

WALDHORN AND SONG IN THE OPEN AIR, 1750-1830

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After Beethoven's *Bundeslied* for soloists, chorus, and winds, op. 122, was published in 1825 by Schott (Mainz), the well-known novelist and writer on music Ludwig Rellstab wrote a review full of enthusiasm about the wind accompaniment:

This gives the Lied an entirely different character, as if it were free, without accompaniment. We cannot help but feel ourselves carried off here, in a manner of speaking, into the open air under green trees, to a merry banquet, where to the loud, enthusiastic singing of the revelers, the gay sound of horns is heard from the nearby thicket. For such a large space, for such a numerous gathering, the Lied had to be given another style than it would have had, were it intended for the narrower confines of a room, and only for several merry friends. In this manner, the composer attempted to transform the originally pleasingly convivial Lied into a sort of hymn, and has brought it into proximity to the magnificent joy that is expressed, though perhaps with a bit too much pathos, in Schiller's famous ode [i.e., "An die Freude," set by Beethoven in the Ninth Symphony].¹

As the place for an ideal realization of this convivial Lied, Goethe's *In allen guten Stunden*, Rellstab thus envisaged a garden or a woods where the sound of the horn in particular could spread freely in the open country. The Romanticists considered the horn to be the voice of nature, whose sound was capable of enriching the beauty of a landscape by means of

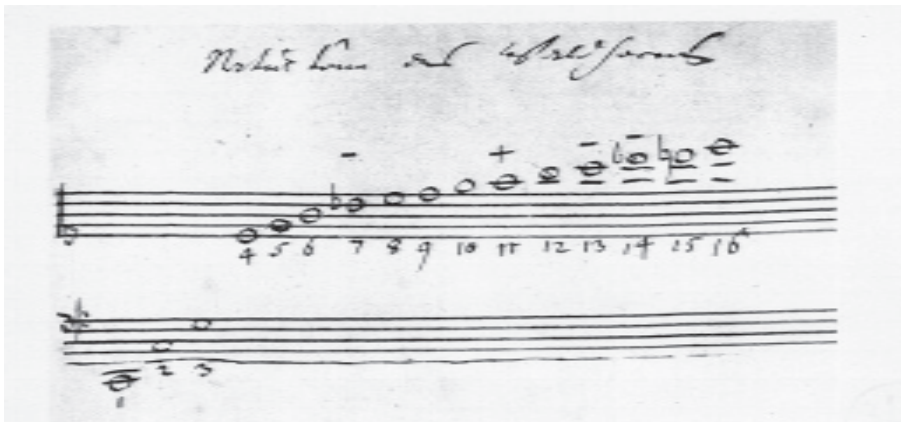


Figure 1

Natural tones of the *Waldhorn*, as sketched by Goethe for a proposed *Tonlehre*.

art. The sounds of the horn evoke visions of idylls, harmony with the universe, or joy. The importance accorded the horn between 1750 and 1830 is admirably demonstrated by a sketch made by Goethe in which the “natural tones of the Waldhorn” are precisely notated as the basis of a “theory of acoustics” (*Tonlehre*) that he intended to write (Figure 1).

The wealth of characteristics attributed to the horn can be observed above all in the works of the poet Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857). In no other poet did the horn awaken so many associations. The first verse of the poem *Frische Fahrt* may serve as an example:

Frische Fahrt**Fresh Ride**

Laue Luft kommt blau geflossen,

Mild blue air comes flowing;

Frühling, Frühling soll es sein!

Spring, it must be spring!

Waldwärts Hörnerklang geschossen,

Toward the sound of horns in the woods

Mut'ger Augen lichter Schein;

Turn the luminous shine of brave eyes.

Und das Wirren bunt und bunter

And the chaos, more and more colorful,

Wird ein magisch wilder Fluß,

Becomes a magic wild river.

In die schöne Welt hinunter

The greetings of this stream

Lockt dich dieses Stromes Gruß.²

Draw you down to the beautiful world.

Eichendorff reflects poetically on the sound of the horn in a number of semantically relevant aspects:

as *post horn*, for example, in the poem *Sehnsucht*:

Am Fenster ich einsam stand / Und hörte aus weiter Ferne / Ein Posthorn im stillen
Land. (Lonely I stood at the window and heard from far away a post horn in the
quiet countryside.)³

as *hunting horn*, for example, in *Auf dem Schwedenberge*:

Du Wald, so dunkelschaurig / Waldhorn, Du Jägerlust! (Forest, so darkly frightening,
hunting horn, hunter's delight!)⁴

as *magical horn*, for example, in *Die Stolze*:

Waldkönig zog durch die Wälder / Und stieß in's Horn vor Lust. (The King of the Forest roamed through the woods and joyfully blew his horn.)⁵

as *nature's horn*, for example, in *Terzett*:

Wenn von den Auen / Die Flöte singt, / Aus Waldesrauschen / Das Horn erklingt.
(When from the meadows the flute sings, the horn resounds out of the murmurs of the forest.)⁶

In his poems, the poet also incorporates the theme of the horn's relation to romantic yearning (for example, in *Nachhall*, in the verse “Waldhorn immer weiter ruft?”—“the hunting horn continues to sound?”⁷), or horn and night, horn and dance, horn and folk song, or horn and singing (for example, in *Die Einsame*, in the verses “Und bei dem Sange und Hörnerklänge / Wird mir immer so bange, bange”—“and with the singing and the sound of the horn, I always become so frightened”⁸). Eichendorff thus addresses the mythical, the imaginary, as well as the real. In this article we will attempt to outline the importance that the combination “horn and song” had in the period after 1750.

In 1732, Joseph Friedrich Majer wrote in one of his treatises, “The delightful, splendid horns are currently very much in fashion, as far as both church music and theater and chamber music are concerned.”⁹ Indeed, after Franz Anton Graf von Sporck became acquainted with parforce horns in France in 1680, he imported them the following year into Bohemia, where they spread quickly. They soon found employment in various functions at the courts of the nobility, but also in town bands, ensembles, and orchestras. Horns were even included in the curriculum of village schools and heard in festive church services with pastoral sacred music. To be sure, until the middle of the eighteenth century horns were present predominantly at the hunt. In many princely suites, the hunting horn players constituted an independent formation.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Swabian poet and singer Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart set his impressions of the horn to paper:

The hunting horn player makes noise, waking hunter and quarry. His style is staccato, and always hopping in uneven meter. The hornist in the church weaps, pulling the notes from the bottom of the heart, and through his breath, as it were, endows the entire instrumental accompaniment with a living spirit. In the concert and opera house, the horn player can be used for innumerable moods. He is effective in the distance as well as close up. Charm, and if one may say so, amicable intimacy, is the prevailing mood of this splendid instrument. For an echo, nothing is more capable and appropriate than the horn.¹⁰

This statement, “for an echo, nothing is more capable and appropriate than the horn,” provides the transition to our theme, the art song. This genre—which after 1800 became increasingly differentiated to adapt to the social life of the aristocracy, the middle classes, and

in the country—received its essential impulses at a time in which absolutist rule, with all its ceremony, had to relinquish its dominance. Enlightenment and sentimentalism, increasing emancipation and participation in all areas of culture resulted after 1750 in changes and breaks that also affected the horn. With the cooperation of the aristocracy, English parks were developed out of the geometrical French gardens. The desire arose to get closer to nature. Nature was thematized in poetry, reflected upon in the sciences, and depicted from the contemplative viewpoint in the arts. On summer days, musicians and listeners delighted in going out into the open air to listen to sounds and tones in the echo and sound chambers of the countryside, as an enrichment of the senses. The very popular social gatherings at Schloß Thurneck in Tyrol were an example of this. Johann Strolz, lawyer and folk-song collector, gave a poetic account of his childhood experiences around 1790:

“Öfters wurd’ auch gesungen
im Hof von Jungen und Alten,
und der Kaplan, ein Ex-Franziskaner,
der blies auf dem Waldhorn.”¹¹

Often, young and old
sang in the courtyard,
and the chaplain, an ex-Franciscan,
played on the horn.



Figure 2

C.A. Günther, *Das Nymphaeum zu Wörlitz* (1793).
Kulturstiftung Dessau/Wörlitz, Bildarchiv, Inv. Nr. IV-799.
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In this openness for that which was audible out of doors, in the forest and in designed gardens, the natural tones that could be produced on the horn were included from the very beginning. The sound of the horn was associated with the wondrous, the magical, the joyous. On boat excursions, one enjoyed this magical sound to the full (Figures 2, 3).



Figure 3
Detail of Figure 2

This found expression in poetry, for example, in a romantic heroic poem that became extraordinarily popular starting around 1780: Christoph Martin Wieland's verse epic *Oberon* was to inspire Goethe as well as Carl Maria von Weber and Johann Nepomuk Hummel (*Fantasia*, op. 116, *Oberon's Magic Horn*). Wieland repeatedly speaks of the magic of the horn's sound, which is depicted as "delightful" (*lieblich*) and, together with the "power of the horn" ("*Hornes Kraft*," 5th song, verse 366), also as magically compelling. The sound of the horn is capable of taking hold of everybody "like a whirlwind" ("*wie ein Wirbel*") and driving them into a dancing-mania.¹² Another poet of this period, Friedrich Leopold Graf zu Stolberg (1750-1819), compared the poems of a friend with the "horn's golden wealth of fragrant fruit" ("*Hornes goldener Fülle von balsamischer Frucht*").¹³ In his idyll *Luise*

(1795), Johann Heinrich Voss allows the echo of the post horn in the forest, which signals the nearness or distance of closely associated characters, to sound just as effectively as the “brave echo of the trumpets and horns” (“mutigen Hall der Trompeten und Hörner”) on the village dance floor or at a wedding with festive music:

As the organist now took refreshment with his family,
 he passed out the parts, and at once the delightful sound of strings
 flowed harmoniously to the sweet song of the
 sensuously whispering flutes and the sound of the tenderly echoing horns,
 like in blossoming May, when the evenings are cheerful and sultry.
 Late at night, on the benches at the entrance, men and women
 listen to the echoing tones of the horn, which from the lake,
 with the gurgle of the marsh and the calls of the nightingale in the moonlight,
 are wafted in from near and far, so that the beech-forest softly answers:
 The pleasant sound of the horn sounded so full of charm there, too,
 sweetly muted by two musically trained sons of the hunter.

(Als der Organist mit den Seinigen jetzo gelabet,
 Teilt' er die Stimmen umher, und mit einmal flossen harmonisch
 Liebliche Saitentöne zu wollustatmender Flöten
 Süßem Gesang' und dem Laute des sanft einhallenden Waldhorns,
 Wie im blumigen Mai, wann die Abende heiter und schwül sind,
 Spät in die Nacht auf den Bänken am Eingang Männer und Weiber
 Lauschen den Zwillingstönen des Waldhorns, welche vom See her,
 Mit dem Geräusch des Sumpfs und Nachtigallstimmen im Mondschein,
 Nah und entfernt anwehn, daß leis' antwortet der Buchwald:
 So voll Anmut klangen auch dort Wohlhlaute des Waldhorns,
 Lieblich gedämpft von zween tonkundigen Söhnen des Jägers.)¹⁴

Here, Voss evoked a naturalistic-romantic, effusive atmosphere that only a few years later would be poetically elaborated upon in many variations by Ludwig Tieck, Joseph von Eichendorff, Heinrich Heine, and Annette von Droste-Hülshoff.

The lines in Voss dealing with the pleasant sound of the horn, produced “sweetly muted” by two players, introduce us to a practice of horn and singing favored around 1800. We shall take a look at this in detail in the light of one of the then fashion-setting localities: Johann Friedrich Reichardt's garden in Giebichenstein near Halle.

A frequent guest at the famous *Gartenreich* (garden realm) in Wörlitz near Dessau was the Prussian court *Kapellmeister* Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814). Upon leaving royal service, Reichardt settled in Giebichenstein near Halle, where he established the widely known *Herberge der Romantik* (Hostel of the Romantic) with financial support from Princess Luise Henriette von Anhalt-Dessau.¹⁵ On a piece of land 5222 acres in size (known today as the *Bürgerpark* or *Reichardts Garten*), Reichardt succeeded in realizing an exemplary life combining the arts and horticulture. After his politically motivated dismissal from the position of *Kapellmeister* in Berlin, he envisioned an ideal existence in “lovely domestic

tranquility and harmony" ("schöne häusliche Ruhe und Eintracht"). To attain this goal, he planted a landscape garden, modeled on that in Wörlitz, with luxuriant vegetation and enclosed by a wall. Reichardt made a point of lending the site the feeling of unhindered growth, shunning the norms of French garden architecture as well as the frivolities of the sentimental epoch.

The dwelling-house and garden harmonized with one another. With a wing especially equipped with a heatable garden hall, the house offered the possibility of entertaining a large number of people near the garden. The large three-piece glass door of this exceptionally spacious hall (sixty-three meters square) opened onto the garden. Parties were held here; well-known artists, scholars, and politicians arranged meetings, so that this small jewel soon became the destination of many a journey. Without exception, they remarked with admiration on Reichardt's gardening skills, but also on his spectacular retirement into private, middle-class life, to which the master of the house also adapted his compositional output. He traded the representative *opera serie*, which had been his principal area of activity at court, for unpretentious songs "*am Clavier*" (to the piano) or pieces for the glass harmonica, which enjoyed great popularity as sentimental garden music. His *Lieder geselliger Freude* ("Songs of Convivial Joy"), published in 1796, were issued in three versions. In this way, he attempted to underscore their adaptability to numerous forms of performance. The variant "with instrumental music" provided for two violins and violoncello, or for two horns, to accompany the voice part. The latter version obviously aimed at music-making in the open air, which long since belonged to the special features of life in his garden. Visitors reported: "Reichardt had his coachman and his servant instructed in horn playing ... Often, when on beautiful, mild, and tranquil summer evenings the old, melancholy, lyrical German songs sounded in the quiet garden, accompanied by a horn, the impression was enchanting." A "foliated concert hall" was Jean Paul's apt description of the garden hall, through whose open folding doors this acoustical signal of the sonic world of romanticized nature flowed.

This was thus the unique atmosphere in which the numerous "Jägerhornstücke" (hunting horn pieces), as Reichardt called them, could be heard. These were pieces that made a very deep impression on Goethe and Eichendorff, the latter still a student at the time. Through his familiarity with certain folk songs, Reichardt developed the genre of the "Hornstück" (horn piece). He wrote in 1782: "There are folk songs that clearly show evidence of the instrument on which they were first devised, or if they were used earlier for dances or hunting pieces and the like."¹⁶ An example of this is the song *Es lobmet mich heute*, with a text by Goethe (Example 1).¹⁷

Another song was published by Reichardt in 1805 in his collection *Le Troubadour italien, français et allemand*; entitled "Der wilde Jäger" ("The Wild Hunter"); text by Achim von Arnim, it too is optionally "also to be played on two horns" (Example 2).¹⁸ A morning song entitled "Die Nacht" ("The Night"), with the indication "also for three horns," from Reichardt's quill was offered in the *Blumenkranz dem Jahre 1803 geflochten. Eine Liedersammlung* ("Flower Garland braided for the Year 1803. A Song Collection"), published in Berlin by Ludwig Rellstab, the writer quoted at the beginning of this article.

Der Jäger
(auch auf zwei Waldhörnern zu blasen)

Lebhaft

Es loh - net mich heu - te mit dop - pel - ter - Beu - te, ein gu - tes Ge - schick. Der

7
red - li - che Die - ner bringt Ha - sen und Hüh - ner be - la - den zu - rück. Hier find' ich ge -

14
fan - gen auch Vö - gel noch han - gen; es le - be der Jä - ger, es le - be sein Glück!

Example 1

Reichardt, *Es lohnet mich heute* (text by Goethe).

Around 1797, Reichardt published *Hundert leichte Übungsstücke für zwei Waldhörner* (“One hundred easy exercises for two horns”) in Leipzig. Intended to be played at social gatherings in the open air, they found a ready market at that time. Reichardt’s family celebrated all its parties to the sound of the horn. For his birthday on 25 November 1809, Reichardt appropriately wore green hunter’s dress.¹⁹

Compositions such as the *Lied aus Götz von Berlichingen* (Georg’s song: “Es fing ein Knab’ ein Vögelein”) by F.L. Seidel, which appeared in 1805 in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*,²⁰ or Schubert’s op. 119, *Auf dem Strom*, and his *Nachtgesang im Walde* (1827) for male quartet and four horns are to be considered in this historical context. The anonymous essay “Über Komposition für’s Waldhorn” (“On Composing for the Waldhorn”), published in 1805 in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, can be of assistance for the interpretation of these pieces.²¹

It is to be hoped that these examples of songs for voice and piano, which were composed in such a manner that they could optionally be played in the open air by two or three horns, call attention to a practice currently neglected, yet one that was an essential part of the tonal aura of the early Romantic period and of the English Garden on the British Isles and on the continent. Just as around 1800 the horn played a dominant musical role in the

Der wilde Jäger.

(Auch auf zwei Waldhörnern zu blasen.)

(Poesie von A. L. von Arnim.)

Nicht zu lebhaft, mit zunehmender Stärke.

Zur letzten Strophe.

Singstimme.

Was jagt mich so matt und mü-de, ich such dich in mei-nem Lie-de In wei-chen

Pianoforte.

Ar-men in stil-lem Kufs, zu lang mir Ar-men fehlt der Ge-nufs.

Im Jagen
Ich dich nur suchte
Zu fragen,
Die dunkle Buche.

Die Frage
Im Widerhülle
Wird Klage,
Dafs Laub schon falle.

In weichen Armen
Im stillen Kufs,

Das Windspiel
Mit deinem Bände
Vergilst Spiel
Und spürt im Sande.

Es legt sich
Mit seinem Munde
Es hört dich,
Verliert die Kunde.

Zu lang mir Armen
Fehlt der Genufs.

Und weint dann
Wie Kinder weinen,
Und gräbt dann
Mit seinen Beinen.

Begräbt sich!
O komme wieder,
Begrab mich
Und meine Lieder.

Example 2

Reichardt, *Der wilde Jäger* (text by Achim von Arnim).

dances of all social classes and intensified the festive splendor at balls, this instrument also occupied a semantically much more important role in the area of intimate house and garden music than has been perceived until now in historical performance practice. Research into music-making in the garden, both in the Orient and the Occident, is still in its infancy. Studies about the role of music-making in medieval gardens of love (*Liebesgärten*), or in the Baroque parks or English gardens of the Classical and Romantic periods do not exist. This article is intended to provide a stimulus for future interdisciplinary research, covering literature, music, and the graphic arts, into this field of investigation.

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NOTES

¹ *Berliner Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 3 (1826): 34. "Dies giebt dem Liede durchaus einen andern Charakter, als wenn es frei, ohne Begleitung genommen wäre. Wir können nicht umhin, uns hier gewissermaßen in freier Luft unter grünenden Bäumen, an ein fröhliches Gastmahl versetzt zu finden, wo zu dem lauten begeisterten Gesange der Trinker muntre Hörnerklang aus dem nahen Gebüsch ertönt. Für so großen Raum, für eine so zahlreiche Versammlung mußte das Lied einen andern Styl erhalten, als es für die engere Beschränkung auf ein Zimmer und nur für einige heitere Freunde berechnet, haben durfte. Der Komponist hat das ursprünglich erfreulich gesellige Lied auf diese Art in den Charakter des Hymnus zu erheben gesucht, und es jener großartigen Freude genähert, die sich in Schillers berühmter Ode, vielleicht dort aber mit ein wenig zu viel Pathos, ausdrückt."

² Joseph von Eichendorff, *Werke*, vol. 1: *Gedichte, Versepen*, ed. Hartwig Schultz (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987), p. 119.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 249-50.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁹ "Die lieblich-pompeusen Waldhörner sind bey jetziger Zeit sehr en vogue kommen / so wohl als Kirchen= als Theatral- und Cammer-Music anlanget ..." Joseph Friedrich Majer, *Neu-eröffneter Theoretisch- und Practischer Music-Saal* (Schwäbisch Hall, 1732), p. 41.

¹⁰ "Der Jagdhornist lärmt und weckt Jäger und Wild auf. Sein Styl ist abgestoßen, und immer im ungleichen Tacte hüpfend. Der Hornist im Tempel weint, zieht die Noten aus voller Seele, und beseelt durch seinen Hauch gleichsam die ganze Instrumentenbegleitung. Im Concert- und Opersaale ist der Waldhornist zu unzähligen Ausdrücken zu gebrauchen. Er wirkt in der Ferne, wie in der Nähe. Lieblichkeit, und wenn man so sagen darf, freundschaftliche Traulichkeit, ist der Grundton dieses herrlichen Instruments. Zum Echo ist nichts fähiger und geschickter als das Horn." Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (Vienna, 1806). Written in 1784.

¹¹ Anton Dörrer, "Johann Strolz (1780-1835)," *Jahrbuch des Österreichischen Volksliedwerkes* 6 (1957): 24.

¹² Christoph Martin Wieland, *Oberon, ein romantisches Heldengedicht in zwölf Gesängen*, ed. Sven-Aage Joergensen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1990), p. 90ff.

¹³ Friedrich Leopold Graf zu Stolberg, "An meinen Freund, den Baron de la Motte Fouqué," in *Sturm und Drang: Werke in drei Bänden*, vol. 1, ed. René Strasser (Zurich: Stauffacher, 1966), p. 160.

¹⁴ Johann Heinrich Voss, "Luise," in *Sturm und Drang: Werke in drei Bänden*, vol. 1, ed. René Strasser (Zurich: Stauffacher, 1966), p. 253.

¹⁵ See Walter Salmen, *Johann Friedrich Reichardt* (Freiburg and Zurich: Atlantis Verlag, 1963), p. 75ff.

¹⁶"Es giebt Volklieder denen es noch deutlich anzusehn, auf welchem Instrument sie zuerst erfunden, oder ob sie früher zu Tänzten oder Jägerstücken und dergleichen gebraucht worden." Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin* 1 (Berlin, 1782): 24.

¹⁷For further examples of so-called "horn harmonies" (*Hornharmonien*) see Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814): *Goethes Lieder, Oden, Balladen und Romanzen mit Musik*, part 1, *Das Erbe deutscher Musik* 58 (Munich and Duisburg: Henle, 1964), no. 54; Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814): *Goethes Lieder, Oden, Balladen und Romanzen mit Musik*, part 2, *Das Erbe deutscher Musik* 59 (Munich: Henle, 1970), nos. 104 and 122; and *Blumenkranz dem Jahre 1803 geflochten: Eine Liedersammlung* (Berlin: Rellstab, 1803), which contains *Die Nacht* for three waldhorns.

¹⁸Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Le Troubadour italien, français et allemand* (Berlin, 1805), p. 116.

¹⁹For further details see: Gabriele Busch-Salmen, Walter Salmen, and Christoph Michel, *Der Weimarer Musenhof: Dichtung, Musik und Tanz, Gartenkunst, Geselligkeit, Malerei* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1998), p. 56ff; and Franz Friedrich Siegmund August von Boecklin, *Beyträge zur Geschichte der Musik* (Freiburg i. Br., 1790), p. 27.

²⁰*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 8, no. 1 (2 October 1805): Beilage no. 1.

²¹*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 7, no. 41 (10 July 1805): 651-53.