PLAYING TRIBUTE, IN EDITORIAL PREFACES, to the power of anniversaries to stimulate new research into previously neglected subjects and historical figures is in danger of becoming a cliché; but it is unavoidable in the case of Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760-1812), whose two successive anniversaries have provided a major impetus for the present project, the first multi-author, multi-lingual book of its kind to be dedicated to the composer. As the fourth volume of the series ‘Quaderni Clementiani’, this book also rides on the new wave of Clementi scholarship that followed the millennium, gaining further momentum from the 250th anniversary (in 2002) of Clementi’s own birth in 1752.

Any inquiry into Dussek forms a natural analogue to Clementi research: the two figures interacted and corresponded with one another, during and beyond Dussek’s decade in London (circa 1789-1799); the shape of Dussek’s

1. The 250th anniversary of Dussek’s birth took place in 2010, the bicentenary of his death falling in 2012.

2. Other events stimulated by the anniversaries include the conference Jan Ladislav Dusík (Dussek), Čáslav, 25-27 March 2010, in celebration of the 250th anniversary of Dussek’s birth. To mark the 200th anniversary of Dussek’s death, the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini, the Istituto Storico Austriaco and the Académie de France à Rome, in collaboration with the Palazzetto Bru Zane – Centre de musique romantique française of Venice and the Haute École de Musique of Geneva, have organized the international conference Central European Musicians and the Birth of French Piano Virtuosity, Rome, Istituto Storico Austriaco and Villa Medici, 11-13 October 2012.

3. The most substantial product of this has been the Urtext edition Muzio Clementi Opera Omnia, edited by Andrea Coen, Roberto Illiano, Costantino Mastroprimiano, Luca Sala and Massimiliano Sala, 60 vols., Bologna, Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2002—, and the Edizione Nazionale Italiana dell’Opera Omnia di Muzio Clementi, critical edition directed by Roberto Illiano, 15 vols., Bologna, Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2008—.

career, with its progressive diversification and inclusion of music publishing and instrument retail in the 1790s, bears a resemblance to Clementi’s, albeit with dramatically different results; Clementi’s compositions provide a natural source of comparison with Dussek’s (even if the differences are often more pronounced than the similarities), and both composers are inextricably associated with the evolution of the piano, of piano construction and piano technique. Early-to-mid-nineteenth-century phenomena such as the crystallization of the canon of Viennese Classical masterworks and continuing advances in keyboard technique and piano construction caused a posthumous decline in both Clementi’s and Dussek’s reputations, from which neither figure has ever fully recovered. One major difference between them (apart from Dussek continuing to perform in public when Clementi gave this up in mid-career, and Clementi’s interest in orchestral composition) is Dussek’s greater geographical mobility. Whereas Clementi settled in England following his arrival there at the age of fourteen, making periodic trips abroad, Dussek was on the move for much of his life; and it is the peripatetic aspect of Dussek’s career that is enshrined in the title of this book, to be traced in the chapters to follow. The diversity of Dussek’s career, geographical and otherwise, means that study of virtually any branch of his activity opens a window onto the vicissitudes of the music business at the turn of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, Dussek’s personal association with some of the major political figures of the time, including Marie Antoinette, Prince Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord and Napoleon himself, leads to insights on how and to what extent the music business was shaped by wider political events of the period. Hence, the present book is concerned with much more than simply the ‘revival’ of an ‘unjustly neglected’ figure.

Dussek’s historical significance has often been acknowledged but seldom fully demonstrated. For a long time now there has been a lurking (perhaps slightly guilty) awareness of his considerable standing within musical life of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, undercut by a reluctance to undertake a full-scale investigation of the available evidence; and any such aspirations have remained confined to a small group of scholars. For the average musician, and certainly music-lover, Dussek’s name stands on the brink of obscurity. The website that currently provides one of the main interfaces between the composer and interested parties is still able to state:

5. Dussek’s output (including 35 solo sonatas for piano; 11 for piano duet; 24 piano trios and at least 16 piano concertos) is more exclusively centred on the keyboard than Clementi’s, which included a substantial number of (albeit largely lost) orchestral works.
Neither [Dussek’s] playing style nor his compositions […] had any notable lasting impact […] While his music continued to be somewhat popular in nineteenth-century Great Britain, it is now virtually unknown6.

Similar sentiments are expressed with monotonous frequency in the programme notes, dictionary entries, radio and television programmes and CD liner notes that, for many, will provide the first and perhaps the only point of contact with the composer. Although the stirrings of a new recognition of Dussek’s significance can be traced in the increasing availability of recordings of his works in all genres7, Dussek’s place in the scholarly literature remains quite circumscribed. He most often figures in studies of pedalling, of legato playing8 and of the English fortepiano; his connection with John Broadwood (1732-1812) is recounted from time to time9. In his compositions Dussek is universally understood to have anticipated the stylistic developments of the middle and later nineteenth century. This view seems to have taken root quite far back in the nineteenth century. It has hardened into a convention, if not a mantra, in the last fifty years, through the writings of Eric Blom and others10. The image of the ‘prophetic’ Dussek is in some senses appealing. It insinuates comparisons with prestigious early Romantics like Schubert, Chopin and Weber, promising to extricate Dussek from the potentially sterile realm of keyboard pedantry or ‘soulless’ virtuosity within which Clementi has more

persistently (and detrimentally) been incarcerated; it reduces the tendency to see Dussek merely as a ‘lesser’ contemporary of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, producing compositions embodying what Charles Rosen once called the «anonymous style» or late eighteenth-century «musical vernacular» that reifies the ‘greatness’ of the triumvirate’s collective contribution11. Nonetheless, the ‘prophetic’ image and what it implies about Dussek’s outlook as a musician diverges crucially from the view prevailing at the turn of the nineteenth century, which was that, whilst certainly approaching the cutting edge of novelty and acceptable taste, Dussek’s output as both performer and composer was fairly well tailored to the demands and predilections of the period — as it had to be to ensure the commercial success on which Dussek depended12. An instructive source of comparison in this context might be the compositions of Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, Dussek’s patron from 1804–1806, whose approaches to harmony and structure were even more daringly ‘modern’ but lacked technical control13. Dussek’s own most consciously progressive works were, predictably enough, the later ones, post-dating 1800. This means that the ‘prophetic’ view focuses attention on (or values the most highly) a handful of ‘late, great’ works that represent only a small fraction of his total contribution; this in turn has a tendency to reinforce the standard perception of a ‘lesser’ composer occasionally approaching the standard of his ‘great’ contemporaries, but only in a minority of exceptional works that are ultimately unrepresentative of his output as a whole. The ‘prophetic’ image also evades the challenge of establishing the position Dussek did actually occupy in the musical circles of his time, and it circumvents the question of how contemporary conditions and social dynamics converged to shape his career and his contemporary, and posthumous, reputation.

The current book seeks to develop the growing awareness of how Dussek’s multi-facetted and geographically diverse career mirrors and generates

13. Cfr. Sumner Lott, Marie. ‘Dussek’s Chamber Music: Blurring the Boundaries Between Private and Public Musical Life’, in the present volume. She cites Prince Louis Ferdinand’s Piano Quartet, Op. 5, which exemplifies the «ostentatious flights of fancy that overwhelm the Classical forms» of the Prince’s chamber works, and Sumner Lott also suggests that Dussek may have instructed the Prince in composition.
new insights into musical, socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions in Europe leading up to and coinciding with the Napoleonic wars; it is also based on convictions of the quality and significance of all branches of his output, not just the small number of later piano sonatas with the greatest claim to established familiarity and prestige. That said, the book sustains due interest in the fascinating and challenging ‘gigantic’ post-1800 sonatas, with individual chapters on the Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op. 61 (‘Élégie harmonique’) (Jeremy Eskenazi) and Sonata in F minor, Op. 77 (‘l’Invocation’) (Erik Entwistle).

One logistical challenge posed by this project has been the scarcity and relative inaccessibility of existing studies of Dussek: many consist of unpublished doctoral or master’s dissertations. The most familiar is Howard Allen Craw’s biography, which includes a thematic catalogue14. This was followed about a decade later by Orin Grossman’s undeservedly neglected dissertation on the keyboard sonatas, whose analytical approach provides a foil to Craw’s purely factual narrative15. Craw and Grossman were preceded by Karol Krafka in 195016 and succeeded by a considerable number of other student researchers spanning the 1970s and 1990s17. In the published literature, some of the most penetrating

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commentaries on Dussek have emerged from brief sections in major historical surveys\(^\text{18}\) and various articles dealing collectively with members of the ‘London Pianoforte School’\(^\text{19}\). Analytical expositions on individual works or groups of


works remain very thin on the ground, and they reinforce the bias towards the solo sonatas. The present book offers compensation via chapters dealing with the piano concertos (Stephan D. Lindeman) and chamber music with and without the harp (Marie Summer Lott). The solo sonatas are approached either collectively or within a particular topic like fantasia (Jean-Pierre Bartoli); approaches to performance (Jeanne Roudet); remote-key relationships (Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald), or they are treated individually, as noted above.

A major stimulus for the study has been the need to fill the gaps and correct the inaccuracies in Craw’s biography. This has led to careful reviews of the evidence in the earlier biographical accounts on which Craw is based, together with the inclusion of a good deal of previously unpublished source material. Through the close analysis of hitherto unpublished correspondence, including seven letters that passed between Dussek and the publisher Gottfried Christoph Härtel (between 1800–1807), Massimiliano Sala introduces new hypotheses about the composer’s publication of his works in Europe, about the nature of his relationship with his employer of the time, Prince Louis Ferdinand, and offers a revised account of his compositional output at this stage of his career. Using information gleaned from contemporary periodicals, Sala also contributes new information on Dussek’s concert activity during his time in Hamburg following 1800. Rudolf Rasch re-examines Dussek’s earlier period in the Netherlands between 1779 and 1782, countering the traditional but uncorroborated belief, expressed by early writers like François-Joseph Fétis, that Dussek worked as an organist in Dutch centres like Mechelen and Bergen-op-Zoom. Michaela Freemanová studies the Bohemian sources on Dussek; she provides an enriched account of his visit to Bohemia in 1802, and highlights biographical riddles for which evidence has not yet been found, such as the claim that Dussek was employed in some capacity by the Drury Lane Theatre in London. A more familiar biographical episode, Dussek’s collaboration with his father-in-law Domenico Corri in the establishment

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of a music publishing and retail firm in London in the 1790s that initially thrived but soon foundered, precipitating Dussek’s absconding from England in 1799 to avoid creditors, is sometimes cited to exemplify the volatility of the music business at the turn of the nineteenth century. New information on this episode is provided by David Rowland, including possible reasons for Dussek’s apparently growing disinterest in the firm in the lead-up to its collapse. The reception of Dussek in the nineteenth century is explored by Laure Schnapper (focusing on France) and Therese Ellsworth (focusing on England): Ellsworth identifies a ‘Dussek revival’ beginning in the late 1830s and lasting until the mid-1870s, underpinning the modern sense that Dussek’s «music continued to be somewhat popular in nineteenth-century Great Britain»22. A different approach is taken by Alan Davison who explores several familiar portraits of Dussek, dating from the 1790s and early 1800s, including the one by Henri-Pierre Danloux that is reproduced on the book’s cover. Taking into account each portrait’s content, method of production and the artists who produced them, Davison probes the potential implications of each portrait for our understanding of Dussek’s place and role within the changing social conditions of this time, as perceived by both contemporary and modern observers. Consequently, Davison’s contribution can be seen as a kind of gloss on those biographical chapters predicated solely on written evidence.

A further objective has been to add impetus to the revival of Dussek’s single set of String Quartets, Op. 60. Dated by Craw to the Summer or Autumn of 180623, the quartets were rated by Dussek «above all» that he had composed up until then, and as compositions that would hopefully «make some Noise in the Musical World»24. Unavailable in any modern edition, Op. 60 began to enjoy a revival when recorded for the first time in 2008 by the Camesina Quartett25. This is being followed by Renato Ricco’s new edition26 and his chapter in the present book in which the works are considered in relation to Haydn’s contribution to the medium. Dussek composed his quartets at a time when Haydn’s were reaching unprecedented levels of prestige, leading to Pleyel’s first complete edition of them in 1801 and their subsequent, pioneering

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production in miniature-score format. The difficulty, for composers, of establishing an original voice in this genre in the wake of Haydn’s achievement quickly took root, and is indirectly expressed by Dussek’s claim, in the same letter, that his quartets «are neither in the Stile [sic] of Mozart, or Haydn, nor that of Pleyel, they are in the Stile [sic] of Dussek [...]».

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Jan Ladislav Dussek’s name appears in many different forms, some of which reflect national variations. His Christian name is given as ‘Johann’, ‘John’ and rarely as ‘Jean’; his middle name appears as ‘Ladislas’, ‘Ladislaus’, ‘Louis’, ‘Ludwig’, ‘Lewis’, ‘Ladislaw’ and ‘Ladislav’, his surname as ‘Dusseck’, ‘Duseck’, ‘Dussík’, ‘Dussick’, ‘Düssk’ and ‘Dussek’; and there are various corrupt spellings (Tusick, Tuschek, and so forth). The preferred English spelling ‘Jan Ladislav Dussek’, the form that Dussek himself eventually adopted, will be used throughout this book in the majority of cases, apart from some direct quotations. Dussek’s compositions will in general be cited using opus numbers in preference to the system of ‘Craw’ numbers introduced in Craw’s thematic catalogue from 1964; on the occasions where ‘Craw’ numbers are used, the designation will appear as ‘C’, followed by the number. Due to their publication by multiple publishers during Dussek’s lifetime, some works were assigned different opus numbers by different publishers in different places. In other cases the same opus number became associated with more than one composition: ‘Op. 70’, for instance, was used for the Piano Concerto in E-flat major (C. 238), dating from 1810, and was one of four opus numbers assigned to the Sonata in A-flat major, dating from 1807. Discrepant opus numbers are indicated by the individual authors, and subtitles will therefore be used whenever available. The Sonata in A-flat major was subtitled both ‘le Retour à Paris’ and as ‘Plus Ultra’ (Op. 71, published by Cianchettini

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29. The other opus numbers were: Opp. 64, 71 and 77, and Craw cites this sonata as «an excellent example of the confusion that exists in the opus numbering of Dussek’s works». Ibidem, p. 162.

30. The sonata was composed following Dussek’s return to Paris from Saxony in 1807 to enter into the employment of Prince Charles Maurice de Talleyand-Périgord (1754-1838). Ibidem, pp. 156–157.
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& Sperati, and Op. 77, by J. André. The nineteenth-century music critic James William Davison explained that the latter subtitle was appended to the sonata by Dussek’s London publisher to indicate that it was technically even more difficult than Joseph Wölfl’s (1773-1812) Sonata Op. 41, subtitled ‘Non Plus Ultra’. In most cases ‘Plus Ultra’ will be used although ‘le Retour à Paris’ will be retained in the chapters in French.

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