

While many details of Rosetti's early life remain obscure, it seems likely that he was born in 1750 in Litoměřice (Leitmeritz / Northern Bohemia). Originally destined for the priesthood, he seemed to have received his musical training from the Jesuits. Recent discoveries establish that during the early 1770s he spent some time in the service of one Russian "*Count Orlov*".

In September 1773 he probably joined the service of Prince Kraft Ernst zu Oettingen-Wallerstein. In July 1774 he was listed as double bass player. By the late 1770s he had already made a name for himself as a composer, whose works were regularly performed in the Parisian "Concert spirituel". At the end of October 1781 the Prince financed a journey to the French metropolis which lasted several months and enabled Rosetti to study concert and opera culture as well as establish contacts with music publishers. In 1785 he became musical director of the Wallerstein court orchestra. From 1786 on, his symphonies also featured regularly on the programmes of the great London concert series.

His international reputation notwithstanding, all his life Rosetti was plagued with financial difficulties. In July 1789 he left Wallerstein for the far better remunerated position of Kapellmeister to Duke Friedrich Franz I von Mecklenburg-Schwerin in Ludwigslust. In December 1791 his Requiem in E flat major (RWV H15) was performed at the memorial service for Mozart in Prague. In early March 1792, the oratorio *Jesus in Gethsemane* (RWV G2) and the *Hallelujah* cantata (RWV G7) were performed at the Berlin castle at the request of King Friedrich Wilhelm II, who invited Rosetti to attend. By this time Rosetti, who had always suffered from poor health, culminating in a "*malignant cough*", was fatally ill. Rosetti died at Ludwigslust on June 30, 1792.

For the two noble houses he served, Rosetti created a steady stream of symphonies, concertos, wind partitas, chamber and vocal music – a total of over 400 compositions. More than half of them were published during his lifetime. Charles Burney ranked him among the most important composers of his time and mentioned him in the same breath as Haydn and Mozart. His mature works reveal a clear taste for contrapuntal work, and are distinguished by imaginative orchestration and a rich harmonic and tonal palette, which at times even prefigures Romanticism.

The present first edition of Rosetti's oboe concerto in C major (RWV C30) is based on two undated sets of parts, the only two surviving sources: source A belongs to the stock of the former Oettingen-Wallerstein'schen Hofbibliothek (now: Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, 02/III 4 ½ 4° 437); source B is kept in the Fürst-Thurn-und-Taxis-Hofbibliothek in Regensburg (Rosetti 18). Contrary to Sterling E. Murray (The Music of Antonio Rosetti. A Thematic Catalog. Warren, Mich. 1996. Page 206), the two manuscripts are by different writers. Slight

discrepancies in the musical text suggest that both copies were based on the same model (an autograph score?); cross-comparisons solved a few uncertainties and doubtful passages. The source situation points to the direct exchange of music between the Wallerstein and Regensburg courts, which at least was particularly intensive from Wallerstein to Regensburg. Source A lacks a title page; the wording of the title given in Murray's Thematic Catalog is obviously the result of a confusion. The title given in source B read: "*Concerto in C / Oboe Principale / accompagnato Da / Due Violini / Due Flauti / Due Corni / Due Viole / e / Basso / Del Sig. Antonio Rosetti*".

At the end of the solo part in source A are two short cadenza sketches in a different hand for the 1st and 2nd movement, as well as a simplified version of bars 160–162, last movement. Cadenzas being rather rare in the sources of Rosetti's works, these sketches are most informative. This is why the editor decided to reproduce the relevant manuscript pages in facsimile on the last page of the score.

In the directory of manuscript copies available from publisher Breitkopf in Leipzig between 1762 and 1787 (Main catalogue and XVI supplements) the concerto, like its sister work C29 (Amadeus BP 1635), is listed in Supplement XV (1782–1784), which dates it to 1781/82 at the latest. Stylistic considerations, however, suggest that C30 predates C29. There is no factual basis for Murray's claim that the Augsburg source is from the estate of Wallerstein oboist Franz Xaver Fürall († 1780).

The present work is in three movements. The first movement (*Allegro*), freshly inventive and full of youthful power, is still dominated by the principle, derived from the baroque *Concerto*, of a series of motifs. The solo part is distinguished by a great variety of melodic and dynamic nuances and calls for great technical mastery from the soloist. The idyllic *Adagio* in F major (fifth relation key) beguiles us by its lyrical figurations, while also indulging in more dramatic passages. The clear formal layout of the good-humoured Rondo "à la chasse", typical of Rosetti, is the basis for another extremely demanding solo part; the above-mentioned alternative bars in source A for a tricky passage in this movement were no doubt added by a performing oboist.

Contrary to the wind scoring of two oboes and two horns prevalent in Rosetti's other solo concertos, for his oboe concertos (excepting RWV C31) the composer always chose the greater tonal contrast of flutes and horns. The *Basso* part should be performed by violoncello, double bass and bassoon, in accordance with performance practice at the time. The solo part contains editorial suggestions for the cadenzas to 1st and 2nd movement, as well as three small cadenzas for the fermatas in the 3rd movement.

GÜNTHER GRÜNSTEUDEL / KURT MEIER