

G. F.
SALOMON*

Concerto
con Timpani
(*“Battaglia”*)

SCORE

Edited for period style

(**nom de plume*, David Avshalomov)

Edited version © 2005 Raven Music

ABOUT THE SALOMON *CONCERTO CON TIMPANI* (“*BATTAGLIA*”)

(Notes by composer David Avshalomov)

This concerto is written in early 18th-century *concertato* style (ca. 1720), derived largely from the procedures in the concerti of Vivaldi (especially those for odd instruments), with some echoes of Handel, Telemann, G.B. Sammartini and others here and there. It is intended to fill a severe gap in the known solo repertoire for timpani, and should prove suitable and enjoyable for both recital and concert use. (Duration: ca. 13 minutes.)

A *Battaglia* originally was a type of organ toccata common in the 17th century, purporting to represent in stylized, antique manner the formal fanfares, intradas, battle signals, sorties, etc., of medieval warfare. The timpani, of course, entered Europe as Turkish military instruments played on horseback before battle, but this piece has no underlying “program.” Here the sub-title simply refers to the quasi-military sonority of certain passages, such as the Intrada and the octave tattoos in Movement I, the showy drumming near the end of Movements I and III. And there is an affect of “mourning” in the slow middle movement.

PRECEDENTS

In this period, Bach wrote a short melodic solo to open the Christmas Cantata *Tönet, ihr Pauken* (“sound, ye kettledrums”), and Handel an extended rhythmic solo illustrating text about the kettledrums in his *Ode for St. Cecilia’s Day*. Molter and Graupner, contemporaries of Bach, both wrote *sinfonias* with parts for 5, 6, even 7 drums, mostly doubling bass lines. Philidor, military musician to Louis XIV, wrote a fanfare-like duet for two pairs of timpani, tuned G-c and e-g. Even Mozart wrote 4-drum parts in some incidental serenades with flutes and trumpets. And there is his popular *Serenata Notturna* for 2 timpani with double string quartet and bass, which makes an **excellent companion piece** for this concerto in concert. In the late eighteenth century, a number of lesser composers wrote pieces featuring as many as 8 timpani played by a single soloist. Examples include a symphony by the German J.C.C. Fischer, and a *Partita* and a *Concerto Grosso* by the Bohemian Georg Druschetzky.

HOW THIS WORK CAME TO BE WRITTEN

In my early school years I sang and studied piano, theory and percussion. My first performance in an orchestra was playing third glockenspiel in Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, a percussion feast. What fun! Soon I discovered the glory of the kettledrums and set out to master them. I was hooked. When I began to compose my own music (as a self-taught teen), I started with choral settings, but I also conceived the ambition to write a convincing concerto for timpani.

At Harvard, in my spare hours I played timpani in many ensembles, sang in the chapel choir, and read madrigals with friends. I entered the school orchestra’s concerto competition and soloed with them in the Milhaud percussion concerto under James Yannatos. I wrote my honors thesis on the melodic use of kettledrums and, to underscore its point, composed a piece featuring them to play in my senior recital: the brief *Diversion* (1966) for timpani and violin. Master percussion teacher George Gaber soon put it in front of students at Indiana U., and it has had many performances in the US as a recital piece. I also wrote several works for pitched percussion quartet, including an *Allegro* which took a first prize at the Aspen Festival in 1972.

There ensued many years of conducting and composing of works in my own personal style, for various instruments and voices in a range of forms. Fast forward: In 1990, after running my own Baroque chamber orchestra for a decade, I realized I could now improvise fluently in that style. I decided to create a quasi-Vivaldi-style concerto for timpani and strings—as a warm-up etude before writing my “modern” one. The three-movement *Concerto con Timpani* (“*Battaglia*,” 1992, under the pen name of Salomon) was the result. It was great fun to write, and is even more fun to play. I have learned that several young drummers have recently taken a run at the career of solo timpanist (which I once dreamed of), recording newly-unearthed 18-century *galant/concertante* works mentioned above. This first concerto is for them and their peers; one of them Jon Haas, premiered it in England. I will write others.

MATERIALS

This version of the concerto has been thoroughly edited and re-notated to reflect a centrist approach to its interpretation based on generally-accepted practices from the Baroque revival waves of the late 20th century, including notes on “over-dotting.” (There is also an “*Urtext*” version giving only the composer’s notes and markings, in modern notation, with very few editorial annotations, chiefly of ornaments.)

Performance materials (rental or purchase) are available through:

Raven Music, 2402 4th St. No. 5, Santa Monica, CA
davshalomov@earthlink.net 310.392.2641

PERFORMANCE

This edited version can be done with accompaniment of a big modern string orchestra. However, the string players must fundamentally modify their accustomed sound picture. This can be done easily, even with modern steel strings and Tourte-style bows. General suggestions for the strings are provided in the notes which follow. (One advantage to using a string group of around 20 players rather than 40 is that the soloist is forced to play more delicately for good balance, which immediately clarifies all the phrasing.)

The **timpani soloist** should ideally use small old-style copper-bowl hand-tuned drums (tuning chains are OK) with hard felt or even wooden-head sticks and bounced (rudimental) rolls. But with a larger ensemble, modern drums, sticks, and rolls may be preferred. The soloist should use 6 drums (or 7, for movement tuning changes). Never use fewer than 6 and never try to pedal between played pitches—this goes against the character of the piece and of the instrument of that time (and weakens the fine visual effect). Just use the pedals to tune between movements, and perhaps to fine-tune pitches during a movement; never let the audience hear any pedal slides. Maintain the illusion of the historic hand-tuned drum.

The **harpsichordist** should use a period replica with at least two 8-foot ranks, tuned to a period well-temperament. Players with little or no experience in realizing orchestral continuo parts should play the written-out realization provided with this edited version. (An unrealized part with just the bass line, figures, and a blank treble staff is also available for those with experience.) Lacking a harpsichord or virginals, try (1) lute plus theorbo (two players), or (2) classical (acoustic) guitar (or even two, possibly one a 12-string for the bass line), or (3) harp (played near the sounding board). They would use the “*Urtext*” continuo part and work out their own realization, using the harpsichord one as a basis.

In a true pinch, you might use a high-end electronic keyboard (MIDI sample or synth) if it provides a really good sampled harpsichord sound, amplifying it tastefully to normal room volume through good, small home/audiophile loudspeakers concealed near the player’s feet. You need to understand the voicing/detuning of unison doublings and octave couplings to get a believable sound; set the global tuning temperament to a Baroque one.

NOTE: *This work is not to be played with piano accompaniment. Ever.* (That is why there is no piano reduction available, nor can the harpsichord continuo realization even remotely function as such.) For recital *only*, where the soloist cannot field a string ensemble of at least 4/4/4/2/1, you might consider using two high-end MIDI sample or synth keyboards, one providing harpsichord, and the other the string orchestra parts—the second perhaps played by two players, four-hands. This requires good string ensemble patches (no cheesy GM “synth strings”). (An organ reduction of the score is also a possibility.)

Setup without conductor (see diagrams) should put the drums front and center, with first desk strings to right and left. Better for the timpanist to sit. (Violins and violas may stand.) This positioning also makes the soloist more likely to play sensitively, listening for phrasing and balance. With a conductor, best to set up the drums next to the podium, stage left, facing ~30° to stage right. (Setting up at the back will make the soloist hard to see and tempt him/her to play too loud, to cut through. Resist this.)

FIRST STEPS TO BAROQUE STRING ENSEMBLE STYLE

For Players of Modern String Instruments

You do not need to be baroque specialists to play the *Concerto con Timpani*. There are a few simple first steps that modern-trained string players can take to make their performances of Baroque repertoire more authentic and appropriately expressive. The key is to change the fundamental sound picture—to jettison the 19th-century Wagnerian sound and shape the notes, articulations, and phrases. Here are some hints for orchestras just starting out.

1. **DON'T VIBRATE**, especially on short tones and legato phrases. This means that you must play better in tune at all times. (Vibrato then was used sparingly, and only as a subtle ornament to gradually make a long tone more expressive in its middle.)
2. **USE OPEN STRINGS** as a matter of course and ease, including on long tones. Avoid crabbed shifts done just to avoid the open string in passage-work. Instead, use it, enjoy its purity. Just ease off with the bow, show the string respect (especially the violin's wire *chanterelle*). Use the clear, pure sound of a gently-bowed open string as your model for the sound of fingered long notes, too.
3. **SHAPE LONG TONES**. The hairpin swell-and-die marks (< >) on single notes in the edited version are *bow swells*, done with pressure/speed, not vibrato. Let long up-bows and down-bows do their work naturally, too. Simply *draw* the bow—don't try to compensate as you approach the tip in slow music; let the sound weaken naturally. Learn to let a note live—and die.
4. **START HEARING BAROQUE TUNING**: Tune chords carefully in slow tempo, particularly at cadences. Make your intonation flexible and responsive to the harmonic moment. In a major chord, the major third will be a good bit lower than we are used to from the "equal" temperament of the modern piano. Conversely, the untempered fifths (in a pure 2:3 ratio) are a bit wider than modern tempered fifths. Example: B on the A string as the major 3rd of a G major chord must be lower than modern equal temperament, but as the 5th of an E major chord it must be *higher* than equal temperament. An in-tune chord will "ring." Use flexible intonation that puts, say, a D# accidental closer to D, while an Eb is closer to E. Finally, don't try to tune every note to the (fixed) harpsichord (yet don't be truly "out of tune" with it either). There is much more to this; it comes with experience. Ask an expert. Listen to recordings.
5. **RHYTHM IS THE KEY**: Strong beat/weak beat; stressed note/weakened note. **PHRASE ALSO BY WEAKENING NOTES**, not just by building and accenting. Longer editorial hairpins indicate subtle phrase shapes, not fat swells or big sustained buildups. When phrases do build in volume (typically editorially marked *cresc.*), they do it from strong beat to strong beat, not continuously through all the notes in the phrase. And vice-versa for dying phrases.
6. **ARTICULATIONS MATTER**: An editorial *dash* over a note means either full value (on quarters and slow-tempo eighths) or non-staccato, OR stress without a hard accent. A thin vertical *wedge* (point down) over a note means either a short note with quick short bow (in *piano*), or (in *forte*, as a dramatic accent), very quick full bow with moderate pressure (almost chopped, but usually starting on the string). A dash with a dot is *half-staccato*; separated but not short.
7. **TRILLS** normally start on the upper note, stressed slightly as an on-the-beat *appoggiatura* before the trill speeds up. In slow and moderate tempo, long trills stop on the principal note to let it sing briefly before going on. Most of these, plus exceptions, are written out in the edited version. Generally, string sections must all follow the editorial or leader suggestion together; don't shape a trill several different ways all at once.
8. **WORK FOR CLARITY**, purity, grace, and elegance. Bow naturally. Muscle, super-"expressive" tone, and hammering are not often relevant in *ripieno* (section) playing. Concentrate on *drawing* the bow more than on pressing it down. (If you are brave, all try choking up on your bows—grip it a few inches further from the frog, so it is more balanced and the tip weighs down less—and notice how that affects your bow strokes and tone.)
9. For fingerings, **STAY IN LOW POSITIONS** as much as possible (where logical).

CONCERTO

"Battaglia" (con timpani)

G. F. Salomon

Intrada

I

Adagio ♩ = 60 - 72

Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Vcl/Bass
Timpani
hard mallets (wood)

(Hairpins < > on long notes indicate expression bow-swells (speed/pressure, not vibrato). Top is at most one dynamic level higher than the start. Just shape the note.)

(Double-dotted notation approximates Baroque "over-dotting" in slow tempos (French Overture style). Extend the dotted note so the short note falls between a 16th sextuplet and a 32nd note.)

(Vlns., successive slow dotted rhythms: for Baroque style, lift and retake after each downbow. Otherwise, for safety, hook. Long notes slightly detached, more so on weak beats 2 and 4.)

(etc.) (exception)

(Trill speeds up imperceptibly after first appoggiatura.)

Allegro (♩ = 96 - 114)

12 *stacc.*

stacc. *p* *f*

stacc. *p* *f*

stacc. *p* *f*

timp. *p* *f*

16 *stacc.*

stacc.

stacc.

stacc.

stacc.

20

24

ff *f*

ff *f*

f *f*

tasto solo *f*

ff *f*

28

timp. *p f p p*

32 (hairpins mean subtle shaping)

p dim. pp
dim. pp
vcl. concertino p dim. pp tutti vcl.
(bass tacet) (harpichord tacet) dim. pp
p p (etc.) dim. pp

36

p f
p f
p + Bass f
p f

40

f f
f f

44

44

f

f

f

f

vcl. + B.

timp. *f*

(B.)

48

48

sostenuto

sostenuto

(viola poco marcato)

sostenuto

sostenuto

p

(sim.)

(sim.)

(sim.)

(sim.)

p

p

p

52

52

pp cresc. (poco marcato)

pp cresc. (poco marcato)

pp cresc.

pp cresc.

f

f

f

f

56

56

(f)

(f)

(f)

(f)

tasto solo

(f)

(f)

(f)

60

timp.

64

vcl. concertino

section vcl. + B.

ff

6
4

68

f

7
4

72

imp. *f*

76

mp cresc. mf f

(6) (7)

80

mf cresc. f ff f

Ritenuato subito

84 *Adagio* ♩ = 60-72 *come prima* (see notes, p. 1)

come prima

88 *come prima* (see note, p. 1) *colla parte*

cresc. *cresc.* *cresc.* *cresc.*

timp. 3 *cresc.* 3

(not too slowly; bravura!)

2 7 9 2 6 9 2 6 6 2 6 6 7 6 4 3

II

Largo, sostenuto

(See note in Mvt. 1 re: overdotting and bowings)

(*mf* ∇ ∇) (bowing shown is for hook)

Violino 1 (*mf*)

Violino 2 (*mf*) (See note in Mvt. 1 re: bow swells)

Viola (*mf*) (tasto solo)

Vcl./Bass (*mf*)

Timpani (*mf*)

(soft sticks—felt or leather head) *p*

etc.

etc.

etc.

etc.

(tasto solo)

mp

mp

mp

mp

11

p

poco crescendo etc.

mf dim.

mp

p

poco crescendo etc.

mf dim.

mp

p

poco crescendo

etc. dim.

mf

poco crescendo etc.

mf 6 5 dim. 6 6 # 4#

16

(come prima)

etc.

p

p

mp

p

etc.

etc.

mp

p

etc.

etc.

mp

6 4 # 6 4 # 4 - 3 #6 4 6 4 # 7

21

26

(come prima)

p (come prima) *poco cresc.* *mf* *dim.*

p (come prima) *poco cresc.* *mf* *dim.*

(tasto solo) *p* (come prima) *poco cresc.* *mf* *dim.*

p *poco cresc.* *mf* *dim.*

31

(come prima)

mp *p* (come prima)

mp *p* (come prima)

mp *p* (come prima)

mp *p* (come prima)

p

36

dim. *pp*

dim. *pp*

dim. *pp*

dim. *pp*

dim. *pp*

dim. *pp*

41

p *pp*

pp *p*

4-3 etc. 4-3 6 7-6

46

staccatissimo *p* *dim.* *pp* (come prima)

staccatissimo *p* *dim.* *pp* (come prima)

staccatissimo *p* *dim.* *pp* (come prima)

p *dim.* *pp*

6 7 6 # 4

51

poco cresc. *mp* *Riten.* *molto mf* *dim.* *A tempo* *Rit.* *pp* *A tempo*

poco cresc. *mp* *molto mf* *dim.* *pp*

poco cresc. *mp* *molto mf* *dim.* *pp*

poco cresc. *mp* *molto mf* *dim.* *pp* *A tempo*

6 6 5 6 #4 7 #4 7-6 6 7

56

sim. *A tempo* *p* *pp* *come prima*

sim. *A tempo* *p* *pp* *come prima*

sim. *A tempo* *p* *pp* *come prima*

sim. *A tempo* *p* *pp* *come prima*

A tempo *p* *pp*

6 4 7 5 2 6

61

(tasto solo)

66 *colla parte*

p *pp* *pp* *pp*

71

cresc. *etc.* *dim.* *pp* *mp cresc.* *f* *a Tempo*

mp cresc. *mf cresc.* *f* *f*

vcl. conc. *mp* *cresc.* *mf* *f*

vcl. section *mp* *(bass)* *cresc.* *mf* *f*

Poco Riten. A Tempo

76

mp *pp sub.* *f* *p* *come prima*

mp *pp sub.* *f* *p* *come prima*

mp *pp sub.* *f* *p* *come prima*

(vcl. conc.)

mp *pp sub.* *f* *p* *come prima*

Vcl. section, bass

mp *pp sub.* *f* *p* *come prima*

(tasto solo) *come prima*

6-6 4- 5 7 # 6 4 4- (#) 5

81

(solo violin or harpsichord fill)

(trill speed up gradually, stops on last D eighth note)

sf *p* *pp*

sf *p* *pp*

sf *p* *pp*

sf *p* *pp*

(violin example:)

sf *p* *freely*

(harpsichord example:)

freely

p *6* *4* *pp #*

42

Bass

Vcl. *mp*

mf *etc.*

46

etc.

51

Vcl. + Bass *sost.*

56

61 *colla parte* *A Tempo*

p (*tasto solo*)

p

66

vcl. conc.

p

72 (*off the string*)

p

(tutti Vcl. + Bassi)

p

p etc.

77

p

82

mf *mf* *mf* *mf*

(tasto solo) Bass Vcl.

p *f* *p* *f*

87

p *f* *p* *f* *p*

mf *mf* *mf* *mf*

sim. *sim.* *sim.*

92

f *f* *p* *f* *f* *f*

detaché, on string *detaché, on string*

f *sempre f* *sempre f* *(tasto solo)*

6 6 6 6 6 6 (B.) 5

97

etc. *etc.* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

come prima *come prima* *come prima* *come prima*

f *f* *f* *f*

6 6 4- 3

123

B.
Vcl. *mf*

p

128

Vcl. + Bass *sost.*

cresc.

cresc.

133

f *detaché, on string* *etc.*

f *(tasto solo)* *etc.*

f *etc.*

138

Musical score for measures 138-142. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the bass parts and a more active melody in the treble parts. The dynamics are consistent throughout this section.

143

Musical score for measures 143-147. This section shows a dynamic crescendo. The dynamics are marked as *mp*, *mf*, *f*, and *mp cresc.*. The bass part features a triplet of eighth notes in measure 147. The treble part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 146.

148

Musical score for measures 148-153. This section features a dynamic fortissimo (*ff*) and includes a *Poco Riten.** instruction. The bass part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 148 and a sixteenth-note triplet in measure 153. The treble part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 150.

154

Musical score for measures 154-158. This section is marked *Poco Riten.* (No ritard, no fermata)*. The dynamics are *p* and *pp*. The bass part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 154 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 158. The treble part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 156.

DAVID AVSHALOMOV

Works for, or featuring Percussion

Diversion violin and 5 pedal timpani [5]

Allegro pitched percussion quartet (Glock. Vibr., Mar. Timp.) [5]

First Prize, Aspen Festival Competition

Chiaroscuro pitched percussion quartet [5]

Drum Role from Lifeboat Variations, all non-pitched percussion instruments, 5-8 players. [2] (Finalist, Korg contest)

Concerto con Timpani (baroque style) 6 (or 7) drums with strings and harpsichord [12] (*nom de guerre*, "G. F. Salomon")

Glockenspiel March novelty for marching or concert band featuring the glockenspiel or bell lyra section [3]

Transcriptions: short keyboard works by Bach, Schumann, Bartok, Schoenberg, Ravel, for pitched and mixed percussion ensembles, 2-10 players. (List on request.)

ALSO: Bach, Sinfonia to Cantata No. 129, transcribed for solo marimba and band [3]

Works for/with String orchestra

Elegy string orchestra [9]

Pangs of Love string orchestra [32]

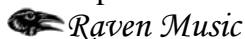
(Romantic variations on a Rachmaninoff Love Theme)

Diamond Variations on an original theme,
string orchestra with (opt.) harp [12]

Trotsky's Train, string orchestra and concertante piano [32]

Arietta flute and strings (opt. 2nd flute) [2]

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