DISsertation Abstract: Scot Buzza

The Vespers Psalms of Baldassare Galuppi
(research director: Jonathan Glixon)

abstract

"Although Baldassare Galuppi was an extremely popular figure in eighteenth century Europe due to the success of his opera seria and opera buffa, during his lifetime he was central to Venetian musical culture as the composer of a large corpus of sacred music. While Galuppi's masses and solo motets have been studied, his vespers psalms have received remarkably little attention; those few studies which have addressed them have done so only with minimal consideration of important questions such as stylistic development, compositional idiosyncrasies, analytical approaches to questions of authenticity, and what those factors might collectively tell us about sacred music in settecento Venice. The bulk of my work will consist of an examination and analysis of the forty vespers psalm settings for voices and orchestra that survive in Galuppi's autograph manuscripts. I intend to transcribe each of these works and carry out an analysis of the structural qualities, a study of the vocal styles, an examination of the characteristics of the instrumental writing, analysis of the use of the psalm texts and the relationship of those text to the music, and a study of compositional idiosyncrasies, as well as other salient compositional attributes that may surface. I hope to identify and articulate specific characteristics of Galuppi's compositional language and use those characteristics to shed light on the issues of authenticity that plague other Galuppi attributions. I will include speculation on the provenance of the works studied, and, wherever possible, extrapolate details of the circumstances of their creation."