



ARTICLE

Handel as Miscellany

Alison DeSimone 

University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, MO, USA
desimonea@umkc.edu

Abstract

During the early eighteenth century, music composed by George Frideric Handel began to circulate in miscellaneous publications of songs and arias. His music appeared in various forms. Some publications, such as four notable pocket collections published in the mid-1720s, preserve the music largely unchanged, although within a new sonic context. Other publications completely transform arias and even overtures into vocal works with new texts, creating layers of musical associations and meanings. Unauthorized appearances of Handel's music in songbook miscellanies and single-sided prints show alternative ways in which consumers may have heard and experienced the composer outside of the opera house or a concert setting. Examining these alternative sources for Handel's music allows for an enriched assessment of which works of the composer were critically and commercially appreciated during the early eighteenth century. Analysing appearances of Handel's music in songbook anthologies also offers insight into how musical miscellanies became ubiquitous forms of the production and reception of his works in the early eighteenth century.

Keywords: George Frideric Handel; miscellany; eighteenth century; Britain; publishing; songbook; opera

Upon opening the cover of John Browne's 1725 songbook *The Opera Miscellany*, the reader is greeted by a detailed frontispiece introducing the collection of songs (see [Figure 1](#)).¹ A man in a laurel crown (Orpheus, perhaps?) gazes up at the god Apollo, who by means of the sun illuminates a curious-looking tree surrounded by musical notes. In the background a shepherd tends his flock. In keeping with its purpose, the frontispiece hints at the contents of the book itself, as does the inscription below the image, drawn from Virgil's *Alexis* (Eclogue II):

Pan primus calamos *cera* componere plures,
Instituit: Pan curat *oves* ovumq[ue] magistros.

Pan it was who first taught man to make many reeds one with wax;
Pan cares for the sheep and the shepherds.²

The Opera Miscellany 'made many reeds one' in its musical contents: it wove together a tapestry of mostly Italian arias drawn from fashionable operas of the 1720s. The full title of *The Opera Miscellany* appears opposite the frontispiece, and it provides further insight into Pan's metaphorical flock, continuing: *Being a Pocket Collection of Songs, Chiefly Composed for the Royal Academy of Musick consisting of Select Airs in Rodelinda, Julius Caesar, and other works of Mr Handel. Airs*

The author would like to thank members of the American Handel Society for their feedback on an earlier version of this article, given as a conference paper in February 2019. She is also grateful to her anonymous readers for their time and helpful comments.

¹ *The Opera Miscellany: Being a Pocket Collection of Songs, Chiefly Composed for the Royal Academy of Musick consisting of Select Airs in Rodelinda, Julius Caesar, and other works of Mr Handel. Airs in Calphurnia & the Great Subscription Book of Mr Bononcini, Songs of Mr Attilio Ariosti, some fine English Airs of that Great Master Albinoni, and other authors* (London: J. Browne, 1725).

² Virgil, 'Alexis: Eclogue 2', *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid*, trans. H. R. Fairclough (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Classical Library, 1916), available at www.theoi.com/Text/VirgilEclogues.html, [28].



Figure 1. *The Opera Miscellany* (London: John Browne, 1725), frontispiece. Reproduced from a reprint of c1730 in the John Hay Library, Brown University, M1505.O628 1730

in Calphurnia & the Great Subscription Book of Mr Bononcini, Songs of Mr Attilio Ariosti, some fine English Aires of that Great Master Albinoni, and other authors.³ This small yet substantial book of fifty-nine leaves, measuring about 160 by 105 millimetres,⁴ contains a wide variety of music by

³ *The Opera Miscellany*. A copy is held in the British Library (GB-Lbl), Music Collections A.416 (catalogued with the date '[1725?]'). At the bottom of the title-page appears this text: 'The whole Transpos'd for the Flute / by Mr Bolton'. The John Hay Library at Brown University holds a reprint of *The Opera Miscellany*, catalogued as c1730, that is later than the one just cited (which was the copy consulted for this article); it is from that reprint that [Figure 1](#) is sourced.

⁴ David Hunter, *Opera and Song Books Published in England, 1703–1726: A Descriptive Bibliography* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1997), 417.

many different authors from across Europe. It appears that Browne compiled this musical miscellany to appeal to consumers whose tastes ranged from elite Italian arias to accessible and popular English songs.

Music by George Frideric Handel features prominently in the collection. Thirteen arias drawn from a number of Royal Academy operas appear out of their original contexts, juxtaposed with music by other composers: Giovanni Bononcini, Attilio Ariosti, Tomaso Albinoni, Richard Leveridge and other popular composers of the 1720s. Browne was not the only publisher to capitalize on Handel's popularity at the time; others, such as Richard Neale (with John Cluer and Bezaleel Creake), Peter Fraser and Arthur Bettesworth, also printed Handel's music in songbook miscellanies during the 1720s, marketing his works to audiences who could enjoy them in their drawing rooms and parlours rather than at the opera.⁵ These collections show that the composer's music was widely consumed beyond attendance at a performance of his operas. By purchasing a songbook miscellany, consumers could hear, perform and engage with Handel's music on their own terms, choosing selections fit for particular occasions, or based on their own personal tastes and opinions.⁶ Such miscellanies also allowed consumers to compare Handel's works with airs and songs by other composers. In some cases, as with *The Opera Miscellany*, arias were preserved with few changes, but in other cases his music was entirely transformed. Analysing appearances of Handel's music in songbooks offers insight into how the musical miscellany became a ubiquitous part of musical production and reception in the early eighteenth century, revealing new contexts for his music and alternative repertoires to which it belonged.

The concept of collecting disparate musical works and publishing them as a new whole grew out of a similar practice in literature. The earliest printed literary miscellanies appeared in the sixteenth century, as booksellers began to collect, compile and publish anthologies of poetry and prose, both sacred and secular in content.⁷ The method proliferated in the long eighteenth century, as printing became easier and recycling material was a quick way to produce a new publication, often without the knowledge or input of the authors themselves.⁸ The songbook miscellany was also not exclusively an eighteenth-century phenomenon, and, like the literary miscellany, its history can be traced back to the earliest years of music publishing in the sixteenth century. The seventeenth century, however, saw increased interest – especially in England – in producing anthologies designed to appeal to a broad swathe of the public and suit a wider range of performance situations. The Playford publishing house was the first to capitalize on the genre's growing popularity, and the commercial success of their many songbook anthologies continued to stimulate the public's interest in printed musical miscellanies.⁹ By the eighteenth century, music printers such as John Walsh had

⁵ On music printing and publishing in the early decades of the eighteenth century see David Hunter's articles 'The Printing of Opera and Song Books in England, 1703–1726', *Notes* 46/2 (1989), 328–351, and 'The Publishing of Opera and Song Books in England, 1703–1726', *Notes* 47/3 (1991), 647–685. These articles remain two of the definitive works on music publishing in early eighteenth-century England.

⁶ Sandra Mangsen has discussed the publication and marketing of songbooks such as *The Harpsichord Master* and *The Ladys Banquet*, which include some transformed Handel works, as well as ones by other composers, in *Songs Without Words: Keyboard Arrangements of Vocal Music in England, 1560–1760* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016), 156–188.

⁷ On sixteenth-century miscellany practice see Elizabeth W. Pomeroy, *The Elizabethan Miscellanies: Their Development and Conventions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

⁸ Barbara Benedict has written extensively on the history of the literary miscellany in the long eighteenth century, focusing in large part on how the miscellany became its own genre, mediated by both the publisher and its readership. For Benedict's work on the literary miscellany see *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); 'Choice Reading: Anthologies, Reading Practices and the Canon, 1680–1800', *The Yearbook of English Studies* 45 (2015), 35–55; 'Literary Miscellanies: The Cultural Mediation of Fragmented Feeling', *ELH* 57/2 (1990), 407–430; and 'The Paradox of the Anthology: Collecting and Difference in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *New Literary History* 34/2 (2003), 231–256.

⁹ John Playford was the first to publish songbook anthologies on a regular basis. *A Muscull Banquet* and *Musick and Mirth*, both published in 1651, were his first publications and were both songbook anthologies. Playford continued to publish

discovered the financial benefits of selling anthologies: like their literary counterparts, songbooks were easy to compile, especially through the reuse of stamped or engraved plates, and they circumvented the need to collaborate with composers.¹⁰ According to David Hunter, the first three decades of the eighteenth century saw numerous songbook miscellanies hit the market; some were more modest collections, while others, like Walsh's *A Collection of the Choicest Songs & Dialogues*, expanded (across many different printings) to more than two hundred songs.¹¹ These anthologies offered their purchasers a range of musical choices amongst their pages, fit for many different kinds of emotional and performative occasions, thereby representing the tastes and choices not just of consumers but of the publishers too. The contents of these books show that printers treated their audiences 'as informed consumers', whose selective acquisitions of songbook miscellanies would represent their personal taste in musical style, genre and lyrical content.¹²

If songbook miscellanies assessed and reflected contemporary taste, it should be no surprise that Handel's music began to appear in these publications in the 1710s and 1720s. The relevant selections offer a new way of considering the composer's impact on his audiences beyond the theatre. Although Handel obtained a royal privilege in 1720 as the sole publisher of his own music, arias and songs by him still appeared throughout miscellanies during this period.¹³ Generally, his arias appeared in publications dedicated to opera excerpts, such as *The Opera Miscellany*, *The Delightful Musical Companion* (1726) and *A Pocket Companion* in two volumes (1724–1725).¹⁴ All four books are considered pocket anthologies, in that they were published on octavo-sized paper for ease of portability.¹⁵ In these collections, publishers excerpted arias from various operas (especially, but not limited to, the Royal Academy operas), printing them alongside other opera

collections of songs throughout his career. For a brief history see Alison DeSimone, *The Power of Pastiche: Musical Miscellany and Cultural Identity in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Clemson: Clemson University Press, 2021), 103–104. See also Mary Chan, 'A Mid-Seventeenth-Century Music Meeting and Playford's Publishing', in *The Well Enchanting Skill: Music, Poetry, and Drama in the Culture of the Renaissance: Essays in Honour of F. W. Sternfeld*, ed. John Caldwell, Edward Olleson and Susan Wollenberg (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 23–44, and Ian Spink, 'Introduction', in *Choice Ayres, Songs and Dialogues, Books 1 and 2 (1673–79)*, John Playford: Music for London Entertainment, 1660–1800, twenty-one volumes, volume A5a (London: Macnutt, 1983).

¹⁰ John Walsh was especially notorious for printing music without the composer's consent or knowledge. According to David Hunter, he was 'the first to employ unauthorized publication as a standard practice'. See Hunter, 'Music Copyright in Britain to 1800', *Music & Letters* 67/3 (1986), 272.

¹¹ David Hunter and Robert D. Hume have shown decisively that songbooks – whether single-authored or miscellanies – were luxury goods in early eighteenth-century London, marketed towards the elite and professional classes. *A Pocket Companion*, for example, retailed at twelve shillings (for subscribers, however, it was a five-shilling deposit, with an additional five shillings and six pence owed upon delivery). On songbook pricing see Hunter, 'The Publishing of Opera and Song Books', 675 (Table 2). On the value of money in the early eighteenth century more generally see Robert D. Hume, 'The Value of Money in Eighteenth-Century England: Incomes, Prices, Buying Power – and Some Problems in Cultural Economics', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 77/4 (2015), 373–416.

¹² Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, 6.

¹³ On the history of copyright in eighteenth-century Britain see Hunter, 'Music Copyright in Britain to 1800' and R. J. Rabin and Steven Zohn, 'Arne, Handel, Walsh, and Music as Intellectual Property: Two Eighteenth-Century Lawsuits', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 120/1 (1995), 112–145.

¹⁴ *The Opera Miscellany* (cited above); *The Delightful Musical Companion for Gentlemen and Ladies Being a Choice Collection out of All the latest Operas Composed by Mr. Handel, Sig.^r Bononcini, Sig.^r Ariosti &c., Vol. 1.* (London: Peter Fraser, 1726); *A Pocket Companion for Gentlemen and Ladies: Being a Collection of the finest Opera Songs & Airs, In English and Italian. A Work never before attempted. Carefully Corrected & also Figur'd for y^e Organ, Harpsicord, and Spinnet, by Mr. Ri.^d Neale Organist of St. James's Garlick-hith, [volume 1]* (London: Cluer and Creaque, 1724); and *A Pocket Companion For Gentlemen and Ladies, Being a Collection of Favourite Songs, out of the most Celebrated Opera's Compos'd by Mr. Handel, Bononcini, Attilio, &c. In English and Italian To which is Added Several Choice Songs of Mr. Handel's, never before Printed Vol. II. Carefully Corrected and Figur'd for the Harpsicord. The Whole Transpos'd for the Flute in the most proper Keys* (London: Cluer and Creaque, 1725).

¹⁵ On these specific anthologies see Mark Allen Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation in the Material Culture of Domestic Musical Performance: The Pocket Opera Anthology in England, 1724–6' (Honours thesis, University of California Berkeley, 2011), available online at <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9q40v18j>.

excerpts, ballads and instrumental works, and preserving them largely unchanged from the original prints. In other publications, including anthologies of Handel's music and single-sheet publications, compositions appear disguised and modified, transformed into another piece of music entirely.

As noted, the appearance of Handel's music in songbook miscellanies allows us to reconsider how consumers would have heard and experienced it beyond the concert hall or the opera stage. The alternative formats for hearing and even performing Handel's music allow for a more complete assessment of his commercial and critical successes in the early eighteenth century.¹⁶ As Barbara Benedict has shown, anthologies illustrate the process of forming a canon in a few ways. First, reprinting an author's (or a composer's) work outside its original context offered the chance to test that person's popularity.¹⁷ Second, anthologies often copied the contents of other anthologies, making a select number of works more common: 'Anthologies also facilitate the formation of an English canon by continually stealing from each other, and thus recontextualizing literary works and introducing them to fresh audiences in fresh ways'.¹⁸ As discussed below, the four pocket miscellanies produced during this short period reflected a years-long rivalry between music printers as they used Handel's popularity to vie for larger profit margins in the publishing marketplace. By considering patterns across the songbook anthologies in which Handel's music appeared, and by analysing the context of works by other composers that surround his, this article aims to demonstrate the importance of musical miscellanies in reinforcing Handel as one of the most renowned composers in early eighteenth-century Britain.

Handel in Eighteenth-Century Miscellany Culture

Starting in the 1720s, Handel's music became a mainstay of miscellany culture in the arts, even beyond the songbook anthology. As I have written elsewhere, the musical miscellany extended beyond the printed anthology in this period, and had an effect on other aspects of musical and cultural life.¹⁹ Handel's works began appearing in variety concerts – and usually without the composer's knowledge – from the 1720s. Singers used his arias to construct narratives about their associations with the famous composer, hoping to entice larger audiences with promises of his most celebrated arias; and instrumentalists programmed *Water Music* on more than twenty concerts between 1722 and 1742 as a means of attracting audiences.²⁰ On the opera stage, Handel participated in the creation of pasticcio operas – works created by piecing together previously composed arias and providing new text to furnish a new opera.²¹ As a composer, Handel influenced miscellany culture from the theatre to the concert room to the printed page.

¹⁶ A few recent books have explored the journeys that songs took in the eighteenth century, from original composition to arrangements made to fit new performative contexts, whether in the home, in taverns or on the streets. See Mangsen, *Songs Without Words* for a consideration of the history of keyboard arrangements from the English virginalists through the virtuosic arrangements of William Babell in the early eighteenth century. For a discussion of song tunes and their adaptations in a slightly later time period see Oskar Cox Jensen, *The Ballad-Singer in Georgian and Victorian London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

¹⁷ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, 17.

¹⁸ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, 17.

¹⁹ DeSimone, *The Power of Pastiche*, 1–18.

²⁰ Alison DeSimone, 'Handel's Greatest Hits: The Composer's Music in Eighteenth-Century Benefit Concerts', *Newsletter of the American Handel Society* 31/2 (2016), 2.

²¹ On pasticcio operas in England generally see DeSimone, *The Power of Pastiche*, 55–98. On Handel's participation in the practice see Carlo Lanfossi, 'Handel as Arranger and Producer: Listening to Pasticci in Eighteenth-Century London' (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2018) and Reinhard Strohm, 'Handel's Pasticci', in *Essays on Handel and the Italian Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 164–211. Donald Burrows has written on a pasticcio event involving Handel oratorios; see his chapter 'Handel's 1738 "Oratorio": A Benefit Pasticcio', in *Georg Friedrich Händel – ein Lebensinhalt: Gedenkschrift für Bernd Baselt (1934–1993)*, ed. Klaus Hortschansky and Konstanze Musketa (Halle an der Saale: Händel-Haus and Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1995), 11–38.

Little scholarship exists on how Handel's works appeared – often unauthorized and out of context – in songbook miscellanies.²² Starting in the 1720s and lasting through the rest of the eighteenth century, music printers exploited the composer's popularity by releasing his music both within published miscellanies and in single-author anthologies. The earliest books of his music published in Britain fall into this latter category: during the 1710s and 1720s John Walsh published excerpts from many of the operas and keyboard works – sometimes without the composer's permission.²³ Perhaps the most ambitious publication of Handel's music in the eighteenth century was Walsh's five-volume set called *Apollo's Feast*, published between 1726 and 1740, which included over four hundred arias written for the operas and oratorios. Other publishers, including Cluer and Creak, released full volumes of Handel's theatrical works; but, as Hunter has shown, consumers much preferred songbooks that published favourite selections rather than the entire opera.²⁴ Miscellanies featuring not only Handel's music, but also music by other opera and song composers, illustrate the ongoing preference for operatic selections over complete works. These publications offered consumers the chance to perform and hear different genres and styles of songs – and even the rare instrumental piece – by English composers as well as those from the Continent. By carefully cultivating a selection of works from a wide variety of source material, publishers moulded public taste by providing particular, curated, sets of pieces designed to appeal to the capricious tastes of purchasers.

If songbook miscellanies both drove and reflected taste, it is worth understanding the audience to whom these books were marketed and who would have bought them.²⁵ As the subscribers' lists for *A Pocket Companion* and *The Opera Miscellany* reveal, most purchasers could be classified as members of the elite and professional classes – aristocratic titles intermingle alongside professional designations such as 'Esq^r' and 'Attorney at Law'. Yet there are also a number of honorifics (Mr, Miss, Mrs) suggesting that these volumes were popular even beyond the nobility and gentry, and that those who belonged to 'the middling sort' could afford such expensive items at least once in a while.²⁶ It is clear, from subscribers' lists as well as studies on purchasing power in the eighteenth century, that songbook miscellanies were expensive luxuries to buy, and therefore would have been available only to those who had money to spend – or who wanted to imitate their wealthier counterparts. Most songbooks sold for between twelve and fifteen shillings, in comparison with two or three pence for the least expensive printed books of the time. Investing in a songbook miscellany meant long-term payoff; rather than attending an ephemeral performance at the opera, purchasers could 'own' performances in their homes, recreating their favourite arias at their harpsichord or spinet, with friends or alone, in their drawing rooms and parlours.²⁷ It is clear from the contents of these publications that editors and printers desired to reach audiences beyond the nobility, and marketed the books accordingly.

A growing desire for operatic selections amongst British consumers stimulated the production of all four songbook miscellanies discussed here. According to Mark Rodgers, the popularity of *A Pocket Companion* volume 1 (1724), compiled by Neale and printed by Cluer and Creak, prompted

²² According to Hunter, Handel may have collaborated with Cluer and Creak on volume 2 of *A Pocket Companion* (Hunter, 'The Publishing of Opera and Song Books', 655). Mangsen has discussed some contexts in which others arranged Handel's music, both for public and private consumption. See her consideration of Handel arias arranged for ballad operas and her analyses of Handel arias arranged as instrumental music in *Songs Without Words*, 164–166 and 173–188 respectively.

²³ Donald Burrows, 'Editions', in *The Cambridge Handel Encyclopedia*, ed. Annette Landgraf and David Vickers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 205–206.

²⁴ Hunter, 'The Publishing of Opera and Song Books', 684.

²⁵ On the subscribers to *A Pocket Companion*, including an analysis of rank and class, see Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation', 18–20.

²⁶ See Desimone, *The Power of Pastiche*, 106–107, and Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation', 23–25.

²⁷ By the 1760s–1770s new harpsichords in London retailed between twenty-five and ninety-eight pounds, depending on the size (single-manual versus double-manual) and the maker. See Lance Whitehead, 'Robert Falkener: An Eighteenth-Century Harpsichord Builder, Music Publisher, and Malfeasant?', *The Galpin Society Journal* 55 (2002), 315.

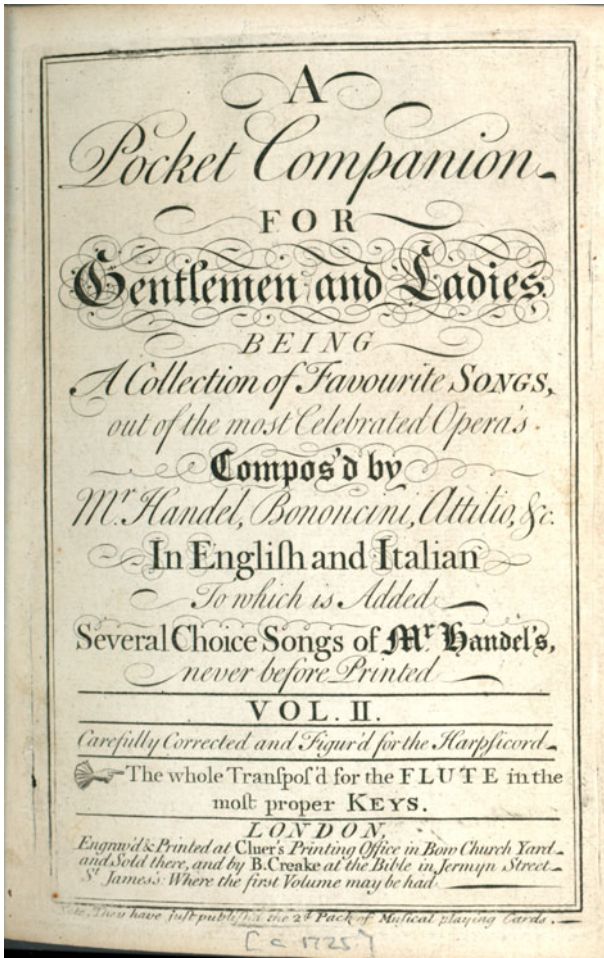


Figure 2. *A Pocket Companion for Gentlemen and Ladies, Being a Collection of Favourite Songs, out of the most Celebrated Opera's Compos'd by Mr. Handel, Bononcini, Attilio, &c. In English and Italian To which is Added Several Choice Songs of Mr. Handel's, never before Printed Vol. II. Carefully Corrected and Figur'd for the Harpsicord. The Whole Transpos'd for the Flute in the most proper Keys* (London: Cluer and Creake, 1725), title-page. Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, B6685. Courtesy of Special Collections, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

their competitors – John Browne and Peter Fraser – to issue their own pocket anthologies of mostly contemporary opera excerpts and songs.²⁸ Owing to market competition, each collection illustrates different approaches to compiling and publishing miscellaneous music, yet there are also important patterns to be found throughout these anthologies. For instance, all four examples are ‘pocket’ anthologies.²⁹ They used the word ‘collection’ in their titles and their contents are drawn mostly from Royal Academy operas by Handel, Bononcini and Ariosti.

The names of these three composers, especially Handel, appear on the miscellanies’ title-pages. For example, the second volume of *A Pocket Companion*, edited by Neale and also published by Cluer and Creake, added Handel’s name twice to the title-page in bold, florid letters (see [Figure 2](#)). Fraser’s *The Delightful Musical Companion* includes a similar title-page. Within the book itself, however, he democratically interspersed Handel’s arias and songs with those by other

²⁸ Rodgers, ‘Taste, Gender, and Nation’, 1–2. Rodgers argues that the timing of volume 1 of *A Pocket Companion* is significant, because it was released in May, just before the nobility left London for their summer houses.

²⁹ Scholars of English literature have studied the pocket companion in its various literary forms, but little work has been done on the genre from a musicological perspective. For a few representative examples see Jennie Batchelor, ‘Fashion and Frugality: Eighteenth-Century Pocket Books for Women’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 32 (2003), 1–18, and Stephen Colclough, ‘Pocket Books and Portable Writing: The Pocket Memorandum Book in Eighteenth-Century England and Wales’, *The Yearbook of English Studies* 45 (2015), 159–177.

composers, including Bononcini and Ariosti, as well as Albinoni, Leveridge and many others. Despite the marketing value that the composer's name brought to these publications, his music was not necessarily favoured over that of others within the miscellanies themselves. Publishers and printers did not obviously prioritize his music beyond including a few more of his arias and starting collections with his overtures. This suggests that out of context and within its contemporary moment his music fitted into a larger repertory of musical works by a variety of other authors that songbook purchasers would have been listening to and performing just as frequently.³⁰

Preserving Handel in Opera Miscellanies

In *The Opera Miscellany*, *The Delightful Musical Companion* and *A Pocket Companion* volumes 1 and 2, Handel's music remains largely unchanged in text, melody, harmony and form. Across all four pocket anthologies, nearly all of the arias retain their original Italian text; only a handful include English translations.³¹ Peter Fraser, publisher of *The Delightful Musical Companion*, explained his desire to maintain the Italian text because of the difficulty of adjusting the English language to Italian-style melodies.³² While the arias appear in keyboard reduction, even their accompaniments remain fairly faithful to the original version by including not only the continuo line but also the most important orchestral melodies that would have been played by the violins or an obbligato wind instrument. In part, this made printing easier, as publishers could refer to old plates from prior publications for a quick reprint. Sandra Mangsen has argued that publishing opera arias faithfully was also a means of preserving performances from the opera house; in lieu of recording technology, one way of remembering and reliving a favourite performance of an aria was to buy the printed music, take it home and play it.³³ Preserving Handel in these miscellanies was the main objective of the publishers and editors, who wished to produce many printed artefacts relating to his popular London operas.³⁴ In light of this common goal, it is worth examining the contents of these songbook miscellanies to see what they reveal about how Handel's music appears, which works were printed (and reprinted) and how these publications might have been used by their consumers (see Table 1).

Across all four songbook miscellanies, publishers drew Handel arias from ten Italian operas and one English-language work. As was usually the case, most of the arias come from Royal Academy operas; curiously, volume 2 of *A Pocket Companion* printed two older arias, one each from *Amadigi di Gaula* (1715) and *Il pastor fido* (1712),³⁵ while *The Opera Miscellany* published one English-language air, 'Where shall I find ye lovely fair?' from *Acis and Galatea* (1718). *Teseo* (1713) appears to be the most frequently reprinted opera from the period before the Royal Academy; *A Pocket Companion* volumes 1 and 2 print six of its arias, a striking number for a work that Handel never revived during his lifetime.³⁶ Seven other Handel operas appear across at least two miscellanies, if not three. Best represented is *Giulio Cesare* (1724), with nineteen arias across three books, with the exception of volume 1 of *A Pocket Companion*. This particular anthology appeared in print on 2 May 1724, just over two months after *Giulio Cesare's* premiere;

³⁰ *A Pocket Companion*, *The Delightful Musical Companion* and *The Opera Miscellany* competed with one another in cornering the market in the 1720s. According to David Hunter, the two volumes of *A Pocket Companion* were the most successful, selling 992 copies (volume 1) and 945 copies (volume 2), while Peter Fraser's *Delightful Musical Companion* sold only 250 copies. See Hunter, 'The Publishing of Opera and Song Books', 660.

³¹ For example, *The Opera Miscellany* includes five Italian arias with English translations. These translations usually appear above or below the original Italian text. Publishers may have opted to include them when there was enough room on the page.

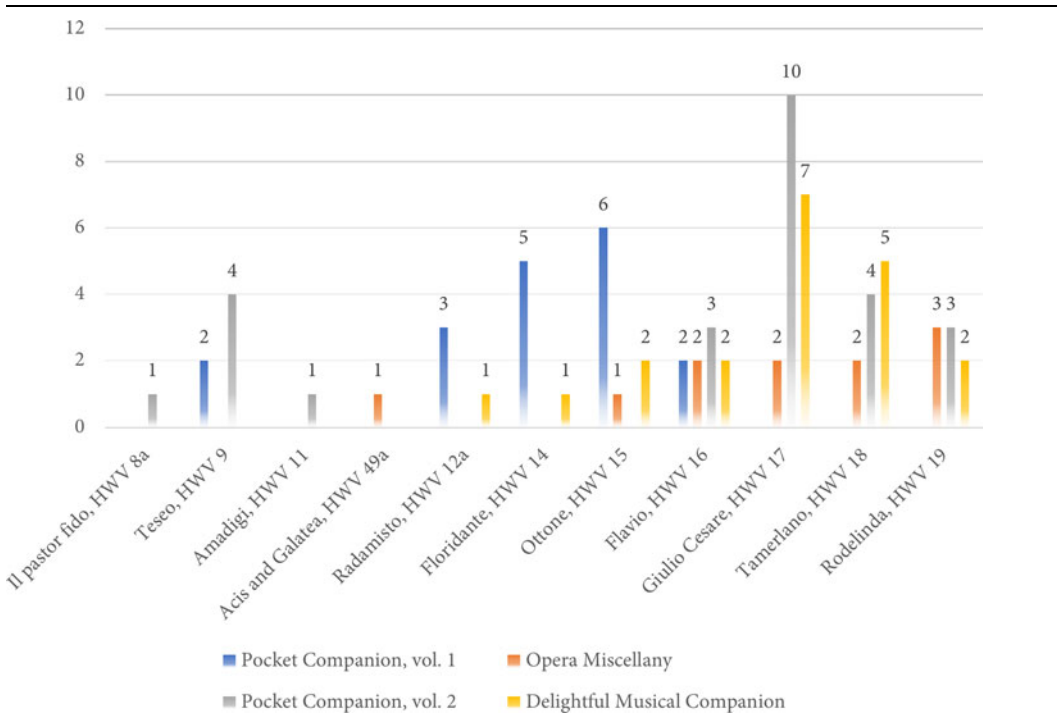
³² For a thorough discussion of Fraser's preface as well as the social implications of using Italian in these books see Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation', 4–5, 26–39.

³³ Mangsen discusses this idea through her first chapter in *Songs Without Words*, 12–58.

³⁴ Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation', 3.

³⁵ Those are 'Non sa temere questo mio petto' from *Amadigi* and 'Se condaste al fine o stelle' from *Il pastor fido*.

³⁶ Annette Landgraf, 'Teseo', in *The Cambridge Handel Encyclopedia*, 638.

Table 1. Handel operas represented in four songbook miscellanies, 1724–1726

aria selections from the opera were likely being made ready for printing.³⁷ In the second volume of *A Pocket Companion*, Cluer and Creake include no fewer than ten arias from the opera. *Tamerlano* (1724) and *Rodelinda* (1725) also do not appear in the first volume of *A Pocket Companion*, but are well represented – along with *Ottone* (1723) – across the songbook miscellanies with a total of nine arias. *Floridante* (1721) and *Radamisto* (1720) appear the least frequently, with only six and four arias respectively having been printed.

It should be noted that these arias were often (although not always) printed with the names of the original singers featured prominently at the top of the page. This was standard practice for theatrical songs and opera arias in early eighteenth-century Britain and suggests that purchasers were not only buying the aria, but also the performance associated with the specific singer. In all four songbooks, the publishers included arias by Handel that had been written for fifteen different singers.³⁸ Of these, Francesca Cuzzoni's arias are best represented, with a staggering twenty-nine arias across all four books. Cuzzoni was a popular soprano for the Royal Academy who sang leading roles in all of the institution's operas starting with *Ottone* in 1723. While her fame may have contributed to the high number of her arias in these miscellanies, the particular selections also derive from the most popular contemporary operas of the time. Arias for current Royal Academy singers, such as Senesino, Margherita Durastanti, Francesco Borosini and Giuseppe Boschi, appear more commonly

³⁷ Cluer and Creake's advertisement for *A Pocket Companion* included a postscript announcing that selections from *Giulio Cesare* would 'speedily be published'; *The Daily Post* (12 June 1724), advertisement, unpaginated.

³⁸ The singers are, in order by number of arias represented across the four opera miscellanies: Francesca Cuzzoni (twenty-nine arias), Senesino (eleven arias), Margherita Durastanti (five arias), Maddalena Salvai (four arias), Margherita de l'Épine (four arias), Giuseppe Boschi (four arias), Francesco Borosini (four arias), Anastasia Robinson (four arias), Gaetano Berenstadt (three arias), Valeriano Pellegrini (two arias), Ann Turner Robinson (one aria), Nicolini (one aria), Jane Barbier (one aria), Caterina Galerati (one aria) and Giuseppe Bigonzi (one aria).

than those for other singers, but besides these publishers also reprinted arias for singers who had long since retired from the operatic stage (such as Margherita de l'Épine) or had even left London (including Nicolini and Caterina Galerati). The current popularity of singers may have been a factor in selecting arias for publication; however, it was not an exclusive factor in driving publication decisions.

As Benedict has argued, literary miscellanies 'prompt the formation of a canon: a demonstration of refined choice'.³⁹ The operas reflected in the four songbook miscellanies show what publishers believed their purchasers wanted. Understandably, the best represented operas are those that were very new. As all four anthologies were published between 1724 and 1726, it is no wonder that operas like *Ottone*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda* appear frequently throughout. *Flavio* is the only opera to appear across all four, suggesting that at least the 'favourite songs' from the opera retained popularity throughout the 1720s. In some ways, these miscellanies reinforce the contemporary notion of a Handelian operatic canon and may have even contributed to solidifying the place of *Giulio Cesare* and *Rodelinda* as two of his most popular operas. In other ways, however, it shows that eighteenth-century audiences heard, performed and appreciated selections from works that are less popular today.

It is also worth taking a closer look at which arias appear more than once across these publications. Surprisingly, there is little overlap in terms of content; perhaps each publisher wanted to carve his own special niche in terms of the Handelian material that his book reprinted, thereby creating more of a chance that consumers would buy the book. Across all four publications, eleven arias appear more than once, representing six operas (see Table 2). Arias from *Flavio*, *Floridante*, *Ottone*, *Tamerlano* and *Giulio Cesare* appear twice, including ones that are still well known today, such as 'V'adoro pupille' (*Giulio Cesare*), 'Falsa immagine' (*Ottone*), 'Se risolvi abbandonarmi' (*Floridante*) and 'Quanto dolci quanto care' (*Flavio*). None of these arias is particularly difficult or inaccessibly virtuosic; 'V'adoro pupille', 'Falsa immagine' and 'Quanto dolci quanto care' are all slow, lyrical arias composed for Cuzzoni.⁴⁰ 'Se risolvi abbandonarmi' from *Floridante* requires a faster tempo but is mostly syllabic, with short musical phrases and plenty of room for breathing. While challenging in their own ways, these arias would have been singable in a domestic context.

Two arias, one from *Rodelinda* and one from *Tamerlano*, appear three times across these miscellanies.⁴¹ Both were originally sung by Cuzzoni, suggesting that purchasers were eager to memorialize the popular soprano's best performances by buying her arias in songbook form.⁴² 'Mio caro bene' is *Rodelinda*'s last aria in her eponymous opera, sung triumphantly after she has been reunited with her husband and all is resolved. It is a charming aria, with its unpredictable vocal line, plenty of florid coloratura and playful interaction between the violin accompaniment and the voice – all of which must have contributed to its popularity amongst these publishers as well as consumers. 'Non è più tempo', from *Tamerlano*, is sung by Asteria in Act 2 after she angrily confronts Andronico for what she sees as a betrayal of their love. In a spirited aria, she sings of being resigned to marrying *Tamerlano* despite still loving Andronico. This da capo aria is concise and pointed, featuring only one melismatic passage, albeit a difficult one. In all three of its appearances in miscellanies, it is described as 'sung by Signora Cuzzoni in *Tamerlano*' and includes a number of features that make a domestic performance possible, including an English text ('No more complain'),

³⁹ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, 4.

⁴⁰ On Francesca Cuzzoni's vocal profile and her reception in eighteenth-century Britain see Suzanne Aspden, *The Rival Sirens: Performance and Identity on Handel's Operatic Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) and C. Steven LaRue, *Handel and His Singers: The Creation of the Royal Academy Operas, 1720–1728* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995).

⁴¹ Both 'Mio caro bene' from *Rodelinda* and 'Non è più tempo' from *Tamerlano* were first published in *The Opera Miscellany*, then in *A Pocket Companion* volume 2, and finally in *The Delightful Musical Companion*. Neither was included in the first volume of *A Pocket Companion* because the anthology was published prior to the premieres of both operas.

⁴² Mangsen discusses this idea of performance memorialization in her second chapter of *Songs Without Words*, 59–92.

Table 2. Handel arias reprinted across four songbook miscellanies, 1724–1726

No il tuo sdegno (Tamerlano)	2
Se risolvi abbandonata (Floridante)	2
Quanto dolci quanto care (Flavio)	2
Falsa immagine (Ottone)	2
Dovè sei amato bene (Rodelinda)	2
Scacciata dal suo nido (Rodelinda)	2
Non è sì vago e bello (Giulio Cesare)	2
Venere bella per un istante (Giulio Cesare)	2
Se potessi un dì placare (Tamerlano)	2
V'adoro pupille (Giulio Cesare)	2
Non è più tempo (Tamerlano)	3
Mio caro bene (Rodelinda)	3

as well as a flute arrangement of the vocal line printed at the end.⁴³ However, the score of the aria also includes an additional staff for the first-violin part, and four orchestral staves appear at the end of the A section providing the final ritornello (this particular aria has no opening ritornello; it begins with the first vocal statement). This kind of print attempted to preserve the original performance as much as possible, offering audiences the chance to perform the music at home with only minimal accompaniment (or on an entirely different instrument), while at the same time allowing them to remember the singer's performance at the opera house.⁴⁴

A closer examination of *The Opera Miscellany* provides the opportunity to understand how Handel's music was recontextualized outside of the theatre (see the [Appendix](#) for this volume's table of contents). Browne placed the overture to *Rodelinda* at the top of the publication, maintaining its full orchestral scoring of oboes/violin 1, oboes/violin 2, tenor (viola) and basso, eschewing a keyboard arrangement that might have been more useful in a smaller pocket volume. A comparison with Walsh's collection of Handel overtures shows that Browne preserved all notational details save for basso-continuo figures and tempo markings, which would not have fitted on the page in his octavo format. This suggests, once again, that songbook miscellanies were used not only for recreating performances at home, but also for remembering earlier performances.

Italian arias dominate the songbook, but while Handel is well represented with the thirteen arias from five Royal Academy operas (and *Acis and Galatea*), his music is almost equally matched by arias by Giovanni Bononcini, who has eight arias from operas and cantatas included in the publication. After the overture at the beginning of the anthology (pages 1–8), Handel's music does not appear again until page 24, with 'No, no, il tuo sdegno mi placò' from *Tamerlano*.⁴⁵ Across the rest

⁴³ All four songbook miscellanies provide English words to some, although not all, of the arias; they either add to or replace the original text depending on the song. This transformation of Handel's original arias would have made domestic performance of these pieces more appealing, and easier for those who were not native Italian speakers, although Mark Rodgers's research shows that Peter Fraser meant for *The Delightful Musical Companion* to be a didactic book for learning the Italian language. See Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation', 2–4.

⁴⁴ Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*, 85.

⁴⁵ Browne's print includes the heading 'Sung by Borosini in *Tamerlano*', thus advertising the singer as eighteenth-century prints often did.

of the pages, his music is interspersed with other works by Bononcini, Ariosti (four arias), Albinoni (five arias, all in English translation),⁴⁶ Leveridge (one air), Giuseppe Maria Orlandini (one aria), Francesco Geminiani (one minuet, with added English text), John Humphries (one air) and what were probably popular English songs. Although Handel and Bononcini appear most frequently in the collection, the order of contents gives them no special preference. In fact, no pattern emerges from the arrangement of songs and arias at all; textual incipits are not in alphabetical order, keys shift and change with every new piece of music, and the English-language works intermingle with those bearing Italian texts.⁴⁷ *The Opera Miscellany* was, indeed, a true miscellany – collected and compiled, but not necessarily arranged to showcase a particular narrative about the works themselves.

The Opera Miscellany allows us to evaluate how Handel's music could have been heard and enjoyed alongside other popular music of the early eighteenth century.⁴⁸ In the songbook as a whole, his arias conflict emotionally or stylistically with those around them. Songs 24–27 offer an interesting case study into how Handel's music can be recontextualized and heard differently in this format. Song 24 (page 51) is 'When Cloe [*sic*] we ply' ('The Artifice'), an anonymous English tune from the theatre that includes the subheading 'Sung by Mrs. Reading'. This is a simple, strophic melody, with four stanzas. The song itself – like many theatre songs of the early eighteenth century – is both about the fickleness of women and about politics and contemporary life. At first, the singer remarks upon Chloe's 'enthraling' beauty, but laments that it is 'Artifice, Artifice all'. The second stanza then takes a jab at the 'Maidens', who tease the narrator by feigning offence at his advances but also lead him on by flirting. Following that, wives become the focus of the joke – they profess that they will never remarry if widowed, but 'in less yⁿ a year they make it appear it is all Artifice'. Finally, the song gets to its political punch line, remarking at the end that 'matters of State' are also 'Artifice' – that is, the world of both women and British politics is all deception.

In a stylistic non sequitur, *The Opera Miscellany* follows 'The Artifice' with two well-known Handel arias: 'Falsa imagine', written for Francesca Cuzzoni in *Ottone* (Act 1 Scene 3), and 'Dove sei amato bene' from *Rodelinda* (Act 1 Scene 6), composed for the castrato Senesino. Musically, the jaunty, simple tune of 'The Artifice' could not be more different from the Italianate melodies, complex harmonies and melismatic writing of the two Handel works. 'Falsa imagine' encapsulates Cuzzoni's abilities in singing slow, lyrical arias. 'Dove sei amato bene', a highlight of *Rodelinda*, is not flashy, yet it is difficult in its lyricism and sustained longer phrases. In some ways, these two numbers are the stylistic antithesis of English theatre music: they epitomize the Italian da capo aria style, the elite 'art music' of the early eighteenth century, while Mrs Reading's song perfectly illustrates the kind of accessible, amusing profile of popular theatre songs of the day.

Nevertheless, these pieces are not completely dissimilar; songs 24–26 view related issues through different stylistic lenses. Just as 'The Artifice' blatantly calls out the perceived hypocrisy and duplicity of flirtatious women as well as of Britain's political establishment, deception is an intrinsic motivation in 'Falsa imagine'. Teofane has been brought to Rome as the betrothed of Ottone and has only seen a portrait of him; however, Adalberto presents himself to her disguised as the German king, to the baffled Teofane's disappointment. In 'Falsa imagine', she feels that something

⁴⁶ I have confirmed that the aria 'Virgins if y^r peace you prize' (the English title given in *The Opera Miscellany*) is by Albinoni, and its text continues the theme of calm reassurance. RISM identifies this aria as Albinoni's 'Vago amabile mio viso' from his cantata *Da Parco d'un bel ciglio*, which appears in manuscript at the Berlin Staatsbibliothek (D-B Mus. Ms. 30136 (3)), as well as in a copy held in the British Library (GB-Lbl), Add. MS 38036.

⁴⁷ It also does not seem as if the songs are arranged because of practical necessity for preserving space or paper in the print. Each song begins on a new page.

⁴⁸ The songbook miscellany mimics, in printed form, a similar mixture of songs and styles that an audience member would have enjoyed in the concert halls. On variety concerts in early eighteenth-century London see Desimone, *The Power of Pastiche*, 19–54.

is wrong, and complains that the picture has deceived her. ‘Dove sei amato bene’ also presents a conflict for Bertarido, who is aware that a great injustice has taken place. An accompanied recitative precedes the lament, in which he narrates reading the inscription on his own funerary urn. First confronted with the usurper Grimoaldo’s public deception that Bertarido, the rightful king, is dead, he will come to find out that his beloved wife, Rodelinda, has been deceived as well. Whether intentionally or simply through the random act of compiling and printing *The Opera Miscellany*, the songbook offered its purchasers a means of exploring related difficult situations – and similar emotional states – through different genres and styles of music. ‘The Artifice’ pokes fun at the realities of life, of which deception is simply a part. ‘Falsa immagine’ and ‘Dove sei amato bene’ allow for a catharsis through performance, embodying the grave emotional consequences of dishonest intrigues.

Songbook miscellanies provided an opportunity for purchasers to bring home a cornucopia of styles, genres and topics, allowing consumers to curate their own specific selection of works for any occasion. In doing so, they helped, as Benedict notes, to ‘publicize and proliferate critical values and thus facilitate the constant reformation of a cultural consensus on . . . merit’.⁴⁹ Handel’s arias and overtures, detached from their original contexts, became individual musical pieces in their own right.

Altering Handel: Arias and their Transformations

While some musical miscellanies relied on preserving Handel and the music of other composers nearly note for note from the original prints, in other contexts his music appeared largely transformed and often disguised. Miscellany publishers of the 1730s and 1740s often reused pieces without any reference to the original context of the work. Over time these selected works accrued musical changes, transpositions and new texts as the music metamorphosed into new forms for public consumption. What began as a dance or an Italian da capo aria from a Royal Academy opera became an entirely new song, with the melody itself often providing the only link to its origin as a Handel composition.⁵⁰

As mentioned earlier, the overture to *Rodelinda* featured prominently as the first composition in *The Opera Miscellany*. It was clearly a popular tune outside its original operatic context, given that it also circulated in an alternative form as a solo publication in the early eighteenth century. The overture begins in the typical French style, in slow duple metre, followed by an imitative triple-metre section performed at a contrasting tempo. As with many of Handel’s opera and oratorio overtures, an ensuing minuet precedes the first scene. This minuet thrived outside of its original context in *Rodelinda*; it was included in *The Ladys Banquet* and other miscellany publications of the 1730s. In this print, the minuet appears almost as a new composition, although the title gives away the source material: ‘A Song made to a favourite Minuet in Rodelinda’.⁵¹ However, it is no longer an instrumental excerpt from an opera overture; it is now a song in four stanzas and is transposed to F major to sit in a more comfortable vocal range. New lyrics written to fit the melody are a typical pastoral love text, imploring the shepherd Strephon not to ‘let the Ungrateful tho Lovely deceitfull thy reason controul’. The B section probably functioned as a refrain, hitting home the warning that ‘As bright as her face is, She’s made for Embraces with Creatures Below’. What was once a simple and charming orchestral introduction to an opera became, instead, a complex song. The new text distances the melody from the opera: rather than referring to the characters or the plot of the opera

⁴⁹ Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader*, 7.

⁵⁰ In some respects this is similar to the ways in which songs from Italian operas were arranged for ballad-opera performances. On ballad opera see Berta Joncus, ‘Ballad Opera: Commercial Song in Enlightenment Garb’, in *The Oxford Handbook of the British Musical*, ed. Robert Gordon and Olaf Jubin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 31–63.

⁵¹ This song may have appeared in Eliza Haywood’s *The Capricious Lovers* of 1727 before it was printed in *The Ladys Banquet*.

in which it originally appeared, the text is now a warning concerning the tricks and deceits of lovely women. Gone, too, is the full orchestral scoring; instead, this song circulated as most songs did – with an unfigured keyboard accompaniment, along with an arrangement of the vocal part for the flute. The melody, in this miscellaneous context, became a new piece of music altogether; it was still marketed with Handel’s name, but the song is hardly recognizable as his composition.

Other instrumental works from the operas received similar treatment and became even more disguised than the *Rodelinda* minuet.⁵² A song entitled ‘A Bacchanal’ appeared in the first half of the eighteenth century, probably initially as a single print rather than in a miscellany.⁵³ Handel’s name is acknowledged, but discreetly; it is printed in small letters in the upper right-hand corner. Despite having not one, but two separate vocal lines, each with a different text, the melodic profile betrays its instrumental origins. It is a difficult work for an untrained vocalist; the melody is largely disjunct, with vocal leaps of up to a seventh, and phrases hardly leave room for the singer to take a breath (see [Example 1](#)).

‘A Bacchanal’ is from another instrumental movement in an opera overture, this time the gavotte from *Ottone*. In the opera, the dance is in cut common time and in B flat major, with a tessitura sitting mostly above c2, which would have been too high for most amateur vocalists performing this song at home. In the arrangement, the publisher transposed the piece to G major, and it is in common time. While the gavotte in *Ottone* would have been performed by the full orchestra, the anonymous arranger of ‘A Bacchanal’ splits up the distinctive melody between the two vocal lines. The second voice opens by singing the entire A section of the gavotte once through. Unlike in its overture context, there is no repeat of the A section; instead, the first voice chimes in with the continuation of the music in bar 8 of the gavotte. While the first voice takes over the oboe/violin 1 melody, the second voice claims the violin 2/viola arpeggiated figures of the overture in bars 10–12 and again in bars 24–26. The song continues in this fashion, with the voices condensing the original instrumental accompaniment at various moments in order to provide contrapuntal contrast to whichever voice holds the melody. No hint is given regarding where this tune came from; while Handel’s name appears on the publication, nothing about the text – an ode to drinking, as suggested by the new title itself – offers any reference to *Ottone*. The arranger simply adapted a well-known tune for a completely new context. Handel’s music here is transformed from Italian art music fit for the King’s Theatre to a popular tune with a local text typical of songbook miscellanies.

While the overture movements could be thoroughly disguised as new songs, this also happened with Handel’s vocal music. A number of his arias circulated as contrafacta, with new texts given to previously texted works.⁵⁴ For example, the solo part of the opening chorus to *Acis and Galatea*, ‘For us the zephyr blows’, can be found as in print renamed as ‘The Dream’ ([Example 2](#)).⁵⁵ Gone are the surrounding chorus and instrumental accompaniment, with the exception of the basso-continuo line. Instead, the original is stripped bare and given a new pastoral text that relates

⁵² I have also found transformations into song of the Musette from *Alcina*’s overture, as well as part of *Floridante*’s overture, which became ‘Oh my treasure, crown my pleasure’.

⁵³ ‘A Bacchanal’ was printed in *The Essex Harmony*, volume 1 (a miscellany of glees for multiple voices) by John Arnold, but it circulated as a single print earlier in the century. See ‘A Bacchanal’, *The Essex Harmony: Being a Choice Collection of the Most Celebrated Songs and Catches Now in Vogue: Several Never Before Published: For One, Two, Three, Four, and Five Voices*, ed. John Arnold, third edition, two volumes, volume 1 (London: A. Rivington and J. Marshall, 1786), 122–124.

⁵⁴ Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson have considered this briefly in the context of John Walsh junior’s *The Monthly Mask* periodical, which appeared between 1717 and 1723 and again between 1737 and 1738. See Baldwin and Wilson, “‘Reviv’d by the Publisher of the Former Masks’: The Firm of John Walsh and the *Monthly Mask*, 1717–27 and 1737–8”, *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 42 (2009), 1–44; see especially 7–8 for a table concerning Handel’s music published in this periodical.

⁵⁵ This song can be found in *The Musical Miscellany; Being a Collection of Choice Songs, and Lyrick Poems: With the Bases to each Tune, and Transpos’d for the Flute. By the most Eminent Masters*, six volumes, volume 5 (London: John Watts, 1731), 104–105.

[Voice 1]

[Voice 2] Bac-chus, God of Mor-tal Plea-sure, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver, e-ver,

[Bass]

4

Ring and

e-ver, e-ver, e-ver give me thy dear Treas-ure, how I long for t'o - ther Quart

9

call the Drow-sey Wai-ter ring, ring, ring, ring, hi-ther

hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther, hi-ther

Example 1. George Frideric Handel, 'A Bacchanal' ([London,] 1740?). British Library, G. 306, volume 1, 307

the erotic story of a shepherd dreaming about his love, Phillis. The melody itself is split into two parts: the A section follows the opening solo line of 'For us the zephyr blows' without any musical changes; however, the B section (bars 4–8) preserves the character of the solo chorus but does not correspond directly to any of the original source material from *Acis and Galatea*. 'The Dream' presents a transformation of Handel's music; given new text, and with only partial melodic reference to the original, 'The Dream' becomes a new song in its own independent right. The composer's name offered a useful marketing strategy, but he took no role in revising his composition into an erotically charged text and tune.

Another contrafactum that appeared in songbook miscellanies and accrued its own life beyond its original context in one of Handel's works is 'The Address to Silvia, Set by Mr. Handel'. Published by John Walsh junior during the brief revival of *The Monthly Mask* periodical in 1737–1738, the song bears no indication of its origins other than Handel's name at the top of the plate. In fact,

13

since it is no la-ter, why should Good Com-pan-ions part. Whip a
 since it is no la-ter, why should Good Com - pan - ions part. He that's wil-ling
 Shil-ling, fol-low, fol-low, fol-low, fol-low, fol-low, fol-low, fol-low fol-low this Ex - am - ple
 Here, here, here, here, fol-low this Ex - am - ple

18

22

round. If you'd wear a Lib'-ral Spi - rit Drink, drink, drink,
 round. Put a-bout, a - bout, a-bout, a-bout, a-bout, a -

26

drink, Put a - bout the Gen'rous Cla-ret af - ter Death no Drin-king found.
 bout, a-bout, a-bout, a - bout the Gen'rous Cla-ret, af - ter Death no Drink-ing found.

Example 1. *continued*

the melody is adapted from 'Lascia la spina', a new setting of an old text. Tracing this song's lineage illustrates the palimpsest-like layers of how Handel's music was transformed from production to production and print to print. The text 'Lascia la spina' first appeared in Handel's Roman oratorio *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno*, composed in 1707. Just four years later, he revised the music and words as Almirena's 'Lascia ch'io pianga' in *Rinaldo*. When Handel reworked the old Roman oratorio for London in 1737 as *Il trionfo del tempo e della verità*, he retained the text 'Lascia la spina'

[Voice] Be-neath a stur- dy Wil - low, Hard by a pur - ling stream, A Mos - sy Bank my
 [Bass]

3
 Pil - low, I fan - cy'd in a Dream. That I the charm - ing Phil - lis Did ea - ger - ly en -
 [Bass]

6
 brace; Her Breast as white as Lil - lies, And Ros - a - mond - a - s' Face.
 [Bass]

What ecstasies of Pleasure,
 She gave to tell's in vain,
 When with the hidden Treasure,
 She blest her am'rous Swain;
 Cou'd nought our Joys discover,
 And I my Dream believe,
 I so cou'd Sleep for ever,
 And Still be so deceiv'd.

But, when I wak'd, deluded,
 And found all but a Dream,
 I fain wou'd have eluded,
 The melancholy Theme.
 Ye Gods! there's no enduring,
 So exquisite a Pain;
 The Wound is past all curing
 That cupid gave the Swain.

Example 2. George Frideric Handel, 'The Dream' ([London,] 1735?). British Library, G. 306, volume 1, 286

but composed an entirely new musical setting. This 1737 musical setting received an unrelated, English-language text in Walsh's *The Monthly Mask*, turning 'Lascia la spina' into 'The Address to Silvia'.⁵⁶ The instrumental introduction incorporates small changes to pitch and some added

⁵⁶ In yet one more step, the text itself was printed without the music two times: first in *The Hive: A Collection of the most Celebrated Songs in Three Volumes*, third edition, three volumes, volume 2 (London: J. Walthoe, 1727), 228. The text appeared again in *The Lark, Containing a Collection of Above Four Hundred and Seventy Celebrated English and Scotch Songs None of which are contain'd in the other Collections of the same Size, call'd 'The Syren', and 'The Nightengale'* (London: John Osborn 1740), 155. These connections offer an opportunity for further research into how texts of songs circulated even beyond musical prints.

notes, presumably to make the keyboard accompaniment livelier, but nothing that obscures Handel's version.⁵⁷ The vocal line follows the composer's own melody, but Walsh makes his version much more accessible to the amateur performer by breaking up melismas or making them shorter. As with 'The Dream', Handel's Italianate art music changed from a difficult da capo aria into a more accessible melody that could be easily played and sung at home.

While there are too many examples of such transformations to discuss here, they open up new modes of understanding Handel's music within a broader context of musical creation, performance and reception. The overtures to *Rodelinda* and *Ottone* could have been heard more frequently as tunes played on a harpsichord and sung by young ladies in their parlours than they were heard at the theatre. Similarly, 'The Dream' and 'The Address to Silvia' may have been performed more often than the original numbers on which they were modelled. The revival of *Il trionfo del tempo* in 1737 received only four performances that season – hardly enough to make popular a single aria buried within the third act. *Acis and Galatea* received some performances in revivals across the 1730s and early 1740s; it may have been a game for those familiar with the work to guess which number was being referred to musically in 'The Dream'. What these transformations show is that in the context of songbook miscellanies, publishers modified and moulded Handel's music to fit a new aesthetic. All four of these pieces appeared first as Italianate compositions, whether opera, masque or oratorio; when they were published in songbook miscellanies, their new texts reflected the stories and poetic preferences of English song traditions. Similarly, the music itself was adjusted to fit domestic performance considerations, such as simplifying accompaniments and making the vocal melodies more accessible for amateur performers. Overall, songbook miscellanies transformed Handel's Italian art music into something more English, offering purchasers an alternative catalogue of songs that would suit more popular tastes.

Rehearing Handel Through the Miscellany

Although not the first of their kind, the four opera miscellanies discussed here were part of a trend in music publishing that lasted through the eighteenth century. Handel's music continued to be excised from its original context in operas and oratorios, reprinted and bound with music by other composers. Enterprising publishers came to realize the benefit of publishing miscellanies consisting entirely of Handel, however, rather than printing a selection of arias in miscellanies: perhaps the most notable example is Walsh's *Apollo's Feast*.⁵⁸ These volumes contained 'a Well-chosen Collection of the Favourite & Most Celebrated Songs out of the latest Operas Compos'd by Mr. Handel'. Walsh's venture was practical; the publisher could reuse plates from prior volumes of favourite songs from Handel operas, making *Apollo's Feast* relatively cheap and easy to print.⁵⁹ The table of contents for each volume illustrates a wealth of the composer's music, unchanged from its original sources. The collection jumbles together da capo arias, organized in alphabetical order and offering the name of the opera in which the aria originally appeared. As in the earlier songbook miscellanies, Walsh's print includes the singer's name at the top of the page, and usually offers a basso-continuo part as well as a reduced obbligato instrumental part; one can easily imagine that in a domestic performance, the player took the continuo with the left hand, played the instrumental line with the right hand and sang the aria.

⁵⁷ For example, in the original score Handel writes a descending scale for the violins in bar 2 and another in bar 3; in Walsh's print, those scales become neighbour-note passages. Walsh adds additional notes to the cadence in bar 4.

⁵⁸ Walsh and Walsh junior released volumes of oratorio arias as well under this series. See Frank Kidson, 'Handel's Publisher, John Walsh, His Successors, and Contemporaries', *The Musical Quarterly* 6/3 (1920), 448.

⁵⁹ On the reuse of plates as practical necessity, and the subsequent legal issues stemming from the practice, see John Small, 'The Development of Music Copyright', in *The Music Trade in Georgian England*, ed. Michael Kassler (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 256–293; see especially 290 for a brief mention of *Apollo's Feast*.

A comparison of Walsh's *Apollo's Feast* with the four other miscellanies discussed in this article – or even with those arias and instrumental works that were transformed in other contexts – suggests tantalizing differences in the ways in which audiences would have heard and experienced Handel's music through publications marketed for use at home. While *Apollo's Feast* offered consumers only Handel, purchasers of *The Opera Miscellany* or *A Pocket Companion* had broader choice; if Handel's music didn't suit a particular occasion, a surfeit of other arias and songs might satisfy instead. Let us imagine an eighteenth-century purchaser of a songbook miscellany. Her wealthy parents have spent twelve shillings on *The Opera Miscellany*; they attend the Royal Academy of Music opera productions as frequently as possible, and have joined in the applause for Handel, Bononcini and Ariosti. In bringing home *The Opera Miscellany*, they expect their musically inclined daughter to try playing many of its selections on their spinet. They also expect, however, that their daughter will use the volume to remember her favourite performances given by Cuzzoni and Senesino at the King's Theatre. Perhaps their daughter might prefer *Calphurnia* to *Rodelinda*, and her parents will hear strains of Bononcini throughout the house more frequently than they will Handel. Maybe their daughter's Italian-language skills need improvement, and she is too embarrassed to sing beyond her native language.⁶⁰ In that case, the English-texted Albinoni arias and Leveridge's popular theatre songs will allow her a respite from struggling through the thorny Italian poetry. Or perhaps one day the daughter sympathizes the most with Bertarido; she sings 'Dove sei amato bene' alone at her keyboard, imagining a long-lost lover. Yet the next day, her spirits are lifted, and to reflect that she performs 'Scacciata dal suo nido'. While fanciful and speculative, such an imaginary scenario demonstrates that a songbook miscellany had many potential performative uses.⁶¹ In this context, Handel's music is no longer strictly speaking his own – the arias are selections with which the songbook owner can do as she pleases. The consumer had agency to experience Handel's music on their own terms.

Within miscellanies Handel's music lived alongside that of a multitude of other composers, both English and foreign-born. These songbooks recontextualized Handel within a broader sonic narrative of music in early eighteenth-century Britain. Although his name was used as a selling point, publishers treated his music similarly to that of other composers; besides opening each collection, his arias are dispersed throughout the books, nestled next to names that at the time could have carried as much weight as his own. These opera miscellanies offer evidence of a repertory of music that could be performed and enjoyed in the home, illustrating the allure of diversity, rather than the homogeneity or exclusivity that Handel's music would come to enjoy in later centuries.⁶² Such publications also preserve some sense of which works by Handel – whether the operas at large, or their constituent arias – publishers deemed to be the most marketable and desired by their purchasers. It is likely that audiences experienced arias and overtures far more frequently through purchased books of music that were enjoyed at home than at the opera house, at which performances of any one work took place only on certain nights at certain times of the year. On these grounds alone, songbook miscellanies deserve closer scholarly attention as sources that inform how Handel's music fitted into a wider sonic world in early eighteenth-century Britain.

⁶⁰ Rodgers, 'Taste, Gender, and Nation', 4.

⁶¹ On the uses of music books in a domestic setting see Ellen T. Harris, *George Frideric Handel: A Life with Friends* (New York: Norton, 2014), 115–150. For a similar kind of imaginative description see Julia Hamilton, '"African" Songs and Women's Abolitionism in the Home, 1787–1807', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 50 (2021), 153–168. Mangsen describes a similar use for later miscellanies in her discussion of Walsh prints from the early eighteenth century; see Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*, 59–92, especially 85–91.

⁶² On the transformation of audiences appreciating miscellany to expressing a preference for homogeneity see William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Alison DeSimone is Associate Professor of Musicology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory. She has published widely on music in eighteenth-century Britain, including her monograph *The Power of Pastiche: Musical Miscellany and Cultural Identity in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Clemson: Clemson University Press, 2021); an edited essay collection, with Matthew Gardner, on *Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); and articles in the *Journal of Musicological Research*, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, *Händel-Jahrbuch* and *Early Modern Women*. She is working on a second monograph on British women and the business of music in the eighteenth century.

APPENDIX

Contents of The Opera Miscellany (1725)

Title	Composer
Overture to <i>Rodelinda</i>	George Frideric Handel
S'ho lasso il piè (<i>Darius</i>)	Giovanni Bononcini
È forza l'amore	An eminent master
Lungi da te ben mio (from <i>Ecco Dorinda il giorno</i>)	Bononcini
Gently touch the warb'ling lyre	Francesco Geminiani
T'amo tanto a mio tesoro (<i>Artaserse</i>)	Attilio Ariosti
I'm tormented when I see Zephyrs	Tomaso Albinoni
Appear all ye Gods on ye plain	John Humphries
Ah what forebodes ys prodigie	Albinoni
No il tuo sdegno (<i>Tamerlano</i>)	Handel
Virgins if your peace you prize	Albinoni
Non è più tempo (<i>Tamerlano</i>)	Handel
Of my own heart I shou'd be jealous	Albinoni
Ah! How happy were ye days	Albinoni
Non credo instabile (<i>Flavio</i>)	Handel
Ritorna o caro dolce mio (<i>Rodelinda</i>)	Handel
Figurati estinti (<i>Arsaces</i>)	[Giuseppe Maria Orlandini]
Conforza ascosa (<i>Vespaisiano</i>)	Ariosti
The Play of Love	Richard Leveridge
Dal mio brando (<i>Giulio Cesare</i>)	Handel
Di quel bel (<i>Flavio</i>)	Handel
Serba fede e serba amor (<i>Calphurnia</i>)	Bononcini
Mio caro bene (<i>Rodelinda</i>)	Handel
The Artifice	unknown
Falsa immagine (<i>Ottone</i>)	Handel
Dove sei amato bene (<i>Rodelinda</i>)	Handel
A proof of love	unknown
Ye little loves	[John Weldon]
Nel mirarvi sì spietati (<i>Artaserse</i>)	Ariosti
Navicella che lungi (from <i>Ecco Dorinda il giorno</i>)	Bononcini
Where shall I find ye lovely fair? (<i>Acis and Galatea</i>)	Handel
Se ti piace di farmi (from <i>Da te che pasci ogn'ora</i>)	Bononcini
Son qual face (<i>Griselda</i>)	Bononcini
Misera che fato (<i>Calphurnia</i>)	Bononcini
Teco s'annodi (<i>Coriolano</i>)	Ariosti
No ah dio che mai farò (<i>Calphurnia</i>)	Bononcini
Wine's a Mistress, gay and easy	Leveridge
Scacciata dal suo nido (<i>Rodelinda</i>)	Handel
The Coquet and the Prude	unknown
A favorit [<i>sic</i>] Mason Song, with its Chorus	unknown
Non è sì vago e bello (<i>Giulio Cesare</i>)	Handel