

Early Music

REVIEW

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What is a carol? Were a survey taken, I imagine that the central features would be Christmas, some (perhaps vague) religious content, and being singable by anyone (even if more elaborate versions also existed). So I was puzzled at the list of the 50 most popular carols as selected by choirmasters and the like printed by *BBC Music Magazine*. *Away in a manger* is no. 50, *In the bleak midwinter* (with the Darke tune, not the Holst) is no. 1. The comments on the Darke setting are explicitly on its performance by choir, no. 2 is Pearsall's *In dulci jubilo* (a choir setting rather than the congregational *Good Christian men rejoice*), no 3 is Howells' *A spotless rose* (a marvellous piece of choral music, but a real challenge for an average church choir). No. 4 (*Bethlehem Down*) is a bit easier, but I've only ever heard it sung by a choir, despite its first publication in *The Daily Telegraph*. The ubiquitous *While shepherds watched* does not appear at all, nor do popular pieces like *Mary's boy child*. A separate list gives Harry Christophers' choice of 5 Ancient Carols: *Verbum caro* (chant), *Make we joy now in this fest*, *Quid petis O fili*, Mouton's *Nesciens mater* and Tallis's *Puer natus mass*. The list is fine musically, and two are formally carols in the medieval sense; but they, like many of the main list, should surely be classified as choral music for Christmas, not carols. We need a word that distinguishes carols all can sing from Christmas music for choirs.

I decided last year that it was a bit restricting attending the Greenwich exhibition and having to sit at my stand all day, so intended this year to spend the three days wandering around, drinking coffee, and generally chatting to people. In fact, we have been so busy lately (so many people, nearly all from abroad, wanting Purcell and Handel!) that I only had time to visit on the Saturday afternoon. It was a bit disappointing. I had several long conversations with people I'd known for decades, but at none of the stalls where I sat and chatted was there much sign of hectic activity (except at Brian Jordan's). Is the financial situation hitting hard, is the event just becoming repetitive, or do people now come only for the concerts? Perhaps it was busier on the Friday. It would be a pity if it faded away.

It's a bit early to wish 'Happy Christmas'. Please remember that there is no Diary in January, though all the events we know are included this month. Those libraries that demand missing issues before they are published, please note that that *EMR* is published in alternate months. CB

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

MERULO

Merulo *Canzoni d'intavolatura d'organo a quattro voci, fatte alla francese (Venezia 1592)*... Introduction by Luigi Collarile. (Biblioteca Musica Bononiensis IV, 102) Forni 2008. 15pp + 43ff, €30.00.

This isn't unknown music. Pidoux's edition (preface dated 1941; my copy seems to have been published in 1954, but Bärenreiter often gave reprints new dates) is commendably straight for its time; there's a more recent edition from A-R (RRMR 90-91), a single volume which includes all of Merulo's canzonas. The nine pieces have titles and some, probably all, are embellished versions of simpler four-part instrumental pieces: the A-R edition prints the six that have been identified. The notation is clear (provided you can read the eight-line lower stave and the clefs), and the printer found a way of getting round the lack of a demisemiquaver type in his font. Bar lines occur regularly after every four minims. Apart from reading the notation, performance is inhibited by the rather larger number of page turns required by the small oblong format, with two systems to a page instead of Pidoux's four; the A-R edition doesn't open flat, so is less convenient for the player. There is a thorough preface, mostly on bibliographical matters. Those concerned with the preservation of original accidentals in editions will note Merulo's commonsense system of not repeating obvious ones in written-out trills (piece 1, bar 1) but if even one extra note intervenes, printing it again (eg bar 4). Serious students and performers will need at least to study it.

BÄRENREITER SWEELINCK

Sweelinck *Sämtliche Orgel- und Clavierwerke* edited by Siegbert Rampe Bärenreiter, 2008

III.2. *Chorale Settings (part 2)* (BA 8486). xx + 83pp, £28.00
IV.1 & 2. *Variations on Song and Dance Tunes* (BA 8487 & 8494). xxviii + 68pp, £28.00 & xx 51pp, £24.00

These three volumes complete Bärenreiter's collection of Sweelinck's keyboard music. Their rival is the new Breitkopf edition (EB 8741-4). Which to favour is difficult to decide. The volume divisions match, so you can have a mixture – only scholars and fanatics will want both, though all academic libraries should have them. No doubt many will continue to use the Dover reprint of Seiffert's old edition, which is a perfectly good way of playing the music for fun, though for serious performance you will need to study one of the new editions. I hardly know the *Opera Omnia* – three volumes from KVN (google the initials for details) at €110 for the set – but as far as I can remember, they were rather unwieldy on a music stand. Comparison by price is difficult. Some will decide by format: Breitkopf is portrait (which fits bookshelves better, and is

more congenial to harpsichordists and pianists), Bärenreiter is landscape, so likely to be favoured by organists. The music can mostly be played on either, and is notated on two staves. Both have thorough introductions, though Breitkopf goes a bit further towards helping the player with an appendix on Playing Techniques.

I'm probably repeating what I wrote in general terms about previous volumes, but I like to make such reviews self-sufficient. It is the variations that I know best; when I had time to sit at the harpsichord and play for fun, my favourite repertoire was the sets of variations by Byrd, Sweelinck and Scheidt, at least in part because the I liked the tunes so much. So I'd recommend vol. 4 (of either edition) as the place to start getting to know Sweelinck: not necessarily his best keyboard music, but his most approachable. I've turned to *Paduana Lachrymae* (Br)/*Paduana Lachrimae collarit* (Bär) for a closer look at the editions, particularly since there is also a recent edition by Christopher Hogwood (John Dowland *Keyboard Music*, Edition HH 11 074, no. 6) which I prefer to both BR and Bär).

There is a single tablature source, so is the y/i difference in the titles a misreading or a genuine ambiguity. Should the *collarit* stay as part of the title, to be repeated as the 'correct' title in concert programmes and CD booklets, or left as a detail to check in a commentary? BR has 33 annotations in the commentary, Bär has 10, HH has 28. The reason is the more interventionist approach of the BR editor, Peter Dirksen, and Hogwood. They assume, for instance, that the accidentals of the ornamented repeat can be used to correct those of the first statement. This is particularly interesting at the last bar of the first section, which is A major, followed by a free repeat with an A chord than an A in the bass and treble figuration replacing the first three notes (AGF) of the *Lachrymae* tune. BR prints a C natural in the opening chord, and one has to read the commentary to find that the source has a C sharp. Bär prints the sharp, but contradicts it by an editorial natural above it. I find the music rather more interesting if the A major chord of the cadence is allowed (by just one quaver) to extend beyond the barline, with the C sharp not contradicted until the right-hand figuration. This would look better if the C were printed as part of the right-hand chord rather than placed with an isolated stem up as a tenor part in the lower stave, implying a part leaping up a sixth. I suspect that the suspicion of letting the chord remain major for another quaver is ignored is chiefly because of that notation. I won't bore readers with other specific comments, though this single example makes the point that, for detailed study, both editions are necessary.

Bär prefaces those sets for which a specific source of the theme might be relevant with an edition of it. He takes *Lachrymae* from the 1600 edition, transcribing the voice

and the lute part. It would have been more convenient for comparison to have used the same barring as the keyboard setting. The agreement of key (A minor) with the 1600 edition might suggest a direct relationship, but transmission through lute versions (although usually in G minor) is more likely. I wouldn't necessarily add 'missing' ties; keyboard players are quite likely to want to strike full chords on the main beat.

Br has less to say than Bär on individual pieces, but the editor has written plenty on Sweelinck elsewhere. Bär does go a fraction too far in preserving details of original notation. I'm happier with standard beamings, especially when the edition is based on remote and probably inaccurate sources that are unlikely to tell us anything about how the composer wrote the music – though one does need to know the status of each accidental. I won't go on to comparisons with other pieces, but I have come across no clear grounds for asserting that one of the editions is a 'best buy'. However, Bär vol. 4.2 contains pieces of dubious authenticity, so (particularly if you have the Sweelinck/Scheidt *Fortuna* elsewhere), it isn't essential.

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY

Coprario *Fantasia as No. 53* (Music Edition 224; £1.90, cheaper for members and subscribers) is a recent discovery, edited from the Blossom Partbooks in Case Western Reserve Library. The three (of six) extant partbooks are a strange anthology alternating texted and untexted works. This being a five-voice piece, the editor has only two lines to fill in, which seem to work. Typically, I expect people will show more interest in this new piece than the 52 that have been long available! The editor/reconstructor, Ross Duffin, draws attention to the unusual cleffing, with F4 at the bottom and G2 at the top rather than either of the usual Italian use of either *chiave naturale* or *chiavette*, though the English viol repertoire is less consistent. (Who/what, incidentally, is/was Blossom?)

Richard Nicholson's *When Jesus sat at meat as* is his most famous piece (ME 221; £3.90). It's a verse anthem, written in SSATB clefs, fitting comfortably a vocal ensemble of AATTB and a consort with two tenors on top, a bass at the bottom, and either tenors or basses in between. Perversely (except for modern singers), this is transposed up, producing parts for SSATB, though the tenor part is rather high. The work can be performed thus from the set supplied, provided the singers can share the players' parts, and the alto and tenor can read alto clef (or the score is big enough to share between two). Alternatively, you can revert to the notional pitch the composer expected and use the alternative untransposed parts and (assuming that this is somewhere within a tone of A=440) make the anthem sound less shrill.

Jenkins features twice in this batch. Andrew Ashbee has been editing his music for as long as I've known him and more. His offering this time is a set of airs for TrTrB (VdGS 85-90, 92, 102, 103). Such dances by Jenkins are always fun to play, never routine. They probably suite violins better than viols, but the top B flats lie under the

hand well enough for the latter. A continuo instrument may be added, playing from the score (ME 222; £3.200). Six sets of divisions for treble and bass on a ground are unattributed in Bodleian MS Mus. Sch.C80, but were passed on to Andrew by Peter Holman, who reckoned they might be by Jenkins, since he couldn't think of any other likely composer. Andrew agreed, and here are the first two. The instrumentaion is unspecific; Andrew reckons treble viol rather than violin, and an organ for the bass. The part is here realised simply, and perhaps superfluously, since the chords are hardly difficult to fathom. (ME 223; £3.30).

Finally the 'division man' himself, 5 Duets for Division Viol VdGS 24-28 by Christopher Simpson (ME220; £5.10): not for beginners!

BLOW & PURCELL

Blow *Venus and Adonis* Edited under the supervision of the Purcell Society by Bruce Wood (*Purcell Society Edition Companion Series*, 2) Stainer & Bell, 2008. xxxv + 137pp, £65.00.

Purcell *Three Occasional Odes* Edited... by Bruce Wood (*The Works of Henry Purcell* 1) Stainer & Bell, 2008. xxix 152pp, £65.00.

The original Vol. 1 of the Purcell Society was devoted to the *Yorkshire Feast Song* ('Of old, when heroes thought it base'). That seems an odd choice, but I hadn't realised till I read the introduction to this new edition that in the 18th century it had been the most widely circulated of Purcell's choral odes and that the autograph happened to be owned by a member of the Society's committee, W. H. Cummings, who edited it. Is the delay in the revision of the 1878 edition due to the absence of Yorkshiresmen on the Society's committee? But the reason is probably an organisational one. It made a rather slim volume, but with the restriction of vol. 27 to *Symphony Songs*, a name unknown to Cummings or indeed anyone for the first century of the Purcell Society's existence, there were two homeless odes, *Celestial music* and *Great parent, hail!*, which have found a new home here. I use the word 'Ode' since the Purcell Society does, but I try to avoid it. An *Ode* is a poem, the usual term for the musical setting is *Song*. This is born out by the titles of the main source of the two Songs here.¹

None of these are pieces of which I have any particular knowledge, and some general points will be raised below in relationship to the same editor's *Venus & Adonis*. But I will comment on a couple of adjacent points in the commentary to *The Yorkshire Feast*. Bars 652-673: 'Purcell did not recopy this passage, merely directing: *repeat the tune over again wth all y^e inst[r]uments*'. So the edition prints in full bars 608-15 with repeat and 624-638 with repeat, rather than having each section first full and repeated with only two trumpets and bass. Since the commentary of both this and the Blow edition is dominated by descriptions of how repeats are notated, the assumption that the rubric

¹ There are still traces of this distinction in the publication of Handel's *Alexander's Feast* and *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*.

means that each full statement should itself be repeated isn't sufficiently self-evident for it to be embodied in the notation without comment. I noticed that because I was following up a remark in the introduction commending Cummings for preserving original beaming and checking whether the new edition preserves this feature. I had little success in noting examples in the 1878 edition (perhaps because I accept without thought what other editors might modernise), but did spot bar 678, where a crotchet in a passage of semiquavers is tied across the crotchet beat. He follows the original and 1878 notation with the justification that to divide it in the modern way would imply an ornament. Is this the thin end of a wedge that might imply a lot less modernisation in the Purcell Society's house style? There's no note to say whether the change of notating repeated semiquavers from the 1878 crotchet with two strokes across the stem to four separate semiquavers is a reversion to what Purcell wrote or a change to modern abbreviationless notation.

The 1878 preface is a fascinating document, with lots of information (though perhaps not to be quoted without checking) and a suggestion that the high trumpet parts be performed on saxhorns. That publication certainly led to performances, and it is interesting how it impressed George Bernard Shaw: 'If I had a good orchestra and choir at my disposal... I would give a concert consisting of Purcell's Yorkshire Feast and the last act of *Die Meistersinger*. Then the public could judge whether Purcell was really a great composer or not, as some people (including myself) assert that he was' (*The World*, 21 March 1894). I must confess that with this particular comparison, Wagner deserves to win hands down.

One point links both these editions: the use of continuous bar-numbering through a whole Song or complete act. There is obviously a virtue in emphasising continuity (as, for instance, by relating tempos) and in avoiding any notational devices that discourage it. But the music is nevertheless divided into sections with different scorings: the problem is not that the music lacks independent forms but that the transitions are fluid. From a practical viewpoint, however, not making the sections identifiably by movement numbers and separate barring is inconvenient. For a start, it makes editions incompatible. Editions may fall out of sequence for various reasons, but normally that only affects single sections. The copy of the 1878 *Yorkshire Feast* I was using had straight-through numbering added like the revised one, but the numbers got out of kilter, and comparing the two was more difficult than it need have been, or would have been had each 'movement' been numbered separately. Furthermore, it is much easier for someone singing or playing in only a few sections to have a long tacet section broken into movements described by movement number rather than a rest sign with 423 or whatever written above it. A rehearsal instruction 'Back to 119' is unhelpful in such situations. And a contents list is also useful, especially if it indicates the voices and instruments required for each movement.

Moving on to *Venus*, the distinguishing feature of this compared with the other three editions I know (Ark-

wright,² Lewis and mine)³ is that it shows Blow's two versions. One of the MS (BL Add. MS 31453) enables the reader to see at a glance where the changes are, since the revised version is written over the top of the original. A multi-coloured edition might perhaps have been able to produce a more legible equivalent of that, but the simpler course adopted here is to print the versions on opposite pages. Anyone who has tried to perform 'He shall feed his flock' from Watkins Shaw's *Messiah* will know how difficult it is to turn over from the bottom of a left page: the impulse to move across to the right (ie wrong) page is virtually insurmountable unless you smother it with crossings out or stick a blank sheet over it (which is annoying if next time you need the other option). So this is essentially a study document, though will presumably be reissued with at least one of the versions separately, preferably the revised one, since the Lewis edition and mine both have the earlier one. The layout of the two is identical, and bar numbers agree.

Much more is known about the sources and their background since the 1980s, when I worked on the piece. I assumed, for instance, that Add. 31453 was updated by a Blow groupie, but the idea that he was a keyboard player updating his copy for a performance of the new version seems more plausible. Bruce builds up a case for the year 1683 as the composition date, though I'm not sure how noting that two songs before *Venus* in the main score of the first version, Add. 22100, were published in 1685 and 1688 prevents 1684 from being as plausible as 1683. However, the idea of locating the performance at Windsor is likely in view of the involvement of the copyist of Add. 31453, John Walter, who was *informator choristarum* at Eton College and lay clerk at St George's Chapel, Windsor. Bruce argues that he played keyboard and that his score shows not only the revisions but its first layer antedates the fair copy Add 22100 (also in his hand). If the performance had not taken place in Windsor, how else would he have had two such significant copies? (Though musicians in Windsor could travel to London as readily as musicians from London could travel to Windsor.) I don't think the evidence is quite strong enough for certainty, and someone needs to go through the other plausible occasions to find reasons for rejecting them. (Richard Luckett's announcement that he had established an earlier date for a performance in Oxford was never followed up.)

I had always imagined the work, like its twin *Dido & Aeneas*, to have been a small-scale, non-official court event. Bruce writes in term of a 'full band of violins', presumably implying the whole 24, and he also suggests

2 Bruce implies that I should have acknowledged using this as the basis of mine. In fact, I state on p. 3 of the current version that it is based on the typography of Arkwright's edition (no home music-setting programmes in 1984), but it follows a different main source so is not relevant to the text imposed on it. And the implication that I changed it to agree with Antony Lewis's edition is untrue, though some features may have been retained accidentally, since I used his score to as a basis for collating the MSS.

3 There is also an edition by Judith Mackerras (yes: she is a relative of Sir Charles): King's College, London, MA 1986, and I have a photocopy of a detailed collation of the text by Andrew Walkling, dated Oxford 1990, which includes all verbal content of the MSS, not just the underlay.

that, since there were recorders, the players would elsewhere have played oboes. (*Dido* has similarly been magnified in some recent performances.) There is no footnote listing or speculating on the musicians who may have travelled to Windsor that year: a list for 1682 comprises men who were primarily singers.⁴ If the choir was there again in 1683, there would have been enough singers for more than a one-a-part chorus, though that doesn't imply that there must have been!

As I mentioned above, the commentaries of both this and the Purcell Ode edition devote great care to the description of how repeats are notated in the sources and the notation is carefully translated into the modern way that assumes that musicians have no common sense. In most cases, it is probably necessary, even writing out the petite reprise of the *Tune for Flutes*, which would otherwise require the first ending to be marked 1 & 3 and the second 2 (which is what my edition, perhaps confusingly, has). However, the layout could be improved by ending a system at the end of an instrumental section before any upbeat that involves only voice and continuo. Double bars don't have to be at the end of bars.

The commentary is extremely thorough. But it is difficult to make judgments without having the sources to hand. In fact, in a variety of occasions when reviewing for this issue, I've found myself unable to see through the notes to what the sources actually read. The solution is to accompany editions with either CD reproductions of them or have them available on line. I'm in theory better off than most people in that at least I've seen the MSS, but that was over twenty years ago, and if I had detailed notes, they still might not answer the questions I am asking myself now. But this edition goes as far as it can, and is to be welcomed. My edition is likely to remain the cheapest around (especially with regard to the instrumental parts), but conductors should consult this carefully.

WATER & FIRE

Handel *Water Music* HWV 348-350 Edited by Terence Best Bärenreiter (BA 4298), 2008. xii + 59pp, £29.00
 Händel *Music for the Royal Fireworks* HWV 351 Edited by Christopher Hogwood Bärenreiter (BA 4299), 2008. zci + 34pp, £26.00.

The word is spreading that there is something wrong with the *Water-Music* consensus that the twenty or so pieces that cluster under that title should be grouped into three suites. The arguments have hitherto been most accessible in Christopher Hogwood's Cambridge Music Handbook *Handel: Water Music and Music for the Royal Fireworks* (Cambridge UP 2005), absolutely essential reading for anyone interested in these works as listener or player. Now we have the score and parts, the score anticipating a replacement of Hans Redlich's *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* IV/13. No autograph survives, and the earliest known scores were from the 1730s. But two earlier keyboard arrangements showed a different order of movements,

which was confirmed as offering a possibility at least of being the original order by a MS Hogwood discovered in 2004 in the hands of two reliable copyists made before the end of 1718, the year after the water party for which the music was written (or assembled). It is heavy going reading this section in the preface, since the MSS are indicated by abbreviations which are not listed: the usual conspiracy of keeping conductors away from information thought fit only for scholars! It helps to have the aforementioned book at hand. The three-suite version that has become ubiquitous for the last fifty or so years derives from Thurston Dart and was available first in Eulenburg miniature scores and parts, then in 1962 in Redlich's HHA volume. It is embedded in the HWV numbers. HHA should have agreed on a single HWV number; the edition unsatisfactorily gives 348-350 – but the three-suite version may well survive for performances when 22 movements are too many, so the original three numbers should be retained for the current suites.

The changes are not drastic, but enough to justify the new edition. Right from page one there are details that are different. Redlich has nine trills notated, Best has one (though Redlich's extra eight would be fine as editorial additions). Each edition has a slur, but in different places. Redlich includes bass figures (deriving from a MS where they were added by Jennens), Hogwood doesn't. Handel tends not to write much figuring, so the absence from the sources isn't in itself indicative that there was no harpsichord on the musical barge, but it seems quite likely. Nor was there any need for a keyboard with all the Fireworks wind, though one could have played in smaller, indoor performances.

The new edition has a few bars of new music. It nearly didn't. A couple of years ago, I happened to be within earshot of a fascinating conversation between the two editors, and was amused that Terence Best wanted 16 bars in the Minuet no. 7 that only occur in the earliest source to appear only in the commentary. Hogwood argued firmly and successfully that it should appear in the score itself: if it didn't, it wouldn't get played. Had Best had his way, it wouldn't even be visible in this separate edition but only in the full HHA volume. The rest of the conversation was less controversial, but still interesting. Are all Collected Works argued over by scholars face to face, note by note, before publication? It seems a good idea, especially if one scholar is also a performer.

The *Fireworks* score has less that is new, since the autograph survives and provides a much surer base for editors, and it is now easily accessible in facsimile (BVK 1666, to which I can't see a reference in the edition itself, apart from an advert on the back page). I haven't had time to look at it in detail, but suspect that older editions are less in need of replacing than those of the *Water Music*. You don't need a score to delete the opening *Adagio* marking (Redlich prints it, but refers to the commentary) or to effect the changed instrumentation of *La paix*, but conductors should at least check the differences (best done by checking the critical commentary, which is only in the full HHA volume).

4 Andrew Ashbee Records of English court music I, 1986, p.205.

BÄRENREITER BACH

Weimarer Orgeltabulatur... Herausgegeben von Michael Maul und Peter Wollny Bärenreiter (BA 5248), 2007. xxxv 48pp + facsimiles, £16.00.

A similar heading appeared in *EMR* 126 p. 2, except for a different publisher's number and a price of £63.50. No: it hasn't been reduced (it's probably gone up with the fall of the pound), but this contains the edition without the facsimile of the newly discovered early Bach MS of Reinken's famous *An Wasserflüssen Babylon*, Buxtehude's *Nun freuet euch* and two pieces by Pachelbel. I didn't know when I wrote then that the edition would be available separately. It is certainly welcome, and will I hope encourage organists to investigate the background to the discovery and the music that Bach thought worth copying. (There is a recording on Carus 83.197).

Bach *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern: Cantata for the Feast of Annunciation Day BWV 1* Edited by Matthias Wendt. Bärenreiter (TP 1001), 2007. 60pp, £7.00.

Vocal score (BA 10001a) £6.00; parts (BA 10001) on sale

Bärenreiter have allocated enough numbers from 1001 in their study-score series from TP 1001 to allow for all the Bach cantatas and similarly in their BA series for performance material. Considering the firm has been publishing the Neue Bach-Ausgabe cantatas since 1954, it is surprising that they have been so slow in issuing them. I don't know why the Bach-Gesellschaft chose this as No. 1, but it was a good choice, being based on a familiar hymn and with the exciting scoring of pairs of horns, oboe da caccia and violins as well as ripieno strings. In a competitive market, I would have thought it worth adding an introduction, and there is probably no conducting score that includes the English text added to the vocal score. The music is legible – a keyboard player could use it, if not a conductor: German pockets (Taschen) must have got larger since the miniature scores of my youth.

BONONCINI CANTATAS

Giovanni Bononcini *Cantate e duette (Londra 1721)* Introduced by Paolo Da Col (*Biblioteca Musica Bononensis* IV, 73) Forni 2008. xvi + 99 pp, €39.00.

One encounters Bononcini often enough in music history books, usually as an unsuccessful rival to Handel. But he was a successful musician long before Handel appeared, and although he didn't come to London until 1720, his *Camilla* was first performed there as early as 1706 and remained in repertoire for twenty years. His book of 14 cantatas was dedicated to the King and has a substantial subscription list of the great and the good (236 names requiring 409 copies). It continued in circulation without the subscription list. Musicians seem to have waited for the cheaper edition, since they are conspicuous by their absence from the list. It's a well-planned collection: purchasers might have found it even more useful if the publisher had provided a list of cantatas showing the

distribution of voices and instruments. Six have a pair of violins (three with soprano, two with alto), There are three cantatas for soprano and continuo, three for alto and continuo, a duet for soprano and alto, and a duet for two altos. Five of the cantatas with violins begin with instrumental movements. According to Hawkins, these were used for about fifty years along with Corelli's sonatas as 'second music' before plays: the terminology we know from Purcell still survived to the second half of the 18th century. The introduction quotes Burney:

The work is finely engraved on copper in long quarto, and contains many pleasing and elegant passages for the time when they were composed, with some ingenious harmonies and imitations; but being less *recherchées* than the cantatas of the elder Scarlatti, and less elaborate than the songs of Handel, easy and natural were then construed as opponents into dullness and want of science. However, even Handel himself condescended to use many of his passages and closes in opera songs which he composed several years after this publication.

The editor offers some more detailed description of Bononcini's style. The music is certainly worth trying. The voices need to be able to read soprano and alto clef. It's a pity that Handel's cantatas never got printed thus.

ALBOREA & LEDERER

If the names above don't mean much to you, don't feel particularly ignorant: I hadn't heard of them either. There is no connection between them apart from appearing in the Diletto Musicale series from Doblinger. They arrived in January, and have been pushed to the back of my box of music awaiting review: my apologies to the publisher for the delay.

Francesco Alborea (1690-1739 – apparently not c.1771 as given in older books) was a Neapolitan cellist, famous for his continuo playing, who became a member of the Vienna Hofkapelle. His *Sonata in C* for cello and continuo emerged in 2003 among six volumes (two of lute tablatures, including music by Weiss) from the music collection of Count Harrach. The editor (Paul Angerer) may be exaggerating that this can be compared with the solo suites of Bach (disregarding the presence of the continuo), but it certainly looks an interesting work, well worth trying. The editor gives solo cello and another bass instrument without keyboard as an option, but since the bass isn't figured, one wonders whether that might imply that harpsichord wasn't expected. (DM 1397. £9.95)

Joseph Lederer (1733-96) was director of music at an Augustinian monastery at Ulm, which the Mozarts visited in 1763. His *Apparatus Musicus oder Musikalischer Vorrat* (Augsburg, 1781) contains a variety of keyboard pieces, which are here edited by Rudolf Walter. He omits a Latin cantata for soprano, violin and organ with strings, and some instructional matter: samples of modulation, introduction to figured bass and a preface to teachers. This is a pity, since there is a potential market for such practical historical information. Only one page was spare

for the German and English extrodution, but room might have been made for a full title-page transcription. What we have seemed at first glance to be a bit naive, but it is worth playing for its own sake as well as for giving an idea of what music teachers of the time were capable of. The original order is changed, grouping the Praeambula and versus together, followed by the three sonatas. (DM 1361; £12.50, though I expect the prices have moved with the exchange rate.)

I was intrigued by Lederer's title: was it a common one, or was it inspired by Muffat? I tried Google, but didn't have the patience to weed out the large numbers of dealers offering this edition, and the only other composer visible the first few pages was Stadlmayr. Perhaps Grove on Line would be better, but all that produced was Lederer. A warning about using the web for quick answers!

IN BRIEF

Breitkopf has issued in miniature score (larger than the miniture size I was brought up with but smaller than the current Bärenreiter study scores) of Joshua Rifkins' *Bach Mass in B minor* (PB5303; €16.00). It contains the introduction to the full score complete (in both languages) but, of course, there is no critical commentary. Slipped inside it, as a bonus and bookmark, is a short interview with Joshua. The NBA edition of this work has long been thought to be unsatisfactory, so in this case the Breitkopf study score is better as well as a few euros cheaper.

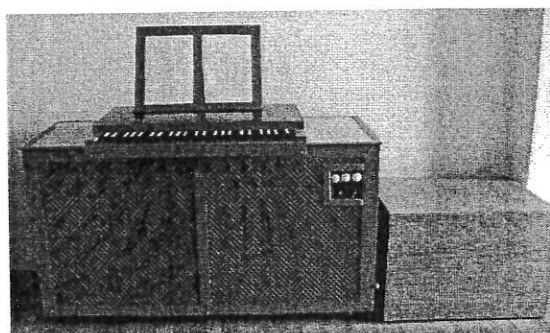
Also from Breitkopf comes a volume of voice & piano reduction of concert arias for bass by Mozart (EB 8798; €20.00). These are all mature works, with Köchel numbers ranging from 432 to 621a (1783-91). The placing of 621a (*Io ti lascio*) at the beginning is anomalous, since otherwise the arias are in chronological order. There is a helpful introduction (three tightly-packed double-column pages each in German and English) by the editor, Franz Beyer, with information on performance practice and short notes on each song; at the end of the volumes there are German and English translation and a list of relevant treatises — there's an idea for Associated Board vocal collections! Footnotes to the music give a few embellishments from contemporary sources and there are some editorial suggestions from Robert Holl. A useful addition to the similar collections for other voices.

Haydn's Symphonies 96 & 100 complete the London Symphonies taken from the Collected Work and now available from Bärenreiter in score and parts. I've only seen the scores. No. 96 in D (BA 4626; £24.00) is misnamed *The Miracle* (which is sometimes applied to the more probable candidate, No. 102, but is probably best forgotten to avoid confusion) for extraneous reasons, though it could quite reasonably be applied to a large number of Haydn's works. No 100 (BA 4637; £28.00) has a more legitimate nickname, *Military*, though the entry of the Turkish contingent in the minor section of the second movement should certainly be a surprise (except that anyone in the audience can see it coming, unless the percussion are out of sight). Nice scores, but why don't conductors deserve or need critical commentaries? I don't know about fanous ones with major orchestras, but the

early-music ones I deal with are curious about sources and whether there are problems lying behind the notes, yet are not attached to universities where they can consult the full edition.

The string quartet version of Haydn's *Seven Last Words* is not yet available in the new Peters edition, but a study score based on what will part of the Collected Works is a useful stopgap (Henle HN 9771; score €11.50). There is only one authoritative source for the work, which isn't clearly described. The introduction explains how Haydn derived the string parts from the orchestral original. This was the first Haydn quartet I had on LP, and perversely I find it engages me more than the orchestra version, while I've never got on with the choral setting. A comparison with the Eulenburg score (which may have been updated since I bought the three-volume complete quartets in around 1960) reveals differences in bowing as early as the third bar. Parts are available (HN 851; the catalogue that came with this also listed op. 42 & 50 (study score €24, parts €48.00) and op. 71 & 74 (study score €20.00; parts already available). I haven't had a chance to compare these with the Peters versions.

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LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

RACHEL PODGER AT RAM

Along with other London conservatories, the Royal Academy of Music gives frequent free public concerts, notably at lunchtimes on Fridays. One such was on 17 October when distinguished violinist, Rachel Podger, made her debut as the first Michaela Comberti Chair for Baroque Violin, directing the Academy Baroque Orchestra (one of several similar names by which the RAM period instrumentalists seems to be known at the moment). The most unusual work was the *Hipochondrie a 7 Concertanti* by Jan Dismas Zelenka, an enigmatic piece that takes a rather wild approach to orchestration, key structure and harmony. Another oddity in terms of key signature was Telemann's Overture in F# minor, with its suite of dance movements concluding with the skittish *La Badinerie*. Geminiani's Concerto Grosso version of Corelli's *La Follia*, bought into prominence the violin playing of Silvio Richter and cellist Monserrat Colome alongside some spirited solos by Rachel Podger. The concert finished with John Walsh's cobbling together of various Handel movements into the Concerto Grosso in Bb (Op. 3/2), the *Largo* giving oboist Leo Duarte a chance to shine. To my mind, Rachel Podger is one of the most musical period violinists around, and her infectious enthusiasm as she led the young players was a joy to watch. Her attention to details of phrasing and articulation were exemplary. The same orchestra also performed during John Eliot Gardner's lecture-recital (30 Oct), although three of the four vocal pieces used continuo only. Mary Bevan, soprano, took most of the singing honours, notably in her expressive performance of Purcell's *Saul and the Witch of Endor* and Monteverdi's *Lamento della ninfa*; tenor Thomas Hobbs and bass baritone George Humphries also impressed in Bach's cantata 81, *Jesus Schläft*.

BOWMAN AND ADMIRERS

James Bowman is a regular at the lunchtime concert series in Banqueting House where he, at least on the evidence of this occasion (20 Oct), holds court to what appeared to be the almost exclusively female Cultural Wing of Saga. Along with The English Consort of Viols (Roderick Skeaping, David Pinto & Rosemary Thorndycraft), he presented an entertaining programme of works by Dowland, Jenkins, Holborne, Draghi and Purcell. Each section was introduced with readings by the lutenist, Ian Gammie, one being Roger North's recollection of the comment of Charles I (who walked to his execution through a window of Banqueting House) that John Jenkins 'did wonders on an inconsiderate instrument'. Other more pointed readings included Baldassare Castiglione querying the suitability of music for women and noting that 'if old men must sing to the lute, let them do it secretly'!

MELOPOETICA

One of a number of young groups that I have been keeping an ear open for since their appearance as finalists in the Early Music Network International Young Artists Competition is Melopoetica (with two violins, cello, harpsichord). They presented one of their programmes, 'An Italian Gesticulation', featuring five generations of Italian composers (from Castello to Locatelli), in front of an impressively large audience at the City Music Society's lunchtime concert in Bishopsgate Hall (28 Oct). This is an extremely professional group, with an engagingly enthusiastic and inventive approach to musical interpretation, always alert to the ebb and flow of the music, and an imaginative use of tone colour by their two violinists (the latter particularly evident in the *Duodecima Sonata* of Castello). Although performing well within the normal limits of historically informed performance, they also made very effective occasional musical use of portamento. Their story-line for the concluding Vivaldi *Folia* was a clever device to engage the audience. I have reviewed Melopoetica several times and they always come up trumps.

CONCERTO DELLA DONNE

Douai Abbey, in Berkshire, hosts regular concerts, a recent one being by Concerto della Donne (6 Sept), directed by the well-known continuo player, Alistair Ross, together with three sopranos matching the similarly named group from the court of the Este family in late 17th century Ferrara. Notwithstanding the Italian roots of their name, this programme was French – 'Music for the Virgin Mary: Music for Convents in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Marc-Antoine Charpentier and others' and was a concert performance of their CD of the same name issued in 2005. Most of the vocal music was drawn from the works composed during the 1670s and 1680s by Charpentier for the Guise princesses, with their emphasis on the veneration of Mary. The three solo singers and small female choir knew how to gently project their voices into this huge acoustic, and gave a fine impression of the evocative sound of female convent voices as they might have sounded in 17th century France. They made effective use of the large performing area possible in this vast Abbey, including a *Stabat Mater* sequence sung from the distant chancel, accompanied on the small Italian-style chancel organ. Such movements around the Abbey threw up one practical issue for performers – make sure your shoes are completely silent. Interspersed organ solos by Lebègue and Nivers completed the musical scene. The main Abbey organ has a wide range of the distinctive colours of the French organ, although Alastair Ross kept his tonal palette very simple, in some cases producing sounds that didn't always tally with the registration instructions given in the many Parisian *Livres d'Orgue*.

LA CALISTO (ROH)

October saw the Aldens (identical twin brother American opera directors) competing with each other on London's opera stage with David making his debut at the Royal Opera House and Christopher at English National Opera. Both productions raise issues of operatic integrity, characterisation, metaphysics and comedy. But despite that, both shows were musically excellent. The Royal Opera House imported the sumptuous 2005 Munich production of Francesco Cavalli's 1651 *La Calisto*, along with Ivor Bolton as conductor. The opera tells Ovid's story of how a chaste nymph Calista becomes a Star (a real one, in the constellation of Ursa Major) in several rather complicated steps, including a lesbian relationship with Jove (disguised as Diana) and being turned into a bear by Jove's long-suffering wife. In the meantime, a shepherd (Endimione) takes a shine to the real Diana, alongside other ancillary stage goings on. The libretto does not indicate how genetically successful Jupiter's coupling with Calisto was (Ovid is specific), although a very obviously expecting Sally Matthews couldn't help but give us a clue – fine in the second half, but a little incongruous while she was still a virginal follower of the Goddess of Chastity. Alden adds to the incongruity by having Calisto appear as an overfully sexual floosy from the start – a mangling of both libretto and myth that undermines one of the metaphysical aspects of the work. Surely one of the points is that Calisto is an innocent – and would Diana really have allowed Endimione to reach such an obviously climactic conclusion to his seduction of her. Goddess of Chastity, my foot! The show lacked the eye-watering prosthetics of the Royal Academy of Music's version earlier this year (unlike Endimione, Dominique Visse's lower half Satirino goat bits remained reasonably under control throughout the proceedings – although they did appear to be in the wrong place), but the set, costume, staging and lighting were undoubtedly spectacular.

As was the singing and acting, from a stellar cast who have performed this work together on a number of occasions in Munich. Top of the bill was Sally Matthews in the title role – a magnificent performance in a tricky role. Other eminent contributions came from Véronique Gens (Giunone), countertenor Lawrence Zazzo (Endimione), Monica Bacelli (Diana) and Umberto Chiummo (Giove), with Dominique Visse and Guy de Mey making the most of the fun roles of Satirino and Linfea. Ivor Bolton's musical direction seemed to be on a different wavelength to David Alden's – he played it commendably straight, with excellent support from his own Monteverdi Continuo Ensemble (fielding three harpsichords and three theorbos, along with harp, lirone, viola da gamba, cello and double bass) aided by some members of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

I know that some readers cannot abide modern settings of early opera, although I often find myself impressed by the updating of the often rather daft originals. *Partenope*, the latest Handel offering from English National Opera, was an interesting example, with the work set in 1920s Paris around the complex interconnected lives of surrealist artists and the exotically (and erotically) wealthy.

PARTENOPE (ENO)

This has been hailed by most critics as a masterpiece, but I had my doubts. One problem is that Handel's own characterisations are often hard enough to fathom out, but where an additional character layer is applied, things get really complicated. The most obvious example was the unequivocal depiction of Emilio as Man Ray. I guess I am not alone in knowing rather more about his life than Emilio's, so it was not always easy to become absorbed into the character that Handel was trying to portray. *Partenope*'s erotically charged reincarnation as Nancy Cunard was slightly less defined – indeed, Rosemary Joshua made this role so much her own that it seemed to be more of a merging of Joshua and *Partenope* than any 1920s sophisticate, although she did wear a collection of bracelets similar to those in Ray's many photographs of Cunard. I am not convinced that this is Handel's finest musical or dramatic achievement (and at nearly four hours, it is a bit of a slog), although it certainly has some very fine moments. I wonder whether he intended *Partenope* to be quite so much the comedian that Christopher Alden has created in this production. And to cap it all, I am afraid that Amanda Holden's oh-so-witty and tortuously rhyming translations for the ENO have begun to wear thin.

The Art Deco stage set was an uncharacteristically Heath Robinson affair, with visible fixing marks and studding shadows in what should have been a smooth plaster surface. The first Act took place in the swish ocean-liner saloon (including, at the start, some Lee Miller gas masks), the rest in the murky corridor behind, including the battle scene at the beginning of Act 2, which was reduced to a bit of a tussle. A sizeable chunk of the later action took place in and around and, indeed, on top of, a toilet, although only those sitting on the main axis of the auditorium would have been able to see much of this. Production doubts aside, musically this was one of ENO's strongest productions to date with a fine cast of singers on very good form. Rosemary Joshua was an ideal singer and actor as the *femme fatale* *Partenope*/Cunard, countertenor Iestyn Davies excelled as Armindo, as did Patricia Bardon (the scorned Rosmira, disguised as Eurimene) and Christine Rice (Arsace). The hapless John Mark Ainsley was vocally excellent and made the best of his complex acting role as Man Ray/Emilio, including having to wear the bizarre paper cut-out and goggle-glasses facial mask that Man Ray adorned André Breton with in his photograph (giving another layer of identity confusion – in the original 1930 photograph, it was Breton who wore the mask and Ray who took the photo – but here it was Ray in the mask).

Christian Curnyn made an excellent ENO debut, having already performed and recorded *Partenope* with his own Early Opera Company. He jollied the ENO band into a very convincing performance – their understanding of period performance has increased noticeably in recent years. I have no doubt that this will stay in the ENO repertory, so look forward to giving it another go when it reappears. In the meantime, as Amanda Holden (if not Handel's librettist) rather awkwardly put it: 'I do not understand what this is about, but something queer is happening, of that there is no doubt.'

Varaždin Baroque Evenings, Croatia (16-29 September)

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Varaždin is a delightful little city, of architectural and historic importance, tucked away at the northern edge of Croatia, about 80km north of Zagreb, close to the Slovenian and Hungarian borders. It was briefly the capital of Croatia in the mid-18th century until a fire destroyed most of the city. The subsequent late baroque rebuilding has survived more-or-less intact, with its impressive collection of town palaces and churches. For the past 38 years, the annual Varaždin Baroque Evenings (Varaždinske Barokne Večeri) festival has been an important part of the city's cultural and social life. Varaždin will be known to a number of young musicians as the home of the Aestas Musica Summer School for young musicians, involving by a number of UK teachers. Architecturally and culturally, inland Croatia is Hapsburg influenced, in contrast to the more Italianate coast – indeed, visiting Zagreb and then Varaždin is like experiencing successively smaller versions of 18th century Vienna.

There were two aperitifs before the official opening of this year's two-week long festival, the first being a visit to Zagreb's splendidly baroque Hapsburg-style National Theatre (sited in the 'Green Horseshoe', Zagreb's equivalent of Vienna's Ring) for Monteverdi's *Orfeo* with the period instrument Croatian Baroque Ensemble (Hrvatski barokni ansambl) and the Choir of the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb conducted by Hervé Niquet (16 Sept). This very stylish production featured a youthful cast with a number of fine singers, although vibrato was, as ever, an issue for a few of them. The instrumental forces were impressive, and were directed with precision and musical integrity by Niquet, although I would have liked more authentic timpani. The direction by Ozren Prohić was strikingly modern with, for example, Prosperina cast as the Croatian equivalent of a white-booted Essex floozy who managed to persuade the golf-obsessed Plutone to free Euridice by means of a brief blow job. The work finished with a religious procession and the kicking to death of Orfeo. The lighting, set and costumes were well conceived, with a three-tier matrix during the first half set and a stark asylum for the second half.

The second aperitif took place in Varaždin's St Nicholas church (17 Sept) and featured one of the most impressive of the festival's visiting groups, the Barcelona based Le Tendre Amour, with members from France, Spain, Argentina and the USA. Their programme of Music for Jewish Celebrations reflected the fact that Israel was a key supporting partner for this year's festival (in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel), with Jewish music featuring in a number of programmes. Works by Marcello, Grossi, Montéclair, Caceres and the impressive Christiano Giuseppe Lidarti (an Austrian composer of Italian extract who settled in Pisa) were interspersed with part-spoken, part-sung contributions by an actor. This

was an excellent performance in all respects, with a well thought-out programme, an attractive presentation (with some neat segues) and music-making of the highest order. Particular mention must go to soprano Estefania Perdomo, whose powerful, clear, ringing voice demonstrated that it is possible to have a strong vocal presence without any trace of operatic mannerisms and only the occasional application of a well-controlled vibrato. Some of the most impressive music came with the extracts from Lidarti's oratorio, *Ester*. A performance of this excellence will be hard to beat during the rest of the Festival.

The formal opening of the festival (19 Sept) was a grand affair with the concert in the Cathedral being just part of the action. Be-wigged and costumed actors, several on horseback, struck poses in the main city square and bowed and scraped to those entering the Cathedral, and the evening finished with a grand procession that led, via youthful performances in more city squares, to a spectacular firework display above the magnificent mediaeval fortress (confusingly, at least to me, known as *Stari Grad* – or 'Old Town'). These festivities enclosed a performance of Handel's stretching of his fledgling operatic wings, *Laudate pueri*, and the first of a number of ventures outside the strictly 'baroque' period, CPE Bach's delightful *Magnificat* (Wq215), with its bustling opening and expansive soprano melody in *Quia respexit*. The performers were the 35-strong Chorus Angelicus choir of Varaždin Cathedral together with Le Parlement de Musique from Strasbourg, directed by Martin Gester. The local choir produced a very impressively clean and focussed sound with no prominent voices. However, with the notable exception of tenor Mathias Vidal, the other three soloists were unimpressive, both vocally and, in the case of the mezzo and baritone, by having their heads consistently buried in their scores.

The Cathedral was also the venue for the following day's reconstruction of Giovanni Gabrieli's 1595 'Mass for the Coronation of Doge Marino Grimani', performed by the 35 strong Choir of Croatian Radio and Television and the eight instrumentalists of Les Sagueboutiers de Toulouse (20 Sept). Tonči Bilić was an impressive conductor – this is not an easy repertoire to control. There wasn't a chamber organ available at the right pitch, so the west-end cathedral organ was used, adding a certain gravitas, albeit from the opposite end of the church. This was another impressive performance by a Croatian choir, although the more exposed solos and consorts drawn from the choir were less effective. A late night concert of lute and guitar music could have been an ideal digestive after this large scale work but, in the event, Hopkinson Smith's programme of Bach (a transcription into lute idiom of the first solo violin partita), Sanz, Gureau and Santa Cruz was far too long and intense for me and

several others in the audience. This concert also reinforced something that had bothered me in the two earlier events – the aural and visual disruption caused by cameras. In this case, after Hopkinson Smith had waited patiently for an audience silence (that only partially arrived about half way through the first piece), a TV cameraman directed his spotlight and camera onto the audience. He then seems to have left, without filming the concert.

The following (Sunday morning) concert took place in the little rose-petal pink octagonal room at the top of the Stari Grad castle that houses Varaždin's greatest musical treasure, a delightful 1668 chamber organ, the case pipes of which have formed the main advertising logo for the Baroque Festival since its creation 38 years ago. Sadly, it wasn't used during this performance by members of the Croatian Baroque Ensemble. According to the programme, they are the only group in Croatia specialising in baroque music using period instruments. Although they regularly perform little-known music of Croatian composers, these were unfortunately lacking in this programme of works by Corelli, Vivaldi, Uccellini, Piccinini, Castello, Corbetta and Frescobaldi. The highlight was the singing of soprano Martina Burger in Vivaldi's cantata *Lungi dal vago volto*. She has a very attractive and clear voice and excellent communication with the audience packed into this tiny space. I could have done with a lot more of her singing in the otherwise instrumental programme. One practical observation is that it would have been a nice piece of stage etiquette if the three instrumentalists had tuned up before the singer came on rather than after – she was left standing while the others tuned.

The Concert Hall of the Varaždin National Theatre was the acoustically impressive venue for a concert by the Varaždin Chamber Orchestra (21 Sept). Although by no means a period instrument band, they demonstrated some awareness of the techniques of period performance, ably encouraged by their director, cellist Krešimir Lazar, who not only played a baroque instrument, but was also fully conversant with the appropriate technique for the repertoire. It is not easy for a cellist to direct an orchestra, not least because, compared with a violinist, the bowing is not so obvious to the other musicians. But Lazar made impressive use of body movement and, occasionally, very deliberate demonstrations of phrasing and articulation to encourage his players. Their programme included Vivaldi, Couperin, Telmann, Durate and Bach's 2nd Orchestral Suite, with flautist Dani Bošnjak combining with Lazar to produce an exhilarating performance.

Camerata Trajectina and have been performing together for around 34 years. Their entertaining programme, 'Music for Rembrandt' (with music by van Eyck, Vallet, Krul, Startera, Huygens, Hooft, Vondel and Sweelinck), took place in a private house in the city (22 Sept), with Baroque flunkies bowing and curtsying at the entrance. Projected photographs aided their spoken and musical tour of the musical life of Rembrandt's time. The facial expressions and hand gestures meant that understanding of the Dutch texts was not a requirement for Croatian or English listeners. Most of the items were in verse, with

simple melodies and harmonies. One of the more dramatic ones was Vondel's *O Kersnacht schooner dan de daghen*, the song of a chorus of nuns just before they are slaughtered. You could certainly hear their fear expressed in the soprano's voice! Being Dutch, their encore was a song about pickled herring.

For many people, including local florists, the highlight of the festival was the concert given by Emma Kirkby and London Baroque in the Concert Hall of the Varaždin National Theatre (23 Sept). Their programme, *Les Amours Baroques*, focussed on the amours of the French and English, with works by Purcell, Couperin, Arne, Handel, Forqueray and Montéclair. Couperin's *Le Parnasse, ou L'apothéose de Corelli* gave Charles Medlam a chance to demonstrate his impeccable French, and Handel's Trio Sonata in G minor and Purcell's Chaconne in the same key demonstrated the extraordinary musicianship of the four players of London Baroque. The two violinists, Ingrid Seifert and Richard Gwilt, form a perfect musical partnership – if one person could play two violins at the same time, it would sound like this. Charles Medlam and Steven Devine provide ideal continuo support, with both slipping into more soloistic roles in three pieces by Forqueray, including an exquisitely played *en taille* melody of *La du Vaucel*. Emma Kirkby was exquisite in songs by Purcell and Arne and Montéclair's *Morte di Lucretia*. She has an outstanding ability to communicate the expression of the text and music – she seems to live every word of every line and also manages to mould her voice into the timbre and texture of the accompanying instruments. At the end of concerts in Varaždin, a large display of flowers is usually placed at the front of the stage, with single stems given to individual performers (male and female). So it was a bit of a surprise, not least to Emma, when something the size of a small tree was bought on stage and presented directly to her. As she disappeared behind it, there started a procession of further bunches – she ended up clutching several times her body weight in flowers, with three stage-hands helping her to hold them all. [A pity our cartoonist wasn't present! CB]

The late evening concert was given by Vox Luminis, an extremely impressive young vocal group that started in the Namur conservatory in Belgium but with members from many different countries. The ten singers (together with organ, theorbo and viola da gamba continuo) gave a programme of Scarlatti (*Te Deum laudamus*, *Salve Regina* and *Stabat mater*) and Carissimi's *Historia di Jephte* (St Nicolas, 23 Sept). Their singing was outstanding, both individually and in consort – indeed, it was refreshing to come across singers who can sing solo and in consort with equal skill. It also made a change to come across four sopranos who managed to avoid getting louder as they went higher. The main solo roles of the evening went to Robert Buckland and Zsuzsi Tóth in Carissimi's *Jephte* – both fine singers. I also liked the contributions from soprano Annelies Brants. Another impressive aspect of Vox Luminis was that there was no obvious director. Not only do I find the lack of a conductor more visually appealing, allowing the focus to be on the performers, but with groups that work in this way I detect a tighter and

more focussed approach to music-making. The occasional moments of silence within a piece, for example, were all beautifully timed, and consort entries were all perfect. They also survived what could well have been a pretty nerve-wracking experience for a group of young singers waiting on stage to start one of their later pieces – the arrival of Emma Kirkby who, rather than slipping in at the back as she intended, was escorted to the very front row! It says much for the singers that they took this in their stride. And it says even more for Emma that she not only came to hear this group after a very long day of rehearsal, workshop teaching and giving her own concert, but also spent so much time talking with the group afterwards.

I was surprised to find that the Salzburger Hofmusik was not a period instrument orchestra – the name alone suggested otherwise, at least to me, and they were set up by director Wolfgang Brunner to explore the pre-Mozartian music of their earlier namesake. As it was, there was a mixture of modern and period instruments and bows and playing styles – and, I am afraid, playing abilities. Intonation was a frequent issue, and the double bass player seems to have turned up at the wrong concert with the wrong instrument! However I was impressed with Makiko Kurabayashi, bassoon, Christine Brandauer and Sieglinde Groessinger, flutes, and cellist Luise Buchberger. They performed CPE Bach's rather Handelian Oratorio, *Die Israeliten in der Wüste* (Varaždin Cathedral, 24 Sept). This was one of Bach's first works after his arrival in Hamburg, where he replaced Telemann as Kapellmeister in 1768. By far the best singer was soprano Gudren Sidonie Otto (first Israelite). Not only did she have an extremely attractive voice, but she displayed an understanding of the *empfindsam* style in which much of this work is written and responded well to the texts. Michael Schopper was a very imposing basso-profundo Moses, visually as well as aurally.

'Touching' is a word that I do not often find myself using when reviewing, but it can certainly be applied to a delightful late night concert given in the little mediaeval Erdödy Chapel in the Stari Grad castle (24 Sept) by *Dječji Pjevački Kvintet Horvat* (The Children's Singing Quintet 'Horvat'), a family of young teenagers (four girls and a boy, four siblings and a cousin, aged between about 13 and 17) with a gamba bass that may become redundant when the young lad's voice breaks. They come from Sveti Juraj na Bregu (St George on the Hill), a small community a few kilometres north east of Varaždin. It wasn't just the youthful clarity of the children's voices that appealed. The music was from the 'Songs for the most important, most holy and most joyous days of the year' ('Pisni za najpoglavitije, najsvetije i najveselije dni svega godišća') by Atanazije Jurjević (Athanasio Georgiceo), a Croatian interpreter, diplomat and religious writer who became Councillor for Slavonic Countries to the Habsburg Ferdinand II and published this book of Kirchenlied (originally for solo voice and organ) in 1635. These simple harmonisations in verse and refrain form were charming in their elegant naivety – they are, I think, the earliest musical works in the Croatian language. It will be

interesting to see what sort of musical lives these talented youngsters go on to lead. This programme has been recorded (unfortunately with applause after each piece) by 'Udruga Prosoli - Sveta glazba' (CD.ED 0116) but it might be difficult to track down.

The German organist Andreas Liebig, now based in Norway, had the difficult job of making J S Bach sound convincing on the organ of Varaždin Cathedral (25 Sept), a modern eclectic instrument that clearly wasn't designed for Bach and audibly suffered from tuning, regulation, balance and action problems. Liebig did the sensible thing when faced with such an organ – rather than try and make the organ sound like something it isn't, he used the full resources of the instrument as it was, producing a grand, complex and occasionally curious sound, albeit perhaps not one that Bach would have recognised. The opening Fantasia in G minor was given an exuberant and flamboyant performance with a driven and energetic fugue. The extended variation set, *Saraband con partita* (BWV 990) is rarely heard on the harpsichord, let alone the organ, but Liebig made it work effectively and explored the wide range of tone colours available. The simplest and most attractive sound of the evening came with the relatively pure tierce registration of *O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß*. The light and clean opening of the concluding Toccata and Fugue in D minor soon gave way to darker and more intense colours, later relieved by a sparkling fugue.

Authenticity questions again came to the fore with the concert by the Belarus National Chamber Orchestra and the Academic Choir 'J J Strossmayer' of the Music Academy in Osijek (in the far east of Croatia), conducted by Pyotr Vandilovsky (St Francis Church, 26 Sept), not least in their choice of a grand piano for Bach's Concerto in D minor (BWV 1052), matching the modern instruments of the orchestra. Handel's Concerto Grosso in D used a chunky harpsichord as continuo. Dmitriy Bortniansky's *Koncertna simfonija* stretched the baroque focus of the Festival with its post-Haydnesque joviality and tunefulness, if not harmonic invention. The Croatian choir made an impressive sound in the concluding Magnificat in C by Pergolesi. This included a particularly effective soprano and alto duet in *Et misericordia*. Notwithstanding issues of authenticity, the Belarus orchestra produced a fine sound within their particular tradition and showed some awareness of period style.

Authenticity certainly wasn't an issue in the harpsichord recital given by Shalev Ad-El (another of the Israeli musicians taking part in the Festival) in Varaždin's historic Sermage-Prassinsky Palace (26 Sept). His programme demonstrated the enormous stylistic difference between JS Bach and two of his sons, CPE and WF. Father was represented by the Toccatas in E minor and D minor (BWV 914/913), both given free and spirited interpretations, and the more formally structured Prelude, Fugue and Allegro (BWV 998). I confess that I had never fully appreciated the music of WF Bach, and only partially that of CPE Bach, but Shalev Ad-El gave intense and insightful readings of their music, notably in three of WF Bach's Polonaises.

The Brisk Recorder Quartet managed to get their enormous collection of recorders through Croatian Customs and presented their programme, 'Flemings in Venice – the art of ornamentation' in Trakošćan Castle, an imposing 19th century recreation of a mediaeval fortress, about 30km west of Varaždin (27 Sept). Their well-presented and extremely well-played concert included works by Mainerio, Sandrin, Merulo, Erbach, Willaert, Andrea Gabrieli, Buus and Bendusi and represented the strong links between Flemish musicians and Venice. As an organist, I was particularly fascinated by their performance of the slowly unfolding polyphony of Erbach's *Ricercar noni toni* and Buus's *Recercar Quarto*, the wider expressive range of the recorder consort adding so much to each individual line. It will be the memory of the outstanding virtuosity and professionalism of these talented players that endures.

I wouldn't normally have to travel to Croatia to hear the Academy of Ancient Music, so their concert in Varaždin Cathedral (27 Sept) was a timely reminder of home. Their fascinating programme contrasted the music of Christopher Gibbons and his pupil, Purcell. I don't know whether any of the modern instrument players that had been playing in the festival were at this concert but, in the performance by Pavlo Beznoziuk and Rodolfo Richter (with Reiko Ichise and Richard Egarr very impressive fellow contributors on viola da gamba and organ) of two of Gibbons' Fantasia-Suites for 2 violins, they would have heard a superb example of how to articulate and phrase the small groups of notes that are the building blocks of music of this era, and to shade and shape individual notes. Historically informed performance is not just about period instruments and bows. The altos in the Academy Choir got an early chance for prominence in two gorgeous cadential flourishes in Purcell's 'I was glad', but otherwise the 13-strong choir was a disappointment. Most of the voices (only one of whom I recognised) had a degree of vibrato that interfered with any notion of consort singing. They no doubt had a great deal more training than most of the singers in the Croatian choirs that I had heard, but I found the attractive clarity of tone of the local choirs a great deal more appealing. That said, several people in the audience told me that they loved hearing what they called this 'very English' vocal sound.

Varaždin's 19th century synagogue has just started to be restored to become an arts and cultural centre but, at the moment, it is only just short of derelict. But in its state of stark simplicity it made moving venue for the late night concert by the Israeli group Ensemble Nobile (27 Sept). It is impossible to separate musical experiences like this from European history, and slides of the synagogue in its heyday during the concert were a touching reminder, not only of mid-twentieth century history, but also of the key role that the Jewish population played in the development of the city of Varaždin. Ensemble Nobile's programme focussed on Venice, starting with 'Music from the Synagogue' with works by Rossi and Casseres and a traditional song for Shabbat and continuing with 'Songs from the Gondola' with music by Monteverdi, Frescobaldi and some lively anonymous songs, ending with the

delightfully lilting *La biondina in gondoletta*. Two key sounds dominated the evening, the wonderfully communicative and expressive singing of a present day *biondina*, soprano Ye'ela Avital, and the distinctive twang of the mandolin of Avi Avital – a particularly evocative feature of the stunning performance of Vivaldi's *La Folia*. There were also impressive contributions from violinist Shlomit Sivan Rosen and Yizhar Karshon, harpsichord. For me, Ensemble Nobile were one of the most impressive groups in the entire Festival.

The official final concert of the Festival was given in the cathedral (28 Sept) by the period instrumentalists of 'Barrocade - Israeli Baroque Collective' (which included all the members of Ensemble Nobile) together with a number of local musicians, generally using modern instruments, and the 23-strong Croatian 'Ivan Filipović' Chamber choir, directed by Goran Jarković, and a programme of Vivaldi's *Laudate pueri*, Vivaldi Mandolin Concerto and Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum*. Ye'ela Avital reappeared as the soprano soloist in the Vivaldi, her bright tone and compelling stage presence more than making up for a deep, but not unattractive, vibrato that occasionally obscured key ornaments. The gentle *Gloria patri* was particularly beautifully sung. The *Dettingen Te Deum* also featured three Croatian soloists who struggled to meet the standard set by Ye'ela Avital. The mezzo and bass both produced reasonable voices, but one spent the whole time singing to the conductor (rather unnerving to watch, at least for this audience member) and the other kept their head in the music throughout – and the baritone's very nervous-sounding vibrato and curious pronunciation (with frequent references to "the Virgin's varm") was something of a put-off. The Croatian flautist, oboists and trumpeters were impressive. I had previously heard soprano Ye'ela Avital (together with harpsichordist Yizhar Karshon) in the 2003 Early Music Network International Young Artists Competition, so it was lovely to see her headlining two such important concerts.

A concert of my own in London meant that I had to leave Varaždin before the Festive Concert given in the cathedral (29 Sept) to celebrate the 180th anniversary of the Varaždin Music School and the life of Marijan Zuber, the founder of the Varaždin Baroque Evenings, who died a few weeks before the concert, which was to have celebrated his 95th birthday. The Varaždin Music School provides specialist musical education for around 600 children from 8 to 18 and also hosts the Aestas Musica Summer School. The girls choir, directed by Dada Ruža, were accompanied by members of London's Royal Academy of Music Baroque Orchestra, conducted by Laurence Cummings, in Pergolesi's *Stabat mater* and Vivaldi's *Gloria*. I managed to hear a few rehearsals of both choir and orchestra and was impressed with both. The girls choir produced a delightful sound.

There are a number of prizes given by a Festival jury for performers in the Festival. Since writing this review I have heard that Vox Luminis won the Ivan Lukačić Prize for the highest interpretational achievement of an ensemble, with Ensemble Nobile getting the 2nd prize for the best artistic interpretation. The Jurica Murai Prize for

the best interpretation went to the ensemble *Le Tendre Amour*. As readers will have judged from my own reviews, these awards were all well deserved. It was also entirely appropriate that they were awarded to three of the younger groups of performers. The Kantor Prize is given by a Croatian daily newspaper for the best interpretation by a Croatian musician of a work by J. S. Bach. This went to flautist Dani Bošnjak for his performance of the 2nd Orchestral Suite, an award that must have been rather easier to judge, as his was the *only* performance by a Croatian musician of a work by Bach.

This impressive festival was not just a showcase for baroque music, but also for Croatian musicians, most of whom proved to be highly capable. In terms of period performance, countries like Croatia have not had the advantages of some other countries in terms of learning and playing opportunities – indeed, it is only in the last couple of years, under the artistic direction of composer Davor Bobić, that the main focus has been on period instruments. This is clearly the direction to which the Festival needs to go in order to build its international credibility. It has a great deal of support, both financial and organisational, and audiences were consistently large. There is enormous potential for a specialist festival like this to make more of an international mark. I commend it.

BIRMINGHAM EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL
Concert Soave

Wednesday 15 October at 7.30 pm

Clifford Bartlett

It was Maria Cristina Kiehr who enticed me to risk the traffic jams of the A14 and suburbs of Birmingham on a wet afternoon. The Argentinian singer has one of my favourite early-music voices, and I couldn't miss her, despite having to coax an ailing vehicle for the 160-mile round trip. I arrived at an empty church (St Augustine's, Edgbaston) expecting a welcome reception. Luckily, my companion's son had been in the church choir some years ago, so she guessed what house to make for. This gave me a chance to be introduced to a group of people I hadn't encountered when attending other early-music events in Birmingham over the last couple of years – the academics. None of those whom I knew from the Midlands Early Music Forum were present – not even Mike Ashley, an *EMR* subscriber and excellent amateur theorbist whom I always seem to meet at Birmingham events.

The programme was a small-scale Venetian Vespers for St Sebastian with just one singer, 2 violins and a continuo group of organ (with a few bars of harpsichord – rather pointless bringing and tuning an instrument for so little), harp and gamba. Apart from *Confitebor III*, no Monteverdi, but music nevertheless of high quality by the younger generation. I hadn't remembered that Maria Cristina Kiehr's voice had slightly fruity quality, but it only took a few bars for me to adjust to it, and her use of it was stunning, with

the virtuosic passages almost unassuming. In the chant antiphons, she seemed to plug into the acoustic of the church, achieving resonance without apparent effort: were they not so marvellously sung, I would have thought them irrelevant in a programme with only one voice. In other respects, though, the church was a bit of a problem.

My last editorial was about how people can hear the same music differently. Here, judging by various conversations in the interval, we were hearing quite different things. The organ, for instance, was too loud for some, fine for others. The harp was not audible enough for most of us, but one person complained it was a bit loud. (It was a pity that, unlike the organist, the harpist had no solos.) The gamba was generally thought too loud, but that may in part have been because the instrument was used more than it needed to be. The fiddlers (who played brilliantly) were clearly audible. Making allowances for such variation, it was a very fine concert, the impeccably stylish as well as virtuosic (though unassuming) singer well supported by her co-director Jean-Marc Aymes and his accomplished colleagues. I was pleasantly surprised that my usual Birmingham concert companion, who is somewhat sceptical of all early music unless produced by *Ex Cathedra* and whom I expected to be a little underwhelmed, was even more enthusiastic than I was. I hope the other concerts of the Festival were equally inspired.

On my way out, I was asked by one member of the audience to comment on the distraction of a photographer who prowled round the church throughout the whole concert. I didn't need any encouragement. Someone should have stopped him.

THE ROYAL WIND MUSIC

Little St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, 16 November

Anthony Rowland-Jones

Selene Mills of Cambridge Early Music did well to seize an opportunity to bring Paul Leenhouts' double sextet recorder consort to Cambridge for a Sunday afternoon recital. I had been fortunate enough to hear this ensemble in June 2007 as part of the main programme of the Boston Early Music Festival in the Jordan Hall, which has a capacity of over a thousand, and I wrote a glowing review of that occasion in *The Recorder Magazine*. If anything, The Royal Wind Music were even better in Cambridge. Although the acoustics of Jordan Hall are excellent, the group seemed more relaxed in the intimate ambience of the church, and their programme suited this environment. Over the last eighteen months, the players, all associated with the Sweelinck Academy in Amsterdam, have responded to the inspirational leadership of Paul Leenhouts in their understanding of 16th- and 17th-century instrumental music, especially in its vocal and emotional qualities. Paul Leenhouts has in his teaching distilled three decades of experience as a member of the Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet, and knows exactly how to communicate his exceptional abilities in technique and interpretation to his brilliant and versatile young players.

The packed audience was impressed and surprised. The Royal Wind Music play their entire programme from memory, with many changes of instruments, carried out with so little fuss as hardly to be noticed. They play a range of nine sizes of recorders, the lowest being a sub-contrabass in B flat, all by the same makers after the late Renaissance instruments of the Bassanos. The conductor stood well back from the arc of players, communicating his interpretative intentions by small but persuasive hand-movements. With so little distraction, one felt as immersed in the music as the players were themselves.

But what most impressed was the sound. Many people in the audience were hearing for the first time what a large recorder ensemble (or recorder orchestra) should, in my view, sound like. Recorder consorts are sometimes said to resemble the sound of a pipe organ. But it is much more. Tones are created by breath-delivery from people – twelve of them in this case – rather than from one mechanical pump. And that breath-delivery can alter at will each note's pitch, articulation, dynamic and (by breath-delivery techniques often neglected by recorder players) tone-colour. This was particularly evident in the playing of Dowland's *Lachrimae Antiquae* where each strain had, as it were, its own personality. The players in this ensemble are highly trained in subtleties of temperament and the use of microtonal changes and dynamics to give the variety and character required by the contexts of their music. Additionally, considerable variety is achieved by changing the number and sizes of instruments playing at any one time; this was evident right from the opening item, a very lively account of Sweelinck's organ tablature version of *Est-ce Mars*.

The greatest sound impression must have been for those present who play in a recorder orchestra. These groups are of players who work together as a permanent ensemble rehearsing regularly under one conductor or musical director. As few pieces have been composed specifically for such groups, they play arrangements, often very skilfully done. This is true also of the Royal Wind Music, although their repertoire is drawn from a period of music when instrumentation depended on availability and circumstances rather than upon a composer's ideas, if any, as to what voices, melody instruments, and/or keyboard/plucked strings he had in mind. The modern recorder ensemble suffers from two disadvantages. Firstly its instruments rarely match, and in numbers and balance they are top-heavy with too few basses, so the sound can more resemble that of a fairground organ rather than a chamber pipe-organ. Secondly, where that effect is diminished by having more contrabasses and fewer descants, the ensemble, if it is to deserve that name, needs to allow for the difference in speaking rate (i.e. the time between starting to give breath and the actual production of sound) between fast-speaking descants and slow-speaking contrabasses. Softening articulation helps, but only slightly. The players of the low instruments need to learn to give breath before the conductor's downbeat, to a more or lesser degree according to the size of the recorder. This is a difficult technique to master, especially in playing music derived from highly rhythmic dance sources. But, as they

showed in two Brade courantes and a Valentin Hausmann Polish dance played as an encore, making these adjustments came as second nature to the players of the Royal Wind Music. Even the B flat sub-contrabass, some 10 feet high, and very slow-speaking and demanding of breath, contributed its bass notes exactly in time with those of the descant (soprano) top line. Only in the encore did the group use a type of staccato articulation which produces a 'chiff' percussive sound-effect. Perhaps there should have been more dance-based music in the programme.

Nevertheless, an enormous variety of sound-qualities were achieved. When the participants played as a single group of twelve, the most-used distribution was two tenor recorders in c', three basset-basses in f, four great basses (c), two contrabasses (F) and a B flat sub-contrabass. The lowest note of the tenor recorder is the central note of a keyboard, and to me this is a comfortable tessitura for listening to a recorder consort, which perhaps should be thought of as an ideal standard for a recorder orchestra playing pre-baroque music. Occasionally, the group played with basset-basses on the top line and, more often, with trebles (altos) at the top, and, sometimes, descants (sopranos), but generally staying with the full range of the basses beneath. For contrast, other higher-tessitura groupings were used, even, just once, a trio of two descants and a treble. Because upper recorders are strong in difference tones, this grouping often sounds unpleasantly strident, but the skilled players made it beautifully sweet, nicely contrasting with the group's normal lower tessituras. Van Eyck's solo variations on Caccini's *Amarilli mia bella* were played, not on the composer's small *handfluyt*, but an octave lower on a tenor. Maria Martínez Ayerza's interpretation, with its exciting dynamic changes, was outstanding.

At other times, notably in Michael Praetorius's *Vater unser*, the group played antiphonally as two sextets. This piece followed Steigleder's setting in four parts with a solo quartet, SATB. Scheidt's setting was played by a trio of one basset-bass and two great basses. This series of seven versions of the same melody, the last two being by J.S. Bach, ended the programme in a manner well suited to the surroundings. This was also the case with the second item in the programme, settings by Dowland, Pachelbel and Sweelinck of 'The Old Hundredth', which also demonstrated the considerable range of timbres which The Royal Wind Music is capable of. Constructing well-integrated programmes of music from a period when each composition rarely lasts for more than a few minutes is not easy. Like their playing, The Royal Wind Music's programme at Cambridge, with all the pieces relating in some way to the melodies found in van Eyck's *The Divine Flute-Heaven* (the programme's title), was close to being perfect.

BOYCE PROLONGS ACTIVE LIFE

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LETTER FROM BURGUNDY

Brian Robins

Every year since moving to France, the first falling leaves of autumn provide a reminder that it is time for us to point west and make the journey over the Loire into neighbouring Allier, the northern-most *département* of the Auvergne. This annual migration of Robins is occasioned not by any quest for more temperate climes (although the weather this year was in fact delightfully warm and sunny), but by the Journées Musicales d'Automne weekend at Souvigny, a picturesque village lying in the heart of the Bourbonnais some 12 km from Moulins, the principal town of Allier. Souvigny is dominated by its large and hugely impressive Clunaic abbey church, most of which dates from between the 11th and 15th centuries. And that's not all. The abbey is also the home of one of the most famous of François-Henri Clicquot's organs, an instrument built in 1783 and one remarkable for remaining in near-original state.

It was Souvigny's Clicquot organ that provided inspiration for the Journées Musicales, now in its eighth year, although for the past three years it has played a mute role, being housed under protective wraps while the abbey has been undergoing extensive restoration. This meant that the festival also had to seek an alternative venue for some of its concerts, a problem readily solved in this part of the world, where if you lose one historic venue you simply move up the road to another, in this case the beautiful and suitably spacious Romanesque church situated in the village of Saint-Menoux. I suppose at this point I should declare an interest and tell you that Pierre Dubois (a name that may be familiar to readers of *EMR* as the editor of Ashgate's Charles Avison *Essay*), the artistic director at Souvigny, is a close friend of ours, a fact that impinges not a jot on my critical faculties, as Pierre would be the first to tell you! However, it probably does influence what is one of the most appealing features of the Journées Musicales: an intimacy and friendly warmth greatly aided by informal post-concert receptions at which artists mingle with the audience, and a free pre-concert breakfast before the Sunday morning concert. Further plaudits are in order for allowing children under 12 to attend the concerts for a mere €2, as a result of which one sees quite young and generally remarkably well-behaved youngsters at both the Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning events in particular. It's a marvellous way to introduce them to 'art' music, although whether or not it would work in Britain is another matter; by and large French children are better mannered than their counterparts in the UK.

This year's opening concert at Saint-Menoux was boldly innovative, consisting as it did of a juxtaposition of the last four Biber 'Rosary' Sonatas and Froberger keyboard pieces with extracts from *Hagoromo*, a 15th c. Japanese Nô play by Zeami. My knowledge of Nô drama extends no

further (and then tenuously) than Britten's *Curlew River*, but I did find the highly stylised movements of Masato Matsuura fascinating, while at the same time never being quite persuaded that the experiment worked. (On returning home I managed to find the text of the play and am still unable to make even a speculative connection). Mira Glodeanu's playing of the Biber pieces was a bit curate's eggish, with rather too many technical slips rubbing shoulders with much expressively sensitive and even elegant playing that reached a high point in the splendid performance of the 'Assumption' Sonata (No.14). Frédéric Haas' interpretations of the Froberger pieces had a quietly dignified authority that equally conveyed freedom of spirit.

If it was also possible to feel that Glodeanu's playing might have aspired to attempting something closer to 17th rather than 18th c. style, that was as nothing compared with the lack of any real discernible Baroque style displayed by the currently fashionable Swiss cellist Ophélie Gaillard the following afternoon. Quite why Gaillard chose a first half that included mostly 17th c. music composed for viol only she knows, particularly when she brought little insight to pieces by such as Diego Ortiz and Frescobaldi. The second half, devoted to three of Vivaldi's cello sonatas, certainly allowed Gaillard to show off a formidable technique, but failed to convince at least this listener that she brings much more than virtuosity to performances designed more to win easy applause than provide deeper satisfaction. Gaillard's recital was given at Saint-Marc in Souvigny, a deconsecrated church transformed into a fine concert venue with the audience on three sides of the performers. The same evening it proved an evocative setting for the concert given by the Ensemble Pierre Robert under the direction of Frédéric Desenclos, an event eagerly anticipated by me in the light of some exceptional CDs made for Alpha. Neither did it disappoint. This was a truly outstanding concert devoted principally to Lenten motets by Clément Marot and the familiar *Leçons de Tenebré* of Couperin, but also including unusually compelling performances by the continuo players of a de Visée lute suite and Marais' *prelude Les Voix Humaines*. If the voices of young singers Anne Magouët and Sarah Breton were larger than we're used to in this music, both are the possessors of ideally fresh, pure voices that admirably captured its paradoxical incense-laden sensuality.

One of Pierre's great skills is to unearth fine but little-known young artists and he did not fail this year, coming up with Il Mondo della Luna, a daftly-named fortepiano trio, who at the Sunday morning concert gave profoundly musical and technically superb performances of trios by J. C. and C. P. E. Bach, Haydn (the marvellous Hob. XV/10), Mozart and Dussek, that of the last named (op.

XV/10), Mozart and Dussek, that of the last named (op. 24/1) a most appealing work that introduces two popular English tunes. Not the least of Il Mondo's assets is the fine sense of ensemble and balance between its members, pianist Joël Gauvrit in particular ensuring that his leading role never dominates his colleagues. These were unquestionably some of the finest Classical piano trio performances I've heard in some while and Il Mondo della Luna deserves to go far... but perhaps with a different name? The final concert was entrusted to a well-established group, Graham O'Reilly's Ensemble Europeen William Byrd, who gave a programme consisting of anthems by Purcell, Locke and Blow, sung one to a part. Unfortunately, enforced changes to the male side of the line-up resulted in performances that, while well informed and including some excellent work from soprano Monika Mauch and mezzo Brigitte Vinson, were unevenly balanced and somewhat monochrome. And I hope Graham will not take it amiss if I suggest that at this stage of his career he really should not be singing professionally.

As a small, concentrated festival, Souvigny's Journées Musicales makes for an enticing experience that can be strongly recommended to anyone looking to combine an autumn break across the channel with early music. And next year the abbey *should* be in use again...

RICHARD HICKOX

(1948-2008)

Richard Hickox died suddenly after a rehearsal in Swansea on Sunday 23 October. While not recently working to any extent in early music, his early career was with chamber choirs and orchestras performing mostly early repertoire, and although he was not a pioneer in the use of early instruments, he was well aware of performance practice issues. I think his chubby face and boyish enthusiasm was a handicap rather than a help in being taken seriously. Hugh Keyte, the BBC's early-music producer from the mid-1970s, told me that, when he asked Richard what he would like to conduct, he said 'everything', in a way that suggest unbounded enthusiasm rather than arrogance. His subsequent career bore that out. A tribute from Chandos stated that in the 20 years he was on their books he made 280 recordings of a vast range of music, including many neglected or unknown works. His association with Simon Standage produced a new orchestra, Collegium Musicum 90, which apart from some excellent baroque recordings participated in a particular fine series of Haydn and then Hummel masses.

There are or will be plenty of obituaries in the press. As I usually do with obituaries here, I'll add a few remarks on my interaction with him, in particular with two operas at Christ Church, Spitalfields.

Richard had been involved in the efforts to restore the church and establish it as a music venue when it was still in bad condition. Hugh told me of his generosity that

when he asked Richard for help in putting on a concert there which would convince the sceptical church authorities that the acoustics were suitable, Richard organised a genuine charity concert (with no-one being paid) with his choir and orchestra putting on a performance of *Israel in Egypt* that incontrovertibly made the point.

Richard asked me to prepare an edition of Handel's *Alcina* for a run of performances at Christ Church in 1985. I was flattered by his faith in me; I can't remember any specific interactions, but I suspect I was chosen because I'd offered advice to Richard as a bonus when he bent my ear to be allowed to borrow music from the BBC. I had done editorial work touching up Handel oratorios for various conductors, and had known the work for nearly 20 years (it was the first Handel opera I ever saw – the Handel Opera Society with Joan Sutherland in 1957). I had a session with Richard and Simon Standage on interpretation and on the bowings, then became the orchestral librarian and marked up the parts. I had already marked up a score with suggestions for ornamentation for a one night stand that Andrew Parrott had conducted at La Scala, so these were incorporated, not to be followed note for note (often I offered a choice) but as a basis for the singer to develop in rehearsal.

This was followed by a more fundamental involvement in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* in 1988. When Richard first phoned me about *Poppea*, I insisted that the work didn't need a conductor, so he modestly appointed himself second harpsichordist. Again I prepared a new edition (involving rather more editorial thought than *Alcina*). I joined Richard and the organiser of the event, Jonathan Balkind, for three days of auditions: the main roles had been cast, but the rest were open to young professionals. The three of us were appalled by the lack of awareness of how Monteverdi might be sung – and hardly any offered audition pieces earlier than Mozart. I think our music colleges are doing a better job now (though a meeting with the Head of Voice at one of them last year didn't give much hope: he couldn't understand that, now that Handel was mainstream operatic repertoire, singers needed to learn how to trill!) I was also asked to be present as musical advisor for the week of musical rehearsals that preceded stage work. For both these operas, I was impressed by the way Richard took aboard suggestions from others; this could be seen as a sign of weakness, but he was clearly, if not over-demonstrably in charge, and easy to work with.

Richard went on to make one of his careers in opera, especially at the Sidney Opera House. He was due to conduct a revival of Vaughan Williams' *Riders to the Sea* for English National Opera four days after his death. He also had a close and successful relationship with a variety of orchestras. If he had a specialisation, it was perhaps 20th century British music, but everything he did seemed to be unassumingly successful, as the series of awards his recordings won testifies. I suspect that everyone enjoyed working with him, and making music as a joint activity with positive interaction between conductor and singers and players.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett & Barbara Sachs

STERNHOLD & HOPKINS

Beth Quitslund *The Reformation in Rhyme: Sternhold, Hopkins and the English Metrical Psalter 1547-1603* Ashgate, 2008. x + 322pp, £60.00

Had the publisher mentioned when asking if we wanted a review copy that the writer deliberately ignored the musical aspect (partly because it was covered by Nicholas Temperley and Robin Leaver's work, partly because she had no training as a musicologist), I would have declined. But it is still an interesting book, not least because of her argument that the bad reputation of the versification of the 'Old Version' is largely a 17th-century idea, and that during the reign of Elizabeth *The whole booke of Psalmes* (to give the title adopted in the first complete edition by Thomas Day in 1562) was almost universally accepted by the English church. It might be an interesting line of enquiry to discuss whether the criticism was linked with a general desire to move on with the new century and new dynasty with James I & Charles I.

Despite their ubiquity at the time, the metrical translations of the psalms by Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins and others are now virtually unknown. The author's names are familiar enough, sounding like a Dickensian law practice. But how many of the texts survive on hymn books? A spot check for the two main authors in *Hymns Ancient & Modern*, *The English Hymnal*, *The Methodist Hymnbook* (1933) and its successor *Hymns and Psalms* (1983) produced one hit 'O God my strength and fortitude' (Methodist 1933 no. 24). The survivor is by William Kethe, one of the other contributors: 'All people that on earth do dwell', sung to the same tune since 1551. Its name reveals its origin 'Old Hundredth': other tune names in this pattern refer to associations with the Sternhold & Hopkins versification, and most traditional hymnbooks include a variety of them to more modern words.

The origin of the metrical psalter is usually presumed to be among protestants driven from the country in the reign of the catholic Mary, who fell under the influence of Calvin rather than Luther, so sung texts restricted to translations of the Psalms (written up to a thousand years before Christ), rather than expositions and reflections on the life and teachings of Christ. Common knowledge, however is slightly oversimplified. Quitslund shows that Sternhold's milieu was in fact the court. He was 'groom of the robes' to Henry VIII from around 1540 and retained the position during Edward VI's reign. He wasn't a literary figure, but associated with the evangelical faction at court, which Edward favoured more than Henry. Sternhold claims in his preface that Edward had sometimes heard him sing his translations. To the extent that the 19 psalms he published in 1548/9 have a bias, it favours

ideology supporting the king. The emphasis changed with the Marian exile, and Quitslund sums up the result: 'Although not actually Genevan [Calvinist] in ecclesiology, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* represents an attempt to infuse the Elizabethan church with the oppositional fervor of the Protestant underground in Mary's reign.' The book was, however, widely used in conjunction with the prayerbook services, perhaps anticipating the later tradition of the Church of England being 'a broad church' hospitable to varied beliefs (or none). The author deftly traces the theological emphases. A sample of topics indexed (and not all books are so well indexed by ideas) gives some idea of the scope: Commonwealth ideology, Communion, confessionalism, deuteronomic ideology, discipline (ecclesiastical). I would, however, have appreciated a first-line index to the psalms and hymns.

It surprises me that a book that was so fundamental a part of English religious, literary and musical experience is now so elusive. The only copy I have is a facsimile of Playford's 18th edition of *The Whole Book of Psalms*, 1729 (West Gallery Music Association, 1995), which does not represent the original music. Quitslund doesn't attempt any original aesthetic evaluation. But the versification is a bit rough and ready, and even without comparison of religious insights, the Old Version doesn't have the sheer technical skill of Watts or Wesley or the best Victorian hymn-writers or their more subtle use of Biblical stories and imagery.

I'm glad I was sent the book, even though there is not a note of music in it.

CORELLI CONFERENCE 2003

Arcangelo Corelli fra mito e realtà storica. Nuove prospettive d'indagine musicologica e interdisciplinare nel 350° anniversario della nascita edited by G. Barnett, A. D'Ovidio, S. La Via (*Historiae musicae cultores* III). Olschki, 2008 2 vols Vol. I and II: xiv+707pp €73.00 ISBN: 978 88 222 5697-3

I cannot resist the challenge of translating Olschki's catalogue description of these Acts (of the Fusignano Corelli convention of 2003), because they were maniacally determined to do justice to the contents in one sentence! 'The miscellany, divided in two volumes, contains broad studies of historic-aesthetic, critical-textual, analytic-musical, and interdisciplinary character, dedicated to five fundamental themes: 'classicality' and 'originality' of Corelli between myth and historic reality; music and art in Roma in Corelli's time; Opus V: problems of textual criticism, exegesis, performance practice; trio sonatas and the Roman tradition; production, diffusion and reception of the Corelli model.'

These volumes are very enjoyable. 11 of the 25 studies are in English, and most are followed by a transcription of the ensuing discussion. These tie the contributions together giving the comments of the various participants.

Part 1 concerns what we think of as classical about Corelli. In "Da Orfeo ad Anfione: mitizzazioni corelliane e il primato di Roma: ripensando la classicità di Corelli" Franco Piperno says that neither Corelli's compositions nor his execution were all that exemplary, but that in the 1680s he was compared to Orpheus, while from 1700 to 1710 he was somewhat demoted to the nevertheless mythical Amphion, i.e. from musical poet to musical architect. In the Rome of Clement XI, architecture and music are arts of "concrete order", whereas painting, poetry and sculpture are of "higher fantasy". For reasons of public relations Corelli held the supreme aesthetic post in Pope Clement's Arcadia. Peter Allsop's "«Nor great fancy or rich invention»: On Corelli's Originality" demolishes this disparaging criticism of Burney's, along with judgments he calls "post-Corellian pre-conceptions". Compared with composers of the Bolognese and Roman schools, Corelli heightened the expressivity of the sonata, especially in slow movements, and "paradoxically...has been judged against the norms that he himself created". Stefano La Via returns to the theme of Corelli's mythological status and function, in "Dalla «ragion poetica» di Gianvincenzo Gravina ai «bei concetti» musicali di Arcangelo Corelli: teorie e prassi del «classicismo» romano oltre l'Arcadia", entering specifically into the aesthetics of Cardinal Ottoboni's Arcadia as expressed by Gianvincenzo Gravina (1664-1718), Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni (1663-1728), and Benedetto Menzini (1646-1704). He uses Op. IV no. 3 to demonstrate how Corelli went beyond these philosophies, especially where he made serious moods playful, and expressed passions in a controlled manner. In commenting on other papers, La Via reaffirms essential differences between Corelli's music and the Arcadian aesthetics.

Part 2 continues to explore the artistic milieu of Rome, albeit not always with specific references to Corelli. More on philosophy, Carla De Bellis' "La Musica nel sogno arcadico della Poesia. Dai testi teorici di Gian Vincenzo Gravina e di Giovan Mario Crescimbeni"; Tommaso Manfredi on the figure of the *homo novus* in another interdisciplinary academy, in "Il cardinale Pietro Ottoboni e l'Accademia Albana. L'utopia dell'artista universale"; Gloria Staffieri, on Roman musical patronage, in "Pietro Ottoboni, il mecenate-drammaturgo: strategie della committenza e scelte compositive" – showing the extent to which the patron may determine aspects of the music itself, and not only in Corelli: e.g. "is there any relation between Ottoboni and the *concerto grosso*?" Karin Wolfe describes the bond of friendship in between the artist Francesco Trevisani and Corelli, and more about Corelli's interest in painting as demonstrated by his private collection.

Part 3 concerns Op. V. Having always used the SPES facsimile containing the Pietra Santa 1700 and the Roger 1710 prints, I was not aware that until 2006 Op. V was missing from the [in]complete Corelli edition. The history of the debate on the problematic editorial criteria,

unsolved from 1963 to 2003, (i.e. up to three years before Laaber finally produced *Band 3* of the *Gesamtausgabe*) is discussed by Thomas Gartmann in "Research Report of a Non-Edition: Difficulties in Editing Corelli's Op. V". Given the overwhelming number of sources, augmented further by derivative works or those realising the ornamentation or continuo, a synoptic presentation became an ever more unwieldy objective; even a CD-ROM generating all the versions was among the proposals – which perhaps deserves an attempt someday! In Niels Martin Jensen's "When is a Solo Sonata not a Solo Sonata? Corelli's Op. V Considered in the Light of the Genre's Tradition" we start from the various title pages and review the options: are they violin solos, or duos for violin and cello or for violin and harpsichord, with the added possibility of playing them à 3 or even by solo harpsichord? The study reviews the diverse characteristics of Italian solo sonatas from 1649 to 1699 (Uccellini to Veracini) and concludes by accepting this diversity and rejecting the use of optional inverted commas to qualify sonatas of this period as 'solo' 'duo' or 'trio'.

Peter Walls suggests how editions and reprints, with and without embellishments, mirrored the conflicting 18th century performing traditions, and how Corelli was apotheosised as "Orpheus" or as an "archangel", while figuring simultaneously as the "Perfect Pedagogue". In 1991 R. Rasch sustained that the ornamented adagios of the 1710 Roger edition could indeed have been Corelli's own. Michael Talbot concurs, and finds an example of the tradition earlier than the 12 graced adagios of Carlo Zuccari of 1762, in a work Vivaldi wrote for the pupil who played the concerto solos at the Ospedale della Pietà from the early 1720s up to 1737. In "«Full of Graces»: Anna Maria receives Ornaments from the Hands of Antonio Vivaldi" he analyzes the "comprehensively graced" version from her part-book for the RV 581 *Largo*, concluding that Vivaldi was versed in this Corelli tradition.

The Roman trio sonata tradition is the subject of Part 4: Antonella D'Ovidio examines 40 sonatas, mostly *da chiesa*, in "Colista, Lonati, Stradella: modelli compositivi della sonata a tre a Roma prima di Corelli". Eleanor F. McCrickard writes on "Dance and Stradella's Trio Sonatas: Implications for Corelli's Opp. I and III"; Sandra Mangsen's "[Re]playing Corelli's Trios" examines recordings from 1957 to 1995 of three *Largo* movements, to assess whether the performers interpret the two violin parts as equal partners, and if so, why (reasons of text, performance habits, experience). The four recordings compared are by the Purcell Quartet, London Baroque, the Smithsonian Chamber Players, and Europa Galante. Federico Vizzaccaro in "Da Simonelli a Corelli e ritorno: rivisitazione di un topos musicologico" asks why Corelli studied counterpoint with Matteo Simonelli in Rome in the early 1670's. There are no conclusive reasons, no clear influence, if not a reverse one – that of Corelli's instrumental style on Simonelli's *Messa Sine nomine* a 17 voci. Enrico Careri, in "Esempi di ridondanza nelle sonate da camera a tre di Francesco Antonio Bonporti" sees mechanical repetitiveness as the distinguishing defect of Bonporti with respect to Corelli.

Volume 2 (Part 5) strays into less familiar territories (including 18th century Spain, China and S. America) and some of its nine papers are long. It begins with Rudolf Rasch's very interesting "Migliorare il Perfetto..." on the editions of Corelli printed in Amsterdam in the early 1700s. It is helpful to know who copied what and why, what marketing strategies were behind editorial claims, and who modified the continuo figures and made other types of corrections in general. Lowell E. Lindgren's "The Great Influx of Italians and their Instrumental Music into London, 1701-1710" presents an enormous selection of readable documents (from libraries, newspapers, theatres) dating from 1669 to 1711, preceded by a guiding commentary. Some of the information tallies with Rasch's previous study, since protagonists such as Nicolo Haym and various publishers figure in many of these documents. This is about Corelli only insofar as "there seemed to be no satiety of [his works]", according to Roger North.

The truly curious discovery of 18th century didactic vocal arrangements (both with and without words) of movements from Opera I-IV is presented by Massimo Privitera in "«Corelli trasformato»..." The main source described is a manuscript in the Biblioteca Estense in Modena containing 12 Marian *antiphonae* for instruments and voices (8 SA; 1 B; 1 SAB; 1 SATB; 1 SAATB) adapted from Corelli's Opera III and IV by Antonio Tonelli (known for his remarkable written-out realisations of the continuo for Corelli's Op. V, also in MOe). As neither the texts nor the music were original, you might expect that the music needed to be arranged to suit the words. On the contrary, Tonelli remains so faithful to Corelli that the players can read from the trio parts!

Luca della Libera compares the masses in *concertante* style of A. Scarlatti with the Corellian 'concerto', based on Franco Piperno's description of its characteristics. He finds a significant correlation, especially in the use of a second choir to double the first. Pierluigi Petrobelli very briefly identifies the 4th Brandenburg concerto as the one most indebted to Corelli, especially in the middle *Adagio* movement. Gregory Barnett has some very original insights about what (other than titles) makes instrumental music ecclesiastic, in his "Church Music, Musical *Topoi*, and the Ethos of the Sonata da chiesa". At times he seems to beg the question, for instance when he says that "venue itself could have an impact on the perception of musical style", but that is indeed worth remembering. He comes at the question from the organ repertoire, which was by and large at least appropriate for use in church. From the *ricercar cromatico*, from the *stile antico* to slow movements in general, from toccatas with *durezze* and *ligature* to rapid passage work, and especially *alla breve* pieces full of fugal imitation, we find most of the *topoi* we expected. What about the Dances? He believes that no matter how courtly the style of the dance movements in *sonate da chiesa*, they were perceived as joyous *Alleluias*. (I really have to remember this argument because in Italy the Church forbids concerts being held in churches, and obtaining permission is an on-going challenge!)

Miguel Ángel Marín's "La recepción de Corelli en Madrid

(ca. 1680 - ca. 1810), Joyce Lindorff's "Corelli's Music in 18th-century China: Currency for Cultural Exchange" and Leonardo J. Waisman's "Arcadia meets Utopia: Corelli in the South American Wilderness" are recent researches off the beaten track:

In the case of Spain, transmission of Corelli's music was the result of Italian violinists coming to Madrid (and other cities) from Milan, Venice, Naples, and Rome throughout the reign of Carlos II (1665-1700), and of Spanish musicians active in Rome. Felipe V visited Naples in 1702 and probably heard Corelli. It is certain his music was known from 1680, but the 15 printed and 32 manuscript sources are considerably later, and comprise adaptations (of trio sonatas for harpsichord, with the elimination of the second violin part, and harmonic additions to the bass line), or copies for use in churches, or by amateurs. The study includes musical examples and appendices listing the contents of all the sources, useful for mapping the origin and development of the 'sonata' in Spain.

Corelli's Opera I-IV are present in the archives of the Beitang Library in China, having been brought to Chinese courts, along with harpsichords, by missionaries. One Teodorico Pedrini (1670-1746), in China from 1711 until his death, music master to the Emperor Kangxi and then imprisoned by him, was an emulator quasi plagiarizer of Corelli. His *Sonate a violino solo col basso del Nepridi* [an anagram], also found in the Beitang Library, are similar in structure, style and full of direct quotes. According to this study they served Pedrini's religious purposes, though this conclusion must be taken on faith – it isn't very apparent how. [There's rather more information and a fuller bibliography on Pedrini in *Wikipedia* than in *New Grove on Line*. We reviewed a CD of his music (Auvidis Astrée E 8609) in *EMR* in March 1997. CB]

Other missionaries, Jesuits, brought European music, including Corelli's, from "Arcadia" to their "Utopia" in Paraguay, between 1694 and 1767. The article discusses the contents of the Chiquitos Musical Archive, and analyzes in detail examples of the changes to Corelli's pieces to facilitate execution, changes so extensive that the alleged "Arcadianisms" – which La Via sees as not consistently attributable to Corelli – were lost, and the music itself did not remain long in use. The study does show the centrality of the teaching and performance of music to the Platonic ideals of the Jesuits, in the words of Padre Martin Schmid (1744): "ideo missionarium quia cano, psallo, tripudio" ("I am a missionary precisely because I sing, I play, and I dance").

Barbara Sachs

VIVALDI OPERAS

Reinhard Strohm *The Operas of Antonio Vivaldi (Studi di Musica Veneta, Quaderni Vivaldiani 13)* Olschki, 2008. xx 790 pp in 2 vols, €85.00. ISBN 978 89 222 5682 9

Not many scholars can contribute such magnificent volumes on such different subjects as Reinhard Strohm. I primarily think of him in relation to the 15th century: his brilliant *Music in Late Medieval Bruges* (with its evocation of

the sound of the city) and the best monograph on music in a single century that I know: *The Rise of European Music (1380-1500)*. But he was also involved in editing Wagner, and has absorbed himself in Italian opera, with a volume of *Essays on Handel & Italian Opera*. His recent work on Vivaldi's operas is now encapsulated in this amazing achievement.

It is divided into three very unequal parts. Part I (pp. 1-10) is devoted to three sections:

1. History: Vivaldi's operatic legacy
2. Practice: Vivaldi's working environment
3. Aesthetics: making and meaning

These are essential reading for anyone interested in late baroque opera and in Vivaldi: full of information and understanding, and surprisingly easy to read. If you want to sample it, try pp. 75-8: *The making of musical forms*. I love, for instance, the mixture of abstraction and down-to-earth approach in its opening:

Composing music is a form of writing and happens on paper; the physical separation of the act of composing from that of performing music not only has socio-cultural aspects (creating music has more to do with literature and books than, for example, building or dancing), but also cognitive ones: the creation of music inhabits space and time in a radically different way to the performance of it. It is quite different from sculpture or painting, where the creator has to enter the intended object's time and space in the act of designing it. Later criticism of the conventional type of Da Capo aria would not have been so vociferous, had there not been an instinctive aversion to the 'trick' of not writing all the notes that were to be heard.

I'm not entirely convinced, but the reader is kept continually alert. This Part would be easier to refer to if each section were treated as a chapter, beginning on a new page and with individual running titles, and with the subsections listed on the table of contents. It would also be convenient if the running titles in Part II named the relevant opera.

Part II (pp. 111-652, straddling the two volumes) works through each opera in chronological order. Taking *Farnace* as example (p. 393), the heading gives title and date, RV number and librettist, followed by date and place of its premiere. There is a transcription of the title page of the libretto, the dedication would be noted if there were one, and a translation of the preface or *argomento*. The characters are listed, along with the names of singers and voice types (S, A, T or B), the place where the action is set, and the composer and the creator of the ballets. The stage sets are listed, together with the designer. There follows a detailed plot summary taking two pages. What comes next varies on what is required. Here we have a section on the production in the 1727 carnival and a further section headed 'Le sublime et le tendre'. There follow 24 pages, including untypically spacious music examples, on dramatic and musical features of the opera. Another 15 pages describe revivals, again with musical examples. This is more elaborate treatment than most operas receive. The pattern is not, however, rigid, and for some operas there is little or no extant music.

VIVALDI OPERAS ON RECORD

The eight operas so far recorded in by Naïve, plus Jordi Savall's *Alia Vox* recording with *Le Concert des Nations* of *Farnace*, are collected together in *Vivaldi Operas 1* (OP 30470), released coincidentally as a 27-CD set on the day I am writing this, 17 November. The conductors are Jean-Christophe Spinosi, Rinaldo Alessandrini, Ottavio Dantone, Alessandro Di Marchi and Federico Maria Sardelli. Singers including Philippe Jaroussky, Sandrine Piau, Marie-Nicole Lemieux, Jennifer Larmore, Anthony Rolfe Johnson, Nathalie Stutzmann and Furio Zanesi. The set is contained in a huge slipcase together with a bonus DVD, complete libretti and a 208-page lavishly illustrated book with specially commissioned photographs and texts.

Part III (not described as such) is a series of tables, plus bibliography and index (pp. 653-790).

Table 1 lists the Foà or Giordano MS number for the 24 works that survive among Vivaldi's autographs.

Table 2 lists the operas in chronological order, giving date, season, title, librettist, theatre and city, the editor's short title (single word & last two digits of the year), the chapter in which it is discussed and the RV number.

Table 3a gives similar information for pasticcios, while 3b lists Vivaldi arias in pasticcios.

Table 4 is an avowedly incomplete list of arias similar to instrumental movements.

Then follow a series of tables for each opera, listing the arias in each in the order in which they appear, giving act and scene number, folio in the autograph, and some other information. Strohm hopes that the information will be made available as a data base. (Thematic incipits for each item are included in the new RV)

There is a glossary of terms, some invented for the book, eg *Dual-effect aria* 'an aria text expressing two contrasted effects, often one in each half' — does this mean the middle section of a da capo aria (is the B section a half or a third? It depends if you are reading or listening), or a more unusual type that is just A+B?

In many ways, this can be likened to Winton Dean's *magna opera* (or do we now write *magnum opuses*?) on Handel's oratorios and operas. If it isn't, it is partly because the remarks on individual operas don't quite add up to a comprehensive survey. But it must be difficult to work on a large body of work that is not publicly accessible in print or on commercial microfilm: if it is, the bibliography here is defective. But all are presumably transcribed, unless some recordings are done direct from photocopies of the MSS (though that's unlikely: even if singers and continuo players can read the score, parts for the other instruments are needed). For Handel, there is (ignoring the HHA volumes, that have only recently made significant inroads into the operas) the 19th-century Chrysander edition, which is adequate for most purposes (and Winton Dean points out the errors anyway). The reprints by Gregg Press in the 1960s and Kalmus in the 1970s circulated widely; most are also available from King's Music. What Vivaldi needs is an efficient and accurate typesetter to sit down with the autographs or good photocopies and a computer and produce a

minimally-edited version of each opera. I reckon that someone like our BC could do the lot in two or three years (it only takes him a couple of hours to typeset a concerto). Obviously, there's plenty of scholarship to consider and more information to add. But get the basic scores out first. If someone put up a few hundred thousand euros, the project would recoup its costs from sales of scores and performance fees before it was finished, unless the fashion for baroque opera fades or similar projects for other composers make Vivaldi less marketable.

This is a brilliant book. It needs to circulate beyond academic libraries, and I hope that, despite the bad exchange rate, individual Vivaldi enthusiasts will buy it, especially those catching up on the recordings mentioned below.

ENGLISH CATHOLIC CHURCH MUSIC

T. E. Muir *Roman Catholic Church Music in England, 1791-1914: A Handmaid of the Liturgy?* Ashgate, 2008. xxi + 288pp, £55.00 ISBN 978 0 7546 6105 4

Like many of our readers, I know quite a lot about Catholic church music in England between 1491 and 1614, but virtually nothing about the period 300 years later.¹ Activities at the Portuguese Chapel in the early years of the 19th century have impinged on me a little, chiefly in connection with Samuel Wesley, and I hear the occasional Elgar church piece. Muir doesn't try to persuade us that the subject needs attention because of the quality of the music: it's not one of those books on unfamiliar territory which draws to our attention the delights of unknown beauties – he doesn't even mention the one masterpiece that any choir capable of performing renaissance polychoral motets could enjoy, Wesley's *In exitu Israel*. There is a fashionable absence of comment on the quality of the music, and the musical examples are aimed primarily to distinguish styles; I must confess that they didn't excite me to want to see or hear the complete works, though it would be interesting to see how Seymour gets from A flat major to A minor in his Mass in A flat (p. 123). That church music must fulfill its function is obviously important. Most Christian denominations produced vast quantities of uninspired, utilitarian music, and the best examples tend to be from composers sympathetic to the demands but with their own agenda as well. The various demands of ecclesiastical fashion could inhibit imagination, and there was also a problem in finding a tradition to follow.

The author impresses by the detail of his basic research – what music survives in the libraries of various churches – and how that relates to the theological cross-currents, showing that practice was more complex than might be expected from the arguments. As a survey of a period for which most of the literature is in one way or another polemic, this is a useful guide. Muir doesn't make too

much of it, but he clearly lays out the inconsistencies of various models for church music over which musicians and church leaders squabbled. But these are seen in isolation from the non-Catholic world. Many of the trends he notices are shared with the Church of England: the rejection of the frivolity and secular nature of Haydn and Mozart masses, for instance. Anglicans too became interested in plainsong, and the antiquarian approach flourished in both churches in the mid-century, though the specific interest in the Sarum rite was peculiar to high Anglicans. Both churches shared the delusion that plainsong could be sung by congregations. (Yes, there may have been a few exceptions, but Muir mentions that even chanting hymns was difficult.) And both turned to renaissance polyphony (usually at its simplest) as a model for the present.

Fundamental to both Catholics and Protestants was the concept that I think of in the phrase from a hymn 'beauty of holiness'² to describe the subdued atmosphere of religious buildings and worship. I guess that it relates to a warped concept of Heaven as somewhere quiet and peaceful (comparable with ClassicFM thinking of music as something for relaxation), with all the normal pleasures of life removed and virtually nothing to replace them happening apart from singing Alleluia to God. I prefer the idea at the end of the Narnia books that the next world is fuller and more exciting than the present, with its concluding literary metaphor placing C. S. Lewis as a writer rather than a Christian apologist: our present life is just the cover and title page; after that, 'every chapter is better than the one before'. The dull view comes over particularly in the way chant is sung: the organ accompaniments quoted by Muir remove any potential for vigour. To take a familiar example not featured in the book, the Victorian one-chord-per-note harmonisations of 'O come, O come Emmanuel' were refined to a weaker style in *The English Hymnal* (for once, Vaughan Williams' rejection of the Victorian was wrong!) I'm not sure whether the controversy between Pothier and Moquereau really matters: they are both too holy, but the latter more than the former.

This book covers the 'political' aspect: how music in church was affected by the increased influence of Rome on English practice: presumably, with the increase in size of an emancipated church, the Vatican thought that what happened in England was more worthy of attention – or was the Vatican increasing its grip on all Catholicism during this period?

One section abandons matters that are specifically Catholic to discuss editorial practice. It seems completely idealistic to expect the introduction of single voice parts for renaissance polyphony in England in the early 20th century. Singing from separate parts was killed by Novello's cheap vocal scores from around 1850 (cf p. 80). The comments on Terry's two versions of the opening of Byrd's *Ave verum* (pp. 244-5) are weird. Muir misses the point that music of Byrd's time was written against a

¹ I am writing this as an outsider. The only Catholic service I have ever sung was an Easter Vigil, punctuated by complaints from the conductor (Bill Tamblin) at the cuts imposed by Vatican II; I took part in the uncut service at a High Anglican church a year or two later. My church experience is Methodist and Anglican.

² *O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness* by John Samuel Bewley Monsell (1811-75), written 1863, revised 1873: his style is cramped by needing seven rhymes for 'holiness'.

regular tactus, and criticises the 1905 version for having regular bars. Starting the piece on a half bar with a minim tied across a bar line to another minim (1921) seems perverse: *Ave* doesn't need a strong accent, but the first syllable is the accented one, and why shouldn't it start the first bar (1905)? I can imagine the 1921 version leading to a tentative start. Choice of minim or crotchet beat is a matter of what the editor thinks the singers are happier with, and crotchets don't in themselves particularly 'enhance the linear aspect of the work', merely make it look more modern. Not splitting the first syllable of *verum* and *corpus* by a tie across a barline (1921) is giving too much weight to the barlines. Even in homophonic music like this, Terry fails to make his barring fit stress when it can do so: why |*Na-tum* |*de Ma-ri-* | - *a Vir-gi-* |*ne* rather than |*Natum de Ma-* |*ri-a* | *Vir-gi-ne*? I don't see where, apart from the presence of a translation as well as the Latin text, the editorial principles have anything to do with catholic or protestant issues. Were the TCM editors particularly protestant anyway? One was having an affair with another and then settled down as a lesbian, which doesn't suggest a particularly Anglican affiliation.

A few individual points that I noted at such times as I had a pencil with me while reading.

p. [xxi] The General Editor begins his series preface 'Music in nineteenth-century Britain has been studied as a topic of musicology for over two hundred years'. What musicological studies were produced of 19th-century music before 1808? (Was musicology even a word till well into the 20th century?) Where was the copy editor?

p. 23: I was intrigued to see on a reproduction of a catalogue of Novello Latin publications of c.1850 an edition for which the orchestral parts are still available in photocopy from King's Music (and possibly still on hire from Novello): Haydn's *Insanae et vanae curae*.

p. 43. *The Messiah* is usually considered a solecism.

p. 46. It is misleading to suggest that Pope Benedict XIV should permit the use in church of tuba, lyres, lutes and violins but ban percussion, flutes, horns, trumpets, harps (that most angelic of instruments) and guitars: surely these are misleading translations of Hebrew words via the Vulgate?

p. 65. The use of a barline after every word had been quite normal in chant editions for a couple of centuries before Maria Joseph Lawson used the practice in 1862.

p. 97. Did Wiseman really emphasise 'the importance of correct punctuation, especially the vowels'?

p. 102. The alternation of loud and soft voices in hymns is documented as an Anglican 18th-century practice.

p. 113, note 20. Why does the author quote confusing information from H. B. Collins on the Lassus Collected Works when he could either look at them at a University library or check the details in various bibliographical works? The series was published in alternating volumes of motets from the *Magnus opus musicum* edited by Haberl, which formed the odd numbers of the *Sämtliche Werke* while Sandberger edited secular works more or less concurrently and added the final volume of *Magnum opus musicum* in 1927. The motets volumes are usually cited as in vol. 1, 3, 5... 21 rather than 1-11.

p. 131, note 38. Why is the Victoria mass given a publisher while

the Palestrina one not?

p. 141. The casual mention of hymns and sequences together is odd for those who think naturally in terms of medieval sequences, which are functionally and formally utterly different from hymns; but I suppose that the handful of surviving sequences blur the distinction.

p. 143/4: the two translations of *Ave maris stella* are not both in 6.6.6.6. meter: Caswell's is 6.5.6.5. The difference is not just in the two catalectic lines but because the anonymous translator's 6.6.6.6 meter is, as usual, iambic, while Caswell, following normal practice for 6.5.6.5., is trochaic. (The Latin original is basically trochaic.) I checked standard usage for the meters in the hymn book nearest at hand, the 1983 Methodist one, and was intrigued to find that the tune that had come to my head for the Caswell translation was actually called *Caswell*, though set to 'Jesus, stand among us'; the short lines, incidentally, make for a strong text, while the anonymous translation, although matching the Latin rhythm, sags.

p. 145. There's something ironic in using 'Ein mädchen oder weibchen' (Muir's capitalisation) from Mozart's masonic Magic Flute for 'I am a faithful Catholic'. (I don't think I've come across hymns saying 'I am a faithful Methodist' or '...Anglican'. Anglicans may feel that they sing of *their* 'church's one foundation', but other denominations use that hymn too, always to a Wesley tune.

p. 151. It seems extreme enough to exclude protestant texts from catholic hymn books – quite a lot of their beliefs are common anyway, but to ban tunes of protestant origin seems perverse; even Methodists honoured Caswell (see note above on p. 143-4).

p. 152. Both *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and *The English Hymnal* make a better showing of Latin hymns with plainchant melodies and translations in the right meter than most of the catholic books described here.

p. 219. Hymns, with their regular rhythm, are not the best way to indicate the difference between Pothier and Mocquereau and different ways of accompanying chant. Both examples curiously give some stress to the unaccented second syllable (*PanGE lingua* or *TanTUM ergo*) by placing a chord under it rather than the first or third note.

p. 226. I don't see what a study of the *Old Hall MS* has to do with performing Ludford and Fayrfax, from a century later; and there's no Ludford in the Eton Choirbook.

It seems a pity that the author does not relate his insights on the cross-currents of catholic musical ideology to the wider world. His analysis of them within the catholic community seems, to this outsider, to be convincing, and I find his conclusion comforting: 'The Ultramontane stress on uniformity, preferably focussed on "ancient" musical styles, looks very like a reaction against the often unspoken, but nonetheless centrifugal tendencies within the burgeoning English Catholic community.'³ Sadly, the catholic church has since lost the taste for centrifugality, or maybe rather, with the enormous increase in the catholic population and its influence in the country, Rome became more concerned in exercising its control.

³ The day I finished this I happened to catch an excerpt of *The Dream of Gerontius* on a Radio 3 CD review. After a rather woolly bit of Bryn Terfel sounding like an Angel in agony, the brief choral phrase before Gerontius goes to meet his maker is a model of what good catholic church music might have been around 1900.

NEMA YEARBOOK 2009

The Early Music Yearbook & Performers Directory 2009 incorporating the Register of Early Music Ruxbury Publications, 2008. viii + 422pp. ISSN 0967-6619

This review has been sent to various Early Music Fora, so apologies for repetition, but as Chairman of the National Early Music Association, I am happy to publicise it here as well. CB

The title has grown longer and the book somewhat fatter this year. The cover's colour-scheme, too, is unfamiliar – a purple so dark ('aubergine', perhaps?) that it almost blends with the black title-area.

The reason for the book's enlargement is that the Arts Council took a decision last year to axe its annual grant to the Early Music Network, which consequently folded; Keith Bennett supplies an article about this in the Yearbook's Editorial section. This is not the place to ask whether the Network had really brought about its own demise, though a case could possibly be made for taking such a view.

At all events, we now have a larger and – to many, I should think – an even more useful Yearbook, for it now incorporates (though in a smaller format than before) 120 pages of the 'Performers Directory' which the Network used to publish.* For the sake of those performing groups there represented, one must hope that NEMA will find a way to get its new-look Yearbook into the hands of many of those promoters who used to receive the Network's glossy volume.

But, as ever, the most interesting part of the Yearbook to most readers will be the Editorial section at the beginning – this varies from year to year, mainly in order to catch up with composer-anniversaries and suchlike. The 2009 Editorial is a few pages short of its predecessor, but it includes several 'goodies': Christopher Hogwood (NEMA's President) on Handel (d.1759); Andrew Woolley on the keyboard music of Henry Purcell (b.1659?); Martin Morell and Michael Procter on the life and work of Giovanni Croce (d.1609) – some MEMF members took part not long ago in Procter's joint Croce workshop with NWEMF, and, indeed, I tutored a MEMF Croce workshop myself a few years back.

Richard Bethell introduces NEMA's big York Conference next July, entitled 'Singing Music from 1500 to 1900' – he has some interesting things to say about the problems of persuading our Conservatoires of Music to teach singers in some way other than what he calls OSFA ('one-size-fits-all'), and this is clearly going to become one of the main themes of the Conference. Think about going to it. (Information in *EMR* xx; more details in our next issue. Contact richardbethell@btinternet.com CB.)

Cedric Lee writes about his Green Man Press, and Alison Crum reviews viol-makers in Britain. Chris Goodwin contributes an interesting piece on 'The Lute Society at 52' (Dear me! – I tried in vain to master a lute in the 1950s,

and I think I must have joined, for a while; I seem to remember receiving some neatly-written tablatures from them – is there a piece called 'Buffins'?) There are also articles about The Georgian Concert Society in Edinburgh; Mark Deller on 'Stour Music'; Jane Beeson on NORVIS; Paul Fugler and Peter Leech on SWEMF – the usual 'map' of the EMFs is there, of course, misleading as ever; the sad fact remains that perhaps 50% of England (by area) is not really serviced by any of the Fora. MEMF, for example, only promotes workshops in about a quarter of the area shown on the map.

As to the rest of the Yearbook, the 'Directory' provides bags of useful background info, and the 'Register' lists oodles of early music enthusiasts – if your name isn't there, then it jolly well ought to be! Beresford King-Smith

* Those using the *Performers and Artists Directory* should be aware of the inconsistent alphabeticisation: some groups whose name begins with The are entered under T, others under the second word. [CB]

PRAETORIUS IN THE CANADIAN PRAIRIES

On Wednesday and Thursday, November 26 and 27, 2008, audiences in the small Canadian city of Winnipeg in the western prairies will be offered a new experience: Praetorius' Mass for Christmas Morning, performed entirely on period instruments!

Two professional chamber choirs in the City, Camerata Nova and Canzona, have banded together to create the Praetorius Project, as it is called. They have built an ambitious collaboration involving a high-level school chorus from Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, early music wind instrumentalists from the University of Brandon, Manitoba, period string players from the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and early brass players from Montreal, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and Sarnia, Ontario.

The production is the brain child of Ross Brownlee, staff member at Amherst Early Music Festival and singer and part-time conductor of Camerata Nova. A music graduate from McGill University in Montreal, he studied with Douglas Kirk, researcher and player in Paul McCreeh's groundbreaking recording of the *Christmesse*, a collection of works by Praetorius for Christmas morning. Brownlee has been dreaming about leading a performance of this collection since he first heard it in 1993. "We really appreciate the enthusiastic support that we have received from early music players across North America!" he said.

While early music is in its infancy in Winnipeg, the City is known for its strong arts and music community, boasting a world-class ballet company, symphony orchestra, chamber orchestra, opera company and three professional choirs.

Sandi Mielitz, Camerata Nova, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Christian Geist (d. 1611) *Pastores dicite*. A full-size set (5 scores & parts) is available for £10.00 from BC at brian@primalamusica.com or from King's Music. It is part of Geist's *Complete Works* in preparation for in 2011.

8 ANGELUS

Pa-sto-res, di-ci-te, pa-sto-res,

p

p

p

7 4 3 6
5

11 di-ci-te quid-nam vi-di-stis,

f

f

f

7 8 7 8

14 et an-nun-ci-a-te, et an-nun-ci-

p

p

p

7 6 5 6 5 6

17 -a-te Chri-sti na-ti-vi-ta-tem.

p

p

p

6 5 5 3 6 4 5 3

20

p

p

p

6 5 6 5 4 3

23 Adagio

23 In-fan-tem vi-di-mus, pan-nis in-vo-lu-tum, et

In-fan-tem vi-di-mus, pan-nis in-vo-lu-tum, et

In-fan-tem vi-di-mus, pan-nis in-vo-lu-tum, et

p

p

p

6 4 5 3 6 4 10 8 5 3

42. *Glo*

45. *a in ex - cel - sis, in ex - cel - sis De - o, et in ter ra*

47. *f p f p f*

50. *Allegro*

pax, pax, pax, pax

ho-mi-ni-bus ho-mi-ni-bus ho-mi-ni-bus ho-mi-ni-bus

bo-nae vo-lun-ta-tis, bo-nae vo-lun-tis, bo-nae vo-lun-tis, bo-nae

cho - ros An - ge - lo - rum lau - dan - tes Sal -

cho - ros An - ge - lo - rum lau - dan - tes Sal -

cho - ros An - ge - lo - rum lau - dan - tes Sal -

11 10 6 5 11 10 8 6

9 8 4 3 9 8 7 6

31. *va - to - rem, lau - dan - tes, lau - dan - tes, lau - dan - tes*

36. *tes, lau - dan - tes Sal - va - to - rem et di - cen - tes: dan - tes Sal - va - to - rem, et di - cen - tes:*

[illegible][illegible]

BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES & OVERTURES

Garry Broughton

Beethoven *Symphonies, Overtures* Anima Eterna, Jos van Immerseel 369' 17" (6 CDs)
Zig-Zag Territoires ZZTo804026' £
Symphonies 1-9 + Overtures *Prometheus, Coriolan, Egmont, Ruins of Athens, Consecration of the House*

Sadly, we receive very little from Zig-Zag. We have this review because ran into Gary Broughton at the Greenwich exhibition and he kindly offered to send a review. CB

With these performances from 2005-7, Jos van Immerseel and his period band Anima Eterna make a valuable addition to the Beethoven cycles recorded in the late 1980s and early 1990s by Goodman, Norrington, Hogwood, Brüggén and Gardiner. Unlike them, Immerseel has the advantage of Jonathan Del Mar's new edition and wind instruments 'built in Viennese style' (originals and copies) which determine a pitch level of A=440. The thick-gut string players are guided by the *Violinschule* of Louis Spohr (resident in Vienna 1812-15) and the double basses are fretted.

The resulting sound-picture is one of great transparency even in the most powerful tutti. In the mellifluous wind section, the characterful playing of the bassoons stands out: the ghostly reprise of the A section in the Fifth's scherzo has never sounded so much like the *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. At lower dynamic levels, the strings are velvety yet incisive, but the violins tend to become submerged at the big climaxes. The forces used are 6.6.5.4.3 (8.8.6.6.5 in the Ninth), with single wind throughout. In the trio section of the Fifth, the basses fully live up to Berlioz's description ('the mad antics of an elephant drunk on brandy') but the elephants only appear once, since Immerseel follows Del Mar (ABA) rather than Beethoven's first thoughts (ABABA) which Robert Simpson and others have advocated as giving a better balance with the vast C-major expanses of the finale, especially if (as here) the exposition repeat in the latter is taken.

Tempi are nearly all in line with Beethoven's markings, noticeable exceptions being the allegretto of the Seventh (crotchet = 67 rather than Beethoven's 76) and the exposition of the 'Joy' theme of the Ninth (minim = 64 rather than 80). These performances are far from being rigidly metronomic; real rhythmic playing produces a delightful rhythmic buoyancy and vitality: rarely has the first movement of the Seventh danced like this. There is a sense of fun, too, in the way the three heroic horns in the *Eroica* bound eagerly into their big solo turn in the Scherzo's trio section. Twice the band produces spontaneous-sounding accelerandi: in the coda of the Second's finale and at the end of the 'Hungarian' G minor episode in the Third's finale. The musicians seem to have

taken a hint from the written-out accelerando at the end of the Eighth's allegretto (poking fun at Rossini's dominant-tonic reiterations?)

Some of the quieter passages in these symphonies suffer from the orchestra's reluctance to achieve a true pianissimo, and another drawback is the distant recording given to the Ninth, with the woodwind and lower strings making less impact. This detracts from one of Beethoven's most original masterstrokes, the fortissimo recapitulation of the first movement's first subject in D major with the F sharp in the bass (bassoons, cellos and basses). On the other hand, the four young solo voices (Anna-Kristiina Kaappola, Marianne Beate Kielland, Markus Schäffer & Thomas Bauer) are recorded too closely, revealing some unwelcome vibrato, although the soprano does hit her top Bs without scooping (still a rare feat in recordings of the Ninth) thereby helping the band and the small, highly-efficient choir (6.6.6.6) to bring Beethoven's symphonic oeuvre to a strong and joyful conclusion.

Despite caveats, this box is highly recommended to Beethoven enthusiasts, who will also find therein intensely dramatic performances of five overtures and a piece of Turkish Delight, the little *Marcia alla Turca* from *The Ruins of Athens*.
Garry Broughton

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CD REVIEWS

APOLOGIES...

... for the Palladian Farewell review. To make it fit the space available, I hacked it around more than it could stand, and mistakes crept in as a result of last-minute tinkering at a little before midnight so that we could start sending copies out on the Tuesday. I wondered whether to sign it with my initials rather than Victoria Helby's name, and in view of the result (some nonsense and a greengrocer's apostrophe), I should have done so. It was, however, some achievement that most of our UK subscribers received their copies on the Wednesday morning. The original version of the review is in the October Tamesis. CB

CHANT

Byzantium in Rome: Medieval Byzantine chant from Grottaferrata Cappella Romana, Ioannis Arvanitis cantor and dir, Alexander Lingas artistic dir 82' 15 (2 CDs) Cappella Romana CR403

Alexander Lingas places Byzantine chant between the Greek East and the Latin West in a recording of psalms and hymns prepared with great attention to scholarly detail. The first CD is dedicated to the founders of Grottaferrata in one of the medieval Greek-speaking communities which long retained their loyalty to Byzantium. The monastery near Rome, originally founded by St Neilos in the 11th century, housed a scriptorium whose musical MSS have preserved repertoires sung in Constantinople before it was sacked by the Crusaders in 1204. Cappella Romana's rendition of kontakia and odes is fine and vocally sonorous, though without much ambient resonance. The second CD celebrates Pentecost, following the customary juxtaposition of chants from the Eastern Christian tradition and the Rite of the Church of Aghia Sophia in Constantinople. Greater variety is provided here, ranging from an impressive alleluya to some calm reflective moments and a contrasting use of lighter voices.

Almost all the transcriptions from MSS was the work of Ioannis Arvanitis who, besides being a leading performer, has researched the significance of Byzantine notation, especially regarding the subtler points of rhythm and accent. The booklet is full of information and provides a sample of Byzantine musical paleography. For the listener who wishes to know more about historical issues and the relation between poetic text and melody it is worth wrestling with a glitchy *Acta Musicae Byzantinae* 6 (2003) website mentioned in the booklet. Though these articles can be

read only on the screen, they confirm the impression that *Byzantium in Rome* is the culmination of extensive learning and lucid analysis. Diana Maynard

The Divine Liturgy of Our Father among the Saints: John Chrysostom in English Cappella Romana 107' 10" (2 CDs) Cappella Romana CR 404

It was with some curiosity, and yet doubting reservations as to the wisdom of the project, that I set out to listen to a complete Orthodox service in English. This was indeed a challenge to Alexander Lingas, John M. Boyer and colleagues, but I have to say that the marrying of the English language and Byzantine chant has been sensitively handled. Nothing impinges uncomfortably upon anyone accustomed to the traditional Anglican liturgy at its most dignified. As for the music, a current issue is set out in the booklet: does one purge the chant of its so-called oriental or Turkish elements and move towards western styles, including polyphony? In this case the decision favours moderation, as for an ordinary service in an English-speaking Greek community, rather than adornment for a festal occasion. Nevertheless for the sake of pastoral needs and expectations there is some concession to varying strands in the continuity or restoration of Byzantine chant.

The booklet includes a lucid explanation by Boyer of his principles in preparing the scores and devising stylistically appropriate new composition. This is selectively illustrated by figures representing Byzantine and Western notation with their verbal correspondence. The presentation of the double CD comes across as both educational and adapting to the requests of church leaders. Diana Maynard

Paulus: Gregorian Chants to texts by Paul the Apostle Frauenschola Exsulta Sion Freiburg, Christophe Hönerlage dir 58' 03" Christophorus CHR 77299

Contrary to the impression given by the cover representing sadly ascetic-looking monks, one is delighted to hear the female treble voices of the Freiburg school for women. This is a group of eight trebles with tone quality so similar that they seem to sing as one, though the two soloists among them do have perceptibly distinctive voices when they take their turns to sing alone. There is no doubt about the perfectionist training that lies behind their performance.

The booklet contains detailed information, mostly of an exegetical nature, in German, English and French, and inside the front cover there is a decorative sample of Latin text and corresponding neumes. Care has evidently been taken over the correction of the various edited manuscripts used, and for the rhythmic-agogic interpretation the oldest neumes manuscript from the tenth century has been used. One can especially appreciate the precision of these Exsulta Sion singers in interpreting the Latin version of St Paul's words with unanimous pace and emphasis in crystalline voices.

Diana Maynard

MEDIEVAL

Ad honorem Virginis: L'Ars Antiqua de la Corona d'Arago Capella de Ministrers, Lluís Vich Vocalis, Carles Magraner 59' 21" Comes CDM 0822

This is interesting for its repertoire, since we rarely hear polyphony from Aragon and the sources are mostly obscure. There is an excellent note by Maricarmen Gómez, though not idiomatically translated: 'voz más grave' must mean 'lowest voice', not 'deeper tone', and we usually refer to Notre Dame polyphony in the singular. More worrying is that absolutely no mention is made of performance practice, though what we hear has prominent instrumental participation, something not expected for Notre-Dame-style music. It needs justification. Leaving that aside, much of the disc is enjoyable to listen to, except that, on grounds nothing whatever to do with musicology, I don't like the sound the soprano makes. CB

14th CENTURY

A Laurel for Landini Gothic Voices, Andrew Lawrence-King 68' 18" Avie AV2151

And a laurel can be awarded to the performers too. Despite Landini's fame as an organist, his surviving music is vocal, and a varied selection of it and music of his time is presented here by a slightly mellower, more suave Gothic Voices than those of the reissues of their Pagean days (eg *The Study of Love* below). Playing this through when I was sometimes within earshot, sometimes not, every time I returned, I was struck by the civilised nature of the music. The programme is well planned, so it also deserves continued listening: both Landini and the performances justify it. CB

The Study of Love: French songs and motets of the 14th century Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 60' 11"
Hyperion Helios CDH55295 ££ (rec 1992)

While listening to this on my way to the Early Music Exhibition I decided that I would just print three contradictory adjectives of praise to set an *EMR* record for brevity. Alas, I couldn't write them down and can't now remember them. Comparison with the current incarnation of the ensemble (two singers and the harpist are on both this and the new Gothic Voices disc reviewed above) shows that the shock factor present here and in all the other Christopher Page recordings spices the music in a way that hints at the toughness that is intertwined with the beauty of the medieval world, even in music that has as much charm as some of the items here. CB

Styems: Italian Music from the Trecento Ensemble Syntagma, Alexandre Danilevski Challenge Classics CC72195 58' 13"
Music by Egoidius da Francia. Bartolinoi da Padova, Paolo da Firenze

A strange disc. In some medieval times and places, one can postulate a vast difference between musical styles. But the refinement of the polyphony (so well sung here) clashes with the instrumental improvisations: a fairly heavy beat for the tune with arabesque elaborations around it. It's a very familiar style which I can't quite place, but must come from one particular interpretation some years ago. An interesting contrast with the Landini disc reviewed above and well worth hearing. CB

15th CENTURY

Busnois *Missa L'homme armé*; Domarto *Missa Spiritus almus* The Binchois Consort, Andrew Kirkman 79' 06"
Hyperion Helios CDH55288 ££
+ Busnois *Anima liquefacta est; Gaude celestis Domina*; Pullois *Flos de spina*

These passionate recordings of works by largely forgotten composers of the 15th century were made in 2001, and in this world of rapid turn-over are already being reissued on Hyperion's budget label Helios. As a singer at the courts of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and of his daughter Maria of Burgundy, Antoine Busnois was at the very heart of the *L'homme armé* tradition, and his setting of the mass using the famous dynastic chanson has all the martial vigour and inventiveness one might hope for in an early contribution to a long and noble tradition. This same declamatory style at which he excels is also evident in his setting of *Gaude celestis domina*, while *Anima mea liquefacta est* finds him in more

melancholy and reflective mood.

If Busnois has fallen somewhat into neglect, Petrus de Domarto and Jean Pullois, from the Antwerp circle of Ockeghem, have dropped from relative celebrity in their own lifetimes to almost complete obscurity. The attractive mass by the former and the setting of *Flos de spina* by the latter bear the distinctive fingerprint of their more familiar contemporary, but are nonetheless works of merit in their own right. The Binchois Consort have a beautifully blended sound and sing with enormous commitment and using period pronunciation, and are powerful advocates of composers who usefully fill the gap between Dufay/Binchois and later generations. D. James Ross

16th CENTURY

Il Divino: music from the world of Francesco da Milano (1497-1543) fantasias/recercari, intabulations, dances and reconstructions Hopkinson Smith lute Naïve E8921 68' 09"

Francesco Canova da Milano, known as 'Il Divino', was perhaps the most famous lutenist of the renaissance, and his music continued to be played throughout Europe well after his death. Two of his fantasias (nos 2 and 3) even ended up close to where I live in Wollaton, in the lute manuscript of Francis Willoughby of Wollaton Hall. They both end up on Hopkinson Smith's CD too.

Most of Francesco's surviving works are fantasias (or ricercars), with few intabulations; there is no dance music, apart from a Spagna for two lutes. He had considerable skill in the writing of counterpoint. It is hard to maintain several voices on just one lute, and the effect can sound cluttered. Part of Francesco's compositional technique involves thinning the texture in such a way that voices are often suggested or implied. Although at times his music can be technically challenging, it is a delight to play, with everything falling so well under the hand. Hopkinson Smith's rhapsodic style certainly suits these pieces, and he gives us an inkling of the hold Francesco had on his audiences.

In his notes, Smith reflects on Francesco's reputation, and how, through his ethereal playing, he earned his nickname. Although he was lutenist to the popes in Rome, for whom fantasias may have been more appropriate than dance music, he nevertheless acquired a reputation for improvising dance music. To give an idea of what Francesco's dance music may have been like, Smith writes five of his own 'reconstructions' using thematic material gleaned from the fantasias: a Saltarello based on Fantasia 3; a Ballo Donna la Donna based on Fantasia

41; *Plus de Tristesse* based on Fantasia 36 *De Mon Triste*, which Francesco had based on a chanson by Jean Richafort; *Sola la dolce sirena* based on Fantasias 2 and 40; and a Pavan *Mi fato e miserabile sorte* based on Fantasias 33 and 34 *La Compagna*. Each of these appears alongside the pieces which inspired them. They are well crafted, and a pleasure to hear. There are also a couple of pieces not by Francesco taken from Casteliono's anthology, *Intabulatura de Leuto* (Milan, 1536): a lively Gagliarda by Alberto da Mantova, and a brisk *Peschatore che va cantando*. Stewart McCoy

Ganassi *Io amai sempre* Pierre Boragno rec, Marianne Muller viol, Massimo Moscardo lute, gtr, François Saint-Yves kb'd Zig-Zag Territoires ZZT081002 66' 02"
Ganassi + Arcadelt, Cavazzoni, Fogliano, Francesco, Gombert, da Ripa, Segni, Willaert

The madrigals, motets, ricercars, toccatas and fantasias on this recording all date from the 16th century. Although his name appears written very large on the CD cover, most of the music is not by Ganassi himself simply because little of his music survives. He published the first known treatise on recorder playing, *La Fontegara*, in 1535, stressing the importance of imitating the human voice and giving comprehensive instructions on playing divisions. Unlike later treatise writers, he did not supply written out examples of how to apply these divisions to vocal or instrumental music, so the players here have used his instructions to create their own versions of a variety of mainly vocal music. There are a few pieces by Ganassi in his second treatise, the *Regola rubertina* of 1542 for the viol, which was followed by a second part, the *Lettonne secunda* for viol and lute a year later. Three of his ricercars for viol from the first book are played on this disc, together with his version of Fogliano's *Io vorrei, Dio d'amore* in which he demonstrates the use of the viol to provide a chordal accompaniment. Victoria Helby

Lassus *Cantiones Sacrae sex vocum* (1594) Collegium Vocale, Philippe Herreweghe Harmonia Mundi HMC 901984 53' 35"

Here is some lovely singing: well-blended voices retaining their individuality, and above all responding with great sensitivity to the moods and changes of the music. There is no coasting along in neutral here: changes in dynamics are subtle but ubiquitous, reacting to the rise and fall of each phrase within each voice part. There are two singers on each line, but the blend and sensitivity are so good that it's hard to tell: the music is treated as chamber music, with no attempt to fill a huge space or make an impressive sound. The result is intimate, warm,

communicative and expressive, reflecting the 'serious' nature of these late works, as Lassus himself describes them: the *Cantiones Sacrae* were written in 1594, the final year of his life. There is also some virtuosic fast singing, but never to the detriment of the music's sentiment. The performance repays repeated careful listening.

In the music itself it is perhaps not too fanciful to imagine the aging Lassus considering the end of his life; while there are plenty of quirky harmonies which make the composer easily identifiable, these pieces have a reflective quality which is well brought out by the performers. The texts are mostly from the Old Testament – Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus – taking a wistful look at the transience of life and the prevalence of sin and the strength of the enemy; but there is also a glimpse of salvation, most tellingly in the final piece of the CD, a setting of part of the Requiem text: 'By the Cross thou hast redeemed me: let not such labour be in vain.' 'Labour', of course, refers to Christ's suffering and crucifixion, but may be coloured by Lassus's own efforts in producing this very personal and emotional music; the words 'tantus labor' are piled up again and again, with major/minor variations almost evoking despair, but ending on a note of trust and hope. *Selene Mills*

Philips Motets & Madrigaux Cappella Mediterranea, Leonardo García Alarcón
Ambronay AMY015 59' 54"

This has 11 madrigals (three played instrumentally) and eight motets, well performed by an ensemble of five voices, six strings, five wind, two pluckers and a keyboard director. There is some imaginative (and plausible) scoring here, which enhances the music and never feels forced upon it. The disc as a whole presents Philips as a much more engaging composer than he often seems to be, and effectively banishes the austere image that the director found so surprising when he first read accounts of his music. There's an interesting booklet note, but if Alarcón wants to experiment with the statement from Zarlino (the end of a long tradition!) that the third is 'pungent and harsh', he needs singers with minimal vibrato so that the intervals can be precisely tuned to whatever temperament Zarlino was thinking of. Another inspiration for the recording is Jan Breughel's *Allegory of Hearing* showing partbooks of madrigals by Philips set out on music stands round a table with instruments lying ready and a naked lady playing a lute. (There's a small reproduction in the booklet, but many readers will have a larger one on the cover of David Munrow's *Instruments of the Middle Ages and the*

Renaissance.) This is well worth buying, despite the wobbles. *CB*

H. Praetorius Magnificat & motets The Cardinal's Musick Andrew Carwood
Hyperion CDA67669 68' 30"
Magnificats II, IV V (with carols) toni + 8 motets

Jerome or Jeronimo (modern alternatives to his first name) Praetorius's music is poised for a leap up the metaphorical charts that allocate composers positions in the ladder of eminence. With a collected works on the way, this CD, and the success of several works that have found their way into weekend courses in the last couple of years, his music is establishing itself beyond the Christmas double-choir Magnificat with carols which is the only work by him at present known to non-specialists. That is the finale to this programme, which also opens with a Magnificat and has another in the middle. It is perhaps rather austere to have the whole programme without organ (let alone any of the panoply of instruments assembled for the dedication of St Gertrude's Chapel, of which Praetorius was organist, in 1607)*. But the eight voices are too good for the listener to feel that anything is missing. I suspect that the harsh soprano sound at the opening of *Gaudete omnes* came from a chivette piece not being transposed down, but I don't have a score to check. Otherwise, their beautiful singing of such fine music deserves wide circulation. *CB*

*Details in the edition of the music by Frederick Gable in A-R Editions RRMBE 91.

Mary and Elizabeth at Westminster Abbey Choir of Westminster Abbey, Robert Quinney org, James O'Donnell 66' 42"
Hyperion CDA67704
Byrd, Mundy, Sheppard, Tallis, Tye White

The energy in the boys' voices is thrilling: they sear through the complex texture of Tye's *Omnes gentes* with evangelical zeal. The energy level slackens when the men sing alone, but the singing is committed and sincere. There is quite a contrast between the bleating tenor soloist and the pure treble, but the individuality of the voices adds to the charm of this very human performance. The lines are less beautifully shaped than the Tallis Scholars achieve in the discs reviewed below, but there is a great sense of expectation, and the gradual build to the climax of Mundy's marvellous *Vox Patris caelestis* is exhilarating.

The booklet has alternative cover illustrations (both from Westminster Abbey) oriented in opposite directions: one can choose from Elizabeth in her most lavish and decorated dress, elaborate lace ruff and jewelled headdress, or Mary's plain naked

head, wigless, crownless and straight-forward. Ironically, the two queens seem to illustrate each other's music, Mary exemplifying the simple settings of vernacular texts demanded by the Protestant Church and Elizabeth portraying the intricate and convoluted counterpoint of the Catholic Church. Robert Quinney's useful booklet notes explain how this is much too simplistic a theory, but in any case this recording showcases the contrasts of style which made the 16th century such a fertile period of composition, and shows how the tradition of singing services at Westminster Abbey has continued unbroken for so many centuries. *Selene Mills*

The Tallis Scholars sing Tudor Church Music Vol. 1 153' 38" (2 CDs)
Gimell CDGIM 209 (rec 1988-2005) ££
Music by Browne, Cornysh, Taverner, Tye
The Tallis Scholars sing Tudor Church Music Vol. 2 153' 02" (2 CDs) ££
Gimell CDGIM 209 (rec 1989-1995)
Music by Sheppard, Tallis, White
(500th anniversary of Coronation of Henry VIII 24 June 1509)

This collection comprises four CDs, and would make a formidable weapon in the armoury of any early music evangelist. Many of the greatest sacred works of the English Renaissance are included here, and surely the intention in making this compilation was that this should become the gold standard performance. The Tallis Scholars can be relied upon to sing with a full, lustrous sound, perfect tuning, good blend and a good feeling for the scope of the music. Some may find the sound anodyne, almost too perfect to reveal the character of the music, but it has a warmth and humanity to it which counterbalance any tendency to mechanicalism. The music itself is glorious; I particularly enjoyed the five huge John Browne pieces on Disc 1, the two for male voices (*Stabat iuxta* and *O regina mundi clara*) making a rumbling close-harmony contrast to the five-part pieces spanning a huge range and topped by the ice-pure treble of Ruth Holton. The Robert White Magnificat on Disc 4 is a masterpiece I had not heard before, and now treasure. The minor-major corner which the piece turns in its final moments seems to lead straight to paradise! *Selene Mills*

17th CENTURY

Buxtehude Göteborg Baroque, Magnus Kjellson dir 58' 28"
Footprint Records AB, FRCD 033
Alles was ihr tut, An filius non est Dei, Benedicam Dominum, Herr wenn ich nur dich habe, Ich bin die Auferstehung, Nimm von uns Herr du treuer Gott

This outstanding CD was sent to me directly from Göteborg Baroque, of whom

I read lots of news in the Scandinavian early music magazine *Tidig Musik*, but whom I have not hitherto had the opportunity to hear. This slightly short programme runs the gamut of the composer's output, from a beautifully paced and shaped *Herr wenn ich nur dich habe* (a wonderful piece over a ground bass for soprano, two violins and continuo) to his mammoth *Benedicam Dominum*, which Kerala Snyder in her informative booklet notes is sure must have been written shortly after the last of the six galleries were built in the Marienkirche in Lübeck (the ever enterprising Buxtehude having raised the funding from local merchants). I especially enjoyed the setting of *Alles, was ihr tut*. The playing and singing is of the very highest order – the sopranos are radiant, the lower voices full-bodied without over-resonating or the use of too much vibrato. Cornetti, trumpets, violins, violas and sackbuts are all in excellent form – this really is a fantastic disc. Every Buxtehude fan should own it. Actually, every early music lover should own it. BC

www.footprintrecords.com has a cast list (all names look Scandinavian except Fiona Russell) and a link to somewhere to order it from. CB

Buxtehude: Opera Omnia VIII: Organ Works III Ton Koopman (1693 Schnitger organ, St Jacobi Kirche, Hamburg) 66' 18" Challenge Classics CC72247

Ton Koopman scurries through another CD in his new Buxtehude-on-Acid series, taking no prisoners on the way. Having come clean with my continuing doubts about Koopman's very individualistic style of playing, not least its frenetic speed and curious ornaments, I have to say that when he behaves himself, he can be very good, as in most of the magisterial final fugue of the opening *Praeludium* in g. In fact there are fewer than usual Koopmanisms on this CD, although expecting him to play the flamboyant *Praeludium* in C (the so-called *Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne*) on an organ with a 32' reed is frankly asking for trouble. Although the case of the fabulous Arp Schnitger organ was destroyed during the Second World War, the original pipework had been stored in the basement and survived. It remains one of the most important collections of 16th and 17th century pipework in the world (with survival from the earlier Scherer and Fritsch, respectfully treated by Schnitger), beautifully restored to playing order by Jürgen Ahrend in 1993. At 66 minutes, the CD is rather short by today's standards, and you need to retain the cardboard sleeve to see the track listing – quite why this isn't on the back of the CD case itself is beyond me. As I mentioned in my reviews of the earlier volumes, it is telling that Koopman's name is double the size

of Buxtehude's on the cover – there is rather more Koopman on these CDs than there is Buxtehude. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*
Jerónimo de Carrion Ah de los elementos Capilla Jerónimo de Carrion, Alicia Lazaro Verso VRS 2058 55' 41"

Jerónimo de Carrión (1660-1721) was, amongst other things, chapel master at Segovia cathedral. This CD presents his *Misa de Batalla* and a selection of his works to Spanish texts. The Capilla that takes his name consists here of three sopranos, three tenors and baritone with an instrumental group including cornetti, low reeds, vihuela de arco, harp, organ and percussion. I imagine this is exciting music to perform, with its archetypical cross rhythms, here combined with all the baroque devices of imitation, cori spezzati, and choral declamation. The mass is perhaps the most backward looking piece – there is another *Misa da Batalla* in the cathedral archives dating from 50 or so years earlier, so there was perhaps a tradition there. The performances are nicely paced and shaped, although some of the voices are just a little 'large' for my taste – it is definitely nice to hear this repertoire performed by smaller forces, though. BC

Charpentier Noel: Christmas Cantatas Ensemble 94 Kay Johannsen 60' 02" Carus 83.196
H. 80, 314, 316, 318, 393, 395, 421, 531, 534,

If I'm totally honest, this CD suffered from comparison with my remembered impressions of an ancient recording of similar repertoire by William Christie and Les arts florissants. Not that there is anything wrong with these performances – indeed, after a week of listening, the subconscious comparing ceased – but I was not initially won over by the sound world. I think Christie might have used gambas rather than violins, so there was a reedier edge. The singing and playing here, like all Carus recordings, is excellent, with some especially lovely high soprano work. Charpentier's Christmas music is always a delight, and this is one of the few new records for the season – ideal gift for any music lover. BC

D'Anglebert Suites for Harpsichord Elizabeth Farr 134' 32" (2 CDs) Naxos 8.570472-73 £

These two discs (priced at less than a fiver on Amazon) are packed with noble performances of noble music. There are no mannerisms in Elizabeth Farr's playing, just good taste, neat ornaments, discreet additional embellishment of the repeats and a deep understanding of the music. The 1689 *Livre* was D'Anglebert's

only publication and contains, in addition to the suites, a number of operatic transcriptions, a group of fugues, hints on *basso continuo* playing and an ornament chart. The highlights of the suites are the *Tombeau de Chambonnières* which ends the fourth suite and the second suite's *Folies d'Espagne*. This latter allows the splendid harpsichord (by Keith Hill, after Couchet and complete with a very good lute stop) full rein and the recording enables us to enjoy its fine tone to the utmost. Suites 1 and 4, and therefore the *Tombeau*, are played on a lute-harpsichord, strung in gut. I am not convinced that this is really a valid performance option for this repertoire, but am glad to have had the chance to find out what it might sound like. Personally, I prefer the sound of the 8-foot registers to the full 884 ensemble, which I found top heavy, and in these movements there are also a few untidy releases of chords which sounded mechanically, rather than player-induced. However, this did not stop my enjoying the playing itself very much. *David Hansell*

Dowland Lacrimae Capella de Ministrers Carles Magraner 71' 57" Licanus CDM 0721

Dowland's *Lacrimae* must be by far the most frequently recorded collection of instrumental ensemble music before Bach and Handel. This version, by a Spanish group directed by Carles Magraner, is decently played, though three things spoiled my enjoyment. The players had clearly not read the intelligent notes Brian Robins wrote for the CD, for they show no sign of recognising that the seven tearful pavans form a cycle that moves through despair to some type of redemption or reconciliation: they play them all at the same (mostly too slow) speed and in the same doleful style. Also, they use a consort consisting (apart from *Thomas Collier's Galliard*, which has two soprano parts) of treble, tenor and three bass viols with lute, which makes the textures too heavy and muddy and is historically wrong: according to the principles of Renaissance instrumentation music of this sort with a single soprano and bass and three inner parts should be played by a treble viol, three tenors and bass, or perhaps by a low-pitched consort with a tenor, three basses and great bass. Most important, I was driven to distraction by the addition of percussion to *Sir Henry Unton's Funeral* as well as all the galliards and almands. All I can say is, if you like tambourine and drums in Dowland and think it's appropriate, rush out and buy this CD; I'll either throw my copy away or put it in my chamber of horror recordings. *Peter Holman*

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)
££ = mid-price

W. Lawes *Harp Consorts* Maxine Eilander
harp, Les Voix Humaines 76' 24"
Atma ACD2 2372

The first complete recording of these intriguing and unique works is of particular interest to viol players, for whom a complete edition is now available from PRB (see *EMR* 122). With the development of historical harp techniques lagging somewhat behind the revival of other instruments, it has been possible only recently, it seems, to experience the true sounds of this segment of Lawes' remarkable output. There remains an unresolved question, discussed in the booklet: were they written for the wire-strung celtic harp, or for the gut-string triple harp? The harpist plays the latter, and if the sound and texture is anything to go by, this is a highly successful answer. The performances are superb and the music is endlessly beguiling: the Pavens majestic and stately, the Airs, Almans, Corants and Sarabands delightfully light-hearted. The instrumentation requires a single bass viol, so the consorts are shared between Susie Napper and Margaret Little, each of whom brings nimble virtuosity and flexibility to their demanding parts. The violinist, David Greenberg plays beautifully throughout, and the theorboe (Lawes' own part), played by Stephen Stubbs, provides a firm, rhythmic bass, adding to the rich sonority. The harp shares the bass line, and adds a full accompaniment, its frequently independent treble line duetting with the violin. The sound is ravishing, the performances in turn lyrical, intense, or earthy and dancing – as Lawes' quicksilver moods demand. Perhaps his most universally appealing pieces receive here a performance to match – buy it and play it to your friends. Robert Oliver

Lully *Armide* Stephanie Houtzeel *Armide*,
Robert Getchell *Renaud*, François Loup
Hiéroclès, Ubalde, William Sharp *Artimodore*,
La Haine, Ann Monoyios *Phénice*, Lucinde,
Miriam Dubrow *Sidonie*, Opera Lafayette,
Ryan Brown 121' 49" (2 CDs)
Naxos 8.660209-10 £

In its first year *EMR* reviewed just one Lully opera release. Now we have three in the same issue with the promise of more to come, as *Les Arts Florissants* have a recording of this same opera in the pipeline. Seldom can a composer have made such a dramatic jump from the pages of textbooks to the operatic stages, concert halls and CD players of the world. *Armide* was Lully's final *tragédie en musique*. He died a year after the first performance but the music survived in the Paris repertoire for 80 years. As early as 1697 cuts were made in Act IV, and this evolving perfor-

mance history is used as justification for this recording's omission of the Prologue and much of Act IV, which, in fairness, does rather impede the flow of the main plot. I must say that I do agree with the conductor's observation that what remains does make for a more intense dramatic experience for someone who is 'only' listening: his live performances did give the piece as Lully wrote it. There is some fabulous music here – the ends of Acts II and V are obvious highlights – and it is impressively delivered. Stephanie Houtzeel as *Armide* sings with the inevitable modern vibrato, but the sound has such a strong centre that the disparity between this and the orchestral timbre is much less disturbing than is often the case. Robert Getchell is an equally stylish *Renaud*. The orchestra is alert and characterful – the start of the overture is positively genial – though I'd be equally happy without the added percussion, especially the tambourine. The booklet does give a full synopsis though for a complete libretto with translation one has to download from the Naxos website (17 A4 pages – raising issues of storage with the CD). This can be recommended unreservedly at bargain price, though Lully completists may want to wait until they can hear what William Christie has to offer. David Hansell

Lully *Proserpine* Salomé Haller *Proserpine*,
Bénédicte Tauran *La Paix*, Stéphanie
d'Oustrac *Cérès*, Blandine Staskiewicz
Aréthuse, Cyané, Hjordis Thébault *La*
Victoire, Cyril Auvity *Alphée*, François-
Nicolas Geslot *Mercure*, Benoit Arnould
Ascalaphe, Marc Labonnette *Jupiter*,
Pierre-Yves Pruvot *La Discorde*, João
Fernandes *Pluton* Le Concert Spirituel,
Hervé Niquet 152' 30" (2 CDs in box)
Glossa GCD 921615

This release is not part of Niquet's extensive *Le Musicien du Soleil* series though it is yet another manifestation of his devotion to the composer and his determination to share this enthusiasm with the rest of us. To keep the price down, the opera is packed on to just two CDs with Act 2 divided between them. Each disc has its own slim jewel case and are joined within the cardboard outer by a thick booklet which contains an excellent essay explaining both the content and context of this slightly unusual piece, a synopsis of the plot and a full libretto in French, English and Spanish. So the presentation is first class.

Musically the most arresting sections are the prologue, the earthquake that ends Act 1 ('a thunderbolt falls on Mt Etna...') and an echo chorus. But the whole work has much decorative charm as the various amorous tensions develop and resolve,

culminating in the inevitable *divertissement*. As always with Niquet, continuity and a sense of collective purpose are great strengths. Amongst the individual singers Salomé Haller (*Proserpine*) and Stéphanie d'Oustrac (*Cérès*) are stylistically very confident, but the stand-out singer is *haute-contre* Cyril Auvity (*Alphée*), with great control in a demanding *tessitura*. This is another significant step along the path of Lully re-appreciation. David Hansell

Lully *Psyché* Carolyn Sampson *Psyché*,
Karina Gauvin *Venus*, Boston Early Music
Festival Orchestra & Chorus, Paul O'Dette,
Stephen Stubbs 173' 42" (3 CDs in box)
cpo 777 367-2

In his 2006 note for *Proserpine* Hervé Niquet lamented that *Psyché* still lacked a modern re-premiere. Well, he need lament no more as the 2007 Boston EMF forces have repaired that omission with the kind of splendour that should garner awards right, left and centre. (Their previous release – *Thésée* – was 2nd in the Baroque vocal category of the recent Gramophone awards.) Amid so much that is utterly splendid it would be churlish to mention minor irritations, so I won't. Top of the list for prizes must be Carolyn Sampson in the title role with Karina Gauvin (*Venus*) not far behind. They set the rest of the cast an inspiring example with regard to both beauty of sound and stylistic purity. Driven by the theorbos of the co-directors, the orchestra is razor sharp – prompt with the *ritournelles*, elegant with the many dances. (Apparently the extended Act V *divertissement* was too extended for some members of the Boston audiences.) If Niquet's *Proserpine* is a 'significant step' for Lully this is the proverbial lunar 'giant leap'. The production, by the way, was sumptuous in the extreme. As with *Thésée*, I yearn for a DVD. David Hansell

Lully *Ballet des Arts* La Symphonie du
Marais, Hugo Reyne 74'
Accord 480 0886

This tenth issue in the *Musicien du Soleil* series is a real charmer. *Le Ballet des Arts* is a traditional *ballet de cour* with roles for both the King and Lully. The arts in this case are (however unlikely this may seem) agriculture, navigation, the goldsmith, painting, the hunt, surgery and war. Each is introduced by a *récit*, the first two of which are by Lambert: the character dances then follow. The vocal items are mainly duets and are really well sung. In the dances the orchestra, founded upon the rich boom of the *basses de violon*, phrase beautifully and never sound dispirited by the sight of yet another binary form dance. The booklet is a bit of

a curate's egg. It is a real bonus to have the entire *Livret* included, complete with stage directions and details of the original cast; but the English translation of the note is rather lumpy. It reads, in fact, like a translation, and someone should face the guillotine for letting 'bass of violin' appear in print as a rendering of *basses de violon*. But the listening was an absolute pleasure.

David Hansell

Monteverdi *Vespro della Beata Vergine*
Le Petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 86' 05"
Challenge Classics CC72311 (2 CDs in box)
A very sparse box names as performers only La Petite Bande and Sigiswald Kuijken: 'wot no singers!' On the other hand, the list of movements in the booklet states the names of the singers for each – right and proper for a solo-voice performance – but no mention of any player (though we can guess the organist). It isn't because the director thinks the instruments unimportant, since he devotes a quarter of his booklet note to the fact that he uses suitable violins and violas, a practice that has been gaining ground over the last few years, encouraged by the unwillingness of players to tune up the 'baroque' instrument they normally play at A=415 to the favoured cornett & sackbut pitch of A=465. But surely the cornettists and violinists in 'Deposuit' need naming more than the chanting alto? (The organ volume there, incidentally, is fine for the cornetti but too loud for the violins, to the detriment of their entry; the violin octave leap at their third phrase is barely audible.) But otherwise it is refreshing to have only the organ as the accompaniment, with an instrument with a sufficient body to support the ensemble by itself.

As for the singing, in many ways it is excellent, but I fear I have to repeat myself over the problem of shaping phrases. This is most noticeable in triple time, when stressing the first note of each group of three gives a tedious sing-song effect. In duple time there is also a lack of awareness of where the phrase is going to: there is little variation of the weight of the stresses to lead through the phrase. And although the general regularity of tempo is a good thing, it feels somewhat relentless: a regular *tactus* need not inhibit shape to the extent it does here. For example, in *Dixit Dominus*, there is something special about those cadences that reach E from C or G. No stress is required on the E chords, but they need a slight placing – nothing romantic, but maybe a fractional delay or a foreshortening of the previous chord to create a little space within the *tactus*, or maybe just an adjustment to their weighting. If the singers don't need a conductor to beat them into shape (the booklet disparages

the need for a conventional conductor) they must be more aware of such matters.

Full marks for the right choice of basic matters like pitch, transposition, number of voices, absence of superfluous instruments, and for excellent singing and playing. It is one of the best performances available, though is let down by a lack of feeling for the shape of the words. I still prefer Parrott, but that may be just prejudice!

CB

I happened to recognise a word in the translation of one of the psalms that wasn't standard and checked to find that they were virtually the same as those appended to my edition, which are neither BCP nor AV but a compromise based on them with a few further changes so that they match the Vulgate or fit the parallel layout. The motets and hymn are entirely my translation. There is no acknowledgement, and I don't remember being asked for permission. The booklet editor doesn't realise that if you add a C to Sancta Sonata sopra Santa Maria: if you add a C to make Sancta, you need to change change sopra to supra.

CB

A. Scarlatti *Messa per il natale*

see Pergolesi

Assisi: Christmas Cantatas Ruth Ziesak, Ingeborg Danz SA, Reinhold Friedrich tpt, L'Arte del Mondo, Werner Ehrhardt
Phoenix 149 67' 29"
F.M. Benedetti *Pastori o voi, Salve regina*; Corelli op. 6/8; F. A. Lazzari *Quam lete videntes*; Melani *Sonata as*; G.M. Po del Finale *O quam jubilet*; Porpora *Stella lucide*

This CD was a surprise and, from beginning to end, an utter delight. Melani, Porpora and (of course, though frankly rather uninspiring as programme choices go) were the only composers I'd heard of, but they certainly did not outshine the music by three monks who also contribute motets, a moral cantata and a *Salve regina*. Only the Corelli is not a world premiere recording and, like the remainder of the programme, it receives a lively performance from L'arte del Mondo. Both singers are on excellent form, with the voices of Ruth Ziesak and Ingeborg Danz blending superbly well in Po del Finale's motetto for soprano, alto, two trumpets and continuo.

BC

Baroque music on Hemony carillons in Utrecht Arie Abbenes 69' 30"

Globe GLO 5234

Music by Castello, Charpentier, Cima, Locatelli, T. Merula, Parcham, Purcell

We bought home some CDs of Balinese gamelans after our visit a decade ago, but couldn't bear to play them: they offered no sound image that matched the real thing. I feel exactly the same about this carillon recording. The carillon is as characteristic a sound of Utrecht as the Gamelan

in Bali, and equally it needs space, the continuing resonance being sorted out without problems by the listener in real space, but sounds congested and confused when recorded. Some sounds need to be heard live.

CB

Les Caractères de la Danse Harmony of Nations Alfredo Bernardini ob/dir 68' 17"

Raum Klang RK 2704

Albinoni op. 9/2; Corelli op. 6/4; Purcell Suite from *The Fairy Queen*; Rebel *Les Caractères de la Danse*; Telemann Overture a7 TWV 55: C6

If the listener needs an exciting and uplifting guided 'Grand Tour of Europe', this up-market baroque pops record of some non-standard repertoire might be just the thing. The young pan-European period instrument group has a high degree of aplomb and produces a full-textured sound in a resonant acoustic for a standard-sized band of 5.4.2.2.1 with oboes and supporting woodwind. The solo string players and Bernadini on oboe show their enthusiasm in some virtuosic playing and exuberant ornamentation. The Rebel work is an interesting one-movement compendium of 13 short, seamless dances with a concluding sonata, and the Purcell is an assortment of eight instrumental movements from his semi-opera. I found the aggressive style of the Purcell somewhat alien, with its Italianate 18th century playing, not helped by the booming 16th bass line. The *allegro* movements of the Corelli were, for my taste, just too fast. The Telemann is perhaps the best work on the disc, showing the band at their most comfortable with this later repertoire.

Ian Graham-Jones

Del mar del alma: músicas y letras de la Bogotá Colonial (17-18 siècle) Musica Ficta Arion ARN68789 68' 31"

This disc features Baroque music from Colombia (or more strictly speaking New Granada, which covers Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) and Spain, featuring voices, recorders, plucked instruments and harpsichord. It's a nicely balanced recital with vocal and instrumental numbers. Although a tabor is noted among the instruments, percussion is mercifully kept to a minimum, although there are some nice rhythmic moments. Anyone interested in the repertoire should definitely buy this. I was particularly impressed that among the CD credits are two restaurants – hopefully one day I'll be able to try them out – obviously the performers and recording staff were impressed!

BC

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)
££ = mid-price

The Historic Organ of Adlington Hall
Anne Page (1693? Smith? organ, Adlington Hall, Cheshire) 70' 38"
PH Music CD2106.

Music by Blow, Boyce, Byrd, Carleton, Croft, Handel, Locke, Purcell, Stanley, Tomkins, Walond

from <http://www.phmusic.co.uk/phmusic1/organcds.htm>. £10.50.

Although the date and builder of the famous Adlington hall organ are unknown, there is reasonably convincing evidence that it was installed for a Legh family wedding in 1693. It seems likely that it was based on an earlier instrument, possibly reusing a choir division of a larger organ. Markings on the pipes, soundboard and roller-boards are similar to those thought to be by Father Smith, but some of the mechanism is of a kind known to have been used by his great rival, Harris. Curiosity also extends to the tonal forces of the organ, which do not match any of the usual specifications of the English 17th century – possibly a result of it being a secular domestic instrument. Despite all its oddities, it remains one of England's most important historic organs and is a splendid sight (and sound) on the gallery of Adlington's mediaeval Great Hall. It is also a lasting memorial to Noel Mander, whose restoration of it in 1958 was of major importance to the English historic organ world.

The programme is a fascinating overview of music from Byrd to Handel, who certainly knew the Legh family in London and may also have stayed at Adlington. Apart from the delightful little Hunting Song (Handel's musical setting of words by Charles Legh), the pieces were probably intended for church rather than performance, although organs were a common feature of the wealthier country houses. Anne Page plays with great integrity and skill, using well-chosen and appropriate registrations and a fine understanding of period ornamentation. It is encouraging to hear what I consider to be the correct (but rarely performed) interpretation of the 'beat' on the first three notes of Purcell's 'Voluntary for Double Organ'.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Musik aus der Dresdner Schlosskapelle
Britta Schwarz A, Sebastian Knebel (c. 1680 organ of Alte Kirche, Cosewig & hpscd after Mietge) 74' 17"
Raum Klang RK 2702

Music by Froberger, Hassler, Kerll, Klemm, C. Michael, J Praetorius, Scheidt, Weckmann

The enigmatic small village organ in the Alte Kirche of Coswig (just outside Dresden) has managed to conceal both its builder and the date of its construction, although the case design suggests a date of around 1680. Although most of the pipe-

work has since been lost, the mechanism and case remain, and the 1998 reconstruction has returned this important little organ to something like its original voice. Surprisingly, the CD does not include an organ specification. The very dry acoustic does it no favours and takes a little while to get used to. However, Sebastian Knebel manages to compensate for the lack of acoustic in his articulation. The programme gives a neat overview of music connected with the Dresden Court during the early to mid-17th century, from Hassler and Erbach through to Scheidemann, Froberger, Weckmann and Kerll. The Italian influence on this repertoire is strong, both in the organ pieces and the two interspersed groups of harpsichord works. Alto Britta Schwarz sings the alternatim verses in Scheidt's *Magnificat 4. Toni*. A couple of lesser known composers are Christian Michael (d. 1637), with a poignant *Toccata à 4 in La minore* and Johann Klemm (c.1595 to after 1651), represented by the sprightly *Fuga XXII à 3. Decimi Toni*. The playing of Sebastian Knebel is particularly impressive.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Musiques au temps de Richelieu La
Symphonie du Marais, Hugo Réyne 107'
20" (2 CDs)

Musiques à la Chabotterie 605005

Ballet de la Prospérité des armes de France (1640)
+ music by Boesset, Bouzignac, Constantin, Formé, Gantez,

Richelieu began his residence as Bishop of Luçon in the Vendée in December 1608. As Hugo Réyne and his ensemble are now based on that region, they were the obvious choice as the musical focus for the quatercentenary commemorations of that event. This release and the associated concerts are the fruits of their researches. There are two discs, one of musiques sacrées and one of musiques profanes. The first begins with a group of quirky motets attributed to Bouzignac and continues with a frisky anonymous *Te Deum*. The mass *Musica simplex* lives down to its name: one movement would have sufficed to illustrate this genre of austere, semi-improvised polyphony. Annibal Gantez's *Missa Laetamini* is a rather more enjoyable listen. On this disc the choral singing is not always as precise as one might wish but it is serviceable and virtually every piece is a premiere recording. The disc of secular music presents what can be reconstructed of the Ballet de la Prospérité des armes de France, first performed in 1641 to entertain the monarch and his family in Richelieu's private theatre. The consort singing in the short récits suffers from a non-blending haute-contre, but the dances have the ensemble's customary finesse. The oboe band is a welcome guest, though its tuning very occasionally

becomes a little too exotic for comfort. The booklet is thorough, though does not find space for English translations of the sung texts. This is a welcome light into a dark niche in our knowledge of French music pre-Lully.

David Hansell

Restoration: Treasures of the English Baroque Jette Rosendal S, vln, Colin Booth kbd 65'52"

CDclassics.dk1002

Music by Blow, Croft, H. Lawes, Purcell, Rosseter

Some people are just too talented. Most of our readers will know that Colin Booth's playing is as distinguished as his harpsichord-making. Jette Rosendal is a professional baroque violinist and singer, though in the latter capacity not just in early music.* She doesn't quite have the archtypical 'early-music' voice, and there's a slight feeling of the opera-singer singing down. But I quickly adjusted. To mention just the framing pieces, I enjoyed *Music for a while* and *The Evening Hymn*. Her playing of Croft and Daniel Purcell sonatas makes one want to hear more. She and Colin have a way of letting the music sound easy. I liked particularly the simplicity of Colin's realisations: the advantage of not importing a cello or gamba is that the keyboard can concentrate on the musicality of his bass playing and not feel that success is judged by the elaboration of the contribution of the right hand. The booklet doesn't let on that Colin plays organ as well as harpsichord. One of the booklet pictures could have the caption 'Have spinet, will travel.' CB

Available for £9.99 from Soundboard Records, Mount Pleasant, Westbury sub Mendip, Wells, BA5 1HU.

* I am reminded of a local musician, Bryony Lang, who led the Bedford Orchestra in a concert but put her violin down to sing Exsultate, jubilate.

Ténèbres: a representation of the Tenebrae Service Elodie Naudod, Elodie Mourrot SS, Fabrice Conan comédien, La Compagnie Baroque, Michel Verschaeve 74' 34"

Arion ARN68786

Music by Bernier, Brossard, Couperin, Montigny, & poems

This is the kind of programme I really enjoy live but which never seems quite so convincing on disc. Six fine pieces of Holy Week vocal music are separated by complementary readings (four in French, one in English) as was the practice in the sacred concerts which the Tenebrae service became in early 18th century Paris. Part of the problem here is that the booklet makes no mention of these texts either in the essay or the text/translations so the non-French speaker may well feel deprived of both spiritual nourishment

and the fullest enjoyment of the purchase. Musically, however, things are very good. *La Compagnie Baroque* have a carefully researched and rehearsed style but which is nevertheless quite bold in their projection of the emotive content of the music. The two sopranos are brave enough to open with Couperin's third *Leçon*, a piece in which the recorded bar is incredibly high, but sing it well and distinctively enough for any comparisons to be irrelevant. Their strength is in the predominating duet medium: I felt that in the solos the characterisation was less consistent. The overall highlight of the disc is the concluding *Ornate aras* by Bernier, in which Italianate recitative and French dance rhythms flamboyantly combine. A word of welcome also to music by Joseph Valette de Montigny, a composer good enough to have had his 1701 book of motets reprinted ten years later and to have had some pieces mis-attributed to Bernier. *David Hansell*

Why not here: Music for two Lyra Viols Hille Perl, Friederike Heumann with Lee Santana lute, cittern, Michael Freimuth lute Accent ACCF 25205 68' 06"

Music for two lyra viols by Thomas Ford and Alfonso Ferrabosco, two bass viols by Jenkins and William Lawes, lute duets by John Danyel and Ferrabosco, plus Allison's divisions on *Goe from my window* played here by treble and bass viols and cittern, and Holborne's variations for solo cittern, make for a very enjoyable hour's listening in this reissue of a recording originally made in 2001. Ford takes pride of place, with 10 of his duets, and rightly so, as they are wonderful listening. The viol players work up a beautiful intensity in the Pavens, which suit their legato style, and the lute players are equally delightful with their contribution, particularly in the Danyel *Passymeasures* – an intriguing piece with subtle rhythms and lovely 'doubles' – well worth picking up if you missed it first time round. *Robert Oliver*

LATE BAROQUE

Bach Cantatas 54, 169, 170 James Bowman, The King's Consort, Robert King 59' 03" (rec 1988) Hyperion Helios CDH55312 ££

Twenty years ago when this recording was made, there were considerably fewer countertenors singing Bach's arias. Bowman's recording, however, stands up to all the current competition. His tone is smooth and consistent, his vibrato is effective by being used so sparingly, and he glides through melismas with agility. Only in one aspect – that of giving an overall sense of the words – is this recording slightly inferior to Andreas

Scholl's 1997 account of BWV 35 and 170. Also excellent is the accompaniment by The King's Consort, although nowadays we are starting to expect the obligato organ part to be played on a full-size instrument (rather than the box-organ heard here). *Stephen Rose*

Bach Clavier Übung III Malcolm Proud (1992 Metzler organ, Stadtkirche, Stein am Rhein, Switzerland) 68' 46" Maya Recordings MCD 0803 BWV 552, 669-671, 676, 678, 680, 682, 684, 686, 688

It was a shame that, having received the funding to travel from Ireland to Switzerland to record this CD, Malcolm Proud didn't choose to play one of the many historic organs available within a similar travelling time. This is yet another Bach recording on a modern Metzler organ. Fine instruments in themselves, but not the same as hearing historic pipework. His playing is perfectly acceptable, if slightly short of outstanding. Although he has grasped the concept of slightly detached played well (so essential in producing the clarity that Bach and his ilk require) he does, like many other organists, occasionally produce a rather insistent style of articulation. This is particularly noticeable in *Wir gläuben all an einen Gott*. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that this CD was grant-aided by the Music Network Ireland, Arts Council Ireland and the Kilkenny Borough Council and also supported by The Heritage Council of Ireland. Good for them, helping an Irish organist travel to Switzerland to record a German composer. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach French Suites, Italian Concerto, Fantasia and Fugue in a (BWV 904) Francesco Cera *hpscd* 132' 47" Arts 47738-8 (2 SACDs)

Francesco Cera, a really distinguished Italian early keyboard player, studied with Fernando Tagliavini and then Gustav Leonhardt; here he is privileged to play upon a copy made in 2006 by Roberto Livi based on an even more special historic specimen in the Musée de la musique in Paris, but originally made in 1691 by Vincent Tibaut: as Livi's own excellent booklet notes make clear, Tibaut was an outstanding builder, and Cera produces playing that really deserves such an instrument. Cera's notes on the Suites elevate our perception of these comparatively modest works to a level of profound philosophic theology: he, for one, judges them to be worthy articles of faith. His playing is throughout a delight. *Stephen Daw*

Bach Complete Flute Sonatas Emmanuel Pahud, Silvia Careddu fl, Trevor Pinnock *hpscd*, Jonathan Manson *vlc* 100' 47" (2 CDs)

EMI 50999 2 17443 2 7
BWV 1020, 1030-5, 1039

This double CD set contains all the flute sonatas by or attributed to JS Bach, including the trio sonata for two flutes and continuo in G major. The French flautist Emmanuel Pahud produces a lovely warm sound without too much vibrato, and though in the fast movements in particular it is apparent that he is playing a modern flute, the slow movements are played most expressively. The players are obviously in sympathy with each other and the excellent balance allows them all to be clearly heard. If you prefer the bigger sound of the modern flute you will enjoy this fine recording. *Victoria Helby*

Bach Cembalo Concertos Francesco Cera, I Barocchisi, Diego Fasolis 68' 15" Arts Authentic 47729-8 SACD BWV 1052-4, 1056

These recordings of Bach Harpsichord solo Concertos present us with the composer at his most spirited and stylish, very authentic with regard both to speed and balances. The performances are authoritatively delivered by Cera and Fasolis, a pairing which I had not encountered before: the result is imaginative, lively and rewarding. *Stephen Daw*

G. Bononcini San Nicola di Bari Lavinia Bertotti, Elena Cecci Fedi Gabriella Martellacci, Furio Zanasi SSAB, Les Muffatti, Peter Van Heygen 81' 36" Ramée RAM 0806

This is a rarity indeed. John Byrom's little rhyme comes to mind:

*Some say, compar'd to Bononcini,
Than Mynheer Handel's but a ninny.
Others aver that he to Handel
Is scarcely fit to hold a candle.
Strange all this difference should be
Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee.*

I was expecting something competent but lacking the dramatic power of Handel, but I was agreeably surprised by the intensity of this work, albeit scored for minimal forces of just strings with the four soloists and no chorus. There are some real gems here. Nicholas' 'M'incateni, e se mi sciogli' (tr. 19) is a stunning aria, bringing to mind a comparison with Handel's famous 'Lascia ch'io pianga' from *Rinaldo*, and Clizio's aria 'Anche il cielo' (tr. 23) has, by contrast, all the drama of many a Handel operatic aria. It is perhaps unfair, though, to compare this work composed in 1693 (Bononcini was Handel's senior by 15 years) with Handel's operatic output of some 18 years later. Indeed, many of the da capo arias bear all the hallmarks of the 17th century Italian opera, with their continuo themes

and only a few having the full string accompaniment. The work, nevertheless, is full of word-painting, with clear references to buzzing bees, fire's angry flashes, sparkling stars and rocking waves, all achieved with simple string writing.

The story is straightforward: Stampiglia's libretto tells the leave-taking of Nicholas from his parents Johanna and Epiphane, aided by his companion Clizio. The soloists, with their ornamented da capos, are stylish, the period instrument performance is impeccable, and the booklet particularly informative, complemented by an impressive CD case. Compared with Alessandro Scarlatti's *Il Martirio di Santa Cecilia* which I reviewed in the last issue of *EMR*, the Bononcini is a much more interesting work, and one to which I will happily return. Ian Graham Jones

Dornel La Triomphante: chamber music for recorders, flute & continuo Passacaglia (Annabel Knight rec, fl, Louise Bradbury rec, Reiko Ichise gamba, Robin Bigwood kbd) + Dan Laurin rec, Eligio Quinteiro theorbo 73' 43"
Naxos 8.570986 £

Dornel was born around 1680 and worked as an organist and composer in Paris. He was highly regarded in his day and held the position of *maître de musique* at the Académie française between 1725 and 1742. This CD demonstrates the variety of his instrumental music, and includes a quartet sonata, two trio sonatas, two solo sonatas with continuo, a harpsichord suite and a trio without continuo. Apart from the *Cinquième Suite* from *Pièces de Clavecin* of 1731 all the music played here dates from a period of five years beginning in 1709. Despite being called sonatas, the pieces mostly consist of dances of the French suite and show only a little influence of the Italian music which was beginning to be felt in Paris at this time. Passacaglia have produced a stylishly played and enjoyable recording, and it comes at a budget price too. Victoria Helby

Handel *Acis & Galatea* (1718) Susan Hamilton *Galatea*, Nicolas Mulroy *Acis*, Thomas Hobbs *Damon*, Nicholas Hurndall Smith *Coridon*, Matthew Brook *Polyphemus*, Dunedin Consort & Players, John Butt 95' 18"
Linn CKD 319

After one of the best *Messiahs* in disc (and similar success with a bit of Bach), John Butt returns with an outstanding *Acis & Galatea*. For a start, he gets the forces right: a soprano, three tenors and a bass, who are not only excellent soloists but blend as the chorus. More important, he gets the feel of the pastoral entertainment*

and doesn't make the mistake of treating it too seriously: not that the death of *Acis* isn't deeply felt, but such emotion arises within a world of make-believe which absorbs and to some extent sanitises tragedy. The tone here is exactly right, and it is good that Polyphemus isn't just a bluff parody. Only a couple of interpretational points worried me. 'Behold the monster Polypheme' is strangely detached (using the word both as a musical and emotional term); and I've never been sure what Handel was intending by marking the opening of 'The flocks shall leave the mountain' *staccato*: here I feel that he might not mean more than (to use that word again) detached. A marvellous performance! CB

* The box refrains from using any word to say what sort of work this is. The autograph has no title: early sources give a choice of English Opera, Opera, Pastoral Opera, Serenata, Masque. I wrote 'Pastoral Entertainment' above before seeing it in the first paragraph of John's booklet notes: it has the right period feel. I'm a bit uneasy about the description on the box 'Original Cannons Performing Version (1718)': I'd omit 'Original' and 'performing'. I don't think that Handel thought in terms of writing a masterpiece in abstraction and then produce a variety of performance versions; the autograph score is a stage in the production of the work, and by this time in his career, Handel must have been well aware that it was not the final stage. For *Acis* there is no conducting score to show the next stage of the process, but the conductor as editor uses the information available and his knowledge of the appropriate conventions to produce a version such as Handel might have performed. The title used here doesn't quite match the process between what Handel wrote and what we hear.

Handel *Joshua* Myung-ee Hyun, Alex Potter, James Gilchrist, Georg Poplutz, Konstantin Wolff SSATB, Kölner Kammerchor, Collegium Cartusianum, Peter Neumann 122' 40" (2 CDs)
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 332 1532-2

Joshua is full of stirring stuff, as you would expect in the aftermath of smashing the Jacobites; the oratorio is full of trumpets, drums and martial airs. The little romance between Othniel and Acsah is a bit twee, but gives an excuse for some nice pastoral music. Neumann's rendition of it is enjoyable. His tempi are on the brisk side, which generally lends a fresh and exciting pace, and arias such as 'With redoubled rage' are splendid. The choir keeps up well, and there is some good, tight singing, as when they describe the razing of Jericho in the opening of Act II. There are also some nice touches, like the use of the organ to suggest the word of God in Act III. James Gilchrist is a convincing Joshua, ably backed up by Konstantin Wolff as the trusty Caleb. Less convincing are the other two soloists: Myung-Hee Hyun has a decent voice, but terrible pronunciation

(very odd vowels); Alex Potter sounds just like the Oxbridge choral scholar that he was – not ideal solo material, and certainly not a 'Helden-countertenor'. At times the choir shows a little weakness – 'See how the Conq'ring Hero' is taken at a slow tempo, giving it ceremonial gravitas, but leaving the choir a little too naked to carry it off really well. However, this is more than a competent performance, and Neumann allows it to be a coherent drama with forward drive. This is a recommendable *Joshua*, and better than some of its English competitors.

Katie Hawks

Handel *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* Julia Gooding, Jeremy Ovenden, Francesco Cera, Duilio Galfetti, SATB, Coro della Radio Svizzera, I Barocchisti, Diego Fasolis Authentic Arts 47739-8
+ *Zadok the Priest & Organ Concerto* 13

With a good mixture of German, Italian (albeit Swiss) and English musicians, this disc might claim to be authentically Handelian. It's a good rendition of the *St Cecilia's Day Ode*, anyway, which really ought to be performed more, as it's so full of musical riches. Julia Gooding has achieved now real warmth to her voice, and Jeremy Ovenden is well-suited to martial arias. The tempi are animated, occasionally bordering on briskness, but the choir and orchestra always meet the challenges given them. The CD booklet is dire – the notes are awful, rendered worse by translation, and there is no libretto (and rather too many photos of Fasolis). The other pieces on the CD are good, but not outstanding, performances of unrelated and rather over-recorded pieces. Could the rest of the disc space not have been filled with, for example, 'Look down, harmonious saint' or another celebration on music, instead of a couple of unrelated fill-ups. It seems unfair to pay full price chiefly for the fairly short *St Cecilia Ode*.

Katie Hawks

Handel *Furor*: opera arias Joyce DiDonato, Les Talens Lyriques, Christophe Rousset 75.08"
Virgin Classics 50999 519038 2 4
Arias from *Admeto*, *Amadigi Ariodante*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Hercules*, *Imeneo*, *Serse*, *Teseo*

In a preface to the booklet notes, Joyce DiDonato's claims that the impulse for this recital disc is the slighted and vengeful character at the heart of many Handelian dramas – in fact, it's such a mainstay character that she has ample choice of music. But perhaps it's just an excuse for her to sing her favourite arias, for this theme remains broad – not limited to female characters, or male, or even Italian opera. But they are all gigantic plums of arias, and nicely

contrasted. I have slight reservations over her ornamentation; I'm a conservative, and feel that Handel wrote lines a lot better than singers (especially as the occasional tuning moment indicates that DiDonato might be better concentrating more on the notes than he did write). Rousset's accompaniment is engaging, if not always as furious as it might be (although even this is mitigated by good phrasing and playing). DiDonato's characterisation is good – her Sesto leaves one wanting more of him, and even her very American vowels in Dejanira's descent into madness really, really work – and this is an enjoyable disc. *Katie Hawks*

Handel *Parnasso in Festa* Carolyn Sampson, Lucy Crow, Rebecca Outram, Diana Moore, Ruth Clegg, Peter Harvey SSSmSAB, The King's Consort & Choir, Matthew Halls 131' 51"
Hyperion CDA67701/2

Thank goodness for Hyperion, still sensibly producing recordings that really ought to exist. *Il Parnasso in Festa* has been unfairly neglected by concert halls and recording studios, and so this CD set is a welcome addition to the Handel corpus. Handel wrote this serenata in 1734 for the marriage of Princess Anne, his favourite pupil, and William of Orange, and it is brimming with lovely music. Set on Parnassus, Apollo asks the muses and Orpheus to celebrate the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, and what follows is a charming discourse on life, love and music. David Vickers' sleeve notes give all the background information you could ever want (including some nice contemporary reviews), and there's even a note on the performing edition. Vickers discusses Handel's reworking of *Athalia* for this serenata, which is interesting, but limited by apologising for this recyding (lots of Handel scholars do this). Can't we just take it as given that Handel did rework stuff, and concentrate on *why* he chose a particular piece to adapt, and what extra insight it can give us into the end result?

As to the performance, the King's Consort is on fine form, and Halls is more dynamic than King in his direction (he does nonetheless suffer occasionally from moderation). Diana Moore is quite at home being deific, as Apollo, although her vibrato is a little too tight for my own liking, and Peter Harvey and Ruth Clegg are good supporting roles. Carolyn Sampson and Lucy Crowe are super, and the extended Orpheus section in the middle is a joy. They do, however, cast Rebecca Outram in shadow, who sounds quite underpowered. Since this recording has no competition, it is just as well that it is so good, and can worthily increase your Handel collection. *Katie Hawks*

Handel *Neun deutsche Arien* Monika Mauch. L'arpa festante, Rien Voskuilen Carus 83.426 57' 56"
+ Mattheson 3 *deutsche Arien*

This disc is a must. First of all, if you don't have the German Arias on your shelves, then your shelves are seriously lacking. Handel wrote them round about the time of *Giulio Cesare*, *Rodelinda* and *Tamerlano*, which gives you some indication of their quality (as well as some of the musical phrases), but they are the opposite of stagey theatricality. Instead, they are very personal reflections of how nature nurtures an individual's relationship with God, the words by the Lutheran Pietist Heinrich Brockes. This is conveyed beautifully by Monika Mauch in some spellbinding sinning. I've not heard anything stiller than *Süsse Stille*; all the other arias are wonderfully phrased, and words coloured, and her voice is at all times both pure and full, a combination achieved by few early music singers, and which many will envy. The musicians of L'arpa festante are accordingly sensitive. Rien Voskuilen takes a few liberties with both the continuo (adding to the keyboard and cello a guitar, theorbo and harp at various times), and the obbligato lines, doubling the instruments on a couple, and taking them away on one. But this does not detract from the music, and at no time does the continuo become intrusive, as is now so often the case. On a couple of arias (e.g. *Meine Seele hört*) there is a slight heaviness, owing not to the tempi so much (though these are on the slow side) as to the emphasis on the beat. However, the singing and playing is so pleasurable that it is a minor quibble.

The three pieces which fill up the rest of the CD were, for me, at any rate, an ear-opener. Having not even looked at the disc before I listened, I was slightly confused at what these were: early Handel? early Bach? Telemann? Actually, they are by Johann Mattheson, Handel's erstwhile best friend. This is their premier recording: they are well worth the rediscovery. Get this disc.

Katie Hawks

Handel's *English Cantatas* Nicki Kennedy, Sally Bruce-Payne SA, Brook Street Band 118' 57" (2 CDs)
Avie AV2153

It was an excellent idea to gather together English-texted music from the peripheries of authentic Handel. The first disc contains two cantatas, *So pleasing the pain* is and *With roving and with ranging*, based on arias from *Flavio*, *Ottone* and *Giulio Cesare* but with new pastoral texts. A pity that Handel (if he was involved at all) wasn't in touch with such good poets as he could call on at Cannons. The problem for the listener is (as in *Acis & Galatea*) catching the right mixture of pastoral

play and seriousness, and the performances here tend to be a little overdone for the texts. (They are printed with no editorial tidying of punctuation, and in an English context, *air* should replace *aria*.) Interesting to hear, whoever was responsible for the adaptations, but I found *To lonely shades* and a group of English songs on the second disc more successful. Essential listening for all Handelians, and the performances are first class. *CB*

C. A. Jacobi *Der Himmel steht*
See Homilius

Leclair *Violin Sonatas* John Holloway, Jaap ter Linden, Hans-Ulrich Mortensen ECM New Series 476 7280 69' 18"
Book III, 1, 3, 4, 7, 8

Every time a new CD appears from John Holloway, I get excited. And every time I am more impressed by the performances (and the beautiful recorded sound) than even I had expected. This, like his (I should rightly say 'their', since he is joined by Jaap ter Linden and Lars Ulrik Mortensen as usual) Veracini disc, is a selection of pieces from the composer's output, although here they have chosen works from a single publication: the *Troisième Livre de Sonates, Op. 5*. Leclair (like Holloway) was clearly an absolute master of his instrument as well as a highly original melodist and lover of rich harmonies. But this, as I said, is very much a team effort and what a dream team this is for the solo violin sonata repertoire – I wonder what wonderful music their next ECM record will delight us with! *BC*

Pergolesi *Messa de S. Emidio* (Missa *Romana*); **A. Scarlatti *Messa per il santissimo natale*** Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini 58' 16"
Naïve OP 30461

The Pergolesi (1736) is a large-scale setting of the Missa (Kyrie and Gloria) for double choir and two orchestras, with oboes, horns and trumpets. Its dramatic writing is more than captured by the ebullient performance of Concerto Italiano, and the work itself deserves to be better known. The impression, however, is that the movements may have been conceived separately, as the somewhat radical key changes (and very short gaps) between them were somewhat disturbing. The richly textured and more dignified 1707 Scarlatti mass is again for double choir but with just string accompaniment, and is a shorter, full setting. It is more conventional, both in style and in performance than the Pergolesi work and the repetition of material in some movements gives the work a greater sense of unity. Here are two works that are well worth hearing. *Ian Graham-Jones*

Platti *Concerti Grossi after Corelli* Xenia Löffler ob, Sebastian Hess vlc, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Georg Kallweit Harmonia Mundi HMC 901996 53' 22" Corelli/Platti op. 5/4, 5, 10; Platti vlc concerto in D, VIII, Oboe concerto in g

release date: 12-1-09

Giovanni Benedetto Platti is one of the more interesting composers active in the middle of the 18th-century. A native of Padua, he was brought to Würzburg by Prince-Bishop Johann Philipp Franz von Schönborn in 1722, and remained there until his death in 1763. Judging by the two concertos recorded here, his music is of considerable originality, in what might be described as a 'Vivaldi meets C. P. E. Bach' manner. It's disappointing, therefore, that less than half this CD is devoted to Platti's own music; the rest is made up of his arrangements as concerti grossi of three of Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas, in the same spirit as Geminiani's published versions – though one of the arrangements is not performed as Platti left it, for some anonymous person has added parts for oboes, horns and bassoons. The result is a passable fake in a vaguely Handelian style, except that the horns are given over-ambitiously stratospheric parts that they can barely cope with. But what's the point? There's plenty of genuine 18th-century music the band could have played instead.

Otherwise the Corelli arrangements are tolerably well played, but the two Platti concertos are dreadful. For a start, the band is much too big. In the note we are told that the oboe concerto 'calls for modest forces, two violins, a viola, and a continuo line, marked as being for harpsichord'. That would be about par for the period, but despite this evidence the band consists of fourteen strings, augmented by at least one bassoon and a lute as well as the harpsichord. Everyone plays throughout, and the tutti are dispatched in the aggressive, 'in your face' style that is regrettably current in some quarters. It lacks all subtlety, and to my ear the result is horrible. What a pity!

Richard Maunder

Rameau *La Pantomime: Pièces de Clavecin* Skip Sempé Olivier Fortin hpscd Paradiso PA0005 58' 56"

This new issue comes in an interesting package: as well as the CD and booklet there is also a DVD, of which more shortly. On the CD Sempé plays three sets of pieces from Rameau's various publications grouped by key. There is no easing us in gently either. He opens with a highly charged reading of *L'Enharmonique* which, at times, only just stays in touch with its pulse, a reminder that this is the director of an ensemble called

Capriccio Stravagante. The other solos include a splendid *Les Cyclopes* and one has to commend the eschewal of the opportunity to issue yet another *Gavotte et doubles*. Sempé is joined by Olivier Fortin for movements from the *Pièces de clavecin en concert*, played on two harpsichords. Though I miss the colours of the violin/flute and gamba, I do savour this rich sonority and the ensemble between the players is absolutely brilliant: theirs is a long-standing partnership. They can be seen in action on the bonus DVD (five pieces – three of which are not on the CD), which is double sided with each side a different format to suit all players. This is quite a curious experience. The fact that one can see adds little as we rarely view the players' hands, there is virtually no apparent communication between them, and they play with completely deadpan faces. The instruments, of course, look wonderful but we don't really see much of them in a way that allows the fullest admiration. Only in the last track does the format really come into its own with extended shots of Sempé's flying fingers in the batteries of Royer's *La Marche des Scythes*. However, in the context of instrument and set his open-necked shirt and jeans do rather grate. Buy it, you'll love it, but don't feel you have to watch (apart from the Royer). David Hansell

D. Scarlatti 16 *Sonatas* Tomoko Matsuoka hpscd 67' 27"

Genuin GEN 88131

K1-3, 28-30, 146, 208-9, 212-214, 462-3, 532-3

This is an impressive debut recording by the winner of the 2007 Bruges Harpsichord Competition. She plays a selection of sonatas, including many well-known ones and some less often aired, topping and tailing the CD with the first three and last three of the *Essercizi*. She shows great lightness of touch, especially in virtuosic sonatas like K146. She is least at home in K30, the so-called 'Cat's Fugue', which I find a bit stodgy; but elsewhere her very clean playing comes through, as does a sense of both drama and fun in sonatas like K3. I particularly enjoyed her cantabile in K 208. She plays on a 1632 Johannes Ruckers, given a ravalment in 1745 and now in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Neuchâtel, and the whole is excellently recorded in a sympathetic acoustic. This more than holds its own in what is now a pretty crowded market. Noel O'Regan

Telemann *Suites for Strings* B'Rock, Jurgén Gross 50' 27"

Klara KTC 4027

La Bizarre, La Lyra, La Musette (TWV 55: G2, E3, g1)

With the recent announcement that the outstanding Russian group Pratum

Integrum has embarked upon a project to record all of Telemann's orchestral suites, I imagine that it is quite unlikely that we will see many more CDs of this repertoire by B'Rock. This really is a pity as they are a fabulous string band and their readings of these three subtitled works are exceptionally fine. Each of the suites consists of a finely wrought French overture followed by a sequence of dance movements or character pieces (with titles such as *Rossignol* and *La vielle*). Based in Ghent, the orchestra is seemingly rather shy, since they do not list their names in the booklet, nor do they credit any director so, like Pratum Integrum, they appear to enjoy democratic music-making – if the results are anything to go by, it's an approach that pays real dividends. I look forward to hearing much more from them. BC

Telemann *Fantasias for solo flute* Rachel Brown 62' 40"

Uppernote Recordings UPCD001

Rachel Brown doesn't tell us what flute she is playing on this recording, but its surprisingly deep alto voice in the lower register and contrasting lighter second octave make it ideal for bringing out Telemann's contrapuntal effects. There are twelve fantasias in the set, rising from A major to G minor and avoiding the more extreme flat keys which are difficult to play in tune on an instrument which is basically in D major. Rachel Brown's playing is stylish and technically assured, with embellishments in the slow movements inspired by Telemann's Methodical Sonatas. Telemann's designation of the pieces as fantasias is fully justified here in a poised performance which demonstrates not just the variety of music contained in these miniature pieces but also the range of sounds which a baroque flute can produce. More information about the Fantasias can be found on the web site www.rachelbrownflute.com.

Victoria Helby

Vivaldi 6 *Flute Concertos op. 10* Konrad Hünteler fl, Camerata of the 18th century Dabringhaus und Grimm MDG 311 0640-2 (rec 1996) 46' 47"

Konrad Hünteler was one of the leading early flute players of the day and these are excellent performances, brightly captured (as always!) by the MDG engineers. They forego today's bizarre need to re-order printed sets, and play them in the order they were published. If you do not own a set of Vivaldi's fine Op. 10 concertos (which include such favourites as *La notte*, *Il Gardellino* and *La tempesta di mare*), this is very well worth getting hold of for excellent, self-effacing solo playing and beautifully crafted accompaniments. BC

Vivaldi *Concerti per violoncello* II
Christophe Coin, Il Giardino Armonico
Naïve OP 30457 60' 18"
RV 399, 401, 403, 408, 411, 417, 422

What do you get if you cross one of the world's leading cellists, some of the finest repertoire for his instrument, and a lively Italian orchestra? The answer ought to be obvious, and no-one even vaguely interested in the cello (or Vivaldi for that matter) will be disappointed by Volume 2 of the naïve Complete Vivaldi Edition's sequence of concertos. Seven contrasting concertos in different keys give Christophe Coin plenty of opportunity to explore the lyric as well as the virtuosic side of the Red Priest's writing for the instrument. Michael Talbot's booklet note is typically informative, though I would have thought the introductory passage about the relevance of the violoncello di spalla could have been omitted without any great loss. I've enjoyed listening repeatedly to this disc and will surely return to it over the coming weeks. Recommended. BC

Arp-Schnitger-Orgel Norden Vol. 2 Agnes Luchterhandt, Thiemo Janssen 76' 10"
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 906 1502-6
Music by Bach (BWV 147, 538, 565 566, 599, 615, 618, 629, 732), Böhm Reincken, Buxtehude (BuxWV 156 161, 220).

The Norden organ is one of the most important historic instruments around, and Agnes Luchterhandt and Thiemo Janssen have the good fortune to be joint organists there, as well as being married to each other. Mrs plays tracks 1-10 and Mr tracks 10-15 (10 being a duet). I would not dare to differentiate between the couple's performances. The programme contrasts Bach with his youthful influences, Buxtehude, Böhm and Reincken. Bach's Toccata (Praeludium) in C (BWV566) is not often played or recorded, but it sounds exceptionally fine on this organ. The CD is a delight, with music, instrument and playing of the highest order. You might not be desperate for yet another recording of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, but this one makes a fitting conclusion to a fine CD. Andrew Benson-Wilson

Barocking Together Sharon Bezaly fl, Terence Charleston hpscd, Charles Medlam b viol 67' 46"
BIS-CD-1689
Bach Flute sonatas BWV 1031-2, 1034-5, Handel fl sonata in b HWV 367b, Telemann Sonata in F TWV 41:F4

I was rather relieved on playing this disc to discover that, despite its title, it contains fairly conventional performances of sonatas by Handel, Bach and Telemann, the last being Telemann's well-known sonata in F for recorder and continuo. Modern

flautists like to play baroque music but not all have as good a command of style as Sharon Bezaly has. She uses some imaginative Italian style ornaments in the Handel and Telemann and is not afraid to add them to the Bach as well. She has great technical facility in the fast movements and the Presto of the Handel sonata is quite breath-takingly fast, with the continuo keeping up admirably. The Handel movements are listed in the wrong order in the otherwise useful booklet, which contains notes by Terence Charlston, who also supplied a completion for the missing bars of the first movement of the Bach A major sonata. Victoria Helby

CLASSICAL

Haydn *Symphonies Vol. 34* (62, 107, 108)
Toronto Chamber Orchestra, Kevin Mallon
Naxos 8.572130 £ 68' 35"
+ Overtures *La vera costanza* & *Lo speciale*

This concludes the Naxos series of Haydn's complete symphonic output. 62 is not as well known as it deserves to be, with its remarkable slow movement and delightful menuetto and trio. 'A' and 'B' may well be among Haydn's earliest works in the form; the sinfonias arranged from the overtures to two of his all-too-rarely performed operas are a welcome bonus. The Toronto CO goes from strength to strength: these are fine performances, with attractive detail and a proper sense of Haydn's perspectives. The recording is satisfactory, though the acoustic lacks atmosphere. Peter Branscombe

Haydn *String Quartets op. 77*, 103
Edding Quartet 57' 14"
Er'Cetera KTC 1379

Haydn's final two-and-a-half string quartets make an attractive programme, and they are very well played on period instruments by a fine, young-looking team. Their dynamic and rhythmic control is impressive, with crisp yet perceptive phrasing. One criticism: they tend to take fast movements very fast, two of the slow ones also on the fast side. But they maintain their sense of direction, and even at *presto* the players do not stumble. Indeed, the feeling of spontaneous music-making in their rendition of these remarkable late flowerings of Haydn's genius is palpable and rewarding. The oddest feature of the release for me is the photograph (by Sara Claes), which fills not only the slipcase but is also prominent both outside and inside the booklet, of a stern, abstracted, modern intellectual with prominent nose who, we are told in the fanciful note, is Franz Joseph Haydn. Let no one be put off by this affectation: the Edding Quartet (named for the Danish philosopher Søren Edding) is a

highly talented group. Peter Branscombe

I was also annoyed that card cover with the superfluous picture concealed information that a purchaser might want to see. CB

Homilius *Weihnachtsoratorium*; C. A. Jacobi *Der Himmel steht* Christian Kohl, Annette Markert, Marcus Ullmann Tobias Berndt SATB, Sächsisches Vokalensemble, Virtuosi Saxoniae, Ludwig Güttler 58' 22"
Carus 83.235

The sacred works of Gottfried August Homilius (1714-85) epitomise the stylistic changes in Lutheran church music after the death of Bach. This recording features his *Weihnachtsoratorium*, a compact work of ten movements. As was typical in the late 18th century, he does not use biblical or chorale texts, instead setting contemporary sacred poetry (which can now seem a little dated in tone). At his best, Homilius writes simple yet hugely catchy melodies (as in the tenor aria, 'Die Engel frohlocken'); he also engages the listener's attention in reflective movements such as the soprano aria 'Kind, ich liebe dich'. Less interesting are the festal choruses, on account of their plain harmonies and regular phrasing. This disc also includes a Christmas cantata for tenor and orchestra by Christian August Jacobi (b.1688), a little-known contemporary of Bach. This is an inspired piece, with a rich harmonic language and ornate vocal writing. Jacobi juxtaposes the jubilation of trumpets with a tranquil texture (for upper strings only) that symbolises the innocence of the infant Christ. Marcus Ullmann excels as the soloist in the Jacobi, and the singing is generally good in the Homilius (with the exception of some sketchy intonation by the solo soprano). his is an interesting exploration of little-known Christmas repertory. Stephen Rose

Carus also produces an excellent promotional CD with 16 excerpts of music by Homilius for which they issue both scores and recordings. Its number is 90.042/99, but it is probably available free with a Homilius catalogue direct from Carus. CB

L. Mozart *Symphonies* London Mozart Players, Matthias Bamert 68' 20"
Chandos CHAN 10496
C1, C4, D1, D17, D25, G14

This invaluable series, now numbering some twenty volumes, here reaches an important juncture with the issue of six richly varied, well-constructed and finely played works, none of them previously available, by the still often underrated Leopold Mozart. Three of them, including a striking *Partia* in C (C4), are in four quite brief movements, three in the overture-like three-movement form, with dashing finale. Matthias Bamert has the measure of them all, and the LMP are in

excellent form for him. The recording is of high quality, and the valuable booklet essay is by Cliff Eisen, than whom no one knows more about Father Leopold.

Peter Branscombe

L. Mozart *Toy Symphony, 'New Lambach' and other symphonies* Toronto Chamber Orchestra, Kevin Mallon 69' 15"

Naxos 8.570499 £

'Other symphonies' are Eisen Ar, Dr15, G8

It's a good month that brings two CDs of sinfonias by Leopold Mozart. The new Naxos contains five works, four indisputably by Leopold, including the symphony presented during the visit to Lambach monastery of father and son Mozart in 1769; and the so-called 'Toy' symphony of uncertain authorship. There was long an element of doubt who composed which 'Lambach' symphony, a fact that helps underline the high quality of Father Mozart's compositional skills. Not only are these works well constructed, they have sufficient variety of mood and instrumentation to keep the listener constantly engaged. The introductory essay is again by Cliff Eisen. Mallon and his Toronto CO play with spirit and discernment and the sound-quality is high.

Peter Branscombe

Mozart *Sonatas, Fantasy, Rondo* Stanley Hoogland *fp* 80' 11"

Arte dell' Arco CC-AD 027

Fantasy K475, Rondo K511, Sonatas K282, 310, 533/494

Hoogland plays an instrument by Christopher Clarke said to be a copy of one by Anton Walther (*sic*), but for some unaccountable reason the nameboard is modelled on that of the Christoph claviorganum in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. The style of the case is characteristic of c. 1800, and the instrument looks and sounds quite different from the fortepianos that would have been available to Mozart twenty-five years earlier: piano technology developed as rapidly in the late 18th century as computer technology in the late 20th. In particular, the use of the 'moderator' knee-lever for brief 'echo' effects or to shade off pianissimo endings is anachronistic, even for the music Mozart wrote in the 1780s.

Despite my grumbles about the choice of instrument, Hoogland plays with feeling and sensitivity, and pays scrupulous attention to Mozart's detailed articulation markings. I could have done with a bit more flexibility in the rapid passage-work, which tends to be rather four-square – but that's a matter of personal taste, of course. I still prefer Colin Tilney's recordings.

Richard Maunder

Mozart *Duo Sonatas 1 Duo Amadè* (Catherine Mackintosh *vln*, Geoffrey Govier *fp*) Chandos *Chaconne* CHAN 0755 66' 12"

Having raved about how much I enjoyed Rachel Podger and Gary Cooper's playful and fresh takes on Mozart's sonatas with violin, it came as a particular pleasure to discover an altogether different, no less viable, and utterly enchanting account from one of the doyennes of the British early violin school, Catherine Mackintosh, and Geoffrey Govier. I have never heard her play solo in this repertoire before – more's the pity, as it is clearly one in which she feels as comfortable as she does in Biber or Bach. Volume 1 consists of three sonatas (including my all-time favourite, K. 301) and two sets of variations. Having played these pieces many times, the performers have overcome the problems of balance between the instruments, and if their accounts are not perhaps as youthful as Podger and Cooper, they are certainly dramatic and expressive. If I had to choose between them for a period of exile, I'm afraid I'd have to have someone make an iPod compilation from both sets!

BC

Organistes de la Catedral de Barcelona Segle XVIII David Malet (1994 Blancafort organ, Barcelona Cathedral), Scola gregoriana de la Companyia Musical 62' 52"
Discant CD-E 1010

The CD is centred on the music of the five organists of Barcelona Cathedral during the period from just before the mid-18th century to the mid-19th century, with examples of alternatim settings from three of them, set in the context of a quasi-liturgical Mass and Vespers. This is not a reconstruction of a particular liturgical event, but blends the music of the whole period. Although the range of musical styles over the century is wide, the influence also reaches back to earlier Iberian styles, notably in Francesc Mariner's sonorous Tiento *partit de mà dreita* which, although written around the middle of the 18th century, owes much to the divided-keyboard Tiento's of Araouxo in the early 17th century. The booklet includes the MS score of this piece. As well as the alternatim organ versets, there are also several solo organ pieces, many of a delightfully frothy nature, set within their liturgical context, for example as Offertori, Communió. Carles Baguer's spirited Roccoco Preludi (del tercer salm de Nones) forms an Ante Missam introit and Mariner's extended Obra de ple sobre la Salve forms a majestic conclusion. The huge organ of Barcelona Cathedral dates back to 1539, although after a reconstruction between 1985 and 1994 it now speaks with a more recent voice. It is played with impressive clarity and

musical insight by David Malet. The three singers of the Schola gregoriana de la Companyia Musical's are also impressive in their singing of the chant (which is from the Cathedral archives) – slow and stately as befits the implied Festival of the BVM. At least some of this comes from a live recording – there is applause at the end but no other evidence of an audience. Thoroughly recommended.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

19th CENTURY

Beethoven *Symphonies & Overtures* Anima Eterna, Jos van Immerseel

see p. 29

Schumann *A Tribute to Bach* Andreas Staier (1837 *Erard pf*) 72' 32"

Harmonia Mundi HMC 901996

Kinderszenen op. 15, *Scherzo...* op. 32, 5 pieces from *Clavierstücke für die Jugend* op. 68, *Waldszenen* 10, 82, 7 *Clavierstücke in Fughettenform* op. 126

We don't have a reviewer for this: there is a vacancy for an expert of good taste to cover releases on the piano after about 1830.

21st CENTURY

Piet Swerts *The six wives of Henry VIII* Flanders Recorder Quartet, Patrick Van Goethem *cT* 62' 08"

Passacaille 948

+ music by Cornish & Henry VIII

First of all the playing is exemplary – there is both musicality and virtuosity in evidence. The concept is a good one: the sequence of Henry's wives together with incidents from their lives, but I began to get the same heart-sink feeling as I do when watching a period film and I just know that the background music will be neither fish nor fowl. There is so much unrecorded music contemporary with Henry which could have been used for this concept. Or Piet Swerts might have chosen to write new music for all of it – he is clearly competent to do so and writes well for recorders. I enjoy Tudor music, and I enjoy modern music, but I think they sit uneasily together here. It is all to do with dissonance and cliché: both styles contain examples of both, but their juxtaposition is uncomfortable, being the aural equivalent of bicycle with a modern express train.

Kathleen Berg

Kathleen's book on Sennfl is now available: see advert on page 48.

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)
££ = mid-price
Other discs full price
as far as we know

VARIOUS

Stella del nostro mar: past and present reflections of the Marian inspiration
Cantica Symphonica 74' 49"

Glossa GCD P31905

Music by Isaac, Josquin, Mouton, Peñelosa Senfl, Willaert + Galante & Gubanov

I first heard this through without the booklet to identify what I was hearing. The first track particularly struck me: a setting of *Ave Maria virgo serena*, with the personal end *memento mei*, evidently not exclusive to Josquin. Beautiful singing, with the words perfectly audible – a lauda rather than motet, but with a change to triple time in the same place as Josquin. It's by Frater Petrus, perhaps Castellanus, Petrucci's first editor. The programme (music from c.1500 that everyone should know) is an homage to the Carmelite convent where the ensemble regularly records, and is indeed a worthy tribute. The singing draws the listener in, the four voices presenting clear lines, well tuned and blended, the singers almost embodying the music. The repertoire is mostly Italian c.1500, but there are pieces dedicated to the group last year by Carlo Galante and Yakov Gubanov. The booklet notes are well worth reading, helping to give this disc a clearer focus than most programmes focused on Mary. Full marks for music, performance and presentation. Highly recommended. CB

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Music for The Twelve Days of Christmas and The Nativity Faye Newton S, Gary Cooper kbd, His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts 59' 20"

SFZ Music SFZ0307

Music by a Kempis, Allison, Farnaby, Gibbons, Holborne, Lasso, Morley, Praetorius, Ravenscroft, Spirdo, Victoria & anon

This is the only new recording we've had of seasonal music that one might wish to hear as background to cooking Christmas dinner or dozing in an armchair afterwards. You do have to like cornetts and sackbuts; as regular readers will know, I do. They are supplemented by Gary Cooper on keyboard and delightful singing by Faye Newton, with Stephen Henderson, percussion, and Keith McGowan on bagpipes and recorder. The first half of the programme runs through the Christmas story, the second has a wider repertoire held together by association with the partridge and pear trees, turtle doves, French hens etc. The Seven Swans are silver ones: Gibbons madrigal works marvellously with this combination! A few versions may not stand repeated hearings, but nevertheless, let this be your sound of Christmas this year. CB

While shepherds watched: Christmas Music from English Parish Churches and Chapels, 1740-1830 Psalmody The Parley of Instruments, Peter Holman 67' 33"
Hyperion CDH55325 ££ (rec 1996)

I hope that most of our readers have this already. There was little competition when it appeared (and not much since) for non-folk recordings of the more vernacular aspects of parish church music of this period. There's plenty of vigour here, but also some quite sophisticated composition, notably the original of 'Old Foster', one of four settings of 'While shepherds watched' which ends the disc. Sad that this once ubiquitous hymn has fallen out of favour, despite the wealth of available tunes. CB

BARGAIN REISSUE

Gregorian Chant c.180' (3 CDs)

The Soho Collection SOHOC022

For an even cheaper Christmas present than the Virgin four-disc reissue of Taverner Consort seasonal music recordings I recommended last year, here's one in which I have no interest (though one that is of rather more limited appeal). I found in Tesco a few weeks ago a three-disc set called *Gregorian Chant* at £4.00 (£1.33 per disc) in a series that looked as if it might offer, at least at that price, useful anthologies for those like me who are ignorant of most of the popular culture of the last century. But as so often, non-expert presentation results in the public being misled. All the tracks are listed on the back of the box. Those who wouldn't dream of picking up a box labelled '3 Hours Of Relaxing, Spiritual Music' (I detest the capital O) might recognise that most of the pieces on CD1 are 13th-century polyphony: it is in fact a reissue of a 1990 disc *Metronome 1001* (perhaps the company's first recording as well as the Orlando's). Well worth having. The other two discs really are of chant. CD2 is music for the feast of St Thomas of Canterbury from the Canterbury lay clerks (recorded 1994) and CD3 is Cappella Nova's Lauds for the Feast of St Columba (recorded by ASV in 1992. Not to everyone's taste, but well worth the price. CB

200 Years of Music at Versailles an update from David Hansell

In my review of this mega-box in *EMR* 126 p. 8, I expressed disappointment that so little of the supporting information was available in English and that the relevant website was misleading in this regard. That was all true at the time but there has been a subsequent development. *EMR* is grateful to John Wall of

www.newolde.com (an amazingly useful website) for this further information

Further to your review in *EMR* 126, a UK edition of the 20-CD set, number MBF1108, was released in June 2008. It includes a different booklet with English translations. Since I purchased the original French edition without translations, I emailed the vendors at contact@coffretbaroque.com to request a copy of the pdf file of the English booklet. My first attempt was unsuccessful. I received a reply that the English booklet could be downloaded from the website www.baroqueboxset.com, which is incorrect, and there was no response to my followup email. About a week later, I tried again. This time, the vendors sent me the pdf file.

THIRD RETIREMENT

This is an appropriate place to thank Peter Berg for his contributions to *EMR* throughout its existence. During his decade as purveyor of early-music CDs (after he retired from being a GP) he was extremely helpful in various ways, particularly by reading all the CD reviews – with particular attention to the headings. The accuracy of our £ and ££ indications is likely to decline in future. Since his second retirement, he continued to provide a monthly list of new issues for the Concert Diary. Last month was his last, and on his third retirement we congratulate him and wish him and Kathleen well for the future. Our paths will continue to cross, and some of our readers attend the weekend courses they organise in Lincoln several times a year.

Vale King's Music Salve The Early Music Company Ltd

Don't be surprised if, next time you receive an invoice from us or order some music, there's a new name on the heading. It's part of the process of adjusting to advancing years. If we were in normal employment we would have been retired by now. We need to make our business more secure and provide for Clare and John when we are no longer here.

We will be associated with Elaine's brother's family, so the name King remains in the background. Our activities will essentially remain unchanged. We will still be providing Purcell and Handel (and even a little Haydn) for 2009 and Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers for its/their 400th anniversary, and so much more.

50 YEARS of DAS ALTE WERK

I'm writing about these in chronological order of recording, since I find them interesting for the progress (or otherwise) of early music performance over the last 50 years.

Bach *Cantatas 206 & 208* Erna Spoorenberg, Irmgard Jacobeit, Wilhelmine Mattès, Tom Brand, Jacques Villisch SSATB, Monteverdi Choir Hamburg, Amsterdamer Kammerorchester, André Rieu 77' 06" 2564 69646-9 (rec 1962)

This is only a decade later than the Reginald Jacques recording of Cantata 11 which I reviewed in our last issue. Reginald Jacques may have seemed quite progressive in comparison with Adrian Boult, but in this disc we are in a utterly different world. In 1962 I had certainly never heard anything like the horns that open track 2. Indeed, the stylistic approach of some performers across the North Sea seems hardly have penetrated the UK at the time. My musical education was based on The Third Programme and the London musical scene, and although the BBC offered a wide range of early music, it was, when trying to be in period style, based on getting the grammar right (double-dots, trills on upper notes etc) rather than affecting the fundamental sound and shape of the music. It wasn't until I met Peter Holman (around 1968) that I realised that there were foreign recordings like this. One may doubt some aspects of the performances – the detached singing of the choir in rapid passages, for instance. But the disc can be enjoyed without making any allowances.

Schütz *Lukas-Passion, Die Sieben Worte* Max van Egmond, Peter Christoph Runge, Leonhardt-Consort, Monteverdi-Choir Hamburg, Jürgen Jürgens 52' 13" Das Alte Werk 2564 69612-8 ££ (rec 1964) The *Seven Words*, which opens this disc, sounds so familiar and in most respects so right that I must have been very influenced by it at the time, and it brings back memories of the only time I've played it, just within the '60s. I'm a bit suspicious of the presence of a chorus, but it's a very good performance. The *Luke Passion* (with Runge as narrator, van Egmond as Christ – very different voices, though both are labelled baritone: both are excellent) is fine if you like listening to the Gospel narrative in German, but doesn't work for me outside a service: the sections to enjoy as music are too few! The recitative is, however, taken at a sprightly pace and is a model of clear declamation, though might not work in a resonant church acoustic. The listing of the violins as 'Marie Leonhardt & 1 other' is a bit insulting to the 'other'.

Monteverdi *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* Sven Olof Eliasson *Ulisse*, Norma Lerer *Penelope*, Rotraud Hansmann *Athene*, Ladislaus Anderko *Giove*, Nikolaus Simkovsky *Nettuno*, Kai Hansen *Telemaco*, Kurt Equilux *Pisandro*, Paul Esswood *Eurimaco*, Walker Wyatt *Antinoo*, Max van Egmond *Eumete*, Anne-Marie Mühle *Ericalea*, Margaret Baker-Genovesi *Eurimaco*, Murray Dickie *Iro*, Junge Kantorei, Concentus musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt 192' 59" 2564 69614-2 (rec 1971) (3 CDs)

This comes from the time when in England Raymond Leppard was performing Monteverdi and Cavalli at Glyndebourne in a style that was a strange hybrid of phoney musicology (those elaborate lute parts that had to be played note-for-note with nothing added or subtracted!) and lack of concern for suitable voices. Vocally, Harnoncourt's performance is impressive, and the music moves dramatically without being overstated. But he still provides 'additional accompaniments': the score was too thin for him. We now know from experience that the minimal notation with an adequate complement of strings plucked by quill and finger is all that is needed, apart from a few ritornelli and Penelope's last aria (though even then voice and strings alternate. Here the additions are in the best possible taste, but redundant to anyone who knows the score. Despite that, it is an impressive performance. The 'authentic' brigade felt let down by Harnoncourt's Monteverdi, but it outshines more recent instrumentally-augmented performances.

English part songs & lute songs Pro Cantione Antiqua, Mark Brown & Ian Partridge *dirs* 66' 58" (rec 1978-79) Part songs by Bennet, Brown, Coleman, Isham, Pearce, Purcell, Ravenscroft; lute songs by Campion, Dowland, Jones, Pilkington

The part songs and rounds sound very dated to me: so Oxbridge, so sober, and the mock-rural so ineffective. It's not clear what tone Ravenscroft expected to be used for his vernacular arrangements, but the mixture of choral-scholarly and mildly rural accents. But The Citie Waites (whose normal pronunciation is equally posh, as one of them demonstrates on Radio 3 every Sunday) gets the tone far better. The disc ends with eight lute songs in multi-voice versions (though with some solo verses), which are its main value, good examples of what one might call the pre-Consort of Musick style: the Consort transformed how this sort of music was sung. A detailed study of how the performances here differ from the Consort manner would be illuminating: it would make an interesting topic for the Voice Conference next July.

Monteverdi *Il ballo delle ingrate, Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda, Tirsi e Clori, Tempio la cetra* Tragicomedia, Stephen Stubbs 76' 01" 21564 69613-8 ££ (rec 1992)

No stylistic problems here, and excellent singing. The items are listed on the cover in decreasing order of length, but the disc starts with the Prologue to Book VII, beautifully sung by John Potter, who is also Tirsi, with Suzie Le Blanc as Clori. Douglas Nasrawi sounds more at ease than most narrators in *Il combattimento*, with lovely singing from Barbara Borden as Clorinda (and also as Amore in the *Il ballo delle ingrate*). The other singers are fine too, and the instrumental ensemble is excellent, with Andrew Lawrence-King playing two harps and three keyboard instruments. So the ideal recording? Not quite. I felt at times (particularly in the instrumental sections) that things were a little exaggerated, as if ideas were being tried out rather than absorbed into the performances. But the occasional irritation is worth bearing for the marvellous singing.

Durante, Mancini, Sarri, A Scarlatti, D. Scarlatti *Musica da camera a Napoli Il Giardino Armonico* 53' 56" 2564 69613-2

A nicely-played selection of attractive music of high quality. There are concertos by Sarri, A. Scarlatti and Mancini for recorder, two violins and continuo, an ensemble that one associates with Naples, but perhaps just because the accident on one surviving MS. From Durante there is an impressive string quattro, while D. Scarlatti's contribution is a treble-bass sonata (K90) played on mandolin with cello, theorbo and spinet. Some of the slow movements maybe put a fraction too much weight on the music, but that's no reason for not buying this disc. The only aspect that dates it is the short playing time, but the programme as a whole justifies it.

Clementi *Keyboard Sonatas* Andreas Staier (Broadwood c.1802 *fp*) 67' 28" (rec 1999) 2564 69613-6

I wasn't looking forward to this very much, thanks to memories of sonatinas from childhood. But I was agreeably surprised. There is some very strong music here, with the sonatas in F minor (op. 13/6) and G minor (op. 34/2), and some very agreeable other pieces, ending with variations on what for me is a Sunday School hymn tune 'Jesus's hands were kind hands', alias 'Au clair de la lune'. Lovely playing, and not old enough to need any comments on its place in the history of period style. CB

LETTERS etc.

Dear Clifford,

Barbara on 'BARBARA ed. BARBARA' (*EMR* 127, p2)

Everyone should be encouraged to use the SPES editions, and to be skeptical of modern editions, if only because no matter how duly we note inconsistencies the reader is ultimately going to be biased by our editorial choices. The editor ponders, but how much? The 3rd time I looked at the Florence manuscript of the *Lamento di Arianna* (in preparing the edition for Green Man Press) I suddenly realised that the tail on a quaver was not a tail, but part of a letter in the text underneath, and the values of that bar no longer needed fixing, as all other transcriptions supposed! In the case of Strozzi's *Lamento* how askew the underlay, how obvious a missing accidental (i.e. how visually suggested by another one), how long a slur, whether notes in movable type were wrong or reversed, are questions conducive to a search for musical conviction. I know of two other modern editions of this piece, and their questionable readings prompted me to perform this piece in order to understand it, before editing it myself.

Your pointing out that *ut supra* suggests the second *Lagrima mie* because it starts a page is indeed intriguing as a reason, but one might argue that, as your insert shows, the first one starts the piece and has the word *Lamento* above it. I give three solutions, and you agree with my preference, but here is yet another hypothesis: since it is awkward to flip back either 3 or 6 pages in the original, and since *lagrima mie* is sung over a long held bass note, perhaps singer and player should simply "improvise", shortening even more the previous Refrain. The continuo could wait on *che* while the singer (with or without further flourishes) finishes *vi trattenete?* (on high e" d"#" e"), timing the insertion of the dominant to precede the d# as we normally do in improvised cadenzas.

I like your question about the opening rhythm. I don't 'repeat' the chord for reasons of rhythm, instead I change the chord each time one beat after the singer clashes with the bass -- after, not with, her d"#, her a' and then her f"#. I was influenced by S. Carchiolo's excellent book on Italian continuo playing (*EMR* 124): he shows that the effect of such displaced notes depends on the harmony being expressed, but out of phase respect to the clashes. A typical recitative creates tension with these non-tonic chord notes, which require 7#/4/2 chords, and which Telemann says the right hand should play while omitting the held bass note, in order to help the singer! Between the extreme options of playing them without the bass note or not playing these chords at all, my compromise is to play them after the singer has made her weighty clash and trill, and this fulfills Carchiolo's description of the function of *heterolepsis*. He quotes Dietrich Bartel (1997) on "figures of dissonance and displacement", and devotes a whole section (5.2.2.1.4.3 "Dissonances in stilo recitativo as

ornamental-rhetorical figures. Relation to accompaniment") to various types. Of course, if you are playing a rather penetrating harpsichord, it would be better to shy away from defining rhythm or harmony obtrusively. In the Foreword, therefore, I suggested omitting the chords I gave, since bracketing them would have looked too fussy in a part which is, after all, just editorial.

Since you raise interesting questions about realisation, please tell readers that "kbd & bc parts" means that Green Man Press provides three parts: a realised score, an unrealised score, and a separate optional continuo part. I do not know of any other editions which do this! As you know, writing a better than perfunctory accompaniment on one staff is frustrating, but I have accepted the challenge because our continuo-player friendliness extend to including an unrealised score, with the hope of encouraging players to move on to facsimiles!

Barbara Sachs

Perhaps creative dialogue at the proof-reading stage (as described on p. xx) or even better discussion involving playing the music should be a regular part of the editorial process. I've probably stated more precisely what 'parts' Cedric provides often enough not to have to do it every time.

CB

Dear Clifford,

The Second Battle of the Bulge

As a teenager, I was shaped by Radio 3's Spirit of the Age, and remember one particular programme, hosted by the immortal George Pratt, called 'the Battle of the Bulge'. This was about the shape of sound produced by baroque string players, especially violinists, which almost invariably crescendoed and decrescendoed [they look silly verbs on the page] as the player reached first the middle and then the end of the bow on any note long enough for it to warrant a whole bow. One violinist, I forget who, argued that the concavity of the bow necessitated this; but, since then, violinists such as Rachel Podger showed that to be fallacious. In fact, since the '90s, bulges seem to be much less. In string playing, that is. Singers seem, however, to have taken this over -- particularly sopranos. The singer's sound is roughly thus: hit a note, crescendo into vibrato, go onto next note and do the same for every note longer than a gnat's crochet. One of the problems is the role of vibrato. I must confess that I have not read more than a few pages of 18th-century vocal manuals (so perhaps someone could help me out here), but I believe that vibrato was an ornament, rather than an omnipresence. Singers like vibrato for two reasons: first, it colours the voice, giving it some warmth, and secondly, it hides out-of-tuneness. It is difficult attaining a nice, relaxed, warm sound without vibrato (early music singers all aspire, really, to be Emma Kirkby), but it's not as difficult as most singers think, especially in choral singing, where there is warmth in numbers. Perhaps there is a comparison to be

made with the very 21st-century looks of ladies and gents in costume dramas (with perfect teeth) – they say what Austen wrote, but there's something not quite right about the whole thing. Is there any way out of this? Can young singers be broken of the bulging habit? *Katie Hawks*

Sadly, I doubt if many offenders will come to the York conference on singing. We've had lots of prospective speakers; we'll be sorting them out into a programme and sending out application form after Christmas. CB

A NEW WEBSITE TO PUBLICISE CLASSICAL CONCERTS ETC.

A new classical music website is being set up, www.bachtrack.com on which musicians will be able to list their own concerts free of charge. The webmistress writes as follows:

How to add a concert to the www.bachtrack.com database:

1. Register on the site and use the email with your one-off log-in password to contact us saying you want to input a concert, giving name, address and postcode of the venue.
2. You will get an email back from us confirming it has been done.
3. Log in to your account on Bachtrack. Go to any page EXCEPT the home page and you will see on the right hand side of the page, below any adverts, a list of things you can do. Select "input events."
4. You will now see the input screen, with a top line "select venue." Write the first 8 letters of the venue in the "Containing" box and then select your venue from the resultant drop down list in the top box.
5. Use the help files available on the right hand side of the screen.
6. Email if you need help!
7. The service is free as long as you exclude a web-link or telephone number for booking. We make a small charge for this.

Alison Karlin, Bachtrack Ltd, 10 Wood Vale, London N10 3DP, Registered in England, no.06443197

Richard Wood (who set up and ran the Bradford Early Music Shop for longer than most of us can remember) is setting up an early-music concert diary, linked to a (probably quarterly) diary/magazine. He will be sending out a free sample copy in the new year. He hopes to pull together information from the various regional diaries, and the web site will be able to be searched by location of concert/course.

The information in the adjoining column is based on a BBC Press Release, abridged and adapted by CB

COMPOSERS of the YEAR

UK readers will be familiar with Radio 3's Composer of the Week, five concerts devoted to the same composer every morning (and now repeated at night) that seems to have existed as long as I've been listening to the radio (probably back to when we called it the wireless).

Next year, the idea is extended and there will be four composers of the year, celebrating Henry Purcell (1659-1695), George Frederick Handel (1685-1759), Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) and Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847).

The main focus of the Purcell celebrations is through two weekends in March and November, marking 350 years since his birth. Highlights include two special *Choral Evensongs*, the first of which comes from Westminster Abbey where Purcell is buried and where he was organist for most of his short life; much of his keyboard music will be performed by Radio 3's first period-instrument New Generation Artist, Mahan Esfahani, and there will be performances of *King Arthur* from the Barbican, *The Fairy Queen* from Glyndebourne, and *Dido and Aeneas* from the Royal Opera House (which will also be televised alongside Handel's *Acis and Galatea*).

Handel is commemorated with a week of programs surrounding the 250th anniversary of his death (14 April). Highlights include *The Messiah* specially staged at Westminster Abbey on the anniversary and a concert of his *Eight Great Suites for Harpsichord* played by Laurence Cummings recorded at the Handel House Museum. All the operas will be broadcast during the year.

The Haydn celebrations begin with a Haydn Day from the European Broadcasting Union on 31 May, the 200th anniversary of his death. The complete Symphonies will be broadcast during the year, two per week (it would be nice if each was associated with a symphony by a contemporary to give some sort of context, and show how good Haydn was) and there will be a series of 17 concerts devoted to his mature String Quartets from Wigmore Hall (but isn't an anniversary year the time to test whether some of the early quartets might be just mature enough to be worth hearing?)

The details available about Mendelssohn programming don't give any clues whether the celebrations will focus on performance practice, both of his music and his of others (particularly Bach, though he did also edit Handel). One programme I will avoid is that of churches and cathedrals up and down the country singing *O for the Wings of the Dove*. I hope that *Elijah* from Town Hall, Birmingham is the period, first version one.

For further information, please contact Victoria Bevan, 020 7765 4714, victoria.bevan@bbc.co.uk

The BBC is also joining forces with the Victoria & Albert Museum and other organisations throughout the UK for Baroque '09, a year of events celebrating Baroque music and culture inspired by the anniversaries of Handel and Purcell. Details will be at bbc.co.uk/radio3/baroque09.

ROME WITH A CHERRY ON TOP

Jennie Cassidy

Renaissance Rome was a rich stockpot of science, thought, knowledge, arts, architecture, music and culture. Stirring his own pot was Bartolomeo Scappi (c.1500 - 1577), Rome's premier chef. He worked in the service of Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggi and in 1536 became entwined with the historical events of the time when he organised a sumptuous banquet for the cardinal in honour of Charles V. Scappi then worked in Rome as private cook to Pope Pious V and his successors Julius III (Palestrina's patron) and Pious VI. He was cooking at the Vatican at the same time as Michelangelo was working on the Sistine Chapel. He later worked in the service of Cardinal Marin Grimani in Venice. He acquired fame in 1570 when his cookbook *Opera dell'arte del cucinare* was published. It takes the form of a culinary treatise in six volumes (one of which focuses on what you need if you are cooking for a prince on his travels). It has more than 1000 recipes, numerous menus, and woodcuts illustrating the kitchen, the cooks at work, kitchen utensils and the serving of meals. Here is a delightful and unusual recipe for cherry cheesecake pie from Scappi's fine collection. In the introduction he says: 'Cherries from Rome are better than the others and at the end of April begin to be good, wild cherries in mid May and in June the sour cherries'. The cherry was brought to Rome from Ancient Greece in 72 BC. The name is from the Greek word *Kerasos* meaning horn, since cherries came from a horn-shaped coastal town. By the first century AD eight varieties were being cultivated in Italy, and the Romans were spreading them as far north as Britain. Kent in particular had extensive cherry orchards

founded by the Romans and by 1640 over two dozen named cultivars were recorded. Alas, 85% of our cherry orchards have disappeared over the last 50 years. I have adapted Scappi's recipe to shed a little Roman summer sunshine onto your Christmas table. It is very quick and easy to make and would serve about 8-10.

Roman Cherry Cheesecake Pie

Filling ingredients

250g cherry jam

250g ricotta cheese

150g soft cheese

25g finely grated parmesan cheese

50g crushed biscuits

A twist of black pepper

1tsp cinnamon

2 eggs

Pastry

500g puff pastry

Beaten egg or rosewater and sugar to glaze

Place all the filling ingredients into a bowl and mix using a food processor or hand blender. Line a well oiled, deep pie dish with half of the puff pastry and put the filling in. Use the other half of pastry to make a lid and seal using a little beaten egg or rosewater. Make a few cuts in the pastry lid to let the steam escape. Glaze the pie with beaten egg or rosewater and sprinkle with a generous amount of sugar. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for about one hour.

This year's Eastern Early Music Forum Epiphany Party in Beccles, Suffolk, will resound to the sound of Roman Christmas music with the stunning *Missa Hodie Christus natus est* by Palestrina (did he and Scappi meet?...) and a 4-choir *Dixit Dominus* by Orazio Benevoli. It is open to players of all early instruments and singers. If you would like to attend please email me for an application form.

Apply early: numbers are limited:

last year some late-applicants were turned empty away.

Price £13, £17, or £19

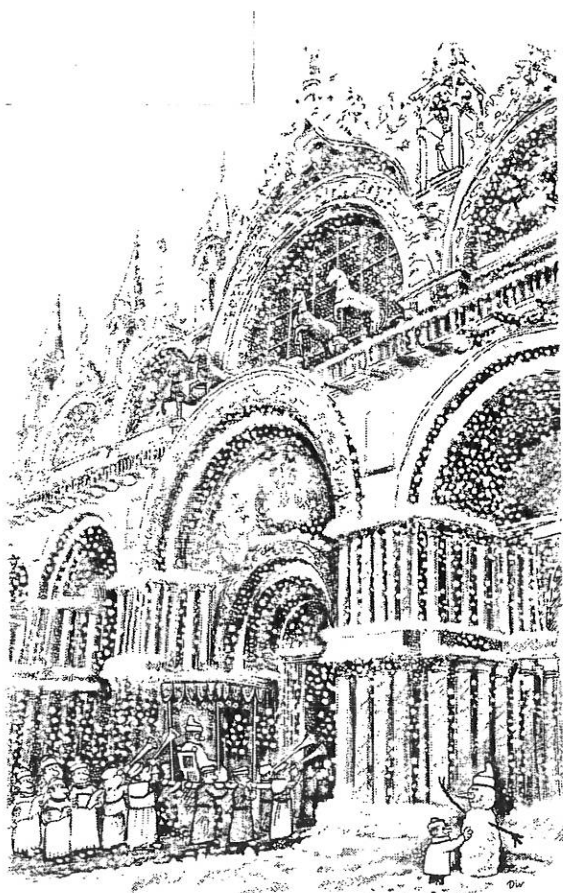
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More illustrations from Scappi's book can be seen at
www.pbm.com/~libdahl/food-art





The Swiss Orpheus

AN APPRAISAL OF THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF

Ludwig Sennfl (1489/91 – 1543)

BY KATHLEEN BERG

This book tells the story of the composer Sennfl. We gain insights into his life and times, together with an overview of the considerable amount of relatively little-known but excellent music he produced. To complete the picture, the book includes new editions of 20 secular songs, 4 Latin odes, 3 German religious songs, 4 large motets, examples of mass propers and vespers, and a magnificat. The book will be launched at the Greenwich Early Music Festival (14th – 16th November 2008) and will be on sale there, price £30. It can also be obtained or ordered via the author on 01522 527530 or by contacting:

kberg@senfl.co.uk

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