

# Early Music

## REVIEW

Number 25 November 1996

ISSN 1355-3437

Price £1.50

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Early Music Review is published on the first of each month except January and August by King's Music, Redcroft, Banks End, Wyton, Huntingdon, Cambs PE17 2AA  
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**Subscription rates**

UK: £10.00 Europe: £13.00

Rest of World:

£20.00 (airmail), £13.00 (surface)

**Cheques payable to King's Music**

except French francs (FFR115) and

\$US (\$30.00 airmail, \$20.00 surface)

payable to C. A. J. Bartlett

A significant proportion of 'new' CDs are now reissues of older material. This month, for instance, we print a list of Harmoncourt discs, classics in the revival of early music, which, especially at cheaper prices, should be snapped up by those who do not already have them. For those who lack our preoccupation with matters of performance practice, there is a wealth of worth-while material, since there is no reason to believe that musical understanding in itself has significantly improved. Many argue that the Furtwängler recordings of Beethoven are more musical than current issues and that the improvement in recording techniques matters little.

But once one gets away from repertoire for which there is a continuous performing tradition, the acceptability of a recording depends not just on the musicality of the performance and the quality of the sound reproduction but on the historical awareness of the musicians. A quarter of a century ago, we knew enough about late baroque performance practice for recent refinements not to invalidate the Harmoncourt CDs, unless you are convinced that choral rather than one-to-a-part textures are as inappropriate for Bach as for Monteverdi. But I doubt whether there is any Monteverdi disc as old as that which I could listen to with enjoyment (except for the extraordinary pre-war Boulanger recordings). We knew a lot about performance practice of Monteverdi in the 1950s. But we were not then seriously questioning modern instrumental and vocal techniques, and there was not enough work for first-class practitioners to be able to devote enough time to acquiring the necessary skills, let alone a willingness of the public to accept different sounds. So there was no way that academic knowledge could be made aurally convincing.

Record companies should be cautious in what they revive. The David Munrow reissues (see p. 8) show how quickly recordings can date: what they cannot show is the impact his music-making had at the time they were issued and how we reacted to them then without the benefit of the subsequent twenty years of increasing musicological knowledge and performing skill. I wonder how well our current favourites will have worn two decades hence.

CB

## BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## SPANISH HYMNS

*Five Spanish Liturgical Hymns complete with their mensural chants, as set by Francisco de Peñalosa and Johannes Wreede/Juan de Urreda, transcribed and edited by Bruno Turner.* (Mapa Mundi A:90). Vanderbeek & Imrie, 1996. viii + 29pp, £7.50 (£6.40 each for 6 or more copies)

Bruno Turner's current enthusiasm for Spanish hymns has led to this useful collection. He argues that the interest in polyphonic setting was sparked off by the ubiquitous Urrede *Pange lingua*: this is included together with his other setting. The four Peñalosa hymns are *Sanctorum meritis*, *Iste confessor*, *Iesu nostra redemptio* and *Sacris solemnibus*. No, my arithmetic is not wrong: the editor is not counting polyphonic pieces but hymns as a whole, so there are six settings of five hymns. Each is presented monophonically in full, both in chant notation and in a rhythmic transcription in accordance with Spanish practice. This latter has all verses underlaid. The four-voice polyphony follows with verses for *alternatim* performance. At the end of the book the Latin texts are set out as verse, opposite literal (not singing) translations. There are a variety of suggestions on how the book might be used: I like the idea of chant *alternatim* between choir and audience. This is, as one expects from the editor, an extremely well-thought-out publication, useful for its chant as well as for giving these short polyphonic gems a context. Four of the polyphonic items are in *Das Chorwerk* 60, but with no chant and only one verse underlaid.

## ENGLISH ORGAN

Stephen Bicknell *The History of the English Organ* Cambridge UP, 1996. xxii + 407pp, £45.00. ISBN 0,521 55026 2

Judgment as to whether the author's fear (for another reason) that this may be an old-fashioned study of the subject depends on whether a sentence in the preface is true: 'the organ is unusual in that musical developments often follow technical ones'. For the book concentrates almost entirely on the organs themselves; there is the occasional nod towards political and social circumstances but very little on the purposes of the instruments he describes. Unfortunately, my interest is more in the organ's function than in stop lists, so perhaps I am not the best fitted to review the book. But before expanding on my dissatisfaction, I must first state that this is a thorough and judicious account of a subject that could so easily be distorted by a display of prejudices. The author is well able to distinguish between good and poor instruments; but if he has antipathies to particular periods, he hides them well,

apart from disappointment with the first half of the present century (and most readers will sympathise with that).

What we are not adequately told is what the various styles of organ so eloquently described were used for. Were these expensive instruments ordered by benevolent churchwardens merely as fashionable adornments? Were judgments about what sort of instrument to acquire made for reasons of musical taste, fashion or function? One crucial topic is the three-stage progression from *alternatim* to accompanying verse anthems to accompanying congregational singing of psalms and hymns. There is a misleading reference to using the organ for accompanying singing in the 15th century (p. 23). It is interesting to hear that on a suitable instrument the bare textures of Stanley's voluntaries sound immeasurably richer: but were the instruments designed specifically for the playing of voluntaries? Such comments as the brief remarks about the positioning of the Victorian organ in cramped chancel positions (p. 260) are all too rare. I only once noticed any mention of the numbers of bellows-men required: a marxist might see the organ is a symbol of the church's belief in the place of the working class.

'Claviorganum' lacks an index entry. The large 1784 Handel Commemoration instrument is illustrated; that follows a practice initiated by Handel for the director of oratorio performances to have access to organ and harpsichord from one set of keyboards. Grant O'Brien's evidence of the earlier English predilection for Ruckers harpsichords linked to chamber organs is not mentioned.

The book ends with a brief 'Guide to surviving English organs', showing how few unchanged instruments survive from any period. I was disappointed to find that the old part of the only historic instrument I had played upon (at Framlingham) was a century later than I thought at the time. It would have been marvellous to have had a companion CD with short pieces from a few of the survivors; a discography would have been the next best thing. There is, however, a marvellously vivid passage on the effect the use of meantone temperament has on Snetzler organs (p. 206).

## KEYBOARD CATALOGUE

Virginia Brookes *British Keyboard Music to c. 1660: Sources and Thematic Index* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. xvii + 413pp, £80.00 ISBN 0 19 816425 4

2398 incipits encapsulate pre-Restoration British keyboard music. They are arranged by composer. Below the title (in standardised form) and incipit follow a succinct statement of the source(s), abbreviated by RISM sigla, and references

to modern editions. Related pieces are cross-referenced. I have found that it takes a while to adjust to the system of abbreviation for modern editions, in which an initial for the surname of the editor often comes first. The thematic index begins at page 125; the opening section is occupied by a list of sources with their keyboard contents. Each has a brief introduction giving date, origin and reference to any major source of further information (though not a full bibliography). No information is given about the size, notational style or make-up of the MSS; it is unsatisfying to say that Lbl Add MS 29996 is 'a compilation of five MSS of different periods bound together' without indicating the divisions in the list of contents. This is the major source covered by the book that is not available in facsimile or modern edition: perhaps John Caldwell should abandon modesty and publish his thesis in the Garland series he edits. Non-keyboard sources are mentioned but do not have a contents list. The volume closes with a thematic index; the incipits are transposed into C, truncated to eight notes without rhythm, and listed (as letters only) in alphabetical order, a useful (if imperfect) way of seeking concordances.

Most of the repertoire is now available in modern editions. This is several decades too late to be a pioneering guide to uncharted territory but will be extremely useful as an index to what is available and as a conspectus of the repertoire. Ask me in a year's time whether it is useful and exhaustive; but it has withstood a variety of spot-checks well.

#### (DE) LALANDE BALLET

Michel-Richard Delalande *Ballet de la Jeunesse* Introduction by Barbara Coeyman. (*French Opera in the 17th and 18th Centuries* ix) Pendragon Press, 1996. xxxiii + 291pp, \$92.00

Lalande (calling on Lionel Sawkins to justify the traditional form of his name) is better known for his church than his stage music. This is his first full-scale work for the stage, and fortunately survives in an authoritative libretto and Philidor score. It is interesting that 2150 copies of the libretto were printed (or at least paid for), a lot for five performances in a theatre for which the editor scorns an earlier estimate of a capacity of 300 as being too high. The work, performed in January and February 1686, comprises a Prologue and three Intermèdes, and was performed in conjunction with a comedy by the librettist, Dancourt; the suggested work has a very general appropriateness to the ballet but the two parts of the entertainment were basically unrelated. The editor quotes the numbers of performers as 56 singers, 35 dancers and the orchestra, a lot for the small Salle de Comédie at Versailles. Assuming that the 25-strong violin band played, she calculates that there was only space for a third of a square metre per player; but perhaps only part of the band were present.

The full introduction does not comment on the implications of the inconsistent orchestral layout in the score. It is basically in five parts (for violin, 3 violas and bass violin) though sometimes there are two staves in the

treble (G1) clef. This shows that there is a solo passage somewhere in the movement in which the top parts divide. Such passages are more lightly scored and are sometimes allocated to flutes or oboes. There is an alternation between one and two bass parts, which might be a way of distinguishing between bass violin and continuo parts; but there are no figures for either part and does one necessarily conclude that the instrumental movements were without continuo? Some editorial comment on how the parts might have been derived from the score would have helped anyone contemplating a performance. That apart, this is a well-prepared facsimile of an interesting and important work.

#### UNEQUAL NOTES

John Byrt *Notes inégales – a European style*. Tiverton, the author, 1996. 2 vols (74 + lxxxiii pp), £20.00. ISBN 0 9526446 1 6 From Dr. John Byrt, 4 Melbourne Cottages, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 5LE, tel 01884 256806

This is a simply-produced, comb-bound, A4 publication, photocopied on one side of the page only, but using a clear computer type – a sensible way of circulating with a degree of informality some of the fruits of long investigation into the subject. As I have mentioned before, Byrt is concerned that our perception of *notes inégales* as a predominantly French phenomenon is far too restricted and he sets his arguments out here with clarity and force, focussing on the allemand. He takes as his starting point the question: why are Couperin's allemandes played *inégales* but not Bach's, since their styles are not very different; is it by accident that we starve Bach of *inégales*? The appendix volume is more varied, with comments on a tape (costing £6.00) containing *inégales* performances of Bach, reactions to it from various people, and a reproduction of an article Byrt wrote in 1967 together with Robert Donington's comments on it. I like the consultative nature of this project. Reaction has mostly come from performers rather than scholars, who seem less willing to commit ideas in progress to print. I'm not sure how much I believe in the omnipresence of *inégalité* outside France. My instinctive reaction is to be sympathetic for keyboard music but to assume that it developed there as a way of lightening notes that other instruments and voices lightened in other ways. This should be read in conjunction with Byrt's news-letter *Unequal Notes* (£2.00 a year). I like the way he responds to items he hears on the radio, including *Woman's Hour*, relating them to his topic. I think that he needs more input from serious scholars who are sympathetic but sceptical. It's a subject of vital importance to late-baroque performance – how late is another matter for discussion. When did the French (let alone anyone else who practised *inegalité*) stop swinging: was it guillotined out of existence in accordance with the revolutionary belief in liberty, fraternity and equality?

#### TROMLITZ'S KEYS

Johann George Tromlitz *The Keyed Flute* translated and edited with an introduction by Ardal Powell. Oxford:



Clarendon Press, 1996. xx + 268pp, £40.00 ISBN 0 19 816462 9

Tromlitz's more general book *Ausführlicher und gründlicher Unterricht die Flöte zu spielen* (1791) was published by Cambridge UP in 1991, Englished by the same translator. *Über die Flöten mit mehrern Klappen* (1800) is more technical; indeed, it concentrates on listing the new keys, explaining their use and a systematic discussion of the scale and a music example in each key. As such its interest is confined to makers, students and players of classical flutes. But that only takes up half the volume. There is a lengthy introduction which ranges through the whole history of the flute throughout Europe in the second half of the 18th century, and this is backed up by an appendix on flutemaking and a list of surviving instruments. Criticism and defence of Tromlitz's publications is also included.

For the general reader, the most interesting aspect is the discussion of temperament. Powell comments that for the most part good (i.e. non-equal-temperament) intonation is still quite unknown to today's 'historically informed' flautists (p. 42) and Tromlitz himself wrote:

Having only one key for Eb and D# on the keyboard, as with all the other enharmonic notes, is an error; therefore it is best to play *solo* on a keyboard or *fortepiano*, that is, without accompaniment. If a good fiddler or flautist who plays in tune joins in, then it's all over; for the fiddler tunes and fingers pure fifths, and there are none on the keyboard, only tempered fifths. These [two] cannot be in tune together; except for people whose hearing is not acute.

It is clear from the information in the book that he was expressing an opinion on a disputed point. Tromlitz seems uninterested in orchestral playing ('What is done with the flute in operas and overtures [perhaps using the word to include symphonies] does not really belong here, for in an opera a great deal can be managed that would not work in concertos and suchlike' p. 240). A contemporary, A. E. Müller, points out that some adjustments can be made without recourse to keys (p. 237) and H. W. T. Pottgiesser states: 'We are quite content with the keyboard's tempered tuning; why not here? Embouchure and fingering in conjunction with a good ear can provide everything necessary?' So was Tromlitz merely a flute maker in an un-influential city (despite the presence of Germany's leading music publisher and magazine, Leipzig does not seem to have been a major performance centre at this period) with a particular fad but with no importance for most music of the period? That is one point that the editor does not address.

This is not the only product of Powell's computer I have been reading recently. The latest *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (xlix/2, Summer 1996) has an article by him provocatively titled 'The Hotteterre Flute: Six Replicas in Search of a Myth' in which he shows that significant instruments marked Hotteterre are copies made a century or so ago based on instruments that were themselves copies made in the family's town of origin, Couture-Boussey. This is a fine example of the importance of organologists being suspicious of existing documentation and beliefs. We now

know less than before about the baroque flute, and its origin may be earlier and in a different place from what used to be believed.

#### BROOK'S COLLECTION CATALOGUED

Ruth Halle Rowen *Symphonic and Chamber Music Score and Parts Bank: Thematic Catalogue of the Barry S. Brook Facsimile Archive of 18th and early 19th Century Autographs, Manuscripts, and Printed Copies at the Ph.D. Programme in Music of the Graduate School of the City University of New York. (Thematic Catalogues No. 24).* Pendragon Press, 1996. xii + 331pp. ISBN 0 945193 84 X

The title page is necessarily lengthy, though even then it is a bit too imprecise about the period covered. The repertoire is predominantly what comes in our CD reviews under the heading Classical. Handel only appears with a late French copy of op. 4/4 called *Concerto pour le Pianoforte ou Orgue*, while J. S. Bach is absent. But Mozart doesn't fare too well (only two symphonies) and there are just two Beethoven items. The collection is, in fact, primarily and intentionally of the other 99% of music of the period, music that is not available in modern edition. The user will soon get a feel for the sort of material likely to be found here. The items catalogued are mostly on film or photocopies, sometimes both, and often there are modern scores as well. It is thus useful to have a cross-section of obscure orchestral and chamber music presented in an identifiable way, thanks to the luxury of the inclusion of incipits for each piece. Movements are listed with headings, key and time signatures. Location of the original sources are indicated as well as CUNY shelf numbers. Nothing is said about access: if I want copies of anything listed, will CUNY supply it or do I have to go to the original library?

Listing incipits helps identification, but, as a former music-cataloguer, it strikes me a bit sloppy for the entries not to identify works that can readily be identified from standard catalogues. The three Telemann Overtures lack TWV numbers (55:D7, D10 & g3), the Fasch Overture and Symphonies can similarly be numbered, and even without a Pergolesi Institute in the same department it should have been possible to identify the first 12 items under Pergolesi as the trio sonatas probably by Domenico Gallo. (The first theme would also appear in a Stravinsky thematic catalogue.) Does the library not have ZWV and the Zelenka MAB volumes? The editor has bothered to look up places as well as dates of birth and death, so there is no policy of not wasting time adding extraneous information. The volume is dedicated to Barry Brook, founder of the archive and distinguished in the musical world with his concern for making information available. While I am sure that he would have been happy with the decision of the cataloguer not to delay publication to produce a variety of indexes, I doubt whether he would have approved of the inadequate use made of the large number of thematic catalogues the CUNY library must have acquired for the



catalogue of thematic catalogues in the same series. Libraries with bibliographic collections will need to buy it, but its cover is too erratic for it to be high priority for individuals.

## JOURNALS

I mentioned the conference in memoriam Michael Morrow briefly in *EMR* 13. The papers presented there have now been published in *Plainsong & Medieval Music* vol. 5/1, April 1996. Warwick Edwards begins by questioning assumptions on the relationship between words and music by comparing medieval monophony and Balkan folk singing. Christopher Page uses a MS in his college library (Sydney Sussex, Cambridge, MS 95) containing 453 chapters of Marian miracles to shed light onto the conductus *Flos regalis*, onto *Gaude flore virginale* (a text believed in the 15th century to be by Thomas a Becket) and onto what he calls an urban myth of the choirboy murdered by Jews (or a Jewess – but not Britten's schoolwife, see *EMR* 21 p. 1). Margaret Bent unveils Dunstaple's new canonic *Gloria* and prints an edition of it, and gives further justification for P rather than B. David Fallows argues that Josquin was born twenty years later than most recent studies assume. It makes a lot of sense in terms of the survival of his music, though there are problems in accepting the idea. Tess Knighton describes a rediscovered 1540 keyboard publication, Gonzalo de Baena's *Arte nouamente inuentada pera aprender a tanger*, Lisbon, 1540, doubly irretrievable in the Biblioteca del Palacio Real in Madrid because it was misclassified as arithmetical (it is in a letter tablature, so should have been treated as algebra) and the title, with *tanger* misread as *tejer*, made it appear to be a book on weaving.

The latest *Haydn Yearbook* (vol. XX from Thames and Hudson, £18.50; ISBN 0 9531627 25) is primarily devoted to facsimiles of two rare printed librettos, *La Canterina* (1767) and *Le Pescatrici* (1770). Caryl L. Clark suggests that only 22 bars are missing from the Act II finale rather than the 38 bars of the former reconstruction, too long for the missing page. Otto Biba draws attention to the oddity of Haydn having anything to do with Callcott's *Explanation of the notes, marks, words, &c used in music* (1792).

There are two more issues in Michael Burden & Irena Cholić's useful series *A Handbook for Studies in 18th-Century Music*, both quite small (39 & 59 pp). Vol. 5 (ISBN 0 9512785 7 6) has articles by Ian Ledsham and Percy Young on the 18th-century material at the Barber Institute, Birmingham University and a survey of 'English Oratorio after Handel' by Eva Zöllner. A fair number of these survive, but there are probably others still unknown (the MSS of four by J. C. Smith were recently discovered). I wondered whether Crotch's *Messiah* (1790) should have been included, but he called it a Sacred Eclogue. Having found an excuse to mention unashamedly (see p. 20) one of our publications, I'll

add that we have a facsimile of Stanley's *Zimri*. Vol. 6 comprises a checklist and guide to London newspapers 1750-1800 by Simon McVeigh. This will save anyone working on the London musical scene of the period hours, if not days or weeks, of frustration.

Readers interested in opera should get hold of the November BBC Music Magazine, entitled *Why Opera Matters: a critical debate* guest edited by Simon Callow (£3.75) with a wide range of stimulating opinions. All that disappoints is the accompanying CD of lengthy extracts of a new production of Cavalli's *La Calisto*; to mention only the bass, the continuo playing is more in accordance with the *secco* style of a century later.

## SOLOMON AGAIN

I was interested to hear that Novello has had Boyce's *Solomon* in its hire library since the late 1980s in an edition by Richard Platt. Had I known, it would have made me question even more the need for the *Musica Britannica* score; if anything further was needed, it was not another full but a vocal score to encourage non-professional performance.

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## PSALMODY AND 'PSALMODY'

Peter Holman

I vividly remember the occasion I first heard some eighteenth-century psalmody. During a visit to Boston in May 1982 I found an LP by the Boston Camerata entitled *Sing we Noel: Christmas Music from England & Early America* (Nonesuch H-71354, 1978) in the shop of the Museum of Fine Arts, and bought it on impulse. I was initially attracted by the Mediaeval English carols on Side 1, but I soon became fascinated by the nineteenth-century American pieces on Side 2, which had a refreshing directness and vigour far removed from the sentimental Victorian carols we all know. In particular, Daniel Read's fuguing tune *Sherburne*, used as a vehicle for Nahum Tate's familiar 'While shepherds watched', soon became a family favourite at Christmas.

In the sleeve notes of that recording Joel Cohen wrote that *Sherburne*, published in 1783, was 'a typical New England "fuguing tune"', and I initially presumed that the fuguing tune, an elaborate type of hymn or psalm tune featuring a contrapuntal passage, was a distinctive product of Colonial America. It seemed to exemplify the sturdy, pioneer spirit of the New World. In fact, I should have known better, for Nicholas Temperley's classic book *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge, 1979; repr. 1983) had already showed conclusively that the repertory of 'gallery music' (so called because it was often sung in the west galleries of parish churches) or psalmody (to give it its less restrictive contemporary name) had first developed in England, and had subsequently been exported to America. It began in the late seventeenth century as part of a movement to revitalize worship in Anglican parish churches. The congregational singing of metrical psalms had become so apathetic and unrhythmical that amateur choirs were formed to improve standards. But this produced unforeseen results, for the choirs eventually silenced the congregations they had been formed to support. As they grew more competent they became more ambitious, and began to perform polyphonic psalm settings and anthems that were too complex to allow for the participation of ordinary parishioners.

The next landmark for me was the publication of *The New Oxford Book of Carols* (Oxford, 1992), edited by Andrew Parrott, Hugh Keyte and Clifford Bartlett, together with items from the psalmody repertory on Andrew's related Christmas CDs. In particular, *The Christmas Album* (EMI CDC 7 54529 2, 1992) contained John Foster's remarkably Haydnesque setting of 'While shepherds watched' in its original scoring for choir and full classical orchestra; it was published around 1820 as a setting of Psalm 47, but soon became associated with 'While shepherds watched', and is still sung today in a cut-down version in the pubs around Sheffield at Christmas. It was a revelation because it

showed that not all psalmody was simple or out of touch with contemporary art music. By then I had begun to experiment with a few items from the psalmody repertory in my own Christmas concerts, the BBC had broadcast some carols from Colchester Institute arranged by Christopher Turner (a colleague at Colchester who is writing a thesis on the subject), and this led to the decision to put on an international conference on 'West Gallery Music' at Clacton last summer, organised by Christopher, Clifford, Hugh Keyte, Blaise Compton (an indefatigable editor and cataloguer of psalmody) and myself. We were fortunate that Nicholas Temperley, the doyen of psalmody research, agreed to give the key-note paper.

The preparations for the Clacton conference brought us into contact with the West Gallery Music Association, founded in 1990. Many of its members came along, and it soon became clear that there was a philosophical or even ideological gulf between them and us. We belong to a musicological tradition that is principally concerned with art music, with establishing accurate and authoritative texts, and with questions of historical performance practice. We instinctively wanted to find an 'original' version of each piece, to identify its composer and to place what we found in the context of eighteenth-century music as a whole. We also wanted our performances to conform as closely as possible to what we thought were the composer's wishes.

The members of the West Gallery Music Association mostly belong to a tradition that is effectively a branch of ethnomusicology. They see the psalmody repertory as a living tradition (as it is, particularly around Sheffield), not a historical phenomenon to be studied and revived. They are less concerned to find the original version of a piece than to establish how, when and where it had been used in that tradition, and they are not much concerned with questions of historical performance practice, such as the use of eighteenth-century instruments. It made for a fascinating conference, and if there was conflict from time to time, that helped to throw these issues into sharp relief. A lot of us came away with the feeling that our preconceptions had been challenged, and that our intellectual horizons had been broadened in the process.

For me, the Clacton conference had two important consequences. It filled me with enthusiasm for the music, and it brought me into contact with Sally Drage. Sally is unusual in that she has a foot in both camps. She is a well-known member of the West Gallery Musical Association, but is also familiar with the early music scene and with conventional musicology: she is writing an M. Phil. on psalmody at Sheffield University. Soon after the conference

I decided to start a small choir to explore the repertoire, and to ask Sally to be its resident musicologist. I also decided that the choir would most easily produce the strong, vigorous yet accurate performances I wanted if it mixed good amateur singers, students and professionals, mostly drawn from my own area, the Essex-Suffolk borders. An experimental concert last December in Boxford Church with a nucleus of six singers was promising, so I took the plunge, persuaded Hyperion to agree to a Christmas CD to be recorded in July this year, and enlarged the group to thirteen. After a certain amount of head scratching we named it Psalmody.

Finding the music for the CD was a fascinating but time-consuming process. The fifteen pieces we finally chose were arrived at after looking at hundreds of possibilities, drawn from dozens of printed collections ranging from about 1740 to about 1840. Many of the pieces considered were settings of 'While shepherds watched', simply because Tate's *Song of the Angels at the Nativity of our Blessed Saviour* was the only Christmas hymn accepted in the Church of England before 1782, when it was joined by Charles Wesley's 'Hark! the herald angels sing' and one other. In the end we chose four settings of 'While shepherds watched' and three of the various versions of 'Hark! the herald'. The music ranges from early, simple and 'crude' (by the standards of art music) hymns and fuguig tunes to sophisticated concerted anthem-like pieces with elaborate instrumental writing. A surprising number of pieces in the psalmody repertoire have parts for obbligato instruments, because most country churches did not have organs and in many of them the singing was supported by instrumental ensembles.

For some in the West Gallery Music Association the absence of an organ has almost become an article of faith – and effectively defines the limits of their interests. But we wanted to explore more widely, taking in music written for urban parish churches (where there usually was an organ and much of the music was written by professional mainstream composers), dissenting chapels (which developed a related but distinctive repertoire), and the choral festivals that were a feature of musical life around 1800 (which often included orchestras). We even included some solo songs written for domestic devotional use with harpsichord continuo or piano accompaniment. Our only criterion was that the piece should be striking, whether in its use of 'forbidden' dissonances and archaic part writing (in country psalmody the tune is often in the tenor, but is doubled at the octave, producing a rich five-part effect), or in its assured use of sophisticated techniques. We tried to be impartial between the urban and the rural, the simple and the sophisticated, the old fashioned and the forward looking, avoiding only the dull, the bland and the inchoate.

Where do we go from here? Our next project is a programme of Easter, passion and funeral music, taking its title from Edward Harwood's famous setting of Pope's *The Dying Christian to his Soul*, 'Vital spark of heav'nly flame'. We will be performing it at Boxford Church on Easter

Sunday, and again at a second conference on the psalmody repertoire to be held in Clacton on 29-31 August 1997; we will be subsequently recording it for Hyperion. Sally and I are also doing a number of workshops for the regional early music fora over the next year, and there are moves afoot to make some of the best pieces available in reliable editions. Meanwhile, the papers from the first Clacton conference are being published, and will be available soon. Before long, we hope, Georgian psalmody will become a respectable area of musicological enquiry and an accepted part of the concert repertoire.

\*\*\*\*\*

*While Shepherds Watched: Christmas Music from English Parish Churches, 1740-1830* by Psalmody and The Parley of Instruments directed by Peter Holman is on Hyperion CDA66924. They will be giving a concert to launch the CD at St John's, Smith Square on Friday, November 29 at 7.30pm.

\*\*\*\*\*

Peter Holman and Sally Drage are directing a workshop on this repertoire for the Eastern Early Music Forum at the Old Chapel, Stoke Road, Nayland, Suffolk on Saturday 30 November, 10.30 to 5.30. Charge £8.00 for members, £10.00 for others. Singers, strings and wood-wind welcome. For details and booking contact Selene Mills: 42 Owlstone Rd, Cambridge CB3 9JH. Tel/fax 01223 354096. Similar courses will take place at Marlow on 8 December (contact Vicky Helby, tel 01492 721582 and at Fountains Abbey on 14 Dec (Jillian Johnson, tel 0113 278 6886).

The second **West Gallery** (or perhaps Georgian Psalmody – the conventional name was agreed at the last Conference to be unsatisfactory but no-one came up with an alternative) **Conference** will be held under the auspices of the Colchester Institute on the weekend of August 29-31 1997. Further details from Chris Turner, School of Music, Colchester Institute, Sheepen Rd, Colchester, Essex CO3 3LL.

**Le Parlement de Musique** under the direction of Martin Gester is running a course on the performance of Telemann's *Brockses Passion* at Strasbourg from 27 February to 2nd March 1997. Advanced players who are accepted for the course will form the forces for subsequent performances. Details from Le Parlement de Musique – Studio, 6, rue de Rome, 67000 Strasbourg, tel +33 88 60 41 74, fax 88 60 42 0

## NEMA

The inaugural Margot-Leigh-Milner Address will be given by Christopher Page on Saturday 16 November at 3.00 pm (after the NEMA AGM at 2.00 pm) at the BBC Studios, Delaware Rd, London W9. Admission free; refreshments afterwards.



## THE DAVID MUNROW EDITION

Clifford Bartlett

The David Munrow Edition. Virgin Veritas.

Dufay *Se la face ay pale* 45' 10" (rec. 1973) 7243 5 61283 2 3  
*The Art of Courtly Love: Guillaume de Machaut, Gilles Binchois, Guillaume Dufay* 155' 41" 2 CDs (rec. 1972-3) 7243 5 61284 2 2

Monteverdi's *Contemporaries* 59' 13" (rec. 1975) 7243 5 61288 2 8  
 Praetorius *Terpsichore, Motets* 53' 53" (rec 1973) 7243 5 61289 2 7

I have mentioned in the editorial the problems of reissuing earlier recordings. This is particularly acute for the David Munrow anniversary issues. David was a friend of mine, and I admired him immensely, even though I always had grave doubts (which I expressed to him) about the make-up of his Early Music Consort – designed to make a wide repertoire playable, especially on tour, but ideal for virtually none of it. Luckily, in his recordings he could call on a wider range of musicians, and it is interesting how many of the names listed for these discs can still be found on current recordings.

Taking these discs in reverse order, Munrow's big-band Praetorius is one of the characteristic sounds of the late '60s (perhaps early music's equivalent to Sgt Pepper). As such, it is beyond any critical sniping. (Yes, I know that Praetorius mentions strings and that the vast array of instruments that he illustrated is not necessarily to be associated with this repertoire.) I was puzzled to see 1974 given as the recording date: he must have been playing these dances in similar scorings since the late 1960s. I knew his musical activity far more from concerts and radio than recordings and the rest of the disc is utterly unfamiliar. The merits of the large-scale church music of Praetorius were first recognised by Michael Morrow: I can remember vividly at a Musica Reservata concert John Beckett's imperious sweep of the arm to bring in the "Singet, jubiliert"s in *Puer natus in Bethlehem*. There was no love lost between Michael and David, but David had the grace to choose different repertoire (the pieces selected by Michael turned up later on the Taverner Consort's recording of Schütz's Christmas Story, reissued this month). There are six pieces, of which I found the last, *Christus der uns selig macht*, particularly impressive, with a haunting phrase that reminds me of *The Dream of Gerontius*. This is a disc that deserves a place in any collection of early music.

Monteverdi's *Contemporaries* is not such an outright winner, chiefly because the two suites of Mainiero dances are so obviously an attempt to repeat the success of the Praetorius and have precious little to do with Monteverdi. It was Munrow's last recording, and shows him promoting a genre which offered no role for him as performer, in this

case the North-Italian small-scale motet. Like many others interested in this repertoire, he called on the knowledge and transcriptions of Jerome Roche and included impressive pieces by Busatti, Donati, Grandi, d'India, and Porta, performed in a way that now seems a little stiff but is still enjoyable. There are also polychoral canzonas by Guami, Lappi and Priuli, brilliantly played.

Moving back to *The Art of Courtly Love*, three LPs spread across two CDs (economical but spoiling their structure), one meets a paradox. As an adherent of the English *a capella* orthodoxy, I anticipated that I would find the pervasive instrumental presence disturbing, whereas in fact, the greater the instrumental participation in any piece, the more enjoyable it is. Sadly much of the singing is dreary. It is partly a matter of tempo, partly of intonation, partly of the feeling that the singers don't really understand the music. The vocal line-up looks fine (James Bowman, Charles Brett, Martyn Hill and Geoffrey Shaw), but for much of the time they sound as if they are on a prehistoric excursion and have lost their guide: trying to match the instruments would have helped. A year or two later in *The Art of the Netherlands* Munrow had greater success in getting stylistic vocal results; perhaps he was still too diffident in moulding singers to his sound image.

The Dufay Mass, preceded by its chanson and the *Gloria ad modum tubae*, was recorded a year later with the same singers plus three youngsters (Rogers Covey-Crump, Paul Elliott and Ian Thompson) and a stalwart from the Deller Consort (Maurice Bevan). It sounds far better. The tempi are slower than one would now expect; I found them annoying when listening with the score but acceptable otherwise. Again, the 'superfluous' instrumental doublings seemed to help.

I would not recommend the earlier discs to the innocent listener. But they are a fascinating record of a stage in the history of performance, showing what can be done with imagination but a warning that those working in an area that depends on knowledge as well as skill and musicality run a risk of having their success undermined by later research. If, in ten years time, we have learnt that most medieval music was played as well as sung, these recordings may come into their own.

Each booklet contains a memoir by David's friend and colleague, John Turner. I have been a little harsher on these records than I think he would be, but we do not disagree on what a loss David was to the early-music world. I'm sure that, had he lived, there would have been a stronger emphasis on 'early' early music in our concert life.



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We will be in Paris for the Early Music Exhibition at the Carrousel du Louvre on Nov. 1-3 and would welcome a chance to meet our French readers.

Mark Williams has sent us the programme of the second Snape Festival of Music within the Liturgy, three days at the end of August with a wide variety of liturgical and religious music comprising three eucharists (ordinaries by Vivanco, Victoria and Michael Haydn), a compline (Rigatti) and a meditation with music by Byrd, Sweelinck and Rosenmüller. This is a remarkable initiative, bringing to liturgical life music that is so often heard only on CD.

Martin Elliott, who was in New Zealand's South Island when we were in the North, sent us some details of his activities there and also notice of schemes to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Christchurch, perhaps taking out the choir from the Oxford College after which the city was named.

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**21 November** James Saunders (St John's Coll, Cambridge)  
*Cathedrals, Music and Reformation in England, 1540-1603:*  
*Towards an Integrated History*

**5 December** Andrew Parrott (Oxford and Holloway)  
*Failures of Scholarship?*



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## RECORD REVIEWS

## MEDIEVAL

**Ludus Danielis** *White Lamentations as* The Clerkes of Oxenford, David Wulstan 73' 58" Approche CAL 6848 (rec. 1977)

This is a worthwhile budget-price disc. The *Play of Daniel* is better represented here than in the more pretentious new recording I reviewed in September. There is perhaps a greater degree of rhythmicisation than might be favoured now, but it is a good representation of the orthodoxy of its date and does not feel imposed. The companion *Lamentations* (the packaging does not say which set – does not, indeed, mention *White* on the front and labels the spine as if *White* wrote *Le Jeu de Daniel*) starts rather drably, but my interest increased as the music progressed. Wulstan's liking for high pitches is even noticeable in *Daniel*. CB

Wulstan's PMMS edition of *Daniel* is available from King's Music for £2.00.

**The Age of Cathedrals: Music from the Magnus Liber Organi** Paul Elliott, Alan Bennett, Paul Hillier, The Theatre of Voices 77' 18"

harmonia mundi HMU 907157

Anonymous, Anon. St. Martial, Anon. (School of Perotinus), Adam of St. Victor, Albertus Parisiensis, Leoninus, Perotinus, Philip the Chancellor

Having been less than enthusiastic about Paul Hillier's recent CDs, I am pleased to welcome this very warmly. I do, of course, have a few quibbles: no recording of music as early as this can please all opinions. The subtitle is misleading, since only about a quarter of the disc has repertoire that might have been in the *Magnus Liber Organi*; rather more comes from St. Martial sources and I assume that Perotin's *Beata viscera*, whose seven verses fill the last 10 minutes of the disc, belongs to a different context. It is beautifully sung, but I find that here and in some other tracks the presence of a drone blunts rather than enlivens the vitality of the melody. I was much more impressed by the droneless *Natus est rex*, an outstanding performance by Paul Elliott (and I'm not saying that because we advertise his *Unison* www services every issue) that has a far greater sense of momentum. There is no Pérèsian attempt at exotic voice-production, but good, straight singing. With Paul Hillier now on the same campus as Paul Elliott (the former succeeded Thomas Binkley as head of the Early Music department at Bloomington), let us hope for further collaborations. CB

**Motetus: Music at the time of Notre-Dame in Paris** Dominique Visse, Eric Mentzel, Edmund Brownless, Colin Mason, Clemencic Consort, René Clemencic 54' 50" Stradivarius STR 33398 (rec. 1992)

I am naturally suspicious of Clemencic discs, recalling over-instrumented *Carmina Burana* and Dufay from the past. But this begins most refreshingly with a marvellous bass and there are fascinating things to hear, with the instrumental participation mostly segregated. The singing, by Dominique Visse, Edmund Brownless, Eric Mentzel and Colin Mason, is very good (don't be put off by the Indian restaurant background-music voice near the beginning) and I find the motets far more convincing than on the Anonymous 4 Montpellier disc: try the astonishing articulation of *Clamans in deserta* (track 5). This disc starts with *Magnus Liber Organi* repertoire and moves on, so nicely complements the Theatre of Voices disc reviewed above. CB

**A Star in the East: Medieval Hungarian Christmas Music** Anonymous 4 68' 20" harmonia mundi HMU 907139

I was so worried that I do not share the otherwise uniform enthusiasm which greets new CDs from Anonymous 4 that I asked Robert Oliver, newly returned from the east (or is New Zealand west?) to listen to it. He has commented by phone, and the remarks here represent our surprisingly-congruent views. We wonder why anyone should buy more than one Anonymous 4 CD, since what is presented is primarily a beautiful but somewhat limited sound, varied only when we have a chance to hear individuals as soloists: Robert liked the feeling of vulnerability in the solo tracks. Perhaps the name 'Anonymous' is aptly chosen. If we were commenting on any individual piece, we could say unequivocally 'the performance is superb' (that gives their publicity agent a good quote). But the style is limited, and it is worrying that, apart from some pronunciation changes, medieval English and Hungarian music sound so similar. Neither of us tend to work with background music, but the disc seems ideal for that: it provides a pleasant noise to which you can at times focus your full attention and find it highly rewarding, but which offers inadequate stimulation if you listen with concentration for 68 minutes. CB

## 17th CENTURY

**W. Lawes In Loving Memory** The Consort of Musick, Anthony Rooley 56' 29" Musica oscura 070972

W. Lawes *Amarillis tear thy hair, Come Adonis come away, Gather ye Rosebuds, Gloria Patri et Filio, He that will not love, How like a widow, How long wilt thou forget, Lord as the Hart, Musick the Master of thy Art, Ne irascaris Domine, Out of the horror of the Deep, Perfect and endless Circles, Praise the Lord, Why soe pall and wan, Yee Feinds and Furies; John Cobb Dear Will is dead; John Hilton Bound by the neere conjunction; Simon Ives Lament and mourne; John Jenkins Why in this shade of night? Henry Lawes Cease you jolly Shepherds; John Wilson O doe not now lament and cry*

Another enterprising foray into rarely-heard repertoire in Musica Oscura's *English Explorers* series, this is a welcome collection of songs for solo and consorted voices by William Lawes, normally eclipsed in this area by his brother Henry. The cannon ball on the cover is a grim reminder of the turbulent times in which the music was composed, and many of the songs reflect the instability and turmoil of the Civil War, not only in their waywardly eccentric exploration of melody and harmony but in their setting of texts. The words frequently vie with the notes for predominance, and the Consort of Musick is the perfect ensemble to convey both sense and sound to maximum effect. The voices are always distinct, so that it is easy to follow all the lines. Occasionally I doubted the effectiveness of the scoring: *How like a widow* might have worked better as a duet for two sopranos with Simon Grant's distractingly growly (but always accurate) bass being replaced by a bass viol.

The recording is wonderfully clear and direct. The subtle organ and lute continuo occasionally storms into dramatic action, but withdraws again to let the voices speak. The collection contains examples of many genres, including a mad song, from which Evelyn Tubb extracts an astonishing level of drama, the strophic *Gather ye rosebuds*, Lawes's best known song, and several elegies on the death of Lawes by his friends and brother. Lawes's songs never reach the sublime beauty of his viol consorts, but are quirkily attractive and evocative of an era of musical experimentation in which Lawes led the field. Selene Mills

**Marais Musique pour la Viole** Charivari Agréable 76' 19"

ASV CD GAU 152

Suites in F major/minor, E minor/G major & D major/minor, Caprice ou Sonate

One of the difficulties with Marais' vast volumes of viol music is just how to treat them when assembling a CD. Charivari Agréable have made a pragmatic decision: they have arranged pieces from the fourth book into three suites, but have not been afraid to add music from other books when appropriate. From the CD listener's point of view they seem to have got it right. At the very place where a change from the combination of viol, lute and harpsichord would be welcome, Kah-Ming Ng changes to chamber organ or plays a harpsichord solo. Susanne Heinrich's viol playing is relaxed and sensitive, never exaggerated, but the character of each piece shines through. In the last suite on the disc, for instance, the impetuosity of *La Fougaide* is followed by a dreamy lute solo (*La Reveuse*) played by Lynda Sayce, and then the affected swagger of *La Minaudière*. Incidentally, am I alone in tiring of off-beat strummed guitar continuo? It seems to me to be somewhat overused in this music, which is generally too subtle for

such treatment. This is a small objection to a delightful and generous disc that I know I will return to.  
Shane Fletcher

**Mazzocchi *Lagime amare*** Tragicomedia, dir. Stephen Stubbs & Erin Headley 73' 32" Teldec *Das Alte Werk* 0630 12097 2

Apart from a Harmonia Mundi recording issued several years ago devoted wholly to extracts from the *Sacrae cantiones*, Domenico Mazzocchi has received scant attention on disc. This generous selection drawn from a cross-section of his major publications would therefore be welcome under most circumstances; but these intensely vivid and thrillingly dramatic performances elevate it to the 'must have' category for anyone remotely interested in 17th-century Italian music. Whether realising the sumptuous (and frequently startling) harmonies of the madrigals as a group of Mazzocchi's long, melodious recitatives, the seven singers are all superb in the total commitment brought to the performances. The continuo playing has a spine-tingling depth of sonority that is allowed to make its full impact in a recording of demonstration quality. Given the diversity of the repertory, my only tiny quibble is that we might have been given more space between tracks – it is a bit disconcerting to be thrown so abruptly from the tantalising pastoral excerpt from the composer's only surviving opera straight into a long narrative recitative on Moses' parting of the Red Sea. Unquestionably a magnificent achievement.  
Brian Robins

**Jacob Praetorius *Motets & Organ Works*** Harald Vogel org, Weser-Renaissance, dir Manfred Cordes 63' 27" cpo 999 215-2

This is a refreshing disc of music by the little-known son of Hieronymus Praetorius (unrelated to Michael). Weser-Renaissance, a group I have not come across before, sing and play persuasively and with great assurance, and it is easy at times to forget that there are only ten of them: STB voices, violin, cornett, three sackbuts, chitarrone, and organ. Their chosen composer is firmly in the early 17th-century Hamburg tradition, influenced by the previous generations of his family and by Sweelinck, with whom he trained in Amsterdam. The sequence of charming and inventive small-scale motets is interspersed by his compositions for solo organ, played by Harald Vogel on the Edo Evers organ in Wamfried Lutheran Church, Osteel, 'the most completely preserved late-renaissance organ in North Germany'. In the course of a series of chorale variations, we are given a comprehensive tour of the registration of what is clearly a remarkable instrument, the icing on the cake of an altogether splendid recording.  
D. James Ross

**Purcell *Halcyon Days*** Nancy Argenta S, Nigel North plucked continuo, Richard Boothby gamba, John Toll keyboards 77' 41" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45191 2 3 Z190, 192, 355, 369, 379, 412 + songs from 323, 574, 581, 583, 600, 606, 629, 630, 631 & 632

This is a wonderful collection of pieces of varied styles and emotions. The divinely-voiced Nancy Argenta is at her best in the more jolly numbers, such as *Nymphs and Shepherds* and *Sawney is a bonny lad*, which provide welcome bursts of spirit amongst what is otherwise an hour or so of elegant gorgeousness. Her diction often is unclear and she sacrifices drama and colour for loveliness. In Dido's lament and *In the black dismal dungeon of despair*, with its low-set recitative, she hints at despair with voice colour, but such opportunities are missed in obvious places such as *The Plaint* and *Ah! cruel bloody fate*. She often loses the importance of key words, as in a rather lumpy *If music be the food of - what was that? - ah, love!* Words are the key to drama; unfortunately, Nancy Argenta does not make the most of either. The continuo group is a delight – *Nymphs and Shepherds* is transformed by their imagination.  
Angela Bell

**Rebello & Melgás *Sacred Choral Music from 17th-Century Portugal*** The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 67' 34" Collins Classics 14652

There is much to admire about this disc. Although it draws on the music of only two composers, within their oeuvres there is a bewildering variety of styles and some lovely music. Ivan Moody's excellent note describes Rebello's style as 'wilful' and his extrovert flair is most obviously to the fore in the effervescent setting of *Qui habitat*, while a more magisterial facet is on display in *Frates sobrii* and the stately but creative 13-part *Magnificat*. Melgás is represented by a very conservative and frankly rather dull setting of *Popule meus*, compensated by an altogether more profound set of *Lamentations* for Holy Thursday and an expressive *Salve Regina*. The notes mention that Rebello's music presented problems of balance, and these are not altogether solved here: some of the fuller moments simply sound overcrowded.  
D. James Ross

**Reincken *Hortus Musicus* 1687** Les Cyclopes Pierre Verany PV796052 74' 40"

This disc reflects an increased interest in late 17th-century North German chamber music. Reincken's *Hortus Musicus* is better known because Bach knew it than for its own merits; that is presumably why there was an edition as early as 1888. It consists of six *Partitas* with a basic scoring for two violins (here Manfred Kraemer and Laura Johnson) and viola da gamba (Guido Balestracci) with continuo (Brian Feehan, Bibiane Lapointe and Thierry Maeder on plucked instruments, harpsichord and organ respectively). Each *Partita* comprises five movements in the standard suite sequence of 'patchwork' sonata followed by Allemand, Courant, Saraband and Gigue. The playing is absolutely first rate: the violinists have individual voices and yet blend so well, the gambist thoroughly relishes his solo excursions and the continuo players vary the texture of their accompaniment with considerable imagination. A must for 17th-century music fans.  
BC

**Salamone Rossi *The Songs of Solomon Vol 1: Music for the Sabbath*** New York Baroque, Eric Milnes 45' 47" Pro Gloria Musicae PGM 108

This is not, as claimed, the first recording of Rossi's unique book of Hebrew liturgical music for 3-8 voices, but it is certainly an improvement on the Pantan pair of discs I reviewed in March (*EMR* 18 p. 14). Here it is sung at a sensible speed by a small ensemble. There is rather more vibrato than one expects from vocal ensembles in music of this period: surely it can't have been added to make it sound more Jewish? As in the Pantan set, the downward transposition implied by *chiavette* is ignored. Psalm 29 (track 9; no 24 in the 1623 edition) sounds very shrill; it is in high clefs (G2G2C2C3CC3F4), the anomalous F4 for a bass part otherwise in a high tessitura is probably because of a few bottom Gs, which transposed are matched by Ds elsewhere. The three-voice *Kaddish* (track 13/no. 1) for G2C2C3 would also benefit from a lower pitch. Tracks 11 & 12 are reversed. The music is slightly old-fashioned for its date, but worth hearing.  
CB

**Schmelzer *Musica Florea***, Marek Stryncl Studio Matous MK 0033-2 931 62' 50" Sonatas (including *cum tubis in pleno a9*, a 3 violini, ad tabulam a4); J. J. Flix *Laudate pueri a7*; Antonio Pino *Laudate pueri a2*; anon *Laudate pueri a4*

There is a certain overlap here with the Prague ensemble, Musica Antiqua Praha: the bass singer and leading musicological mind behind the recording is Michael Pospisil (with the customary apologies for the missing accent) and at least two of the violinists also play for Pavel Klikar. The music comes from the marvellous Kromeriz collection and, indeed, a couple of the pieces are already familiar from Supraphon 11 1416-2. I have no reservations about recommending the disc to all interested in 17th-century music. The instrumental pieces, including a scintillating account of the sonata for three violins and an ensemble of trumpets and sackbuts (a new departure for Czech period instrument groups) are utterly convincing. Anna Hlavenková and Michael Pospisil are totally at ease with their *Laudate pueri* settings. Tenor Martin Prokes has a much harder job: not only is the range extremely wide for this period, the harmonic language is also a little out of the ordinary (if the transcription is to be believed – in common with Pospisil, I doubt whether Vejvanovský, who copied a large number of the Kromeriz pieces, was the world's most conscientious scribe).  
BC

Also available: a 3CD set combining this with discs of Biber & Vejvanovsky by the same ensemble MK 0034 2 933 198' 20"

**Sweelinck *Keyboard works*** Anneke Uittenbosch hpscd, virginal, org 72' 43" Globe GLO 6035 (rec 1989) More palatino, Ick voer al over Rhijn, Fantasia Chromatica in d, Est-ce Mars, Onder een linde groen, 2 Toccatas in a, Poolse Dans, Malle Sijmen, Pavana Lachrimae, Pavana hispanica, Echo Fantasia, Mein junges Leben hat ein End

This reissue of some of Sweelinck's secular keyboard works is played on a Katzman harpsichord, a Crijnen virginal and a Metzler organ, all after instruments more or less contemporary with Sweelinck. Anneke Uittenbosch's interpretation is musical and fluid, with a delightful sense of articulation, particularly on the harpsichord. On the organ, she demonstrates the harpsichord player's fear of playing loudly, but no matter. The *Pavana Lachrymae*, played on a sweet-sounding virginal, is given one of the most lachrymose performances I have heard – at nearly ten minutes, a real drenching.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Van Eyck Der Fluyten Lust-hof vol 2** Marion Verbruggen 73' 59"  
harmonia mundi HMU 907170

Like the new recording by Anonymous 4, it is difficult to treat this as anything other than background music or a disc to dip into, despite the impeccable performances. I've included van Eyck into successful mixed concert programmes at the Wigmore Hall and the Utrecht Festival; why must recordings follow the monographic pattern of books rather than the anthology approach of concerts? I asked several people to review it but they could not face 74 minutes of recorder music. But if you are a recorder enthusiast, you will surely enjoy this feast of solo playing, unadulterated by any accompaniment. Good notes by Ruth van Baak Griffioen, the author of a thorough book on van Eyck which devotes particular attention to the origin of the tunes. CB

**Lamenti Barocchi vol 2** Soloists of the Cappella Musicale di S. Petronio, Sergio Vartolo  
Naxos 8.553319 72' 52"

Anon *Lamento del castrato*, Bassani *Il musico svogliato*, Fabrizio Fontana *Lamento dell'impotente*, B. Marcello *Lamento dei castrati*, Monteverdi *Lamento della Ninfa*, Luigi Rossi *Lamento di Zaida mora*, Ingordo *human desio*

The best thing about this issue is the sheer joy of hearing Italian singers in this repertoire where so much rests on the text, especially since these are singers whose accuracy of pitch and sureness of focus means that they can sing together with instrumental clarity. The only familiar piece is the first, Monteverdi's *Lamento della Ninfa*, with an appropriately vulnerable nymph in Gloria Banditelli. Thereafter the disc is devoted to a series of pieces about loss of various kinds, including two *Lamenti dei castrati* (one sung heroically but at times uneasily by male soprano Angelo Manzotti) and a *Lamento dell'impotente* for strictly post-nine o'clock watershed listening. Not all the disc is about such anatomical subjects. Apart from the Monteverdi the best piece is the intriguing *Il musico svogliato* by Bassani about a musician who has difficulty getting down to work; snatches of his conventional aria are interrupted by his own comments on his need for a drink (musicians don't change) and some ornamentation that makes him cough; in the end he makes the excuse that he has not brought the score with him and the piece ends as he leaves to fetch it.

This is splendidly done by Antonio Abete, the best singer on the disc, who is capable of fine, expressive tone in the baritone range and an ease with the lowest notes in the Monteverdi. But on the whole this is a curiosity rather than a must. Shane Fletcher

**La harpe royale: Musical Portraits, Dances and Laments from the Court of Louis XIV** Andrew Lawrence-King harp 71' 54"  
deutsche harmonia mundi 05472 77371 2  
Music by Corbetta, L & F Couperin, Froberger, de Visée

Under the enviably skilled fingers of this artist, the baroque harp seems to combine the virtues of theorbo, harpsichord and clavichord while avoiding their limitations. There is so much to enjoy here that it is difficult to know where to start. The sound of the instrument is remarkably varied in both tone and dynamics – the bass strings being especially delectable – and the temperament is such as to give the exotic chords real bite. Repertoire is drawn from guitar, lute and harpsichord originals and it all sounds remarkably idiomatic; the *tombeaux* are particularly notable. I soon gave up listening to the instrument and just enjoyed the music-making, and when the disc ended, immediately enjoyed it all again. Treat yourself. David Hansell

**Mascharada: Music at the Bückeburg Court of Ernst III** The King's Noyse, dir. David Douglass 70' 10"  
harmonia mundi HMU 9071765  
Dances etc. by Bleyer, Brade, Grabbe & Simpson

Any recording of The King's Noyse is worth hearing and the Anglo-German repertoire from c.1610-20 is still too little known. If you drive across Germany to Berlin, it is worth turning off the Autobahn to see Bückeburg with its marvellous Lutheran church of 1612 (the Schloss is more of the J. C. F. Bach period). If I find Simpson the most interesting of the English composers, perhaps I am biased by having helped Peter Holman prepare an unpublished edition of *Taffel-Consort* 25 years ago. Brade certainly writes with a rhythmic vitality, but Simpson has more imagination, though his best pieces, other than *Bonny sweet Robin* (not on this disc), are arrangements, like the extraordinary Pavan after Dowland. The Grabbe madrigal *Ah! misera mia vita* works well on instruments; if the others are as good, someone should record his set (like Schütz's op. 1, the fruit of studies with Gabrieli). There are good notes by one of the players, Scott Metcalfe, though the difference between masque social dances and choreographed ones like Johnson's *Satyr's Dance* needs comment. All is well played and a good renaissance violin band (and this one is superlatively good) is a welcome change after the appropriation of so much dance music by wind bands. CB

**The Historic Organ: The Compenius Organ at Frederiksborg Castle: Music from the 17th Century** Per Kynne Frandsen 61' 48"  
Marco Polo Da capo 8.224057  
Music by Dowland, Geist, Lorentz, Radek, Scheidemann, Schildt, Schop & anon.

If, despite my veiled warnings about the playing, you dashed off to buy the CD of the Frederiksborg Castle organ reviewed last month, then you may want to try the patience of the dealer by asking to swap it for this one (though read the notes first, since they give a more detailed history of the instrument than those here). This more recent recording, played with conviction by the resident organist, is a delight. The well chosen programme features music related to the organ, to Denmark or to both, and is played with effective use of the registrations possible on this renowned instrument. The reeds make less of an appearance, and are all the more effective for that. The tour de force is the final piece, a jolly anonymous *Trompter Aufzug* which, as well as the reeds, also features the organ's special effects – the timpani and two bagpipe drone stops. The programme includes all five surviving works by Martin Radeck, Schildt's superb chorale fantasia on *Herzlich lieb hab ich dir*, and a delightful *Eengelendische Nachtigall*.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

## LATE BAROQUE

**Bach St John Passion** Mark Bleeker Evangelist, Nathaniel Watson Jesus, Kevin Walsh Pilate, Tamara Matthews, Jennifer Lane, David Vanderwal SAT, Trinity Cathedral Choir & Baroque Orchestra, Eric Milnes 111' 07" 2 discs  
Pro Gloria Musicae PGM 111

This must be the first full recording of an original-instrument performance of this work to come from the USA, and very impressive it is, too. The choir and orchestra have been extremely well prepared (better than many European ones) and the soloists all suit their ranges and styles very well indeed, notably the fine tenor Evangelist Mark Bleeker, whose delivery may be a little slow but remains flexible and very attentive to significances and meanings. I should have preferred an even stronger contrast between arias and chorale-settings and an even more dramatic treatment of the choral Turbae, but a strong bonus is that this performance was recorded – and very well managed indeed, considering this – at a live performance. One almost feels the sense of wonder that the performance engenders, despite the occasional unnatural silences between items. This is really a good account, well worth having as your only reading. But if you prefer silence at the end, be ready to switch off quickly before the applause starts. Stephen Daw

**Bach Concertos for 3 & 4 harpsichords BWV 1063-5** Bob van Asperen, Bernhard Klapprott, Marcello Bussi, Carslen Lohff; Melante Amsterdam 61' 30"  
Virgin Veritas 7243 45204 2 5

There is an infectious characteristic swagger about this recording which derives from that serious enjoyment which has long characterised Bob van Asperen's ventures and adventures with ensemble Bach. He also plays the two solo items with real distinction and creative zest. Melante



Amsterdam actually denotes a string quartet with Anthony Woodrow doubling Wouter Möller's cello on double bass, and very stylish their playing is until one highly-exposed violin solo in BWV 1063/2 where, uncharacteristically, the leader Francois Fernandez suddenly rises wildly out of tune as he introduces the main theme. With its impression of spontaneous musical celebration, this sets itself up among recent recordings as the benchmark for future readings.

Stephen Daw

**Bach Organ Works vol 4** Ton Koopman (Arp Schnitger organ at St.-Jacobi-Kirche, Hamburg) 70' 12"

Teldec *Das alte Werk* 4509 98443 2

BWV 532, 538, 540, 564-5, 566

In the remote possibility of my ever getting to meet St Peter, I hope he entices me in with a promise that the angelic Ton Koopman is the resident organist and that he has managed to bring with him the Jacobikirche organ. An eternity of Koopman playing Bach would make up for the loss of eternal fun promised in the other place. The programme is of toccatas or toccata-like pieces, of which the most interesting is the little-heard Praeludium in E BWV 566 and the most powerful is the Toccata in F. This is given a thundering performance, mesmerizing in its rhythmic pulse and sheer energy – and this is one of the first times I have heard a performance of the fugue convincing in style and registration. (Normally players either make the fugue sound like an afterthought or try and get it to outdo the Toccata). Koopman's playing is never dull and can be quite exasperating (his recording of Stanley still makes me spit blood for its unstylish use of ornamentation and registration), but in this series of Bach CDs he seems to have caught the mood exactly. It makes such a change to listen to a strong musical personality who is not afraid to involve himself in the music, rather than the too frequently heard type-writer performances of many organists. Koopman's characteristic ornamentation and flourishes somehow seem to fit in this music. If the playing were not so good, I would have spent most of this review enthusing about the magnificent 1693 Arp Schnitger in Hamburg's Jacobikirche. The recent restoration is a major part in the development of our thinking about the late north German baroque organ. So triply worth buying, for instrument, player and music.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Boyce Trio Sonatas** The Parley of Instruments & Parley of Instruments Baroque Orchestra, Peter Holman 123' 06" 2 CDs Hyperion CDA67151/2

Includes 3 additional trios as well as the published set of 12:

When I first heard of Peter Holman's plan to record these pieces orchestrally, I must confess I had reservations. Having heard the whole set several times now, I am totally comfortable with the idea. Not only do they work with larger forces (particularly with the well-placed switches from solo to tutti),

in some cases it will now be difficult to think of them ever again as trio sonatas. I was surprised that the *all'ottava* viola part was not more prominent and did not create any harmonic infelicities (at those points where the viola line lies above the violins, the greater number of players carry the lines of the texture and fool the ear). Holman's choice of pieces to perform in their published version is convincing (he argues that the set is really two interspersed sequences of *da chiesa* and *da camera* sonatas), as is the selection of keyboard instrument (varying between harpsichord and organ) and the occasional use of bassoon on the bass line. Let's hear some of Boyce's choral music next, please! BC

**Caldara Maddalena ai piedi di Cristo** Maria Cristina Kiehr, Rosa Dominguez, Bernarda Fink, Andreas Scholl, Gerd Türk, Ulrich Messthaler SACTTB, Orchestre de la Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, René Jacobs 126' 27" harmonia mundi HMC 905221.22 2 CDs

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of this fine performance of a very fine piece is the decision to cast a female alto in the role of worldly love and a counter-tenor in that of heavenly love: while Andreas Scholl seems particularly at ease with the tessitura of his part, Bernarda Fink struggles rather to sustain the unusually low line; in duet, having the male voice above seemed strange and threw the contrast between them into even greater relief. There are some delightful instrumental contributions; unlike the Camilla de Rossi reviewed below, the violins are totally secure and the cello line (which would have been of particular interest to the composer, of course) is wonderfully executed. Just occasionally René Jacobs has a mad urge to ripple chords like a maniac, but this was rarely upsetting and the continuo playing is otherwise finely balanced between sensitive accompaniment and a motor force in the overall scheme of things. Recommended particularly to lovers of early Handel. BC

**Handel Almira** Ann Monoyios *Almira*, Patricia Rozario *Edilia*, Linda Gerrard *Bellante*, Jamie MacDougall *Fernando*, Douglas Nasrawi *Osman*, Christian Elsner *Tabarco*, David Thomas *Consalvo*, Olaf Haye *Raymondo*, Fiori Musicali, Andrew Lawrence-King 224' 27" 3 CDs cpo 999275-2

Handel's first opera, composed in Hamburg late in 1704, is the only major work of his to survive (not quite complete) from the period prior to his Italian visit. A disorganised, sprawling comedy, with moments of pathos, it provides fascinating glimpses of the greatness in embryo as well as being a valuable exemplar of the early days of the Hamburg opera. Modern revivals (none in Britain) have been rare and ruthlessly cut. The 1994 Bremen production from which this performance derives was also much cut and reordered, but, praise be, the studio recording presents all the extant performable music in the right order; only a few repeats are skipped. (The fragmentary chorus

in Act 3 is omitted, and no solution is provided for the missing aria at the end of Act 1 – see my comment quoted by CB in *EMR* 19, pp. 8-9 – so the act ends with a recitative.) For such generosity – and the fact that the set is at a medium price – one could forgive much, but there is very little to forgive apart from the rather tricky (though never unmusical) instrumentation of the dances in the Act 3 masque and of the accompaniments of some of the arias with continuo only (e.g. solo harp, organ and harpsichord without string bass). In general the performance is extremely assured, with Lawrence-King (who replaced the indisposed Thomas Albert, conductor of the staged performances, for the recording) setting perfectly judged tempos and shaping the often irregular melodies with a clear sense of phrase. Monoyios is a shade lightweight in the title role, and among the men only Haye could be said to possess beauty of tone; but the whole cast sings with unfailing commitment and is more than equal to the considerable expressive and technical demands of the music. The booklet provides the sung text with a reasonable English translation (the German, especially in the part of the comic servant Tabarco, is occasionally incomprehensible, even to Germans) but annoyingly the stage directions are omitted, making some scenes very hard to follow. Nevertheless an important and most welcome issue, not only for Handelianists, but for others who wish to explore a genre of opera not previously well-represented on record. Anthony Hicks

**Handel L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato** Venceslava Hrubá-Freiberger, Dagmar Schellenburger-Ernst, Jochen Kowalski, Michael Rabsilber, Franz-Josef Kapellmann SSATB, Rundfunkchor & Orchester der Komischen Oper, Berlin, Rolf Reuter 112' 36" 2 CDs. (rec. 1989)

Berlin Classics 0011472BC

Of all Handel's English works, *L'Allegro* would seem to lose the most by being given in German, where the subtlety of Milton's imagery, much of it drawn from an idealised version of rural England, is inevitably lost in a singing translation ('the bellman's drowsy charm' becomes 'the watchman's call at night') and the relationship of the text to the music is consequently obscured. One wonders whether the soloists (who probably all have excellent English) might not have done better with the original words, as this performance (with modern instruments) is rather prosaic, though carefully prepared and decently sung, with especially good contributions from the sopranos. The alto variants of several numbers are adopted for Kowalski; most of them, with the bass version of 'Orpheus' self, are new on record, but are seldom advantageous, and the alto versions were designed for a contralto, not a counter-tenor. The overture to the pasticcio *Alessandro Severo* (1738) is played at the start; Handel himself seems to have opened some of his performances with op. 6/10. Even at mid-price, this set is only for the most determined Handel collector. Anthony Hicks

**Handel *Le Cantate Italiane per Basso*** Jean-Louis Bindi, Artifici Musicali, Guy Delvaux Stradivarius **STR 33425** 53' 35"  
HWV 98, 101b, 102a, 136a 165

It was an excellent idea to collect Handel's cantatas for bass voice on one CD, and it is especially good to have the two pieces with accompaniment for violins, *Cuopre tal volta* and *Spande ancor*. (The latter, remarkable for an opening aria with imitative and chromatically inflected counterpoint in four real parts, has previously been elusive on disc.) They are written for a bass with wide compass, and Bindi proves well up to their challenge with firm and even tone throughout the range. He is always alert to the words and shapes the musical line intelligently. *Nell' Africane selve* makes even greater vocal demands (a frequently-cited passage descends from a' to C'♯); these are again met, though I wonder if Bindi takes the piece too seriously: the musical substance does not really merit his intensely expressive reading. *Della guerra amorosa*, in baritone range, is just right, and so, as a performance, is the unpublished *Dal fatale momento*; but the latter is not what it seems. Despite the confident ascription of this version to Handel in a Leipzig MS, it is actually a straight transcription of a soprano cantata more plausibly attributed in two other MSS to Francesco Mancini. I am still glad to have it – every Handel spuriousity should be recorded once – and I regret that Bindi does not also include the Fitzwilliam Museum version of *Nell' Africane selve*, or at least the extra aria which appears nowhere else, to give a truly complete coverage of the repertoire. Delvaux's continuo realisations (for sensible combinations of cello, violone, lute and harpsichord) add to the pleasure of the disc, and I am disinclined to complain of delayed cadences in the recitatives as they never violate musical sense. The only serious defect is the absurdity of the English translations in the booklet (e.g. 'But when from thine lights thou wound me thy germinate torch, scourged and without peace, I thy prisoner the archer God has made'). If you can't understand the Italian, you'll need to read the French translation. **Anthony Hicks**

**Locatelli *Concerti Grossi Op.1***, Nos.7-12  
Capella Istropolitana, dir. Jaroslav Krecek  
Naxos **8.553446** 63' 56"

In conjunction with Naxos 8.553445 (see *EMR* 23) this completes Capella Istropolitana's recording of Locatelli's op. 1 *Concerti Grossi*. Much of what I said there also applies here: it may be a modern band, but they have opened their minds to the progress which has been made in the 'early music world' (as if it were a different planet!) so the heavy, strictly arpeggiating harpsichord has been replaced by a more idiomatic contribution to the texture (here they use chamber organ as well) and the tempi are well selected. Most people will know the *Christmas Concerto* with all its obligatory nods in Corelli's direction (it is a very Corellian set), but the other five will probably be new – and they're well worth getting to know, especially at bargain price. **BC**

**Camilla de Rossi *Il Sacrificio di Abramo***  
Susanne Rydén, Ralf Popken, Jan Strömberg  
SAT, Weser-Renaissance, Manfred Cordes  
cpo **999 371-2** 74' 58"

This is the second Viennese oratorio I've been listening to this month (see Caldara above). The performance is on a more modest scale, with one soprano singing both female roles and single strings throughout. The music is typical of the early 18th century: primarily secco recitative leading into continuo arias with instrumental ritornelli. The inclusion of chalumeau parts is interesting and they are extremely well played. Unfortunately the same cannot always be said of the string playing. It is unlikely that the Viennese performances would have been on such a modest scale: certainly, when compared to Chiara Banchini's band, there is a definite need for a bigger sound. But **cpo** deserves to be encouraged in its pursuit of the unusual. **BC**

**Telemann *Oboe Sonatas*** Paul Goodwin, Susan Sheppard *vlc*, John Toll *hpscd*, Nigel North *theorbo & archlute*, Lynden Cranham *vlc*  
harmonia mundi **HMU 907152** 64' 42"  
TWV 1:356 & 1732; TWV 41: a3, B6, e6, Es3 & G2

What would we think of Telemann if there had been neither Bach nor Handel? We should certainly hold his chamber music in the highest esteem and the contents of this well planned and persuasively performed recital would provide plenty of support for such a view. Almost the whole baroque is here, with even a few bars of harpsichord obbligato which might have escaped from a Scarlatti sonata. This particular Trio offers some sumptuous textures as the oboe and keyboard engage in a lively contrapuntal debate, supported by theorbo and cello continuo. Telemann (and the author of the booklet essay) might have been surprised to hear arias from his cantatas performed with the vocal part assigned to a cello, but there is no denying the eloquence of the interpretation. **David Hansell**

**Italian Baroque Favourites**: Capella Istropolitana  
Naxos **8.553447** 71' 59"  
Albinoni op. 2/6, Geminiani op. 2/5, op. 3/3,  
Locatelli op. 1/5 & 9, Manfredini no. 10, G. B. Sammartini *Sinfonia in A*, Torelli op. 8/6

This is an attractive selection, the sort of anthology frequent on LPs of the 1960s but less fashionable now. Modern instruments are used, but the playing is stylish and should not be scorned. The main weakness is the apologetic sound of the harpsichord. No conductors are mentioned: presumably the performances are assembled from separate discs (like the Locatelli op. 1, reviewed above). The English, German and French notes are different. **CB**

**Strömsholm Castle Chapel Organ** (Daniel Strähle, 1743) John Wellingham  
Proprius **PRCD 9143**  
Music by Bach, Blow, Boyce, Byrd, Corelli, Handel, Purcell, Roman, Walond & Walther

It has taken John Wellingham a while to expose himself to the laser, but it has been a

worthwhile wait. Wellingham is known as an enthusiastic teacher and joint founder, with the organ-builder William Drake, of the John Loosemore Centre for Organ and Early Music in Devon. He has introduced many players to the joys of the mechanical action organ and the techniques of touch and articulation that can bring early music to life. His sensitive, musical and communicative playing is an eloquent testimonial to many years of encouraging others. The organ is the delightful 8-stop instrument in the chapel of Strömsholm Castle in Sweden, built in 1743 by Daniel Strähle, and includes a superb little regal stop, the Vox Virginea. It is recorded remarkably effectively from its cubby hole high in the roof of the castle. Bach's 'harpsichord' toccata BWV 916 makes a powerful opening, but the mood for the rest of the CD is generally light and attractive, including an arrangement of some of the Water Music pieces and one of Thomas Billington's arrangements of the Corelli Concertos. There is a good booklet, with a few of the registrations noted. Fine playing, excellent recording: buy it.

**Andrew Benson-Wilson**

For availability, phone John Wellingham 01364 643120

## CLASSICAL

**Haydn *Harmoniemesse, Te Deum* (1800)**  
Sandra Piau, Monika Groop, Christoph Prégardien, Harry van der Kamp *SmSTB*, Chœur de Chambre de Namur, La Petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 51' 43"  
deutsche harmonia mundi **05472 77337 2**

Faced with the prospect of a Haydn mass I would normally prefer to be handed a vocal score than a CD, but this is a *Harmoniemesse* to which I will listen many more times with ever-increasing pleasure. Even at an initial 'background' hearing, the energy and beauty of this performance were impossible to ignore. The speeds are immaculately judged, generally faster than most performances I have heard, so that even the unison passages (which are usually boring to sing or listen to) become a comprehensible part of the rhetoric, for example the *Benedictus*, punctuated by a lively staccato bassoon. The phrasing is faultless, by both singers and players, who interpret perfectly the moods and meanings of the texts. The balance between voices and instruments is excellent, favouring good variations in dynamic within a generally light but full sound, and allowing Haydn's delightful instrumental vignettes to sparkle. All four soloists are exquisite, with power and fervour perfectly balanced with sensitivity and line. There are several moments of such luminous beauty, particularly from the soprano and tenor, that are in themselves enough for me to urge you to buy this disc, of which Haydn would have been proud.

The *Te Deum*, written two years before the Mass (which was Haydn's last major work) is less attractive, rather dominated by trumpets, timpani and martial rhythms. But this performance too is commendable, and the 24-voice choir excellent. **Selene Mills**



**Haydn String Quartets op 64** The Salomon Quartet

Hyperion CDA 67011 69' 19" (Nos 1-3)

Hyperion CDA 67012 60' 08" (Nos 4-6)

The Salomons continue their Haydn String Quartet series with the Op. 64's, written in 1790. Their performances never fail to delight and here they achieve even greater heights (as does Simon Standage with his top E flat in the Trio of No. 6). With their totally sure technique and accuracy, the music sparkles, yet reveals great depths of emotion and understanding. Of the quartets on the first disc, No. 2 in B minor perhaps stands out, with its chromaticisms and extremes of modulation in the first movement and its intense yet static B major adagio. On the second disc No. 4 in G major is a vivacious work, while No. 5 brings new life to the well-known masterpiece. No. 6 in E flat (which I think acquired the name *The Railwayman* at some point) has a particular warmth, yet with some surprises in both the Minuet and Finale. If I could only afford one of these records, the choice would be Nos. 4-6, though much would be missed in the first three.

Ian Graham-Jones

**Kleinknecht Flute sonatas** Sabine Dreier fl, Petra Manz gamba, Irene Hegen hpcsd/jp

cpo 999 361-2 77' 09"

Divertimento in G, Trio in D, Sonatas I, III, VI, VI

'Jakob Friedrich [Kleinknecht's] music... warrants more attention and study that it has received' (Douglas Lee in *The New Grove*). Active as a flautist in Bayreuth, he wrote a set of three-movement flute sonatas for a royal wedding in 1748, and four of them are included here, together with some altogether more interesting music for flute and cembalo obbligato discovered by the players in Bayreuth and Nuremberg. It is fascinating to hear the change from high baroque to classical in the works of one man. The best performance is of a trio that is half-way between the two styles, in which the two upper parts are taken by the flute and the keyboard right hand. The outer movements are done with great zest, though the central *amoroso* is not relaxed enough. Elsewhere, too, there is not quite enough variety in the sound or enough shaping of phrase to do this music full justice. Nevertheless the recording is fascinating in uncovering the evolution of Kleinknecht's style... but it is perhaps more extraordinary to think of the extent to which music in Bayreuth was to change over the next century.

Shane Fletcher

**Mozart Die Zauberflöte** Christiane Oelze Pamina, Michael Schade Tamino, Cyndia Sieden Queen of the Night, Gerald Finley Papageno, Constanze Backes Papagena, Harry Peeters Sarastro, Uwe Peper Monostatos, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 158' 44" 2 CDs

Archiv 449 166-2

*Magic Flutes* are coming thick and fast – this is at least the fifth in recent years to use period instruments. John Eliot Gardiner's approach is signalled in the overture, which

is unusually hard-driven; the performance, for all its style, spirit and technical excellence, does lack something in charm. Gerald Finley offers an endearing and beautifully sung Papageno, Christiane Oelze is a glorious Pamina and Michael Schade as her prince is almost as good. The competition between Cyndia Sieden's Queen and Harry Peeters' Sarastro is on musical grounds easily settled in the Queen's favour: she is neat, accurate and dazzling, he disappointingly woolly and shallow-toned. The Ladies and Boys are alike very good, and the smaller roles are well taken. Oddities in the text include a lion rather than a serpent pursuing Tamino; and four excerpts are repeated as appendices with the words of the first full score edition (1814). Some of the sound effects go over the top, and an acceptable dynamic level for the dialogue is rather loud for the musical numbers. This is a stimulating recording, with a number of challenging touches – and all the expected orchestral beauties that Gardiner and his EBS have led us to expect. Among period recordings, Christie, Ostman and Norrington all provide strong competition; if I had to choose just one *Flute*, I think Christie would have my vote, but I should want to smuggle Oelze and Finley into my ideal recording. Peter Branscombe

For the video, see p. 18

**Mozart Opera excerpts.** English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 70' 29"

Archiv 449 938-2

This contains 19 tracks from Gardiner's recordings of Mozart's operas from *Idomeneo* (represented by its overture) on, eye-catching with its reproduction of the starry sphere of Schinkel's 1816 *Zauberflöte* (if all productions were so stunning, I might not worry so much about anachronisms). If it was given away free, it would effectively increase sales of the complete sets; otherwise, it might be better to save up for them. But if you want an anthology, this is a very attractive one. Stanford Olsen sings his Belmonte song beautifully, and I thoroughly enjoyed Bryn Terfel in 'Non più andrai', with exaggerated rolled rrrrrs and a matching tongue-slightly-in-cheek orchestral sound. The one opera I wouldn't want on the showing here is *Così fan tutte*. CB

**Mozart Arias** Cecilia Bartoli with Edita Gruberova, Yvonne Kelly, Concentus Musicus, Nicholas Harnoncourt (*Lucio Silla*), Lella Cuberli, Ferruccio Furlanetto, John Tomlinson, Berlin Philharmonic, Daniel Barenboim (*Le nozze di Figaro* & *Così fan tutte*) 53' 56"

Erato 0630-14074-2

Q. What is Warner Music playing at?

A. Making money from unsuspecting Cecilia Bartoli.

This disc is simply a 'bleeding chunks' compilation from pre-existing recordings. Bartoli *does* feature on each item, but I wonder if dedicatees will really enjoy the contributions of the other singers. The extract from *Lucia Silla* is the most successful, largely because of the balance

between the voices and the sensitive playing of Harnoncourt's Concentus Musicus. This contrasts markedly with the Berlin Philharmonic's strings, utterly lacking in definition, and a woodwind section that is thicker than sticky toffee pudding! For *aficionados* only!

Angela Bell

**Mozart Duos K. 487 & Divertimenti II & III K.439b; Stadler Terzetten** The New World Basset Horn Trio 65' 52"

harmonia mundi HMA 1907017 (rec. 1989)

The delightful music assembled here consists of the five-movement divertimenti nos 2 and 3 of the five works that make up K439b; movements 8, 2, 7, 4 and 12 of the duos K487/496a that have for many years now been recognized as for French horns, not basset horns; and five movements by Mozart's friend Anton Stadler, which show that anything Stadler can do, Mozart can (of course) do better. They are welcome not least for reminding us that Stadler had a nice sense of fun as well as mastery of his instrument. The New World Basset Horn Trio play well, with mild decoration in some of the repeats; but there is less expressive moulding than one could wish for, and the recording is close, with clicking keys at times distracting. Peter Branscombe

**Mozart Sonatas K. 279-282** Patrick Cohen (Anton Walter fortepiano, 1790) 74' 55"

Glossa GCD 920503

The notes to this disc give an interesting account of Anton Walter's life and rightly claim the Walter grand piano used for this recording is in an excellent state of preservation. It post-dates these sonatas by about fifteen years and has a superb resonance which Patrick Cohen exploits to the full. The slow movement of the F minor sonata is a masterpiece, performed here with lovely melodic lines. My only caveat is the opening *Allegro* of the C major sonata, which lacks rhythmic precision – the rubato interferes with the structure of the movement. The quality of the recording is excellent.

Margaret Cranmer

**Vanhal Symphonies** Concerto Köln 73' 19"

Teldec Das Alte Werk 0630-13141-2

Symphonies C11, d1, g1, a2, e1

Three of the five pieces on this disc overlap with a 1994 Orfeo recording by the Philharmonisches Kammerorchester München. A pity, as there is a plentiful supply of new works to explore. But it's clear that the G minor symphony, with its delicious *cantabile* concertino for violin and viola, is becoming something of a favourite. Vanhal's minor key music is angst-ridden in the very best *Sturm und Drang* tradition: his use of four (sometimes five!) horns and relentless motor rhythms in the lower strings adds a definite urgency. The lyrical slow movements and neatly counter-balanced minuets and trios are like reflective oases. Who will be the brave ones to explore Vanhal's church music? The late Vaclav Neumann's *Missa solennis* in E flat (also on Orfeo) is, I'm afraid, little more than a token gesture. BC



**Make a Joyful Noise: Mainstreams and Backwaters of American Psalmody 1770-1840**

The Oregon State University Choir, dir. Ron Jeffers 45' 21" (rec. 1978)

New World Records 80255-2

Music by Belcher, Billings, Bull, Holden, Kimball, King, Kyes, Munson, Read, Strong, Swan, Wetmore

A most welcome reissue. For a start, the booklet is exemplary, with a long and lucid introduction to American psalmody and detailed notes on each of the 17 pieces by one of the leading scholars on the subject, Richard Crawford (though its a pity the bibliography has not been updated). The singing is slightly mild, but it has the characteristic earnest lilt when a crotchet fusing line takes over from minim-pulse homophony and is the best recording of the repertoire we have received for *EMR* so far. Those who find hymns too short-winded can appreciate how skilfully and movingly Billings handles the prose text of *The Dying Christian's* [perhaps we might amend that to *Musician's*] *Last Farewell*: 'God grant that we may meet in the land of harmony where the wicked cease from troubling and where the weary are at rest'. CB

from 701 Seventh Avenue, New York NY 10036-1596 fax +1 212 944 1922

**The piano favourites of Jane Austen** Martin Souter 68' 08" Isis CDO24

Clementi, Eichner, Haydn, Piccinini & Pleyel

**The music & songs of Jane Austen** The Windsor Box and Fir Company 71' 24" Isis CDO25

Boyce, Dibdin, Giordani, Harrington, Kotzwara, Linley, Pleyel, Sterkel, Webbe & anon.

**Music for Love and Marriage** The Windsor Box and Fir Company 67' 35" Isis CDO26  
Abel, Abingdon, J. C. Bach, Dussek, Hook, Mozart, Sancho, Stanley

Jane Austen's Hampshire house contains collections of music, much of which was copied by the authoress. The first two of these discs comprise music from these sources, more shallow than that on the third. *The Music & Songs of Jane Austen* contains obscurities such as a dullish flute sonata by J.F.X. Sterkl, a marginally more interesting piano duet sonata by Tommaso Giordani, and Kotzwara's totally tasteless party piece, *The Battle of Prague* (the manner of his death was considerably more interesting than his music), enlivened only by Derek McCulloch's narration. These are offset by some charmingly innocuous songs by Webbe, Harrington and Dibdin, tastefully sung by Michael Sanderson, a tenor who also plays violin. Pleyel's Flute Sonata in D (op 2/6) is perhaps the most interesting work on the disc, here played by Jenny Thomas with Katherine May (harpsichord). The bass part is played on bass viol: one can only imagine JA's ironic comment on a household where so archaic an instrument was still in use.

The *Piano Favourites* disc, performed by Martin Souter on two Finches instruments, offers more dynamic and arresting playing, if occasionally lacking sensitive shaping. Two early Haydn Sonatas are

complemented by four Pleyel and three Clementi Sonatinas, the latter redolent of examination grade music! A keyboard transcription of a Piccinini Overture and an interesting Sonata in A (op 3/1) by the bassoonist and symphonist Ernst Eichner complete this disc.

By far the most interesting of the three discs is *Music for Love and Marriage*, a collection of music 'in the era of Jane Austen', though how much of this she knew is open to question since nearly all the music was written prior to 1780, when JA was barely out of her nappies. A Trio for flute, violin and continuo by J.C. Bach sometimes only just made it. A Gamba Sonata in A by Abel is sensitively played by Ian Gammie, and is complemented by a Flute Sonata of John Stanley. Also on the disc are some interesting 'tit-bits' by the Earl of Abingdon, a collection of four of the best Stanley Voluntaries played by Martin Souter on the St. Mary's, Rotherhithe organ, and a fine Dussek Harp Sonata (in C minor, not – as on the disc and notes – in E flat major) superbly played by Elinor Nebbett on an Erard instrument, together with two Mozart pieces that I was unable to trace, there being no Köchel numbers.

Ian Graham-Jones

**ROMANTIC**

**Beethoven Symphonies 1 & 4** Beethoven Academie, dir. Jan Caevers 58' 50" harmonia mundi HMA 1901573

It is good to have these energetic, imaginative accounts of the First and Fourth Symphonies. The Beethoven Academie here uses 'orchestral forces based on those employed in the first performance of Beethoven's Third Symphony'; the strings are lithe, with very clear articulation, and the winds are nicely forward, with much good detail. In 1/2 and 4/1 I wished for greater definition from the timpani, but balance is generally excellent. Caevers controls tempos and dynamics expertly, and the textures are finely integrated. The works both come over with the impact that the earliest audiences must have experienced.

Peter Branscombe

**Berlioz Harold en Italie & Tristia** Gérard Caussé vla, Monteverdi Choir, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, dir. John Eliot Gardiner 59' 28" Philips 446 676-2

Despite many predictable and outstanding qualities, the performance of Berlioz's magnificent symphony with viola is not an unqualified success. My principal reservation concerns the work's protagonist, for I find Caussé's tone too often distinctly unattractive and his continuous vibrato in lyrical passages accords ill with a performance that by definition claims historical awareness. Neither is Gardiner's direction entirely convincing, the opening movement never quite conveying the essential Berliozian line, whilst the final Brigands' Orgy lacks the whiplash spontaneity and abandoned verve of Colin Davis's second recording (also

Philips). But the two inner movements are superbly done, the Pilgrims' March an evocative web of delicately-etched sonorities (with Caussé providing his best playing in the extraordinary *sul ponticello* arpeggiations) and the Abruzzi Serenade distinguished by incisive but lightly-sprung rhythms. The playing of the ORR throughout is superlative, as is Gardiner's impressive control of the huge dynamic range the composer asks for but rarely gets. There is, too, the bonus of the choral trilogy *Tristia*, its second (and finest) section, *La mort d'Ophelie*, given a performance of such poignant beauty that it alone is almost worth the asking price of the disc. Excellent sound, but mind your speakers at the climax of Hamlet's Funeral March!

Brian Robins

**Brahms Requiem** Christiane Oelze, Gerald Finley SBar, La Chapelle Royale, Collegium Vocale, Orchestre des Champs Elysées, Philippe Herreweghe 66' 15" harmonia mundi HMC 901608

The speeds all feel fine (though are a little slower than the metronome marks Brahms suppressed), as is the overall shape, both in terms of time and volume. Of the two soloists (Gardiner's Tamina and Papageno), the latter is preferable, the former a bit wobbly. But my main worry is the over-weighting of the orchestral bass, despite the absence of an organ (Herreweghe chooses Brahms's less-favoured alternative of a contrabass.) If you can tolerate that, this is an enjoyable Requiem, emotional but not sentimental, though perhaps a little lacking in the warmth that is undoubtedly to be found in the score. CB

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Musica Sancta Jerusalem Collection** 242' 19" Helicon HL8131 5 discs

These five discs, numbered separately HL 8109-2 to HL 8113-2, contain anthologies from the choirs of five Christian religious communities from Jerusalem (in numerical order): the Armenian Choir of the Patriarchate [no H?] of Jerusalem, the Russian-Catholic Fraternity of St Jude Thaddaeus, the Monastery of the Resurrection in Abu-Gosh, the Monastery St John in the Desert and the Community of the Beatitudes Emmaus-Nicopolis. The last three are in French. I find it difficult to know what to make of them. There is little information except for St. John in the Desert disc: short notes on the choirs and some French and English texts, directed more to religious than to musical listeners and suffering from an emphasis on design rather than legibility. As souvenirs of visits, these would be acceptable, though as frustrating as the unannotated tapes we bought in Bali; and I would have thought that anyone buying a package this size after a trip to Jerusalem would hope for some Jewish and Muslim music as well. I want to know more about the music; what vernacular styles, for instance, lie behind the lilting French liturgy of Brother Ephraim at Emmaus-Nicopolis?

Perhaps those who buy music for meditational purposes are less curious about its origins. Most fascinating is the French-language Byzantine-inspired music from St John in the Desert, with its Mediterranean sound and extensive drones. These are not all first-rate performances: you can get better Bortniansky and pseudo-Arcadelt elsewhere; but these discs do give a feeling of Christian communities needing to find viable liturgies and creating them from a variety of sources. CB

**Old English Nursery Rhymes** Vivien Ellis, Tim Laycock, The Broadside Band, Jeremy Barlow 67' 35" Saydisc CD-SDL 419

Listeners without young children will not be aware of the atrocious quality of most recordings of nursery rhymes. It really is refreshing to hear them sung in tune, with the right harmonies (i. e. ones that fit the character of the tunes) and in appropriate styles. Here everything is right without being self-consciously so: the listener doesn't get the feeling that the performers are trying to do things differently from usual and children are not likely to be put off: ours weren't. I hope it is also available on cassette (and that it is sold by Woolworths, Smiths and The Early Learning Centre, many of whose tapes are sung out of tune with synthetic backing). Our family car trips would have been much more enjoyable if this had been available 15 years ago. Jeremy Barlow should be commissioned to produce a musical supplement to the *Oxford Book of Nursery Rhymes* that prints the tunes with the proper basic chords and adds a commentary on them; marvellous though it is, the Opie's work was one-sided. CB

## REISSUES

Teldec *Baroque Line*: mid-price reissues of recordings, by Nikolaus Harnoncourt unless stated otherwise. \* = to be released during November.

4509-97984-2 Bach *Brandenburg Concertos* 1, 2, 4  
4509-97985-2 Bach *Brandenburg Concertos* 3, 5, 6  
\*0630-13582-2 Bach *English & French Suites* Curtis  
\*0630-13583-2 Bach *Gamba Sonatas*  
\*0630-13573-2 Bach *Magnificat*; Handel *Utrecht Te Deum*  
4509-97986-2 Bach *Toccata & Fugue* Tachezi  
0630-13566-2 Bach *Xmas Oratorio highlights*  
4509-97991-2 Boccherini *Cello concertos* Bylsma  
\*0630-13574-2 Handel *op. 3*  
4509-97988-2 Handel *Famous Overtures & Marches*  
4509-97989-2 Handel *Famous Arias*  
4509-97990-2 Handel *Messiah highlights*  
0630-13569-2 Telemann *Tafelmusik, Overtures* Brüggem  
4509-97983-2 Vivaldi *Seasons*  
0630-13568-2 Vivaldi *op. 8/7-12*  
\*0630-13572-2 Vivaldi *op. 8 complete* (2 CDs)  
4509-97992-2 *Famous Baroque choruses*  
\*0630-12341-2 *On Wings of Song* Barbara Bonney  
\*0630-12342-2 *Barbara Bonney sings Sacred Arias*

Teldec's mid-price Opera collection includes

0630-15799-9 Monteverdi: *Ulisse* Harnoncourt  
0630-15736-9 Purcell *King Arthur* J E Gardiner  
& Harnoncourt's *Così fan tutte* and *Idomeneo*.

We will be commenting on the new batch of deutsche harmonia mundi's *Baroque esprit* discs will be reviewed next month.

## VIDEO

### Gardiner's Flute

Mozart *Die Zauberflöte* Christiane Oelze *Pamina*, Michael Schade *Tamino*, Cyndia Sieden *Queen of the Night*, Gerald Finley *Papageno*, Constanze Backes *Papagena*, Harry Peeters *Sarastro*, Uwe Peper *Monostatos*, Monteverdi Choir, English baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 160' Archiv 072 447-2 (VHS Video)

This is not exactly the video of the CD. The cast is virtually identical (the CD has Nicolas Robertson & Noel Mann as the armed men, but the video replaces the latter with Richard Savage – a reward for organising the travel?) But the CD comes from a live performance at Ludwigsburg while the video is from the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam. This too is a live performance, semistaged in a production by Stephen Medcalf and the conductor. Since they are different performances, we have reviewed them separately; Peter Branscombe reviews the CD on page 16 and I have left most matters of musical evaluation to him.

It might seem like a further stage of his Karajanification for John Eliot Gardiner to take over responsibility for staging as well as conducting. But with virtually all the major opera houses controlled by managements which believe in the pernicious notion that all that needs preserving from the original work is the music and that, since the words are inaudible, incomprehensible or nonsense, the dramatic basis envisaged by librettist and composer can be cast aside, how else can a conductor who believes that music and staging should be of a piece get stylish productions? There is nothing wrong with imaginative productions dealing with preoccupations of the 1990s, but they should be of operas of the 1990s and result from creative dialogue between librettist, composer and director. With older works, no-one now represents the composer to say: 'No, that's NOT what I meant.' *Die Zauberflöte* is a work that is particularly prone to 'interpretation' because producers feel impelled to turn a rather confused libretto into the serious dramatic masterpiece Mozart's music deserves. My own feeling (with which Peter Branscombe, author of the wise *Cambridge Opera Guide* on the work, will disagree) is that it is a hodge-podge, alternately, sometimes simultaneously, child-like and childish, the fairy-story and the attempts at profundity not quite gelling into a whole. Productions that try too hard to explain tend to overweight and distort it.

So it is refreshing to see a production that does not, for instance, relocate the action in 1960s flower-power California with Sarastro as some oriental mystic guru. The viewer can make up his own mind what it means, and is even spared the essay offered to the CD buyer (an inadequate introduction to the opera) emphasising the importance of the lion with which the opera originally began (which means reinstating a version of the first scene which Mozart could never

have performed because of the need to retune the timps) and suggests that study of the tarot (dragged from the fairground into literary ken by T. S. Eliot) will help enrich our meditation on the ancestry of the work.

I think I would have enjoyed the production live. There is no set, but dancers ingeniously make up for the lack of props. The stage (including the orchestra) is used imaginatively, and the action helps the audience rather than confuses it. Missing is the main advantage of TV opera: subtitles. I look forward to operas on video CD formats where one can select the language in which they are shown on the screen. Without that, cutting chunks of the dialogue is probably sensible. The Dutch audience, incidentally, is very responsive to the text. It would have been nice to have a proper staging, but this is perfectly acceptable.

Another benefit of video-CD, incidentally, will be the chance to label individuals for those who are interested. When I first started going to concerts (mainly the Proms), I was always puzzled how other members of the audience knew who was who on stage; now I use orchestra-lists to identify players I know only as voices on the phone. I expect many would like the option to flash on screen at will the name of a player or small-part singer being shown in close-up. We could even identify the affluent-looking couple who arrive just before the overture starts.

Musically, there is no comparison between the video and the CD. I presume that there was no acting at Ludwigsburg. Adding the extra dimension for Amsterdam seems to have made most of the singers lose concentration, so intonation suffers, especially from the higher voices and Sarastro. There is the usual incompatibility between a stylish, period band and all-purpose operatic voices; on the video this is exacerbated. The tempi are refreshingly judicious, though the first *Queen of the Night* aria doesn't flow enough, and *Pamina* pulls back too much in *Ach ich fühl's*; I assume that, given the overall weakness of Sarastro's performance, the unbending *In diesem heilig'n Hallen* was to shorten the agony. It is marvellous to have a *Papageno* who can play his *glockenspiel* – and even add ornaments.

It has often worried me in televised concerts that the change of shot from one set of players to another was so unrelated to the music. This video shows the danger of being too clever: in the Overture, it soon became irritating having changes every two or four bars with the musical phrases. Generally, though, one sees what one wants to see, apart from the usual problem of all TV that most shots have inevitably to be close-ups so the viewer cannot always relate what he is seeing to the acting area as a whole. There is no remedy for that until domestic screens get a lot bigger.

Among reviews held over until next month are 14 discs, mostly recorded by *The City Waits*, from *Sound Alive's* Popular Past Series.

## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

I so enjoyed reading your piece on 'what I did in my hols', especially your account of the Balinese music. Your point about the role of memorisation in aurally transmitted traditions is so important. In Aboriginal music too, the need to reproduce pitch, rhythm and text relationships is absolutely paramount. Our late Professor Cath Ellis (the author of the *New Grove* material), who sadly died last year, revealed the astonishing sense of perfect pitch and time of the Aborigine musicians by her research. I'm not too surprised that you were not able to find any live events with Aboriginal music. Though it is becoming more common to find public performances by Aboriginal dance companies in the cities, it would be almost impossible to find tribal music performed 'in public' precisely because of its ceremonial function. The idea of entertainment isn't a part of this music. Researchers on the subject have to be accepted by a community of tribal people in order to take part, or be present, because there is no performer-audience division in the sense that Polynesian music has now (probably because of the much longer-established access to the tourist market and compatibility of music as entertainment). Tapes made by researchers are often subject to restrictions and are held in collections such as the National Library, Canberra. On the other hand, Circular Quay [Sydney] almost always has an Aboriginal didjeridu player among the entertainments, doing impersonations of kangaroos, cars, anything incongruous.

To return to your other point, I'm sure that European chant and much early polyphony must also have been performed from memory: probably the composers and the scribes (notation specialists) were regarded as the software designers of their day. Umberto Eco in *How to Travel with a Salmon* (I think) has a hilarious piece on the subject, transposed to ancient Egypt.

Rosalind Halton

I well understand the problems of our secular approach when encountering different cultures. Traces of different attitudes survive here: it is only recently that applause and the wearing of DJs at church concerts have become acceptable and there is a pervasive myth, perhaps based on truth, of devout individuals kneeling to pray on arrival for Messiah performances in concert halls. What puzzled me about my experience of the Aborigine site we visited was the selectivity of what they sold to tourists. There has been a fair penetration of Aboriginal painting and dance into the Australian cultural scene, but not music. I suspect that there is a deliberate attempt to hide their culture behind tourist popularisations. Our guide (European but with evident sympathy for the Aboriginal way of life) made it clear that the 'official' explanations of the paintings we saw were nonsense, and his seemed more plausible. One can understand the Aboriginal desire to protect their culture from tourists; on the other hand, traditional structures and beliefs are unlikely to survive the pressures of Western commerce, media, unemployment, alcoholism and

drugs (unless defended by a self-sufficient alternative system like fundamentalist Islam), so the most effective way of preserving them is by some sort of accommodation with tourism. A lot of tourists will just be interested out of idle curiosity, but others will respect a culture more if they understand its arts and music (and will feel insulted if fobbed off with trash and half-truths). So far, Bali seems to have survived becoming the Blackpool Beach of South-East Asia by having enough confidence in its own culture to open it to visitors, accepting various degrees of influence from outside yet still (apparently) retaining its structure of beliefs and, in many respects, its traditional economy. (But perhaps I should not comment on the strength of a three-day visit and a couple of guide-books, and I'm not sure how much our delightful guide was schooled to follow the party line).

Incidentally, I see that Anna Maria Busse Berger has just received a Guggenheim Fellowship to research the role of memory in Notre-Dame polyphony.

Dear Clifford,

Our church choir has been told by numerous conductors that in sacred renaissance polyphony, the meaning of the words *always* comes first. Thus, regardless of what is happening in the music, the stronger syllables within a phrase should be stressed more than the weaker syllables and less important words. If it is particularly difficult to sing an unimportant word or syllable softly, perhaps when it lies high in the voice, then the way the whole phrase is sung should be altered to make it easier to achieve correct accentuation. This strikes me as an entirely logical viewpoint and makes musical sense. However, when I listen to recent and highly acclaimed recordings by leading choirs of music by, for instance, Victoria and Palestrina, it is obvious that many words and syllables that would not be stressed when spoken *are* stressed within certain musical phrases: *Deum de Deo*, *Hosanna in excelsis*, *quoniam*, *sanctus*, *Patris*, *gloria*, *Domine*, etc. This is presumably a conscious decision by the choir director. As I don't recall every having seen this point criticised in *EMR* reviews, I can only assume that the one person who is worried by it is me.

Also, am I alone in feeling vaguely worried when singing from editions transposed to give a key signature of four flats? Isn't a simpler signature more appropriate, or doesn't it work like that. Please enlighten me.

Mary Iden

To take the second paragraph first: yes, it worries me too when reviewing editions of 16th century music and I often mention it, though perhaps my views are so notorious that publishers don't send me editions transposed thus! There are two points to regard: the apparent pitch of the original notation and the actual sounding pitch. In theory, there should be no need to change the former to change the latter. But most singers, even without perfect pitch, are disturbed if the sound they are producing is too far from what the notation makes them expect. But if one confines transposition to intervals of a tone, a fourth or a fifth,



one can get fairly near to the desired pitch. The problem arises when editors transpose by a third (whether major or minor); this produces far less satisfactory key signatures. Sadly, one school of English church music scholars believes that transposition up by a minor third produces the correct pitch. I don't believe that, even if there were a correct pitch and that it was precisely known, we should disrupt the notation so much. In early sources, we see transposition by the intervals I have mentioned; if the music needs to be sung a minor third higher, it should be notated a tone higher, which is near enough for most purposes. Sadly, some conductors seem to think that there is something magical about reading the music through a haze of flats.

Verbal accentuation is more of a problem. First, there is the question of different national pronunciations of Latin. Harold Copeman's *Singing in Latin* deals with that and I'll be reviewing another book on the subject next month. This is a major consideration for French Latin; have you ever sung any Poulenc motets? But there are many examples not explained away thus, where the music seems to have a rhythm of its own with a stress pattern which contradicts the words. In some cases, we are merely confused by modern bar-lines: triple-time settings of Osanna in excelsis can often be rhythmically more subtle than they seem. But there are times when the composer seems definitely to have placed musical rhythm above the natural stress of the words. That is rare in late-renaissance music. With earlier music, the problems are wider and a close relationship between verbal and musical stress may be inappropriate. Listening to a wide range of contemporary, popular and ethnic recordings will show that the late-renaissance balance of words and music is by no means a universal one and it is perfectly possible for the two to coexist without a direct inter-relationship.

Dear Clifford,

I particularly enjoyed reading Michael Thomas's expansion (*EMR* 24 p.18) of his review (*EMR* 21 p.13) as, some years ago, I visited the Andreas Beurmann Schloss and its remarkable collection of keyboard instruments. The Schloss was built in 1700; Handel and Mattheson had played there and possibly Bach too when visiting nearby Lübeck. We entered and were faced with two things: first, a warm welcome (which included being offered a glass of champagne at 9am) and second, a view of harpsichords parked in rows, looking like a cross between a sale-room and an airport long-stay car park. The collection numbers over 100 instruments – pianos, clavichords and organs as well as harpsichords, so space is at a premium.

Dr Beurmann showed us round, choosing an excerpt of music as he passed each keyboard, before letting us loose on his collection. There were 3 harpsichords by the Ruckers family, a Dulcken of 1755, and many representative samples from Spain, Portugal, France England, Germany and Italy as well as a Miklis (1671) from Prague. We were astonished to find four 2-manual Kirckman harpsichords in the same room, so we essayed some concerto movements for pairs of matched instruments. There was also a formidable array of pianos of every significant age and maker. I understand that there is a catalogue in the pipeline.

Jonathan Hellyer Jones

We are flattered by the notes of congratulation which many readers append to their subscription renewals. A couple of examples are: Thank you for the best value £10 subscription known to man! and Congratulations on a publication which keeps me up-to-date more than any others. We thought readers might be amused by a contrary opinion from Denis Stevens (a strange response to our printing an article by him and a favourable review of one of his publications last month). Note that he himself failed to quote the correct issue number: the one to which he refers is 24, not 12.

*EMR* 12, p.7 col. 2 §4 line 6: 'there were several misprints in the introduction'

*ibid.* line 10: 'the p in Hampstead has been inserted by hand and two omitted words are pasted in'

TOO BAD MR BARTLETT...

*EMR* 12, p.3 col. 1 6 up you have un for und  
on p.4 col.2 §2 line 12 you have 'cappricios'

No, I shall NOT be renewing my subscription. I am sick and tired of hearing your editions and your favourite editors praised to the skies. You and they can do no wrong. Others can do no right. I can find better and more worthwhile periodicals: see *The Strad* this month p.1058.

Don't bother to send further copies of *EMR*.

Denis Stevens

We do our best on a very tight budget: we are aware of the problems of proof-reading, a perennial difficulty for a magazine that has a very short gestation period and which lacks the funds for professional readers. Had he read page 14 (penultimate line) Denis Stevens would have noticed an advance apology for possible slips in the last issue (ironically, one that he doesn't quote opens the very next paragraph). I mentioned the misprints in his introduction merely to justify our not reprinting it ourselves; we would have felt obliged to reset it rather than issue it with MS corrections and would have trusted him to give it adequate proof-reading. With regard to restricting praise to our favourite editors (who are they?) I have only once received any substantial criticism of any review, and that was about ten years ago when I was writing for *Early Music News*. I try to be fair, but naturally do have a viewpoint, which is that of the consensus of professional and well-informed amateur performers of early music (I take considerable pains to check with such performers what their expectations are). Since Denis Stevens has cut himself off from that world, he is unlikely to be in a position to evaluate such judgments; I would be only too pleased to print criticism of my musicological misjudgment.

We are aware of the problem of conflict of interest with regard to our own editions. We only mention them, except in adverts, when apposite to matters that arise for other reasons, though we admittedly favour reviews of performances using our material. It would be absurd (and dishonest) not to mention them when reviewing a rival, if only to make clear that my comments come from a careful study of the work in question. Also, King's Music subsidises the magazine quite heavily so it is reasonable to expect some publicity from it.

Apologies to a continuing subscriber, John Stevens, for our previous mentions of 'Prof. Stevens' without distinguishing between him and Denis.