

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.

Little is known about the circumstances of the composition of Popper's third concerto for cello and orchestra. It is dedicated to "his excellency, the imperial state councillor von Ogarew" and was premiered by Popper, accompanied by the Budapest Philharmonic under Karl Goldmark, on 9 March 1888. It seems that the success of this performance was not great enough for Popper to take the piece across Europe. Much smaller in scale than his second concerto in e-minor, Op. 24, which Popper had premiered in the Gewandhaus in Leipzig in 1879, this charming piece much deserves a revival.

Note on the Edition

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

The Rahter publications of the orchestral score and the piano reduction (pm 0052) show some differences in dynamics and in one place even a small additional passage in the solo cello part, suggesting that the composer gave the later publication of the piano reduction and solo cello part (1888) more attention than the score. Our editions both reflect these changes and are aligned with each other.

In the interest of practicality for modern performance, we have transcribed the trumpet parts from F to B Flat. From bar 407 to the end, Popper requests the brass instruments to be doubled to four trumpets and four horns, which we have omitted in this present edition.

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.

Tecwyn Evans & Martin Rummel
Auckland, September 2017