

# Early Music

## REVIEW

Number 56      December 1999

ISSN 1355-3437

Price £2.00

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Published on the first of each month except  
Jan. and Aug. by King's Music, Redcroft, Banks  
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#### Subscription rates

UK: £15.00 Europe: £20.00  
Rest of World: £30.00 (air), £20.00 (surface)

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King's Music is dependent on computer technology for its existence. But technological improvement has its problems. We acquired a digital photocopier in July, with the intention that it would also be a fax and be linked with a computer that could store our publications so that copies could be produced without cluttering the house with intermediate master-copies. It's now mid-November, and we are still waiting for the system to be properly set up. Even worse, we were puzzled why the fax rang so often and no messages came through, and only now has it emerged that one reason (others are not yet diagnosed) was that its default setting let it receive messages only from authorised senders! How are we supposed to know who wants to fax us? If you have not received an answer to your faxes, please try again. Further hassles to communication are a change in e-mail address, since [ibm.net](http://ibm.net) has now become [attglobal.net](http://attglobal.net) (whatever the change of ownership, why can't the addresses stand?) and our postcode is also likely to be changed. For a firm whose main means of advertising is the circulation of its previous products, such wanton changes in address are likely to cause long-term loss. A further problem is that some e-mails this month have been lost, and at present we can receive but not reply.

On 4 November *The Times* printed a colour facsimile of *Ave magnifica Maria* from the Worcester Fragments (no. 19 in Dittmer's edition). What was immediately striking was the quality of the reproduction, even in a newspaper. It headed a story about the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music, which contains not only good images of music that is already legible but electronically enhanced readings of palimpsests: check <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~diamm/> for an example. This contrasts with the publication of Bach's complete autograph MSS on microfiche. Stephen Daw tells me that only one UK library is subscribing. I'm not surprised: who wants to spend a vast sum of money on such old technology? Any investment now should be on creating good digital images, which can then be used for whatever delivery system is most economic – at present, probably e-mail for single pages, CD for the complete collection, though no doubt other means will be invented that can use the same images without the need to re-photograph the decaying manuscripts.

The Newer Grove is supposed to be published a year hence in both hard copy and digital form. I will want both, but at present it seems that I will have to choose one or the other or pay double. Please think again! It will only cost a pound or two to slip a CD into a hard copy: so try to work out some licensing scheme whereby purchasers can benefit from both formats.

CB

## BOOKS &amp; MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## CLASSIFYING THE MOTET

Julie E. Cumming *The Motet in the Age of Du Fay*. Cambridge UP, 1999. xv + 418 pp, £45.00. ISBN 0 521 47377 2

This has all the makings of a boring book. I wondered at first whether the first chapter on Darwinian classification was really necessary and expected it to degenerate into a 'naming of parts' exercise. But no. The Darwinian comments were stimulating and useful: indeed, as the result of a brief description of what I had managed to read while travelling from Clapham to South Kensington, the person manning the stand next to me at the Early Music Exhibition was so interested that he went off to seek the nearest photocopier. Using fuzzy rather than over-precise categories, the author was able to divide her repertoire up in such a way as to offer fruitful discussion about what a composer and listener expected from the various types of motet written in the first three quarters of the 15th century. The chief focus is on Bologna Q15, where there is a separate section devoted to motets, and the Trent Codices, where identification of what is a motet is less objective but, as a result of the preceding study of Q15, can be carried out with confidence.

The line from the motets of Machaut to those of Josquin has never been very clear; one disappointment of Leeman Perkins' *Music in the Age of the Renaissance* (see *EMR* 54 p. 6) was its failure to enlighten me. Cumming tantalisingly stops just before Josquin's most-sung (and perhaps earliest) motet, *Ave Maria... virgo serena*, but continuing to the next stylistic phase would have lengthened her study over-much: perhaps there will be a sequel. It is, though, a pity that Busnoys (to use the preferred spelling) is ignored: a motet like *Anima mea liquefacta est* (included on The Whyte Rose CD: see p. 20) is within its chronological scope. By the sensible use of small print, the book includes a number of complete musical examples (sadly no CD as well), and the writer's enthusiasm for her subject encourages one to persevere through what is hardly an easy read. A sentence like: 'the result [of the absorption of the English cantilena into the continental motet] was an abundance of wonderful new music' (p. 99) is not what one expects in a book of this sort, but how refreshing! There is an interesting section where, having dealt formally with the Q15 motets, she returns to consider them as music. This remark on Forest's *Alma redemptoris mater* is again one that draws the reader to the motet for reasons other than classificatory: 'At first this piece appears difficult, aimless, even arcane; but it grows on you. The complex rhythmic counterpoint and the search for stability separate us from our moorings, and pull us briefly into another world' (p. 155). Julie Cumming is certainly interested in how to hear a motet.

## SERAFINO

Giuseppina La Face Bianconi [&] Antonio Rossi *Le Rime di Serafino Aquilano in music*. (*Studi et Testi per la Storia della Musica*, 13). Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1999. 311pp, £1759,000. ISBN 88 222 4766 3

Before looking at this, I tested the recent textbooks on the period for information on Serafino, checking both Serafino and Aquilano in the indexes since even this new study isn't consistent in which it uses. There is no mention in Leeman Perkins' *Music in the Age of the Renaissance*; Alan Atlas' *Renaissance Music* devotes two pages to him (202-203), with an example in the accompanying anthology; Reinhard Strohm's *The Rise of European Music* has two passing references and a paragraph on the same piece that Atlas discusses, drawing on an earlier publication of his. Serafino is, however, more important to music history than this might suggest, since he was one of the leading figures in the development of a style of Petrarchan poetry sung to simple music that could be accompanied by the poet-singer himself on lute, lyra or keyboard. The sources, however, are mostly in four parts. This book assembles the 29 poems that survive with music. One section is devoted to a critical edition of the poems. This is followed by editions of the music (some poems have more than one setting), taking the edited version of the poems and adding a full commentary of the musical sources, with significant variations given in superscript staves in the edition rather than compressed into the notes. No attempt is made to get behind the four-part notation to show how they might have been performed. There are chapters on the diffusion of poetry and music with thorough discussions of the sources. This is an essential source-book for anyone studying or singing the repertoire that suddenly came to the surface with Petrucci's *frottole* prints.

## BONFIRE SONGS

Patrick Macey *Bonfire Songs: Savonarola's Musical Legacy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. xx + 359pp, £48.00. ISBN 0 19 816669 9

November 5th is not an appropriate date to be writing this, since the bonfires in question were in Florence 110 years before Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up parliament. Curiously, Savonarola was not necessarily favoured by Catholics: praise by Luther hindered the posthumous rehabilitation his followers sought, and in England he had a period of association with Protestants: indeed, Cranmer paraphrased Savonarola's meditation on Psalm 50 at the opening of his final speech before suffering the same fate from the Catholics. This is the text, *Infelix ego*, that Byrd

was to set, presumably with reference to the martyrdom of Catholics. Macey's book deals with two very different types of music linked with Savonarola. First come the parodies and successors to the Florentine carnival songs, which were sung during the few years when Savonarola was in the ascendancy. It required some detective work to uncover Savonarolan texts concealed by the less incriminating ones that have often survived. The second part of the book concerns the polyphonic settings that draw on his commentaries on Psalms 30 (*In te Domine speravi*) & 50 (*Miserere mei Deus* – Josquin's setting is particularly discussed) and *Ecce quam bonum*. A chain of settings is linked, some links more convincing than other. An accompanying CD by the Eastmann Capella Antiqua directed by the author provides complete performances of 28 of the works described. 20 are short early pieces (which sound rather more refined than the book implies that they should); the others are more substantial settings by Richafort, Verdelot, Willaert, Simon Joly, Le Jeune, Clemens non Papa, William Hunnis (for solo and lute) and William Mundy (an early verse anthem). These are commendable performances and will add to the value of the book. The music is due to appear soon from A-R Editions (R116) – which makes one wonder whether so much space in the book need have been given to music examples. This is an impressive study, supplying a pattern for the scattered settings of Savonarola's texts as well as detailing the musical activity of his period of influence.

#### GERMAN ORGAN

*Die Linzer Orgeltabulatur (1611-1613): Auswahl von 77 Tanzsätzen und Liedbearbeitungen* herausgegeben von Raimund Schächer. Cornetto (CORN-10-1-0157), 1998. 47pp.  
*Samuel Scheidt Tabulatura Nova* herausgegeben von Harald Vogel. Teil II. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8566), 1999. 182pp, DM66.00.

Johann Gottfried Walther *Sämtliche Orgelwerke* herausgegeben von Klaus Beckmann Band IV. Choralbearbeitungen N-Z. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8681), 1999. 155pp, DM59.00

The edition of Musik-Handschrift 512 in the Oberösterreichischen Landesmuseum at Linz contains 47 of the manuscript's 120 four-part songs and dances. Not that there is much part-writing: virtually all the pieces have either a melody or at least a freely-moving part on top with three-part chords below that can be played by the left hand; only rarely does the right thumb need to take the top note of the accompaniment. These chords often move as consecutive triads or octaves and fifth and are hardly sophisticated. They probably need a pungent organ to sound effective: on paper, they look pretty elementary and much more provincial than a collection like the Dublin Virginal MS, on my mind since I've just been listening to a recording of it (see p. 22). The Praetorius dances are masters of sophistication compared with these! But the publication may be useful for programmes reflecting popular taste.

The Scheidt, from a decade later, is at a completely different level. I welcomed vol. 1 in *EMR* 11 (June 1995). Vol. 2 is

equally commendable, and has an additional valuable feature: a lengthy appendix on playing techniques of the period, especially fingering, along with an editorially fully fingered version of the *Cantio Belgica* from vol. I. (I'd welcome Davitt Moroney's comments on that; cf p. 5 below.) The introduction repeats that of vol. I, there are facsimiles of the original prelims, and an appendix sets out part of the *Fuga contraria* and all of *Christe qui lux* on three staves; other such alternatives appear within the body of the edition. I have found no explanation for the two different treatments, but it is more sensible than the use of small print to present both layouts simultaneously, as is done in the Mahrenholz Collected Works. Otherwise only two staves are used. In general, if you happen to have that 1954 edition, there's no need to buy the new one, despite its more frequent use of three staves (though Vogel's appendix is certainly worth reading); if you haven't, this is a key work in German organ music which all serious students of the instrument should have.

Little needs to be said about the last volume of Walther's organ works, which contains the final third of his chorale settings (nos. 89-129 plus three settings of dubious authenticity; I wrote on vols 1-3 in July (*EMR* 52, p. 4). Obviously, collections of chorales are of less practical use to English church organists than to those in Germany, but there are some seasonable pieces on tunes that congregations may recognise (*Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*, *Puer natus in Bethlehem* and *Von Himmel hoch*) which could make a change from Bach – not that I've anything against Bach, but we'll hear rather a lot of him next year, so give his almost exact contemporary and relative a chance, especially since not much fuss was made of the anniversary of his death last year. Needless to say, the edition is excellent and the layout has been properly thought out.

#### SEMPER DOLENS

Peter Holman *Dowland: Lachrimae (1604)* (*Cambridge Music Handbooks*). Cambridge UP, 1999 xvi + 100pp hb £27.50 ISBN 0 521 58196 6; pb £9.95 ISBN 0 521 58829 4

*Lachrimae* was the first ensemble music of the period that I got to know, thanks to two recordings, The Elizabethan Players on what must have been a somewhat inauthentic viol consort, and the Thurston Dart one on modern strings. I don't still own either of them, but suspect that (although at the time I thought viols more suitable than violins) the Dart version would be the more acceptable now. I encountered *Lachrimae* little in my viol-playing days, chiefly because most viol consorts assume two trebles, while the second part in much of Dowland's set is not a treble part and is ungrateful to play on one. There have been enough recordings now to testify to the popularity of the 1604 publication. As an entity, it is a convenient length to record on a disc, though is rarely performed thus in concert.

Peter Holman covers all aspects, from the practical (what instruments?) to the meaning of the titles. That is the only area where I might gently question his comments. He tries



very hard to relate the titles to the pavans. I'm partly convinced, but he might have considered a more casual approach. The most similar previous English publication is Holborne's 1599 set of 65 pieces, most of which are titled. How fundamental are these titles to the music? *Heigh ho holiday* is more cheerful than *The image of Melancholy*, but although it has been possible for a modern performer to build up a story out of the titles, the relationship between music and title is in most cases virtually arbitrary. Turning to the most widely-circulated Italian instrumental collection, Maschera's *Canzoni*, with editions in 1582, 1584, 1588, 1590, 1593 and 1596, 11 of the 21 pieces have titles with no apparent significance to an English player, then or now. Might Dowland's thought processes have been less profound? The title *Passionate Pavans* fits the contemporary passion for alliteration (cf William Hunnis's *Seven Sobs of a Sorrowful Soule for Sinne* on the seven penitential psalms). He had, boldly, written a series of pieces that used the same form and thematic material, based on a piece already circulating with a lachrymose title. What more obvious than to name them by a series of qualifications to the title of the first pavan? He would have tried to make the titles fit, but they could well be post-compositional labels designed primarily for identification at a time when musicians were less obsessed with numbers than we are now. It is certainly easier to identify Italian numbered canzonas than English viol consorts with a numbering system invented only within living memory.

The book benefits enormously from being written by someone who has edited the music and directed a recording of it before he started to write about it. He is master of the existing scholarship, and builds on it. He asks practical questions: why table-book format (and does it work)? Why 21 pieces? Symbolic, or because that was a convenient size for the printer? He can also write well, and what could have been a tedious analytical procession through the pavans is illuminating, not penitential. His closing comparison with Elgar's 'sense of melancholy and regret' is apposite. The book employs a wide variety of methods of discussing music, with a lighter touch than most scholars can manage. I like the way the blurb ends with 'even numerology', evidently the *ultima Thule* of musicology. This is the earliest music included in the series. I suppose the obvious successor, for which the same author would be ideal, is Purcell's *Fantazias*, which were also on record in the late 1950s (Walter Goehr's 10" Classics Club LP – like Dart's *Lachrimae*, with a string orchestra).

#### COMES MASSES

Juan Bautista Comes *Masses. Part 1. Masses for One and Two Choirs*. Edited by Greta J. Olson. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 95.) A-R Editions, 1999. xx + 133pp, \$69.95. ISBN 0 89579 427 6

Juan Bautista Comes *Masses. Part 2. Masses for Three Choirs*. Edited by Greta J. Olson. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 96.) A-R Editions, 1999. vi + 200pp, \$74.95. ISBN 0 89579 428 4

A welcome to this fine edition of the five fully-extant masses by Comes (c.1582-1643), who began and ended his career in Valencia but was assistant *maestro di capilla* at the Royal Chapel in Madrid for a decade from 1618. Two further masses are completely lost, but it is odd that the *Misa a8* is not included: surely it cannot be too difficult to extrapolate the cantus part of one choir? Part 1 has one mass a4, *Exsultet caelum*, and two a8, *Iste confessor* and *Misa qué fértil que es el año* (Mass 'how fertile is the year'), which is assumed to refer to reginal rather than agricultural fertility, though I suppose it could be used for harvest festivals. Part 2 has a battle mass (*Misa ad instar praelii constructa* – Mass 'upon the onset of war'), based on Victoria and thus back to Jannequin, and a *Misa de tres contrabajos*, i.e. each of the three choirs has a proper bass part instead of the usual practice of having one choir SSAT and the others SATB. The Battle Mass is for Michaelmas, not Easter. The music looks worth singing, and the edition presents no obstacles to the performer, apart from the cost. (I don't know what arrangements A-R make for a choir wishing to perform one of the three-choir masses. £45 per singer is prohibitive; do they allow photocopying of as much as half a volume?)

I have a few comments on the 'Notes on Performance' section of introduction. The editor confuses how the work might be performed by a standard, modern SATB choir and how it might have been sung originally or now by a professional group that would book its singers to represent that. For instance, she declines to transpose down the *chiavette* four-voice mass on the grounds that 'the bottom note of each part is already at a comfortable lower limit by modern standards'. But it is not so much the bottom notes that affects the listener and singer as the top notes, and a cantus part going up to top B can only give an entirely false image of the sound world of Spanish (or any other) music of the period, while pushing the Altus up to D demands a range and sort of voice that the low-clef pieces does not recognise. While we don't know what the original pitch was, the presence of A as the normal top Altus note gives a fair idea that it was not intended for contraltos or falsettists.

The three choirs of the Battle Mass are headed 'Organo pequeño', 'Organo grande' and 'Capilla'. A natural (but wrong?) inference is that 'Capilla' means 'choir', so that the other choirs are solo (either voices alone or voices mixed with instruments); that is perhaps contradicted by having Choir II with the big organ. The linking of Choir I (SSAT) with the small organ, however, does confirm expectations that it (and the SSAT choirs in the other masses) might be for soloists. (The others choirs are SATB: the initials stand for clefs, not modern voice-types – I think the editor confuses them.) In the *Misa qué fértil...* the size of the organ isn't specified: there is a *Coro del organo* (SSAT) and a *Coro de la capilla* (SATB). If an editor is going to make remarks about performance practice, these terms and their implication need explaining; knowledge of the geography of the relevant buildings might help. The comments on p. xiv about a *Miserere* a16 whose parts make explicit a scoring for 12 solo voices, with one tutti choir, are not extrapolated to



the works at hand. Are there more than one copy of any parts in the sources?

The other unclear issue is instrumental participation. While it is part of our general understanding that the *bajon* normally accompanied polyphony in Spanish cathedrals, along with organ and harp, I don't understand how she can conclude that by the requirement that it play every time polyphonic music was performed 'the door is opened to additional instruments participating during the ordinary': if anything, the specific requirement for the *bajon* alone means that the other instruments were not required! The comments on continuo parts are confused. For a start, why write 'their design suggests that they are laid out for practical use': aren't the voice parts also for practical use? Only one mass is printed here with a continuo part, though curiously a facsimile page of it is reproduced which also contains part of another mass for which the edition prints no continuo part. The surviving continuo parts are generally later, but it would have been useful if the edition had listed more clearly what was extant. The fact that there are four such parts (copied only slightly later than the main source) for the Battle Mass, none of which are included, should surely be listed in the critical commentary, not in an introduction printed in a different volume. Anyone playing organ in the other masses should study the part for the *Misa que fértil...* The high choir is often doubled an octave lower, and there are minor adjustments. Sections beginning with a single part seem to have been doubled by a chord (cf p. 96 bar 49 & 108 bar 42). Since there is plenty of spare space in Part 2 (the staves are well separated from each other), it would have been helpful to have included continuo parts, whether original or editorial. There is no indication whether instrumental parts doubling the vocal ones are available from the publisher, and the editor doesn't speculate which parts might have been doubled or replaced by instruments. It is disappointing when there is so much editorial information that the attempts to help the performer are not taken far enough.

In most respects, though, this is a fine addition to the range of Spanish church music available. I look forward to performances and recordings.

#### MERRY MADRIGALS

Sebastian Knüpfer *Lustige Madrigalien und Canzonetten*. Edited by Bernd Baselt. Introduction by Peter Wollny. (*Recent Research in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 97). A-R editions, 1999. xx + 123pp, \$55.00. ISBN 0 89579 431 4 (Instrumental parts available.)

Word of Knüpfer's existence (indeed, I trust, his merits) is about to reach the general musical world with an imminent CD of his church music from The King's Consort. This enables us to sample another side of his output. His first publication was a collection of madrigals and canzonets published in Leipzig in 1663, with an apologetic preface explaining that he had written these pieces, far too frivolous for the director of music in the town's main

churches, some time earlier. They would make a nicely-varied CD in themselves, since the 20 pieces show such a variety of scoring, with various combinations of one to four voices with other instruments in the even-numbered items (the canzonets); the only madrigal with instruments is the first, with two *ad lib* violins. They are the main instruments, but there are some interesting low scorings, including two *violette*, gamba & ATB (no. 2), two *viole da braccio* and SA (no. 6), three *viole*, *fagotto/violone* & A (no. 18) and the same with B (no. 20). Unlike the Comes, this edition offers no comments on performance practice, and dodging the inconsistent nomenclature was probably wise. But these middle parts are all transcribed into alto clef with no indication of the original clef: the editor merely tells us that treble and tenor clefs have been replaced by alto, without being specific, a rare defect in what is otherwise a fine edition. The other is the removal of underlaid verses other than the first to the end of the piece – not at all helpful to singers; only no 4, with five verses, is too long to stay under the stave. The texts are mostly light, indeed flippant, and are all in German; the introduction includes English translations. The variety of instrumentation is matched by the variety of vocal patterns of movement. The edition was among the papers left by the distinguished Handel and Telemann scholar Bernd Baselt; Wollny has supplied most of the introduction and checked the edition.

#### PURCELL'S GRADUS

Henry Purcell *Twenty Keyboard Pieces and one by Orlando Gibbons from the Purcell manuscript in The British Library*. Edited by Davitt Moroney. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 1999. 48pp, £4.95. ISBN 1 85472 869 5

There was considerable publicity when this was discovered in 1993 and bought by the British Library in 1995. Davitt Moroney recorded it for Virgin and has now produced an excellent edition of the section in Purcell's hand (the rest is by Draghi) for the Associated Board. Despite the firm musicological basis of that organisation's recent publications of early music, it might seem a little surprising to find it producing this scholarly publication, without the least sign of my bugbear in their output, editorial fingering. But it is highly appropriate, since the editor is convinced that the music is a carefully-arranged basic method for the harpsichord, a graded series of pieces that takes the player through the conventions of fingering, ornamentation and notation. He justifies this in the introduction, but I was fortunate in being invited to his introductory lecture-recital (17 Nov. at the RAM), and enjoyed one of the clearest expositions I have heard from any lecturer: he should be signed up and sent to talk to all establishments that train teachers of keyboard playing (piano as well as harpsichord). Without making a big issue of it, he demonstrated how early fingering worked and why it was important. It was particularly interesting to hear why Purcell included the Gibbons Prelude in G from *Parthenia*. In fact, the original plan was to omit it from the publication; but then the editor realised that it was the culmination of what was

taught in the seven pieces that preceded it. This also explained why it had remained in circulation for 80 years: it was itself a study. Half the book is introduction and facsimiles, which explain how Purcell's 21 Lessons (as we might call them) make a course for beginners. But the student is not spoon-fed: nothing is added to the original notation (apart from the merits of clear printing), and the ABRSM has been persuaded to abandon the normal tidying of notation. If they can keep original time signatures, it's about time *Musica Britannica* began to do so! The editor believes this is as important an instructional collection as the Bach family notebooks. I'm writing this a few hours after hearing his enthusiasm, but I'm convinced, and don't think I'll want to rewrite when my recollection of it fades.

#### CONTI

Hermine Weigel Williams *Francesco Bartolomeo Conti, His Life and Music* Ashgate, 1999. xiv + 281pp, £45.00. ISBN 1 85928 388 8

I must confess to an almost complete ignorance of Conti, apart from having a copy of the Hänssler/Carus edition of Bach's instrumentation of *Languet anima mea*. But he was an important figure in Vienna in the first quarter of the 18th century, and with the revival of his colleagues Fux and Caldara, perhaps his music too will be found worthy of attention. (SPES has facsimiles of eight of his cantatas.) I'm not sure if this book is quite as strong an advocate as it might have been. Conti was primarily an opera composer, although ironically it is only the overtures that are available in modern editions (in the Garland Symphony series). Individual aspects of the operas are discussed here, but we are given no idea of what any of them are like as wholes. The author's thesis on Conti was finished in 1964, and I wonder how much of her attitude to baroque opera dates back to then, when the form was considered artistically unviable. Recitative, for instance, is written off as intrinsically boring: maybe it is to non-Italian speakers, but the Viennese public seems to have been able to cope without surtitles! The status of the composer is exaggerated. I doubt if Conti had an opportunity to 'prefer' to write one-act operas for royal birthday or name-day celebrations: presumably he wrote what he was told. Did he even choose the singers himself? Williams warms more to the intermezzi, which are more to modern taste.

The book supplies a considerable amount of information which will be of use to those who come across Conti in other contexts: as a distinguished player of the theorbo (Weiss is described as playing second to him on one occasion) and mandolin, and as one of the composers to favour the chalumeau. I feel that the author's descriptions of Conti's use of instruments might have profited from input from practitioners of them. It is not clear whether 'flute' refers to recorder or traverso. Handelian will be interested in the account of Borosini (who is here called a baritone rather than a tenor). I would have appreciated a proper list of works with sources, rather less compressed

than the one she provided for *New Grove*. I happened to get Marcello's Psalms off the shelf to review a CD (cf p. 28), and noticed that she misunderstands the letter from Conti prefacing vol. 2. Surely Conti (writing on Christmas Day 1723) was acknowledging four copies (*esemplari*) of vol I, not four individual psalms: presumably these were pre-publication copies, since the titlepage is dated 1724. This is a thorough study, not very exciting to read, but filling a gap in the available information and drawing attention to a composer to whom we should devote more attention.

#### HAYDN SYMPHONIES

One of the great musicological productions of the century was the critical edition of Haydn's symphonies prepared by H. C. Robbins Landon in the 1950s and 1960s. (The edition did not appear till the 1960s, but much of the work must have been done in conjunction with Landon's massive book *The Symphonies of Joseph Haydn*, published in 1955, which devoted 200 pages to lists of sources and corrections to existing editions.) Unlike many musicological editions, this was issued from the start in the format of scores and parts (divided between Doblinger and the Haydn-Mozart Presse), with miniature scores as well, so the fruits of the editor's labours were as accessible as possible. Not all manifestations of the edition, however, include the critical commentaries, so it is convenient that Universal Edition, whose Philharmonia series of miniature scores contains all the symphonies, both in a 12-volume set and individually, has appended three volumes devoted to them. These were omitted from the individual scores, both at miniature and (I think) full size, and only appeared in the bound volumes, from which they have been reprinted. The conscientious conductor will want to know the status of the text he is conducting: whether it is an authoritative source or whether there are features that may be questioned, and may want to check whether there are source differences for any oddities that he may notice. Haydn scholarship has, of course, moved on, but this is likely to remain the standard edition for many years, so the separate circulation of these commentaries is most welcome – though it is a pity that the editor wasn't asked to write a few general comments on subsequent studies on the sources. Conductors and orchestral libraries should buy them (at a little over £20 each) to supplement the separate full scores. (PH806-808)

#### BASSOON QUARTETS

Georg Wenzel Ritter *Six Quartets for Bassoon and Strings, opus 1*. Edited by Daniel G. Lipori. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, 55) A-R Editions, 1999. ix + 84pp, \$40.00. ISBN 0 89579 432 2

Ritter (1748-1808) was famous during his lifetime as a bassoonist. His path crossed with Mozart in Mannheim and Paris in 1777-78 and he probably played in *Idomeneo*; from 1788 until his death he worked in Berlin. Apart from a couple of concertos, this set of quartets (published in Paris

c. 1779) is his most substantial work. They are virtuosic pieces for the bassoon, exploiting the top rather than the bottom part of the compass. The quick notes are metrically simple, with passages of continuous semiquavers that outstay their welcome. The violin, viola and cello parts are subordinate, though even the viola has demisemiquavers in No. 2. They are worth publishing for bassoon enthusiasts, who will also be interested in the reproduction of Ritter's fingering chart for a six-keyed bassoon. It seems a little naive to assume that, because Ritter played an instrument from about 1756, it must have had six keys also. The editor does not suggest a date for the chart; it was printed in Berlin, so presumably dates from after 1788. The critical report mentions a MS of one quartet which contains an additional movement and extra articulation marks and two Eingangs, which he assumes derive from the composer. Some of the editorial slurs seem to come from this source, but it is a pity that the extra movement and Eingangs are not included. One further point: with a bass clef part on the top stave (the two pages of facsimiles confirm that the original avoids C clefs), the score would be easier to read if the bar lines were broken between staves one and two. Parts are available at \$36.00.

#### NEW FROM FUZEAU

First a general point: the textured, floppy covers have gone and in their stead are stiff boards. Libraries, of course, will welcome the extra durability, while those who have been worried that forcing volumes flat on a music stand might break their backs can now do so more confidently.

The most obvious feature of the earliest music in the September batch of issues is also technical. A folder contains the two editions of Jacques-Martin Hotteterre-le-Roman's op. 2: *Pièces pour la flute traversière... Livre Premier* of 1708 and, separately bound, the 1715 *nouvelle édition augmentée de plusieurs agréments*. The 1708 edition is printed from movable type, the 1715 one is engraved. The improvement in legibility is enormous, as is the convenience of the greater compactness of the notation, which avoids awkward page-turns and enables the shape of movements to be more visible on the page. The musical improvement is the addition of embellishment signs, as well as the addition of an *ad lib* bass to the two duets. The only problem is that the interest in the 1708 edition is almost exclusively bibliographical, so most buyers are paying for two volumes when one would do (though the flautist can give the 1708 edition to the accompanist and play from the 1715 one). They are quite cheap (FFR222), but Performers' Facsimiles have the 1715 edition for £12.50.

Jacques Aubert's second book of sonatas for violin and bc first appeared in 1721, but in 1737 a new edition appeared *corrigé[e] et augmentée et les basses ajoutées a la portée du violoncelle et du basson*. The changes are quite substantial, so the publication of both volumes reveals more than the Hotteterre pair, with the earlier version having greater intrinsic value. There has been some controversy about Fuzeau's policy of cleaning up their master-copies before reproduction, and they here print an example. The original

is certainly unreproducible as it stands, and any publisher will feel obliged to do something about it. When we started producing facsimiles, I spent ages with a paint-brush on the full-size negatives; subsequently, we haven't bothered. If you can put originals on a photocopier and set it at the right density, much of the background disappears. Sadly, few libraries let one do that (I say sadly, because once a decent copy is made, the original will suffer less wear) and reproduction from microfilm is unsatisfactory since it diminishes the contrast between the printed image and the background. I don't know how Fuzeau do their cleaning: I would imagine on computer, enlarging the image so that very fine deletions of irrelevant blackness can be made. On the page given for comparison, there seems to be little with which one can quarrel, though some of the extension lines from bass figures are shorter in the final version than the original. But there is a potential for disquiet, and the occasional publication of pages for comparison is salutary. The set was published earlier in the year, so isn't hard-bound. (FFR222).

More effort has been devoted to J.-B. Loeillet de Gand than to John Loeillet of London, and no facsimile of the latter's *XII Solos, Six for a Common Flute and Six for a German Flute* c. 1729 has come my way before. John Walsh hedged his bets, offering sonatas for both forms of flute in one volume; an alternative titlepage (reprinted here) gives German Flute or Violin instead. Both editions seem to be contemporary, though the Common & German flute one has a dedication, which probably gives it some authority. Both use the same plates. No problems of legibility (and no G1 clef, which may put beginners off the Hotteterre); and even if you can only play six of them, good value at FFR167 (about £17). The introduction covers op. 2 as well, which is also in Fuzeau's catalogue: a set of 12 trio sonatas, again for mixed instrumentation, six for two violins, three for two German flutes and three for oboe and common flute (FFR179).

Finally, a couple of 19th-century items. My viola-playing stopped before I was far-enough advanced for Campagnoli's *41 Caprices pour l'Alto*. The purpose of a facsimile of an edition of 1869 of a work published some sixty years earlier defeats me. Richault's edition is an exercise in how to get as much on a page as possible that makes even the most compact King's Music page look spacious! The introduction makes comparisons with a Breitkopf edition, but gives not details of it: according to the chronological table, the original Leipzig edition was published by Hofmeister, not Breitkopf. There is nothing to explain why this edition has any significance. I'm puzzled. (FFR113). More interesting is vol. 2 of Sigismond Thalberg's *Douze Etudes pour le Piano* op. 26. The facsimile includes the first edition of 1838 together with the autograph manuscript, in two separate volumes for ease of comparison. I must confess that French (and English) engraving of this period often looks unattractive. The MS looks better, but is not, I think, something to play from, though the last page is easier to read with repeat signs for the left hand so that the right-hand part is not cluttered by it when in the lower stave. A table lists the few differences of substance between the versions.



## CATALONIAN GUITAR

Mangado Artigas, Josep Maria, *La guitarra en Cataluña 1769-1939* (London: Tecla, 1998). xvi + 303pp hb \$98.00 ISBN 0 948607 15 7; pb US\$70.00 ISBN 0 948607 16 5 (Special offer: \$60.00)

For many people the guitar and Andalusia are inseparable with echoes of nights in the gardens of Spain and memories of the Alhambra. The reality of the guitar in Spain is, and was, rather different. The nights and memories exist, but there is another history of the instrument in Catalonia which is seldom told. This history begins in the 15th century with the earliest appearances of the vihuela, carries on with seven editions of Juan Carlos Amat's *Guitarra española* published in Catalonia and Valencia from 1596 - c.1800, with a final Catalan note on the five-course guitar provided by the Catalan Minguet I Irol in his *Reglas y advertencias* first published in Madrid in 1753.

Josep Mangado begins the present publication with the six course instrument in the middle of the 18th century and continues the story up to the Spanish Civil War. Certain guitarists in this period (Fernando Sor, Francisco Tarrega, Miguel Llobet, Emilio Pujol) are well known and have been the subject of an individual monograph. For most people, though, the names of José Ferrer, José Broqua, and Alfredo Romeo are names from Domingo Prat's *Diccionario* or composers on music from dusty library shelves.

This book helps fill a gap in music history, well supported by extensive documentation and illustrations. The beginning and completion points are somewhat arbitrary, but it is good to see a study of the musical context which produced Emilio Pujol, and in Castilla, Andres Segovia. The latter, who was such a dominant figure on the concert stage of the 20th century, did not spring, despite the legends, alone and unaided from a musical desert. This publication is a good reminder that there was guitar before Segovia.

Two small quibbles. There are no plans for an English language edition and there are some ink smudges on my review copy. But these are minor details set against the wealth of information, documents, and interesting stories much of which is available for the aficionado and expert alike for the first time.

M. June Yakeley

*Apologies for delay: June e-mailed this in time for the October issue, but it disappeared.*

## PENGUIN CAROLS

*The Penguin Book of Carols*, Chosen, edited and introduced by Ian Bradley Penguin Books, 1999. xviii + 414pp, £7.99. ISBN 0 140 27526 6

This is, I think, the first book on the subject that has taken advantage of the information assembled so assiduously for the *New Oxford Book of Carols*. One is pleased to see it, though at times the editor seems a bit out of his depth,

jumping in a little carelessly where words need to be chosen with caution to cover surmise. It is stretching a point to date three of the four carols he lists as from 1400-1550 on page xi or the Coventry Carol to 1400-1450. And why does he think that *Angelus ad virginem* originated in Ireland? The Dublin source isn't the earliest, and there is evidence that it is Parisian. The range is, of course, wider than NOBC, and we have modern carols, such as two with words and music by John Rutter. It is useful to have different versions in recent hymnbooks noted: some are improvements, others just PC.

A carol without its music is nothing, so a carol book without tunes can only remind people of what they know, not expand their horizons to anything new. Absence of music also makes it more difficult to define a carol. It is not surprising that *Bethlehem Down* 'has never caught on': the words and tune are inseparable, and Warlock's rich harmony is suitable only for capable choirs, not congregational or outdoor singing. (Incidentally, unless you happen to remember its first line, you won't find it: there is no index of titles, just one of first lines, which is superfluous in a book arranged in that order anyway.) It is a shame that, at a time when more people than ever before travel abroad and are familiar with other languages, and when the better choirs favour singing in the original language, most foreign carols are given only in English. Those who find Gilbert and Sullivan a bore will be infuriated by the editor's obsession with them; but otherwise this is a useful book. The tone of the commentary can sometimes be a bit arch. Our readers would probably prefer the NOBC, but this would make a fine Christmas present for less-informed relatives.

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*We have been inundated with books this month. The following are awaiting our next issue (in February), as well as some music editions.*

John Harley Orlando Gibbons and the Gibbons family of musicians, Ashgate, 1999. x + 341pp, £45.00. ISBN 1 84014 209 X

*Oxford Composer Companions. J. S. Bach* Edited by Malcolm Boyd. Consultant Editor John Butt Oxford UP, 1999. xxv + 626pp, £40.00. ISBN 0 19 866208 4

*We didn't get a copy of this on publication, despite various requests. It has now arrived from Early Music, where it seems to have been sent by mistake, too late for comment on this issue. But at a glance it looks excellent: an ideal Christmas present for any of our readers.*

*A Catalogue of the Shaw-Hellier Collection in the Music Library, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, The University of Birmingham* compiled by Ian Ledsham. Ashgate, 1999. xxx + 385pp, £52.50. ISBN 1 852928 386 1

*François Devienne's Nouvelle Méthode Théorique et Pratique pour la Flûte. Facsimile of the original edition with an introduction, annotated catalogue of later editions, and translation by Jane Bowers. Commentary on the original edition by Thomas Boehm.* Ashgate, 1999. x + 116 + 77pp, £45.00. ISBN 1 84014 642 7

Colin Lawson and Robin Stowell *The Historical Performance of Music: An Introduction* Cambridge UP, 1999. xiii + 219pp. hb £35.00 ISBN 0 521 62193 3. pb £12.95 ISBN 0 521 62738 9

*Music in Art: International Journal for Music Iconography. Vol. XXIII, no. 1-2, Spring-Fall 1998*

## NOT SO FAR AFTER FITZWILLIAM?

Ian Harwood's comments on arrangement last month apropos *charivari agréable's* recording of transcriptions of music in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* have provoked response from three of the players. I haven't heard the recording, so won't join the debate, except to say that describing the arrangements as 'for mixed consort' on the front of the CD was unfortunate, since that term has been used (probably with less justification than the word 'consort' by itself) for the six-instrument ensemble of Morley's *Consort Lessons*. It was that which made me send the recording to Ian, a long-established expert on that topic. CB

As a performing musician I feel that to release a disc is to raise one's head above the parapet of public opinion, and that it is therefore inappropriate to object when reprobation follows. However, as a fellow reviewer I felt that Ian Harwood's critique of the *charivari agréable* Fitzwilliam disc demanded a response. The demolition of a disc purely because it affronts one's personal taste is surely an evasion of a reviewer's professional responsibilities. Taste is not uniform, and there are less subjective benchmarks which reviewers ought to consider for the information of readers whose tastes may be different, something which Ian signally failed to do.

It is impossible to decree, at some 400 years distance, what Elizabethan and Jacobean musicians would have considered an acceptable arrangement. Some original 'arrangements' by distinguished musicians would raise eyebrows today. Francis Cutting's lute versions of, for example, Byrd's *Lullaby* and *Pavana Bray* spring to mind: there is also an anonymous lute arrangement (in the Hirsch lutebook) of one of Byrd's viol fantasias, which demonstrates that the consort/solo instrument division was not a rigid one. The *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* includes Giles Farnaby's arrangement of a Robert Johnson pavan, which must surely have originated as a lute work. I tried in vain to reclaim it, but so thoroughly has Farnaby reworked it that it is no longer possible to discern how it might have lain on a lute.

Much instrumental music of the period was reworked repeatedly by composers famous and unknown, for many different instruments. If those musicians had followed Ian's dictum, the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* would have been smaller and poorer, shorn of, for example, Philips's French and Italian madrigal settings, Farnaby's arrangements of Rosseter and Johnson, Byrd's *Delight Pavan*, *Lachrymae* settings by Byrd, Morley and Farnaby, and the countless sets of variations on those ballad tunes which were then the common property of musicians, and which we believe should be still. Clearly Ian believes that we have gone too far in our musical voyage of discovery, and that our ship should remain forever tethered to an ancient and sometimes crumbling quay. But can anyone truthfully examine the sources, glorious, frustrating and inspiring in their variety, and deny our ship the right to set sail. Lynda Sayce

As one of the participants in the Fitzwilliam CD reviewed by Ian Harwood in the last issue of *EMR*, I would like to offer a few words by way of response. As far as the instruments are concerned, I am the guiltiest party, playing music from circa 1600 on an 18th-century-model violin: I take Ian's point that nowadays such a disparity is usually avoidable, but I feel he misrepresents the current situation regarding renaissance violins.

Many renaissance violins today are based on originals considered by some scholars (though not all, I realise) to be 19th-century fakes (eg, the Linarol and Amati instruments most commonly used as models). Furthermore, they are frequently strung using 20th-century principles – even, in some cases, with covered strings. Other details of set-up, such as bridge and soundpost (should there be one?) are poorly understood, and often based on later information.

Handicapped by an instrument that was too late, I nonetheless did my best to recreate an appropriate sound-world by ensuring that the instrument was appropriately strung (i.e. in equal tension, and all in gut), played with a bow copied from an early-17th-century original, and played in a style and with a technique which I believe reflects English violin playing of around 1600. Whether my colleagues and I were successful in this endeavour, however, is not apparent from Ian's review, even though it occupies a full page and a half.

The principal point I wish to make is that we do not have much reliable information about how a renaissance violin was constructed – more the pity – and that my compromise (for which I make no excuses beyond lack of funds, and with which I do not pretend to be satisfied) was not necessarily much further from the truth than those, perhaps less obvious, made by other musicians. I look forward to the day when the concept, construction and set-up of the renaissance violin are well understood, but it hasn't come yet!

A final point: is it really so wrong to make and perform arrangements (transcriptions, settings, or whatever you wish to call them) of early music? Did musicians in 1600 really wring their hands in frustration at being unable to perform a piece because they had the 'wrong' combination of instruments at their disposal? If the arrangements prove ineffective, then it is fair to criticise, but I don't understand Ian's apparent objection in principle to making arrangements: surely a practice that any competent musician – of any period – would have found both pragmatic and rewarding. While Ian Harwood finds himself asking 'Why?', I find myself asking 'Why not?' Oliver Webber

I commiserate with Ian Harwood over his early attempts at 'old music' in the '40s involving dubious arrangements of the FWVB for descant recorder (wooden, no less) and piano. My colleagues and I, being fourth generation period-

instrument players, do not have the benefit of such experience. We operate in a milieu where mere 'relentless quest for authenticity' is passé and where contemporary arrangement is by no means 'dirty' (note John Bryan's approval in a review in the same issue on p. 28 on viol arrangements of Italian sonatas and arias, incidentally featuring two of our violists). We live and breathe the current – by that I mean 20th-century (see Taruskin) – notions of historical performance practice, and constantly encounter, in the case of Tudor and Jacobean music, a plurality of media for the same tune.

In our recording, Mr Harwood had hoped to hear comparisons between keyboard settings (arrangements!) and contemporary mixed-consort concordances. In the absence of the latter, we supplied our own, to his utter disappointment. The vitriol directed by Mr Harwood is selective. While not arguing that arrangements are not a historically significant facet of music making, he is being two-faced about this: Philip's arrangement of Caccini is 'homage', whereas even our most modest straight transcriptions smack of the 'more recent baroque adagio industry'.

Mr Harwood's fundamentalist persuasion, whereby anything not completely of known or 'old' provenance is impure, and ought to be annihilated, qualifies him well to head the 'authenticity police'. Out on arrangement patrol, he would stamp out elements pernicious to early music, which, presumably to him – like Romantic music (and his own romantic understanding of authenticity) – admits no compositional input from the performers.

As a fellow reviewer in this magazine, I must say Mr Harwood's rantings lack grace. I can assure Mr Harwood that we did not mean to have him re-visit his post-war years during which arrangements 'were all the rage', nor did we mean to threaten his notions of creative fulfilment. However, we believe that the riches of the FWVB should be made approachable to those other than keyboardists. Judging from our always discerning audiences' feedback in the sold-out concert in Magdalen College Chapel earlier this year, our attempt to shed new light on the FWVB was, to borrow Mr Harwood's words, 'a good idea'. Those wishing to make up their own minds from a live performance can do so at the Brighton Festival on 17th May 2000. *Kah-Ming Ng*

## EARLY MUSIC IN POLAND

Amy-Elizabeth Wheeler

*Amy-Elizabeth Wheeler has been a subscriber and customer for several years. She has sent this to expand BC's account of music in Eastern Europe in EMR 54, p. 11. We are grateful for her contribution, and welcome reports from other parts of the world. CB*

I read with interest your article 'Eastern Promise', in the October issue of *EMR*. I thought experience as an American soprano working in Poland might shed additional light on the early music scene over the past ten years.

I made my debut with The Warsaw Chamber Opera in 1990 during the company's first Mozart festival and remained with the company for six seasons. The festival was – and I believe it still is – the only festival in Europe to feature fully-staged productions of all the Mozart operas. Many of the WCO productions have since toured in France, Spain, and the Netherlands and were very well received. The festival, now in its tenth season, no doubt has something exciting planned for the millennium. In 1993, the WCO mounted its first baroque opera festival performing among other works the KM edition of John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*. The festival, still going strong in its sixth season, is currently performing Monteverdi's *Vespers* and *The Coronation of Poppea*.

Mr Stefan Sutkowski, the artistic director and managing director of the WCO, who is very knowledgeable about Polish music and music history, is publishing a collection of Polish early music. For more information about early

music at the WCO, you can contact them directly at Warszawska Opera Kameralna, ul. Nowogrodzka 49, 00-695 Warsaw, Poland (fax +48 22 629 32 33).

The results following the WCO's first baroque festival were very encouraging for both singers and instrumentalists, and we began pursuing more opportunities to study and play early music. Jaroslaw Lipski, Poland's leading renaissance lute and theorbo player, contacted me after one of the *Venus and Adonis* performances and suggested we make a recording of selected English lute songs. The CD titled *What Thing is Love* was released by Peregrine Records this year. [Review in our next issue *CB*.] We were pleasantly surprised at the popularity this programme received in Poland. We tour regularly and the CD has a lot of air-play on Warsaw's Radio Classic; in addition we have made several television appearances.

Poland has always had a lively and enterprising music scene despite a long history of political disturbance. The thread of Polish musical life and the high standard of Poland's composers and musicians has been remarkably well maintained and, regardless of the inconveniences presented by the lifestyle under communism, there has been and continues to be an excellent environment in which to develop as a performing artist. The rapid reforms made in Poland between 1991 and 1992 have been beneficial for musicians; the massive foreign investment and cultural exchange has been a strong catalyst for



stimulating more early music activity. Musicians who are interested in this kind of music finally have easier access to travel, libraries, manuscripts, education etc. A case in point is the fact that the WCO was able to invite Richard Wistreich as a guest teacher for the singers participating in the premiere of *Venus and Adonis* to help with English and interpretation; had the Festival been a year or so earlier, this would have been much more complicated to arrange.

One of the current difficulties facing early music musicians in Poland is the lack of good instruments, particularly contrabasses and positives (I suggest you take your own positive if you want to tour in Poland: the good ones are always in use). As far as the availability of instruments produced in Poland, there are talented instrument makers such as the lute builder Szymon Sieczka-Gasienica who lives in Zakopane. However his production is limited due to the high cost of building materials and competition from second-hand instruments sold in England and Germany.

Otherwise, more early music festivals are being created each year in Poland, and lately (after marrying a Swede and starting a family) I have been involved with coordinating a band using a selection of some of Poland's leading freelance musicians, many of whom work with *Il Tempo*, Marek Toporowski, *Il Suonatori*, the WCO etc., together with some of Sweden's best freelance musicians from Stockholm Baroque Soloists and Concerto Copenhagen. Our most recent performance was in Poznan, with a programme which included Baldassare Galuppi's unpublished *Confetibor tibi, Domine* for SAB soli, strings & bc. We are provisionally booked to repeat the programme at the National Philharmonic in Warsaw on 11th April, 2000 and yet again in October 2000 in southern Poland – where there are quite a few early music festivals. Since I began working with the Galuppi project, I have found that Poland's festival organizers are more open to ambitious programmes, asking not so much about the popularity of the composer (it seems to me the Poles heartily accept Charles Burney's opinion of the glories of Galuppi) or the cost of the production, but

rather if one of the pieces in the programme will be a premiere in Poland – a most refreshing attitude. Maria Lindal, the concert master from Drottningholm Slottsteater who thankfully is leading my band, said after our rehearsals: 'Amy, it's great working with these musicians – I am impressed by the responsive and exacting level of playing and the relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere – do you think I could steal Marta [the second violinist] and take her back to Sweden?'

I append a brief list of names to look out for:

Malgorzata Wojciechowska *traverso* (a superb player, she collaborates regularly with the gamba player Mark Caudle).

Artur Stefanowicz *countertenor* (we made our debut together in Mozart's *Ascanio in Alba*. He has gone on to work with Glyndbourne and ENO).

Arek and Ewa Golinski *Il Suonatori* (Arek is the band leader and one of Poland's best violinists).

Marek Toporowski *harpichordist/conductor*.

Mikal Straszewski director of *Il Canto*.

Lilianna Stawarz *hpscd/cond.* of WCO.

Maria Papusinska leader of *Musica Collegium Varsovia* (resident band at the WCO).

Agata Sapiiecha *Il Tempo*. [She tells us that she has set up a foundation called Concert Spirituel, for which she has ordered a substantial collection of facsimiles of baroque orchestral music. CB]

Record Label: CD Accord Music Edition,  
Ul. Jasna 5,00-950 Warsaw.

Festivals: Wratlavia Cantans (Wroclaw),  
Chantarele (Goluchow),  
Dni Muzyki Dawnej (Zywiec, Warsaw),  
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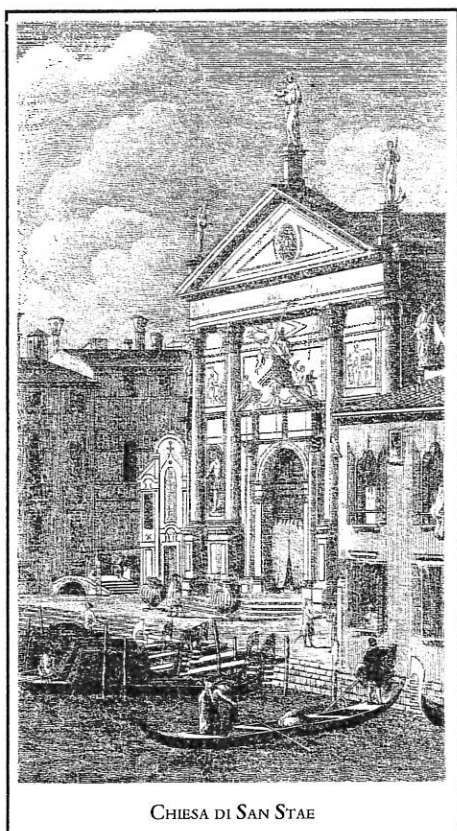
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Please inform us if any aspect of your address changes.

A large proportion of renewals fall due in December. Invoices are enclosed with this issue. We would be grateful for payment on receipt: please do not wait until the next millennium.

## EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL IN VENICE

Peter Branscombe

Martin Randall Music Management mounted a delightful festival from 7 to 13 November of early music in Venice, the main attraction being the well-chosen programmes with outstanding performers, and the superb, often unusual venues. What could be finer in prospect, and in the event, than Paul McCreesh's recreation with the Gabrieli consort and Players of the First Vespers for the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin as it might have been celebrated in St Mark's in 1643, unless it was the same performers' closing concert in the Scuola di San Rocco that consisted of a recreation of the programme for the celebration of the saint's feast day on 16 August 1608? Some of the concerts took place in small venues, necessitating in one case as many as seven repeat performances.



CHIESA DI SAN STAE

The opening concert in the Chiesa di San Stae of music for strings of the 17th and 18th centuries set the tone for the week, with works by unjustifiably neglected Venetian composers – Dario Castello, Giovanni Rovetta (some of whose sacred vocal works were a feature of the San Marco vespers), Biagio Marini and Carlo Antonio Marino, G. B. Fontana, Marc'Antonio Ziani (a striking *Sinfonia del Sepolcro*) and Georgio Gentili, as well as Vivaldi. I Sonatori de la Gioiosa Marca, who gave a further concert next day in the glorious surroundings of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, proved a good if not outstanding

group. For their all-Vivaldi programme in the Scuola they were joined by Giuliano Carmignola, who tossed off four violin concertos with a fetching mixture of straight-faced efficiency and brilliant virtuosity in the cadenzas. Two brief pieces *Al Santo Sepolcro* introduced a welcome touch of sobriety and calm.

The one incontrovertibly chamber event was a recital of sonatas for flute and harpsichord given in the lovely little Salla della Musica in the Ospedaletto. The interesting programme of works by Marcello, Albinoni, Vivaldi and Platti was performed in unashamedly traditional manner by the sparkling flautist Giulio Gianelli Viscardi and the harpsichordist Maria Cecilia Farian.

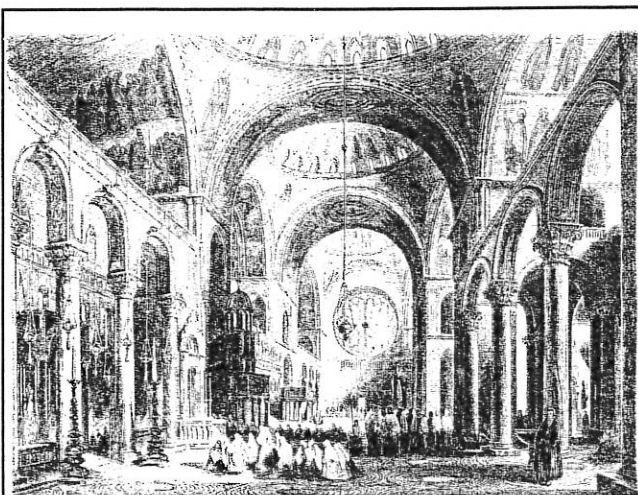


CHIESA DELLA MADONNA DELL'ORTO

The vast, cold Chiesa della Madonna dell'Orto was the site for the Orlando Consort's programme (obviously too austere and demanding for the taste of some of the festival-goers!) of music from the 14th to the early 16th centuries. Here the Venetian link was sometimes obscure, but the sensitive programme-building grouped together music for the church, courtly songs, the Petrucci Collection, and ceremonial motets. Dufay was prominent, Johannes Ciconia made memorable appearances, and there were movements by Josquin and Obrecht. The purity and conviction of the singing was outstanding, though many of the listeners were more enthusiastic about the Orlando singers' participation in McCreesh's baroque programmes.

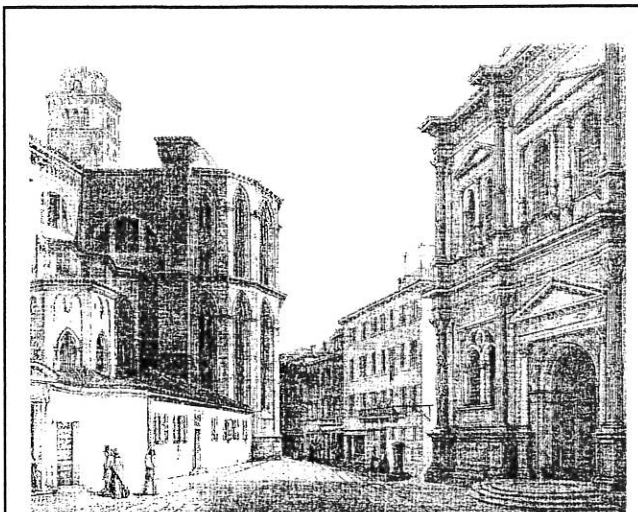
Another fascinating venue was the Ateneo Veneto. Its rather gloomy interior with dark-hued woodwork and paintings by Veronese and Palma il Giovane was soon lightened by

the lovely singing and playing of Paul McCreesh's musicians in the programme dominated by masterpieces from Monteverdi's Seventh and Eighth Books; Alessandro Grandi and Vincenzo Calesani were also well represented, and instrumental pieces by Fontana and Marini gave some of the audience their first experience of the mysteries of the chitarrone and cornett (Jeremy West in brilliant form).



BASILICA DE SAN MARCO

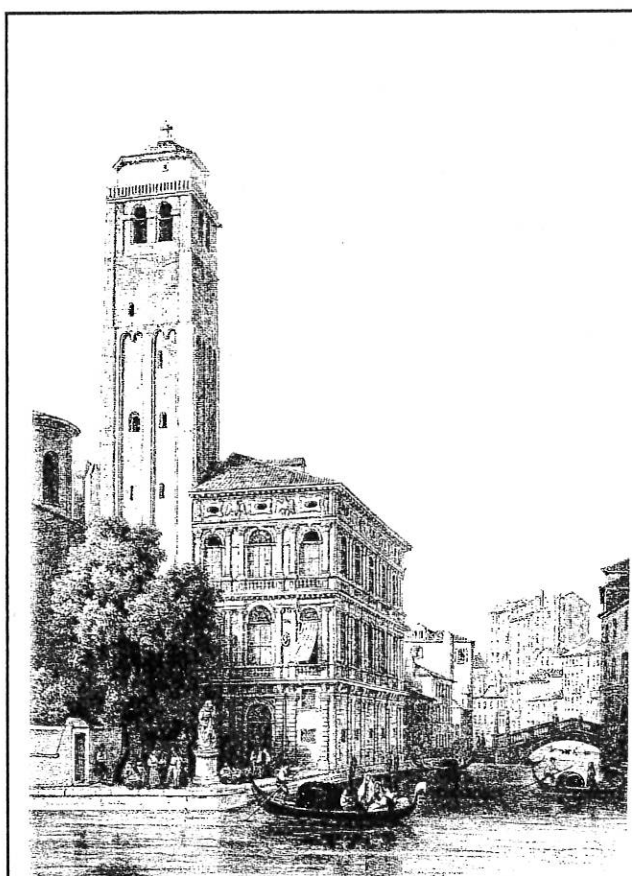
A feature of the grandest event of the festival, Vespers in St Marks, was the contrast between the delicacy of some small-scale motets, and the full-blooded splendour of polychoral psalm settings. Grandi, Monteverdi, Finetti and Marini were represented; the total absence of Cavalli was a rare disappointment. For me the most exciting experience was to hear major works by Giovanni Antonio Rigatti, here making a richer, more exciting impact than on recordings. So understandably enthusiastic was the audience at the end of the programme that McCreesh offered an encore – something that might have worried the Signoria in 1643, but was gratefully received by the capacity audience – the setting of *Ave maria stella* from the 1610 Vespers.



SCUOLA GRANDE DI SAN ROCCO

The San Rocco concert highlighted the contrasts between the delicacy and grace of solo motets by Barbarino, exquisitely sung by Robin Tyson, large scale instrumental sonatas by Giovanni Gabrieli for as many as five mixed instrumental groups (including up to five cornetts and ten sackbuts), and Gabrieli's reconstructed Magnificat in 33 parts for five mixed groups. The clarity, richness and spaciousness were alike superb.

All in all, a magnificent festival. Three percent of the income is being donated to the Venice in Peril appeal, and a provisional cheque, handed to Lady Clark at the San Rocco concert, is intended to cover restoration of the entrance to the Chiesa di San Rocco that the audience passed on their way out from the scuola. Even a short report would be incomplete that made no mention of the contribution of Roderick Swanson, a genial Falstaff who introduced each programme with wit and enthusiasm, knowledge lightly worn, and never a note in sight; his interval reading from Thomas Coryat's *Crudities hastily gobbled up in five Moneths travells...* was a minor highlight. The various morning and afternoon walks that art historians led to buildings of special interest (often with access to otherwise impenetrable places) deserve a word; and no one who was present at the festival would give credence to the old chestnut that good food is a rarity in Venice. It was the nourishment for the ears, however, that will live longest in the memory.



PALAZZO LABIA, VENUE FOR A CONCERT OF TRIO SONATAS OF THE TIME OF TIEPOLO GIVEN BY I SONATORI DE LA GIOIOSA MARCA



## CHRISTMAS RECORDS (1998)

Many Christmas records arrived last year too late for us to include them in the December issue. So we are reprinting the page of belated seasonal offerings that we included in the February 1999 issue. We hope that they are still available.

**Angels from the Vatican: the invisible made visible** Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge, Mary Berry 75' 29"

Herald HAVPCD 220

Chant, including *Missa de Angelis*, Marenzio *Qual mormorio soave*, Palestrina *Ave regina caelorum*, *Veni Michael archangelus*, Victoria *Duo seraphim*

The booklet begins with a summary of angelic theology by the Pope, who is also photographed shaking hands with Mary Berry. Since far more people believe in angels (70% of the UK population, I think I read recently) than believe in Christianity itself, this should sell well. I'm not sure, though, that this is the group's best CD. If you follow the texts, you will get an aesthetic dimension to the Papal prose. The group is mixed-voice, with four ladies well-known in the professional small-choir circuit. They don't blend convincingly in the polyphonic inserts, but the chant is as always convincingly sung. There is no explanation of why the *Missa de Angelis* is so called. CB

**Gregorian Chant: Christmas** Benedictines from Montserrat & Münsterschwarzach 150' 58"  
Deutsche Grammophon 459 421-2 ££  
rec 1973 & 1981-2 2 CDs

This well-filled pair of discs begins with the monastic responsories for Christmas matins, sung with vigour and feeling by the monks of Montserrat. The rest of disc one and all of disc two, sung by the more-refined German group, comprises the propers for the three Christmas masses and Epiphany (including the ordinary for the first and last of these masses). These are quite old recordings: the Responsories date from 1973, while the masses comprise the first two of a five-LP Archiv set of 1982. Despite the large amount of music, the booklet has texts and triple translations (though not the four-stave and neumed chant of the original Archiv booklet). If you want coherent sections of chant repertoire, not just a collection of favourite melodies or a textually-themed anthology this is highly recommended. CB

**Russian Christmas: Vigil of the Nativity of Christ** The Russian Patriarchate Choir, Anatoly Grindenko 60' 14"  
Opus 111 OPS 30-218

I have complained, probably more than once, that most recordings of Russian chant sound as if the music was composed around 1850. And not just records: when in 1960 I drove from Moscow to visit the monastery at Zagorsk (which seems to have been kept as a living museum for tourists) the slow, deep chords were per-

vasive. This is different. Grindenko is a musician of wide experience (as a double-bassist he played in the premiere of a sonata by Gubaidulina and he also plays the gamba) and the music has been reconstructed from 16th and 17th-century MSS. I am not able to judge the plausibility of the reconstruction, but it feels convincing, perhaps because it approaches the music afresh rather than through the surviving tradition. Lovers of low basses, however, will not be disappointed. There is an informative introduction, and my only disappointment is the absence of the Russian words (whether in Cyrillic or Roman characters) alongside the translations. CB

**Medieval Carols: The Mystery of Christmas Night: Words and music from the Middle Ages** Opus anglicanum 75' 02"  
Herald Talking Books HAVPCD 212

Another disc beginning with bells: they are common this Christmas. This comprises a sequence from a group which specialises in programmes of music and words, and is based on a concert given annually at Wells Cathedral. I find such mixtures fail on disc because I generally don't want to hear the words as often as the music (or, put another way, there are different levels of concentration at which one can listen to music, but there is no point in hearing words unless one can follow their logic). Here, the spoken sections are brief, and are mostly texts one knows from musical settings anyway, so they are acceptable. The simpler medieval pieces – chant and 15th-century carols – work well, but Machaut needs more edge and *Viderunt omnes* lacks the impact of either of the Hilliard discs of Perotin. That the other long piece is a powerful performance of Horwood's *Gaude flori virginali* says something about the imagination of the programming. Those used to this sort of music may find slightly too much vibrato, but the programme should widen the musical experience of those who buy it as a talking book! CB

**Arcadelt - Mouton - Isaac The Virgin & Christ-child** Henry's Eight 63' 42"  
Etcetera KTC 1213

Arcadelt *Missa Noe noe*; Isaac *Virgo prudentissima*; Mouton *Nesciens mater, Noe, noe*; anon carols *Alma redemptoris mater, Alleluia Now well may, Ave Maria...Hail blessed flower*

An interesting, if somewhat eclectic, compilation of music loosely related to Christmas, this is worth getting for the Isaac alone: a stunning performance of a piece which is difficult to bring off (I have tried it with my own choir) but which here shows clearly why Isaac was seen as a rival to Josquin – though quite different in style. There is some wonderful duet singing, especially from the high male voices, in this and other pieces here. The two Mouton motets are also very fine and the four anony-

mous English pieces get very committed performances. I found the mass a little disappointing: this is not the fault of the singers, who give it all they can and who make a particularly nice job of the *Agnus Dei*. The plainsong *Ave Maria* is a bit out of place, both stylistically in its Solesmes-like performance and acoustically. But I am once again very impressed with this group's blend, tuning, and controlled forward production which suits this repertoire very well.  
Noc O'Regan

**Uns ist ein Kind geboren: Cantatas** Greta de Reyghere, Artur Stefanowicz, Rodrigo Orrego, Klaus Mertens SATB, Collegium Instrumentale Brugense, Capella Brugensis, Patrick Peire 50' 41"

Eufoda 1272

F. L. Benda (?) *Gott steigt herab*; Homilius *Uns ist ein Kind geboren*; Kuhnau? *Uns ist ein Kind geboren* (BWV 142); Stölzel *Kündlich groß ist das gottselige Geheimnis*

Each of these attractive Christmas cantatas, transcribed from sources at the Brussels Conservatoire, is a happy addition to the catalogue. BWV142 was long attributed to J S Bach, then to Kuhnau: its small-scale, intimate tone and the plain-spoken eloquence of the text suggest the turn of the century as a plausible date. Stölzel's modest work comprises a chorus, two short arias and a simple chorale. Homilius's cantata from 1783 features a substantial *da capo* aria in the galant style for soprano and breath-taking trumpet writing. The final work, attributed to a member of the Benda family, is the most forward-looking. The performances are very good, though the countertenor's diction is not 100%.  
Tristram Pugin

**Ryba Czech Christmas Mass, Missa pastoralis** Dagmar Vankátová, Pavla Kšicová, Vladimír Doležal, Václav Sibera SATB, Josef Ksica org, Choir & Orchestra of the Czech Madrigalists, František Xaver Thuri cond 54' 43"  
Naxos 8.554428 £

Here is a delightful example of Czech music at its most uninhibited and endearing. The Christmas Mass (1796) will be familiar to lovers of older recorded versions by Kühn or, indeed, by Thuri himself; the little *Missa pastoralis* of 1788 is claimed as a first recording. Both works are put across with infectious charm and spirit, and the warm glow of the recording (All Saints, Hradčany) helps supply a suitably bucolic atmosphere. The soloists are good and lively, though the bass sounds too mournful in his solo in the Kyrie. The music is unashamedly popular, with echoes of *The Magic Flute* (and even pre-echoes of *Hansel and Gretel*) in the Christmas Mass, and pretty tunes offset by bold tutti. Despite the short playing time, this is a CD well worth acquiring.  
Peter Branscombe

More Christmas items on page 32

## MUSIC IN LONDON

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Not before time, The Royal College of Organists is spreading its musical wings with a series of concerts at their home at St Andrew's, Holborn. The Sweelinck Choir and Players (a cousin to one of the prizewinners at the 1999 York Early Music Competition) opened the series with a rather unadventurous programme of Bach's Overture 3, Brandenburg 4 and the cantatas *Wir danken dir* and *Ein feste Burg*. Under the solid direction of the young German organist, Martin Knizia, the band of young professionals gave enthusiastic and committed, if occasional wayward performances. The three trumpeters had trouble controlling their misbehaving instruments and the lead violinist dominated proceedings in a way that his poor intonation and lack of subtlety didn't warrant. This was particularly noticeable in Brandenburg 4, where the nicely shaped melodic lines and clear articulation of the two recorders (Amy Whittlesea and Becky Davey) outshone the fireworks of the violinist. It was good to hear the decisive tone of a violone, played by Beth Symmons alongside Sophie Willis's well-paced continuo cello (outstanding in the sweeping obligato of 'Komm in mein Herzenhaus'). Of the five solo singers, Nicholas Warden's fruity bass voice excelled. Given the concert's hosts, it was a shame that the organ concerto opening *Sinfonia of Wir danken dir* (an arrangement of the opening of the E major violin Partita) did not use a more prominent organ. The little box organ was barely audible from its position hidden away in the midst of the orchestra.

Philippe Rogier is a name that will soon resonate around the London early music sphere as a result of a choral workshop given by Alan Lumsden for the Thames Valley Early Music Forum – repertoire from a Beauchamp summer school – and three concerts by the Oxford choir, *Magnificat*, the first of which was at St James's Piccadilly (5 October) and launched their Rogier CD. Rogier was the last of a succession of Flemish musicians at the Spanish Court of Philip II, being director of music from the age of 25 until his death only 10 years later in 1596. Three-quarters of his works were destroyed in a fire in 1734, but he left eight mass settings and 36 motets. The *Missa Ego sum qui sum* formed the foundation of this concert, which also included Gombert's imitative helter-skelter of a motet which the mass parodies and six Rogier motets from the Office of the Dead. These included the astonishing six-part *Vias tuas*, with its scrunchy harmonies and largely homophonic but occasionally slithery textures. His use of homophony was also apparent in the Mass. The strongest impression of Rogier's music was its timeless quality, achieved through the most sparing use of cadences. Entire movements of the mass, and several of the motets, had only one cadence point before the conclusion, although harmonic shifts added their own punctuation points. The four women and six men of

*Magnificat*, under the direction of Philip Cave, were powerful advocates of Rogier's music, although the highest realms of the women's voices tended towards shrillness at times.

Rather like London buses, you can wait for ages for a performance of Handel's *La Resurrezione* (1708) and then along come two at once. This once little-known work, which had opened the Lufthansa Festival, also opened The English Concert's new season (Barbican 6 October). Billed as an oratorio to fulfil the Papal ban on opera in Rome, this youthful work is full opera in all but name, with love duets, pastorales, lullabies, earthquakes and storms. and a turtle dove. The integration of instrumental and vocal forces is apparent from the start where the Angel's forthright entry forms the third movement of an instrumental Sonata. The fugal opening on two oboes contrasts with a sensuous dialogue between viola da gamba and solo violin before an interrupted cadence leads to five punched out chords. As a sinuous oboe recitative dies away, the Angel comes thundering down to cast open the gates. Lucifer's huffing and puffing defiance leads to the first love aria, the Angel's 'D'amor fù consiglio'. The end of the first scene produced my only criticism – the noisy rattles of Trevor Pinnock's harpsichord glissandi as he chased the violins in the huge ascending and descending sweeps of Lucifer's unleashing of the hideous serpents and furies. Otherwise this was a sublime performance from director, singers and players alike with many memorable moments from the likes of Nancy Argenta, Lynne Dawson, Robin Blaze, Benjamin Butterfield, Michael George, Rachel Podger, Jonathan Manson, Pamela Thorby and Katharine Spreckelsen and perceptive direction by Trevor Pinnock. [The opening sequence described thus does not feature in Chrysander's score; King's Music has the only accurate edition.]

The enterprising British Clavichord Society is fast becoming a powerful mouthpiece for this retiring instrument, and one of its founders, Paul Simmonds, gave what was almost certainly the first British recital on a pedal clavichord on 9 October (at the Art Workers' Guild). At their extreme, pedal clavichords could comprise two manuals and pedals, made of three separate clavichords piled on top of each other. Paul Simmonds' instrument was a simpler affair, with a natty new pedal clavichord (with 16' and 8' strings) concocted by Benedikt Class (of Northeim, Germany) sitting under a Karin Richter copy of the 1771 Nuremberg instrument. A clavichord recital is a magical experience, with the delicate but sensuous tone drawing the listener into the heart of the music through this essentially introvert instrument. Although it is famed as a practice instrument for organists (and the basic technique is exactly that required for sensitive organ playing), the fluidity of Simmonds'

playing owed more to harpsichord style than the organ. This was particularly noticeable in Pachelbel's Fantasia in G minor, given a quasi-Italian arpeggiated treatment and the concluding Bach Toccata in D minor (yes - THAT one!) which sounded amazing shorn of its organistic grandeur. Bach's sublime Partita on *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig* was a brave choice of piece, not least because many of the variations need two manuals. I would have preferred a more consistent pulse relationship between variations – the pace of the duo third variation, for example, was rather pushed and, perhaps as a result, the articulation seemed to owe more to the sometimes awkward note spacing than the underlying musical line. Overall, this was more of a thoughtful presentation of work in progress than a polished performance.

I have been to many concerts at St James' Piccadilly where an audience of 50 or so pay up to about £10 for a first class concert. But throw in the The Consort of Musicke, and a brief private viewing, and you can fill the place, galleries and all, at up to £35 a ticket. This joint presentation by The British Museum Society and the Royal Academy of Arts (15 October) was linked to the Anthony Van Dyck exhibitions in celebration of his 400th birthday. The concert took its title from the first piece, d'India's *Godea del Sol i Rai*, Basking in the Rays of the Sun (...my pretty darling seemed like a red rose), which could have been a comment on Van Dyck's heavily blushing skin tones in his portraits of those surrounding the Court of Charles I, our own Sun King. The five pieces by Nicholas Lanier provided the closest link to Charles I and Van Dyck – he was Master of the King's Musick and was painted by Van Dyck. But musically the highlights were the ten vocal pieces by William Lawes which also produced the most sublime singing from the Consort at their emotionally laden best – giving Evelyn Tubbs a line like 'Beat thy breast, sigh, weep, despair; cry Ay me! Is Daphnis dead?', for example, is just asking for trouble! But their well-known attention to the detail of the words grabs the listener's attention and draws him into the heart of the composer's intent. The concert was full of magic moments with star turns from all the singers and sensitive, restrained accompaniment from Steven Devine (organ and harpsichord) and an unusually untalkative Anthony Rooley (lute). An inspiring evening.

Les Talens Lyriques were a French import that defied British beefs as they docked at the Wigmore Hall (9 Nov). Fielding a four-piece group, led by the distinguished young harpsichordist, Christophe Rousset, they were joined by soprano Monique Zanetti for a programme of Couperin, Lully and Campra. Zanetti's sultry and richly sensuous voice brought great emotional depth to the arcadian musings from Campra's opening scene from *Idoménée*, 'Venez, Glorie, Fierté' and the sinuous melody of Lully's *Atys est trop heureux* with its hypnotic ground bass opening stanza. Although there were times when vibrato got in the way of her florid ornamentation of Lully's timeless melodic lines, my biggest gripe was her lack of contact with the audience. Singing directly, albeit passionately, to a music stand with hardly a glance at the listeners, it felt as though we were

watching a recording session. Her stage position seemed curious as well, well to the left of the stage and singing across it, rather than out to the audience. Les Talens Lyriques were outstanding, with far better cohesion and musicality than their appearance (with a different line up) at last year's Lufthansa Festival (when I also criticised a different singer for keeping her head in the score). The unforced tone and superb tonal blend of the two violinists, Florence Malgoire and Mira Glodeanu (one of the winning group at the recent York Competition) was matched by the distinct bass line of Juan-Manuel Quintana's viola da gamba. Rousset's continuo playing was sensitive and stylistically appropriate. It was aided by the unusual positioning of the harpsichord stage right with the sharp end pointing towards the audience. This subdued the percussive edge for the listener, whilst giving a strong lead to the instrumentalists. His direction of Couperin's opening *Le Parnasse ou L'Apothéose de Corelli* was exquisite, particularly in the delicate and subdued tones in the scene where Corelli drinks at the Fountain of Hippocrene. The programme closed with appropriate symmetry with *L'Apothéose de Lully*. Rousset showed his sympathy to be clearly on the side of Lully, as Corelli's plodding ground bass welcomed him to Parnassus. The earlier flight of Mercury to the Elysian Fields was indeed mercurial, and the rumblings from Lully's contemporaries were distinctly subterranean. The enthusiastic yelps of approval from the audience were well deserved, drawing two encores.

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's new season started with the complete Beethoven symphonies with five different conductors and with a vocal work as contrast and filler in each concert. The Hungarian Ivan Fischer directed the performance on 10 November at the Royal Festival Hall with the American soprano, Christine Brewer. Listening to Beethoven symphonies is like revisiting old friends – so much is familiar, but there are always new insights or previously undiscovered facets to delight. With the 2nd symphony, the friendship had been fleeting, which gave me the chance to imagine the impact on the 1803 first night audience as they experienced the shattering emotional depth of the opening passage and the vast and argumentative coda to the first movement. Fischer imparted more than a hint of Bavarian swagger in the Allegro and the jaunty fifth theme of the Larghetto, framed by its amazing medley of songs without words. He allowed himself just the right amount of schmalz in this movement, but didn't quite encourage the degree of clarity that the scherzo demands. The delightful whispery moment towards the end of the final movement was a clear forerunner of the magical link between the scherzo and the finale of the 5th symphony, which followed after the interval. Fischer's interpretation of this was powerful and rich, with the opening motive hammered out as in days of old. My biggest problem was his intrusive habit of thumping out the silent opening beat with his foot – and substituting a loud sniff for the reprise. Even in rehearsal this should not be necessary, and certainly not for a band of the OAE's calibre. His phrasing of some of the subsequent passages was also new to me, but did not cause undue alarm. The OAE's woodwind were



in their usual superb form, although the horns were shaky at times. I was weaned on performances where the mysterious conclusion to the scherzo was a barely audible mish-mash of sound, out of which leapt the shattering fanfare of the finale; hearing all the notes with clarity lost some of that reverential hush, and I wondered if Fischer had allowed the strings to get a little too loud. Christine Brewer took *Ah! Perfido* in her stride in a magisterially assured performance. The erudite programme notes included a contemporary review of the work, with its curiously insistent repetition of the final phrase, now soft, now loud – ruining the piece, according to Reichardt. But Brewer's outpouring of passion as she called repeatedly for death or pity made Beethoven's coda convincing. A powerful evening, and not for the weak-hearted.

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#### AND IN EDINBURGH

*Stylus Phantasticus* Kati Debretzeni *vln*, Alison McGillivray *gamba*, Matthew Wadsworth *theorbo*, Robert Howarth *hpscd*, *org* Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh, 12 October.

This was a memorable concert – and not just because the players performed the whole thing from memory. There was an infectious enthusiasm about their playing, and their commitment to the particular style of music in which they specialise, which made for a very compelling performance. The *stylus phantasticus* is one of those styles, like the late-16th-century mannerist madrigal or the music of the *Sturm und Drang* period, when nothing seemed to succeed like excess. The music of Biber, Marini, Schmelzer and Walther is full of 'curious and new inventions' such as scordatura, improvisatory flourishes and flamboyant virtuosity and needs a confident violinist to bring it off. Kati Debretzeni certainly had the necessary panache and strength of tone and led the ensemble from the front. The improvisatory nature of much of the music must have made memorising it quite a challenge, especially for the three continuo players. Having three gave a richness to the accompaniment which was particularly appreciated in the Canongate's resonant acoustic. It was less suited to the solo pieces, especially Matthew Wadsworth's Piccinini *Toccata Cromatica* which didn't carry so well, though his continuo playing was exemplary. It was a pity, too, that Robert Howarth chose to play Sweelinck's *Baletto del granduca* on the small-sounding chamber organ, rather than letting it rip on the Canongate's exciting new Frobenius. Alison McGillivray showed a fine sense of style in a Kuhnelt *gamba* sonata. Overall, this is an exciting young group and I look forward to hearing more from them.

Noel O'Regan

If you are giving a concert, please make sure that we know about it. Send details by the 15th of the previous month to the address on page 1. Make sure that you state date, time, place, phone number, who and what. If you are using King's Music publications, let us know: we might give you more space.

#### CHARPENTIER

##### *In Nativitate Domini N[ost]ri Jesu Christi Canticum (H421)*

Charpentier made three settings of the text *Frigidae noctis umbra*. H414 (for 5 voices) is well-known, particularly the setting of *Salve puerule*, which is available from King's Music and was printed in *Early Music Review*, December 1996. H393 is for three voices (Tr, S & B clefs) and two treble instruments. According to Catherine Cessac, it was written for Christmas 1698. H421 is for three female voices (original clefs Tr Tr S) and continuo; its date is unknown.

Source Paris Bibliothèque nationale, Rés. Vm <sup>1</sup> 259 (Vol. XII, f. 20<sup>v</sup>-22<sup>v</sup> of the *Mélanges autographes*). This is one of three settings of basically the same text.

The score is headed:

Historicus	3 <sup>us</sup> Superius
Chorus Pastorum	
Angelus	1 <sup>us</sup> Superius
Una ex Choro	2 <sup>us</sup> Superius

but within the score Charpentier use the French term *Dessus*. Since the bottom part of the chorus divides at the last chord of several sections, it may be assumed that it is not intended for one voice per part (though Peter Holman, for whom this edition was prepared, suggests a different possibility: that the single third singer decides which note is preferable depending on the strength of the continuo instruments).

The music of verses two and three is not notated, but the texts are headed:

*a ce second couplet la p<sup>r</sup> Dessus dira la partie du 2<sup>d</sup> dessus.*

*a ce troisieme couplet le 2<sup>d</sup> Dessus reprendre sa partie.*

The complete work is available from King's Music @ £4.00

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Salve, puerule,<br>Salve, tenellule,<br>O nate parvule,<br>Quam bonus es!<br>Tu coelum deseris,<br>Tu solo nasceris,<br>Nobis te ut miseris<br>Assimiles. | 1. Hail, little boy,<br>Hail, tender little one,<br>O tiny baby,<br>How good you are!<br>You have left heaven,<br>You are born on the earth,<br>To make yourself the same<br>As wretched us.  |
| 2. O summa bonitas,<br>Excelsa deitas,<br>Vilis humanitas,<br>Fit hodie.<br>Aeternus nascitur,<br>Immensus capitur,<br>Et rei tegitur,<br>Sub specie.        | 2. O greatest good,<br>Highest deity,<br>He becomes today<br>Vile humanity.<br>The eternal is born,<br>The immense is encompassed,<br>And is concealed<br>In the cloak of matter.             |
| 3. Virgo puerpera,<br>Beata viscera,<br>Dei cum opera,<br>Dant filium.<br>Gaude flos virginum,<br>Gaude spes hominum,<br>Fons lavans crimum<br>Proluvium.    | 3. Virgin child-bearer,<br>Blessed womb,<br>Through the work of God<br>They give a son.<br>Rejoice, flower of virgins,<br>Rejoice, hope of mankind,<br>Fountain washing<br>The slurry of sin. |



29

Tu coe - lum de - se - ris, Tu so - lo na - sce - ris, No - bis te ut mi - se - ris  
 Ae - ter - nus na - sci - tur, Im - men - sus ca - pi - tur, Et re - i te - gi - tur,  
 Gau - de flos vir - gi - num, Gau - de spes ho - mi - num, Fons la - vans cri - mi - num

Figured bass: 6 4 #6 6 6 6 5 3 6 6 6

35

As - si - mi - les, No - bis te ut mi - se - ris As - si - mi - les.  
 Sub spe - ci - e, Et re - i te - gi - tur, Sub spe - ci - e.  
 Pro - lu - vi - um, Fons la - vans cri - mi - num Pro - lu - vi - um.

Figured bass: 6 5 6 9 8 6 5 4 3

41

Tu coe - lum de - se - ris, Tu so - lo na - sce - ris, No - bis te ut mi - se - ris  
 Ae - ter - nus na - sci - tur, Im - men - sus ca - pi - tur, Et re - i te - gi - tur,  
 Gau - de flos vir - gi - num, Gau - de spes ho - mi - num, Fons la - vans cri - mi - num

Figured bass: #6 6 6 6 5 3 6 6 6

47

As - si - mi - les, No - bis te ut mi - se - ris As - si - mi - les.  
 Sub spe - ci - e, Et re - i te - gi - tur, Sub spe - ci - e.  
 Pro - lu - vi - um, Fons la - vans cri - mi - num Pro - lu - vi - um.

Figured bass: 6 5 6 9 8 6 5 4 3

53 \*

Figured bass: 5 6 7 6 7 #6 6 5 4 3

\* Après cette finale la basse continue jouera une ritorn[elle] de huit mesures seulement jouant toujours le mesme mouvement, comme par exemple: [bars 53-60]



## RECORD REVIEWS

Since it is two months before our next issue, it seemed unfair to omit discs that have been received but which, for one reason or another (e-mail crashes are more likely than late submission from reviewers) we have no review. We have tried to include as many late arrivals as possible, which is why there may be rather more signed CB and BC than usual.

### MEDIEVAL

*Abballati, abballati! Canti e suoni della Sicilia Medievale* Al Qantarah 74' 59"  
Foné 99 F 07 CD

I don't know what to make of this. It is a sacred equivalent to those discs that treat troubadour songs in the Arabic style, but rather more so. The booklet note argues that Sicilian culture was a mixture of Arab, Byzantine, Provençal and Norman cultures, and this is an attempt to imagine how medieval religious music might have been sung. The two sources mentioned are the 12th-century *Troparium de Catania* (edited by the distinguished chant scholar, David Hiley) and the *Corpus of Sicilian Folk Music*. The contrast between the familiar text of *In hoc anni circulo* (NOBC 13) and how it is treated here is amazing. The seven performers produce an impressive sound. I don't know if I believe it, but it's certainly very ethnic. CB

### 15th CENTURY

Barbireau *Missa Virgo parens Christi, Kyrie paschale* (etc.) The Clerks' Group, Edward Wickham 68' 57"  
ASV CD GAU 188  
+ Obrecht *Inter praeclearissimas, Laudemus nunc Dominum, Salve sancta facies; Pipelare Credo de S. Johanne Evangelista; Pullois (?) O beata infantia*

As if to underline their pre-eminence in this repertoire, the Clerks' Group have just released a disc devoted to Jacobus Barbireau, but by way of unfinished business also featuring sacred music by several contemporaries including Jacob Obrecht, and it is with a very authoritative account of his *Laudemus nunc Dominum* that the disc opens. Further excellent Obrecht in the form of the motets *Inter praeclearissimas virtutes* and *Salve sancta facies/Homo quidam* is also beautifully sung, while the spectacular *Credo de Sancta Johanne Evangelista* by Mattheus Pipelare provides further evidence for that master's inclusion in the first rank of Franco-Flemish composers. But the main interest resides in the Barbireau Mass and *Kyrie paschale*, which are in the same sonorous and affecting style as his setting of *Osculetur me*, with which the Clerks' Group intrigued us on ASV CD GAU 153. Clearly Barbireau's premature death in 1491 at the age of 36 deprived us of an extremely distinctive voice in the rich panoply of Flemish polyphonic composition. In the mass (one of only two by the

composer which survive), the handling of the voices is masterly indeed, while the rich five-part texture is further enhanced by voice-division. This music by Barbireau is an important discovery indeed, and helps to account for the elevated circles he moved in and the considerable reputation which survived his untimely demise.

D. James Ross

Obrecht *Missa O lumen ecclesiae* (etc.) A. N. S. Chorus, János Bali 68' 06"  
Hungaroton HCD 31772  
*Alma redemptoris mater, Ave regina, Missa Malheur me bat, Missa O lumen ecclesiae*

These performances are rather good. In view of the group's name I braced myself for an overcrowded, non-specialised bash at this difficult repertoire, but not a bit of it! The 14 singers, with four male altos on the top line, give a thoroughly creditable account of both masses and motets, and János Bali demonstrates a deep understanding of the idiom and indeed the musicological context of the works, laid out in an uncharacteristically detailed Hungaroton programme note. If the choir perhaps lacks the final precision of the Clerks' Group in their singing of Obrecht (CD GAU171), they supply ample measures of the 'musical soul' which I occasionally found lacking in that disc. The unusually low pitch of their version of the Mass *Malheur me bat*, presumably to accommodate the adult male voices, is extremely appropriate to the work's dark character, although it is a pity that the Benedictus and second Osanna have been omitted on the basis of the music merely repeating material already heard in the Crucifixus. These are extremely presentable performance of rarely recorded repertoire and are well worth buying.

D. James Ross

*The Whyte Rose: poétique anglo-bourguignonne au temps de Charles le Téméraire* Ferrara Ensemble, Crawford Young dir 66' 20"  
Arcana A301  
Songs by Busnois, Frye, Molinet, Morton, Ockeghem, Robertus d'Anglia, & anon

Looking at the list of composers, I assumed that the rose was not the one associated with bank-holiday cricket. But Crawford Young's excellent booklet notes begin, if not in Yorkshire, at least in such English locations as Grafton Regis and Stony Stratford, with the secret marriage of Edward of York and Elizabeth Woodville in 1464 and move to the more ceremonious wedding between Edward's sister Margaret and Charles the Bold in Bruges four years later. The disc draws on the Anglo-Franco-Flemish repertoire of the Burgundian court. The disc begins and ends with sacred Frye: *Salve virgo mater* and *Sospitati dedit egros*, both marvellous pieces and a little more sensuous than Busnois' *Anima mea liquefacta est*. The other pieces

are secular, in English, French and instrumental, all beautifully performed, with particular credit to the ATB trio of Lena Susanne Norin, Eric Mentzel and Stephen Grant. Highly recommended. CB

### 16th CENTURY

Bassano *Viva l'Amore: XVI-XVII Secolo* Flanders Recorder Quartet, Capilla Flamenca 65' 50"  
Opus 111 OPS 30-239  
Music by A., J. & L. Bassano, Blancks, Coprario, Ferrabosco I, Harden, Henry VIII, Holborne, Lassus, Lloyd, Marenzio, Vecchi

This is a good idea for a recording. Members of the Bassano family served in the English court recorder consort from 1540 to 1630, and had a European reputation for making sets of recorders. We also have a good deal of music linked with the group, either composed by its members or found in manuscripts that can be associated with it. Furthermore, the Flanders Recorder Consort play on 'Bassano'-type recorders by Adria Breukink and Bob Marvin – presumably copies of the surviving instruments that David Lasocki and others have suggested were made by members of the Bassano family. We therefore have that rare thing in early music recordings: a close match between the instruments used and the music played upon them, complemented by beautiful sonorities, excellent intonation and a generally sensible approach to articulation and tempi.

It seems almost churlish, then, to point out that this CD is a missed opportunity. More than ten minutes is wasted on much-recorded pieces from the Henry VIII book, compiled around 1515, long before the Bassanos arrived in England. It is good to have some of the madrigals and chansons from the first section of the Fitzwilliam Wind Manuscript (c1610), since wordless vocal music of this sort seems to have been the staple fare of wind groups at the time. But it is unlikely that this repertoire would have been used in concerted performances with a group of singers, as happens here. Another ten minutes or so is spent on familiar pieces from Holborne's *Pavans, Galliards, Almains* (1599), when only one of Jeronimo Bassano's excellent fantasias is included (it is one of the highlights of the recording, along with Alfonso Ferrabosco I's pavan for six basses), and none of his fine five-part pavans and galliards. It would also have been good to have had a larger selection from the Fitzwilliam MS, and some pieces from the slightly earlier court wind manuscript now in the Filmer collection at Yale; only two parts survive, but some of the pieces can be reconstructed from other sources.

Doubtless, someone involved with this recording thought a whole CD of recorder consorts too much of a good thing, and decided to mix in vocal pieces and some lute music. The result is attractive and

varied, but it is not the revelatory exploration of a much ignored and misunderstood repertory it could have been. *Peter Holman*

Byrd *Cantiones sacrae* 1575 (*The Byrd Edition* 4) The Cardinal's Musick, Andrew Carwood, David Skinner 73' 36"  
ASV *Gaudeamus* CD GAU 197

The Tallis-Byrd *Cantiones sacrae* is a fascinating collection, bringing together the mature work of Tallis and Byrd's first coherent collection. Hearing the two together (and I'm remembering Michael Howard's broadcasts and recording from the 1960s), Byrd seemed so modern, but by themselves some pieces feel pretty archaic, and I'm occasionally worried by the singers' need to push them, rather let them flow in the way of the earlier repertory. The famous (thanks to Kerman) opening piece has something of a madrigal texture to it and might have benefited from a freer, unconduted approach. But these are minor points: the 15 (or 17 if *Tribue Domine* is counted as three) sacred songs are well worth hearing as a set, and the more comfortable pitch than we often hear for this repertory is a bonus. *CB*

Cara *Fiamma amorosa et bella: musiche di Marchetto Cara alla corte di Isabella d'Este* Consort Veneto 48' 58"  
Bongiovanni GB 5086-2 *see next issue*

Dalza *Intavolatura di Liuto Venezia* 1508 Massimo Lonardi 48' 28"  
Agorá AG 013 (rec. 1995)  
21 pieces by Dalza, 8 by Capirola

My initial reaction to this disc was that it falls just a little short of the best recording of this repertory (and there are some – in spite of the 'world premiere' label on the booklet – by Paul O'Dette and Jakob Lindberg among others). Yet it is hard to say why, because the performances are clean and not lacking in interest; indeed some of them have considerable verve. However some of the dances lack the last degree of rhythmic tightness which would have made all the difference, and the faster divisions have the sense of 'almost but not quite' about them. The disc is somewhat short, though the chosen selections from Dalza are repetitive enough to make it feel longer than it is; the selection of eight pieces from Capirola, not mentioned on the front cover, provides welcome relief. There is an honesty about these performances which many will enjoy, and the recorded sound is good. Well worth investigation. *Lynda Sayce*

Du Caurroy *Requiem des Rois de France* Douce Mémoire, Denis Raisin Dadre *dir* Astrée E8660 71' 17"  
+ Goudimel *Psalms* 120 & 130

Du Caurroy's music is enjoying a revival, and this recording should continue the process. While not being exactly a reconstruction of the music for the funeral of Henry IV in 1610 (the requiem mass lasted five hours, so even if the information survived, it would take four CDs),

it makes the reasonable assumption that the music performed would have been by the royal composer Du Caurroy, who had died the previous year; the setting was used for subsequent royal funerals. One might wonder whether such an important ceremony would have been performed by more than six singers and eight instruments, but the sound is rich enough on disc, even if it might not have filled Notre Dame (was sound expected to fill large buildings anyway?) In fact, doubling solo voices with loud wind fills out the sound more than one might expect. The music is impressively sombre, though I must confess that I skipped the funeral oration. I particularly enjoyed the two French psalms that begin the disc, and there are two of Du Caurroy's fine *Fantasies* (nos 34 & 37). A recording commendable in concept and execution, and with good booklet notes. *CB*

Isaac *Missa Paschale: Isaac, Hofhaimer & Buchner at the court of Emperor Maximilian I* (I Fiamminghi III) Cappella Pratensis, Rebecca Stewart *dir*, Wim Diepenhorst (Ebert organ, Hofkirch, Innsbruck) 55' 38"  
Ricercar 206692

Up till now I have found listening to Isaac's church music a duty rather than a pleasure (I didn't sample the two CDs that we reviewed recently). This is, however, a delight. Organ, chant and vocal polyphony match each other, giving a total experience of the music that is far more effective than most attempts at such reconstructions. The choir has a confidence in its pulse that seems to give it freedom: after reading the booklet, I deduce that this may well come from singing from facsimiles of the part-books. The organ music isn't actually by Hofhaimer and Buchner but improvised (so the booklet tells us: how prepared does an improvisation have to be before it becomes a composition?) In his excellent booklet note, William Peter Mahrt points out that, while we expect unity to derive from the composer, for the listener of the time coherence came from the liturgical occasion; this CD certainly bears him out. Even if you don't want the liturgical experience, the singing draws the listener into itself. *CB*

Palestrina *Messe Mantovane vol. II* Soloisti della Cappella Musicale di San Petronio, Sergio Vartolo *dir*, Liuwe Tamminga *org* 101' 47"  
Bongiovanni GB 5556/57-2 (2 CDs in box)  
*Missa Beatae Mariae Virginis I, II & III*

I'm afraid I continue to be baffled by the approach to these Palestrina masses taken by Sergio Vartolo and his singers. The manneristic, lozenge-shaped dynamics with which every note is often treated destroys any sense of line – and line is all important here. In the Credo the singers swell on the conjunction 'et', then separate it completely from 'incarnatus est' for example. This application of baroque instrumental gestures, beloved of some players from the Low Countries, has become something of a fetish for Italian vocal groups but it doesn't work for me. Otherwise these are interesting recordings, though having three

masses based on the same plainsong does make it rather grind on a bit – particularly when the chant is always sung by the same male falsetto voice. It is odd that, in masses with *alternatim* Glorias and Credos, the Kyries are not sung nine-fold with *alternatim* chant. This is Palestrina writing to commission for the Duke of Mantua and it is, for the most part, careful rather than inspired music. The singers are sensitively accompanied by Liuwe Tamminga on the organ and there are some very informative programme notes by Paola Besutti. But be warned about the style of singing. *Noel O'Regan*

Palestrina *Stabat mater* etc *see* Allegri (p. 22)

Rogier *Missa Ego sum qui sum* Magnificat, Philip Cave *dir* 74' 35"  
Linn CKD 109  
+ *Dominus regit me, Heu mihi Domine, Laboravi in gemitu meo, Peccavi quid faciam tibi, Taedet animam meam, Vias tuas & Gombert Ego sum qui sum*

This is a lovely disc, a worthy addition to this group's impressive discography and a fascinating exploration of the music of this neglected Franco-Flemish composer. Before his premature death at the age of 35, Rogier composed some 300 works, of which only about 50 survive, among them eight masses including the spectacular *Missa Philippus II* and the present setting, based on a motet by Nicolas Gombert. Magnificat sing the mass, Gombert's motet and other motets by Rogier with the serene confidence which has become the hallmark of their recordings. With the exception of a couple of slightly dodgy moments, one of them unfortunately at the start of the mass, the performances are eloquent indeed, and Philip Cave's direction is thoughtful and revelatory. The disc is recorded in a warm acoustic and the tempi are generous, allowing for expressive phrasing and dynamic variation. Along with the Rogier disc in the ground-breaking series *de Vlaamse Polyfonie*, this present recording makes a very important contribution to the revival of the fortunes of an important Renaissance composer. *D. James Ross*

Senfl *Deutsche Lieder, Carmina* Weser-Renaissance. Manfred Cordes 69' 53"  
cpo 999 648-2

Senfl's songs can be made to sound a bit like the beer-hall entertainment that always seems to be on TV if you are stuck in a German hotel on Saturday night. Brueghel's dancing peasants on the cover makes one fear the worst, but the 'Ich kumm, ich kumm's at the end of *Im Mayen* are not performed as if accompanying tankards banging on the table. This is, in fact, a civilised disc, the wind ensemble complementing the singers in a refined way. The performances are direct and straightforward, letting the quality and beauty of the songs sound forth clearly: why do English singers not know them? As well as German songs and instrumental pieces, there are two Latin items, *Beati omnes* and the 'second-hand funeral motet' *Quis dabit oculis*. This is a most attractive disc, well played and sung. *CB*

**Tallis The Complete Works, vol. 4. Music for the Divine Office 1** Chapelle du Roi, Alistair Dixon 66' 41"

Signum SIGCD010

*Dum transisset a5, Hodie nobis caelorum, In pace in idipsum, Jam Christus astra, Jesu salvator saeculi, Loquebat variis linguis, Magnificat a4, Quod chorus vatum, Salvator mundi, Sermonem blande, Videte miraculum*

I was a little hesitant in welcoming earlier issues, but am very happy with this one. As an anthology, it has the advantage of a common theme: settings of chant, which is often unmistakably audible to even the most inexperienced listener. The hymns, in fact, are perhaps the easiest way to approach this sort of music; Tallis is invariably inventive. Of the responsories, the outstanding example here is *Videte miraculum*, the quality of the music truly matching the incipit. The weakest piece is the longest, a Magnificat a4, sensibly placed last so it can easily be ignored; I was puzzled when I first heard it and was comforted to read in Nick Sandon's excellent notes that he finds it clumsy and inexperienced. The vocal style has a lot in common with The Cardinal's Musick, whose Byrd has also reached vol. 4 (see above). Both groups move along much faster than older-fashioned listeners may like, and are restrained in highlighting the detail – the Tallis performances more than the Byrd. On the whole, it works, though I find it more effective with music I know than music that is unfamiliar, where a little more pointing of the passing scenery can help – so persist if it seems to pass by too quickly first time. The Byrd booklet tells us who sings which part in each piece; it took a long time to find the choir list in the Tallis – 15 names placed next to a small photo of nine singers, with no breakdown by voice. The series is getting into its stride and the whole disc works as a coherent programme. CB

**Barzellette: North Italian Frottole of the Early 16th Century** Retrover, Markus Tapio dir Opus 111 OPS 30-243 65' 53"  
Music by d'Ana, Cara, Capriola, Dalza, Ganassi, Lurano, A. & R. Mantovano, Newsidler, Ortiz, Pesenti, Stringari, Tromboncino & anon

I wonder whether I should spoil the surprise by mentioning Annemieke Cantor's marvellous contralto sound on the first track, the anonymous *Tu dormi, io veglio*, accompanied by lira da braccio. There's a very free approach to rhythm, far removed from the style that prevailed when this repertoire was (in England at least) dominated by countertenors, with imaginative playing by the group's six instruments. A delightful recording, which fully justifies the director's aim of putting the emotion back into the frottola. CB

**The Dublin Virginal Manuscript** Joseph Payne org & hpscd 58' 18"

Discover International DICD 920592

Also includes Philips Passamezzo Pavan & Galliard

I left this aside last month since I knew that the music wouldn't stand close com-

parison with the complete Byrd collection. When I first came across John Ward's edition of the music (2nd edition from Schott), it was my introduction to the network of the European popular repertoire, and found Ward's notes as interesting as the music, which is of variable quality and mostly unsophisticated. There are some delightful short pieces, but there isn't enough substance to sustain interest throughout a whole CD, and the inclusion of the Peter Philips emphasises this. The music is fun to play, less so to listen to. Joseph Payne plays it a little stolidly, not helped by the harpsichord's sound. The organ used for a few pieces seems a little substantial to be a domestic instrument, which is surely what this collection needs. CB

**Genesis Voces Aequales 74' 00"**

Fono FA-066-2

Clemens Creavit Deus hominem; C. Festa Dominator caelorum Gombert Domine Deus; Lassus Creator omnium Deus, In principio erat verbum; Obrecht Factor orbis; Palestrina Tui sunt caeli; Wert Domine tu es + settings of Vesper hymns by Andrés Soós

This is the second part of a CD tryptich which juxtaposes old music with new. [We reviewed the first disc, *Apocalypsis 1999*, in *EMR* 48, p. 18.] I enjoyed it very much. Here, all of the contemporary material (on which I will not comment, as the disc will surely draw attention in other journals), is from the pen of one composer (seven hymns, commissioned by Voces Aequales). The early repertoire similarly deals with the book of Genesis and is beautifully sung. The sonority of an all-male group often causes problems of clarity in thickly-textured music, but that is certainly not the case here, such is the expert control on blend and timbre. Even if cross-over isn't your thing, don't miss this group! BC

Andrés Soós is one of the singers on the ANS Chorus Obrecht disc also reviewed this month.

**J'ay pris Amours: Chansons au luth du XVIème siècle** Claudine Ansermet S, Paolo Cherici lute 67' 44"

Symphonia SY 98162

Music by Clemens non Papa, Crecquillon, F. da Milano, Morlaye, Sermisy, Spinacino & anon

Although a considerable number of lute songs were published in the sixteenth century, relatively few have been recorded, so this disc fills a welcome hole in the available repertoire, all the more so because it is finely performed and beautifully recorded. Claudine Ansermet's voice is warm and rich, with a wide range of emotional colouring, and capable of considerable agility. I found her mostly moderate vibrato just occasionally a little too much, and a few ornaments sound a little questionable, but these are tiny quibbles which should not dissuade you from buying the disc. The playing of Paolo Cherici is a delight; he is a subtle and masterful accompanist in these often very intricate lute parts, and his solos are beautifully wrought. Most attractive of all is the completely flawless ensemble; they sing and play as one, and the result is

extremely beguiling. Highly recommended.

Lynda Sayce

**Musica Vaticana: Music from the Vatican Manuscripts (1503-1534)** Pomerium, Alexander Blachly dir 66' 46"

Glissando 779 001-2

Carpentras Lamentatio Jeremiae; C. Festa Conditor alme siderum, Inviolata integra et casta, Pater noster/Ave Maria Josquin Benedicta es, Virgo salutaris; Mouton Tua est potentia; de Silva Omnis pulchritudo Domini; Willaert Enixa est puerpera

Issued in association with the exhibition 'High Renaissance in the Vatican', this disc provides a fascinating cross-section of papal music from the first third of the 16th century. Mainstream repertoire such as Josquin's motet *Benedicta es*, popular throughout Europe and which even found its way into the repertoire of the Collegiate Church at Lincluden in the West of Scotland, rubs shoulders with less familiar music by Genet (Carpentras) and Costanza Festa. From their very first manifestation on disc, Pomerium have maintained the very highest standards of performance, recording and presentation, and this latest recording is no exception. The standard of the singing is consistently excellent, the recorded sound is rich without sounding too plushy and the production looks absolutely gorgeous, the beautifully illuminated opening of the chant *Rex pacificus* from a Sistine Chapel manuscript gracing the front cover. Another powerful illustration of what can be achieved by a generously funded arts project, the resulting disc is a delight from start to finish and a valuable contribution to our picture of music-making in the Vatican at the height of its powers.

D. James Ross

Congratulations to Peter Czornyj, formerly of Archiv, where he was responsible for some very distinguished recordings, on his new venture of Glissando. We hope that the label flourishes.

## 17th CENTURY

**Allegri Miserere; Palestrina Stabat mater;** King's College Choir, Roy Goodman tr, David Willcocks dir 55' 37"

Decca Legends 466 373-2 (rec 1963)

Allegri Miserere; Palestrina Hodie beata Virgo Maria, Litaniae de BVM, Magnificat 1 toni a8, Senex puerum portabat

Maybe not perhaps legendary (it is far too well documented to be a legend), but there is certainly an element of hagiography in the focusing on the boy treble here. It is an important recording, in that it is probably responsible for the subsequent popularity of the hybrid piece that is Allegri's *Miserere*. It stands comparison with later recordings, and the use of a boy treble, while not authentic for any recreation of a performance in the Sistine chapel in the 250 or so years of its use there, is surely exactly what Ivor Atkins intended when he put together the now-familiar version. The young Roy Goodman sings at least as well as anyone who has subsequently sung the solo treble, and is amazingly confident and in tune: he had the advantage of innocence



of the tradition that can weigh upon more recent singers and benefited from King's nerve-saving custom of not divulging in advance who would take the solo. Sometimes when one hears it on the radio, it is introduced with comments like 'whatever happened to Roy Goodman?' I'm sure all our readers know (though we haven't, alas, had many records from him to review lately). The booklet is built round him, and he contributes notes about his choirboy days as well as on the music (though he might have let on that the top Cs are a recent addition to the piece's history.) The pictures come from him too, no doubt preserved by proud parents. I met Roy's mother once for five minutes, when I gave her a lift from a Cambridge church to Roy's car after a concert; she mentioned that, as a boy, Roy might have channelled his excess energy into something far less socially acceptable had not joining the choir given him an enthusiasm and a motivation which was the making of him. It would have been nice to have had a full choir list: I suspect that it would contain other familiar names.

The *Miserere* takes 11 minutes and comes from an LP *Evensong for Ash Wednesday*: the Palestrina, which forms the bulk of the disc, is mostly for double-choir and was recorded later the same year (1963). It is a bit of a period piece: slow and dramatic, but with a care in its shaping that can still be a model to modern singers. The part-writing is amazingly clear. This is what I enjoyed when I visited King's Chapel as a student, but it doesn't say as much to me now, especially the most famous piece, the *Stabat mater*. A fascinating disc, well worth the reformatting. CB

**Boeddecker *Sacra Partitura, Straßburg 1651***  
Lukas-Barockensemble Stuttgart (Susan Eitrich, Undine Holzwarth, Theodor Schmitz SSB, Marianne Rönez vln, Eckart Lenzing *dulcian*, Hubert Hoffmann *chit*, Adina Scheyhing *vdg*, Hans-Eugen Ekert *claviorganum*, dir Cornetto LC10382 76' 30"  
Includes Casati *Pater noster* & Monteverdi *Ecce sacrum paratum*

Boeddecker is chiefly known as the composer of the first solo bassoon sonata, based on *La Monica*. The publication contains one other instrumental work, a virtuosic violin sonata, and motets for soprano and continuo. Most of these are by Boeddecker himself, some based on chorales but otherwise in the Italian style, but three are by Gasparo Casati (two omitted from the disc, but the Lord's Prayer is included, since Boeddecker added the closing phrase) and one by Monteverdi, to which he added ornamentation. The well-filled disc ends with two simpler funeral trios for a 15-year-old girl who died in 1663. An enterprising disc: worthwhile repertoire, very well sung and played by this Stuttgart-based group. The sopranos divide the motets equally; both sing stylishly and attractively, in complete command of the florid style. An interesting feature of the accompaniment is the use of a combined harpsichord and organ: both sections of the instrument sound well. Cornetto also publishes the

score, which I recommend strongly to sopranos seeking new repertoire. CB

**Dowland *In darkness let me dwell*** John Potter T, Stephen Stubbs *lute*, John Surman *S sax*, B *clarinet*, Maya Homburger *vln*, Barry Guy *d/bass* 72' 34"  
ECM New Series 1697 465 234-2

I've met various strong opinions about this recording, some even from people who've heard it. I've tried to keep an open mind, especially since I'm a great admirer of John Potter. But my main concern was, not the free approach in general, but the fact that on the whole it didn't seem to add very much. It was not till track 13, *Go crystal tears*, that I felt that there was enough added value to make the exercise worthwhile. The music is moved from Dowland's time, but isn't anchored in the 1990s or any other period. The selection emphasises the his 'semper dolens' side, with tempi on the slow side. The lighter songs are varied by instrumental verses with weak substitute melodies. A positive feature is the chance to hear some of the melodic lines in the inner parts that don't always come across when the songs are accompanied just with lute. Immediately after listening to it closely, I played it again as background to coffee and idle chat with a couple of our regular writers, and we found it agreeable background music: I suspect that will be its main use. A pity. I'd love a straight Dowland disc from John and Stephen, and I'd not be averse to hearing the music dragged into the 21st century; but this seems to be an interesting idea which has fallen short of its potential. CB

**Monteverdi *Vespro della beata Vergine***  
Ensemble Elyma, Coro Antonio il Verso, Coro Madrigalia, Les Sacqueboutiers de Toulouse, Gabriel Garrido *dir* 115' 45"  
K617 K617100/2 (2 CDs in box)

Those who feel cheated at paying for two discs and getting just over 80 minutes of music at least get their money's worth here. The most useful extra item is the Magnificat a6, an underperformed piece that I first encountered as the soundtrack of an arty French film about 40 years ago. It surprises me that the other piece in the 1610 publication, the mass *In illo tempore*, is rarely (never?) recorded with the Vespers. (Perhaps that is why Bach Collegium Japan have been chasing a down-a-fourth score of it from me.) Here the programme is extended by Monteverdi's *Sancta Maria succere miseris* and a Kapsberger sinfonia between the two Magnificats and a couple of motets by Paolo Agostini, which displace Monteverdi's concerti (or *concertus* as they are called here, following the 1610 title page) from their expected places. Plainsong antiphons are taken from sources of the period, though not rhythmicised as Giudetto's *Directorium* suggests. The logic of singing an antiphon substitute then following it by that for which it is substituting defeats me, while *Nisi Dominus* ends the first disc with neither substitute nor antiphon following it. All this is trivial save to liturgical fanatics. With

regard to the performance, there is much to praise. It has similarities with the American performance I wrote about last month, both for good and ill. I wish conductors would think more about how a performance from partbooks might have worked. Admittedly, there is some economy in the 1610 publication in squashing disparate parts into the same book; but I don't believe that a part for a single movement would have had notes added from another part; you can't just decide (from studying a modern score) that a bit of the organ part needs another instrument doubling it.

I worry about the enormous variation of tempo within sections with no mensuration change; one of many examples is the first a5 'Nisi'. There is no observance of proportions nor, for that matter, of *chiavette*. For me, the undoubted excellence of the musicians is spoiled by the conductor not treating it as a work of 1610. It's a pity that K617 felt it worth marketing this rather than pushing some of Garrido's far more enterprising and successful productions. CB

**Monteverdi and more... *Che soave armonia***  
Tirami Su, Erin Headley *dir* 73' 76"  
Vanguard Classics 99141 see next issue

Our reviewer and I both say that this is very good: try Monteverdi's *Con che soavità* for a starter. CB

**van Noordt *Works for Organ, vol. 2*** Cees van der Poel (organ of the Nieuwe Kerk, Harlem) 64' 56"  
Naxos 8.554205 £

I've had a copy of Max Seiffert's 1896 fine edition of van Noordt's 1659 *Tabulatuur-Boek* for thirty years, but never really looked at it; so this disc was encouragement to do so. Andrew Benson-Wilson explained the background in his review of vol. 1 (*EMR* 54, p. 20). This completes the series. Recondite stuff! It is probably as well that it is on a cheap label: I'm not sure that I would recommend it at full price, except to the wealthy. The music is interesting rather than exciting, and the performance does not have enough spark to kindle any flame in this listener – perhaps it matches the music just a little too well. It is certainly worth getting at least one of the volumes for historical reasons (both for the music and the instruments: the booklet note is informative). One feature of the playing annoyed me: delaying the first note of a new phrase and spoiling the rhythm rather than cutting short the last note of the phrase before. This is, on the whole, even-flowing music, avoiding the sort of fantasy that needs freedom. CB

**Pachelbel *The Complete Organ Works, vol. 7***  
Joseph Payne (H. G. Trost organ, 1735, Altenburg Castle Church) 58' 15"  
Centaur CRC 2418

I would so like to praise Mr Payne's playing. His prolific output of CDs is recorded on some fine historic instruments and his repertoire delves into the more hidden corners of the organist's repertory, and for that he is to be commended. And at times

his playing can be really quite good. But he descends into frippery just a bit too often, generally by the use of mannered articulation, bizarre registrations, and an emphatic touch which somehow brings out the worst in the chosen registration – try tracks 2 and 12. Although one might get away with such things in the heat of a live performance, something rather more considered is needed for a CD that must endure repeat listening. I wonder if his recording engineers could have been kinder by giving him a generous acoustic bloom within which his more extreme articulations might lose their bite. His use of the glockenspiel for the last phrase of track 4 is very odd – it is a treble rank only and the passage goes beyond its range, missing a few of the final notes. That said, there is much to like on this CD, not least the magnificent Trost organ which, because of the curious geometry of the Altenburg Schlosskirche, can sound better in recording than in concert. The pleno *Allein zu dir, Herr Jesus Christ* is well worth a listen.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Peri il Zazzerino: Music of Jacopo Peri** Ellen Hargis S, Paul O'Dette *chitarrone*, guitar, Andrew Lawrence-King *harp*, Hille Perl *lirone*, gamba 73' 31"  
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907234

Peri hasn't done too well on disc so far, but this certainly makes amends. This is a well-chosen mixture, mostly of monodies from his *Le varie musiche*, but with a few instrumental pieces, including a contemporary version for gamba of *O miei giorni*, sounding amazingly convincing without words. I've always thought of Ellen Hargis as a somewhat serious singer, so the lighter pieces here are a delightful surprise. The opening song sets the stylistic range of the disc: it mostly sounds like one of Andrew Lawrence-King's hispanic arias, but breaks the pattern for four, more serious duplicate bars in each verse. With Andrew and Paul O'Dette accompanying and positive contributions from Hille Perl on *lirone*, Ellen Hargis makes marvellous use of the best possible support.

CB

**Purcell The Gresham Autograph** New Chamber Opera Ensemble (Libby Crabtree, Rachel Elliott, Deborah York SSS, Gary Cooper *kbd*, Elizabeth Kenny *theorbo/guitar*, Mark Levy *bv*) ASV CD GAU 194 67' 28"

The Gresham Autograph is an interesting MS, and is the only major Purcell source to be available in facsimile: a serious failure of British musicology in the anniversary year was the failure to raise commercial backing for more of such publications. It contains many well-known songs from Purcell's later years, though not always as originally composed. Some variants may be careful revisions, others may just be because Purcell was writing a song out from memory rather than copying a score. Is the lesson that we should ignore the details of notation more than we do, or should we not usurp the composer's privilege? Anyway, this makes fascinating

listening, with excellent performances from the sopranos and an interesting variety of accompaniment. I would have thought that, whether designed for instruction or entertainment, the collection was probably used at home rather than in the theatre, so the availability of more than one accompanying instrument was unlikely; but even without an imaginary scenario, there is rather more string bass than is necessary. A decade earlier, the lute would have been the obvious choice: I'm not sure about the 1690s. (The 24 songs here date from 1692-3.) What worried me chiefly, however, and made it hard work listening, was that the songs seemed so high. Purcell is quite sparing in his use of solo soprano, and so many songs in that register feel inherently unPurcellian. There is no assumption that the use of the G2 clef means that they are for a woman: perhaps high tenors would sound less overbearing. I'm trying to rationalise my discomfort; I hope others don't share it, since this is a fine anthology of Purcell at his best, and I am entirely happy with Gary Cooper's performances of six keyboard pieces.

CB

**Sartorio L'Orfeo** Ellen Hargis S Orfeo, Suzie Le Blanc S Euridice, Ann Hallenberg S Aristeo, Anne Grimm S Autonoe, Laurie Reviol S Tetide, Petra Noskajová mS Orillo, Olof Lilja T Erinda & Ercole, Rodrigo del Pozo T Achille, Josep Cabré Bar Chirone & Bacco, Harry van der Kamp B Esculapio & Pluto, Teatro Lirico, Stephen Stubbs *dir* Vanguard Classics 99194 ££ 144' 22" 2 CDs

I had hoped I'd be asked to review this opera: the performers are as close as I could come to a dream team to sing music by my Venetian pet composer, Giovanni Legrenzi, and now that I've heard them in this piece, I long to hear music by the man himself. Sartorio's music is somehow more modern than Legrenzi's: the arias range from continuo pieces with ritornelli at the end, through similar pieces with instrumental interjections, to full ritornello arias. The opening duet is stunning: I'd fallen in love with Euridice within moments, lending considerable credibility to the theme of Orpheus as the jealous husband. There is not a single weak link in the production: the singing is uniformly excellent and the thoughtful disposition of the continuo line-up (as you'd expect from Teatro Lirico, of course) is, perhaps, the key to the overall success. Unfortunately, I missed the Utrecht performances – I hope the production will be resurrected some time!

BC

**Schmelzer Sonatae unarum fidium** John Holloway *vlh*, Aloysia Assenbaum *org*, Lars Ulrik Mortensen *hpscd*, *org* ECM New Series 1668 465 066-2

This is something of a departure for ECM, and what a stunning debut in this field! John Holloway and his two keyboardists make an utterly convincing case for this combination of instruments in this repertoire. Where we might nowadays expect some sort of lute to have replaced the viol or bass violin as the melodic bass part, here

the percussive harpsichord (and I don't mean that to sound pejorative in the slightest!) and the sustaining organ combine beautifully to support the violin. The booklet notes make the interesting point that the continuo players had to sit down and discuss the harmonic implications of such and such an unfigured progression, which might suggest that there were more than a few clashes in contemporary performances, but might equally suggest that there was more rehearsal involved than we seem to suppose nowadays; arguably, the more familiar groups become with the notion of multiple continuo players, the less likely severe clashes become. None of the music needs any recommendation from me – it is simply wonderful, and, in these hands, will not fail to impress anyone interested in 17th-century music for solo violin. The anonymous sonata at the end of the disc is accompanied by solo organ, and I have to say that I wholeheartedly agree with Holloway's suggestion that it is by a young Heinrich Biber. In the very natural acoustic familiar from ECM's previous recordings, it sounds beautiful. Very highly recommended – the players enjoyed themselves so much in the Bertali Chaconne that they just couldn't stop where the composer left off...

BC

**Schütz Libro primo de Madrigali** Cantus Cölln, Konrad Junghänel 57' 59"  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 901686  
**Schütz Chorwerke** Sächsisches Vocalensemble, Matthias Jung 55' 18"  
Tacet TACET 99

see next issue

**Schütz Christmas works** Stephen Genz Bar, La petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 67' 35"  
DHM 05472 77511 2  
Christmas Story SWV 435, Magnificats SWV 468 & 494 + SWV 352, 396 & 403

The sleeve notes confess that Schütz is not part of La Petite Bande's normal repertoire and, although, these are not bad performances by any stretch of the imagination, there are people out there who do it much better (Bach Collegium Japan, The Gabrieli Consort Weser-Renaissance). The Christmas Story is the centrepiece, but no mention is made of the necessary reconstruction job: who wrote the first chorus? The tutti singing is finely controlled, the Evangelist is very nice indeed, but some of the solo singing is a little too big for my liking. The other pieces on the programme include some of my favourite Schütz, especially *Auf dem Gebirge*; here, though, I'd definitely go straight to Masaaki Suzuki and his Japanese ensemble. In short, not my first choice – at the moment, that would be Robert King's 1989 recording, where the fillers are four outstanding Christmas motets by Giovanni Gabrieli.

BC

**Uccellini Sonate, Correnti e Arie dall'Opera Quarta, Venezia 1645** Conserto Vago (Marino Lagomarsino, Ernest Braucher *vlhs*, Marco Vitali *vlc*, Ero Maria Barbero *hpscd*, Massimo Lonardi *archlute*) 71' 12"  
Agorá AG 019

Like the Schmelzer reviewed above, the



premise of this recording of 27 of the 55 pieces in the set is to try out all the possibilities within the performance of Uccellini's music, so the harpsichord and lute share the responsibility of being a sustaining continuo part and a more melodic foil to the violin part(s). Some pieces are taken by the continuo instruments on their own, while others have just plucked or just keyboard accompaniment. I have to say that I found none of the versions (even the keyboard realisations of solo violin music) offensive in the slightest, indeed, I found them utterly convincing. The acoustic is clear and the recording equally so. Very nice. **BC**

**Weckmann Sacred Concerti and Harpsichord Music** Susan Gritton, Paul Agnew, Julian Podger, Stephen Varcoe *STTB*, The [augmented] Purcell Quartet, Robert Woolley *kbd* 67' 47"

Chandos Chaconne **CHAN 0646**

Weine nicht, Wie liegt die Stadt so wüste, Zion spricht; Partita II & III, Toccata III & V

If you don't know the marvellous sacred concertos by Weckmann, order this at once. I suppose that having all four of the pieces in Silbiger's A-R edition might have been tidier, especially since an excellent complete disc of the keyboard works by Siebe Henstra is available on Ricercar 206682 (see *EMR* 55, p.28). The four pieces played here by Robert Woolley are welcome in their own right, not merely as contrast to the often sombre vocal music. Weckmann works more within the conventions of the time than contemporary English composers did when aiming at extreme expression, but he is certainly effective at such devices as the chromatic fourth. Try the last piece, *Weine nicht*, where it is the instruments who do the weeping and the voices that console them — effectively, since it ends with a genuine off-beat *ciaccona*. I am very happy with the instruments, but sometimes the voices seem to be trying too hard to behave themselves (e.g. in the bass's two-octave, four-bars of semiquavers on the first syllable of 'Davids'). But that doesn't prevent a strong recommendation. **CB**

**The Organs of Willem Hermans in Pistoia (1664) and Collescipoli (1678)** Liewe Tamminga *ACC 98129D* see next issue

## LATE BAROQUE

**Albinoni Complete Cantatas op. 4** Barbara Schlick s, Derek Lee Ragin *cT*, Roderick Shaw *hpscd*, Nicholas Selo *vlc* 114' 37" 2 discs  
Etcetera **KTC2027** ££

Previously issued separately: see *EMR* 45 p. 18 & 47 p. 22. **BC** was less than enthusiastic about Barbara Schlick's disc, but Eric Van Tassel was happier with Derek Lee Ragin, who includes two Caldara pieces to extend his disc towards an acceptable length. **CB**

**Albinoni 12 Concertos, op. 9** Andrew Manze *vl*, Frank de Bruine, Alfredo Bernardini *obs*, The Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood 117' 36" 2 CDs in box  
Decca *L'Oiseau-Lyre* **458 129-2**

Let's get the contentious bits out of the way before we deal with the substance of this set: 'First complete recording on period instruments' splashed across the front of the box should perhaps have been qualified by 'available on 2 CDs', since *Opp. 9 and 7* have been recorded complete on 3 separate discs by Collegium Musicum 90 on Chandos. Secondly, I'm rather puzzled why Decca didn't release the discs separately — they each feature different orchestras, different recording locations, different engineers and, I have to say, different Andrew Manzes! Over the two years between sessions, he has grown in stature as a fiddler and I can't believe that he would be delighted to hear the very first violin solo in *Op. 9 No. 1*. But gripes aside, this is a very good set: De Bruine and Bernardini are brilliant oboists (and there are none of the key-clicking sounds of the Chandos set), the AAM (regardless of the line-up) will always make a wonderful sound under the sharp-eared Christopher Hogwood, and Manze (in both incarnations) is an outstanding soloist. For some of the most glorious oboe-duetting ever, listen to disc 2, track 17. **BC**

**Bach Cantatas from Leipzig 1723/III (vol. 10)** Miah Persson, Robin Blaze, Makoto Sakurada, Peter Kooij *SATB*, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki *dir* 63' 12"

**BIS-CD-951**

Cantatas 105, 179, 186

First, nail colours to mast. I'm a convert to the thesis that Bach wrote — and, what's more important, chose to write — the vast majority of his 'choruses' for an ensemble just comprising the four solo singers. So I approached this CD (my first full exposure to a much-praised series) as I would a transcription or adaptation. And that's how I hear the 16-strong chorus, spread across the back of the soundstage in sharp contrast to the upfront focus of the soloists. But on its own terms this CD offers much to like. All the soloists enunciate clearly, which is no small matter — I can follow the recitatives without reading the text, and the arias, too, when the tempo isn't driven too hard. (Peter Kooij is especially fine, and I've never heard Robin Blaze sound so convincing.) I'd take 186/3 or the second section of 105/1 a bit slower; 105/5 is too choppy and marchlike (but the *corno da tirarsi* — essentially a B♭ natural horn with an A slide, according to Suzuki's notes — is ravishing). If the performances have an overall weakness, it's in being just too smooth and, well, too nice. The 'Zittern' of 105/3 seems not frightened, or frightening, enough; 105/5 fails to convey the puritanical wrath in the B section's denunciation of Mammon and the 'eitle Welt'. Overall, there's just too much legato and not enough silence, especially in the choruses; but a passage like the rising chromatic scales in the interludes of 186/8 also cries out for articulation — of the kind we do hear in the animated cadences of the same movement. I want to hear more of Suzuki's Bach, but for the sake of the solos; and I'll listen for more of the

ferocity which Richard Taruskin (whom I so seldom agree with) has pointed out in the Bach cantata aesthetic. **Eric Van Tassel**

**Bach Hochzeitskantaten** Christine Schäfer, Musica Antiqua Köln, Reinhard Goebel  
Decca **459 621-2**  
Cantatas 51, 202, 210

Those readers who have purchased the disc demonstrating changing styles of Bach performance issued with Teldec's 'Bach 2000' integral recording are in a position to compare the highly pleasant tones of Christine Schäfer here with those of the (English) soprano Angela Kazimierczuk on that disc's track 1, which is included to demonstrate outstanding 1999 levels of competence. Although neither soprano was trained to sing in a 'baroque' or distinctly 'early music' way, each clearly avoids introducing romantic/modern techniques such as slow and broad vibrato, yet each is clearly aware that some faster and/or narrower species is both quite appropriate to Bach's music, and indeed essential to the development of a voice capable of focusing details of tuning with the accuracy and versatility to colour Bach's expressive requirements. All this has relevance to the string playing of Musica Antiqua Köln, whose performances produce a similar compromise. This, then, is what I call good modern Bach, played and sung well, if too little affected and mannered for my preferences. A special bonus is the choice of *Jauchzet Gott* (BWV 51) in its latest version with two concertante trumpets and timpani, as used for some unknown wedding (maybe in Halle around 1750) — a first account on disc. **Stephen Daw**

This is issued in what seems to be an effective new packing (though only hard use will tell): a stiff-bound booklet (normal CD box size) with the CD slipped in the end. Unlike the Bartoli Vivaldi, this lacks title and number on spine.

**Bach Organ Works vol. 4** Gerhard Weinberger *cpo* 999 653-2 73' 36"

BWV 568, 569, 574, 578, 579, 632-644, 767, 770

**Bach The Young Bach: a Virtuoso** Kay Johannsen (Arp-Schnitzger-organ, Cappel) 70' 06"

Hänssler (Bach Edition 89) **92.089**

BWV 550, 563, 565, 568, 577-8, 690, 715, 718, 720-2, 725-6, 729, 732, 737-9

**Bach Orgelbüchlein BWV 599-644.** Wolfgang Zerer (organ of St Martinkerker, Groningen)  
Hänssler (Bach Edition 94) **92.094** 72' 45"

see next issue

**Bach Le Clavier bien tempéré, Inventiones & Sinfonies, Variations Goldberg** Helmut Walcha *hpscd* 378' 39" (5 CDs in 2 boxes)  
EMI Classics 7243 4 89161 2 £ (rec 1960-61)

These CD transfers, issued by EMI France in 1996, are available at the ludicrously-cheap price of £11.25 + post from Discovery Records (tel +44 1672 563931; e-mail [discovery.records@virgin.net](mailto:discovery.records@virgin.net)). People of my generation found Walcha's precise style of organ and harpsichord playing a revelation. Now it feels a bit cool and the instrument sounds rather tinkly. For a comparison of the weak and strong aspects,



try the Eb/D# minor of Book I: the Prelude (ideal clavichord music) unexpressively stiff, the fugue starkly impressive. In general, the performances here are good antidotes to over-personal interpretation and at the price, don't hesitate to buy a significant document in the history of Bach performance. **CB**

**Bach Harpsichord Music by the Young J. S. Bach** Robert Hill 69' 53"  
Hänssler (Bach Edition 102) CD 92.102  
BWV 820, 832, 883, 896, 917, 944, 967, 989, 992

This is one of several recordings for this series in which Robert Hill will perform pieces from Bach's childhood and youth – repertoire in which he is indeed a world authority of the highest order. That he is also among the most persuasive harpsichordists alive today will come as no surprise to anybody who has read my review of his reading of the Art of Fugue, or, even better, heard it. However, these works demonstrate breadth of imagination and sensitivity in detailed respects rather than profound mastery or depth of faith, and, because of this, perhaps, I find these gems of promise a little overwhelming in such obviously capable hands and from a mind so rich in experience. But probably our best *Aria variata* as well as our tidiest *Capriccio sopra la lontananza...* issued on disc in the last ten years. **Stephen Daw**

**Bach Klavierbüchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann Bach** Joseph Payne *hpscd, clavichord, org* 102' 33" 2 CDS in box  
Hänssler (Bach Edition 137) 92.137

The touchingly innocent and childlike manner with which Joseph Payne plays the music of father and son (as well, occasionally, of others) probably appeals to me for romantic reasons, but it still *does* appeal, especially when I recall the very high degree of skill of which we know Payne to be capable. (He is, like Robert Hill, a product of Harvard.) The Friedemann Album is now housed at Yale, and there can be little greater pleasure today than listening to these CDs and following this intimately communicative and educational product whilst reading the Dover facsimile edition and relishing the performance in this combined way – something which neither W. F. nor J. S. could ever have imagined becoming public, let alone so conveniently accessible. **Stephen Daw**

**Bach The Six Partitas BWV 825-830** Lucy Carolan *hpscd* 146' 07" (2 CDs)  
Signum SIGCD012

Lucy Carolan is among the most remarkable pupils of Gustav Leonhardt, and a rare breadth of positive intellect lies at the heart of this remarkable recording. It is the first I have heard to strive realistically to do full justice to this most famous opus 1, reminding us, as the artiste's own booklet notes do, that even first products can be summative and worthily representative in subtle and very broad respects. Structurally masterly, rhythmically inspirational, polyphonically poetic, and in detail so often

'just right', this achievement, from a performer who might so shortsightedly have been dismissed as 'just another continuo player', sets new standards for the next millennium.

So I conclude my critical writings of the old millennium by welcoming in every respect these profoundly musical interpretations of one of Bach's own most outstanding compound compositions. Such playing could be the source from which new standards in the authoritative delivery of all early music might develop. The Signum team is also to be congratulated. I happen to know Lucy Carolan's chosen instruments, which belong to my former employers; they are here to be heard exactly and at their excellent best. **Stephen Daw**

**Bach: The Secret of the Semitones** Andrew Lawrence-King *baroque harp* 68' 03"  
DHM 05472 77523 2  
BWV 903, 944, 997, 1004

The harp is not an instrument that readily comes to mind for the music of Bach, although, on reflection, it shares several characteristics with the lute. The sound of Andrew Lawrence-King's Baroque double-harp is, moreover, not unlike that of a clavichord (at least one that is closely recorded) and the harp shares the clavichord's advantage of dynamic expression over other keyboard instruments. Where the harp loses out to most 'conventional' Baroque instruments is in the lack of control over the *ends* of notes. On the harpsichord and organ, the ending of notes accounts for precisely half of the expression the player can achieve through articulation, and this factor is still important for most instruments that have the added advantage of dynamics. In Lawrence-King's recording it is the single-line passages that tend to be compromised (as in the Chromatic Fantasy – minus fugue – that opens the disc), since we hear a mesmeric sequence of equally articulated notes. In fact, this tends to emphasize the relative triviality of the piece in that the notes which are meant to be arpeggiations of free chordal passages are not easily heard as part of a hierarchy, as a factor of more-or-less whimsical elaboration (in this respect the sound is not unlike that of 'pre-historical' pianistic performance where every note that Bach wrote is treated with equal, but depressingly regular, awe).

But the pieces that involve some polyphony and chordal passages are a different matter entirely. In the Partita BWV 1004 (transposed to A minor), which includes the famous *Ciaccona*, Lawrence-King's musicianship comes into its own. For here we can hear the notes in relation to surrounding chords and other lines (even if these are only sketchily suggested): now the harpist has something to play with in placing the beginnings of each note and thus the endings are not so crucial.

The recording is presented with a pseudo-occultist title and booklet. The whole thing will appeal most particularly to those who like to add a bit of culture to their new-age evening experiences. **John Butt**

**Bach Sonatas & Partitas 2 (BWV 1003/5/6)**  
Rachel Podger 66' 00"  
Channel Classics CCS 14498

This is simply stunning solo fiddle playing. I loved the first volume, and was totally bowled over by this second installment! The slow movement of the C major sonata is beautiful – she's so relaxed that she even throws a few little ornaments for good measure (of which I'm wholly in favour!) The quick movements, again, show unquestionable technical mastery, but it's her musicality that is so astounding; within huge, long phrases, she can draw out one or two notes which are given a special colour, which lends the whole thing shapes that I'd never even imagined before. I was slightly startled by some cheeky little ornaments earlier on, but I won't spoil your fun by warning you of their exact location. This should be required listening for all young violinists – it's inspired and inspirational! **BC**

**Bach ...per la viola da gamba...** Hille Perl *gamba*, Lee Santana *lute*, Andrew Lawrence-King *harp*, Veronika Skuplik *vl'n*, Barbara Messmer *gamba* 65' 17"  
DHM 05472 77515 2  
BWV 1011/995, 1025, 1029

Hot on the heels of Hille Perl's Bach gamba sonata recording (see *EMR* 55) come three more 'Bach' pieces adapted for her instrument. The fifth cello suite, BWV 1011, is already something of a hybrid, probably arranged by Bach from his own lute suite BWV 995 and requiring the cello's top string to be tuned a tone lower than usual. So with transposition to the gamba's open-string key of D it works extremely well as a solo for the instrument. Perl's use of French agréments and additional chords and the cavernous church acoustic of this recording give Bach's music a lush darkness rarely heard in cello performances. She also responds most sensitively to the ebb and flow of Bach's harmonic tensions.

BWV 1025 started life as a lute suite by Weiss, was arranged by Bach for harpsichord with a new part for obligato violin, and has here been given back to the lute, with the violin part played an octave lower by the gamba. This makes for a sometimes cluttered sound in which the 'comments' of the viol part rather too often upstage the graceful galanteries of the lute. But there is a lovely sense of conversation between the two players: one can perfectly well imagine the discourse of Weiss and Bach together in Leipzig in 1739.

In the final item Perl revisits the G minor gamba sonata BWV 1029, but orchestrates it so that the harpsichord's right hand part is played by violin, and the left hand by a plummy continuo section of second gamba, harp and lute. The original solo gamba part is frequently overwhelmed by this accompaniment, and the cut and thrust of Bach's counterpoint sacrificed for a rich but soft-focused sound. Tempi are considerably slower than in Perl's solo recording and the echoing church acoustic contributes to

an occasional feeling of heaviness here. But in the end Bach's music seems strong enough to survive almost any amount of arranging, especially in hands as sympathetic as those of Perl. *John Bryan*

**Essential Bach: choral, vocal and instrumental music** The King's Consort, soloists & choir, Robert King 73' 21"  
Hyperion KING5

The 14 tracks include several that have not been released publicly, so even those who snap up every King's Consort's disc will find something fresh here. Nor is it a collection of 'Bach's greatest hits': the G-string Air or bits of Brandenburgs are notably absent. Many listeners, in fact, will find themselves introduced to music that they don't know, in performances that are often extremely impressive. I'm not quite sure how people use such samplers: if I was a hotel manager, I'd have this instead of the usual background noise. If you have it on around the house, you will certainly be tempted to extend your CD collection. What Bach work requires two tenor drums, two horns and three trumpets visible on the group photo? I suspect watery Handel. *CB*

**Cervetto Sonatas for Cello** Giorgio Matteoli *vlc*, Fête Rustique (Walter Mammarella *hpscd*, Marcello Scandelli *vlc*) 75' 44"  
Agorá AG 098  
op. 2/1-4, 7, 12

This world premiere recording of half of Cervetto's 12 *Solos* is very good indeed. Four are played with harpsichord and cello continuo, No. 4 with only harpsichord and No. 7, which has lots of double-stopping, as a cello duet. I have never heard any of the performers before, and I've never heard any Cervetto before (he's always just been a name in music history textbooks); the notes suggest that some of the people who wrote those very books (including the New Grove article) might not be that well acquainted with this particular set. I found the music to be easily enjoyable, and the performances very persuasive. There's no suggestion that the other six are as good, or that a Vol. 2 is planned, but I hope we will hear more. *BC*

**William Croft Complete Harpsichord Works Vol. 1 & 2: Suites and miscellaneous pieces** Julian Rhodes *hpscd*, spinet, virginal 159' 48"  
Ismeron JMCD 6 & 7 2CDs

I'm afraid to say this new complete Croft is not a thing of beauty, musically or visually. J Martin Stafford's CDs have a very '50s, functional look about them, and on this occasion the performances are equally functional, achieving little in the way of expressiveness or poetry. Three instruments are used – copies of a 17th-century English virginal, a Hitchcock spinet and a 1693 Blanchet. This last instrument sounds fine, but the spinet is a little strange, with its throttled treble making it sound as if there's a buff permanently on. Rhodes is fluent and articulate but totally inflexible, and at times distinctly metro-

nomic. There is absolutely no interpretational response to darker elements in the music such as the minor second sections of the Almand and Corant of the A major suite, and no attempt is made to do anything interesting with the occasional section of *brisé* writing. All in all I found these discs tiring to listen to – the recent Colin Booth recording, though not a complete survey of Croft, is far better.

*Robin Bigwood*

**C. H. Graun Christmas Oratorio** Ingrid Schmithüsen, Lena Susanne Norin, Markus Schäfer, Klaus Mertens SATB, Rheinische Kantorei, Das Kleine Konzert, Hermann Max 73' 25"  
cpo 999 707-2

If Stölzel's oratorio (see below) is an imaginary entity, Carl Heinrich Graun's oratorio is definitely presented here as it was intended. The score has only recently been investigated at the Library of Congress and its dating is somewhat uncertain, but it was definitely written before he started work in Berlin. Whatever its history, this too is a very attractive piece. Basically a series of recitative-aria pairs, with four choruses and four chorales (we're treated to seven verses of one – and it is a treat!) and a single duet. There is little of the actual story, the text being far more reflection than narration. The soloists are very good, though I did worry slightly about Schmithüsen and Schäfer's very top notes. The orchestra is brilliant (as usual with Das Kleine Konzert) and the chorus very fine. This is another very welcome recording, and will make an excellent Christmas present for anyone interesting in German baroque music. *BC*

**Handel Dixit Dominus, Te Deum** Elena Cecchi-Fedi S Fabian Schöf rin, Gloria Banditelli AA, Marco Beasley T, Antonio Abete, Furio Zana si BB, Coro della Radio Svizzera, Ensemble Vanitas, Diego Fasolis 72' 17"  
Arts 47560-2 £

It was worth issuing these two Swiss Radio recordings of 1996 and 1995 on a budget CD. The *Dixit* is impressive, with assured singing, and is well-paced by Fasolis. His added dynamic nuances always go with the grain of the music. The sound for the *Te Deum* is not so good, and there is a weak solo alto, but otherwise it is a fair account of a somewhat uneven work. Readers of *BBC Music Magazine* may wish to note that the same performance of the *Dixit* also appears on one of the CDs accompanying the December issue, Ensemble Vanitas having renamed themselves I Barocchisti. The coupling there is the Vivaldi *Gloria*, as in the original 1995 concert. *Anthony Hicks*

**Handel Utrecht Te Deum, O be joyful in the Lord** Ensemble Bouzignac Utrecht, dir. Erik Van Nevel 46' 28"  
de haske DHR 197.002 *see next issue*

**Handel Duetti Italiani** Rossana Bertini, Claudio Cavina ScT, La Venexiana 66' 53"

Cantus C 9620

HC32/3, 4, 8, 9, 12-14, 17-19 (HWV 178, 181, 185-6, 188, 190, 193-4, 197-8)

The front cover surprisingly promises 'The 10 Italian Duets of Handel', but on the back the words 'for soprano and alto' are added to achieve accuracy. The SA duets have always been the most popular on disc, mostly with a countertenor on the alto line: Mária Zádori and Paul Esswood recorded all ten on vinyl in 1984, and nine (the omission being *Beato in ver*, HWV 181) appear on Hyperion CDA66440 (dating from 1990) with Gillian Fisher and James Bowman. Unfortunately the new set is a disappointment. Bertini's hard-edged soprano makes a poor match with Cavina's cloudy alto, and the continuo is exceptionally noisy, especially when both harpsichord and lute play with the cello. The booklet notes (by the record producer and Cavina) indicate the project was undertaken with great earnestness, and Cavina (who directs the ensemble) says that his aim was to get away from an 'instrumental' interpretation to one in which response to the *affetti* of the words is paramount. But since the duets are in effect accompanied madrigals – i.e. settings for multiple voices of poetic texts conceived as the utterances of a single voice – expression must be kept within formal limits. The result here is an exaggeration of tempi – slow becomes sluggish, fast becomes rushed – while simple musical points, such as the piquancy of a suspension, get lost. Fisher and Bowman remain a better choice, blending well and allowing the music to speak more naturally.

*Anthony Hicks*

**Handel Organ Concertos op. 7/8-12** Alfred Gross *claviorganum*, Rundfunkorchester des SWR, Klaus Arp 68' 32" *see next issue*

**Handel The Chamber Music Vol. 1 The Flute Sonatas** L'Ecole d'Orphée (Stephen Preston *fl*, Susani Sheppard *vlc*, John Toll *hpscd*, Lucy Carolan *hpscd*) 74' 22" (rec 1985)  
CRD 3373

op. 1/1a, 1b, 5, 9; 'Halle' sonatas 1-3, HWV 378

The CRD set of Handel's solo sonatas has been around for some time; I still have the LPs, but they have already circulated on CD. This reissue of one strand of the complete recording is a useful reminder that we shouldn't believe too much that performances are getting better and better: these are still strong contenders for the position of standard version. But times *do* change: Stephen Preston used to seem to play quite freely, but other players have overtaken him in that respect, and he now sounds quite restrained. What a set of Handel's flute sonatas should contain has also changed: old-fashioned numbering best shows what is included. *CB*

**Heinichen Dresden Wind Concertos** Laurence Dean *fl*, Martin Stadler & Harriet Herrle *ob*, Fiori musicali – Barockorchester Bremen, Thomas Albert *vln*, dir 57' 48"  
cpo 999 637-2  
Concertos for 2 ob in e, 2 fl in D, ob in g & a, fl & vln in e, ob & fl in g

cpo continues to promote the musical outpourings of August the Strong's court at Dresden with a lovely disc of small-scale wind concertos by Heinichen. There is one dubious piece on the programme, a concerto for flute and violin with strings, attributed elsewhere (in two sources) to Telemann. There are some nice touches in Heinichen's music – solo flute accompanied by pizzicato upper strings, overlapping double oboe exchanges, slip-sliding harmonic progressions, and some lovely melodies. Fiori musicali (with some personnel in common with the band of Il Teatro Lirico) play very well, and the recording is bright and clear. Thomas Albert does not play the solos in the above-mentioned concerto as cleanly as Simon Standage (CHAN 0519) or Andrew Manze (Denon CO-78933) [both versions attributed to Telemann], but the solo wind playing is extremely good. Highly recommended. BC

Leclair *Concertos* Monica Huggett *vlm*, Claire Guimond *fl*, Arion 63' 08"  
Atma ACD 2 2143  
Op 7/2, 3, 6; op 10/1

I enjoyed this CD very much. These concertos have long been dear to my heart and I feared that my Chandos set with Simon Standage would take some beating. Monica Huggett clearly needs no introduction. She ornaments away with the best of them: I was literally shocked out of a trance by her first little escapade! Claire Guimond, the Canadian flautist, may be less well known by our readers, but her account of the C major concerto Op. 7 No. 3 compares well with Rachel Brown on Chandos – perhaps slightly less sweet of tone, but certainly no less stylish or secure in technique. Arion play very well. The theorbo struck a low note a little too forcibly for my liking once or twice, and tempi were not always uniform, but I would happily recommend the disc to anyone interested in Leclair. BC

Manfredini *Concerto Grossi op. 3/1-12* Capella Istropolitana, Jaroslav Krcek 78' 26"  
Naxos 8.553891 £

Most EMR readers will be familiar with Manfredini's Op. 3 No. 12, one of a batch of concerti grossi from early-18th-century Italy written especially for Christmas night. The other 11 pieces in the set will probably not be that well known, and this disc is to be welcomed if only to rectify that situation. That scarcely does the performers justice, for this is a fine modern-instrument recording, with clearly-recorded, bright-sounding strings. Some of the concertos are in three parts, some in four, some have three movements, others have four (following no particular pattern), some with prominent soloists – track 29, for example, has just two solo violins, with the orchestra bursting in with track 30 – and some without. Most styles of the High Baroque are there, and the music is rather more reminiscent of Albinoni than Corelli. I hate to bring it up again, but could someone buy them a harpsichord that doesn't jingle? The string playing is very good, and

personally I'd prefer a continuo instrument that with a bit of body. BC

B. Marcello *Psalmes de David* XVIII-21  
Musique des Lumières, Jean-Christophe Frisch  
K617 K617099 73' 18"  
Psalms 10, 14 & 21

Considering their popularity in the 18th century and ready availability now (Gregg reproduced all 8 vols, bound in 4, in 1967 and SPES have got up to vol. 3), Marcello's vernacular psalm settings are remarkably rarely sung. This disc demonstrates the quality and interest of the music. It draws particular attention to the Jewish element and attempts a guess at how Jewish music might have been sung in Marcello's Venice. The performances try a bit too hard at maximising variety and contrast: slow sections, for instance, seem to me to be too slow and at times the cello is far too obtrusive. If there was more competition, I might express other matters of disquiet, balanced by such positive features as using a proper organ, not a baby one – though Silbermann instruments can hardly have been common in Venice and at times this sounds quite Victorian. But there is nothing, to my knowledge, quite like this, and hearing it is highly recommended. CB

Pergolesi *Credo, Domine ad adiuvandum, Laudate pueri*, extracts from *San Guglielmo Duca d'Aquitania* Susanna Rigacci, Dano Raffanti, Shan Wang SST, Cappella Santa Cecilia della Cattedrale di Lucca, Orchestra Lirico Sinfonica del Teatro del Giglio, Gianfranco Cosmi 65' 59"  
Bongiovanni GB 5090-2

This is an unselfconsciously modern-style performance, proclaimed by the marvellously full-blooded tenor entry in the opening extract from Pergolesi's student oratorio of 1731; the otherwise-excellent (apart from the translation) booklet notes, do not say which William of Aquitania was sainted and why (William I, who founded Cluny in 910). Judging from the excerpts, it is an impressive piece. The two Vespers pieces come from the following year, the *Credo* lacks such precise dates and attribution, though seems to be genuine. CB

Royer *Pièces de Clavecin* (1746) Iakovos Pappas *hpscd* 58' 52"  
Agorá AG 222

Christophe Rousset's 1993 Royer recording on Decca has become something of a standard – fluent, dramatic and deeply musical – so it's a brave harpsichordist who releases a rival version. Actually, it seems that Iakovos Pappas recorded his Royer first, but whether this 1999 release can correctly be termed, as it is on the booklet, a 'World Premiere', is questionable. His interpretations are very different from Rousset's. On the whole his approach is cooler and calmer, but still often successful. In particular, *L'Aimable* and *La Remoleuse* from the G minor suite are lovely readings. However, I take issue with the degree and persistence of the *inégale* in *La Zaïde* and *Les tendres sentiments* is just too indulgent.

There are one or two curious features. *La Bagatelle* and *Le Vertigo* sound as if they were recorded in a different acoustic, and there are some rather audible edits. Also, for some reason, the unquestionably laudable but, in this context, incongruous phrase 'All we need is love' is printed around the rim of the CD. Given the choice, I'd have Rousset every time, but there are those who have a problem with his playing, in which case this is a viable alternative.

Robin Bigwood

G. Sammartini *12 Sonate per due flauti dolci e BC Vol. 1*. Giorgio Matteoli, Tommaso Rossi *rec*, Fête Rustique 63' 16"  
Agorá AG 020 63' 16" (rec 1995)  
Sonatas 2, 5-8, 10-12

The twelve sonatas for two recorders and basso continuo by the 'London' Sammartini represent one of the largest sets of trio sonatas for this combination of instruments by any baroque composer. Between 1727 and 1740, at the height of the recorder's popularity, three separate editions appeared, evidently to satisfy the appetite of London's many keen amateur recorder players. The continued popularity of these pieces in our own century is not surprising, given their slight technical demands and their melodic and inventive appeal; they are charming works, each of three or four short movements, and idiomatically written, if not of the highest musical quality. Fête Rustique have their work cut out to make a satisfying 60 minutes of listening, and the dry 'front room' acoustic makes their task yet harder, allowing no resonance or softening of the overall sound. Technically there is little to fault, and the recorder players try hard to be inventive, but the continuo playing (save some variety of timbre) does little to raise the performance to a higher profile. Titled Vol 1, this disc represents only eight out of the set of full twelve (nos 2, 5-8 and 10-12), the remaining four are presumably to be released at a later date.

Marie Ritter

Scarlatti *Sonate per clavicembalo* Enrico Baiano *hpscd* 68' 57"  
Symphonia SY 99166  
K46, 109, 126, 175, 181, 217, 232-3, 248-9, 295, 296, 394-5, 402, 439, 516

I sometimes wonder about these all-Scarlatti CDs – it takes some really good playing and programming to produce a satisfying disc, and this doesn't always happen. Happily, Enrico Baiano has got things just about right. There are some cracking sonatas that are not at all well known and the performances are communicative and inspired. The highlight must be the sonata in A minor K175, with its slightly unhinged flamenco/castanet effects. There's a great deal of flexibility, yet the musical momentum is strongly maintained. If you have to have a 'best of' Scarlatti and can't run to the still superb Scott Ross box set then this elegant CD is well worth considering. Robin Bigwood

Stölzel *Christmas Oratorio Cantatas 1-5*  
Britta Schwarz, Henning Voss, Jan Kobow,



Klaus Mertens *mSATB*, Weimarer Barock-ensemble, Ludger Rémy 57' 54"  
cpo 999 668-2 1 CD in a box

Ludger Rémy has already championed Stölzel's music with a cpo recording of his setting of the Brockes Passion. Here we have a fictive Christmas oratorio made up of cantatas from two cycles from the mid 1730s, half of which are recorded here. Stölzel is essentially a miniaturist – only one track on the whole CD is over four minutes in length – and his strength is in manipulating material in a way that gives the texts greatest possible clarity. He orchestrates very well – horns and trumpets are used, but never overbear the singer or the string ensemble. He is a particularly skilled composer of recitative, both secco and accompagnato, and he's not afraid to experiment with form, such as interrupting recitative with a chorale or a bit of proper orchestrated aria. The four soloists (who combine in the tuttis – there is no choir) are excellent, and seem to relish the low pitch (Rémy chooses A=392Hz). Altogether, this is a lovely recording, which will set the Christmas cheeks aglow, and I look forward to hearing Cantatas VI-X. BC

BC has edited some of Stölzel's earlier Christmas cantatas, which can be supplied by King's Music.

Veracini *Complete Overtures and Concertos Vol. 2* Accademia I Filarmonici, Alberto Martini dir 58' 52"  
Naxos 8.553413 £  
Vln concerti a8 in D, a5 in D, Concerto a5 in D, Overture 5 in B $\flat$ , Aria schiavona in B $\flat$  arr Veracini

This is a bit of a mixed bag. The solo violin playing is, mostly, very good indeed, and the orchestra and continuo section accompanies well. It's more the music which is the problem – Veracini may have been a brilliant player, but he is not really renowned for his compositions, and I find them rather bitty for my liking. The large-scale concerto that opens the disc, for example, might have impressed its original invited audience with the diversity of sounds and the technical display of the soloist, but it just doesn't hold together. In the first movement of the A major concerto, one of the ritornellos has the violins trilling at different times, which just sounds slightly wrong; there's a later passage which sounds as if one violin part has *appoggiature* while the other doesn't and rather than standardise (which I'd be tempted to do as an editor), they make something of the discrepancy, which draws all the more attention to the difference and, to my ears, makes it sound sillier than it might. This will be another Naxos series which will hold some treasures but, I suspect, as many mysteries. BC

Vivaldi *Gloria, Beatus Vir* Caterona Trogu-Röhrich, Emanuela Galli, Caterina Calvi, Susanna Moncayo, Anna Bonitatibus, Vincenzo Manno SSAAAT, Madrigalisti della Polifonica Ambrosiana, Ensemble Pian & Forte, Francesco Fanna dir 58' 05"  
Agorá AG 001 (rec 1994)  
*Beatus vir* RV 795, *Jubilate o amoeni chori* RV 639 (introduction to) *Gloria* RV 588

There are some very lovely things about this recording – the instrumental playing stands out as excellent, the solo singing is equally good (especially the lowest-sounding female alto ever), and the choir quite bright and crisp. My doubts arise over the attribution of the *Beatus vir*: with absolutely no evidence but the booklet note and what my ears tell me, I am convinced that Galuppi was, in effect, doing a Vivaldi: where the latter lifted some bits and re-worked others of Ruggieri's *Gloria*, Il Buranello built a setting of *Beatus vir* around Il prete rosso's RV597, keeping the best bits (like the opening, and the beautiful 'In memoria aeterna' – Choir I in RV597, here a trio for altos) and filling in the gaps – 'Gloria et divitiae' and 'Dispersit, dedit pauperibus' with violas doubling the bass and violins often in unison sound like a lot of church music by Galuppi that I've transcribed. Whoever wrote it, the piece is very good, and it (along with the other two works on the disc) seems to inspire the performers. BC

Vivaldi *Laudate Pueri ed Introduzioni Mariane* Enrica Mari S, Ensemble Fête Rustique, Giorgio Matteoli dir & vlc solo 69' 36"  
Agora AG 172.1  
Trio Sonata in g RV74, Cello Concerto in a RV 422, *Laudate pueri* RV600, *Ascende laeta* RV635, *Ostro picta* RV642

I sketched a draft of this review about a month ago, intending to listen to the CD again before finishing it. Usually my initial judgment stands, but hearing this disc again, I wonder how I could have been so wrong. The singing and playing really are excellent. The programme is an unusual but effective mixture, with three pieces for soprano, a cello concerto and a trio sonata. The inclusion of the concerto is explained by the fact that the ensemble is directed from the cello. It is perhaps a pity that the two *introduzioni* are removed from the *Dixit* and *Gloria* to which they belong; but I'm not going to object. Enrica Mari has a clear but strong voice and can use it stylishly (with far better trills than many so-called specialists). My probably none-too-authentic score has no suggestion that the speed should be much slower for the B section of the first aria of *Ostro picta*, and it is odd that a harpsichord appears for the first half of the recit, to be replaced by an organ in the second. But I have no other grouses and recommend this strongly. CB

Vivaldi *The Vivaldi Album* Cecilia Bartoli, Il Giardino Armonico 66' 39" 62' 21"  
Decca 466 569-2  
arias from *Bajazet*, *Dorilla in Tempe*, *Farnace*, *Giustino*, *Griselda*, *La fida ninfa*, *L'Olimpiade*, *L'Orlando finto pazzo*, *Teuzzone* + *Di due rai* & *Zeffiretti che sussurrate*

What a curiosity this is! Decca's star soprano, one of Teldec's best baroque bands and, tucked away inside the booklet, the Arnold Schoenberg Choir (Harnoncourt's pet Viennese group) in a selection of operatic arias, all with Cecilia's stamp on them. The new-style packaging (basically a lovely, small hardback book with beautiful paper and lavish illustrations and a

pocket at the back for the CD, though this will surely get grubby fingerprints all over it!) lends a particular air of quality to the product, but I'm afraid the performances don't match. Classic fm listeners might well be spellbound by her bravura arias, and there is no denying that Italians get under the skin of a text far better than anyone else, but Vivaldi demands more technical precision than he gets here – some of the stunning runs are stunning; others leave one literally gasping for breath. The second flageolet player swoops up to a note at the end of one phrase. The horns bluster. All in all, then, a more than worthwhile venture, but more successful as a publicity exercise than a musical experience. BC

Vivaldi *String Concertos, vol. 1: The Paris Concertos* Collegium Musicum 90, Simon Standage 62' 08"  
Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0647  
RV 114, 119, 121, 127, 133, 136, 150, 154, 157, 159, 160, 164 [MS set in Paris Bibl. du Conservatoire]

You might think there could be nothing more boring than a whole CD of four-part concertos (without soloists) by Vivaldi; indeed, you might anticipate wholeheartedly agreeing with the usual Stravinsky jibe. Unfortunately, you'd be misjudging the composer (for a start, each of these pieces is utterly different from the rest) and you'd miss out on a real treat. Simon Standage and Collegium Musicum 90 don't resort to fancy effects and tricks to spice up otherwise dull music: they pick lively tempi, they shape phrases beautifully, they use a wind trio in three of the pieces for variety (with some historical justification, and to good effect) and they lend just a hint of flair with little improvised ornaments here and there. The hour passed so quickly, I listened to it all again. It's really very nice. BC

Vivaldi *Concertos and Chamber Music* Musica Alta Ripa 56' 26"  
Dabringhaus und Grimm MDG 309 0927-2  
RV 63, 83, 108, 436, 531, 564

The last few reviews I've read of Musica Alta Ripa have not been that enthusiastic, so I'm happy to report that, as far as I'm concerned anyway, normal service has been resumed. Of the four concertos, only one was unfamiliar (RV436), while the opening track must be heading towards being the most recorded after the Four Seasons – the G minor concerto for two cellos. The chamber music is the wonderful *La Folia* (RV63) and the C minor sonata for violin, cello and continuo. Danya Segal is a fine recorder player, embellishing Vivaldi's lines with perhaps more elegance than virtuosity, and sensitively accompanied by the strings. Their showpiece, the D major concerto for two violin, two cellos and strings, was one of my favourite tracks on the Il Giardino Armonico recording (Teldec 4509-94552-2); here, some of the over-emphasis of barlines is gone, some of the showiness replaced by an absolute comfort in the security that the technical demands are not what's most important.

Anne Röhrig and Ursula Bundies are brilliant (in the true sense) violinists, perfectly matched by the cellists Albert Brügggen and Juris Teichmanis. A must for all Vivaldi fans. **BC**

*Handel's Rivals: operatic hits by London's favourite Italian composers* Maria Vassiliou S, Alasdair Elliott T, James Eastaway ob, John Trusler & Andrew Roberts vln, Nicholas Robert vlc, Jane Clark hpsc 59' 23"

Janiculum JAN D203

Music by Amadei, Bononcini, Gasparini, Hasse, Porpora, Porta, D. Scarlatti & Vinci

Two things stick in my mind about this CD – what wonderful solo fiddle playing (is John Trusler a relative of Matthew, whom I heard give a stunning recital here in Dundee of all places?) and what a gorgeous (but too modest) sound James Eastaway gets from his oboe. This is, of course, extremely interesting repertoire: we hear about Handel's trials and tribulations at the hands of other imported composers, but rarely do we get to hear any of their music. I have reservations, among them the voices – but that's down to my personal preference for a lighter, brighter sound – and the scaled-down performances. Would the opera arias really have had only solo strings? Andreas Scholl recently recorded Hasse's 'Pallido il sole' with a reconstructed full orchestration, and it was far more impressive; likewise, the Vinci duet that follows here would (I think) have been helped by a more weighty accompaniment. I hope they go on to uncover more gems among this repertoire. **BC**

*Quaranta Horas: Joyful and Spectacular Spanish Music from 18th Century Madrid* Al Ayre Español, Eduardo Lopez Banzo 67' 14" DHM 05472 77509 2

Music by Antonio de Literes, Joseph de San Juan, Joseph de Torres

No: not a break-through in CD technology that gets 40 hours on one disc. The three-days' devotions at the royal chapel of the Alcázar in Madrid were celebrated on the first Thursday, Friday and Saturday of each month (except when they coincided with major feasts). During the *siesta* (not a time for sleep but for contemplation following the mass) music was performed, including vernacular villancicos. This disc comprises 11 of them by composers working at the Chapel Royal of Philip V at the beginning of the 18th century. The music is attractive, bouncing with rhythm (for which composers and performers take equal credit), with texts that handle the conventional topics with more ingenuity and poetic success than those of most other catholic cultures of the time, this is an immensely attractive recording; and the sort of contemplation the final Epiphany piece might encourage bears no relationship to Protestant concepts of the term! **CB**

## CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *The Complete Keyboard Concertos, vol. 4* Miklós Spányi hpsc, fp, Concerto Armonico, Péter Szűts dir **BIS-CD-768**

H412, 416, 420 (=Wq 9,13, 17)

Miklós Spányi and Concerto Armonico are, of course, some of the best of Hungary's early music performers who I managed to overlook while writing about music in Eastern Europe last month – and what a total fool I feel! Everything about this recording is class. The soloist (who's not afraid to admit that he plays one of the concertos on fortepiano rather than harpsichord for no better reason than that he prefers the feel of it!) is rapidly becoming the world authority on Bach's keyboard music and it shows in his every phrase; the strings (44211) play beautifully – their punchy interruptions are very dramatic. I agree with Spányi's hunch that the D major concerto might originally have been for a melody instrument. The series has moved on since this recording, and may have to be extended to take account of the new discoveries in Kiev, but I recommend it heartily to everyone with the slightest interest in C. P. E. Bach. **BC**

J. Benda *Sonatas for harpsichord* Tamara Franzová 743' 16"

Supraphon 81 9011-2 131 *see next issue*

Cambini *Sinfonie* Academia Montis Regalis, Luigi Mangiocavallo 72' 49"

Opus 111 OPS 30-244

Symphonies 4 in F, 5 in e; Sinfonie concertante for 2 vlins in c B12; for ob & bsn in Bb E5

On reading the assessment of Cambini's music in New Grove as being somewhat shallow, I was not looking forward to this review, fearing that it might be yet another record of late-18th-century muzak. I was, however, agreeably surprised with the quality of the four works on this disc. Cambini's predilection for the *sinfonia concertante* is evident in the wind solo writing of the two symphonies (arguably slightly better works than the concertantes). These three-movement works from the 2nd book of symphonies for *grande orchestra* are surprisingly mature music, with some *sturm und drang* influence in the E minor symphony. Although the playing from this ensemble is generally good, it does not match the best of English period orchestras. The solo bassoon playing is outstanding (Maria De Martini). **Ian Graham-Jones**

Cannabich *Symphonies Nos 47-52 (1772)* Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia, Uwe Grodd 67' 12"

Naxos 8.554340 £

This second volume of the Cannabich symphonies consists of the six pieces published (in a different order to the composer's own catalogue) as Op. 10. They all have three movements (no minuets or scherzi), and are scored for strings with pairs of oboes or flutes, with horns. They are perfectly

fine as background music, but, as I think I said last time, Cannabich's music is pleasant but not exactly imagination-grabbing. I've listened to the set three times and I couldn't possibly recall a tune, even though some of the slow movements are very attractive. **BC**

Haydn *Heiligmesse, Nikolaimesse* Lorna Anderson, Pamela Helen Stephen, Mark Padmore, Stephen Varcoe SATB, Collegium Musicum 90, Richard Hickox cond 62' 23" Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0645

Another partly seasonal offering here, with that evergreen, the St. Nicholas Mass, as well as the *Heiligmesse* (in honour of St Bernard of Offida). This continues the high standards of CM90's earlier Haydn releases – the orchestral sound is rich, with incisive upper strings and lovely mellow clarinets. The soloists are, of course, very good, and the choir has a great time with Haydn's superb choral writing. **BC**

Haydn *Auenbrugger Sonatas (Hob. XVI/35-39)* Ronald Brautigam fp 75' 14" **BIS-CD-992**

This is highly skilled playing of some of Haydn's best-known sonatas and the disc has the added advantage of being recorded on a fine reproduction fortepiano in a resonant acoustic. Fresh and bright sounds with plenty of zip in the fast movements are matched with a sonority in the wonderful E flat major *Adagio* that is almost orchestral in character. This movement has an unusual mezzo forte opening in this recording and the playing expresses both passion and nobility. All the repeats are included and the astute listener will notice the occasional addition of a little subtle ornamentation. **Margaret Cranmer**

Jomelli *Requiem in Eb, Veni Sponsa Christi in A & C* Elena Cioric, Beata Ganzel, Antonio De Lucia, Viorel Kojocar SATB, Coro della Accademia Nazionale Moldava, Orchestra Sinfonica Moldava, Silvano Frontalini dir Bongiovanni GB 2215-2 68' 14"

I found this hard work, not because the music was dull or uninspired (which I'm afraid I often find to be the case with this composer) but because there was an obvious culture clash. This is not the place to discuss such things, but not only did the music and modern style speak different languages, but the performers themselves, with a clear Slavic roundness of pronunciation and sound production, are light-years from a funeral in Württemberg in 1756. The solo soprano in the two settings of *Veni sponsa Christi* floats (and occasionally screeches!) about like flotsam on a rough sea of violas and cellos, who can't quite decide when the D sharp becomes D natural. That is perhaps a little harsh, but this is not a CD you could play as background music when Aunt Maud is visiting! My abiding memory of the disc, though, will be such booklet gems as: 'Death changes: standing as the scandal of existence, even the competence of the Church on it is put in discussion.' **BC**

£ = bargain price ££ = mid-price

Other discs full price as far as we know.



Mozart *Une soirée chez les Jacquin* Sandrine Piaë S, Gilles Thomé *cl/basset horn*, Emilio Moreni *vla*, Arthur Schoonderwoerd, Miklos Spanyi *kbd*, Ensemble 415, Chiara Bianchini, etc. 94' 57" (2 CDs)  
ZZT 990701 (1/2)  
K228, 346, 436-9, 441, 498, 521, 549, 561 621b

Mozart was on very friendly terms with the three children of Nikolaus von Jacquin, an eminent botanist and chemist, so it was a nice idea to build a CD programme around works that are, or might well be, connected with the family and their musical evenings. This is an exceptionally interesting, if ungenerously brief set – there would have been time to include the *Skittle-alley* Trio written for Franziska, the daughter of the house and Mozart's talented piano pupil; however, we do have the duet sonata K521, written for her, played without much subtlety by Arthur Schoonderwoerd and Miklós Spányi on a copy of a fortepiano of 1793 by Lengerer. Voices, clarinets and basset horns are in the ascendancy here (the only orchestral work is the incomplete first movement of the familiar clarinet concerto in the version for basset horn). Of the vocal pieces, the Notturmi and the *Bandel* trio are quite familiar, the canon *Ach! zu kurz* less so. There are copious notes in French and at times delightfully odd English, and the issue is illustrated with a mixture of welcome facsimiles and grotesque artwork. Since these expert French musicians end with the *Ox* canon, one could be forgiven for saying that, far from there being anything to beef about, the French on this showing come out as real champions.

Peter Branscombe

Rosetti *Clarinet Concertos 1 & 2; Concerto for 2 horns* Dieter Klöcker *clar*, Klaus Wallendorf & Sarah Willis *hns*, SWR Sinfonie-orchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg, Holger Schröter-Seebeck 60' 08"  
cpo 999 621-2

This CD will sell best amongst fans of the clarinet – the music is not first rate (for all its historical significance), but there are plenty of impressive flights of fancy for the soloist to keep most ears busy. The double horn concerto is also slightly innocuous: I remember singing along with the tunes, but I can't recall a single one now. The orchestral playing is slightly darker and ever-so-slightly heavier than, say, the London Mozart Players in their Mozart Contemporaries series, for example. Tempi seem well chosen and the balance between soloists and orchestra is well handled. Pleasant but rather unmemorable. BC

*La Chasse: Hunting Music* Darmstädter Hofkapelle, Wolfgang Seeliger 64' 16"  
Christophorus CHR 77220  
Endler *Sinfonia 11 in D*, Haydn *Symphony 73 La Chasse*, Mozart *Horn concerto 1 K412*, Vogler *Les rendez-vous de chasse*,

This disc is worth it for the Johann Samuel Endler *Sinfonia* alone – superb playing, and the music is worthy of the very best of Telemann. Instead of the usual *Ouverture* it

starts with an extended *Marche de Trompettes* followed by some spirited movements and dances. Haydn's *Symphony* No. 73, with its *chasse* finale, is one of the best of his middle period works; this is an excellent recording. Musically the Abbé Vogler ballet music is more straightforwardly classical; all the movements are short and structurally simple, but certainly worth hearing. Particularly noteworthy is the instrumentation, with the inclusion of harp and piccolo in some movements. I am not sure of the relevance to the hunt of the Mozart/Süssmayer concerto, and I personally would have welcomed other lesser known works of the period on the *chasse* theme as being worthy of inclusion on this record in its place.

Ian Graham-Jones

## 19th CENTURY

Beethoven *The Piano Concertos* Robert Levin, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner 273' 57" (4 CDs in box)  
Archiv 459 622-2 (rec 1995-97)  
Concertos 1-5, Choral Fantasy, Concerto 4 arr. pf & str qtet, Symphony 2 arr pf, vln & vlc

What struck me particularly about these recordings was the stylistic incompatibility between the piano and orchestra. Not, I think, this particular piano and orchestra, but between the way we expect period bands to play and be recorded. Is the popularity of historically informed recordings of 19th-century repertoire due more to our CD-dominated approach to music, which favours clarity and detail of expression, rather than to any knowledge that these were particularly characteristic of performance around 1800? It so happens that, although I am used to Mozart concertos with fortepiano (particularly, of course, the recordings by Robert Levin) and Beethoven symphonies with period instruments, I haven't listened with any concentration to Beethoven concertos with early pianos. I was disturbed here by the contrast between the almost caricature-like emphasis on the details of phrasing in the orchestra and the piano's much greater subtlety of expression, operating within a narrower dynamic level. This is not so much a matter of balance but of style. That apart, however, this is a fine set which I have thoroughly enjoyed playing and can strongly recommend. As bonus, it includes a sextet version of Concerto 4 that avoids such problems; it is no mere transcription, as Hans-Werner Küthen's notes explain (in a separate booklet from the rest: was it originally intended to issue it and the second symphony arrangements separately?) CB

Padre Davide da Bergamo (1791-1863) *Romantic Organ Works* Andrea Marcon (Serassi 1858 organ at S. Maria di Campagna, Piacenza) 62' 49"  
Divox Antiqua CDX 79606

It is all too easy to criticise the musical tastes of a different generation or society that doesn't tally with our own – and reassessment of a forgotten musical genre

can be harder when it falls into the same category. So what will *EMR* readers make of the early-19th-century Italian organist/composer Padre Davide (Felice Moretti) who took Franciscan orders in 1818 and remained organist at Santa Maria in Campagna until his death? At first hearing, it is almost unbelievable that this music was played as an integral part of the Mass, until one recalls the prevailing musical tastes, particularly in the belcanto tradition of lyrical opera. Not for the first time, popular music had been taken up by the church, with results that might appear astonishing to us. Organists who thought that Lefebure-Wely's music was outrageous should try this for size. Andre Marcon is a distinguished player of early Italian music, but has transferred to this genre with ease. The organ is similar to Padre Davide's own organ and Marcon has mastered its orchestral colours and the music's operatic ebb and flow superbly. The dramatic undulations of the organ's winding (particularly noticeable on some grand opening chords) take a while to get used to, but they add a cinema-organ-like charm their own – I am not familiar enough with the Italian organ of this period to know the extent to which the player could have controlled the winding by varying his touch. Take a deep breath, suspend present-day musical taste, and have a listen. There may well be music going on in our churches today that will produce similar mirth in 150 years time.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Schumann *Das Paradies und die Peri, Requiem für Mignon, Nachtlied* Barbara Bonney, Alexandra Coku, Bernarda Fink, Christoph Prégardien, Neill Archer, Gerald Finley, Cornelius Hauptmann *SSmSTTBarB* (in *Das Paradies*); William Dazeley *Bar* (in *Requiem*); Monteverdi Choir, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner 117' 58" 2 CDs in box  
Archiv 457 660-2

Gardiner's revelation of Schumann continues apace – of the three pieces on this set, one (*Nachtlied*) has never been recorded before! – and the wonderful clarity of texture he achieved in his symphonies set (something of a watershed in the history of performance practice) is maintained beautifully here. The music, itself, is astonishing – ever responsive to the imagery of literary texts, the composer revels in the scope a full orchestra gives for expression. The palette is further broadened by the inclusion of the human voice in its many facets (soloists and choir, children and adults); it's a kaleidoscope of a sound world and should, as John Daverio's notes hope, banish the myth that Schumann was a heavy-handed orchestrator. *Das Paradies und die Peri*, though given prominence on the cover, is third on the programme; the performances are typical Gardiner – some of my German friends complain that he is 'too perfect', a concept with which I have some difficulty, but I think they mean that such correctness of presentation precludes emotional engagement. There is no way that's the case here – the performances are



meticulous, but there is passion a-plenty. As for Die Peri, Barbara Bonney can enter Paradise any time she likes – my heart melted the first time I heard her! Indeed, the solo contributions are, without exception, stunning. A special mention for the Hanover choirboys in the *Requiem*: it must have been an overwhelming experience to work in such demanding conditions, but they are brilliant! My recording of the month (despite John Holloway's Schmelzer!) BC

## CHRISTMAS

*Christmas CDs often arrive too late to be reviewed till long after the season. So we include here a few that had not arrived by Nov. 20th or which arrived too recently to be properly heard. Angels & Shepherds is certainly worth buying. Of the Naxos batch, none of which I have heard, the Charpentier looks interesting*

**Angels & Shepherds: a 17th Century Christmas** Cappella Fuguralis, The Netherlands Bach Society Choir, Jos van Veldhoven 69' 08" Channel Classics CCS 15198  
Music by Bach, Buxtehude, Carissimi, Cozzolani, Crüger, Fergusio, Hammerschmidt, Praetorius, Scheidt, Sweelinck, Verrijt, Vierdanck & anon

The composer-list makes it clear that this is not record of standard carols: in fact, the occasional familiar item, such as *Es ist ein Ros*, are disappointingly conventional: far more interesting are the concerted pieces for solo voices and violins. This arrived too late for a detailed consideration, but I have found it extremely enjoyable as background music and will give it the attention it deserves when this issue gets off to the printer. CB

**Silent Night: Christmas Carols** Thomas Hefe, Reinhard Grüber Tr, Bar, Regensburger Domspatzen Roland Büchner dir 60' 55" Glissando 779 002-2

in addition to carols and 19th-cent. music, includes J. M. Bach *Fürchtet euch nicht*; Gallus *Venite ascendamus ad montem Domini*; J. Walter *Joseph lieber*

**Charpentier Noël's and Christmas Motets** Aradia Baroque Ensemble, Kevin Mallon Naxos 8.554514 £

**A Roman Christmas** Cologne Chamber Orchestra, Maya Book S, Jürgen Schuster tpt, Stefan Schilli ob, Helmut Müller-Brühl Naxos 8.551077 £  
Albinoni op 9/2, Corelli op. 6/8, Marcello Ob conc, A. Scarlatti O di Bethlehemme, Tpt Sonata in D

**Bach Christmas Oratorio (highlights)** Hungarian Radio Choir, Falloni Chamber Orchestra, Géza Oberfrank Naxos 8.554508  
From the Naxos complete set 8.550428-30

**O Holy Night** Le Petit Bande de Montréal, Martin Dagenais Naxos 8.554435 £

**A Danish Christmas** Musica Ficta, Bo Holten Naxos 8.554627 £  
Music by Gade, Nielsen, Weyse etc

Here are some more reviews of Christmas CDs that arrived too late for last Christmas and were reviewed in Feb. 1999; see also page 14.

**Christmas in Early America: 18th century Carols and Anthems** The Columbus Consort, Joseph Petit dir 55' 40" Channel Classics CCS 5693 (rec 1993)  
Belcher, Billings, Carr, Dencke, French, Gregor, Heighington, Herbst, Holyoke, Husband, C. T. Pachelbel, Peter, Schulz, Stephenson

We are used to hearing early American music recorded only by American groups, so it is refreshing that the Columbus Consort is based in Holland with members from Australia, France, Iceland, Israel, Norway, the UK and the USA, and has an Amsterdam-based organist, Richard Egarr, who features often in our reviews. The music is in a mixture of styles. What comes over best is the closing group of Moravian pieces, including a short Latin Magnificat by Carl/Charles Pachelbel of which his father would have been proud. Of the rest, the most entertaining is an *Anthem for Christmas* by Benjamin Carr, which prefaces an adaptation from *The Creation* with bits of Handel and Corelli: interesting that the Haydn was already popular by 1805. (A defect of the booklet is the absence of publication dates.) The more distinctively non-European music, e.g. Billings' *Bethlehem*, with its avoidance of the expected tonic-dominant patterns, is too polite: the hard-edged tone of, for instance, Larry Gordon's groups is much more effective. The performances here are more in the manner of Psalmody, well worth hearing provided you want a civilised sound. CB

**Once as I remember** Monteverdi Choir, John Eliot Gardiner 73' 11" Philips 462 050-2

I was intrigued during the summer by a series of phone-calls from the Monteverdi Choir with questions about various Christmas pieces, including a Gloria by Robert Cowper which I did not know. This begins a varied anthology of Christmas music which is based round the Gardiner family nativity play. Rather more cultured than those which most of us attend, the text was based round Milton's seasonal *Ode*, interspersed with a catholic selection of Christmas music. I doubt whether it was sung quite so competently and stylishly then, but with Sir John in charge, there is no suggestion of a village barn. I'm not always convinced by tempi: after a brisk (but effective) performance of Howells' *Spotless rose*, Byrd's 'O magnum mysterium' is slow and overdone. So, perhaps, is the Palestrina, but it speaks powerfully nevertheless. This a fine collection of known and unknown Christmas music, and Gardiner's reminiscences of his childhood in the booklet are touching. Remember it when buying next year's Christmas presents. CB

*We wish all our readers a merry Christmas and a bug-free new year.*

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## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

I've just read your review in *EMR* 55 entitled 'DTO Biber', and have one or two things to add which you may find interesting.

The importance of the volume is that it completes the project of publishing all of Biber's extant instrumental music which was begun by Guido Adler in 1898 (volume 11 of DTO). The sources for all of the works included in the volume are held in the archives of the Arcibiskupsky zamek a zahrady (archiepiscopal castle and gardens) in Kromeriz, Czech Republic. The high standards of the volume (both of the editing and scholarship of the accompanying notes) are exactly what we have come to expect from the Moravian musicologist Jiri Sehnal, who is a renowned expert on the Kromeriz archives and has published a large corpus of studies in Czech and German over the last thirty years. A recent review of a Biber disc in another musicological journal made me realise (yet again) that some British writers on music are simply not reading scholarship of our European counterparts, which results in the same misconceptions and basic errors which were present in some English-language discussions of this repertoire fifty years ago remaining in much of what we write today.

Of editorial interest is the piece you describe as a 'Ciaccona of uncertain authorship for violin and bc'. This piece, which exists in only the one manuscript in Kromeriz has also appeared in another recent edition: 'Solo Compositions for Violin and Viola da Gamba with Basso Continuo From the Collection of Prince-Bishop Carl Liechtenstein-Castelcorn in Kromeriz', *Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era* 82 (AR-Editions; Madison, 1997), ed. Charles E. Brewer, which I reviewed for *Early Music* in 1998. Brewer's edition, has, however, some 332 additional bars of music which do not appear in Sehnal's edition. This is quite puzzling! I did see the source for this last time I was in Kromeriz, but did, unfortunately, not have copies of either of these editions to hand to make any detailed comparison. But I do seem to remember that the additional music in Brewer's edition was in the MS. How such a situation could have arisen when there is only one source for the work and both editions are based on that source is unclear. What is clear, however, is that it is not only those (as you say) 'old editions' which have suspicious features: we must remain critical at all times!

James Clements

*I didn't give the DTO volume a full review: it isn't new (1997) and we hadn't been sent a review copy, but I noticed it listed last time I ordered some DTOs so ordered a couple of copies. It had been waiting for space for some months, so I squeezed in a brief mention last month. It is, as you say, a milestone, though perhaps has had the result of emphasising Biber's instrumental music at the expense of the vocal: libraries subscribe to DTO, but*

*I doubt if as many buy the separate Carus vocal editions. At least your forthcoming Mass edition for A-R should circulate widely. CB*

Dear Clifford,

In your review of the PRB edition of a six-part *In nomine* attributed to George Gill (*EMR* October 1999, p. 3), you say that he 'must be one of the most obscure composers to achieve a modern edition'. In her introduction to the edition Rita Morey mentions just one biographical fact about him: he is listed as 'Musical Instrument Maker' in an English court document of 1641. In fact, had she looked at Andrew Ashbee's *Records of English Court Music*, iv (Snodland, 1991), p. 22-3 rather than Lafontaine's superceded *The King's Musick* (London, 1909), she would have found another reference to him, in a Signet Office book for March 1608/9:

A privilege granted to Peter Edney, his Majesty's servant, and George Gill, servant to the Prince [Henry], for ten years 'for the sole making of violls, violins and lutes w<sup>i</sup><sup>th</sup> an addic[i]on of wyer stringes besides the ordenary stringes for the bettering of the sound, being an invenc[i]on of theirs not formerly practised or knowne'.

I discovered this document in the Public Record Office in about 1980, and it led me to investigate the early history of the English viol with a second rank of metal strings – the ancestor of the later German and Austrian baryton. I finally wrote up this research in '“An Addicion of Wyer Stringes beside the Ordenary Stringes”: the Origin of the Baryton', *Companion to Contemporary Musical Thought*, ed. J. Paynter, R. Orton, P. Seymour and T. Howell, (London and New York, 1992), pp. 1098-1115. In this article there is a good deal of information about George Gill. In brief, he was baptized at East Quantoxhead near Watchet in Somerset on 3 August 1574, the eldest of six children, and lived there on and off throughout his long life. He married Joan Peers on 23 November 1601, had at least two children, became one of East Quantoxhead's wealthiest ratepayers, and was buried there on 5 April 1664. The 1641 document should be treated with suspicion, since court establishment books of this sort are often inaccurate or out of date, and there is no sign that he held a paid court appointment. His court connections probably came about through the Luttrells of Dunster Castle, the leading local family, who also owned the manor in East Quantoxhead, and were presumably just honorific – equivalent to a 'by appointment' award today.

The problem with all this, however, is that there is no proof that George Gill wrote the six-part *In nomine* in question, or a five-part *In nomine* also attributed to him. They are ascribed just to 'Mr Gill', and on the face of it is more likely that such complex and accomplished works were the work of a full-time musician rather than an instrument maker. Other candidates are the Arthur Gill who was in the service of Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset in 1608, or the Robert Gill mentioned as an apprentice in the 1616 will of the London musician Henry Walker.

Peter Holman

Dear Clifford,

I have always admired *EMR*. Now that I find it is a journal where the editor can review a recording and write half the review in Latin, I can only say that

HIIS.TEMPORIBUS.FINIBUSQUE.INTER.TOT.ET.TALES.  
INSIGNISSIMOS.VIROS.MUSICE.AD.HONORE.  
STILUM.BAIULANTES.CLIFFORD.  
BARTLETTUS.UT. ILLE.  
NOVUS.VENIENS.  
EX.OLIMPO.  
FULGET

Yours ever, Christopher Page, Cambridge  
(*Ille qui Christum portat et paginam subiungit*)

Since *EMR* is hardly a monumentum aere perennius, I'd better make sure that your appreciation is inscribed on my gravestone.

Dear Clifford Bartlett,

I'm writing to remove a small uncertainty in Michelene Wandor's article 'Ruggiero Freed' (*EMR* 55, Nov 1999). In fact, a concert performance of Caccini's opera *La Liberazione Di Ruggiero Dall'Isola D'Alcina* was given in Oxford on 29th May 1998, directed by Vassilis Vavoulis and produced by O.U. History Alive! So the Muswell Hill version is not the 'first outing in this country'.  
Andrew Kay

*It's always dangerous to list a performance as first. Unfortunately, my attempts to get some sort of performance of it when I was directing the Early Music Centre Festival ten years or so ago came to nothing for lack of money. There has presumably been another performance since then, since one of our readers, living not far from Muswell Hill, made a MS score for it.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Apologies for a very stupid slip in the editorial last month: I do really know that the Dowland song I mentioned begins *Weep*, not *Sleep*. Since writing it I've met several people who know or knew Alan Morgan.

Where do you read *EMR*? We were amused to receive a request for a duplicate copy from someone whose first copy had fallen into the bath (and that wasn't the subscriber whom I already know reads it there, or the proof-reader who corrected this month's CD reviews). A day or two later, we were asked for another copy of our liturgical guide to Monteverdi's *Vespers* by someone who had been reading it in bed, left it there, forgot about it, and found it reduced to dust when the sheets were washed.

My too-brief remarks on the retirement of Klaus Neuman last month (p. 33) stepped a little too far in contrasting WDR with the BBC. The BBC does now collaborate with recording companies; I was living in the past. But I think WDR was doing so long before the BBC.  
CB

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—THE WASHINGTON POST

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## ST. GEORGE AND EPIPHANY

'God for Harry, England and Saint George'. But Harry had to choose his enemies carefully, since St George is also the Patron Saint of Portugal, Venice, Genoa, Catalonia and Greece.

Traditionally Twelfth Night or Epiphany Eve was celebrated with dances, tugs of war, games, fires, feasting, costumes, masks, hobby horses and music. There was a 'twelfth cake' which contained a bean and a pea. The finders of these became King and Queen bean for the night and were in charge of the revels. A drink of mulled and spiced ale or cider called Lambs Wooll was served, and the trees were 'Wassailed' to ensure a good crop for the following season.

*Next crowne the bowle full  
With gentle lamb's wooll;  
Adde sugar, nutmeg, and ginger,  
With store of ale too;  
And thus ye must doe  
To make the wassaile a swinger.*

(Robert Herrick, 'Twelwe night, or King and Queene', 1648)

Along with these amusements were the Mummers who performed short plays to echo the themes of spring triumphing over winter and of the three wise men

outwitting wicked King Herod by following the star. St George was a favourite play, the good Saint overcoming the evil dragon.

*I am St George, the champion bold.  
My sword and I won three crowns of gold.  
I slew the fiery dragon, and kept from slaughter  
The King of Egypt's only daughter.*

The play ended:

*Our revels now are done.  
They and we must be gone.  
Till Christmas Twelfth another year  
Good luck, good cheer! And we will be here!*

To Christians, Saint George was a professional soldier, who publicly declared himself by tearing down Diocletian's edict against the Christians, for which he was beheaded near Lydda in 303, to become one of the early Christian Martyrs. The fame of Saint George as a defender of Christianity was imposed on the Greek legend of the virgin Andromeda and Perseus and retold as Saint George and the Dragon. The story quickly spread westwards and was thought to have been brought to Iona by Bishop Arculf in the 7th century.

*If you would like to try Dragon Pye without all the hard work, come along to the Millennial Epiphany Party in Beccles, Suffolk on Saturday 15th January. Once more Philip Thorby will be leading players and singers of renaissance music at the Eastern Early Music Forum's annual party. For more information contact Jennie Cassidy on +44 1473 718811 or e mail: Jennie.Cassidy@btinternet.com*



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## DRAGON PIE

Jennie Cassidy



First find and slay your dragon or dragoness. Call on Saint George if this bothers you, and if possible ask him for a dragonet, as they are much more tender than the old, gnarled, thick-scaled ones. Have the head, claws and scales removed. Have him cleaned, and clip the wings and tail – you could use these to make a good stock with carrots, onions, parsley and bay. Reserve a little dragon's blood. If you can't get hold of a dragon, a griffin, phoenix or pig would be suitable alternatives, but you will need to add some extra spices.

### STEW

250g dried beans, soaked overnight in cold water  
 5 rashers bacon, diced  
 unseasoned stock or water to cover the beans  
 500g lean cubed dragon, griffin, phoenix or pig meat  
 4 tbsp flour seasoned with salt, pepper and a little chilli powder  
 green dragon fat or olive oil for frying  
 1 small onion, peeled and diced  
 1 small leek, sliced (St George will probably have a supply of these)  
 1 tsp tumeric  
 2 cm fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped  
 1/4 bottle of nice beer (Maybe St George will help you dispose of the left-overs!)  
 3 tbsp Grand Marnier or Cointreau  
 salt to taste (about 1 tsp)  
 3 bay leaves  
 150 g dragon's blood (or tomato puree with a dash of tabasco sauce)  
 2 whole flames (or 1 tbsp whole grain mustard, 1 tsp powdered ginger and 1 or 2 tsp whole pink or green peppercorns)

### TOPPING

30 dragon scales or 1 globe artichoke  
 1 tsp lemon juice  
 2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into big chunks  
 250g frozen peas  
 a little milk, butter and nutmeg  
 1 bunch of watercress, washed

Drain the soaked beans and rinse with cold water. Place the bacon in the bottom of a saucepan and put the beans on top. Cover with unseasoned dragon stock or water and boil rapidly for 10 minutes uncovered. Reduce the heat, replace the lid and simmer for 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, coat the dragon meat in seasoned flour and fry in small batches of 8 pieces a time until it's all done. Remove the pieces to a large lidded casserole dish. Fry the onion and leek slowly until soft and browning. Add the tumeric and fresh ginger, and fry for a further couple of minutes. Pour on the beer and Grand Marnier or Cointreau to deglaze the pan. Add the vegetables and cooked, drained beans to the meat in the casserole. Season with salt, add bay leaves, blood and flames. Stir well and place in a moderate oven (160°C) for about one and a half hours until the meat is tender.

To prepare the topping, boil the scales or artichoke with lemon juice for about 40 minutes. Meanwhile in another pan, boil the potatoes for about 25 minutes until tender. Add frozen peas and boil for a further 5 minutes. Blend the potatoes, peas, butter, milk, nutmeg and watercress to a smooth consistency. (If you don't have a blender, chop the watercress finely and get St George to mash them with his mace). When the meat is ready, spread with green mash and decorate with overlapped scales or leaves.

### COMPETITION

A simple one this time: who can produce the most ingenious explanation, either scholarly or fanciful, of the following carol (from a print of c.1550).

*Gebit, gebit, gebit, gebit,  
 Lux fulgebit hodie.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Ipsē mocat mē;</i><br>An aple is no pere tree<br>In ciuitate Dauid.              | 3. <i>Aparuit Esau:</i><br>A red gowne is not blew<br>In ciuitate Dauid.                |
| 2. <i>Notum fecit Dominus:</i><br>By the byll one knoweth a gose<br>In ciuitate Dauid. | 4. <i>Uerbum caro factum est;</i><br>A shepe is a peryllous beste<br>In ciuitate Dauid. |

The Latin tags come from the Christmas Day liturgy  
 (assuming that *mocat* is a misprint).