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REVIEW

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- 2 Books & Music
- 9 Boston Early Music Festival
Clifford Bartlett & Brian Clark
- 14 ♪ Rossi *Se così dunque Amor*
- 16 Cremona Early Music Festival
Peter de Laurentiis
- 18 Coffee House *Eric van Tassel*
- 20 Ars subtilior *Elin Harries*
- 21 CD Reviews
- 28 Letters

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You can't win! Some readers think it vulgar when I signpost ironic or humorous remarks with an exclamation mark, while without that hint others read them straight and get offended. Since we have an international readership, I suspect that it may help to give a clue in the punctuation that the meaning is not quite what it seems, so we may be a little more generous with our !!!s. (I don't see the point in cheating by using ... instead.) There is a difference between UK and US use of language and sense of humour (evidenced by the difficulty of exchanging TV comedy shows). English humour more often depends on understatement, and that may perhaps be related to some of the differences in performance style that are mentioned in reviews this month.

As an English listener, I found the Capriccio Stravagante concert at Boston completely over-the-top (see p. 10). While some others agreed (there was much discussion on the net), the concert was enthusiastically received. I might claim that the vulgar over-presentation of emotion naturally appealed to the less-sophisticated listeners. But I would be insulting to fellow music-lovers: who am I to be superior? As a reviewer, of course, I must state my opinion; no doubt other reviewers have disagreed. Similarly, while full of admiration for some tracks of the Concerto Italiano's recording of Monteverdi Book V, I agree with our reviewer (see p. 22) that the more extreme distortions of the notation are excessive.

Partly, this is merely personal taste. But is there a more fundamental difference between the stiff-upper-lip and understated Anglo-Saxon approach to life and the more open Mediterranean attitude? I prefer music to be in time, so that any slight rhythmic deviation is powerfully effective. I am not impressed by performances that ignore the underlying rhythm instead of counterpointing against it and which sacrifice structure and shape for the maximum expression of each individual phrase. The level of rhythmic and emotional flexibility must, of course, vary according to the time and place of the music and the *bon goût* of the performer. But I am tired of attacks on unexpressive performers who are in fact being more subtle than their attackers.

CB

Books and Music

Clifford Bartlett

FRIENDS OF STEELE

Liber Amicorum John Steele: A Musicological Tribute edited by Warren Drake (Festschrift Series No. 16) Pendragon Press, 1997xi + 484pp, \$54.00 ISBN 0 945193 80 7 [Available in UK from Rosemary Dooley]

The frontispiece photo is almost a cartoon of the archetypal musicologist: a little man with a very big score, in this case of Peter Philips's *Cantiones sacrae*, which John Steele published himself as well as edited. He is a distinguished scholar who has worked at the University of Otago in Dunedin since 1962. Festschrift's are often variable in quality, and usually have essays on an indigestible range of disparate subjects. Here, I found virtually everything of interest, and this review could easily degenerate into a list. There is one page that I am tempted to photocopy as large as possible and stick on my wall: a table of modal/tonal types and transpositions, with names, clefs, *ambitus* and *repercussio*, with Zarlino's indication of pitches for starting and for cadences. This comes from an article by Peter Platt on Dering's tonality which includes a substantial summary, as lucid as the topic permits, of the post-Meier/Powers understanding of how late-renaissance modal tonality works. I'm sure that will rapidly appear on students' reading lists. I also recommend Patrick Little's justification of the older view of a single mind behind the Fleury Playbook, Warren Drake's study of Isaac's 'Monodia in Laurentium Medicem' (*Quis dabit capiti meo*), Richard Rastall's analysis of Byrd's Fantasy a6 in g No. 1 (the one with Greensleeves and the Galliard), which he defends admirably from the curious implication that it is somehow inferior to the 1611 Fantasy in the same key, Howard Mayer Brown's posthumous essay on Lasso's early madrigals a4, and Peter Walls' undermining of Geminiani's originality in placing the viola among the solo instruments of his concertos. Richard Charteris contributes a frustrating account (because only one part survives) of an unknown MS at Harvard of Lutheran church music of c. 1610.

FORESTIER

Mathurini Forestier (fl. c. 1504-1541) *Opera omnia* Ediderunt Nors S. Josephson et Thomas G. MacCracken (*Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae*, 104). American Institute of Musicology/Hänssler (68.504), 1996. xxxiii + 153pp.

I mentioned this briefly in a CD review last month, since by far the best-known work by Forestier is what has hitherto been known as Josquin's *Veni Sancte Spiritus*. Indeed, it was in circulation under his name in the mid-16th century, though the oldest MS ascribes it to Forestier. Not that one is much the wiser, since virtually nothing is known about him. One other motet survives incomplete (the editors have supplied the missing top part to *Alma chorus Domini*) and there are three masses in a post-Josquin style. The four secular works included here may be by different composers. *La hault d' Alemaigne*, a textless trio from Petrucci's *Canti C* attributed to Mathurin, was edited by Bernard Thomas in LPM AN3; the CMM editors do not mention his suggestion that the tenor is based on a basse danse. Three chansons come suspiciously later, from 1538 and 1541, so may be by another composer. The masses take up the bulk of the volume. All are based on Josquin: *Intemerata virgo* a4, *Baises moy* a5 and *L'homme armé* a5 with a canon *super voces musicales*. This last (also ascribed to Mouton, under whose name Taruskin published some movements in the *Ogni Sorte L'homme armé* anthology) has considerable notational complexities. It may be a touch old-fashioned to halve note values. Modernisation of Latin orthography should have been accompanied by some comment on whether there were any distinctive spellings in the sources, now that singers are adopting pronunciations of the appropriate time and place. Otherwise, the editors have done their work well. Whether any performers take up Forestier remains to be seen; interesting though the music is, and good enough for one piece to stand among the works of Josquin, he is hardly a major figure.

GABRIELI 1597

G. Gabrieli *Sacrae Symphoniae 1597* The Beauchamp Press, (Churcham, Gloucester GL2 8AA) 1996.

At the Churcham Schütz week last summer I exerted a certain amount of pressure to reinforce Alan Lumsden's idea of devoting the equivalent week this year to commemorating the 400th anniversary of Gabrieli's massive publication of motets and canzonas. I chickened out of the proposal for us to share publication on discovering that London Pro Musica was intending to publish the instrumental works, having other projects on

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hand (three operas and a 53-part Mass, for a start, let alone two large tasks for Oxford UP). Meanwhile, Alan went ahead, not just with the instrumental pieces, but with all the motets as well. The former will be ready for his course in July, and I will write about them later, perhaps in conjunction with the LPM edition; Bernard Thomas tells me that the individual works are now available from LPM, but not the complete volumes. Meanwhile, we have from Beauchamp separate editions of 45 motets ranging from 6 to 14 parts (the two largest pieces are still to come). They are incredibly cheap, ranging for £0.80 to £3.40. All have a distinctive yellow cover with a standard preface, to which is appended the text and translation, which Richard Charteris kindly allowed to be taken from his catalogue. My eye fell on one that was not quite accurate enough. *Exaudi Domine iustitiam meam*, for instance, is not truly represented by 'Hear the right, O Lord' and the subsequent English punctuation doesn't match the Latin. But that is an exception. Note values are halved in duple, quartered in triple time, which meets the expectations of the likely market. I presume that Alan Lumsden did the basic editorial work, which was then checked by Michael Procter. What I have checked looks fine. I was amazed how few of the motets here I knew. They are all on the shelf in Denis Arnold's edition; but one is unlikely to sing from that, while these tempt performance. No doubt Alan will be working through them at the many courses he takes, and I can't wait to sample them in a few weeks time, though fear that sleep may be short if we try to sing all of them.

BYRD 1607

The Byrd Edition... Volume 7^a Gradualia II (1607) Christmas to Easter edited by Philip Brett. Stainer & Bell, 1997. xxxv + 156pp, £60.00 ISMN M 2202 0298 8

There is surely no need now to enumerate the virtues of the Byrd edition in its present phase. There is fortunately no room for homosexual politics in editing Byrd, so Philip Brett (who has been busy undermining Britten by undoing the composer's attempts to universalise the homoerotic elements in his operas) can here concentrate on editing in the most helpful way possible. This involves a minimum of editorial presence in the notation, presenting a text that is by present standards ideal: regular 4-minim bar-lengths with original note values but modern clefs. There are few problems in evaluating the sources, since the only variants are minor differences between surviving copies. These are footnoted, avoiding an indigestible critical commentary. The original orthography and underlay was exceptionally careful and is taken seriously, avoiding the usual standardisation to the *Liber usualis*. The main problem is sorting out Byrd's liturgical intentions. This is done thoroughly and presented clearly, to the extent of reprinting four pieces from *Gradualia I* to complete the Votive Mass of the Blessed Sacrament, which Byrd circumspectly failed to signpost in the original edition. Apart from that, the volume includes the propers a4 for Christmas Day and Epiphany and a5 for Easter. The introduction deals with liturgical and per-

formance considerations at length. An ideal edition, if you can afford it. But I doubt if singers would buy it even at a third of the price: no wonder music is expensive!

MORE SICILIAN VESPERS

Vincenzo Gallo *Salmi del Re David che ordinariamente canta Santa Chiesa ne i Vesperì. Libro primo a otto voci con il suo partimento per commodità degli organisti (1608)* a cura di Maria Antonella Balsano e Giuseppe Collisani (*Musiche Rinascimentali Siciliane*, XVII). Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1996. xix + 10 facs + 100pp, L68,000. ISBN 88 222 4462 1

This is a much smaller collection than that of Rubino, which formed the previous volume in this series (see *EMR* 28 p. 3). It is scored just for double choir and organ, and only has one setting of each psalm. The original index sets out the rationale of the volume in a way that the modern one ignores: first come the five Vesper psalms and Magnificat for Sundays and male saints' days, followed by three others required for feasts of the Virgin, a *Domine ad adiuuandum* and a four-voice polyphonic version to replace the chant incipit of *Dixit*. *New Grove* exaggerates in describing the music as being 'in the style of Giovanni Gabrieli': it lacks his harmonic and emotional intensity and also is consistently scored for two C1C3C4F4 choirs with no obvious requirement of instrumental participation except for a *segunte* organ. The musical interest is primarily rhythmic and chordal. The chant incipits are given in the source; the edition does not interpret these, so the singer needs to decide whether the ligatures have rhythmic significance. As with the Byrd edition, the transcription preserves original note-values, but it also leaves the original indication of accidentals unchanged, which might confuse singers. The top part of *Laudate pueri*, for instance has #CEDCB; the second C is natural. I think our policy of adding cautionary accidentals in such places is more helpful. The earliest Vespers set most of us know is Monteverdi's of 1610. It is interesting to see a more conventional publication (not one that Monteverdi is likely to have known) from the other end of Italy. It lacks the intense musical and coloristic imagination of Monteverdi's vocal writing. But Gallo's music makes far more sense performed chorally and looks well worth trying.

VENETIAN SCHÜTZ

Heinrich Schütz *Symphoniae Sacrae I Opus 6...Twenty sacred concerti with Latin texts for three to six parts (voices and obbligated instruments) and basso continuo* edited by Siegfried Schmalzriedt. (*Stuttgarter Schütz-Ausgabe* 7) Carus (CV20.907), 1996. xxxix + 174pp, DM264.00

I give the English editorial title in full, since it is a succinct description of what Schütz's first set of *Symphoniae Sacrae* contains, smaller-scale works than the second and third set, with no optional capellas. This is the third complete edition. Vol. V of Spitta's *Sämtliche Werke* has served scholars well for a century, more useful than the irritating 'practical'

edition which Bärenreiter produced with no respect for instrumental tessituras and with indications of transposition buried in the introductions.

This new volume, a continuation of the edition began by Hänssler, is all one could wish for, provided that the separate editions with parts of each item follow quickly. Carus also offer to produce transposed parts if required. The price is a bit high (between £90 and £100), but you do get a lot of music for your money, together with a long introduction (in German and English, including texts and translations), and a short critical commentary – the original edition seems to be very accurate. There is a table showing 17th-century and modern liturgical use, but unless the reader knows the allegiance of Veit Dietrich and Lucas Lossius, there is no way of telling whether the 17th-century column is giving Roman or Lutheran information. In fact, since the work was published in Venice during the composer's second visit there, it might have been worth checking the San Marco liturgy or the works of other North-Italian composers of small-scale concertos. It would seem that the impetus for the collection was primarily musical and that it may have been intended for use as sacred chamber music rather than as part of the liturgy. As with the Gabrieli described above, it is not helpful to print English translations that do not correspond with the Latin, and the AV or BCP would have been a better source than the RSV. 'Know that the Lord is God! It is he that made us, and we are his' may perhaps be a better translation of the Hebrew than 'Be you sure [BCP or Know ye AV] that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves', but the latter represents the Latin more accurately.

I looked in detail at *In te Domine speravi*, since I had scribbled a few comments when playing from my Bärenreiter score (which is transposed up a fourth to give a modern alto rather than high tenor voice part with a violin part way above the range used at the time and a bassoon/trombone part that sounds ludicrous). This drew my attention to the question of major and minor chords in the realisation. In bar 129 there is a bass # on the second note; the editor prints a minor chord. The parallel passage at bar 9 has no figure. Rather than using this as an excuse to suppress it, I would take it as a cue to add it at bar 9 (one doesn't expect figuring to be pedantically complete, so it is generally better to take information from parallel passages than assume a misprint or an intended inconsistency). One then wonders whether this has any implication on the opening: should the first two chords in bar 2 also be major? This is at the beginning of a phrase. I would also question the minor chords at the ends of sections. Is Schütz's figuring really reliable enough to imply that unfigured final chords on A and D are minor? The edition is inconsistent, with minor at 36 and major at 120. I would probably play major at both, with major then minor on the two chords at 128. It is, incidentally, quite difficult to read the sharp, natural and flat signs, which are smaller than the figures. Is it necessary to use naturals as figures? It is much easier to think of sharps indicating major chords and flats minor, even if normal modern signs are used with the notes. (I was embarrassed, however, to find myself playing from my

Monteverdi *Vespers* edition a few days after writing that and see that I had used naturals there; I must have given them up soon after.) This criticism does not in any way undermine the value of the edition, merely a warning not to take the realisation on trust. Ideally, it would have been nice to have included a realisation only in the separate editions of each piece, but the reformatting that would involve would have made either this volume or the offprints more expensive.

In content *Symphoniae Sacrae I* can be seen as a successor or rival to Schein's *Opella nova* (1618 & 1626). Both comprise concertos for a mixture of solo voices and instruments, though Schütz's music reflects more recent Italian styles. A few pieces are quite well known, especially those which set an instrumental challenge, like *Attendite, popule meus* for bass and four trombones and *Buccinate* for TTb, cornett, trumpet or cornett and bassoon. The range of instruments used is wide (recorders, flutes, violins, cornetts, curtals and trombones) and the voice parts are not virtuosic, so I hope that this publication (which is a great pleasure to handle and contemplate) will lead to more performances of this Italianate collection, more a successor to his op. 1 (the Italian madrigals) than Schütz's intervening works.

BACH COMPANION

The Cambridge Companion to Bach edited by John Butt. Cambridge UP, 1997. xv + 326pp, £40.00. ISBN 0 521 45350 X
Paperback: £14.95 ISBN 0 521 58780 8

I'm not quite sure if this is really a companion, in the sense of a book that I will want to have on hand or refer to frequently. It won't be placed on a shelf near my desk along with BWV, its ongoing successor the *Bach Compendium*, or the useful Mozart and Beethoven Compendia from Thames and Hudson. Its value is rather to give those who have read a book or two about Bach and know the music an idea of the preoccupations of current Bach scholarship. There are three sections, on the historical context, the music, and its influence and reception. The first is perhaps the most interesting. I found Ulrich Siegele's chapter on the political background to Bach's position at Leipzig fascinating. Robin Leaver's contribution on the Lutheran background covers more familiar territory but is a succinct account of an important subject. A quotation from Luther on p. 41, incidentally, emphasises the importance he attributed to correct *musica ficta*, likening its addition to the transformation of the Law by the Gospel. The editor's own contributions speculate on Bach's philosophy of composition and how his attitudes relate (not by any direct influence) to the ideas of Spinoza. The chapters on the music suffer from so little space for so many works, though each writer finds something important to say. It amazes me that Bach's early works need any special pleading; I know I am not the only person who is particularly drawn by the early cantatas, and I am not too happy with a chapter entitled *The mature vocal works* because of its implication that e.g. the *Actus Tragicus* might be considered immature. George Stauffer, who deals with performance practice, stresses how recent is the

approach which *EMR* takes for granted. He seems not to understand that Rifkin disputes that Bach wanted a choir of 12 or 16 for concerted works. He draws only one of the possible conclusions from the rhythmic variation of the *Domine Deus* of the Mass in B Minor: perhaps the Dresden version is more explicit because Bach did not know how the players there would understand the notation, which needed no interpretation in Leipzig under his own direction. Our Bach reviewer, Stephen Daw, writes on Bach as teacher and model. A book well worth reading (and not just by academics), though more suited as an occasional rather than a regular companion.

CONSENTING HANDEL

Georg Friedrich Händel *O praise the Lord with one consent*, HWV 254: anthem per Soli (STTB), Coro (SATB) ed Orchestra (oboe, 2 Violini e Basso continuo) edited by Christine Martin. Carus (40. 911/01), 1996. ix + 76pp, DM 62.00

The titlepage sensibly avoids giving any other than the HWV number; it is generally now called Chandos Anthem 9, but most English choirs sing it from Novello vocal scores with *Sixth Chandos Anthem* on the cover. Performances of this and other Chandos anthems have been hindered by the scant availability of decent editions. Bärenreiter has scores in the Halle Händel-Ausgabe but the only buyable parts for most of them are the not-very-legible cut-ups I produced some years ago from Chrysander for the recording by The Sixteen. So a proper new edition, with score, vocal score, chorus score and parts is most welcome. The score has a small-print German translation added below the text, not so prominent as to distract singers of the English. The titlepage description of the forces required begs a question, since Handel's chorus clefs are C1 C4 C4 F4 (as a facsimile shows): it makes obvious economic sense to set it out for SATB, but the altos need a low E flat. (Unlike the Schütz edition reviewed above, vocal ranges are not given.) I once mistakenly deduced from the Chrysander score that the allocation to solo of the first four soprano notes and the absence of the word when the first tenor sings the same phrase three bars later showed that Handel had more than one voice on the top part but only one on the second. The new edition banishes such speculation by removing the solo/tutti marks altogether: they are not in the autograph. The editor might have added a footnote suggesting that the oboe might be tacet in the *piano* sections of 2, though Handel does not make it explicit as he does in 3, and she doesn't add editorial tacets for the bassoon in 2 as she does for 3. A couple of niggles about the textual commentary: when there is only one violin part, there is no need to specify I or II, and the use of sans-serif type with lower-case l and capital I identical makes VI I (VI l) look confusing.

The opening paragraph of the introduction is misleading. There were no Anglican services in the early 16th century and it distorts Le Huray's *New Grove* article (quoted as source) to say that anthems may have been sung at communion services; presumably the place specified at Matins and Evensong in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer

had been customary for most of the previous century. The mention of 'orchestra' with its implication of several instruments to a part is also regrettable; apart from ceremonial occasions like Coronations, the tradition in the late 17th century was one-to-a-part, which may well have been normal in the Duke of Chandos's chapel, even if he did have more players on his pay-roll.

Despite quibbles with the ancillary matter, I have nothing but praise for the edition, and hope to divert those buying our improved-Chrysander version towards it.

MOZART HAYDN BEETHOVEN

John Irving *Mozart's Piano Sonatas: Contexts, Sources, Style* Cambridge UP, 1997 xxii + 215pp, £35.00. ISN 0 521 49631 4

Bernard Harrison *Haydn's Keyboard Music: Studies in Performance Practice* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. xxxv + 418pp, £48.00 ISBN 0 19 816325 8

Carl Czerny *On the performance of all Beethoven's works for the piano* edited and with a commentary by Paul Badura-Skoda. Universal Edition (UE 13340E), 1970. 109pp + 12pp inserted commentary, £27.00 ISMN M-008-00100-0

During my teens, my favourite recreation was playing Mozart's piano sonatas. Since I played rather than practised, I never became good enough to get very far into the 19th century, and was anyway much less attracted by the repertoire anyway. But I did not have a similar affection for Haydn (not, at least, for his keyboard works). So it has seemed odd to me that there have been several books on Haydn's piano sonatas since I started reviewing but this is the first on Mozart's that I can remember since the Badura-Skoda *Mozart-Interpretation* (1957, English edition 1962).

Irving starts well, with a discussion on the formal and stylistic context. No particular surprises in the survey of influences, though Haydn is shown to have been less significant than previously thought. The sources are described and significant points drawn to the reader's attention. This will be useful for those concerned with details of what they play but who are put off by critical commentaries, and these chapters would be an excellent introduction to a comprehensive book on the Sonatas. But once we get on to discussion of the music, the scope narrows and the rest of the book is devoted to an explication of sonata structure and composition in accordance with the theory of rhetoric. This is done with some degree of caution. But I am not convinced. It seems curious to me that writers on Mozart of earlier generations, who would have been brought up on the classical texts upon which rhetorical theory is based, seemed unaware that this knowledge had any relevance to Mozart. At the time when I spent so long playing the sonatas I was reading Demosthenes, Cicero and even Quintilian, but it never occurred to me to make any connection. Is it because we have lost the feel for Classical culture that scholars can take seriously the attempt by early musical theorists to find a practical application in what they

learnt from their rhetorical education? Does rhetorical theory explain music of the period any more satisfactorily than the concept of the imitation of nature, or is it merely another example of 18th-century writers on music trying to make music fit the intellectual ideas of their time? There are, indeed, ways in which an understanding of rhetoric can suggest how a Mozartian movement may have been heard, perhaps even thought out. But it is only one approach, and the book suffers from setting out to cover the sonatas in depth then getting stuck on one mode of understanding. There is a problem, too, that his insights on any individual sonata are scattered through the book, with no focussing on each work as an entity. This lack of awareness of the whole is exemplified by the form of the book itself, which starts as if it is going to be a compendium to the sonatas and finishes down a side-track.

One small sign of a lack of understanding of the rhetorical mentality is the way the list of authors Leopold Mozart claims to have consulted is taken so seriously; the pretentious use of 'authors' (*auctoritates*) was a subject for parody as far back as Chaucer and mentioning an author need not imply that the writer had read him.

Irving avoids discussion of performance practice, but Harrison's book is specifically on that topic. My confidence is a little undermined in that he concentrates so specifically on Haydn. If a composer uses a set of abbreviations to indicate embellishment, it is necessary for his audience to understand them. Haydn was, at least for the latter part of his life, writing piano music primarily for international publication. Did those who bought his music think when playing it: 'this is Haydn, we must play our ornaments differently from the way we play them in all our other music'? What is missing is a thorough discussion of the practice of Haydn's contemporaries.

That apart, this is an extremely valuable study, the main problem being that it is so thorough that I fear that many who should read it will give up before the end. The thoroughness, however, means that the author can avoid simplistic solutions, and he is adept at assembling sensible conclusions from the theorists and Haydn's varying practice. The importance of C. P. E. Bach, underplayed elsewhere, is stressed for a transformation in Haydn's notation and style in the mid-1760s, but the recent attempt to link him with the fortepiano at such an early date is resisted. Apart from detailed discussion of individual ornamentation, there are chapters on instruments and keyboard idiom, articulation, rhythmic interpretation and tempo, and repeat conventions and embellishment. Make sure your copy has the bibliography and index: mine ended abruptly at page 394, but the publisher claims it was a one-off.

I was puzzled by the announcement from UE of the Czerny as a new work since I thought I had seen it long ago. It comes with a © date of 1970 though it must be a reissue, since the cover has an ISMN (though an ISBN would be more appropriate). It is an important book, in that Czerny studied with Beethoven and had intermittent dealings with him for over a quarter-century. But it is frustrating, partly because the comments tend to be too general to be very helpful, but also because piano styles

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were changing rapidly and one cannot have absolute assurance that Czerny had the historical awareness to imagine in the 1830s how differently he played as a boy at the beginning of the century. The bulk of the volume is a reproduction of Chapters 2 and 3 from Czerny's *The Art of Playing the Ancient and Modern Piano Forte Works*, vol. 4 of his *Theoretical and Practical Piano-Forte School* as published by Cocks in London around 1840 in a translation by J. A. Hamilton. This is prefaced by Czerny's biographical notes on Beethoven and is accompanied by a commentary by the editor which quotes the metronome marks from Czerny's edition of the Sonatas. The whole of Beethoven's music with piano is covered, including chamber music and concertos. This is certainly a work that needs to be continually available, and anyone playing Beethoven on the piano should consult it, if critically. Note that Czerny envisages the player using his own cadenzas.

MUSICAL DELIGHTS

One of the longest series listed in Hill and Stephens is *Diletto Musicale*, Doblinger's early-music collection. The latest batch is orchestral, beginning with a *Sinfonia concertata* by Caldara (DM 1175; score £16.50, parts £19.25, from A. A. Kalmus). Nothing is known about the origin of the work, but it is presumably quite early. It is scored for two solo violins and five-part strings and looks effective but not too difficult: useful fodder for the increasing number of baroque-orchestra summer schools. The editor, Brian Pritchard, has had to correct a poorly-copied set of parts (seven scribes for

eight parts). The original has identical bass parts marked *Violoncello* and *Organo*; are we sure that a double-bass is needed as well? Perhaps that depends on where the work might have been played. There are various editorial dynamics, perhaps over-prescriptive; I'm not convinced by the echoes in the last movement.

The first half of Locatelli's op. 4, the *Introduzioni teatrali*, has been available in score since 1961 as vol. 4 of *Monumenta Musica Neerlandica* (we have copies available for £20.00). We also have a facsimile of the parts of the complete work (£40.00). Pier Angelo Pelucchi has edited two of the second half, op. 4/8 in F *Concerto à imitazione de Corni da Caccia* (DM 1161; score £14.85, set of parts £19.25) and op. 4/10 in Eb *Concerto da Camera* (DM 1162; score £16.50, parts £19.25). The consecutive publisher's numbers would seem to imply that there is no plan to issue all six; we will have to await the Collected Works from Schott. No. 8 is almost entirely an orchestral concerto, apart from one movement in which a solo violin imitates a pair of horns playing in thirds. The violin should probably also elaborate the preceding *Largo*, but the editor instead writes a stream of semiquavers for the keyboard, perhaps on the false assumption that the keyboard player must be in charge of the ensemble. No. 10 has solo and ripieno for all four parts (there are *solo* and *tutti* marks in the original solo parts, not reproduced in the edition, which might imply that the ripieno instruments merely reinforce it, but in fact their parts differ). The editor lists surviving MS sources but does not make clear whether they are merely derivative from the print. The editorial performance suggestions in no.10 are somewhat more elaborate than one now expects; the vln 1 soloist surely doesn't need to be told how to bow ornamental figuration (e.g. mov. 1 bars 5 & 18) and the slurring of paired repeated quavers in the following movement (e.g. bar 11) isn't extrapolated from any parallel passage. Pelucchi used a rather odd wording to state that, as with many other sets of concertos, the cello solo part is figured as well as the ripieno bass. He suggests 'a second instrument (spinnet, small harpsichord or lute) in the tutti sections to support the concertino': I don't understand the logic. Surely the concertino continuo instrument should play throughout? Now that Locatelli's music is getting better known from recordings, it is good that these concertos are available to non-specialists.

We all know the *Farewell* symphony; how many of us know the *Arrival*? This was written by Johann Matthias Sperger, the only surviving example of what seem to have been a spate of sequels (by Dittersdorf, Pleyel and even, perhaps, Haydn himself). In reverse of Haydn, it begins with two solo violins, with the trumpets and timps arriving in time for the second movement. The edition (DM1174; score £16.50, parts £35.75) reproduces the composer's preface and cue-sheet for someone to direct the entry of the players. This includes a *clavicembalo* which is not shown in the edition. It would be difficult to match Haydn's original (a work which has befitted – or suffered – from much recent analytical attention); for a start, the key of F major is a rather unimaginative response to Haydn's F# minor and major. But the music is certainly good enough for the

occasional performance. A remark in Sperger's obituary (1812) is apposite: 'He also wrote a number of symphonies, all of which are in a pleasing style and without any great difficulties in performance; this makes them quite suitable for amateur concerts.'

MUSICI SEGRETI

We had a visit recently from Björn Svensson, who is associated with Ivan Shumilov in a variety of publications which appear under a group of titles, all of which appear on the covers of their publications: *Musici Segreti*, International Music Association and Friends of Roman [address c/o Shumilov, Skyttev.1, S-13437, Gustavsberg, Sweden, tel +46 8 656 4354, fax 656 4382, e-mail rusintt@algonet.se]. Their 20-page 1997 catalogue lists a vast number of facsimiles (the advert on the back of some of the music mentions 777 titles). Of the batch I have received, there are two sets of music for unaccompanied violin by Roman, identified on the cover only by a faint reproduction of what I guess was on the outer leaf of the MS. One has a titlepage, the other begins on the inside cover. References to Bengtsson's catalogue have been added; it is not clear whether the faint numbering in roman is also modern. I don't have the modern edition to hand, but there seem to be more than the six published in *Monumenta Musicae Svecicae* so it would be nice to know how many are authentic and how many come from Mr Roman's vast spuriostity shop (I have to hand only Bengtsson's catalogue of that, but not of the authentic works, while most violinists will have neither).

Three other volumes have *Musikalisk Almanacka* 1997 on the cover, beneath *Musikaliska Rariteter från gamla Stockholm*, as well as the other three general titles. One has an 18th-century title page for *Six Sonatas for A German Flute, Violin, & Bass Composed by Signor Haas[e]*, published by Tyther in London in 1745 (according to BUCEM) and includes a modern MS score of Sonatas I & II (with a blank stave to sketch a realisation) in a slightly wishy-washy photocopy that misses some note stems (was the original in blue pen?) plus photocopies of the 1745 parts. Here there is editorial information, but the page on the inside front cover is taken from someone else's edition which doesn't mention an edition by Tyther and with four pages of the RISM entries for Hasse included at the end – useful but presumably done without permission. The second item is also by Hasse, a concerto in F for *flauto d'amore*. Again there is a modern score in Ivan Shumilov's hand with facsimile parts, this time from a commercial MS set sold by J. J. Hummel in Amsterdam, though the *Cimbalo* is copied by Shumilov with the solo line included as well. The last of the three *Almanacka* pieces is a suite transcribed from string quartet for recorder quartet (SS/ATB) from Stephani's (no initials) *Sonate da Camera*, whose title-page curiously calls them *a Tre: Due Violini Alto e Basso*. Again, we have the sensible practice of a modern MS score with facsimile parts, which reveal that the suite has been assembled from various parts of the original edition. The tenor recorder part is in the alto clef.

It seems as if items are run off individually as requested. Altogether the output gives the impression of being put together by somewhat unsystematic enthusiasts. There is clearly a vast amount of interesting material available at very cheap price (there is a standard charge of SKR5 per page), but its organisation needs a greater degree of rigour for prospective customers to have confidence in what they are ordering. Perhaps I'll feel more confident after further dealings with them.

They have instigated *The International Day of the Forgotten Music's Revival* to take place annually on 12th July. This is an idea that might be worth considering: it would, for instance, be a good way of encouraging some interest in schools and radio stations. But it would need promoting by a stronger pressure group and would, for a start, need a more idiomatic title. Any ideas?

ROM CATALOGUES

We received adverts from Bowker/Saur of two catalogues on CD-ROM. I have not seen either in operation, so cannot offer any evaluative comment. But readers with access to good libraries should exert any pressure they can to make sure that these are available. The RISM thematic catalogue of music MSS after 1600 contains some 200,000 works in 434 libraries. Previously available on microfiche, it now has more entries and is far more convenient in that it can be searched in so many ways, including by musical incipit. It will thus facilitate enormously the tracing of concordances and attributions. It is offered at an annual subscription of £920. CPM ^{PLUS}: *the Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library* appears in a new edition with a £400 reduction on a full price of £1495 if ordered by the end of July. Here again the usefulness of being able to search under a variety of elements gives an enormous advantage over hard-copy.

It does, however, strike me as rather unimaginative to sell documents which all musicologists would love to have at hand at a price which only large libraries will be able to afford. The technical revolution of miniaturising and increasing the search potential of library catalogues has progressed marvellously, but still with the attitude that the information must be consulted in libraries or on-line. Both these catalogues need to be available on the computers of individuals working at home, especially those unattached to University networks; pricing them at this level restricts their use and is counter to the whole ethos of computer use. The British Library catalogues are, I gather, now accessible on the web; I personally would rather have a disc I could slip into my computer, and if the information can be circulated on the net, it is hardly expensive to encode it on disc. Perhaps a double pricing system is needed, with libraries paying a substantial sum but individuals charged something like £50.00 per disc. Most of that £50.00 would be sheer profit for the publisher. I happen to live only 15 miles from a good library; pity our new customer from Alice Springs, whose nearest research library is a thousand times further away. (Details available from Bowker-Saur, Maypole House, Maypole Rd, East Grinstead, W. Sussex RH19 1HU, e-mail custserv@bowker-saur.com.uk)

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BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Clifford Bartlett & Brian Clark

As with our review of the 1995 BEMF, this covers separately the main and the concurrent events. Brian Clark assiduously attended the latter (succeeding Rosemary Druce, who found proof-reading nostalgic), showing a nose for the worth-while; I suspect that not all concerts reached the level of those he describes. I attended more of the main events than Brian, but we heard some together and in such cases my comments benefit from discussion with him. The general comments are also mine. CB

This was my fourth Boston Festival, the third in which I have had some involvement as editor and publisher of the its main dramatic work. So I may perhaps not be the most impartial of reviewers (and the same applies to Brian, who typeset both the 1993 and the 1997 *Orfeos*). However, my enthusiasm for the performance of Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo* reflects that of virtually all those who attended – and it was amazing how many people who saw it early in the week booked again for a second performance. I overheard many comments; all were pitched between approval and enthusiasm. A notable exception was, of course, the critic of the Boston Globe; but there would surely be something fundamentally wrong with any event that met his whole-hearted approbation.

To undertake such an obscure work was a bold act of faith. While not entirely unknown – it had been recorded by Les Arts Florissants and performed at Bloomington – it was a risky venture, but one well worth taking. Boston has one of the largest early music festivals, and is a wealthy town in a country where private patronage of the arts is expected. It ought to be able to take risks. In fact, of course, nothing like enough patronage reaches the Festival: I hope that with this success behind them the Board can attract the interest of the wealthy so that it can plan more ambitiously for future festivals.

A positive benefit of the need to economise was the collaboration with Drottningholm. The production is being exchanged with the 18th-century Swedish opera house, though the singers and string-players will be different there. (I will report on their comparative merits next month.) The visible benefit at Boston was the marvellous costumes. Robin Linklater was unable to match the sets by the famous designer Giacomo Torelli which graced the original 1647 production – an excuse for the revival was the 350th anniversary – but the simplicity of his economy version worked effectively enough. There was a large cast, far too extensive to commend individually, led by Cyndia Sieden and Ellen Hargis as Euridice and Orfeo. One of the high-points of the work was their duet near the end of Act I, which we include as our musical offering this month (see p. 14).

Having worked on the edition, I had some concern that the opera might not be strong enough for the weight put upon it as the Festival's major work. I need not have worried. The recitative was expressive, the songs delightful and varied ensembles gave each scene a satisfying shape. Dramatically, what on paper seemed a somewhat clumsy story made sense. The shadow of Monteverdi did not fall over it. Jack Edwards as producer managed to get a fluidity of movement and gesture that felt at one with the music, avoiding the stilted movements that can distract in authentic productions but without the irrelevant movement of modern ones. The dance (choreographed by Lucy Graham) was beautiful and effective.

The string contribution in the score is small, but was expanded by apt borrowings and adaptations by Peter Holman. His Parley of Instruments joined David Douglass's King's Noyse, combining the leading specialist renaissance/early-baroque violin groups. Both are more accustomed to one-to-a-part ensembles for music as early as this, so the opportunity to experiment with orchestral textures with the right instruments was of great value and produced fine results. Especially interesting to hear was the continuo section: two harpsichords, five/chitarrone/guitar/archlute players, harp and lirone. Despite this richness of sound, however, the acoustics of the theatre demanded some amplification. Of the two performances I heard, this was unnoticeable at the dress rehearsal (where I sat in the middle of the dress circle) but was distracting at the first night (when I sat on the left and heard the sound from a speaker that side, contradicting the sight of the players on the right). I gather that this improved during the week. While I am fully convinced that amplification may be needed by continuo groups in a pit, it is a shame that it is necessary when the players are visible; surely the authentic solution is more players, not electronics. There may have been several lutes, but not enough to obstruct the view of the stage, as was reported of one Venetian opera house. But I commented on the inaudibility of the lute in *King Arthur* in 1995, so had better not complain too much.

Rarely have I seen an operatic staging which was so much of a piece. Everything blended; styles of staging, design, singing and playing were compatible. The apparently-minimal direction (concealing, of course, an enormous amount of detailed rehearsal) worked marvellously, despite the cynical remark of one guitarist who, when hearing that Drottningholm wanted 20 minutes to be cut, suggested that they could be saved by tightening the cadences. It is sad that the performance was not recorded, but the quality was so high that I hope the team (many of which also worked on *King Arthur* in 1995) can be brought together again.

I have just one criticism. Aristeo, rival suitor for Orfeo, was sung convincingly enough by Jennifer Lane, but the character is a bore. When editing the work, I wondered whether he might have been intended to be comic, particularly since he is associated with Satiro. Might he not have been intended as a sort of Malvolio? There needed to be some obvious reason why his suit should be out of the question – perhaps, despite the American fear of insulting minorities, too tall or too fat; and his madness could have been made visually clearer by using the convention of torn or scant garments.

The orchestra devoted its night off from the opera to a concert of French dances from *Le Balet comique de la Royne* (much more interesting than I had thought from the score) to Charpentier and Lully, performed on the stage in the theatre. We tried listening from two places (a box on the left and the front row on the right), but found neither entirely satisfactory. The big stands seemed to obstruct the sound of the lutes, so perhaps they should share so that the obstruction is between them. It was refreshing to hear Praetorius dances familiar in wind versions played with the scoring for which they were intended: strings, with violins only on the top part and violas in the middle.

I had a problem with the Parley of Instruments' chamber programme the night before. Having got to bed at 3.00 am that morning, I was quite tired by 11.00 pm (which by my unadjusted body-clock was 4.00 am), and must confess that music *Pour le coucher du Roy* was far too effective for its purpose. At least one of the players, though, had as little sleep as me, and had also played for two rehearsals and an opera that day. The Boston Band is worked very hard, but the derivation of concerts from it, a practice going back to the other *Orfeo* in 1993, very effectively makes the Festival events cohere.

I managed to stay awake for Paul O'Dette's recital of mostly solo lute music by Francesco da Milano. As always, brilliant playing, of a composer of great importance in the creation of a notated style of idiomatic instrumental music. A final group of duets (with Stephen Stubbs) introduced a new *Fantasia à dui liuti* in two quite different styles. We look forward to Arthur Ness's revised edition.

I found this recital, enthusiastically though it was received, less effective than Paul's Dowland programme at the Wigmore Hall a few months ago, not because of the playing, but because the player was invisible, so there was no focus for the eye. I commented last time on the problems of some of the churches used by the Festival. We fortunately had less of Emmanuel Church this time (though its convenient location prevent it being ignored completely, and it may not be coincidence that, apart from the concert already mentioned, the only other one in which I nodded was there). The two concerts I attended on the Saturday took place in the Faneuil Hall, new to me as a concert location. It was so refreshing to be in a building where everything could be heard and seen and where there was no

need to make any allowances for acoustics or wish to change seats at the interval. The same also applied to the two programmes I heard in the Jordan Hall of the New England Conservatory. Unfortunately, the two buildings are at opposite ends of town and quite distant from the Emerson Majestic Theater/Park Plaza Castle which form the central nexus of the Festival. But I would be very happy if the 1999 Festival could be programmed so that all the main events took place at these two halls.

The last late concert, given by Tragicomedia, i.e. the non-keyboard continuo section of the opera band, was very much in the style of an end-of-term romp. The antics surrounding (and during) Suzie Leblanc's songs enhanced her emotional presentation of amorous texts: the relationship between *tragi-* and *comedia* can never have been closer. Eleonora Fuser (whose contribution to the acting in *Orfeo* was, I was told, inspirational) brought in the world of the *commedia dell' arte*, while Steve Player only had to move an inch to generate laughter.

This followed a rather less successful concert from Mala Punica. Having heard one (unfortunately not two: see *EMR* 30 p. 12) of their CDs, I was looking forward to hearing them live, but was extremely disappointed. The playing was fine, but I wasn't convinced by a whole programme of music from the decades around 1400 played on recorder, portative, two rebecs and harp, with the occasional bell. Some of the music may have survived without text and some with instrumental embellishment, but apart from a couple of dances (in a different style) it is basically music with words and I felt a longing to hear a singer. I was also worried by the group's inability to begin a piece at the beginning go on to the end and then stop. Are there any sources which tell players that pieces of this period must be preluded and linked by doodlings? Since the music was in a style unfamiliar to many members of the audience, this, added to the absence of texts, made it quite difficult to comprehend the form of the music. It was a relief that the concert was short, leaving time to attend a reception by the American Recorder Society in honour of Edgar Hunt, whose recorder-playing goes back to the 1920s and who founded the Society of Recorder Players sixty years ago.

The two Jordan Hall concerts were in marked contrast with each other. Skip Sempé has been sounding off in various places about the dullness of non-interpretative performances, and did so again in his program note for a concert called *Mythologies & Homages* by Capriccio Stravagante. I found the instrumental part of the concert a caricature of a performance. It was dominated by the gambist Jay Bernfeld. I commented in the interval that he played as if he hated the viol, at which the person sitting behind me interjected: 'no, he loves the viol but hates not being able to play it!' That is unfair; but he attacked his instrument like a percussionist and looked like a pugilist the whole time. Poor Katharina Wolff on the violin didn't stand a chance. His *Folies d'Espagne*, with Carol Lewis as accompanying gamba, was impressive in a way, but not a way I wish to hear again. Sempé himself

was far less revolutionary than expected, and indeed played Royer's *Marche des Scythes* almost straight, as far as I could tell without the facsimile to hand; what must be the most bombastic harpsichord piece ever written was made to sound entertaining. The two cantatas, Rameau's *L'Orphée* and Clérambault's *Médée*, partially reconciled me to the style, since the dramatic instrumental manner fully matched that of Guillemette Laurens. But neither cantata is really a short opera; the scale is smaller, and to my mind the performances need a more subtle balance between the dramatic and the reflective. The singer's flailing arms complemented a bold and imposing vocal manner that was at times impressive. But it grew wearisome, and there is far more contrast in the music than the continually-extrovert manner allowed. Indeed, a general problem of the Sempé style is that it insults the audience: everything has to be spelt out, and it is not credited with the ability to recognise musical points without excessive assistance from the platform. His performances sound like the sort of rehearsal at which one exaggerates everything to make sure it is there; but he doesn't proceed to the next stage, which is to play it again with poise and balance. Or am I being very Anglo-Saxon?

We returned to the Jordan Hall for the very last concert: *Duelling Harpsichords* played by William Porter and Gary Cooper. During the first item, a suite by Louis Couperin in which Porter played the *Prélude* then added a *contre-partie* while Cooper played the rest of the Suite, I wondered whether our time might have been better spent filling our suitcases with cheap clothes from Filene's Bargain Basement and going straight to the airport. But things improved. Porter was given a theme in a sealed envelope and improvised a subtle suite on it; he is evidently a far better performer when he is creating the music rather than just playing it. Cooper played the amazing *Toccata settima* by the other Rossi – was it written as a test for tuners? – then we had three of Pasquini's remarkably little-heard *Sonate a due cembali*, far more interesting than their reputation as practice-material for those learning to play continuo. The high-spot was an improvised *Bergamasca*. After all the lute and guitar grounds at the Faneuil Hall the night before, it was amazing to hear so subtle and imaginative a creation. Concentration on the 350th anniversary of *Orfeo* had led the Festival to neglect the Schubert bicentenary, but we were compensated here by allusions to his E flat Impromptu in the *Bergamasca*. Porter's additions to Rameau's *Les Niais de Sologne* made a brilliant end to the concert and (except for those attending the last performance of the opera) an appropriate end to a Festival which could easily have had as theme 'Beyond notation'.

Even the Orlando Consort ended their first recital with an improvisation (as good as Pärt to my ears). Otherwise, the most modern music was by Perotin. Despite the quality of the singing, I would have found this more enjoyable as a lecture-recital; in the absence of chant, the pieces needed words between them. What I remember most is nothing to do with the music but an irrelevant comment by Charles Daniels that 'from time immemorial' means 'from before

1187'. Despite being at a late hour and at the soporific church, their Ockeghem programme was more stimulating: music from the mass *De plus en plus* with chansons, the *Offertorium* of the Requiem and the lament on the death of Binchois (more or less the contents of their next CD, to be reviewed in our next issue). Josquin's lament for Ockeghem made a popular and moving encore, perhaps almost a relief, since I suspect that many share my difficulty in grasping Ockeghem's music. But the *Orlandos* (Orlandi?) made an eloquent and moving case for it and left me frustrated at my declining vocal powers and inability to sing such music myself.

CB

With 56 official concurrent events over six days (various instrument makers had also arranged showpiece recitals for their prize products, which were not listed in the lavish Festival & Exhibition book – a typically cheap American 290-page tome at a mere \$10!), the Boston Early Music Festival Fringe (sorry, Concurrent Events) had everything from solo harpsichord to baroque orchestra with choir, from medieval improvisation to chamber arrangements of Beethoven symphonies, from competent amateurs to absolute geniuses.

Deciding which to attend became a question of compromise: with each event lasting for around an hour, some venues were simply too far apart to allow one to take in consecutive events. Likewise, there were inevitably times when there was more than one interesting program on offer. As a result, I tended to concentrate on my particular favourite areas (17th-century violin and 18th-century recorder) and only heard two Renaissance programmes and nothing earlier than 1550.

Thomas Fritzsche's concert of unaccompanied cello music had already begun by the time I reached Boston University's Marsh Chapel, so I heard only two Bach suites (G major and D minor), which he played on a borrowed instrument, the cost of transporting his own cello from Germany having proved prohibitive. I found the playing compelling – the melodic lines in the D minor suite in particular are not always easy to spot – and, although the humidity obviously affected the tuning, I was impressed by some subtle bow strokes and imaginative phrasing.

The Ensemble Soleil (from Boston) consists of two violins, gamba, theorbo and harpsichord. For their concert, they were joined by flautist Douglas Worthen. I found it strange that, while one violinist played facing the audience, the other played across the ensemble (as it were) so their sound was never balanced. Equally strange was the Vitali piece they played with flute: the second violin sometimes doubled, sometimes dropped out. While Italian music is rather robust, to pull off a performance of any Couperin, you really have to have gotten under the skin of French music and I'm afraid this didn't seem to be the case here. There were some nice moments in the concert, but there remains a fair deal of work to be done.

Renaissosics, in stark contrast, are a brilliant ensemble (recorder, violin, cello, and archlute, with Patrick Lindley guesting on virginals): no matter what the programme said they were performing, what we got was very much their version. Taking as their starting point the essence of dance music (and dance musicians' uncontrollable urge to improvise on the tunes they have to play over and over again – I speak from the experience of 1001 ceilidhs!) all five performers waxed lyrical (and whatever the rhythmic equivalent is) on all manner of dance tunes. They were joined by Charles Garth and Maris Wolff for two numbers, the dancers' flourishes being complemented by those of John Tyson on recorder and James Johnston on violin. This was one of several concerts where even the cellist ornamented his line – as a past advocate of this idea, I was not entirely convinced in practice.

My third concert that day featured three traversos, with soprano, gamba and harpsichord. Lucy Yates can lament and decry as well as any: her impassioned glare would reduce any man to tears (or a shivering wreck, whichever was requisite), with some stunning melismata, perhaps a little shaky at the very top of her range. Mary Oleskiewicz, who gave a ravishing performance of one of Quantz's solo sonatas, wins an award for the strangest statement of the week: 'As I'll be playing at French chamber pitch, this sonata will sound in D flat.' Is that 'baroque' D flat or what? The stunner of the show was the final piece on the programme, a J. S. Bach aria with three flutes – wonderful playing and singing, though I would have loved some ornamentation in the Da capo.

Shortly afterwards, musica poetica with bass-baritone Paul Guttery gave a recital entitled 'De profundis', cantatas by Bruhns and Tunder together with sonatas by Buxtehude and Erlebach. Anyone who read my review last month of Chicago Baroque's Erlebach CD will be glad to hear that musica poetica are considering recording the sonatas. Robert Mealy and Lynn Tetenbaum on violin and gamba respectively were accompanied by William Porter on harpsichord. The cantatas, which were cut down from the original versions, both worked well. Guttery declaimed the text beautifully and was up to most of Bruhns's exceptional demands.

I was reminded of Renaissosics' performances later that evening when, forsaking the early music world, I headed off to a jazz club in Cambridge. Being in a relatively small room, the powerful amplification was rather painful on the ears, but the spontaneity of performance was not a million miles away from the interaction I'd enjoyed so much in the morning. Indeed, it's an experience I would recommend to everyone in our field: being so at home in any musical idiom allows one to take liberties and to take risks in ornamenting. One of my lingering memories will be Margriet Tindemans sighing when she didn't quite manage to tuck the last demisemiquaver of an improvised diminution in time: shortly afterwards, she shared a smile with Sarah Cunningham and everything was fine again – having that sort of fun is what music-making is all about.

E17 (Ensemble • Seventeenth • Century, rather than the pop group East 17) got the next day off to an early start. You perhaps wouldn't expect a group consisting of soprano, cornetto, theorbo and harpsichord to blend very well, but balance is one of this ensemble's greatest strengths. Lorna Young Hildebrandt's clear voice is perfectly matched by Kiri Tollaksen's bright cornetto, while the continuo players accompany one minute and push things on the next. Two pieces of Schütz were my favourites, with some deliciously scrunchy suspensions in *Erhöre mich, wenn ich rufe* (though some improvised ornamentation might have been welcomed, particularly in the reprise).

The French baroque was the subject of my next date: soprano Sudie Marcuse-Blatz sang motets and cantatas to the accompaniment of cello and harpsichord. The small audience must have been slightly off-putting (as must the reversing hooter of a truck outside the library and the three police sirens), but I just did not feel this was the repertoire for this singer – she is undoubtedly passionate about the texts, and part of the problem was the lack of unanimity of the continuo pairing, but her voice lacks focus in intricate work and her cadential decoration at the end of the Campra was quite extraordinarily un-French.

One of the most exciting ensembles in Boston was Ensemble Rebel. After sonatas by the eponymous Frenchman and his compatriot François Couperin, they played works by Pohle (*Nun danket alle Gott* for two scordatura violins and continuo), Kerll, Rosenmüller and Schmelzer. Clearly owing a great deal to early Musica Antiqua Cologne performances, the Rebels are dramatic in their interpretation and presentation, with stunning ornamentation from all the players (though the gambist/cellist just overdid things for my liking) and bags of style. Look out for a CD of Salomone Rossi sonatas in the near future – it will be well worth having.

The longest concurrent event I attended was The Publick Musick's all-Bach programme, featuring Max von Egmond in the Coffee Cantata, the Mass in G and two Brandenburgs (Nos. 4 and 5). Much was made of von Egmond's presence, but either he was having a bad day (the weather took a sudden stormy turn, so that's entirely possible) or he is no longer the singer he once was. The Brandenburgs were well enough played (there was some nice interplay between flute and violin – the violin being obliged not to overpower the gentler wind instrument), but lacked that certain something: the violin soloist tried too hard in No. 4 (and paid for it with some serious tuning problems), while the 'not strictly speaking a cadenza' of No. 5 was remarkable in its four-squared-ness: was Bach really so emotionless? There was a good deal of nice singing in the mass (from one of those choirs where you're not allowed to stand beside anyone else singing your part), but there were also weaknesses: the bass section of the band needs to work hard on tuning (and that cannot entirely be put down to the humidity!).

Unfortunately the length of this event meant I missed Musica Aeterna.

The next day, I had to choose between the Ockeghem Requiem and Josquin's *Missa Fortuna desperata* and opted for the latter. For a largely amateur choir, this was quite a remarkable feat: singing in Picardy-French pronunciation and experimenting with *musica ficta*, Convivium Musicum (who get a special mention for their luxurious programme-booklet) produced attractive performances of some extremely difficult music. There were one or two points where the *ficta* (or lack of it) didn't work (for me!), perhaps because it was probably conceived vertically rather than horizontally, but it was a relaxing hour in a hectic week and a commendable venture.

The next concert I attended was given by La Luna: violinists Ingrid Matthews and Scott Metcalfe (who had directed the above Convivium Musicum concert), gambist/cellist Emily Waldhout – who all played in the Orfeo orchestra – and harpsichordist, Byron Schenkman (on whom more below). To say the least, this was an hour of sheer delight. From the very opening piece (Schmelzer's *Lanterley sonata*), they enchanted their audience with stunning roudades, impeccable ensemble (the violinists, in particular, have a common sixth sense) and, put quite simply, the sheer wonder of their combined musicality. Here was a bass player who could make her presence felt without becoming a blustering buffoon and a harpsichordist, who does everything right. It is utterly amazing that no major record company has discovered La Luna: as we were told at the beginning of the week (and, indeed, as *EMR's* Rosemary Druce said in 1995), they are absolutely faultless and deserve to be more widely known (as, indeed, does the music they perform).

I then took flight and ran halfway across Boston (an exaggeration, but it felt like it in the heat) to hear *Tempesta di Mare*, in this concert soprano, two recorders (one doubling flute) and continuo of bassoon, archlute, gamba and harpsichord. The programme was built around the popularity of the recorder in 18th-century England, featuring works by Corelli (arranged from Op 6), Finger, Handel, Pepusch and Veracini (a sonata for traverso). The soprano (who has a pleasing voice and a keen dramatic sense, if little idea of baroque ornamentation – we heard two trills) only joined in the *Pasticcio Entertainment* (Pepusch's *Menalcas once the gayest Swain* interspersed with movements from Handel), which was a slightly bizarre finale choice, as it ended with a piece for voice and one recorder – the other player had to be brought back for the applause. The group has a lot of potential, but Gwyn Roberts (the apparent leader) needs to ensure that, in striving to communicate her rapture in the music, she doesn't push her instrument too far: it was ironic that her programme note mentioned newly-redesigned recorders 'with... improved intonation'.

I've kept my other favourite concert of the week until last. Despite having some sort of flu, Byron Schenkman gave a stunning solo recital in the Boston Center for Adult Education's answer to the Versailles hall of mirrors. He

played Handel, D'Anglebert and Rameau, each sounding as if he were making it up as he went along and each sounding totally different to the others. The entire hour was played from memory (as was the delightful *Les étoiles* by Corrette, played as an encore) and every phrase, every note almost, had something to say. Even Handel's seemingly inevitable keyboard music sounded utterly original and spontaneous. If he and his colleagues in La Luna gave the performances of the week, he was my performer of the festival. BC

Finally, a few words about the exhibition. The big room in the Castle was sparser than usual, with empty stalls and a less varied group of exhibitors. Perhaps the omission from the programme of wind music had an effect; would even one famous trumpeter have enticed a gaggle of trumpet-makers hoping to sell him an instrument? I also wonder whether the exhibition is too long. It might be a more attractive proposition if the exhibition were more concentrated: set up on Thursday morning and running perhaps only in the afternoon and evening of Thursday and Friday and all day Saturday. This would also allow exhibitors a chance to participate in the morning events; in the four Festivals I have attended, the only one of these that I have been able to get to was one I chaired in 1993. I heard particular good reports of the morning spent discussing staging *Orfeo*. It is, however, an excellent way of meeting people of interest and is, I think, the most satisfying exhibition venue we have yet found. CB

Luigi Rossi *Orfeo* (1647)

The duet on pp. 14-15 comes from the last scene of Act I when Orpheus and Eurydice's marriage ceremony is interrupted by the ill-omen of the sudden extinction of the ceremonial candles. They sing together and re-affirm their confidence in the power of their love. (Complete score £30.00)



Sketches by Robin Linklater for Bacco, Satiro & Momo from the Boston Early Music Festival production.

Luigi Rossi – Duet from *Orfeo* (1647)

Orfeo

Se co-sì dun-que A-mor fà, Ch'al-ma io si - a Dell' al - - - ma mi - a,

Euridice

Se co-sì dun-que A-mor fà, Ch'al-ma io si - a Dell' al - - - ma mi - a,

6

Chi di - vi - der ne vor - rà, chi, chi di - vi - der ne vor - rà, chi di - vi - der ne vor -

Chi di - vi - der ne vor - rà, di - vi - - - der ne vor - rà, chi di - vi - der ne vor -

16

-rà? O fe - li-ce il mio cor, O fe - li-ce il mio cor! O be - a - - - to il mio ardor!

-rà? O fe - li-ce il mio cor! O be - a - - - to il mio ardor!

27

E che pos-son le sfe - re Con-

E che pos-son le sfe - - - re Con-tro del no-stro se - no,

35

- tro del no - stro se - no, S'e - gli è di gio - ia ri - pie-no, D'in - fi - ni - to pia - ce - re? -

S'e - gli è di gio - ia ri - pie-no, D'in - fi - ni - to pia - ce - re?

If thus then Love would have me be the soul of my soul, who would divide us?

Oh happy my heart, oh blessed my passion! And what can the spheres do against our heart, if it is full of joy and unbounded pleasure?

44

Ver-sin pur del tor - men - - - - - to, Ch'e-gli è tut - to con - ten -

53

Ver-sin pur del - le no - - - - - ie, Ch'e-gli è col-mo di gio - ie!

-to! Ah

63

Ah nò Più Ca - pa - - ce non è, ca - pa - ce non è.

nò, ah nò, nò ch'e-gli in sé Più ma - i di gua - i Ca - pa - ce non è, ca - pa - ce non è.

73

A-mor, e quan-do in te, Per tua som-ma bon - tà, Mag-gior sor - te ti diè Mag-gior

A-mor, e quan-do in te, Per tua som-ma bon - tà, Mag-gior sor - te ti diè Mag-gior

79

fe - li - ci - tà, mag-gior sor - te ti diè, mag-gior fe - li - ci - tà,

fe - li - ci - tà, mag-gior fe - li - ci - tà, mag-gior sor - te ti

86

mag - gior sor - te ti diè, mag - gior fe - - - - - li - ci - tà?

diè, mag - gior sor - te ti diè, mag - gior fe - - - - - li - ci - tà?

Let them pour down torments, it is all contentment; let them pour down troubles, it is overflowing with joys.

Ah no, it no longer has room for woes. Oh Love, when, through your own generosity, has a greater fate given you greater happiness. (transl Anthony Hicks)

Cremona Early Music Festival

Peter de Laurentiis

Cremona - 'La Città della Musica': this is how the birthplace of Monteverdi and, much more evidently, of nougat, fancies herself. If being 'La Città della Musica' means having horrid little souvenir violins wherever you go (don't forget Stradivarius etc), then I'm not so sure I want to live here for the next three or four years. Fortunately, things such as the Cremona Early Music Festival and the Scuola di Paleografia e Filologia Musicale (Italy's only Music Faculty of its genre) give one a glimmer of hope.

First of all, the concerts. The opening concert (Pinnock's B-minor Mass) took place in San Marcellino, a big baroque church with remarkably high ceilings. This church has, alas, a very poor acoustic, the sound being swallowed up by the space. But at least from the third row I could hear with good definition. I once tried sitting at the back of the church, and there really was little left you could listen to. Pinnock's account of Bach's masterpiece(s) was secure and straightforward, with very well judged tempos, giving a great sense of unity. I enjoyed it, but on leaving I had the feeling that my great expectations had been left unsatisfied to a certain extent. The choir (10, 8, 6, 6) was outstanding: concentrated and responsive in a work always so demanding, it produced the most beautiful sound, and everything seemed easy and natural (how exciting to hear fine English tenors take the top A of *Cum Sancto Spiritu*). The *Et incarnatus* and the *Crucifixus* were the highlights of the concert. The orchestra was very good too, with delightful flair in the more exuberant pieces, and distinguished solo contributions (except a slightly suspicious intonation from the first oboe, otherwise perfect, just in the opening Kyrie, and from the cello/bass section in the *Agnus Dei*). The weakest point was, alas, the solo team, except the soprano, Nancy Argenta, with her usual pure and silvery tone. Rainer Trost and Catherine Wyn-Rogers are both marvellous singers, but they might have come out of an old Rilling disc (to be precise Julia Hamari in Rilling's B-minor Mass sings with a more controlled vibrato than Wyn-Rogers), Brian Bannatyne-Scott was somewhat unsure, particularly in the *Quoniam*. (Trost and Bannatyne-Scott were standing in for Ian Partridge and Anthony Michaels-Moore). Some time ago I would have been perfectly content with what I heard and saw, but now the huge (though excellent) choir, the four soloists sitting most of the time and getting up once in a while to take their solos, gave me the impression of a decidedly old fashioned way of performing such a work.

The next concert was quite similar to the one of the Regensburg festival (reviewed in *EMR* 31 June Diary p. 9) the performers being the same: this time in addition to the Ghielmi brothers there was soprano Ursula Fiedeler. The venue was S. Maria Maddalena, a wonderful church dating

from about the end of the 15th century. Like S. Marcellino and S. Omobono, S. Maria Maddalena only opens for the Cremona Festival. On this occasion they are all extremely well illuminated, both inside – making these churches look much better – and outside with oil torches, creating an atmosphere of magical detachment from the outside world. The programme included some *geistliche Lieder* by Bach (BWV 452, 478, 481, 505, 508-9), and some by C.P.E. Bach (from collections of 1758 and 1781), the only secular *Lieder* being *Da schlägt der Abschied Stunde* (a translation of Metastasio's *La partenza*) and *Lydia*. Ursula Fiedeler is an excellent singer: not content with her beautiful tone and marvellous technique, she made every effort to transmit the pathos of the pietist texts. This made a terrific effect in the C.P.E., especially in the later and in the two secular works which have some of the Romantic Lied features (strophic form, piano preludes and interludes), but I must confess that in Bach's *Lieder* I found her singing (and gesture) a little mannered, if not affected.

Hesperion XX were to the fore on the following Sunday. Actually it was a homespun concert in many respects: literally because it featured just Jordi, Montserrat and Rolf (Lislevand), but also because of Savall's self-indulgence affecting not only the playing (with both the questions 'How shall I play this note?' and 'What notes shall I play?' being a matter of personal taste), but also the programming (dozens of *Folias*, *Ciaconas* etc.). The programme notes clearly showed their author in embarrassment in his attempt to find some coherence among pieces by Francisco Correa de Arauxo, Bartomeu Cárceles, Juan de Triana, Thomas Ford, Tarquinio Merula, Marin Marais, and a couple of much earlier anonyma (which went unmentioned in the notes). Anyway the concert was a great success, with the performers all in excellent form. Final titbit: both Savall and Lislevand have a much better Italian pronunciation than Figueras. A pity she was the singer!

Three days later we had Alessandrini with his *Concerto Italiano* performing a similar programme to that of their most recent CD (Monteverdi's small-scale sacred music). I expected a disappointment, having always been suspicious of their CDs (especially after a poor live concert I attended in Genoa), but it turned out to be extremely enjoyable. There were just a couple of points that didn't work. First of all Alessandrini, *direttore al cembalo*. The harpsichord wasn't much of a problem, especially as he only used it twice, and anyway it wasn't audible at all. But when he wasn't playing he was conducting in a Karajanesque manner which, especially with four singers in front of him, looked quite ridiculous. (The cembalo was clearly an excuse not to stand in front of the vocal consort for the whole concert). The

other problem was Rossana Bertini, wonderful in her solo motet *Laudate Dominum*, but quite annoying when singing in consort. She had a big vibrato (which is not apparent on the CDs) starting exactly half way through every note, which interrupted abruptly the sense of polyphony you should get now and then in these pieces. Finally Alessandrini is quite right to scorn Malipiero's editions of Monteverdi, but then he shouldn't use them. The absence of the double-bass proved those who criticized the CD for having a heavy bass line to be right. The singers were generally in good form, especially bass Sergio Foresti, tenor Gianluca Ferrarini, and soprano Elisa Franzetti.

The baroque orchestra Accademia degli Improvvisi under Danilo Costantini performed Handel's *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*. The most impressive thing besides the music itself was the orchestra, confidently led by first violin Alessandro Ciccolini, who also added stylish ornamentation in the Da capos. Unfortunately this made a bit of a contrast with the singing: apart from Banditelli and Cecchetti, we had an opera singer and one who simply wasn't at ease with her part.

Sadly I missed the next two concerts (Fulvio Rampi's Cantori Gregoriani and Roberto Gini's Orchestra I pomeriggi musicali and Orchestra Milano Classica) and the next I caught was Cappella Artemisia (after the XVIIth century Italian painter Artemisia Gentileschi) conducted by Candace Smith. I consider this to be the most satisfying concert in the whole festival. The concert title was 'Canti del chiostro: I vespri natalizi di Chiara Margherita Cozzolani': the always-effective liturgical reconstruction formula. The programme was chosen by Candace Smith and Robert L. Kendrick, whose book *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and their Music in Early Modern Milan* was reviewed in *EMR* 27 p. 5. I certainly share Mr. Bartlett's negative opinion of the milieu from which this music arose, though I think that both the 'obsession with virginity' and the 'need to keep them [the nuns] in a man-less world' have reasons other than the 'sexually-assertive way Latin men tend to behave'. Asceticism and monasticism (I couldn't find an English word for the Italian *cenobitismo*) have always been crucial aspects of more than one religion. Anyway the music was really very fine, particularly the solo motets. The instrumentalists were all extremely convincing, but for the singers some distinctions must be made. The countertenor (or male-alto, falsettist, etc.) voice-type had established a reputation long before I was born, so I don't know what effect the first countertenors had on those who were not used to it. I must confess that the effect of hearing female tenors wasn't really revealing for me. My only previous experience was of unprofessional choirs using low-altos to compensate for the absence of tenors. Anyway some of the lady-tenors were quite good, and among the other voices there were some outstanding singers (it was difficult to determine the voice type because they all had a surprising vocal range) who sang with evenness of tone and showed great awareness of style (unfortunately I wasn't able to match the names to the singers).

Another Italian group the Atestis Consort & Chorus under Filippo Maria Bressan performed 'Sacred music in 17th century Florence and Venice' including works mostly by Monteverdi and Gagliano (plus some Cavalli, Frescobaldi, Filippo Vitali, Benvenuto Cerri, and keyboard pieces by Giovan Battista Ferrini and Costanzo Antegnati). All in all it was a very poor concert. I thought Pinnock used too big a choir for Bach, but never expected to hear again Monteverdi motets performed by a choir of twenty.

The last concert I attended (I missed the closing concert), was Peter Phillips conducting his Tallis Scholars. The programme included two masses and a motet by Palestrina: as usual he did not try any liturgical reconstruction. The masses were *Missa Brevis* and *Missa Papae Marcelli*, the motet was *Surge Illuminare*: no aim of further exploring Palestrina's output (I feel ashamed at using the term 'exploring' for such a composer); perhaps the rest of it is not worth hearing, or perhaps twenty years of the *Missae Brevis/Papae Marcelli* are not long enough to appreciate such works. What surprised me was the philological decision of a *mi contra mib causa pulchritudinis* as second note of the first Kyrie of the *Missa Brevis*. The man next to me thought that this little mistake made the Tallis Scholars more 'human'. To which I replied that I didn't know what he meant by 'human', but that the same singer who had made the slip sounded gorgeously human when he sang flawlessly in other groups. It goes without saying that the singers were outstanding, probably some of the best English singers of the moment.

A couple of closing remarks: although what I have written may seem a little hard, I am more satisfied by Cremona's early music efforts than I would have ever expected. Generally speaking the standard was quite high. Unfortunately those who were responsible for running the Festival were clearly unqualified to undertake such a difficult task. A festival worthy of the name should be limited in time (surely it shouldn't last a month, with one or two concerts per week), especially considering that Cremona is quite a small town, poorly served by public transport. A number of students I know from outside Cremona couldn't get to the concerts as they didn't have a car. The programme notes, which I consider to be very important for the success of a festival (there was no general programme or brochure other than a leaflet listing the concerts), were very uneven in quality, some scholarly, informative and clearly written, others deplorable. If you must copy from encyclopaedias at least try and copy the right bits: last year we had *Welcome to all the pleasures* performed while the programme notes dealt with *Hail, bright Cecilia!* In spite of all this, I feel very optimistic for the future and invite you all next year to the beautiful town of Cremona.

A reader asked if we knew the origins of clapping at the end of a performances. Without going back to such texts as *Omnes gentes, plaudite manibus*, I wonder whether any readers know of early examples of this aspect of audience performance practice.

COFFEE HOUSE

Eric Van Tassel

The London Coffee House Exchange (LCHE), conceived by Anthony Rooley and set in motion in collaboration with the poet, playwright and director Don Taylor, has several aims: to develop a new informal, intimate performing venue for drama and music; to give younger artists a chance to reach an audience and to do so in a new way; to bring performers and audience into a closer interactive relationship. On 30 May, with Arts Council support, LCHE was launched with a five-hour gala.

The venue – new to me at least – was the Amadeus Arts Centre, in an utterly anonymous residential street on the edge of Little Venice. The Centre (whose day job is, variously, as a rehearsal hall and as a place of worship) has its own catering facilities; more important, the hall itself – probably a former nonconformist chapel – is a lofty room no more than perhaps 45x40 feet [14x12 metres], with a deep stage and modest backstage facilities. As it was set up for LCHE, the hall held about 100 patrons seated at round tables, with another 50 or so spectators in the three-sided balcony above. The acoustics are unnoticeable, which means they are excellent; and as the hall was never really darkened, everyone in the audience was close enough to make eye contact with the performers.

This inaugural programme played to a packed house; people had assembled on the street long before the doors opened at 6.30 p.m. and few left before the show ended, just shy of midnight. The programme was thoroughly heterogeneous: two short modern plays (one of them written for the occasion), and a Jacobean mini-masque; some viol consort music; a sequence of recitatives and songs from the 1705 *Semele* by Congreve and John Eccles; a 20-minute extract from the *Ordo Virtutum* of Hildegard of Bingen; a supper-clubbish set of four or five show songs, billed (accurately) as 'Songs from the Flops'; and some popular songs and street music from 'the underbelly of Purcell's England'. Orders for refreshments – coffee, wine and cakes – were taken before the show got going. There was also a formal interval for serious placing of repeat orders, but the waiters also served refills unobtrusively throughout the evening.

In the Ben Jonson masque (a slight work in itself) the audience enjoyed the way Chris Emmett played to, and sent up, the supposed toffs at what passed for a top table; the climax, with Andrew King's entrance as a (literally) golden Apollo, singing an air adapted from Lanier by Anthony Rooley, managed to be exotic without being too solemn. When the City Waites brought the evening to an end with their wonted folk-club showmanship, they had the crowd solidly with them. In fact, each of the individual

acts had something to recommend it; and it was particularly gratifying to see some seasoned artists, such as the actor Kenneth Haigh and the soprano Evelyn Tubb, get stuck into ensemble work alongside some relative newcomers.

Of the two items I thought outstanding, one – the Rose Consort's sequence of viol music by the two Alfonso Ferraboscas, beautifully played to a raptly silent audience – would have been very like a conventional concert; but in the visual and acoustical intimacy of this hall the music spoke to the listener with unfamiliar directness. My other highlight, Evelyn Tubb's X-rated sequence of recitatives and airs from *Semele*, was pure musical theatre. LCHE gave Tubb the right setting and atmosphere to ignite her dual persona as actress and singer in a way that would be difficult in the Purcell Room or even the Wigmore. She worked the house shamelessly, in the spirit of her role model, the post-Restoration singing actress Mrs Anne Bracegirdle; everyone in the audience felt she was playing to them alone. As a strictly musical judgment, I might have asked for more varied support than Rooley's solo lute; but I'd pass up a pit band if too much hardware looked like placing a barrier between Tubb and her audience.

Of the two sponsoring organizations, Rooley's Consort of Musicke understandably favours early music, while Taylor's First Writes Theatre Company just as reasonably fosters modern, indeed new, works. This difference could be fruitful, or it could be risky; but regardless of period, such a mix of spoken drama and musical items recalls Roger North's rueful comment that dramatick operas like Purcell's *King Arthur* pleased no one, with some play-goers wanting less music and some music-lovers thinking the lengthy speeches tedious.

And even if all in the audience were (improbably) equally keen on both drama and music, the LCHE programme required of us too many radical gear-changes from one item to the next. I don't know how, or even whether, the straight theatre is addressing issues of historical performance practice; but in the early music game these days we are being urged to go farther, and consider what Christopher Page has called 'historical listening practice'. LCHE's two modern plays spoke to us in (more or less) the vernacular we use in the street. For the Ben Jonson masque, historical listening practice asked us to (in some sense) pretend that we were amused by topical jokes targeted at the Jacobean gentry or bourgeoisie, or else to recognize that we were spectators at an antiquarian exercise. The City Waites bade us assume the roles of – what? Restoration pub-crawlers? We hadn't had enough to drink for that, not if we were going to drive home from W.9.

Listening practice posed a challenge even when a particular item on the bill was so charming (I use that word in its ancient sense of magically bewitching) that we forgot who or where we were, let alone what kind of audience we were meant to be: a privileged definition of 'authentic' listening. For both the Rose Consort and Tubb's *Semele*, in the unique atmosphere of this hall and this audience, I was thus bewitched – only to be jolted, with the next act on the bill, into some radically different listening practice.

The extract from the *Ordo Virtutum* – though utterly imaginative and absorbing on its own terms – was problematic and unsatisfactory in the wider context of this programme. The four Virtues and the Soul they strive for all wore abstract, vaguely medieval costumes, as did the harper Michael Fields (the Virtues' adversary, the Devil, was wittily dressed in modern evening clothes); like the costuming, the performers' stage movements and the actorly-chantlike style of singing put us squarely in the realm of 'knot your own Middle Ages'. So far, so good: that's no more disorienting than being thrust into the Waites' make-believe tavern. But the Waites sang and spoke (when you could make out the words) in something like our native language, as did all the other texted acts on the bill; whereas the *Ordo* is irremediably in Latin, and even the most learned among us weren't about to go out into west London and hail a taxi in Latin.

Halfway through the evening, the drinks interval was occupied with an exchange of views in which Rooley and Taylor asked all those present: 'Does it matter what playwrights and composers want, or are we free to do what we like with their work?' – all it lacked was the examiners' traditional 'Discuss (write on one side of the paper only)'. The question, though cleverly phrased to suppress the buzzwords authentic and historical, nevertheless got little farther than an exchange of platitudes. What had been an intimate place during the performances became, in this interval, a booming big hall, in which only those bold (or boring) enough to hold forth in public bluster got very far (as those who know me will have guessed, I was prominent among the blusterers).

Rooley tells me that LCHE will continue, though he can't be specific about how or when. I very much hope he's right. I suggest that, for a while at least, all the acts with words should be Anglophone; and the programming should experiment with finding less abrupt transitions between acts (perhaps a narrower chronological span for any one evening?). But these quibbles are insignificant alongside the need for such innovative venues and imaginative programmes, and the urgency of trying out different forms of listening practice and building new and diverse audiences. The Amadeus Centre itself is an unqualified success and should be cherished.

For the interval exchanges, LCHE should give up the public forum and try leaving an empty seat at each table, to be occupied during the interval by one of the performers.

Some artists will shrink from table-hopping, but even on a shorter bill than this one was there will presumably be enough of them to go round. Some performers will just be lionized; others will be harangued by a single table-dominating windbag. But the bluster will at least be quarantined, and a table of five or six people can work out its own etiquette on the spot, and may succeed – as the committee of the whole house couldn't on 30 May – in getting beyond entry-level abstractions like historicity or jeers at theme-park antiquarianism. Our musical and dramatic cultures have been addressing the past in very different ways, with different kinds of success. On 30 May the differences were a *pons asinorum*; around a table, in conversation with a practitioner from one culture or the other, they might become a fruitful stimulus.

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Denmark and Sweden. We will be passing leisurely through Denmark on our way to Drottningholm for the performance of Rossi's *Orfeo* on August 2nd. If anyone would like to meet us en route, please get in touch.

International Musicological Society Congress
Royal College of Music & Imperial College, London.
We will be at the Exhibition, August 14-16, 18-19.

The London International Exhibition of Early Music
Royal College of Music, September 5-7.
We will be sharing Room 68 with The Parley of Instruments. This is on the 2nd floor; do come and find us.

If you wish to see any particular items from our stock at these exhibitions, please let us know in advance, since we will not have a large display on show.

The September *EMR* may be a few days late.

ARS SUBTILIOR

Elin Harries

Ars Subtilior manuscript reading workshop, 31st May hosted by Alistair Dixon and Edward Wickham of the Cantiones Press

Thirty-eight enthusiasts gathered at St Pancras Church, Euston, on a sunny Saturday morning to take part in a day's foray into the art of reading renaissance manuscripts. Those attending were mostly followers of the choirs of the two hosts or those contacted by various mailing lists, travelling from as far afield as Oxford, Cambridge and Malvern. The average age was higher than I had expected – further education establishments had not been targeted in their marketing. Those I spoke to were all involved in music either as enthusiastic amateurs or in some semi-professional way.

A planned expedition to the British Library had failed to materialise: collaboration with the BL may be easier when it has moved to its new site. It was no practical loss, however, as there were copies of renaissance scores available for us to browse, and the extra journey hassle would have eaten into the available time.

We had been forewarned to be in good voice – this proved to be sound advice! Roughly translated as 'method adorned', *Ars subtilior* was a very appropriate description of Edward and Alistair's teaching perspective. After a brief explanation of the notation, illustrated by a chart in the preface of the music (their own edition, incidentally), we were thrown straight into a tentative attempt to sing in unison the first line of a facsimile of Josquin des Prez's *Fama malum*. This hands-on approach was a very good tactic as a most effective means of demystifying the script. Almost before I knew it, we were actually singing in four parts, and reasonably accurately, from the old notation – the single line became two, then four, then the whole work.

Next, for a bit of light relief we were allowed to sing *Adiutorium nostrum*, attributed to Antoine de Févin, from the modern edition. The original manuscript with its association with fertility was presented to Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon for their private devotion.

We tackled Tallis's *Misere nostri* for six voices in both the modern score and facsimile. The historical context of the work and its composition techniques were explained simply, as was the printing method for such works, with a quick paper-folding demonstration from Edward.

After lunch we returned to *Adiutorium nostrum* along with the *bête noir* of the day, an anonymous Gloria for six voices taken from the important Trent codices, written in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The notational skills

needed here were more complex than those utilised earlier, and the vague text directions prompted an unsuccessful attempt to underlay the text ourselves in groups after some basic instruction from Alistair and Edward. The exercise was worthwhile and thought-provoking, but the conventions and skills needed to achieve a coherent result were clearly beyond our abilities, and in the absence of uniformity we reverted to the security of a sung 'ah'!

It was at this point that my brain felt that it needed a rest. Concentrating for such a long period of time on the manuscripts was very tiring, even after several cups of complimentary coffee. The cancelled library trip had obviously left a gap to fill. Perhaps a short slide-show or listening to recorded 'ideal' renditions of the works would have provided an appropriate diversion.

The day was rounded off with a recap and a hearty 'performance' of the works tackled earlier.

For my own taste, there was rather too much singing and not enough information on offer during the day, but I speak as someone who sings often and felt the need to be educated. That said, it was obvious that many of the participants had come along for a good sing, and they didn't go home disappointed.

This was the second workshop of its kind held in London by the enterprising *Cantiones Press*; there will, I hope, be many more. There are plans for a similar event to be held in Oxford on St Cecilia's Day (22nd November)

For further details of the *Arts Subtilior* workshop in Oxford contact Cantiones Press on 0171 385 6489

NEW OXFORD BOOK OF CAROLS

Oxford University Press intends to produce a paper-back reprint of the complete book, including all the extensive historical information. Although there will be no opportunity for a thorough revision, there will be a chance to correct mistakes. The editors (Hugh Keyte, Andrew Parrott and Clifford Bartlett) would be very pleased if readers who have noticed misprints or errors of fact could let us know. Please send these in writing (post, fax, e-mail) to Clifford Bartlett at the Early Music Review/King's Music address as soon as possible.

RECORD REVIEWS

CHANT

The Miracles of St Kentigern: Scottish Medieval Plainchant Cappella Nova, Alan Tavener dir, Angus Smith T, William Taylor clarsach ASV CD GAU 169 76' 55"

The gentlemen of Capella Nova sing this long-neglected music from the early 14th-century Sprouston breviary with great passion and commitment, sounding thoroughly versed in the distinctively Scottish idiom of the chant. Variety and illumination are provided by strategically-placed vocal drones, bells and improvisations upon the wire-strung clarsach. This latter contribution by the leading expert in the early Scottish harp, Bill Taylor, is particularly convincing in the readings from the life of St Kentigern, where the music takes on the mantle of biographical tale told in song. Lector Angus Smith responds with an engagingly theatrical style of delivery. A particularly interesting effect of the rudimentary instrumental accompaniment is to emphasise the 'home and away' harmonic pattern which this music shares with most of the early Scottish repertoire. An inventive and thoroughly convincing recording of fascinating music.

D. James Ross

MEDIEVAL

Hildegard of Bingen *Laudes de sainte Ursule* Ensemble Organum, Marcel Pérès 79' 01" harmonia mundi HMC 901626
Hildegard of Bingen *O Jerusalem* Sequentia DHM 05472 77353 2 67' 30"

It is good to be reminded that much of Hildegard's music is liturgical. On the other hand, listening to Pérès's women singing, in their distinctively earthy tone, lengthy psalms topped and tailed by Hildegard's antiphons is not, I suspect, many people's idea of a pleasant hour's amusement. This is, however, a valuable antidote to recordings that separate the music from its context and function, and I sympathise with the eschewal of instrumental participation. How does Pérès know that the chest voice was in common usage in 12th-century Rhineland nunneries?

Barbara Thornton and her Vox Feminae (Benjamin Bagby and his Boanerges also take part) have clear, not gravelly voices and relish heights and marvellously soaring phrases. Each piece convinces in its own terms, which include bells, a certain amount of droning and other instrumental participation. Listening is positively enjoyable, though I have a sneaking fear that Pérès offers a more authentic experience. CB

Le Jeu d'Amour: the game of love in medieval France Anne Azéma 60' 12" Erato 0630-17072-2

Anything that Anne Azéma does is enjoyable. Here she moves from the Provence of her recent records to northern France, and

in some cases to music that survives with parts, though mostly she sings the monophonic trouvère repertoire. The sound is midway between the extremes of the two Hildegard discs reviewed in the previous column. There is an impetus that carries one along similar to that of the Sequentia performances. Here the instrumental interludes and backing are more elaborate; they feel more acceptable, though if I could travel back in time, I have little expectation of hearing music programmed like this. It is nice in these days of specialisation to find two of the Boston Orfeo violas velleing here. CB

O tu chara sciencia: Musique de la pensée médiévale La Reverdie 73' 20"

Arcana A 29

Music by Andrea dei Servi, B. de Cluny, Donato di Firenze, Giovanni da Firenze, Hildegard of Bingen, Lorenzo da Firenze, Landini, Mayshuet, Magister Pietro, J. de Porta & anon.

Speculum amoris: Lyrique de l'amour médiéval du mysticisme à l'éroticisme La Reverdie Arcana A20 51' 30"

Music by Forest, Hasprois, Landini, Pierre de Moulins, Magister Piero, Wolkenstein and anon.

Two thematic programmes, covering a wide range of medieval music. I tried not to think about Gothic Voices, but I do find La Reverdie's mixture of voices and instruments, with the emphasis on the latter, unsatisfactory for this music. It is such a relief when a voice-only track arrives, despite intonation not always being quite as firm as it should be; the soft-edged tone, however, is very appealing. I was worried by the prominence of the cornett; true, there may be some iconographical evidence for its use (though I doubt if the horn shown on the front of *O tu chara sciencia* could sound quite so refined), but it has much later connotations. I don't want to put you off. The ensemble plays brilliantly and the varied pieces fall together well, whether you appreciate the learned concepts and commentary or not. But I sense an ensemble searching for a repertoire rather than one like Les Haulz et les Bas that is formed because music existed for it. CB

There is a chance to hear La Reverdie live at the York Festival this month.

15th CENTURY

Cornysh Latin Church Music The Cardinal's Musick, Andrew Carwood 73' 28"

ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 164

Cornysh Ave Maria mater Dei, Gaude Virgo mater Christi, Magnificat, Salve Regina Prentes Magnificat, Turges Magnificat

This arrived with a photocopy of a recent article by David Skinner, summarised in the booklet, deflating the current assumption that this is the same Carver as that of the Henry VIII songbooks (*Ah Robin*, etc); so we have placed him in the 15th-century section. The music and performance is magnificent,

with just one criticism: in the solo sections, the lower voices seem to be striving too hard, and vibrato is disturbing. Otherwise, sheer enjoyment! CB

Josquin Desprez *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariæ* Ensemble Labyrinthes, Les Saqueboutiers de Toulouse, Maîtrise Notre-Dame de Paris, A Sei Voci, Bernard Fabre-Garrus dir 61' 45"

Auvidis Astrée E 8601

Also includes Dupré *Chi à martello*; Josquin *Deus in nomine tuo*, *Inviolata a12*, *Miserere mei*; Martini *Perfunde coeli rore*

We know from Lewis Lockwood's *Music in Renaissance Ferrara* of the numbers of the performers in the chapel of Duke Hercules, so one cannot complain at the wide range of forces used here. I found some of the short-spaced alternations in scoring a little implausible; otherwise this is an impressive recording of music that usually sounds unstylish when sung by forces larger than the basic complement of A Sei Voci. Here all works well. The boys sing the top part of the mass at a pitch way below that which English boys are trained to reach. The item I enjoyed most, however, was the 12-voice setting of *Inviolata integra et casta es*, whoever wrote it. CB

A Florentine Carnival: Festival Music for Lorenzo de' Medici London Pro Musica, Bernard Thomas 54' 46"

Carlton Classics 30367 01992 ££

Music by Coppinus, Isaac & anon.

It would be nice to welcome this reissue from 10 years ago including some well-known performers. Late 15th-century music badly needs the sort of authority Bernard Thomas brings to it. However, as a series of short pieces, some very beautiful, it doesn't hang together, and with only 55 minutes of music it could struggle to compete. The cornet, shawm and sackbuts forming the loud consort have occasional passages of sour tuning. Four singers perform carnival songs, mostly by Isaac. Their approach, à la Jantina Noorman, doesn't suit Kevin Smith, who sounds strained. The more gentle approach for *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam*, for example, more accurately recalls the singing of this fine artist. Robert Oliver

16th CENTURY

Renaissance Masterpieces. Vol. III. Paris Du Caurroy Choir of New College, Oxford, Edward Higginbottom 66' 47" Collins Classics 14972

I approached this with enthusiasm, since I am fond of the small amount of Du Caurroy that I know. I'm not sure whether to blame the composer or the performance for my disappointment. Some of the music seemed rather uneventful, especially the *Missa pro defunctis*, which occupies nearly

half of the disc. It might have more effect if the text were delivered at a speed nearer that of speech, since the music demands greater suppleness than it receives. I warmed more to the motets later in the programme, though the sound seemed much less clear than on other recordings from the New College choir. An interesting disc for those wishing to pursue the little-known period of French church music around 1600, but not one to convert the sceptic. CB

Gombert Missa Tempore paschali Henry's Eight, Jonathan Brown dir 65' 26"
Hyperion CDA66943
Also Adonai Domine Jesu Christe, In illo tempore, Magnificat VIII toni, O Rex glorie

This is the second album of music by Gombert that Henry's Eight have recorded for Hyperion, and they sound generally more secure this time round. They make good sense of the dense textures and querulous harmonies for which Gombert is notorious, and add to this a dramatic flair occasionally lacking in their main rivals in this repertoire, the Huelgas Ensemble on Sony. Gombert's cadences, which never seem to be heading where they eventually arrive, require just such committed advocacy to convince the listener. The extra singers called upon when the mass goes into twelve parts in the final petition of the Agnus Dei are integrated without a hitch, and this eccentric movement proves the crowning *tour de force* of the recording. Following their impressive 1995 debut disc for Meridian of music by Robert White, it is interesting to see Henry's Eight already carving out a distinctive recording niche for themselves. D. James Ross

Palestrina & De Macque Organ Works
Liuwe Tamminga (15th-cent. organ by Lorenzo da Prato, San Petronio, Bologna)
Accent ACC 96115 D 68' 28"

This is one of the most musical organs in the world – and one of the oldest. Any CD of it is worth considering, but this has the added value of a fascinating and well balanced programme and some superb playing by Liuwe Tamminga. The historic Italian organ sings in a vocal style, and keyboard touch and articulation need to be as sensitive as a singer's, using control of the opening and closing of the pallet to provide the vowels and consonants. This CD will let you hear exactly how it should be done. The programme has been excellently put together, balancing the eight Ricercars attributed to Palestrina with lively Canzonas by de Maque and stirring Partitas by Stella, Rinaldo and de Maque. The two *Consonanze stravaganze* of de Maque are highlights (the first played on the sonorous 24' and 12' Principale) as is the opening Intrada, played on the Ripieno – the full chorus of the organ. Buy. Andrew Benson-Wilson

Mirror of Voices: de Lassus, Adriaenssen, De Manchicourt, Crequillon, Guyot de Chatelet
Evelyne Dasnoy mS, André Vanderbosch baritone, Catherine Parmentier lute 47' 50"
Koch Discover International DICD 920398 £

This begins with six Holy Week responsories by Lassus (nos. 7-12 in *Sämtliche Werke* 24) sung by four unidentified voices in a strange sound and style that reminded me of 1950s Deller discs; the BRTF recording is dated 1985, but sounds as if that could be a misprint for 1958. The secular remainder of the disc also features four voices as much as the named soloists with a programme of unhackneyed chansons and lute pieces, the lutenist being by far the most acceptable of the performers. CB

Music of the Reformation Peter Schreier T, Capella Fidicinia, dir. Hans Grüss 57' 02"
Berlin Classics 0091202BC (Rec 1982) ££
Chorale settings by de Bruck, Ducas, Othmayr, Senfl, Walter and from Adam Puschmann's Songbook

The Songbook supplies two monophonic pieces (*Im langen Ton* & *In der Silberweise*), both well sung by Schreier (although he has the same falsetto high tones as Harry Secombe), while the others can be divided into homophonic and contrapuntal settings. Instruments include recorder, viols, organ (sometimes sounding like a chuffy tenor recorder), crumhorns, trombone and dulcian. This is another excellent remastering with very clear sound (very slight reverberation due presumably, to the empty church). The highlight of this very good CD is Othmayr's chorale-motet, *Ein feste Burg*, the performance showing all manner of scoring variations. One black note: no translations, particularly unhelpful for Senfl's *Pacientia*. BC

Musique ibérique au clavicorde Ilton Wjuniski harmonia mundi HMC 905236 75' 34"
Music by Fr. Bartolomeu de Olagüe, Cabanilles, Cabezon, Carreira, Coelho, Correa de Arauxo, Gaspar dos Reis, Mudarra & anon.

Every organist should play the clavichord, as most did for practice and domestic performance in pre-19th century times. As well as allowing a degree of touch-sensitivity and expressiveness impossible on any other keyboard instrument, it requires exactly the same control of arm weight and touch as a good organ. It also does organists no harm at all to play very quietly now and then. The Spanish organ repertoire (also suitable for other keyboard instruments, harp and vihuela) covered on this CD is one of the most fascinating of the European tradition, and includes Cabezon, Arauxo, Cabanilles and Coelho. The clavichord (or 'monacordia' as it was known in Spain) brings out the subtlety of the musical line in the often complex contrapuntal *Tientos* and even sounds convincing in a late-17th century *Batalha*! The playing makes full use of the delicate tone of the two copies of 18th century Spanish instruments used – at times they sound like lutes, in tone, rhythmic flexibility and touch. My only quibble with the playing is the tendency to crescendo during trills, adding more of an accent than I think was intended, and an occasionally over-heavy touch. As with any recording of a clavichord, it is essential to have the playback volume set suitably low. Recording clavichords is clearly not easy – here the microphones were set to register the sound

as heard by the player, but they also pick up the sound as emitted by the player – in this case his voluminous and erratic intakes of breath. Control of breathing is as important as control of touch, and clavichord players should always blow their nose before performing! Andrew Benson-Wilson

17th CENTURY

Brossard Grands Motets Choeur de Chambre Accentus, Ensemble Baroque de Limoges, Christophe Coin 76' 07"
Auvdis Astrée E 8607
Canticum eucharisticum pro pace, In convertendo, Miserere mei

Yes, this is the same Brossard who many of us will know as lexicographer and theorist, but not, I suspect, as a composer. As we might expect of one as widely knowledgeable, at various times one can hear echoes of Brossard's contemporaries and immediate predecessors, though this has the positive virtue of creating stylistic variety in these three lengthy works. The performances are exceptionally well integrated with orchestral, solo and choral sections flowing in and out of each other. However, not all of the solo singers sound at ease with the style, nor do they all have the clarity of tone we have come to expect in this repertoire. This could therefore be a case of sample before purchase, though if you're a sucker for multiple suspensions and you start with track 22 your decision will be swiftly made. David Hansell

Buxtehude Vocal Music, vol. 1 Emma Kirkby S, John Holloway, Manfredo Kraemer vlns, Jaap ter Linden vdg, Lars Ulrik Mortensen hpscd, org. 72' 15"
Marco Polo Dacapo 8.224062
BuxWV 32, 38, 76, 83-4, 95, 97-8, 105,

This recording can be recommended without reservation. The music is very beautiful, the performances superb. The instrumental group is that whose recording of Buxtehude's chamber music I recommended some issues ago. Here they are joined by Manfredo Kraemer in playing which has all the virtues the music requires, including, this time, awareness of the words. They echo the vocal line so often that they could not play so well without, I imagine, writing the words in their parts. But the success of the recording hangs on the singing of Emma Kirkby, here outstanding even in comparison with her own distinguished catalogue. The music requires just her kind of verbal commitment, not only to the declamation of the text itself, but also the emotions behind it. It is very 'simple' music, in the sense that it calls forth a straightforward, direct response from the listener. Emma Kirkby's singing has an open-throated emotional quality which allows this music to have great impact. It is all new to me, and I was very moved. Her voice, for once, acknowledges the force of gravity, with, here and there a portamento, weight in the middle register and a lovely chesty sound in the low notes. The pitch (a=440)

suits her perfectly (it has to, she spans two octaves). She paints the text with great intensity, and never loses those bell-like attacks on top notes when she wants them.

Robert Oliver

Charpentier *Messe pour le Port-Royal* Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr, accomp & dir Emmanuel Mandrin; organ improvised couplets by Michel Chapuis 69' 05"

Auvidis Astrée E 8598

Messe H5, Ave Maris stella H63, Veni creator H69, Magnificat H81, Laudate Dominum H182 O salutaris H261, Domine salvum H290, Flores O Gallia H342

Charpentier's music for the nuns of Port-Royal has appeared on disc before in thoroughly satisfactory performances. The notable feature of this new release is the inclusion of improvised organ interludes, as specified by the composer, played by Michael Chapuis on the splendid 1739 Clicquot organ at Houdan. These and the brief snatches of plainchant create a real feeling of context for Charpentier's simple music (mainly unified voices) which looks almost dull on the page but has great dignity. The mini-vespers sequence that completes the recital includes a rarity – an unaccompanied piece – a setting of *Laudate Dominum* for four high voices *sine organo*, and very lovely it is too, as is the succeeding motet *Flores O Gallia*, the musical highlight of the collection. Here, however, the singers do not always sound at ease in the more fluid lines and the addition of ripieno voices in certain sections is not convincing. These performances may well be useful to singers and choral directors contemplating the use of 'French Latin' as the simple textures make the mass text stand out clearly: helpfully, this appears in full in the booklet.

David Hansell

Froberger *Suites de clavecin & Toccatas* Christophe Rousset (J. Couchet hpscd 1652) 64' 53" (rec 1992)

harmonia mundi Suite HMT 7901372 ££

Suites 18-20, 30; *Toccatas* 2, 9, 14, 18; *Tombeau sur... M. Blanrocher, Lamentation sur...Ferdinand III*

Whilst in Boston, I heard various pieces by Froberger (and several ways of pronouncing his name) in different temperaments and on a variety of instruments. I'm afraid they never really did much for me, even in live performance, when the performer at least has the opportunity to grasp your attention visually (a lot of keyboard players do!) Recorded on a Johannes Couchet harpsichord (originally 1652) and (to quote): 'Pitch: A 392. Tuned in French eighteenth century' (presumably never since), four suites, four toccatas and two laments were just a little too much. Don't get me wrong: Christophe Rousset plays magnificently: his timing is meticulous, his distinctness of touch very precise and his selection of registration shrewd. My ears just cried out for more orthodox tunings!

BC

Marais *Pièces en trio* Musica Pacifica 135'52" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61365 2 6 2CDs

I was a bit nervous about this. Would the invention of Marais sustain two discs of his

trio sonatas? I've played all of these, but never listened to them. In fact, I enjoyed it very much. There is great variety of invention, and Marais has such interesting harmonic ideas. Some movements are real crackers – gorgeous slow sarabandes and majestic Passacailles. There aren't any of the character pieces of the *Pièces de violes*, but there's no great need. The performances have a lovely relaxed feel about them, with beautifully expressive playing from all, but particularly oboe and recorder. My only reservation is that there is no pair of like instruments. The violin, despite the excellent ensemble, cannot help but draw attention to itself when it is with a recorder, even when it has a subservient part, and the player's habit of bulging with vibrato cannot be matched by the wind players.

Robert Oliver

Mazzocchi *Sacrae concertationes* (1664) nos. 2, 5-7, 9, 11, 14, 16-19 Maria Cristina Kiehr, Barbara Borden, Andreas Scholl, Gerd Türk, Ulrich Messthaler SSATB, Nederlands Kamerkoor, René Jacobs 72' 51 (rec 1990) harmonia mundi Suite HMT 7901357 ££

This set of motets and dialogues was published in the year before Mazzocchi's death and probably represent his favourite pieces. They consist of extended passages of solo writing and some lovely (often chromatic) contrapuntal sections. After five tracks of solo performances come six with choir, with soloists taken from within the Nederlands Kamerkoor. The continuo section consists of cello, theorbo and keyboard (organ or harpsichord) and never draws attention to itself. The solo singing is very similar to what we hear from Cantus Cölln; the choral singing is, surprisingly, not overpowering at all in such intimate music. One of Jacobs's better CDs.

BC

Monteverdi *Quinto Libro de' Madrigali* Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini Opus 111 OPS 30-166 65' 19"

Book 5 is Monteverdi's first with continuo: introducing it gradually (it is functionally necessary only in the last six pieces) must have been a propaganda move to demonstrate the organic continuity between *prima* and *seconda prattica*. Concerto Italiano uses instruments only where essential and uses them well – though I'd like to hear at least one piece (maybe *Troppo ben può*) with just a big, fat theorbo and no harpsichord.

Capitalising on the singers' home-field advantage as native Italian-speakers, Concerto Italiano delights in subtle, and not-so-subtle, variations in tempo and declamation. Some effects (like the inflected quavers at *Era l'anima mio* b. 16-18) are delicious, others (like the declamatory contrast between 'non mori tu' and 'mor'io' at the end of the same madrigal) are touching and illuminating. But they sometimes carry their very strengths too far. Thus, the caesuras on repeats of 'si moia' in *M'è più dolce* b.19f are witty and affecting, but they outstay their welcome by b.23f; and after the delicate grace of b.21, overdoing the corresponding cadence at b.25ff sounds just a bit naff. It is revealing to

compare that madrigal (and the whole CD) with the Consort of Musicke's L'Oiseau-Lyre version (410 291-2) released in 1984. Even if it is not the Consort's best Monteverdi book, it is a reminder that it was pioneering the extrovert, expressively-inflected performance of this repertoire years before Concerto Italiano was even thought of. Concerto can be exhilarating, intriguing and often moving. Heard straight afterwards, the Consort may seem too bland; yet it often gives a better sense of a madrigal's architecture than the Italians with all their love of detail. Concerto starts off *Me più dolce* extremely slowly; the tempo almost doubles from b.3. But the Consort of Musicke shows how taking the opening bars *a tempo*, almost off-handedly (as common sense suggests), can actually heighten the impact of the astonishing harmonies. If Monteverdi had wanted the Concerto version, he could perfectly well have notated it that way. As in other pairings of the two groups, the recordings are complementary, not competitive. Performers, in particular, simply must listen to both; and then (to paraphrase Yeats) throw CDs away and be content to sing. Eric Van Tassel See also p. 28.

Rossi Hashirim Asher Lishlomo (*The Songs of Solomon*) Pro Cantione Antiqua, Sydney Fixman 69' 23"

Carlton Classics 30366 00452 ££

Unlike some Carlton discs, this is a new recording made last year in the West London synagogue. There have been two other Rossi recordings since *EMR* began, one from Prague, the other from the USA, neither entirely successful. This contains 20 of the 33 items in Rossi's 1623 publication and is far better sung than its rivals. If I am not entirely convinced, perhaps it is because the music may not be quite as good as Fixman claims in his notes. Unless you feel you need all 33 works, this is the best buy.

CB

Sainte Colombe *retrové et changé* Hille Perl *gamba*, Lorenz Duftschmidt *gamba*, Lee Santana *lutes*, Andrew Lawrence-King *harp*, organ 68' 38"

DHM 05472 77373 2

This is a very interesting recording, taking liberties, but with insight and respect for what is available of the original. The duets survive in a single manuscript source, copied by someone unknown, in many cases clearly incomplete. Many of the pieces are very beautiful just as they are, but many cry out for the sort of treatment they receive here. Hille Perl, whose playing on some Harp Consort recordings I have already admired, plays a Bertrand copy. She is joined by Lorenz Duftschmidt, who plays an original Bertrand (the instruments are stunningly matched), accompanied by Lee Santana (*lutes*) and Andrew Lawrence King (*harps* and *organ*). Their added bass-lines and accompaniments work superbly well, even in the well-known *Tombeau Les regrets*, marvellous with just two viols, but here with the pluckers even adding bits; it's wonderful, even for hard-core bass viol duetists.

Robert Oliver

Schütz *Auferstehungs-Historie; Meine Seele erhebt* (SWV 344) Concerto Vocale, René Jacobs 50' 38" (rec 1989)
harmonia mundi Suite HMT 7901311 ££

This is the shortest of the current batch of Suite re-releases from harmonia mundi: in addition, the German Magnificat setting that accompanies the *Resurrection Story* has already appeared in a cheaper re-issue series (which is quite naughty, even if it is a good performance). The opening chorus gives an excellent idea of the performance to come: a lavish choral sound with expressive crescendos and diminuendos, clearly audible lines and slightly emphasised rhythms. The gamba consort improvise around the Evangelist's reciting tone, with the top line most prominent. The concertato movements work well on the whole, even Andreas Scholl's 'fleeting counter-tenorial appearances' (© Classic CD, July 1997!) Slightly out of season, perhaps, but this is nevertheless well worth having – the soprano ensembles are stunning. BC

Schütz *St John Passion, Psalms of David* Dresdner Kreuzchor, Capella Fidinicia, dir. Flämig 57' 14" (Rec 1972, 1974-5)
Berlin Classics 0090092BC ££
SWV 40, 42, 43, 44, 481

Unlike the *Resurrection Story*, Schütz's passion settings are purely vocal. The narrator and characters recite the text in pseudo-plain-song (adding rhythm as they see fit), while the choruses, as well as providing an overall framework, are themselves characters in the drama (and mostly contrapuntal). This remastered recording is remarkably clear (the Lukaskirche must have been empty for the sessions) and the performance is very good. Schütz's choruses don't give much scope for characterisation: "Weg! Weg mit ihm!" isn't exactly a frightening piece! The psalms (to which you'll have to refer to a Bible for texts if you struggle to understand the German) feature double continuo and up to three lutes (yes, more than two decades ago), violin, "diskant-violin", gambas, cornetts and up to six trombones. The singing is not of the same quality (the opening tenor solo has far too much vibrato) and the acoustic is suddenly woollen (two of the pieces are a8, the other two a10). On the whole, though, the performances have dated little. BC

Effetti e Stravaganze: Affect and Effect in 17th-Century Instrumental Music Concerto Palatino 60' 38"

Accent ACC 94102 D

Music by Corradini, Fontana, a Kempis Marini, Picchi, Piccinini, Ré, Riccio, Selma y Salaverde, Troilo, Uccellini, Viadana

The icy cool we expect from the Concerto Palatino – always perfect and measured – has thawed on this recording. It may partly be an approach to the repertoire of the bizarre, and may be but one example of the burgeoning confidence of cornett and sackbut playing everywhere. The instrumental blend is so matched and shaped that a wholly new sound is created. The playing is wonderfully vocal and fluid. The continuo

assumes a rather background role – acting as a garnish rather than a bed of salad. The resulting clarity is part of the Concerto Palatino hallmark, but in some pieces even more conversational excitement might be possible by involving the continuo as peer. The programming is excellent, moving from the conservative Picchi canzon through Corradini's syncopations, remarkable for their extent rather than their outright oddity, and the harmonic hinterlands of Piccinini and Marini. Occasional returns to canzon form serve to reset the temperature amongst pieces based on bird-calls and the cat-and-mouse trading of divisions. This is extraordinary repertoire delivered by extraordinary players. Stephen Cassidy

„Quando muere el sol“ *Penitential Music at the Royal Chapel in Madrid* (Barocco Español vol. 3) Al Ayre Español, Eduardo López Banzo 66' 11"
deutsche harmonia mundi 05472 77376 2

This third volume of DHM's series devoted to the Spanish Baroque turns to the little-known repertory of the sacred music around the turn of the eighteenth century, a period when Spanish music became increasingly subjected to Italian influences. If the idea of over an hour of penitence might seem excessive, the considerable variation of style and, more unexpectedly, mood in these works rapidly dispels such notions. In particular the colourful multi-sectional Torres *Miserere* thrives on contrast, with flowing counterpoint frequently interrupted by vigorously-declaired homophony in ensembles, themselves alternated with solo verses. The two *Tonos* are simpler, folk-inflected verse and refrain settings, that of de Navas opening with an *estribillo* (refrain) of moving beauty whilst the *Tenebrae* Lamentations also offer considerable textural variety. The vocal performances are of high quality, the occasional unsteadiness of the bass providing the only serious reservation. Apart from some less-than-pleasing violin tone, the instrumental contribution is thoroughly sound. Full texts and translations are included with a disc that is recommended to readers interested in exploring one of the more worthwhile by-ways of the period. Brian Robins

Hanseatic Wedding Motets Weser-Renaissance, Manfred Cordes 60' 02"
cpo 999 396-2

Music by Eccard, Raphun, Schop, Schultz, Steffens, Stobäus, Sweelinck, Vierdanck

By definition, wedding motets, written specifically for a particular event, could only be performed once: luckily, they were considered a valuable part of the wedding ceremony (having the works printed was hardly cheap) so, like funeral motets, many of them were preserved as part of family collections. While a CD full of dirges might not be a particularly attractive proposition, this selection of quality wedding music (with considerably more taste than the junk compilations churned out now for the nuptial season!) is a delight. Though most of the composers featured scarcely rate more than the briefest mention in the

history books (a few won't even meet that criterion), there is some fine and appealing music here, much of it from Königsberg, for up to six voices with a pair of fiddles, four-part wind and multi-tiered continuo, superbly performed. BC

'Hanseatic' is on the back and spine, but not on the front of the box.

LATE BAROQUE

Bach Mass in B Minor Balthasar-Neumann-Chor, Freiburger Barockorchester, Thomas Hengelbrock 107' 15" 2 discs
deutsche harmonia mundi 05472 77380 2

This performance was given in an acoustically-spaced, staged version during a Festival, but there isn't as much of a sense of directional dialogue as we might have expected. The choir is large, and some movements (including both sections of the first *Kyrie eleison*) are taken unusually slowly, with doesn't make it easy for either singers or players to control consistently. The singers have, however, been well-prepared and ensembles and solos are usually taken more nimbly; but those who cannot accept really fast speeds may find this a good set to try. The Freiburg orchestra has never sounded very stylish to me, although they are admired by many. I very much liked the more gesturing, idiosyncratic styles of La Petite Bande, the old Leonhardt Consort and even the Vienna Concentus Musicus, and I find the Freiburg recipe under-expressive, though often better in equal tuning and in versatility of bowing (because the bows sound lighter, and are presumably played well away from the heel with tight hair and consequently more like modern bowing; this is the kind of thing that Eduard Melkus has long been doing). The balance is odd with so big a choir in the large movements and, the other way round, with solo singers accompanied by more than one string-player to a part. Some of the pronunciation of the Latin struck me as highly unorthodox. Stephen Daw

Bach Great Organ Works Helmut Walcha (Great Organ of St. Laurenskerk, Alkmaar & Silbermann Organ at St.-Pierre-le Jeune, Strasbourg) 144' 58" 2 CDs (rec 1959-1971)
Deutsche Grammophon 453 064-2
BWV 527, 532, 538, 540, 542, 552, 565, 572, 582, 645-650, 769

A sentimental reissue for me. Walcha's Archiv recordings and his personal appearances at the 5.55pm Royal Festival Hall recitals in the late 1950s were my first experience of any sort of music-making which seriously attempted to be based on historical instruments and performance practice. My previous knowledge of Bach's organ works, apart from playing them as impromptu piano duets, had been on a typical small Victorian organ with just one pedal stop; performances I heard elsewhere were bigger but no more stylish. These recordings wear pretty well. To be honest, they do sometimes seem a little pedestrian, especially in contrast with Ton Koopman (whose first Bach discs were the next

revelation in my understanding of his organ music). This reissue will intrigue those interested in the modern revival of Bach and, apart from that, offers an enjoyable experience in its own right. **CB**

Bach Six Cello Suites Jaap ter Linden 145' 33"
harmonia mundi **HMU 907216-17** 2 CDs

There is something very agreeable about Jaap ter Linden's playing of this essential repertoire. Things have obviously been very attentively planned and prepared. He has, inevitably, taught as well as played these works numerous times, and no doubt he has considered the two versions recorded by his compatriot, Anner Bylsma (on Seon and Sony, very differently played) as well, perhaps, as the one from Wispewey (fluffed technically here and there, but still stylish) and recordings on modern instruments too. But he hasn't copied anybody, and he puts in some delightful touches of detail, notably in the more strongly-stylised dances. There are two small snags. First, somehow the real greatness of the Suites – their very distinct individuality within the collected series and their carefully-balanced expressive call upon the performer to combine strictness with flexibility – somehow escapes the listener's attention. Second, there is a surfeit of extraneous sound, both from the player and the instrument, which constitutes a serious distraction. **Stephen Daw**

Bach 6 Sonatas BWV 1014-1019a Dmitry Sitkovetsky vln, Robert Hill hpsc'd 76' 15"
Hänssler Classic CD-No. **98.154**

This single disc contains the usual versions of the six sonatas with the very late (c.1749) harpsichord *Allegro* in the last of them, hence 1019a. Sitkovetsky is among the very best of a host of Americanised Russian-born violinists, and has always displayed a strong sense of style, even in his recording of the unaccompanied solos. His tone is beautiful, without too much modern vibrato, and the speeds are reliably-judged. There is a problem in that, if a harpsichord is to be adequately heard when playing obbligato with a modern violin, it needs to be very strongly voiced, and that has been done with the instrument played here by the excellent American scholar Robert Hill. This prevents an imbalance of volume, but the strong voicing make it difficult to play in what Bach apparently termed a *cantabile* manner, i.e. with a minimum of percussive impact as the strings are released to vibrate. In all musical respects, though, this performance is relevant and competitive with some of the best baroque-violin interpretations. **Stephen Daw**

Boyce Peleus and Thetis Opera Restor'd,
Peter Holman 68' 06"
Hyperion **CDA66935**
Also *Corydon and Miranda*, music for *Florizel and Perdita*, The Dirge from *Romeo and Juliet*.

The major offering here is the early (pre-1740) masque *Peleus and Thetis*, an uneven work that builds up to a surprisingly intense climax (very well handled here) rather too soon. The development of the

story of Jupiter's opposition to the lovers Peleus and Thetis is extremely effective, the culminating point a dramatically-charged trio that takes full advantage of the *Acis*-like situation. But no tragedy follows, and the ensuing mollification of Jupiter by the clairvoyant Prometheus disappointingly lowers the dramatic tension of the last third of the work. The remaining pieces are slighter, but include a delightful pastoral duet from *Florizel and Perdita*, Garrick's 'adaptation' of *A Winter's Tale* (1756), and a touching setting (complete with tolling bell) of the Dirge Garrick wrote for *Romeo and Juliet*. In Holman's experienced hands it all comes off very well, the singers conveying the drama of the masque in impressive style. New additions to Hyperion's trail-blazing English Orpheus series are now lauded with almost monotonous regularity. That should not be allowed to detract from yet another disc essential to anyone interested in English music. **Brian Robins**

Sharing a stand at Boston with Tricia Holman, I was interested to see how many of those who stopped by were aware of The English Orpheus as a series; so it is odd the Hyperion has stopped numbering new issues, thus losing the collector's obsession to complete a numbered sequence.

Goldberg: Chamber Music Musica Alta Ripa
Musikproduktion Dabringhaus und Grimm
MDG 309 0709-2 76' 50"
Sonatas for 2 violins and bc in a, C, c, B flat, g and f;
Polonaises composto per il Cembalo in F, d, E₂, c, G & C

I have to confess that this is the first time I have ever knowingly heard any of Goldberg's music; 'knowingly' because one of the trio sonatas on the present disc was long attributed to J. S. Bach (and when you hear Goldberg's contrapuntal skill, you'll realise just how easy it could be to mistake his works for the master's). The five trio sonatas and one quartet are in the slow-fast-slow-fast *da chiesa* form and even the apparently lyrical movements have subtle contrapuntal elements to them. The playing is excellent: the violinists have individual sounds, beautifully balanced and unbothered by some fiendish passagework. The Polonaises are much simpler in style and carefully shaped and polished by Bernhard Lohr. The continuo playing is supportive with being obtrusive. Fine music in inspired performances. (The group takes its name from the Latin name for Hanover, where it is based.) **BC**

Graun Cleopatra & Cesare [excerpts] Janet Williams *Cleopatra*, Iris Vermilion *Cesare*, Lynne Dawson *Cornelia*, Robert Gambill *Tolomeo*, Concerto Köln, René Jacobs 77' 14"
harmonia mundi *Suite* **HMT 7901602** ££ (rec 1995)

After my review of the complete opera, Anthony Hicks (quite rightly) castigated me for failing to appreciate Graun's recitative. Since this just has the highlights, harmonia mundi here avoids the recitative problem. It is a great disc, full of a variety of arias, together with the dramatic overture and a couple of ensembles. Some of the singing is a little overpowering, but, taken within the

imagined context of a live performance (to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the opening of Frederick the Great's Berlin opera house at Unter den Linden), it is utterly convincing. Recommended. **BC**

Handel Samson Lynda Russell *Dalila*, Cathryn Wyn Rogers *Micah*, Thomas Randle *Samson*, Matthew Vine *Messenger*, Michael George *Manoah*, Jonathan Best *Harapha*, Lynne Dawson, Mark Padmore *ST*, *The Sixteen*, *The Symphony of Harmony and Invention*, Harry Christophers 204' 43" 3 discs
Collins Classics **70382**

An issue to be welcomed, with some reservations. The work is given complete, more or less as it is in the Chrysander edition, with some supplementary recits in the closing scene when the messenger announces Samson's death, and a curious choral echo of the words 'Let the bright seraphim' before their final chorus entry of 'Let their celestial concerts all unite'. The libretto is superb (except for a brief, rather misogynist section reflecting on Dalila), using the image of light and darkness to give cohesion to this large-scaled work, thought over-long in its own time and frequently cut in performance today. It is a great strength of this recording that at no stage does one agree.

The performance overall has great strengths, worthy of this masterpiece. The orchestra plays beautifully, particularly the unison violin obligato accompaniments to the arias. The choir is very good, as one would expect, and the solo singers are all very fine. I have two points on which I have reservations. The first is that there is too great a discrepancy between the style of much of the solo singing and that of the orchestra and choir; the second, that the recitatives are rather pedantically paced.

Thomas Randle, for all his many virtues as an heroic tenor for this first great heroic tenor role, sings with too little tonal variety, and uses too much vibrato, particularly in 'Total eclipse'. When in his final aria, 'Thus when the sun', he does use an appropriate colour, the effect is stunning. The pivotal role of Micah is sung by Catherine Wyn-Rogers, who could also use far less vibrato. For example, in the first Act aria 'Then long eternity shall greet your bliss', the word 'long' is set to a step-wise scale, starting on the tonic, lifting slowly with rests to the fifth degree over the sustained tonic in the bass. It is a graphic, yet simple, depiction of the agony of waiting, and such a fine singer could surely opt to use no vibrato. Dalila is sung by Lynda Russell, who manages to be both voluptuous and stylistic, but needs a more girl-like virgin in the wonderful echo aria where she sounds, if anything, more virginal than her virgin (the voluptuous-sounding Lynne Dawson). Jonathan Best, as Harapha, has a superbly menacing sound, and Manoah, Michael George, brings a very moving pathos to his arias in the first and third acts. Lynne Dawson (brilliant in 'Let the bright seraphim') and Mark Padmore are the most consistently stylistic, in a performance which, despite reservations, can certainly be recommended. **Robert Oliver**

Locatelli *L'arte del violino op. 3* Mariana Sirbu vln, I Musici 193' 09 3 discs
Philips 446 506-2

Any recording of this work must stand comparison with Elizabeth Wallfisch's astounding set on Hyperion. Although Mariana Sirbu is an excellent violinist and Massimo Paris's cadenzas are extremely idiomatic, there are (for me, at least) several problems: omnipresent vibrato (thrown into stark prominence when Locatelli's writing forces the player to use open strings) and gushy accompaniments. Surprisingly, too, tuning is not always stable (not only in the extraordinarily high-lying solo parts, either). Not bad, but equally not in the same class as Wallfisch's account. **BC**

Rameau *Anacréon, Daphnis et Eglé (Orchestral Suites Vol. 2)* Capella Savaria, Mary Térey-Smith 51' 26"
Naxos 8.553746 £

Neither of these two one-act opera ballets, produced for the court at Fontainebleau in 1754 and 1753, exists in a modern edition. The performing scores for the present suites have been prepared by Paul F. Rice, who suggests in his notes that *Anacréon* would be worth reviving. That work, incidentally, is not to be confused with the *Entrée* of the same name Rameau added for a revival of *Les Surprises de l'Amour* in 1757, a trap not avoided by the Classical Catalogue in its listing of the William Christie recording. As is invariably the case with Rameau, there is much to enchant in both suites, which are directed by Térey-Smith in largely spirited fashion, although some of her tempos seem on the slow side. This coupled with a resonant, bass-heavy recording does at times leave one wishing for lighter rhythms and more translucent textures. Her Hungarian period instrument band respond with their customary commitment and enthusiasm, but some untidy string ensemble and other lapses (the oboes have a particularly nasty moment near the end of the *Daphnis Overture*) suggest either lack of rehearsal time or unfamiliarity with the idiom. A good if not outstanding disc, valuable principally for introducing previously unknown Rameau to the catalogue. **Brian Robins**

Rameau *Ouvertures* Les Talens Lyriques, Christophe Rousset 69' 48"
L'Oiseau-Lyre 455 293-2

I doubt if anyone will be surprised to learn that I absolutely love this disc: Rameau's opera music has long fascinated me and, while I reckon him to be one of the outstanding setters of the French language, his purely instrumental music is perhaps his most extraordinary. Each of the 17 overtures recorded is individual: if they take their inspiration from the Lullian 'French overture', it is not long before they are imbued with an almost symphonic character. They must surely have captured their original audiences' imaginations, whether or not they were favourable! Even for modern listeners, there remains something of that initial shock. A recording no-one should miss! **BC**

Vivaldi *Concerti for Strings* Alberto Martini vln, Accademia I Filarmonici 56' 59"
Naxos 8.553742 £

RV 113-4, 127, 138, 146, 151, 153, 157, 161, 167
Vivaldi *Dresden Concerti vol. 1* Alberto Martini vln, Accademia I Filarmonici 60' 20"
Naxos 8.553792 £

RV 170, 314a, 319, 341, 366, 383

These two CDs have similar sleeve-notes, which inform us that Vivaldi's father was 'to win distinction as a violinist in the service of the great Gabrieli and Monteverdi' – not bad for someone born the year before the latter died! The Dresden concertos recorded are all for solo violin, and not the ones I've come to call the Noah's Ark concertos. Several were specifically written for the Dresden-based virtuoso Pisendel. Together with the sinfonie recording, this compilation features some quite stylish playing (there is no irritating harpsichord arpeggiation for example), though the continuo cellist should learn not to get too carried away with vibrato. **BC**

Great Baroque Arias Gillian Fischer, James Bowman, John Mark Ainsley, Michael George SATB, Crispian Steele-Perkins tpt, Lisa Besmosiuk fl, Roy Goodman vln, The King's Consort, Robert King 61' 07"
Carlton Classics 30366 00422 (rec 1987) ££

Music by Bach, Handel, Purcell, Vivaldi & Weldon

I suspect that our readers are less likely to buy this for themselves than as a cheap present for elderly relatives, satisfying in that it presents an old-fashioned repertoire of well-tried airs (none the worse for that) in a style which accords with contemporary taste. A few decades ago, the sheep would have safely grazed in English and the rather slow *Largo* (or rather *Larghetto*) would have had a more worthy text. A nice anthology, deserving non-specialist circulation. **CB**

Music in England in the time of Hogarth Various performers 65' 36"
harmonia mundi HMUK 986002
Music by Arne, J. C. Bach, Corelli, Croft, Gay/Pepusch, Matteis, Handel, Purcell, G. Sammartini & anon.

I'm afraid that the 16' bass and French Sailor in Christie's *Dido* put me off at the start of this compilation, but it quickly improves with McGegan's Matteis. Whether I would have thought of Hogarth had I been unaware of the title I doubt. But the mixture works well, and I hope that Hogarth traps many into sampling a century of English music. **CB**

CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *5 Flute Sonatas* Christopher Hyde-Smith fl, Jane Dodd hpscd 67' 03"
ASV CD QS 6205
H. 504-6, 508, 509 (Wq 73, 83-86)

Whilst nowadays only the most pedantic 'historically-enlightened' player would disprove of the notion of modern-instrument recordings of old music, CDs as lacklustre as this are just asking for trouble. Compared to the wonderful 1993 Kuijken/van Asperen

recording on Sony neither Hyde-Smith nor Dodd manage to capture much of the music's expressive qualities, instead sailing through great swathes of harmonic and motivic interest in a sort of metronomic daze. This is made worse by an uninteresting and uncomfortably closely-miked harpsichord sound and Hyde-Smith's somewhat unreliable tuning. The notes are all there, but these are at best pedestrian performances. **Marie Ritter**

C. P. E. Bach *Gambesonaten* Siegfried Pank, Christiane Jaccottet clavichord & fp 55' 51"
Berlin Classics 0092642BC (rec 1984)
Sonatas in C, D, g, H558-9, 510; *Fantasie* in C H284

The principal point of interest in this reissue is in the choice of accompanying instruments. The use of the clavichord, in this case a relatively large-toned instrument, allows a lovely relaxed sound from the viol, but in the two sonatas in which it is used (C Major and G Major) neither artist finds the necessary poetry, despite their impressive security. Only in the G minor sonata, in which the fortepiano makes a very appropriate accompanying tone for the viol, is there real life. And only the C minor *Fantasie* for fortepiano solo, which concludes the recording, has all the vividness and unexpectedness one associates with this composer. **Robert Oliver**

J. C. Bach *Six Sonatas for Piano Forte op. 16 with an Accompaniment for Violin or German Flute* Salzburger Hofmusik: Wolfgang Brunner fp, Christine Busch vln, Karl Kaiser fl 50' 01"
cpo 999 494-2

This CD may appeal to those who prefer their J.C. Bach forthright and direct rather than delicate and rococo, but some may find it too driven. Brunner's generally graceful piano playing is accompanied alternately by violin or flute, though the close recorded sound makes the violin tone far from ingratiating. He plays – rather curiously – on a copy of a Walter 1790, and works busily – perhaps too busily – at retaining the interest of the listener. **Simon McVeigh**

The Bach Family: *Organ Works* Marie-Claire Alain 60' 05"
Erato 0630-17073-2
Music by CPE, JC, JCF & WF, including WF's 8 *Fugues* & fugues on BACH

I have difficulty with the generation of organ composers immediately following J. S. Bach, including his sons. Some of their music is great fun – light and frothy in the new gallant style – but when they venture into traditional Bach territory, boy can they be turgid! For example, C. P. E. Bach's organ sonatas are a delight (and, although not on this CD, were specially written to be performed by the Princess Anna Amalia on this organ); but some of the vast fugues of the likes of Krebs (who wrote some lovely trios and chorale preludes) are just overkill. Although definitely on the earnest side, this programme manages to avoid the excesses, although all eight of WF's *VIII Fugues* is a bit of an academic luxury. The 3 fugues on the letters 'BACH' by CPE, JC and JCF make

for interesting comparison. The organ sounds lovely, although the registrations are a bit too baroque for the period of the organ and music. And, at risk of crayoning on an icon, I do find that Marie-Claire Alain's playing, although stylish and musical, retains faint echoes of the over-articulated style of the 60s – but she is not the only one!

Andrew Benson-Wilson

F. Benda *Concertos for Flute, Strings and Continuo* Konrad Hunteler, fl; Camerata of the 18th Century
MDG Gold MDG 311 0702-2

These mid-18th century concertos tread an intriguing path between baroque and galant styles, with symphonic, expressive flute and violin writing underpinned by archaic basso continuo structures. Benda's bracing string writing is vividly brought to life by the Camerata of the 18th Century, offset by Hunteler's robust but nevertheless luxuriant flute sound. The recording quality here is extremely good, albeit a little dark-hued. Highly recommended, demanding repeated listening.

Marie Ritter

Boccherini *Sinfonie a grande orchestra op. 37* Academia Montis Regalis, Luigi Mangio-Cavallo 55' 28"

Opus 111 OPS 30-168

op. 37/1 in C, 3 in d, fin A (G 515, 517, 518)

Boccherini *Symphonies* Akademie für Alte Musik, Berlin 78' 26" (rec 1996)

harmonia mundi *Suite HMT 7901597* ££
op. 12/6 in A (G 508), op. 35/5 in Eb (G 513), op. 41 in c (G 519), op. 42 in D (G 520)

Boccherini *Symphonies* Ensemble 415, Chiara Banchini 65' 34" (rec. 1988)

harmonia mundi *musique d'abord HMA 1901291* £

in D (G 490), d *La casa del Diavolo* (G 506), A (G 511), F (G 512)

What a month for Boccherini recordings! Three discs of different works, played by different groups (both in terms of personnel and approach) and what a wonderful insight into his orchestral music they provide. *La casa del Diavolo* (the earliest piece on any of the discs) opens very dramatically (and the out-of-tune oboes – how can such a thing be possible? – heighten that drama no end!) and soon settles into a *Sturm und Drang* piece, worthy of Haydn. With twice as many string players, the Akademie für Alte Musik produce a much more powerful sound. The wind playing is in a different dimension (try the middle section of track 3). The Italian orchestra also has a slightly larger string section, but what it gains in sound quality, it loses in intonation (some passages are quite disconcerting!) That said, these are all very exciting recordings of some wonderful music.

BC

Giardini *Cinque Quartetti dedicati al Duce e alla Duchessa di Devonshire* L'Astrée 66' 53"

Opus 111 OPS 30-163

op. 21/2, 5, 6 (hpscd); op. 25/3 (fl), /5 (ob), all with vln, vla, vlc

This polished Italian ensemble performing on period instruments has selected three

quartets from the op. 25 set for harpsichord, violin, viola and cello and interspersed them with two contrasting quartets, one with flute, the other with oboe, by the Italian violinist Felice Giardini, most of whose works were written after settling in London. Although generally admirably performed (I have some reservations about the oboist), in an attempt to achieve variety of texture by interleaving the wind quartets with the harpsichord works, this arrangement has resulted in three B flat quartets in a row (relieved, I must admit, by two short slow movements in the subdominant). Furthermore, it is the first two works on disc (in C major op. 21/6 and D major op. 25/3) that seem the most rewarding. The rondo of the C major has some interesting textures; the D major gives some passages of melody to the viola and is a delightful work and, in the oboe quartet, the solo instrument is given an accompanying role for much of the time. In all these quartets the violin shows off some virtuoso passage work. The harpsichord could have been more forward, particularly where it has solo sections.

Ian Graham-Jones

Haydn & Pleyel *Cello Concertos* Ivan Monighetti, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin
harmonia mundi HMC 901599 68' 29"

Haydn *Concerto in D* Hob VIIb:2, in C Hob VIIb:1; Pleyel *Concerto in C* Benton 106

Almost everything about this disc is a curiosity, starting with the lugubrious cello-playing monk (Corot) on its cover. No one could dispute Monighetti's cellistic panache, but his Haydn equally features a manipulation of tempo and dynamics verging on perversity, graceless phrasing, and truly bizarre cadenzas of his own devising. Possibly reflecting the notes ('golden age of Viennese classicism, while France was in the grips of the torments of the Revolution') the D major cadenza features the *Marseillaise*, while the C major still more weirdly drags in Mozart's 'Non più andrai' with added bow fusillades. The same Mozart raises its head in Monighetti's cadenza to the little-known Pleyel concerto in C, a work whose expansive and sonorous character deserves more thoughtful treatment.

Simon McVeigh

Haydn *Quatuors op. 33/1, 4, 6* Quatuor Mosaïques 60' 27"

Auvidis Astrée E 8570

The Quatuor Mosaïques have produced highly characterful, even mannerist, recordings of these three works. Despite some eccentric rhythmic distortions (in scherzi, in all places) they remain unimpeachable in both ensemble and intonation. However, apart from some rare sound swells and the occasional open string, one would be hard-pressed to tell them apart from many well-characterised modern-instrument quartets, especially with regard to their extensive employment of both legato and vibrato. Perhaps they lack the risk-taking edge of the Salomons, but these polished performances are certain to please many.

Simon McVeigh

Jadin *Quatre sonates pour le forte-piano* Patrick Cohen (Dulken 1793 fp) 65' 07"

Auvidis Valois V 4777

In Eb op. 3/1, in g op. 3/2, in F op. 6/2, in F op. 6/3

Hyacinthe Jadin was a talented pianist and composer who would be more famous if he had lived beyond the age of twenty-four. He grew up in a family of musicians and his tutor, N.J. Hüllmandel had studied with C.P.E. Bach. His music looks forward to romanticism and is interpreted excellently by Patrick Cohen on a superb 1793 Dulcken [spelt Dulken in the notes] fortepiano with Viennese action. He gives the music a fine sense of direction and variety of colour and the acoustic is lively.

Margaret Cranmer

Mozart *Gran Partita K. 361; Serenade in c, K. 388* Harmonie de l'Orchestre des Champs Élysées, Philippe Herreweghe 70' 26"
harmonia mundi HMC 901570

Herreweghe obtains performances of these strikingly different works that do full justice to their originality as well as to their more conventional features. The instruments have an attractively rough edge that ensures the listener is not seduced by mere beauty of tone-colour. Tempi are well judged, and phrasing, texture and balance are alike admirable. Above all, one has the sense of gravity, and of fun, as one imagines Mozart intended it. There is no false pathos, no undue jocularity; these are readings that will last, and the technical standard is as one has come to rely on from this source, even if the upper voices are favoured in the recording.

Peter Branscombe

Mozart *Sonates d'Église* London baroque, Charles Medlam 47' 37" (rec 1984)

harmonia mundi *musique d'abord HMA 1901137* £

Described in the current *Classic CD* magazine as 'the polar opposite of ecclesiastical solemnity', these 17 one-movement pieces were most likely written to be played during the reading of the Epistle, between the Gloria and Credo settings of the mass. They are presumably short because the Salzburg mass had to last less than 45 minutes, and the fact that they are jolly does not mean that they cannot be solemn: how many of the hundreds of *missae solenne* written in 18th-century Austria are dour? The five members of London Baroque strike the right tone on this budget-priced disc: just the right tempi and bright, unfussy playing.

BC

19th CENTURY

Chopin *First and Last* Peter Katin (on c.1836 Collard & Collard square piano)

Athene ATH CD11 74' 56"

op. 1, 12, 19, 24, 57, 64, 68/4 etc.

This is a first-class disc on all counts. Peter Katin's performance is outstanding for its rhythmic vitality, with phrasing that is both inspired and faithful to the text. He also wrote the excellent notes explaining how this kind of music prompted his purchase of a Collard & Collard square piano, an instru-

ment capable of demonstrating virtuosity as well as sustaining melodic lines. The choice of repertoire is interesting and I particularly enjoyed the mischievous quality of the rondo and the Spanish flavour of the Bolero, as well as smaller touches in better known works such as the mordent at the beginning of the Db major waltz. *Margaret Cranmer*

Giuliani *Serenata Italiana* Esther Schobel guitar, Reza Najfar fl 60' 24"
Koch Discover International **DICD 920493**
Grand Duo Concertant op. 85, *Serenade* op. 127 & items from *Pièces faciles et agréables* op. 74

The effortless efficiency of modern instruments can come as a shock after their period counterparts, and this is particularly the case with intimate chamber music of this type. The *Serenade* and *Grand Duo Concertant* are both lengthy concert works, which would be particularly challenging on a period flute. On the modern instrument the technical challenges are much reduced so the listener's attention can be concentrated solely on the content of the music. Some of Giuliani's output is not quite up to this scrutiny, and many may feel, as I do, that the slighter items are best retained for amateur domestic consumption. This is not to belittle this fine duo, however, whose performance is elegant and totally secure. Najfar produces a pleasingly intimate tone, the accompaniment is as subtle as the writing allows, and Schobel plays her solo passages with panache. Tuning is impeccable throughout. A charming disc; another volume of some more substantial items would be welcome. *Lynda Sayce*

MISCELLANEOUS

Angels: *Voices from Eternity* Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen, Tod Machover 59' 09"
Erato **0630-14773-2**

An attempt (belated, perhaps – I saw no vast quantities of angelic apparatus in the Boston shops recently) to cash in on the fashion for Angels that spread here from the States last Christmas. The theme is built up from three strands: plainsong, 19th-century American hymnody and electronic sounds (processed at IRCAM). This last strand is disappointing, mostly inoffensive and only occasionally having any significant effect. My limited experience of Shaker music suggests that its simple gift didn't extend much beyond the tune Copland extracted, but it is excellent to find Southern Harmony hymns put on a level with Roman chant. I personally would have preferred a straight concert, but Anglophiles may find it more rewarding. *CB*

SAMPLERS

Offertorium La Cappella Reial de Catalunya, Jordi Savall dir 79' 01"
Auvidis Fontalis **ES 9906** ££
Music by anon, Alfonso X, Dufay, Carceres, Morales, Guerrero, Victoria, Monteverdi, Cererols, Mozart

I think this is a new disc, but I've heard a lot of Sibyls lately and the pattern is similar to *Vox Aeterna* (*EMR* 27 p. 26), with some fine tracks but a cumulative lack of energy. *CB*

LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

Some thoughts prompted by reviewing the new Concerto Italiano recording of Monteverdi's Book 5 [see p. 22]. Most of Book 5 uses the normal 16th-century clef set, with C1 and F4 for the top and bottom voices. Concerto Italiano treats the two exceptions (*Cruda Amarilli* and the *Ecco Silvio* cycle: clefs from G2 to F3) as *chiavette* and transposes accordingly (*Cruda* a 5th lower for a one-flat signature, *Ecco* a 4th lower for a nil signature). The Consort of Musicke also transposes *Ecco Silvio*, but takes *Cruda Amarilli* at printed pitch. (The Consort sings at about a'=440, Concerto about a semitone higher: a trivial difference in this context.) Consulting my musicological betters persuaded me to accept the *chiavette* reading of these pieces objectively. But subjectively I felt the way students of Renaissance art must feel when they see the renovated Sistine frescoes. The colours of a *Cruda Amarilli* which lies between A and a" have been part of my mental landscape for 35 years, and I had long ago unconsciously devised my own affective or pictorialist rationales for the top notes at 'ma de l'aspidio sordo' and 'i mi morrò'. It wasn't easy to rethink the music as lying between D and d" without those high notes, and with the bass starting certain scale passages on low E or D. To my surprise, however, when I finally capitulated it felt like taking off a pair of too-tight shoes. And Book 5 still has other high notes whose expressive significance I really can live with, both intellectually and emotionally, in places like the celestial tessitura of 'Quand' anima più bella' in *Era l'anima mia*. Does this shed any light on what happens if musicological conclusions reach the point of seeming intellectually inescapable but continue to feel viscerally unacceptable? Does it help us understand why (as Andrew Parrott has pointed out) so many performers and scholars still choose not to debate, but simply to ignore, the issue of one-per-part choruses in Bach's cantatas?

Eric Van Tassel

I happened to play in a Monteverdi Vespers the weekend before sending this to the printer so am reminded of my initial reaction to the down-a-fourth theory for the Magnificat (with which I thoroughly agreed; indeed, which I have aided and abetted). Despite that, I was worried that the end seemed somewhat inconclusive. In performances in a liturgical context, that didn't matter, because it wasn't the end anyway. But now I find that, even in a straight, unliturgical performance when 'Amen' really is the end, it works perfectly, whereas at notated pitch (whether at 440 or even worse 460) it sounds far too shrill and you are then tempted to add 16' instruments to compensate. CB

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Dear Clifford,

Whatever else there is to say about Ben Byram-Wigfield's *Allegri* edition and his correspondence about it (such as the fact that by the 19th century, the technique of spontaneous ornamentation over a fauxbourdon had been long forgotten and thus it is not that surprising to find similarities between versions committed to paper, and that performance of these written-out ornaments nevertheless remains 'Italian singing' in every sense), it is incontrovertible that there were never boy singers in the Papal Chapel choir from at least the 14th century onwards, if ever!

Graham O'Reilly

Dear Clifford Bartlett,

With reference to your review of The Sixteen's Carver Mass (*Dum Sacrum [not Sanctum] Mysterium*) *EMR* 30, p.12, I am a bit confused as there seems to be a mix up with a third recording. You refer to *Musica Scotica's* Complete Works of Carver, which I think I have as sung by *Cappella Nova* directed by Alan Tavener. On this disc the 19-voice motet, *O Bone Jesu*, takes 12'18", (nearly as long as The Sixteen's 12'41"). Yet you say that "Tavener's *O Bone Jesu* lasts 11'08". The third recording I refer to is that of Andrew Parrott's Taverner Choir on EMI (Taverner, Browne, Carver). On this disc the *O Bone Jesu* does indeed last just 11'08". Is it possible that you are confusing your Alan Tavener with the Taverner Choir?

Robert Betts, American University of Beirut

Sorry about the slip in the Mass title. The Musica Scotica Complete Works of Robert Carver to which I referred was the printed edition (see EMR 27 p.2). I don't have the Alan Tavener recording, so I was indeed referring to the Andrew Parrott Taverner one.

THE HIGHEST NOTES

After taking the Gold Medal at the 5th Athens Choir Festival, one of the basses of the Warwick Chamber Choir was so elated that he announced over the aircraft PA system that passengers were fortunate to have on board a prize winning ensemble who would sing them a song. In spite of having suffered the previous nights celebrations the director was able to extract a tolerable rendition of Bennet's 'Weep, O Mine Eyes' filmed by a Japanese video enthusiast at an altitude of 35,000 feet.

We were also intrigued to hear that the choir performed the 'Byrd' *Haec est dies* (published in *EMR* 21) successively over three days by to some 10,000 at the University's Summer Degree ceremonies last July.