

BCS TANGENTS

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Haydn and the Clavichord

David Breitman

A lecture-recital given at the *Symposium on the Clavichord*, Edinburgh, October 28, 2006

My serious interest in Haydn's keyboard music began in 1978, when I heard Malcolm Bilson play a fortepiano recital at Wellesley College. I'm not absolutely sure which sonata it was – I think it may have been the B minor – but I vividly remember my enthusiastic reaction. Equally unforgettable was the reaction of the person sitting next to me, tenor and musicologist Rufus Hallmark: his comment was “at last, Haydn in clothes that fit.”

That concert was a life-changing experience, although I didn't quite realize it at the time. It took me almost ten years to make my way to Cornell's DMA program in Performance Practice of Eighteenth-Century Instrumental Music, but when I finally began my graduate study with Bilson at Cornell, I started with a small, rarely-played Haydn sonata.

I've remained interested in Haydn's keyboard works, and continue to play them, teach them, and talk about them. In my annual guest lecture to Oberlin's music history survey class, I explain that Haydn's career spanned the great shift from the harpsichord to the fortepiano. I contrast his relationship to the piano with that of Mozart and of Beethoven: Mozart, whose mother wrote to her husband from Mannheim that “Indeed he plays quite differently from how he used to in Salzburg, for there are pianos here, on which he plays so extraordinarily well that people say they have never heard anything like it...” This was 1777, and virtually all of Mozart's keyboard music comes after that moment. Beethoven also reacted to instrumental changes. His early pieces,

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Earliest Clavichord Piece Performed

David Schulenberg

The American Musical Instrument Society held its annual meeting at the National Music Museum at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, South Dakota, on May 19–22, 2006. The museum is one of the chief centers in North America for the study of historical musical instruments, of which it has one of the largest collections in the country. Meeting concurrently were the Galpin Society, the chief British scholarly association of organologists, and the Comité International des Musées et Collections d'Instruments de Musique, the international disciplinary body for museum collections of musical instruments.

Of special interest for readers of *Tangents* was a talk by Darryl Martin (of the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments) entitled “The Early Flemish Clavichord: Reconstructing an Instrument after a Portrait by Jan van Hemessen, Antwerp, about 1530.” The portrait in question is the famous painting at the Worcester Art Museum that depicts a young girl seated at a clavichord. Those who attended the BCS's Clavichord Symposium during the 2005 Boston Early Music Festival may recall Peggy Baird's discussion of this painting. The instrument is depicted with sufficient detail to permit a reconstruction, which Martin has executed for a private American collector. The latter generously brought his instrument to the meeting, making it possible for the present writer to follow up the talk with a short recital program.

The instrument is quite small and heavily fretted, with a very shallow key dip and a small but perfectly clear timbre, sounding at four-foot (octave) pitch. The repertory, performed in the Arne B. Larson Concert Hall at the museum, consisted of contemporaneous French, German, and Netherlandish keyboard pieces, which originally were probably played on the clavichord by both professional organists and wealthy amateurs. The latter would have included

manist scholars such as Bonifacius Amerbach of Basel, for whom the organist Hans Kotter prepared a large manuscript collection of keyboard music. The program opened with an *ἀναβολή* (prelude) by Kotter, followed by arrangements by his contemporaries of songs and dances. The clavichord was joined in two of these by a Renaissance flute, played by Mary Oleskiewicz, in chansons by Claudin de Sermisy and Pierre Sandrin (with ornaments by Diego Ortiz).

Of paramount importance was a keyboard setting of “Een vrolijc wesen” by the Antwerp composer Jacob Barbiereau (1455–91). Originally a song for three voices, it became one of the most frequently arranged



Reconstruction by Darryl Martin

works of the late fifteenth century. An embellished keyboard version of it became the first music to be published explicitly for the clavichord, incorporated into an anonymous French translation of Sebastian Virdung's *Musica getuscht* (Basle, 1511). The translation was published at Antwerp in 1529, hence appearing at the same time and place as the Hemessen painting. The inclusion of this piece on the program was at the suggestion of John Koster, conservator of the Museum, who had spoken about early Flemish clavichords during the 2005 Symposium.

Also held during the meeting was a brief memorial observation for the late Howard Schott. Schott was one of the leading Froberger scholars of the twentieth century, and it therefore seemed fitting for this writer to play (on a harpsichord by Thomas and Barbara Wolf) Froberger's Suite 20, which opens with an allemande entitled “Meditation faite sur ma mort future.” Ω

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Spring 2006 BCS Recitals

Peter Sykes

On March 12, 2006, Gregory Crowell presented a clavichord recital at the Friends Meeting House in Cambridge. His program contained works one usually expects in clavichord recitals, plus some surprises. The opening piece was one such: a keyboard transcription of the overture to Handel's opera "Ottone." Crowell observed that savoring "public" music as this privately in transcribed form was a usual practice; his performance made a persuasive case for this practice today. Another (relative) surprise was the Toccata in G Major by Bach; such Italianate keyboard writing is not usually associated with the clavichord, but again Crowell's perfor-



Greg Crowell

mance on a 1908 Dolmetsch-Chickering clavichord left one without reservations as to the suitability of the clavichord for this music. Works by C. P. E. Bach, Benda, and Haydn were complemented by parts of a new work by Graham Lynch ("Vanishing Pathways" and "Toques I"), a prizewinner in the 2004 British Clavichord Society composition competition. The formidable difficulties of these new pieces were dispatched with aplomb, proving that serious yet highly enjoyable music is still being written for the clavichord. Throughout, Crowell's playing was distinguished by firm tone, elegant nuance, and disciplined rhythm. Ω

On May 21, 2006, Bruce Glenny was presented in recital at Gore Place, a historic mansion and an ideal setting for such an event. (The threatening weather and intermittent thunder lent a "Wuthering Heights" romance to the atmosphere.) The program consisted of music of the Bach family and of Herbert Howells. It opened with a most sensitively played Polonaise by W. F. Bach; these neglected works, filled with interest and detail as they are, clearly need more performances. Next was a Sonata by C. P. E. Bach. Glenny detailed the compositional history of this sonata, existing in both an early and a revised version;



Bruce Glenny

it was the early version that we heard. After that was the French Suite in G Major by J. S. Bach, a familiar favorite sturdily played. To end the program Glenny played six movements from the suite "Lambert's Clavichord" by Herbert Howells, an early 20th century British composer. Glenny spoke of the dedictees of each movement, giving a picture of a vanished circle of friends and acquaintances. Alternately yearning, melancholy, jocular, and earthy, these works sounded very well on the 1972 Goble clavichord. Glenny's performance was solidly grounded yet atmospheric, and the audience was treated to an elegant reception following the recital. Ω

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Haydn, continued from p.1
through op. 53 (1802), were all written for the five-octave instrument familiar to Mozart. Subsequent pieces take advantage of the increased range and sonority of the steadily larger pianos available to him.

In Haydn's case, the most revealing moment comes in a letter written to his student Frau Genzinger, in 1790: "Your Grace will no doubt have received the new Clavier Sonata [Hob. 49] by now... It's only a pity that Your Grace doesn't own a fortepiano by Schanz, since everything is better expressed on it. ...Your Grace might give your *Flügel*, which is still quite good, to Fräulein Peperl and buy yourself a new fortepiano... I know I ought to have composed this Sonata for your kind of Clavier, but I found this impossible because I am no longer accustomed to it."

Scholars have struggled to identify the precise moment when Haydn became "no longer accustomed" to composing for the *Flügel* (harpsichord). A panel discussion on this topic was convened in 1975 (reported in *Haydn Studies*, 1981), and the participants (including William Newman, Christa Landon, H. C. Robbins Landon, and Jens Peter Larsen) came to a consensus that Haydn began to write for the fortepiano around 1770, citing especially the extensive dynamic indications in the C minor sonata from 1771. Laszlo Somfai, writing in 1979 (although his book *The Keyboard Sonatas of Joseph Haydn* only appeared in English in 1995), comes to quite a different conclusion: according to him, "Sonatas that appeared between 1780 and 1788...were conceived in a tentative fortepiano idiom... The keyboard music of the years 1788-96 reflects a fully fledged, mature craftsmanship of fortepiano writing..." A. Peter Brown, in his 1986 book *Joseph Haydn's Keyboard Music: Sources and Style* takes a different approach. He proposes a "preferred instrument" for each of Haydn's keyboard pieces, along with an "other possible instrument" for many. In this way he is able to suggest the fortepiano as "possible" for pieces as early as 1771, without arguing that Haydn had already abandoned the harpsichord at that point. Brown proposes the clavichord as a "preferred instrument" for some pieces, and includes it as "other possible instrument" for a good many more. The clavichord plays an even greater role in Howard Pollack's 1991 article "Some Thoughts on the 'Clavier' in Haydn's Solo Clavier-sonaten,"

published in *The Journal of Musicology*, vol. 9, no. 1. Pollack's view is that "Haydn composed principally for the harpsichord from the 1750's to about 1765, the clavichord from 1765 to about 1780, and the fortepiano only sometime after 1780."

The narrative of the harpsichord's replacement by the piano is indeed a complicated one, and it is tempting to use Haydn's case to tell a linear tale. Unfortunately, while the earliest phase of the story (works without dynamic markings, perfectly suited to the harpsichord) and the latest phase (with Haydn's own testimony that he was "no longer accustomed" to write for the *Flügel*) are clear, the middle period – covering a period of about two decades – is a major muddle. [I offered the opening of Hob. 29, with dynamic markings definitely not realizable on a harpsichord, as an example of a pre-1780 piece that may have been intended for the clavichord.]

A brief digression: Although I'm a relative newcomer to the clavichord (I've owned an instrument for a little over three years), I've owned, played and toured with historical pianos for almost two decades. I frequently give masterclasses where students encounter a fortepiano for the first time, and I always encourage everyone present to give it a try. Invariably, sooner or later, someone trots out a piece by J.S. Bach. Hardly surprising – we've already heard Bach in every conceivable transformation: Bach-Busoni, Bach-Stokowski, Switched-on Bach, Jazzed-up Bach, and Bach on the koto. Why wouldn't you want to hear how Bach sounds on a Graf? No, the surprising part – to me – is my own reaction. I have to suppress the urge to strangle the unsuspecting player... After all, I haven't hauled and tuned a 400-pound instrument in order to show students how Bach may have sounded to Mendelssohn! So why am I proposing to play Haydn's F minor Variations for you on the clavichord, when by this date (1793) Haydn's keyboard writing reflected what Somfai called a "fully-fledged, mature craftsmanship of fortepiano writing rooted in personal experience"?

As I suggested earlier, the narrative of the harpsichord's replacement by the fortepiano is a tortuous one. But let's turn now to a different narrative: the story of Haydn's engagement with the clavichord. That's easy: we have a report of a clavichord ("a worm-eaten old clavier," according to Dies's biography) in the 1750's, a worn

clavichord (perhaps the same one) in a description by Bartolozzi in 1787, and finally Haydn's own account of having composed the *Creation* (1796-98) on his Bohuk clavichord, built in 1794. In other words, Haydn used the clavichord throughout his entire composing career.

So, if instead of asking "when did Haydn renounce the harpsichord for the fortepiano?" we ask "which of Haydn's keyboard works can legitimately be associated with the clavichord?" – surely, the answer is "all of them!" (The only real problem is the 'open pedal' passage in the C major sonata, Hob. 50.) Even Frau Genzinger's sonata, which Haydn says would "gain double its effect" when she trades her *Flügel* for a Schanz fortepiano, makes a convincing effect at the clavichord (although, as Frau Genzinger complained to the composer, we too might wish that Haydn hadn't included the crossed-hands passage in the slow movement...).

Especially felicitous at the clavichord are those passages with an accompaniment of repeated, pulsating notes or chords, long dissonances which invite *Bebung*, and phrases demanding a rapid change in dynamic. Two wonderful examples, from opposite ends of Haydn's career, are the slow movements of Hob. 2 (probably composed around 1760), and of the Genzinger sonata. [I played excerpts of these on the anonymous fretted Saxon instrument from the Mirrey collection.]

What, finally, are we doing when we choose a historical instrument for a performance? We try to recreate a moment in time when a composer, a composition, an instrument, and an audience were in some kind of harmony. We can try to recreate the situation of Frau Genzinger proudly playing "her" Haydn sonata to her friends (presumably after she acquired her fortepiano). Or, we can do as Haydn did (as reported by Schulz in 1770): "After some breakfast, I sit at the *Klavier* and begin to improvise. If I hit upon something soon, then things go further without much effort. But if nothing comes to me, then I see that I have through some lapse lost grace; and I pray again for mercy until I feel that I am forgiven."

[As an example of what must have been a particularly successful day, I played the F minor Variations on the beautiful 1762 Hass in the Russell Collection.] Ω

Symposium on the Clavichord, Edinburgh, October 27-29, 2006

A meeting organized by the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments
David Breitman

St. Cecilia's Hall, Niddry Street at the Cowgate. Sounds pastoral, doesn't it? The Russell Collection's situation is paradoxical: housed in a magnificent set of rooms, crowned by a remarkable, elliptical concert hall, but in a building that is wedged among noisy bars, yards away from the center of Edinburgh's seediest tourist attractions ("Auld Reekie's Ghost and Torture Tours, nightly at 7, 8, 9, and 10"). Despite the occasional siren, or whoop from Bannerman's Bar, it was a splendid setting for the weekend's events, attended at various times by about 35-50 enthusiastic people.

The first event, a concert Friday evening on the 1762 Hass, was shared by Paul Simmonds and Michael Tsalka. The first half consisted of a selection of pieces "with varied reprises" by C. P. E. Bach, a group of fugues by W. F. Bach, and a sonata by Wolf, all played with total mastery by Simmonds. Tsalka offered four interesting and lively sonatas by Türk, to which he brought both energy and refinement. Unfortunately, his performance was undermined by the tricky action of the Hass – which, in Paul Simmonds' words, "would as soon block as look at you."

Saturday morning's session began with Simon Field's lecture "XML and Musical Instrument Data." Mr. Field, a computer scientist from Cardiff with a serious interest in musical instruments, made the case for using XML (Extensible Markup Language) to record information about musical instruments, because of its flexibility in handling ambiguous data (such as doubtful attributions, or measurements which may change over time). Using a clavichord description from the Russell Collection itself as an example, he showed how an XML file could be easily queried by a computer program, while remaining reasonably readable by humans. There

seemed to be at least a few audience members who will definitely be following up on this project, judging by their detailed technical questions.

Next up was a lecture by Neil Coleman of London about the Friederici dynasty, setting out the various family members who were involved in the instrument business, and reporting what is known about their activities. Most disappointing, given their

who used it as a kitchen table he set out to track down Engel's remaining six clavichords, with some notable successes.

The last event of the morning, a lecture-recital on Haydn, was given by your reporter. A full account begins on p. 1 of this bulletin. After lunch, we reconvened to hear John Koster speak about stringing schedules, a subject that might seem very arcane until we remember that the choice

of string gauge determines both the touch and the pitch stability of a clavichord. The thrust of John's argument was to suggest that Joel Speerstra's stringing choices – as described in his book *J.S. Bach and the Pedal Clavichord*, and carried out in the numerous pedal clavichords he's built in the last decade – is as far off the historical mark as Dolmetsch's lightly-strung clavichords of the 1930's, only in the other direction. He bases his argument largely on the gauge numbers on surviving instruments (including the Gerstenberg copied by Speerstra), asserting that



Edinburgh, the Cowgate, complete with illuminated cow (across the street from the entrance to the Russell Collection)

reputation, is the fact that only two surviving instruments are known. C. P. E. Bach's endorsement of clavichords by Friederici, in which he refers to the quality of their "tractament," led to a discussion of the precise meaning of that word, beginning with the observation that "workmanship" or "craftsmanship" (offered in some published translations) are surely wrong – but some ambiguity remains in choosing between "action" or "touch."

Paul Simmonds discussed the instrument collection of Carl Engel, a German living in England in the nineteenth century who collected a staggering number of instruments (around a hundred). A composer, pianist, and teacher, he organized an instrument exhibition at the South Kensington Museum (now the V&A) in 1872. The catalog he produced wasn't superseded until the 1960's. Simmonds was led to this topic by way of a pantalon-clavichord he acquired some years ago; after he discovered that it had been purchased by Engel from a widow

there is no disagreement on the meaning of those numbers. It was a pity that Joel wasn't on hand to defend himself... (although he does address some of Koster's points in an interview in the May 2005 *Clavichord International*).

Darryl Martin explained his attribution of a Flemish origin for the little triple-fretted instrument from the Mirrey collection. He began by apologizing for the use of the term "Flemish" to describe a school of building centered around Antwerp, but justified the geographically dubious term on the basis of its familiarity "even if there is someone out there sticking pins into a voodoo doll of me." He dealt primarily with evidence from pictures, and also by contrasting features of the Mirrey example with those of similar instruments from Germany and Italy.

Then it was time to hear that instrument played. Judy Conrad offered a program of Sweelinck, and we were all astonished by the quantity of sound put out by the little

instrument with its tiny soundboard.

After a brief dinner break, we were back for an all-Mozart recital by Pierre Goy. Despite hobbling about on crutches (the result of breaking his left foot last month while visiting the Musikmuseet in Stockholm) he played with perfect ease. Mozart on the clavichord seemed as natural as could be. The first movement of the early E-flat sonata, which he offered as the first encore, sounded as if it must have been conceived for the instrument.

Sunday morning was devoted to a workshop conducted by Paul Simmonds. Students (mostly of the “adult amateur” category) played the fretted Hubert, and Paul touched on a wide variety of issues, from how to “prelude” (try out the keyboard by improvising some arpeggios) before beginning a prepared piece, to fine points on the execution of ornaments in W. F. Bach.

The afternoon session began with Micaela Schmitz, who discussed the experience of taking pieces back and forth between the harpsichord and clavichord (as C. P. E. Bach suggests every keyboard player should do). She showed how certain fingering choices that she called “lazy” (sliding the thumb, finger substitution), originating at the harpsichord,

had to be replaced with more “solid” choices when playing the same piece on the clavichord – with results that were musically beneficial when transferred back to the harpsichord.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to discoveries at the Polish convent of Santa Clara at Stary Sacz, in Poland. Maria Erdman discussed a musical manuscript, dated 1769, containing 101 “Arias by

Hermert then talked about the clavichord by Albertus Septemda located at the same convent. This instrument, which closely resembles the Praetorius octave clavichord, has a label in which the third digit is illegible – so it might have been made anywhere between 1604 and 1694. Hermert has built a beautiful copy, and Erdman used it for most of her recital, which consisted entirely of Polish music, beginning with pieces from the Gdansk Tablature of 1591, and ending with a sonata by C. W. Podbielski (1740-1792), a pupil of Mützel. Maria made a wonderful case for all of this unfamiliar music, playing both the Hermert and the Hass with spirit and grace.

The very last event was a recital by Clare and David Griffel of 18th century *Lieder* for voice and keyboard, performed mostly on a big Dolmetsch from 1896. The exception was Haydn’s ‘Arianna,’ the only work on the program, indeed of the entire weekend, performed on a keyboard other than a clavichord — on an English piano by the aptly named Loud — and it only served to highlight how successfully the clavichord accompanied the voice throughout the rest of the concert.

Too soon, it was all over. Ω



Picturesque Edinburgh

assorted authors, to be played on positive organ or spinet during the Service at church.” She characterized them as largely secular “galanteries,” although there are also a few pieces in the collection explicitly related to the religious service (elevation, offertorium). Andreas

The Clavichord at Oberlin

The clavichord is now firmly planted at Oberlin College. For some time Oberlin has owned a 1965 Hugh Gough unfretted clavichord with a range of GG-g3. More recently, keyboardist and Oberlin Conservatory faculty member David Breitman has acquired a copy of Christopher Hogwood’s Hass, made by Ugo Casiglia, an Italian builder living in Sicily. Breitman’s short course “Introduction to the Clavichord,” given in the spring, 2006, had eight students.

Most recently, Oberlin acquired a pedal clavichord built by Joel Speerstra (given in honor of the 70th birthday of David Boe, professor of organ and harpsichord at Oberlin). To help inaugurate the pedal clavichord, Speerstra, an Oberlin graduate,

paid a visit in September, which included, Breitman reports, “a splendid recital” and two classes: one on clavichord playing for organists, and one on the use of rhetorical figures (“Musica Poetica”) in German baroque music. Ω

Geoffrion Residency

In October, clavichordist and builder Renée Geoffrion, who was presented in recital by the BCS in 2005, returned to the Boston area for a residency of ten days. During her visit she made presentations on and about the clavichord to the early music seminar (taught by Frances Fitch) and the piano seminar (taught by Eileen Hutchins) at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge; also to a piano class for

young students (taught by Angel Ramon Rivera) in the Preparatory Division of the New England Conservatory. A number of students took private lessons from Renée. These included some with no prior experience with the clavichord, as well as students more familiar with the instrument.

On two evenings Renée presented house concerts, one at the home of John and Harriet Carey in Wellesley and another at the home of Margaret Irwin-Brandon in downtown Springfield. Each was “an evening of supper, music and conversation” in a gracious ambiance.

Information about ordering a CD of clavichord music recently recorded by Renée can be found on the BCS website. The CD includes music by W. F. Bach, C. P. E. Bach, J. Haydn, and W. A. Mozart. Ω

Clavichord Labeled M. J. Schramm, München

Tim Hamilton

Tim Hamilton is a restorer of early keyboard instruments in Boston.

A clavichord with the nameplate “M.J. Schramm” was brought into my workshop for restoration in 2005. At first glance the instrument looked as though it had been made during the 1930s but further research indicates that an earlier date, perhaps a considerably earlier date, is possible. According to an article by Ralf Ketterer that appeared in the German publication *Monatsanzeiger*, Karl Maendler became the sole proprietor of the Schramm firm in 1903 and instruments produced after that date had the “Maendler-Schramm” label on them.¹ That would imply that this instrument was built prior to 1903. Ketterer, however, is no longer certain that Maendler began immediately to put his name on the firm’s instruments.²

Further research indicates that M.J. Schramm may have produced no clavichords himself and that all of the clavichords produced by this firm were de-



The restored clavichord M.J. Schramm, München

signed and built by Maendler.³ (The statement by Maendler highlighted here appears to support this hypothesis.⁴) In this case, the “M.J. Schramm” nameplate may simply indicate that this was one of the first Maendler clavichords and was issued before he began to put his own name on the instruments. What is not clear is exactly when these first clavichords were built.



M.J. Schramm, München

signed and built by Maendler.³ (The statement by Maendler highlighted here appears to support this hypothesis.⁴) In this case, the “M.J. Schramm” nameplate may simply indicate that this was one of the first Maendler clavichords and was issued before he began to put his own name on the instruments. What is not clear is exactly when these first clavichords were built.

Thus far, the owner and I have not located any other clavichord with the “M.J. Schramm” nameplate, although a few clavichords with the label “Maendler-Schramm” are known to be in private hands and museums. Photos of the two

“Nach hundertjährigen Vergessenheit kommt das Clavichord wieder zu Ehren, und ich habe mit Begeisterung die Gelegenheit ergriffen, Clavichords in vollendetster Form erstehen zu lassen, und habe von allen Seiten die grösste Anerkennung gefunden.”⁴

Karl Maendler, in a catalog published by the Schramm firm

Description: The instrument has a modern outline being fairly deep front to back for its width. Veneered in walnut it has a simple square tapered folding stand. The compass is GG to f” . Here is a detailed description with some notes on restoration.

Case: The case, excluding moldings is 1444mm wide, 532mm back to front, 164mm high. The case sides are 22mm thick and are veneered in walnut with a simple flat molding. There is no other decoration.

The case sides, lid and base were made using blockboard plywood, a type of

plywood made of strips of square or rectangular timber faced on both sides with a thick layer of good quality veneer for structural support and covered when required with an outer thinner layer of decorative veneer, in this instance European walnut. This type of plywood seems to have been first made commercially in Germany by Küm-

mel’s at Rehfelde near Berlin about 1902.⁵ Although not as stiff as solid wood, blockboard is nevertheless much better at resisting the tendency to twist and bend than plywood. Available in large sheets, it would have made a reasonable choice for construction of the case. Solid walnut was used



Maendler-Schramm, München
Photo by Ken Lee

for the braces, music desk, lid stay and other visible small parts. There are two diagonal braces at the same height as the strings. The smaller of the two runs parallel to the top string from the hitch plank to the wrest plank. The larger brace runs parallel to the bottom string from the left hand back corner of the case to the right hand front corner. This larger brace is so low as to make it impossible to remove more than one or two keys singly without removing the whole keyboard. Braces of this type were often used in European square pianos. In rectangular instruments such as the clavichord [and

square piano] the treble end of the hitch plank, or in the case of a square piano the wrest plank, is very narrow and likely to fail, so from about the late 1820s a single bar was fitted in the treble as reinforcement. Later, around the 1850s, some piano makers added an additional brace in the bass which greatly added to the stability and strength, as can be seen from the fact that this Schramm is quite remarkably untwisted for a clavichord, especially one with a blockboard base.

Stand: The folding stand consists of four square tapered legs, veneered in walnut. These are hinged in two gate leg pairs, each pair held in position by a diagonal brace hinged at the gate leg stretcher and screwed at the other end into the base with large thumb screws. There is a clip to hold the stand folded flat to the bottom when transporting the instrument.

Keyboard: The keyboard was probably made by a piano keyboard maker. On the side of the first key there is a makers stamp, which I could not read except for the number 181020. The key lever mortises are bushed and chased as in a modern piano keyboard. The keys are 22mm thick. The tails of the keys are long, wide and not carved to reduce weight. Especially in the treble, this extra mass makes it difficult for a player to produce a clear even tone. There are also problems with the balance rail position. The bottom note is 405mm long overall, the top 454mm overall, but the balance rail position is a uniform 162mm from the front of the naturals.

Tangents: The tangents are L shaped with an oblong hole in the horizontal face through which the tangent is screwed to the key. The oblong hole allows front to back movement of the tangent of about 4mm. The top of the tangent has a projection or lip about 1.5mm high at back to prevent the rear string sliding off the tangent. This is a feature I've not seen before.

Bridge and Soundboard: The bridge is 13.8mm wide at the bass and 15.7mm high, 12.6mm wide at the treble and 15.75mm high. The soundboard is 2.4mm thick with the grain running parallel to the bridge.

Strings: The strings, as far as I could tell, are mostly original. As can be seen from the string chart, the tensions for

the bass strings are very high and although they were saved and reused they are very false. There is a good case to be made for changing them. The plain string gauges were recalculated to provide a smoother more traditional tension curve and restrung using iron or brass wire as required.

Condition: The clavichord, although complete, was in very poor condition. The glue used in the manufacture of the blockboard had not stood up well and in many areas the case sides and lid had delaminated. Two of the corner joints had failed and the walnut veneer was hanging off in sheets. The stand had come apart and was broken in several places. Inside the case, the wrest plank had split and come adrift and the hitch plank was damaged. The larger of the two diagonal braces had come loose, the soundboard and bridge needed repair and countless other repairs were required. Now restored, the instrument looks good and has a decent sound. With a new set of bass strings and a better keyboard further improvement is possible. Ω

Notes:

¹Ralf Ketterer, "Der Instrumentenbauer Karl Maendler und die Weiterentwicklung des 'Bachklaviers'," *Monatsanzeiger Germanisches Nationalmuseum*, No. 263, February 2003, Nürnberg 2003, p. 6f. In English translation: "In 1898 Maendler became a partner in the Schramm firm and five years later he took over as the sole proprietor, but kept the firm name in which his own name does not appear. The instruments which the workshop released after that...all bore the name 'Maendler-Schramm.'"

²E-mail from Ralf Ketterer.

³Beverly Woodward, Lothar Bemann and Richard Troeger have discussed this and all agree that there is no evidence that M. J. Schramm himself built any clavichords.

⁴In English translation: "After a hundred years of oblivion the clavichord is coming back into favor, and I have enthusiastically seized the opportunity to produce clavichords in a most perfect form, and have received the greatest recognition from all sides."

⁵Nikolas Pevsner, "The History of Plywood up to 1914," *Architectural Review*, August 1938.

Note	Length	Core Diameter	Cover Diameter	Tension kgf
GG	1142	.35	.47	11.9
GG#	1129	.35	.46	13
AA	1115	.33	.45	12.7
AA#	1102	.33	.45	14.3
BB	1087	.33	.4	13.2
C	1073	.33	.38	13.4
C#	1058	.33	.33	12.1
D	1042	.33	.29	11.1
D#	1028	.33	.29	12.1
E	1011	.33	.25	11
F	999	.3	.23	10.1
F#	981	.3	.19	8.7
G	967	.3	.19	9.5
G#	947	.3	.18	9.7
A	929	.3	.14	8.1
A#	908	.3	.14	8.7
B	883	.56		10.1
c	874	.44		6.27
c#	852	.44		6.69
d	829	.44		7.11
d#	811	.44		7.64
e	782	.44		7.97
f	756	.42		7.62
f#	731	.34		5.24
g	702	.34		5.43
g#	675	.34		5.63
a	646	.34		5.79
a#	620	.34		5.98
b	594	.34		6.17
c'	567	.34		6.31
c#'	538	.3		4.96
d'	512	.3		5.04
d#'	482	.3		5.02
e'	457	.3		5.06
f'	431	.3		5.05
f#'	404	.3		4.99
g'	382	.3		5.01
g#'	359	.3		4.96
a'	338	.3		4.93
a#'	318	.3		4.9
b'	300	.3		4.9
c''	282	.3		4.86
c#''	265	.3		4.82
d''	249	.3		4.77
d#''	236	.3		4.81
e''	223	.3		4.82
f''	211	.3		4.85
f#''	199	.3		4.84
g''	189	.3		4.9
g#''	181	.3		5.04
a'''	171	.3		5.05
a#'''	161	.3		5.03
b'''	152	.3		5.03
c'''	145	.3		5.14
c#'''	137	.3		5.15
d'''	128	.3		5.04
d#'''	123	.3		5.23
e'''	118	.3		5.4
f'''	114	.3		5.66

All measurements are metric.
Strings GG to A# Steel core, Close wound copper wrap.
String B Brass. Strings c to f' Steel.

BCS
TANGENTS

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