

Musical Innovations in C. P. E. Bach's *Gellert* Songs

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Poster Abstract

Although C. P. E. Bach was involved with the first Berlin Liederschule, he was not actively engaged in their theoretical discussions. He published lieder in volumes compiled by the Liederschule, such as the *Berlinische Odin und Lieder*. However, his compositional style was often more progressive than the other members of the Liederschule, especially in the *Gellert* songs. C. P. E. Bach published his *Gellert* songs in Berlin in 1758, and they were reissued four more times. In these songs, Bach abandoned the figured bass style of piano accompaniment in favor of pre-composed material, but amongst other composers, figured bass piano accompaniments remained standard until the 1770s. C. P. E. Bach also sought new ways to set the text that addressed the issue of poetic representations in strophic songs. This included slight variations between strophes, but did not include through-composed songs. In this paper, drawing on scores, secondary material, and primary sources, I will argue that C.P.E. Bach's *Gellert* songs represent a significant innovation in musical representation of the text in Lieder composition. In this way, Bach was ahead of his contemporaries in Lieder composition, and thus his *Gellert* songs laid the foundation for Romantic lieder composers and their interest in musical text painting.