

Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

Donnerstag-Akademie

Dr. Iskrena Yordanova (Lissabon): Niccolò Jommelli's *divertimenti* – Variants, Contexts and Performance Practice

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Studio Eckenstein der Musik-Akademie Basel, Leonhardsstr. 6, Basel

Eintritt frei

Niccolò Jommelli (1714-1774) was the most performed composer at the Portuguese court during the second half of the 18th century, with more than 25 titles presented between 1765 and 1795. Lisbon probably holds the richest collection of his scores, as well as many libretti and archive documents that testify his connection with the Portuguese royal theatres from 1767 until his death in 1774.

Based on these documents, my paper will address important issues concerning the compositional process, spreading and performance practice of two *divertimenti teatrali* composed by Jommelli for the Stuttgart court in 1764: *L'accademia di musica* and *La conversazione*. During the 1770s these short comic operatic pieces were developed and also performed in the Salvaterra Royal Theatre near Lisbon in 1775. The original divertimenti, written for 3 singers and orchestra, evolved into the more elaborated "cantata" *La critica* that has 7 roles.

This apparently minor repertoire represents an interesting case of "*teatro alla moda*" genre, containing textual citations of French and Italian 17th- and 18th-century arias, a magnifying glass to the operatic world of the time. The presence of separated 18th-century parts at the Ajuda library in Lisbon for each singer and the entire orchestra, produced for the Portuguese performance, is a very good opportunity to discuss how theatres operated in terms of preparation of the spectacles.

Dr. Iskrena Yordanova is Director of Research at the Centro de Estudos Musicais Setecentistas de Portugal «Divino Sospiro». As violinist (M.A. at the Sofia National Academy), since 1996 she has been a member of the first violins of the São Carlos National Theatre. Since 2004 she has been concertmaster and founding member of the *Divino Sospiro* baroque orchestra, which performs at international venues and festivals, and has produced several recordings with international labels.

She earned her PhD degree in musicology from the University of Évora and is a researcher at CESEM-UNL and a collaborator at CET-FLUL. Her academic activity includes the organization of international musicology congresses, the development of research projects dedicated to the 18th century musical heritage, such as the serenatas of the Palace of Queluz, and critical editions. She is the editor-in-chief of the *Cadernos de Queluz* series published by Hollitzer Verlag (Vienna). Since 2023 she has been lecturer at AReMus – Artistic Research in Music at the Conservatorio Santa Cecilia in Rome.