestral position in 1873 in order to pursue an accelerating solo career throughout Europe. Popper was held in high esteem by his fellow musicians and maintained close personal and artistic associations with composers such as Bruckner, Brahms and Liszt, as well as with the leading performers of the day.

Most of his compositions were for his own instrument and testify to an intimate knowledge of how to marry virtuoso technique with the rich sonorities and expressive capacities of the cello. Popper's compositional output became highly regarded, and many of his works would come to have pride of place among the concert repertoire of all cellists during his lifetime. They continue to do so to the present day.

Popper premiered his first concerto in Löwenberg in December 1865. The "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik" notes: "We mention an original new work, performed here for the first time – the Violoncello Concerto in D Minor (Op. 8), composed by Herr Popper. We are pleased to discover that, unlike most cello concertos, it avoids a potpourri-like style, moving forward and bringing unity to the work. Although he has not quite mastered the form, or achieved a full homogenous style, the concerto offers much that is piquet and effective in ideas and in instrumentation. Re: Herr Popper's playing – nothing more could be desired ...". Georg Goltermann, to whom the concerto was dedicated, performed it in Stuttgart with that city's orchestra, in March 1867.

Note on the Edition

The aim of **paladino music** is to produce practical modern editions that also provide historical insight.

As no original score could be located, we created it from a set of parts printed by André, with an original piano reduction as reference. Differences between those two have been aligned, assuming that the the composer gave the later publication of the piano reduction and solo cello part more attention than the score. Our editions (this and the piano reduction, pm 0048) are aligned with each other.

In the interest of practicality for modern performance, we have transcribed the trumpet parts from F and D to C.

Modern notational conventions have been employed, resulting in the omission of unnecessary accidentals and redundant slurs. Some dynamics and articulation markings have been rendered consistent with parallel readings or with other instruments. Consecutive dynamic markings, often the result of printing limitations, have been combined where appropriate.

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