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I was pondering while writing on John Potter's *Singing* (see p. 2) how 16th-century church singers managed to sort out underlay and ficta when much of the music was sung just once a year with minimal or no rehearsal. Irrespective of having to relate to other parts purely by ear (no scores, of course), how did several singers on a single part agree with each other? My mind turned to a recent conversation. During the eating and chat after a rehearsal of Biber's Requiem in F minor, a tape of the Interfora Cavalieri *Rappresentazione* was playing as background music. Jennie Cassidy mentioned that there was a group of elderly ladies (perhaps even as old as me) who were singing her part in it, and followed her lead so precisely that, even when she hopped from one line to another, they followed her – so were evidently not reading the notes. I wonder if that is what happened in the 16th century: one singer led, and the rest, very alert to the options, followed a fraction of a second behind and were able to pick up the leader's decisions (like playing continuo from an unfigured bass and spreading any doubtful chord so that the third doesn't sound until it has been heard). Perhaps some experimentation might be conducted to see how noticeable the time-lag is in a resonant acoustic.

Biber-lovers living within reach of Suffolk are lucky this month. There are two performances of the *Missa Salisburgensis a53* at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral (3 June) and Hadleigh (4 June) directed by Peter Holman and another of the Requiem at Blythburgh on 10 June with Philip Thorby, with some overlap in performers and one piece in common – the *Capricornus* included in last month's *EMR* will be performed by the two Cassidies and myself. Philip directed the Requiem in Israel recently; the report I received (admittedly from the leader) was enthusiastic, and apparently the audience was very moved. She is less certain how Bach's *St John Passion* will be received; I hope to write next month about Marisson's book on the work, which deals with its antisemitic content. King's Music wanted to produce an edition of the Biber Requiem, but both times I have asked for a copy of the only source (in Salzburg) I have been told that it is lost and that no microfilm exists. There are problems with the DTO score: does anyone know of any photo or transcription?

CB

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

SINGING

The Cambridge Companion to Singing edited by John Potter. Cambridge UP, 2000. x + 286pp. hb: £40.00 ISBN 0 521 62225 5. pb: £14.95 ISBN 0 521 62709 5

This is the second Cambridge book this year which seems to me to be confusingly titled. Apart from Western music during the last quarter-millennium, I would guess that about 90% of music is vocal: to try to describe this is so vast a task that I'm surprised that every opportunity was not taken to concentrate on singing itself rather than on the history and description of vocal music. There's nothing wrong with Stephen Varcoe's chapter on European art song in itself. But any academic could have knocked up something like it in a few days (though might have checked that Wagner wrote the *Wesendonck Lieder* with piano, not orchestra): what I hoped to hear from Stephen (and what would be more suitable for the book) is how he sings it differently from other types of vocal music. Stephen Banfield's chapter on stage and screen entertainers gets the focus right, as does (in a different way) Timothy Day on English cathedral choirs in the 20th century. I enjoyed the editor's chapter on ensemble singing, though I might question his disparaging of singing early music from partbooks; apart from any psychological advantages (or otherwise), it is possibly a way of avoiding more modern aesthetic ideals. If, as seems possible, the bulk of renaissance church music was sung with minimal or no rehearsal, subtleties like arranging to align the text on similar vowels (p. 162) were probably not on. (But see this month's editorial: I tried the idea out on John Potter and he thought it plausible. Indeed, the improvisations that the Hilliard do must depend on a similar sort of reaction.). His distinction between rehearsal and performance reminds me of a late-night discussion with the audience at the Utrecht Festival some years ago in which the Hilliards took part. Asked how they rehearsed their performances, the reply was to the effect that rehearsal was one thing, performance was something else. No doubt they say the same at their summer school.

The scope of the book is wide, though there is only one chapter on non-Western singing. It is almost entirely about professionals. The exception is a stimulating chapter by Felicity Laurence on children's singing. But even that is about training children, and is her idea on the cultivation of headtone generally accepted? There is nothing on the earliest singing that most of us experience: lullabies and nursery rhymes (or even what we hear in the womb). If the idea that, if you sing to a child what it has heard before birth, it will stop crying turns out to be valid, it should be a strong encouragement to singing. What do mothers brought up on pop music sing to their children now?

Much of the book is devoted to areas beyond the Western art music to which my experience is chiefly confined. As someone outside the world of popular music, it intrigues me what performers are found acceptable for academic discussion. Are there evaluative discussions in journals I know nothing about, are those chosen merely indications of a common assumption of worth that defines an academic sub-culture, or is the choice chiefly determined by survival? A chapter on singing with the microphone (as an acoustic as well as visual aid) would have been interesting. Western folk music, since excluded from the definition of world music, is omitted. I was amused to read that in Buenos Aires the opera chorus sang in Italian (whatever language the other singers used) until 1961 (p. 105); one sometimes wonders if it matters what language opera choruses sing in anyway.

Despite some disappointment at the scope of the book, though, the individual contributions are well worth reading and as a whole I found it stimulating: were I to embark on the thoughts it provoked, I'd fill this whole issue.

LASSUS MAGNIFICATS

The number of the 100+ Magnificats by Lassus that are available in separate editions can probably be counted on the fingers, so congratulations to Breitkopf for issuing two more. No 66, *Magnificat quinti toni super "Omnis homo primum bonum vinum ponit"* a6 (ChB 5285) is based on a motet by Wert. It is a cheerful piece and fits SSATTB quite well, the original tessitura in high clefs lying low enough for transposition not to be necessary. Music for seven voices is unusual: indeed there is only one setting a7, *Magnificat Perpulchrum septimi toni*; the nickname ('especially beautiful') comes from the posthumous complete publication of the Magnificats, but modern catalogues identify it more prosaically as no. 87. It too is in high clefs and is printed here down a tone for SSAATTB (ChB 5286; each edition costs DM4.20 – about £1.35). There seem to be no problems in editing the works, since the sources differ minimally. They sensibly have four-minim bars and original note values, but I'm not convinced that *mensurstrich* is particularly helpful. The editor, Rudolf Ewerhart, seems not to have been able to find any relevant contemporary source with the tones for the alternatim verses. I'd like some evidence for his suggestions that 'the indispensable accompanying instrument was the organ' and 'The wide variety of colours afforded by a mixed vocal-instrumental performance most likely comes closest to the typical sound of the late Renaissance and early Baroque'. Vespers at the Bavarian court were probably celebrated quite simply, with psalms in *falsobordone*, so lavish instrumental Magnificats were unlikely. Choirs shouldn't feel obliged to assemble instruments to be authentic.

LATIN BYRD

William Byrd *Latin Motets II (from manuscript sources)* edited by Warwick Edwards (*The Byrd Edition*, 9). Stainer & Bell, 2000. xix + 202pp, £69.00. ISBN 0 85249 371 1

see Annual Byrd Newsletter 6, p. 11 *bound in this issue*

17TH-CENTURY POETRY

English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700. Vol. 8 Seventeenth-Century Poetry, Music and Drama Edited by Peter Beal. The British Library, 2000. 340pp, £45.00. ISBN 0 7123 4029 5

I was at first puzzled why we were sent this, but one article is specifically on music, another is by the editor of *Songs to Phillis* which we publish, and a third is about a lost masque. In fact, I found myself more interested in sampling work in a different discipline. I've been a bit critical of musicologists, and indeed of literary scholars as well; but this shows that old-fashioned source studies are still alive and well. My initial interest in two contributions on Carew was led by a vain hope of more information on the psalms set by Lawes which we publish; but the editorial problems reminded me of those in dealing with music from nearly a century and a half earlier – until recently of scholars preferred the printed sources to the MSS in the music of around 1500, led (perhaps astray) but the elegance and apparent authority of the Petrucci prints. Scott Nixon's criticisms of the modern editor of Carew misses the point that the modern editor of a collected printed edition is in a similar position to a 17th-century editor, and also needs to have some degree of consistency to make the end-product convenient for the reader. So there may be advantages in taking seriously an editorial house style of the period: would not Carew have expected it? I find this with operas of the following century; Handel may have copied the text of his operas in the autograph scores, but it is sensible to take the orthography from the contemporary libretto, even though the MS must be followed for differences of substance. Similarly, if I were editing the Henry Lawes MS, I would pay some regard to the published *Ayres and Dialogues*, even though that is not the primary source. On a flippant note, you won't find Francis Wyrley's rhyme *suspicious/fellatricious* in *The Golden Treasury*.

Turning to the *Select Ayres*, Richard Charteris has had the misfortune that his article on the MS appendix to a set in Kraków has been anticipated by H. Diack Johnstone in *Early Music History* 16. It is curious how differently the two scholars approach the topic, so apart from the intrinsic value of the different material in each, the two articles could be used as a case-study for trainee musicologists. One weakness in the Charteris inventory that was apparent even without comparing the rival version was the freedom of notation of the incipits he quotes. Like Johnstone, he prints a facsimile of Reggio's song *Upon the Death of the Duke of Gloucester*, showing that he tacitly changes the vocal clef from C1 to G2. This may not be significant; but it is

possible that there may be a difference not just in range but in implication between the two clefs: by the end of the century G2 was being used (as today) for tenor voices, but C1 may not have been read at the lower octave. (This is just a hypothetical distinction to show that the clef may be important.) Later, for no. 19 Charteris states that *Un sol bacio* is scored for tenor and unfigured bass; Johnstone shows the original clef to be alto; alto-clef parts often fit the tenor voice, but it is usually better for catalogue entries to refer to the clef, not surmise the modern voice type. He also prints a natural below the first note, whereas the MS has a sharp above it: someone interested in figured-bass notation might wonder whether this was an early use of the natural for a minor chord. In the text, Charteris identifies the scribe as John Patrick, who was Preacher of the Charterhouse from 1671 till his death in 1695, and provides a considerable amount of information about him – the most valuable feature of the article. Patrick was particularly interested in psalmody, his metrical translation of 100 psalms appearing in 11 editions and his complete Psalter in eight. Purcell set nine of them.

Musicians are familiar enough with the great court masques but are not so aware of the less extravagant examples cultivated by the aristocracy. One that was performed in several households around 1620 turned up in the British Library (one of the few items in the book that relates to that institution) a decade ago; its text is printed in full and makes it clear that a cut-price masque was thought to be extremely desirable. The texts of two songs survive, but not the music. Music would have been needed for the dances, and one wonders whether some of the players from the court masques were involved and recycled the music from them.

SCHEIDEMANN

Heinrich Scheidemann *Sämtliche Werke für Clavier (Cembalo)* edited by Pieter Dirksen. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8688), 2000. 84pp, DM38.00.

Scheidemann is better known to organists than harpsichordists, and this is the first complete edition of those of his keyboard works that are not obviously for organ. It contains 30 pieces, mostly dances, some of which have doubles, a characteristic feature of Scheidemann. Most of the music survives in early sources from the orbit of the composer, but one substantial anonymous piece is included, a setting of *Lachrymae*; the editor reckons that it not quite as good as the Schildt setting. Both settings are in Werner Breig's *Lied- und Tanzvariationen der Sweelinck-Schule* (Schott 6030; 1970), which surprisingly, in view of the new edition's use of separate beams in chords, is sometimes more precise in the notation of accidentals, though differences are not significant. This looks the sort of music that I would enjoy playing; it is one of the editions I'll put aside for use when our house extension is finished and the harpsichord is repaired and set up there. The edition includes F. Anerio's *Mio cor, se vera sei salamandra* (without stating the original clefs), on which Scheidemann wrote a lively intabulation.

KRIEGER

Johann & Johann Philipp Krieger *Sämtliche Orgel- und Clavierwerke* Herausgegeben von Siegbert Rampe & Helene Lerch. Bärenreiter, 2000.

I. Johann Krieger *Musikalische Partien* (1697) & *Anmuthige Clavier-Übung* (1699). (BA 8402). xliv + 107pp, £25.00

II. *Werke abschriftlicher Überlieferung/Works from copied sources.* (BA 8406). lxxii + 110pp, £27.00

I was teasing Richard Turret recently that it was odd that his bibliography of writings on Byrd omits the most significant examples of the year: the booklet to several CDs and the introduction to the latest volume in *The Byrd Edition* (though they are mentioned elsewhere in his *Newsletter*). Any bibliography on the Krieger brothers using the same principle would leave out the most substantial work on the subject, certainly the only one in English, since these two volumes have extraordinarily thorough and lengthy introductions in German and English. Fortunately, Johann published two volumes of keyboard music, so half their combined output survives with a clear ascription. These occupy vol. 1; vol 2 begins with three works by JP, then includes the rest of the music attributed to J along with some dubious works. Some of the introduction is printed in both volumes, but much of vol. II is devoted to the problems of establishing texts from early-20th-century editions made from sources that haven't survived. Normally, the Second World War is blamed for missing MSS. But the editors are puzzled at the loss of keyboard MSS in particular, so perhaps they still survive among the heirs of some hoarding scholar who 'borrowed' them (see vol. II, p. xlvi).

The editors make things difficult for themselves by choosing to respect the details of the original notation of the 1697 and 1699 edition which form the main source for vol. I. Readers will be aware that recent German editions of early keyboard music have become extremely careful to preserve original beaming, barring etc. So trying to restore a hypothetical original from Seiffert's DTB edition of 1917 is tricky, good though that be in most respects; even more difficult is the reconstruction of the original notation of pieces surviving in other less-scholarly editions. I have some doubts about the importance of the retention or restoration of what the English translation calls 'double bars': bars twice as long as the signature implies – in fact, 'inconsistent barring' would be a better description, since bar-lengths vary. I'm not sure that it matters very much. The composers, printers or copyists don't seem to have made much conscious attempt to avoid placing barlines through hemiolas (witness the second barline in the very first piece), and their presence or absence is a fairly trivial matter. Were I editing the music, it is usage of accidentals that would worry me more. It is a pity that the facsimiles of vol. I do not include a page or two of the musical notation (despite a reference to one on p. xxxi), especially as there are comments on the printing process. The introduction contains much information about keyboard instruments of the time, including registrations of three organs.

L'ESTRO ARMONICO

Antonio Vivaldi *L'Estro armonico Op. 3, in Full Score...* Edited by Eleanor Selfridge-Field with Edmund Correia Jr. Dover Publications, 1999. ix + 257pp, \$14.95 (UK £12.95). ISBN 0 486 40631 8

This follows on from the excellent edition of op. 8, which was also prepared by the Center for Computer Assisted Research in the Humanities at Stanford. Unlike previous editions, a line is devoted to each of the original parts, so the score makes it easier for the conductor to see how the parts are distributed among the players if they are using facsimiles (which are available from Performers' Facsimiles or King's Music). There are excellent introductions and critical notes, and this can be highly recommended, with the virtues of both musicological excellence and economy. Just one quibble: the allocation of parts to *Violino concertante* and *Violino* [presumably *ripieno*]. This is given in italics; but such information is often italicised for aesthetic reasons, so the reader will not necessarily assume that it is editorial. I see no reason why the *solo* and *tutti* marks in the parts exist to give any more information than to tell a single player that the spotlight is on him or that there is some safety in numbers since the other parts are also playing (and perhaps a consequential difference in playing style). The score makes it look as if the concertos for four violins need at least eight, when of course they don't. As with the chorus in Bach cantatas, it is doubling that is the option, not playing solo. Since it is by no means self-evident from a set of parts which of them can be left out of the concertos which do not have four independent parts, one must presume that the set was intended for an ensemble of four violins (which might be doubled), two violas, cello, violone and keyboard.

HAPPY KEISER

Der glückliche Fischer is a cantata for soprano, two violins and continuo from Reinhard Keiser's *Gemüths-Ergötzung* of 1698, the year after he had become director of Hamburg's Goose-Market opera company. It has been edited by Thomas Ihlenfeldt (Deutscher Verlag für Musik, DVfM 9527; DM29.00 from Breitkopf); the package gives you score, one violin and one bass part, so two sets are needed to provide for a singer, keyboard and two violins, leaving a spare bass part, which is unfigured but prints the recitatives in full. The introduction quotes Keiser's preface on the cantata form: 'It was... derived from the opera. Since it was felt that the mixed style of singing found in opera – recitatives and arias which are either cheerful or sad, in one key or another – was very pleasant, but since it was not feasible to take one piece from an opera because of the alternating characters, the old custom of making long songs or many stanzas or strophes yielded to the new practice of creating a mixed poem containing recitatives and arias.' Keiser was a leader in bringing the classical Italian pastoral cantata to Germany, and this shows his skill in the style, though the rhythms are a bit repetitive.

LEARNED BACH

Christoph Wolff *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*. Oxford UP, 2000. xvii + 599pp, £25.00. ISBN 0 19 816534 X

This new biography combines treatment of the surviving music and its reconstructed contexts in such a way as to use the composer's authority and resource – aspects which have excited comment since his early lifetime – as a point from which to develop new considerations of intriguing elaboration in such a way as to remind his readers how much of what we know today was unknown by those who considered Bach before the 1950s. The new approach depends heavily on new material, and it is probably the best single book yet issued to help the reader catch up with Bach scholarship. After reading it, one's view of Bach is quite likely to have changed.

Concerning the 'life story' of Bach, let alone his personal style and character, evidence seemed at best scarce, and such modern attempts at biography as were attempted by Karl and Irene Geiringer (*Bach, the Culmination of an Era*, 1966) and even later by Alberto Basso (*Frau Musica: la vita e le opere di J. S. Bach*, 1979 & 1983), despite most attentive new attention to the daunting international Bach literature, only superseded earlier biographies from Forkel to Spitta insofar as those had been far too considerate of religious and political preoccupations of their own times. So we seem to have too tight an evidence of the music but too vague a knowledge of the man.

Wolff is already an authority on Bach and the *stile antico*, on Bach and his predecessors (both his family and such composers as Pachelbel, Bruhns, Buxtehude and de Grigny), on aspects of his creative processes and revisions, on the cantatas in context, and on Bach's late works as summations. He is joint editor of the *Bach Compendium* (the successor to BWV) and the *Bach-Jahrbuch*, and has done sterling work for the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe*. All this has formed a fruitful background for the highly illuminating focus of his first biographical study. It has also given him an almost unmatched facility for sorting out coincidentally-dated works and activities: the Chronology forming Appendix I is particularly useful.

Altogether, this is a biographical treatment which will enlighten, absorb and impress. Certain aspects of Bach are as well or better treated elsewhere. But *EMR* readers will already have encountered and considered him, and this new book forms an almost ideal second or third level of consideration. I would have preferred more concerning the bases of modern attempts to perform in appropriate ways to the challenges of the music: the freedom as well as the rigour with which composers and performers seemed to have approached the music; exactly how Bach was learned and original, how conventional in the performance of his keyboard works, his Passions, or his works intended for outdoor performance. These are, however, minor quibbles. This book is none the worse for being a short, deep study.

It has been priced to sell widely and designed with lively readers in mind. May such readers give it the welcome it so warmly deserves.

Stephen Daw

WHICH BACH?

The flute sonata in E flat that has received a number in both the J. S. Bach and C. P. E. Bach catalogues (BWV 1031/H.545) has been re-edited by Barthold Kuijken. Kuijken has done his work thoroughly, and there is a detailed list of variants between the two main sources and an extensive introduction. He is inconclusive on the authorship: 'BWV 1031 is untypical of C. P. E. Bach (and W. F. Bach), too thin for J. S. Bach and too good for Quantz', though is quite taken by the idea that it is by J. S. in imitation of Quantz. He points out that the piece is still the same as it was before the attribution was questioned, even though it is now played less. Serious flautists will need the commentary even if they have another edition (EB 8689; DM18.00).

SINGING BACH & MOZART

Johann Sebastian Bach *Das Arienbuch/The Aria Book. Bassoon*... Edited by Charlotte Lehmann. Bärenreiter (BA 5214), 1998. 58pp + accompanying brochure 23pp (BA 5214e), £10.00. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart *Das Arienbuch/The Aria Book. Alto*... Edited by Charlotte Lehmann. Bärenreiter (BA 5374), 1999. 107pp + accompanying brochure 31pp, £15.00.

These are interesting publications and should prove invaluable to singing teachers and students. The main volumes can be used just as normal anthologies, with good two-stave accompaniments that distinguish reduction from realisation. The Bach volume contains 11 bass arias from the cantatas. The Mozart collection has 14 arias, all from early works: apart from the concert aria K.255, the highest Köchel number is 118, the works called upon being *Apollo und Hyacinth*, *Mitridate*, *Ascanio in Alba* and *Betulia liberata*. Early Mozart is not to be despised, and there are advantages in singing music that does not have a weight or performance tradition to stifle interpretation. The musical texts are based on the NBA and NMA, so these are in themselves useful and cheap anthologies. Their value is increased by the accompanying brochures (I retain the slightly odd word that the publisher uses). Their separation from the music volumes is sensible, since it enables the main volume to be non-language-dependent (though Drinker's English translations are added in the Bach volume) while the brochures can be issued in a single language; separate versions are available in German and English (the BA numbers quoted above are for the English versions).

The brochures provide help for the singers. The Bach one has a good preface that will give the student who is not familiar with the music of the period some idea of what the cantatas are. In both volumes, each piece is introduced by setting it into its context within the work as a whole. The words are printed line-by-line along with fairly literal translations – though the reader may wonder why Apollo's name

comes twice in the Latin text and not at all in the English of the first piece in the Mozart book: one can see why, but explanation is needed. Advice is given on technical preparation, including useful exercises, and there are suggestions for performance. This is all very helpful and should encourage thoughtful and stylish singing. Duration and instrumentation are stated. I wonder whether Bärenreiter has parts for each aria readily available for singers who wish to perform with instruments: there is a limit to how well the aria as a whole can be performed just with piano, however good the singer.

I have also received Mozart's *Sämtliche Lieder für mittlere Stimme/Complete Songs for Medium Voice* transposed from the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe (BA 5328; £10.00). There are good reasons for singers to stick to songs that they can sing in their written key: apart from key associations, one imagines that composers normally envisaged a particular tessitura or voice colour. But lower voices expect their repertoire to be extended by transposition, and this is a useful publication. Non-singing English texts are added at the end of the volume.

SCHETKY & OSWALD

I had a long phone chat with David Johnson recently, arising out of the review in April of his *Musica Scotica* volume. He has sent a few of his recent publications, plus one old one which I might perhaps have mentioned: his edition of a trio sonata in F by the Early of Kelly that is not from the published set (£9.00). A sonata by Schetky for violin and cello (apparently without keyboard continuo) in E flat dates probably from 1774 and comes as two parts with no score (£6.00). Oswald's *A Sonata of Scot's Tunes* is presented for string quartet and continuo with a viola part added (£10.00 for score and parts). In view of the change in the copyright status of editions, David states explicitly that the edition can claim copyright on the strength of his viola part, his keyboard realisation and other amendments to the text; i.e. if he had produced a simple edition (as, for instance, King's Music would have done), the PRS and MCPS would not have been interested and it could have been used freely (though not photocopied, since the graphic image right presumably still survives).

The problem with these editions for our professional or serious amateur readership is that, although they present unknown music, they are edited for educational purposes, so come with bowings and fingerings (though not in the Oswald score). Two systems of facsimile are printed on the cover of the Oswald showing the original trio texture (though the original has three systems on a page), and the editorial commentary justifies the need for the added viola part. It should be useful for schools that have string ensembles. But there is likely to be resistance these days to handwritten publications; the fact that the introduction and commentary is so clear only exaggerates the fact that the music isn't typeset. Most music teachers now can turn out material on their own computers that looks far better.

[Obtainable from Soar Valley Music, 3 Waldron Court, Prince William Rd, Loughborough LE11 5GU tel 01509 269629 or in USA from Fiddlers Crossing, PO Box 92226, Pasadena CA 91109, tel 626 792 6323. The catalogue also includes more educational material, such as 24 *Scots Airs for Violin and Cello*.]

PICTURING PERFORMANCE

Thomas F. Heck *Picturing Performance: The Iconography of the Performing Arts in Concept and Practice*. University of Rochester Press, 1999. xii + 255pp, £30.00. ISBN 0 58046 044 5

This is a mixture, with much of its content (to which five other authors contribute) devoted to a discussion of the subject in very general terms, while towards the end the reader is given a lot of very specific bibliographical and www-ological information – is there a term for the listing of source material on the net? The book as a whole is more net-orientated than any scholarly work I have seen so far. Indeed, its opening chapter, a historical survey of the use and differentiation of *iconology* and *iconography*, is based on web searches, which provide a vast amount of leads into the subject. A whole chapter is devoted to Panofsky's interpretation of the terms. It is unfortunately too easy to assume that, because a work of art *can* have meanings at different levels, it *must* have them, just as for medieval interpreters an innocent bit of narrative from the Bible had to have a literal, an allegorical, a tropological and an anagogical meaning. I'm a little suspicious of too great a concern with the meanings that can be read into pictures. If I were an art historian, I'd like to study the interaction between the programmes laid down by the commissioners of paintings and what the artists made of them: it's a bit like assuming that an opera composer creates what you would expect from the libretto. Perhaps cultural historians should be as suspicious as musicians in extracting information from artistic works.

The general message is one that is now obvious, but has only penetrated to musicians over the last few years: artists have their own agenda, and information they appear to give about music and music-making must be questioned and requires much investigation before it can be interpreted. Every picture may tell a story, but it is often different from what it seems. Anyone trying to use visual images to understand early music will be wiser having read this, although it is quite hard work. One quotation is apposite to many books I have read recently:

It would seem that then [1580], as today, there was a temptation to prefer erudite-sounding words to simple ones, given a choice. In purely quantitative terms, the temptation has proven more irresistible to writers in the later twentieth century than to all others combined. (p. 14)

But the message of the book is

Art historians have gradually learned to accept the fact that 'realism' in the visual arts is an elusive phantom. Potential iconographers of the performing arts, too, should realise that hardly any image can be taken at face value. (p. 47)

EARLY CLARINET

Colin Lawson *The Early Clarinet: A Practical Guide*. Cambridge UP, 2000. xiii + 128pp. hb £30.00 ISBN 0 521 62459 2. pb £11.95 ISBN 0 571 62446 5

Clarinette: Méthodes et Traités, Dictionnaires. (Méthodes & Traités, 6; Série I, France 1600-1800). Fuzeau, 2000. 303pp, FFR390,00

I can envisage several types of readers, all of whom will find this helpful. The player of the modern clarinet who wishes to find out about the early instruments to help in his own stylish playing of the pre-20th century part of his repertoire will find this useful in offering ideas and information. Such a player who wants to take up an early clarinet will benefit even more. It is not quite detailed enough to act as a substitute for a teacher for someone wanting to play an early clarinet from scratch: do such people yet exist? Do they expect to read from parts at sounding pitch? (I have of late been surprised by sackbut players who cannot read the tenor clef, but there are now early-music players who take it up without playing the trombone and without familiarity with the conventions of notation for it.) There are also some technical comments which need a little more explanation for another class of reader, to which I belong: those who don't play any sort of clarinet but are interested in the music and hence in what played it. That apart, I found it illuminating and surprisingly readable. Occasionally a little more authorial intervention might have been useful. Various practical points concerning looking after the instrument are quoted on pp. 38-40, for instance, but they author does not confirm that they are sensible. It seems odd to list a table of variants between two editions of Handel's *Ouverture* for two clarinets and horn without quoting the autograph readings.

Just as I was finishing this section a batch of new facsimiles arrived from Fuzeau. I'll write about the rest next month, but it is worth mentioning here the latest in their *Méthodes et Traités* series. The selection of clarinet tutors is skewed by restriction to French texts, but it is nevertheless a valuable collection. It begins with the anonymous *Principes de clarinette* of c.1760 attributed to Roeser and his *Essai d'instruction...* of 1764. The most substantial item is the *Nouvelle Méthode de Clarinette* by Frederic Blasius (1796). Van der Hagen's *Méthode Nouvelle et Raisonnée* (1785) and *Nouvelle Méthode* (1796) and Yost's *Méthode* (c.1800) are the other instruction books; there are also excerpts from general works and fingering charts. It isn't entirely comprehensive, but any early clarinettist will want a copy.

PERFORMERS' FACSIMILES

Most of the recent issues are of keyboard music. Jean-François Dandrieu's *Troisième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin* of 1734 (PF 167; £14.50) contains two long suites (with 10 & 8 pieces) and another six of just three pieces each, all with the individual names that one expects from French keyboard pieces of the period. I don't have the 1973 Schola Cantorum

edition of Dandrieu's three books, so cannot say whether the facsimile is necessary to those who own it. But it is certainly a useful publication for those who enjoy François Couperin's slightly lesser contemporaries. Those not used to facsimiles will be encouraged by the fact that most of the music is in treble and bass clefs. Gustafson & Fuller's *A Catalogue of French Harpsichord Music 1699-1780* quotes from a contemporary review:

Les personnes qui aiment les Chants gracieux, la modulation naturelle et la bonne harmonie auront de quoi se satisfaire dans cet Ouvrage, dont le Frontispice indique la caractere sous une allégorie aussi bien executée qu'elle est ingénieuse.

However, the frontispiece is not very clear, and it is difficult to distinguish the instruments accompanying the dancing couple on the left. (Livres I & II are already published as PF 165 & 166, £17.00 & £14.50.)

C. P. E Bach's *Sei Sonate per il Clavicembalo Solo all' uso delle Donne* (PF 1773; £12.50) is the least visually attractive of this batch, with its movable type, and has soprano clef for the right hand throughout. They seem to have been written in the mid 1760s (their H numbers – 204, 205, 184, 206, 185, 207 – separate sonatas of 1765 and 1766; the set is more simply numbered Wq 54) and were first published in Amsterdam around 1770; the facsimile is of a Riga reprint of 1773. Is it fanciful to link the sexual type-casting to the assumption that the right hand can play more difficult music than the left? (The proper professional – male – player would have learnt a greater equality between his hands.)

Samuel Wesley's *Voluntaries for the Organ* op. 6 were published as twelve individual items between 1802 and 1808. They come in two volumes (PF 217-8; £14.50 each), taken from an early reissue which has a continuous pagination but preserves the separate title page for each voluntary. They are multi-movement pieces for pedal-less organ with considerable precision on registration. There are occasional problems for modern performance with the bass going below bottom C. Voluntary IV includes a fugue on *Non nobis Domine*.

Another facsimile of Boyce's *Twelve Sonatas for Two Violins: with a Bass for the Violoncello or Harpsichord* (1747) seems unnecessary (PF210; £29.50). Admittedly, as the publisher of the existing one, I'm perhaps biased, so I'll set out the differences without comment. KM costs only £20.00, and includes a second copy of the continuo part. PF is more generous in format with much bigger margins, but the notes are the same size in both editions; KM is properly printed from full-size photographic plates made direct from an original copy, not our usual photocopy. KM has an introduction which refers briefly to the other sources, including various MS scores, a list of misprints, and a facsimile of a page of autograph score giving a different version of one movement. Both PF & KM include the extraordinarily large list of subscribers (though KM squashes eight pages onto one for economy), an amazing testimony to Boyce's status and to the amount of amateur music-making here and abroad – 15 names in the USA. PF includes a later (1788) portrait, KM has a two-page Walsh catalogue from c. 1747.

ÆSTAS MUSICA INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Sarah Turvey

I must admit that it was the beautiful picture of the Croatian coastline on the front of the *Æstas Musica International Summer School* brochure that first attracted my attention. However, I soon realised that it would also be an interesting course for me to attend as a singer specializing in Early Music. The Summer School offers tuition in strings, harpsichord and historical dance with tutors of international repute in the field of historically aware performance, culminating each year in a semi-staged production of an opera or oratorio involving all of the participants.

It is important to understand something of the history of the Summer School to appreciate why six years after its foundation, *Æstas Musica I.S.S.* continues to be an unique educational and artistic venture in South-Eastern Europe. It was created for a dual musical and social purpose. Director and Founder, Croatian violinist Maja Zarkovic (who was then a student at the Royal College of Music) formed the idea of the Summer School with the aim of helping to fill a cultural gap created by the war in the region.

Being among the rare Croatian musicians who had an opportunity to win a scholarship to study in London, I felt it was my duty to do something for those who were cut off from what was happening in the rest of the musical world. The School was formed from the view of music and education as powerful tools for communication. I approached several renowned musicians asking whether they would come to teach in Croatia. It was overwhelming to get their positive responses and to encounter their human concern. Since then, a group of wonderful musicians joined by volunteers in administration and participants from all over the world, have been helping to restore a few broken strings in a wounded part of Europe through the shared joy of music-making of a high standard. When the course was formed, there were only a few people in Croatia who had experience in Early Music performance. There are still difficulties that prevent students from choosing a career in Early Music, such as the lack of instruments and tuition. In fact, the only place in Croatia and the whole region where students of music can work with professional early music players and teachers is at the *Æstas Musica I.S.S.* With a significant move in favour of historically aware performance practice not only in Croatia but also in surrounding countries, I hope there will be ways of overcoming these obstacles.

The Summer School has been held in several beautiful places in Croatia during its existence to date. In 1996, Purcell's *Dioclesian* was performed at the Palace peristyle of the original ancient Roman Emperor Dioclesian in the coastal town of Split. Handel's oratorio *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* was performed in 1998 in one of the oldest cathedrals in Europe, St Jacob's Cathedral in Sibenik, and in 1997 and 1998 the Summer School was held in the scenic town of Primosten. In 1999 it was held for the first time in Varazdin in Northern Croatia. Just two hours drive from the capital Zagreb, the baroque town of Varazdin is listed by UNESCO as having special historical significance. For many years Varazdin was part of the Austro-Hungarian

Empire, and the influences of this time on the architecture and cuisine are very apparent. Of course I didn't know any of this history when I enrolled last year – only that the music being covered sounded exciting, the course was inexpensive and in an interesting place, and I had a friend going who urged me to go too.

The Summer School in 1999 once again involved an ambitious amount of musical preparation, culminating in semi-staged performances of Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Charpentier's *Actéon* in Varazdin Palace. As well as preparing all the choruses for these operas, the choir (which was largely made up of Croatian participants) rehearsed motets and Byrd's 5-part Mass for performance in Varazdin Cathedral. Rehearsals were conducted with great enthusiasm and humour by Alastair J. Hume, who was a founder member of *The King's Singers*. He managed to stun us with his varied collection of colourful shorts! Meanwhile, Mary Collins was exercising her amazing stamina and energy by tutoring classes of dancers around the clock, providing people from as young as seven and eight years old with the valuable opportunity to gain some experience in historical dance. The instrumentalists had a busy programme throughout the course. Not only did they prepare the scores of the operas, but they also worked on chamber and solo repertoire under the guidance of inspiring instrumental tutors, Laurence Cummings, Nicolette Moonen, Jennifer Ward-Clarke and Artistic Director Catherine Mackintosh. Like many other participants, Bojan Cicic, a violin student from the Music Academy in Zagreb, expressed his enthusiasm about the opportunity to work with tutors and meet other musicians from all round the world. It was his first contact with historical approaches to performance practice and he took to it like a fish to water, going away with the aim of trying to establish his own chamber ensemble and keep in regular contact with the other instrumentalists he had met.

For me there were several highlights to the Summer School. Musical aspects aside, Varazdin is a lovely town with many wonderful restaurants, bakeries and coffee houses and a marvellous daily market providing a window to the culinary traditions of Northern Croatia. It became my habit to make a daily tour of the market on my way to breakfast at the nearby bakery/coffee house – a very pleasant way to begin any day. Of course, the opportunity to meet and work with the tutors and the other participants from all round the world was fantastic. On our morning off many of us climbed into a bus and visited Trakoscan Castle, the long history of which includes the famous Esterhazy family. This was also a great opportunity to see some of the beautiful Croatian countryside. The *Æstas Musica I.S.S.* however, was made particularly memorable to me by its

final concerts. Combining all the singers, dancers, instrumentalists and several of the tutors, both *Venus and Adonis* and *Actéon* were semi-staged with costumes kindly provided by the wardrobe department of the Varazdin Theatre. It was all filmed for Croatian television. The familiar and inevitable concerns that everything will be ready in time made the success of the end result even more triumphant!

The *Æstas Musica I.S.S.* has deservedly gained a wide reputation in its short life both in Croatia and abroad. Much credit is due to Maja's original inspiration and all the tutors,

participants and interested organisations and individuals who have helped to make it the success it has become. With further support, it can continue to fulfil its initial and ongoing aims as a valuable venture in South-Eastern Europe and abroad.

*This year the summer school will again be held in Varazdin between 19 and 28th August. For further information and application form (deadline 15 June) contact *Æstas Musica*, PO Box 271, New Malden, KT3 4YD. Tel/fax +44 (0)20 8473 4933 e mail: aestas_musica@hotmail.com*

THE SOUND OF THE CORNETTO

Stephen Cassidy

'An international Symposium on the playing technique, performance practice, historic importance, manufacture and repertoire of the cornetto' was presented by Vincent Meyer in collaboration with the Bate Collection, Oxford University and the Historic Brass Society on 26-28 April.

Not since Andrew Parrott's 1991 performance of the large-scale Gabrieli works has such a constellation of cornetto stars been seen at these latitudes. For a remarkable three days an extended family was brought together comprising pioneers, role models, young talent, academics, keen amateurs and makers. This was made possible by the vision and generosity of Vincent Meyer, and steered on its course by the friendly hand and witty charm of Jeremy West. The guiding principles of the Historic Brass Society through its chairman Jeff Nussbaum, were in evidence too. The HBS seems to have honed the ability to put together winning combinations of ingredients for successful events. It contained the ideal mix of masterclasses, papers, and concerts. I had a secret concern before this year's event that a symposium on the cornetto alone might prove a surfeit of riches, even for one such as me. I need have had no fear. The highly inclusive mix of playing sessions (from beginners to advanced), lecture recitals on playing issues, papers and masterclasses gave variety for everyone. The issues raised rippled beyond the cornetto into many areas of musical interest. Each evening highly entertaining concerts were given by everyone's cornetto heroes: Jean-Pierre Canihac, Bruce Dickey, Jean Tubery, Jeremy West and Roland Wilson, supported by new talent, sackbut players and the continuo players Rob Howarth and Gary Cooper.

It was therefore a very fitting occasion for the presentation of the HBS Christopher Monk award to Bruce Dickey. The award is given annually to a prominent figure recognised for a major sustained contribution to the field of early brass. Christopher Monk can be fairly credited with the reappearance of the cornetto in the firmament. He seeded the world with thousands of excellent inexpensive instruments. Some inevitably may have fallen on stony ground, but in the nature of seeding this is a necessary part of

discovering the fertile areas. Amongst the areas of fertility were many, including Bruce Dickey who took the cornetto to extraordinary heights. It is easy to underestimate that not only has performance on the instrument reached these heights in a single generation, but that that generation had no role models, no teachers, nor even any external sound picture to aim for. One of the rewarding features of the event was the pulling together of those generations: from Don Smithers, friend of Christopher Monk and the first to record the instrument, through Bruce Dickey and the current established professionals, to the wealth of young talent emerging from the colleges. The tutors had the generosity to express the hope that they would in turn be surpassed. I hope there develops a market to sustain the new talent. One of the best ways to help create that market is by bringing together amateurs and professionals in such imaginative events which develop the field.

Amongst the specific items vying for a mention, a few illustrate the variety. David Staff gave some perspectives on doubling baroque trumpet and cornetto. Prof Murray Campbell gave us an inimitable tour of the physical acoustics of the instrument. Don Smithers traced the cornetto and trumpet origins back through the Old Testament to reload the instruments with a symbolism which we have allowed to evaporate, but which determined their musical context. Bruce Dickey talked us through the demands of his favourite teacher, Luigi Zenobi del Cornetto of c. 1600. The leading modern cornetto players have worked diligently through the treatises and recreated a sound consistent with the highest ideals expressed in them. The prime ideal is the imitation of the human voice. Several years ago I attended a voice symposium at this same venue, mounted by Andrew Parrott in a laudable attempt to explore and perhaps recreate those vocal ideals. In a strange inversion, singing styles now move within a very conservative orbit, whilst the best instrumental players can imitate better early singing styles – which they need to recreate in their heads. What a pity that members of that voice symposium were not there to hear Luzzaschi's *musica secreta* piece for three sopranos played on cornetti by Jean-Pierre Canihac, Jean Tubery and Bruce Dickey!

LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

In 1998, the youthful and ambitious Classical Opera Company put on two of Mozart's earliest dramatic works, the dramatic cantata *Grabmusik* and *Apollo et Hyacinthus*, both written when he was 11. Continuing the theme, they have now moved forward a year to the 12-year-old Mozart's precocious comic opera *La finta semplice* (Royal Opera House Linbury Studio Theatre, 3 April). The very early works of great composers are difficult to review – they inevitably do not show the mastery that the composer later became capable of, so are open to undue criticism – but are usually staggering achievements for a youth, so are open to undue praise. The biggest problem in *La finta semplice* was the helter-skelter outpouring of action during the recitatives (also the case in Handel's *Silla*, reviewed below), despite some well crafted English sub-titles – an error of Mozart (or his librettist), not the direction. There are some very attractive arias, notably the first aria of Rosina, the 'false innocent' of the title, 'Colla bocca e non col core' (although Sarah Fox's voice and timing was not as secure as it could have been); Cassandro's rumbustuous 'I'm not drunk' aria 'Ubriaco non son io', sung with gusto by D'Arcy Bleiker; Polidoro's 'Sposa cara, sposa bella' (Christopher Saunders) and Giacinta's 'Che scompiglio, che flagello', sung superbly from the far corner of the orchestra by an excellent last-minute stand in, Stephanie Marshall. It was unfortunate that no time was allowed for applause for her arias – and it was an unforgivable breach of etiquette that the out-of-voice singer who acted the part of Giacinta, but did not sing the arias, did not acknowledge her stand-in when she came on stage for the final applause. The finales to the three Acts showed the young Mozart's promise in being able to string together longer musical arguments, although he never quite managed to bring the characters together musically. From the introductory talk (1 April), it was clear that a lot of work had gone into this production although, on the day, Ian Page's conducting of singers and players never really extended beyond the competent and the stage direction over-accented the frenetic pace of the exuberant young Mozart. In their three years of existence, The Classical Opera Company have built up an enviable list of backers and patrons, and produce interesting programmes and excellent publicity – the time has now come to focus on musical excellence.

The London Handel Society are far from newcomers to the London opera scene. Their 23rd annual Handel Festival featured two operas, *Ottone* and *Silla*. *Ottone* was given a fully-staged performance in the Britten Theatre at the Royal College of Music (an object lesson for the designers of the Linbury Studio Theatre at the Royal Opera House). Set in 10th-century Rome, the plot charts the interrelationships between three pairs of characters, centered around King

Otto II of Germany, and was first performed in London's Royal Academy of Music in 1719. It is not the most gripping of Handel's operas, although there are some attractive set piece arias. Two youthful casts were used over the five performances. On 4 April, Adam Green was the star as the heroic pirate Emireno, with Juliane Young's boyish voice well suited to the trouser role of Alberto. Although there was some stunning lighting, the direction was aimless and the stage set was visually awkward. Despite its concert setting, *Silla* (Royal College of Music Concert Hall, 11 April) was a much more powerful affair, with a stronger cast making the best of a dreadful libretto and verbose recitatives. With only three arias, James Bowman had to make the most of the recits to portray the complex character of Silla, a rather unpleasant dictator of Rome around 80 BC. Bowman (far too nice a chap for such roles) was at his mellifluous best in the gorgeous slumber song 'Dolce numba'. But he ignored the implied mood of some of the recits, easing into gentle cadences as he hastened to slay the arrogant hydra with his sword and on two other occasions when his stage directions were to storm off in a rage. His fellow alto was Simon Baker, on fine form in the more demanding role of Claudius with its trumpet aria. Three of the four sopranos impressed, Joanne Lunne being the exception, pulling the pulse around to fit her ornaments and not quite reaching the highest notes during her duet 'Sol per te'. As well as keeping in time, Natasha Marsh had far better control of vibrato and was particularly effective in the mezzo area of her voice – her prison aria was magical. Elizabeth Cragg produced a number of spell-binding moments, including the heart-wrenching 'Sei già morto' and an exquisitely touching recit 'Be silent, you are dear to me, too much I love you', which must have melted the heart of Simon Baker, into whose eyes she gazed. The orchestral playing was crisp and to the point, with clear direction by the leader, Adrian Butterfield. [The orchestral material from these performance will be available from King's Music.]

Studiously ignoring Bach, The Sixteen are undertaking their own pilgrimage around some of England's most impressive buildings with a programme of pre-Reformation music. I overheard part of a rehearsal in Winchester Cathedral and heard them in concert in Oxford's rather smaller Christ Church Cathedral the following day (8 April). Standing on the southern side of the crossing, facing towards the expansive south transept, this was one venue where the acoustic was on their side. Of the 28 listed singers (plus extras for a *Spem in Alium* in Canterbury) covering the whole series, the 18 appearing in Oxford were amongst the finest. The Sixteen are going from strength to strength, whether in their show piece summer Handel performances of this more esoteric and purer repertoire.

Harry Christophers has an innate sense of the architecture of music, overlaying large-scale structural elements with the all important small scale details – particularly noticeable in a piece like Byrd's *Ad Dominum cum tribularer* or Tallis's *O nata lux* with its delightfully slithery cadences. For a group that includes a number of fine young solo singers, the tonal cohesion between their voices is awesome and tuning is rarely short of perfect, although there was one rather ragged entrance and a wandering alto cadence. John Browne's impassioned and moving *Salve Regina* was the highlight. The Sixteen's pilgrimage continues, and is well worth joining.

The usual Easter week cycle of Passions took on a new twist this year with a fully staged opera production of Bach's St. John Passion at the English National Opera, directed by Deborah Warner with Stephen Layton as conductor. Going several steps further than Jonathan Miller's semi-staged St. Matthew Passion, this was theatrical opera at its most powerful – Stephen Layton was quoted in the press as saying that 'It is a better plot than any opera. I mean, they don't crucify many people in opera.' St. John's is the most personal of all the Gospel interpretations, and Mark Padmore's Evangelist was an intensely intimate portrayal of the story teller who becomes an integral part of his story – indeed, the conclusion of the final chorus focused entirely on Padmore, standing alone, centre stage, amidst a sea of post-Diana flowers and holding a pathetically bleating lamb. The giggles of the audience were surely as much a release of emotional tension as a humorous response. Paul Whelan was an unnerving Jesus – the striking Sunday School imagery, complete with flowing locks, contrasted with an unmistakably gaunt and alienated edge. The visual image of the chorus was predominantly English middle class (all were in modern dress) which rather helped build my own image of David Kempster's Pilate as a pompous senior immigration official confronting a scruffy and rather angry Eastern European illegal immigrant in Tunbridge Wells – the only utterance that was not Bach's was Pilate's exasperated and bemused 'Ah', his hand clasped to his head, as Jesus announced that his Kingdom was not of this world. Musically the honours must go to Mark Padmore for his outstanding portrayal of the tortured Evangelist. Natalie Christie (soprano) expressed fresh-faced evangelical innocence in her opening aria and delved the emotional depths for her final aria, as she comforted the distraught Evangelist, and Barry Banks and Michael George had fine roles; but Catherine Wyn-Rogers was far too operatic for my tastes, as was most of the ENO chorus. The orchestra was also a typical ENO fudge, with some decent early instrumentalists for the key parts (helpfully raised at the sides of the pit to stage level) but some less-than-converted players in the remaining parts. Stephen Layton, no stranger to Easter Passions and an inspired choice for this production, made valiant, and generally successful, efforts to keep the whole show together and pushed the pace at a sensible rate, despite all efforts by the chorus and many of the band to frustrate him. I am not ashamed to admit that I found this production an overwhelmingly powerful experience.

Westminster Abbey should have been far more to my tastes as a venue for St. John's Passion, but I came away from the performance there (18 April) strangely unmoved – the entirely secular Coliseum seemed a far more spiritual place. The Choir of Westminster Abbey were joined by Florilegium and directed by their new Organist, James O'Donnell, together with a very curious choice of soloists for a performance that had promising 'early music' credentials. James Gilchrist was an engaging Evangelist, his voice and stage presence portraying his involvement with the story, and Carolyn Sampson, one of my favourite younger singers, was on top form, beautifully reflecting the mixed emotions of 'Zerfleibe, mein Herze' as she repeated the final words 'dein Jesus ist tot' first mournfully, then angrily. But the remaining soloists, to varying degrees, wobbled and fumbled their way around their notes in a wholly unconvincing way. It was unnerving to have Christus (who growled into his score) also appearing as the bass soloist, particularly in the aria 'Mein teurer Heiland' which is directed to Christ just after he dies [though that seems to have been what Bach expected CB]. The lengthy pause that came between the recitative announcement of Christ's death and the bass aria was interrupted by a very loud cough by somebody who clearly had not been keeping up with the plot. The ageing voice and overly operatic style of the counter-tenor was also misplaced. O'Donnell's direction was well considered, and boy trebles produced a delightfully instrumental tone.

Another feature of Easter week in London is the Hazard Chase series of concerts at The Temple Church and St John's, Smith Square, culminating in one of the Passions. The lunchtime concerts at the Temple, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, included The Private Music, Jogleresa, Red Byrd with Trio Mediæval and The Hilliard Ensemble. The Private Music have consolidated their position since winning last year's International Early Music Network Competition in York and gave a very professional and musical concert. They are fronted by soprano Hedvig Eriksson, who coped magnificently with the alarmingly low start of Christoph Bernhard's cantata *Aus der Tiefe*. Biber's 10th Mystery Sonata gave violinist Mira Glodeanu a chance to show her mettle, but I wasn't sure about changing from organ to harpsichord continuo part way through – nor using the harpsichord in Purcell's *The earth trembled*. The high point of the week was the first London appearance of the Norwegian group Trio Mediæval, with three sopranos, (Anna Maria Friman, Linn Andrea Fuglseth and Torunn Østrem Ossum). Formed and moulded through the Hilliard Summer Festivals, they are a most impressive new group. Their clear and unforced voices, with superb control of intonation and blend of tone, combine with an obvious musical intelligence, as evidenced by their ability to shape a musical line and give structure to a piece. They performed the *Messe de Tournai* and the *Alleluia Dulce lignum* by Leonin and joined John Potter and Richard Wistreich (Red Byrd) for some contemporary pieces. Others have tried to reinterpret the medieval repertoire for soprano voices, but none as successfully as this young group. And, although it is probably rather politically incorrect to mention

it, it is nice to find a group that are far more attractive in the flesh, so to speak, than they appear in their rather stark publicity photographs. The concert by Joglaresa was a very strange affair. They bill themselves as 'the only ensemble performing medieval music to have drawn performers exclusively from the improvisational spheres of jazz and world music rather than classical music'. What this meant in practice was music ranging from 12th century Iraq to 14th century Italian *laude* all performed in a uniformly neo-Arabic style which, although not unattractive in small doses, did outstay its welcome over a one hour concert, never mind any questions of authenticity of music written two centuries and a few thousand miles apart.

The Gabrieli Consort and Players made their regular Easter Sunday trip to the Barbican for a performance of Bach's Easter Oratorio, *Magnificat* in D and the *Sinfonia* from *Cantata 42*. Their otherwise strong line-up of soloists (Julia Gooding, Robin Blaze, Paul Agnew and Neal Davis) was let down by soprano Kimberly McCord, who lacked clarity and seemed out of kilter in what was essentially a team performance, generally ignoring both conductor and fellow soloists and directing her attention straight to the audience, even in choruses. Paul Agnew's voice is exquisitely expressive, but he is prone to dropping the volume at the beginning and end of phrases to a point where audibility can be impaired. Robin Blaze demonstrated his outstanding clarity and vocal agility in 'Depositum potentes' and in Mary Magdalena's aria 'Saget, saget mir geschwinde', with its hushed cadenza-like close. The players of The Gabrieli Consort were on top form with Katy Bircher's hesitatingly rhetorical flute solo in 'Seele, deine Spezereien' and Katharine Spreckelsen's obligato oboe in 'Saget, saget mir geschwinde' being particularly noteworthy. Paul McCreesh's conducting was fluid and involved, directing the *Magnificat* without a score and working with his musicians. His speeds are less frenetic than they used to be, allowing space for his

own musical interpretations, bringing out, for example, the dance suite character of the arias in the Easter Oratorio – a work that ought to be better known.

For a city that has such a strong reputation for early music performance, it is curious that London has so few organ concerts devoted to the early repertoire, notwithstanding the general lack of appropriate organs. The visit to Mayfair's Grosvenor Chapel of the Italian organist (and founder/director of the Venice Baroque Orchestra), Andrea Marcon was therefore particularly welcome (25 April). The concert was part of the Royal College of Organists' series 'from Bach to the outer limits', with the rather questionable inference that countries like Italy were 'peripheral' to the central organ cultures of Germany and France. The programme included examples of the Italian Toccata from the grandeur of Frescobaldi's Toccata V (1627) via Rossi's operatic Toccata IV and delightfully quirky Toccata VII to Froberger's dreamy Toccata III (1649) and Kerll's sombre *durezze e ligatura* Toccata IV. Marcon's improvised flourishes at the opening of the Toccatas and Salvatore's *Canzona francese seconda* were outstanding, as was his ability to express subtleties of organ tone through sensitivity of keyboard touch. The Grosvenor Chapel organ is particularly helpful in this respect, although its unequal temperament proved a bit harsh for Bach C-minor Passacaglia and not pure enough for the Italian repertoire, written for meantone instruments, although most of the scrunchy bits were pleasantly noticeable (the organ's overall tuning was not at its best). Andrea Marcon is an extremely persuasive interpreter of early Italian music, exposing the expressive, emotional and rhetorical qualities that are so often missing in performance today indeed, the workshop the following day (which generally shows up teachers more than their pupils) demonstrated how little the Italian early keyboard repertoire is really understood in this country.

RAMEAU'S ADONIS AT BENSLOW

Selene Mills

The amateur production of a Baroque opera from scratch in under a week was the brainchild of Michael Procter and Opera Restor'd, who directed the first Benslow Music Trust's Opera Project eleven years ago. With some inevitable practical and personnel changes over the years, the format has basically remained the same: a bunch of strangers with suitcases filled variously with music-stands, white tights and throat pastilles meet in a country house, and a few days later give a fully-staged performance of – in this case – a work never previously performed in English in the UK. The key figures in all this were, from the beginning, the Director and Leader of The Parley of Instruments – Peter Holman and Judy Tarling; the repetiteur of Opera Restor'd, John Flinders, and dancer and choreographer

Lucy Graham, more recently joined by Stage Director Steven Adby and by Opera Manager Becca Friswell.

The first half of the programme offered an Arne symphony, Handel's anthem *Let thy hand be strengthened*, a delightful flute concerto by Festing, a Purcell vocal dialogue, and an extraordinary performance of the Menuet sequence from Bach's Brandenburg 1, with the Polonaise taken at what seemed like a furious lick, but was actually the correct proportional speed which Peter and Judy had been dying to try out for years. This little concert served to show off the orchestra and instrumental and vocal soloists, and (during the week) to give the participants something other than the Rameau opera to get their teeth into.

And it certainly was a mouthful! In awkward keys for both wind and strings, and with constant time changes and nowhere to gather breath (or tune up), by all accounts it was the hardest score ever attempted in the Benslow context. For the singers too there were many difficulties: very few hummable tunes, and quixotic timings which really tested the soloists as they tried to keep time with the conductor while maintaining their rôles. Musically it was not Rameau's best work, although there were many beautiful passages, particularly for Venus and Diana, and some splendid orchestral writing, including virtuosic parts for the two horn players. The plot scarcely deserved that name, being utterly predictable and straightforward.

But it was the staging, acting, singing and dancing which made the evening an utter delight. Paula Bishop's superb presence (as Cupid) set the scene for the action, and almost all of the cast threw themselves into their parts with great conviction, and with a pleasing unity to their gestures and movement as well as their singing. Charlotte McLean, as Venus, never seemed quite engaged, but Clare McCaldin was a marvellously stern but malleable Diana, who could inform the audience of her precise state of mind with a mere glance. Dance was a vital part of the performance. There was music for plenty of *tutti* dancing, in which the members of the chorus, and sometimes the soloists, joined very competently; but the best moments were when the seven specialist dancers took centre stage. Under Lucy Graham's direction they had choreographed some of the dances themselves, and these provided excellent sub-plots to add interest to the basic story of Venus and Diana squabbling over the mortal huntsman, Adonis. The dancers – particularly the men, who had the most active roles – were as good at acting as they were at dancing, and their contribution, together with that of the hard-working orchestra, was essential to the success of the evening.

Benslow Music Trust Baroque Opera Project, 24-30 April 2000

Early Music
REVIEW

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BLOWING OUR OWN TRUMPET
a few recent quotes

I really don't know how you do it – it is always welcome on the doormat. *Jonathan Jones, Cambridge Baroque Camerata*

Thank you and the team for another year's news, enlightenment and amusement. The work rate, particularly CB's is most impressive. *Jim Marshall*

Many thanks for an interesting magazine. You have managed to provide an interesting forum for differing views on early music performance etc. I am glad you have not become a dull glossy! The reviews of books, music and CD's are never dull and always informative. Keep up the great work and long may it continue. *Eleanor Thompson*

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Treble

Contratenor 1 & 2 Unisono

Tenor Primo

Tenor Secondo

Basso

Organo

6

Decani

come be - fore his pre - sence with a Song Be ye sure that the Lord he is God, he is

come be - fore his pre - sence with a Song Be ye sure that the Lord he is God, he is

come be - fore his pre - sence with a Song Be ye sure that the Lord he is God, he is

Tenors unison

come be - fore his pre - sence with a Song Be ye sure that the Lord he is God, he is

come be - fore his pre - sence with a Song Be ye sure that the Lord he is God, he is

6 6 5 5 6 6

12

God it is he that hath made us and not we our selves We are his Peo-ple and the Sheep of his Pa-

God it is he that hath made us and not we our selves We are his Peo-ple and the Sheep of his Pa-

God it is he that hath made us and not we our selves We are his Peo-ple and the Sheep of his Pa-

God it is he that hath made us and not we our selves We are his Peo-ple and the Sheep of his Pa-

8 7 6 7 5 6 4 3 6 6

18

18

-sture, and the Sheep, the Sheep of his Pa - sture O go your Way in - to his Gates
 -sture, and the Sheep, the Sheep of his Pa - sture O go your Way, your Way in - to his Gates
 -sture, and the Sheep, the Sheep of his Pa - sture O go your Way, your Way in - to his Gates
 -sture, and the Sheep, the Sheep of his Pa - sture O go your Way, your Way in - to his Gates

6 7 6 4 3 5 6

24

24

with thanks-giv - ing and in - to his Courts, in - to his Courts with praise Be thank - full
 with thanks-giv - ing and in - to his Courts with praise, his Courts with praise Be thank - full, *tr*
 with thanks-giv - ing and in - to his Courts, his Courts with praise Be thank - full,
 with thanks-giv - ing and in - to his Courts, in - to his Courts with praise Be thank - full,

6 5 4 3 7 6 6

29

29

-full un - to him And speak good of his Name, and speak good of his Name For
 thank-full un - to him And speak good, speak good of his Name, speak good of his Name For, *tr*
 thank-full un-to him And speak good, speak good of his Name, and speak good of his Name For
 thank-full un - to him And speak good, speak good of his Name, and speak good of his Name For

6 7 6 6 6 7 6 # - 5 3 4 # # 9 8

35

the Lord is gra-cious, the Lord is gra - cious his Mer - cy is e - ver - last-ing, is

the Lord is gra-cious, the Lord is gra - cious his Mer - cy is e - ver - last-ing, is

the Lord is gra-cious, the Lord is gra - cious his Mer - cy is e - ver - last-ing, is

the Lord is gra-cious, the Lord is gra - cious his Mer - cy is e - ver - last-ing, is

5 \natural 6 4 \sharp \natural 5 \natural 6 4 \natural

RECORD REVIEWS

CHANT

Adoratio crucis Boni Pueri, Schola Gregoriana Pragensis, David Eben 68' 49"
Supraphon SU 3448-2 231

The programme is in two sections: music from Holy Week (mostly Good Friday, when, like the Gesualdo reviewed below, I happened first to play it), and music for other feasts of the Cross. If the picture of the singers is to be believed, there are 11 men and 25 boys – though the 'Good Boys' choir as a whole is 250-strong. I like the sound; the contrast of octave is attractive, and the general impression of the singing is relaxed without being too laid-back. CB

MEDIEVAL

Les Trois Maries: Easter liturgical drama (14th century); Chants for the Feast of Easter Ensemble Gilles Binchois, Dominique Vellard Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45398 2 4 67' 00"

The Easter play comes from the *Livre de la Trésorerie d'Origny-Ste-Benoite*, a Benedictine nunnery near St-Quentin. It runs for about half an hour and includes sections in French, leading it further from the liturgy than some shorter Latin plays. There is a certain monotony in the repeated stanzas of the scene with the spice-seller which the beauty of the female voices emphasises. The whole play is sung impressively, with a hint of dramatic spacing and effective structural use of drones. It is preceded by the blessing of the Paschal candle, *Exultet*, and concludes with a series of Easter chants, sung in an earlier style (I assume that, by the 14th century, chant singing was, like quadratic notation, fairly four-square). Dominique Vellard takes the role of a male priest among six female singers, who make a marvellous sound and move flexibly and fluently. The fine booklet notes by Susan Rankin and Marie Noël Colette are in French and English, but the sung texts are only in Latin and French. CB

Llibre Vermell Sarband 63' 14"
Dorian DOR-93292

I've been criticised for reviewing CDs from listening to them while driving; in this case, I'm glad that my first hearing was on my way to rehearse the first of Suffolk's four Biber concerts (see p. 1 & Diary). Sarband's imaginative performances made the journey speed by. I had some doubts whether 14th-century music in Montserrat could have sounded like this, but I didn't really care. But when I played it again at my desk, an element of musical conscience urged caution. So perhaps take what you hear less as a historical reconstruction than a brilliant and moving recreation based freely on the surviving MS and enjoy it for its vigour and beauty. CB

Medieval Music in Denmark Musica Ficta, Bo Holten 65' 07"
dacapo 8.224133

I made the mistake of running on to this after hearing Sarband's Red Book; it then sounded rather worthy and dull. I tried it again on my journey home and it seemed much better, even if it lacks Sarband's panache. Reading John Bergsagel's booklet essay is necessary to understand how some of the music is relevant to the disc's title: first time through I was puzzled by the Notre-Dame items. These flow extremely well, but the tuning isn't spot on. Alteration of male and female voices gives variety and there is much attractive music here – you don't have to be a Danophile to enjoy it. CB

15th CENTURY

Josquin Desprez Missa Ave maris stella, Vergil-Motetten Dufay Ensemble, Eckehard Kiem dir 50' 25"
Ars Musici AM 1278-2
+ *Absalon fili mi, Dulces exuviae, Fama malum, Tu solus qui facis mirabilia*

This ensemble from Freiburg obviously loves its early music, and the seven singers have worked hard to record this CD – but it shows. Unfortunately the hazards of putting two voices on a single part are demonstrated here by the two counter-titans, who together produce a singularly nasty sound, particularly on high plainchant passages arching over polyphony in the lower parts. On his own the principal Superius is fine, as are all the other singers, and when numbers are kept to one per part everything is lovely; but there is something amateurish about the whole disk, and alto Markus Baisch should stick to orchestral conducting. The interpretation of the Mass is good, with strong rhythms and clear part-singing, but all the wrong syllables are emphasized; for me a vocal performance without understanding, or perhaps without caring about, the text is pointless. The disk motets include two with texts from Virgil's *Aeneid* – *Fama malum* and *Dulces exuviae* – apparently recorded here for the first time on CD. *Dulces exuviae*, the final words of Dido before her death, is particularly beautiful. Selene Mills

16th CENTURY

Guerrero Vespers for All Saints, Missa pro defunctis Chapelle du Roi, Alistair Dixon Signum SIGCD017 76' 54"

The Chapelle du Roi just go from strength to strength! As so often with groups engaged in extended projects recording the complete works of a particular composer (in this case Thomas Tallis), the work in hand informs all the other activities of the choir,

and this is certainly the case here. The feeling for the music's 'cool beauty' is acutely developed, and the technical assurance is considerable. The alternation of chant and polyphony, ranging from the simplest faburden to more complex writing, is extremely effective, and the reconstruction of the two sequences of music utterly convincing. Incidentally, the faburden setting of *Laudate pueri* by Rodrigo Ceballos is remarkably similar to the setting of the same material associated with the Inverness Sang Schule, a testimony to the international character of these modest syllabic settings. Comparison is invited with the recent account of the *Requiem* by The Orchestra of the Renaissance (Glossa GCD 921 402). The latter performance employs instruments and uses Guerrero's revised edition of 1582, which takes into account the deliberations of the Council of Trent, whereas in the present version the voices are unaccompanied and the source used is the pre-Tridentine 1566 publication. The performances are consequently very different, and as each is outstanding in its own way, I would recommend investing in both.

D. James Ross

Taverner *Missa Corona spinea, Gaude plurimum, In pace* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 58' 38" (rec 1989)
Hyperion Helios CDH55051 ££
Taverner *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas, Audivi vocem de celo* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 45' 01" (rec 1984)
Hyperion Helios CDH55052 ££
Taverner *Missa Mater Christi sanctissima* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers, Fretwork 65' 09" (rec 1992)
Hyperion Helios CDH55053 ££
+ *Hodie nobis coelorum rex, In nomine a4, Magnificat a4, Mater Christi, Quemadmodum a6*

Marvellous music in good recordings from the 1980s. Perhaps we might now favour a slightly lower pitch – the soprano line grows a little tiring, but it doesn't conceal the lower parts as much as in some high performances of this repertoire. Well worth reissuing, even if the *Gloria tibi Trinitas* disc is a bit short. The sing-through of its chant is not separately tracked nor texted in the booklet. CB

Victoria *Missa Gaudeamus, Missa Pro victoria* The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood 77' 43"
ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 198
+ motets *Doctor bonus, Cum beatus Ignatius, Descendit angelus Domini, Ecce sacerdos magnus, Este fortes, Hic vir despiciens mundum, O decus Apostolicum, Tu es Petrus, Veni sponsa*

This is a very fine recording indeed and a most welcome one. The two masses represent opposite ends of the composer's stylistic spectrum while the motets show both the young idealist and the more experienced craftsman at work. The masses are sung two to a part, the motets by solo

singers. There is quite a contrast in tempo too: the *Missa Gaudeamus* has a stately tactus which allows it room to breathe without dragging; the motets run along at a semi-breve per second which emphasises the madrigalian qualities stressed in Andrew Carwood's liner-notes. The shorter lower-voiced motets can sound a bit rushed occasionally but, on the whole, I like these brisk tempi which give the music tremendous drive and can leave one gasping at the brilliance of the three double-soprano pieces in particular. The *Missa pro victoria* (based on Janequin's *La guerre*) is sung without instruments and without the organ part which the composer supplied for Choir I. This is a controversial decision but one which can be justified by the performance which is confident in its choice of tempo, clear in its declamation of the words and beautifully in tune. Carwood has transposed the music on this very full CD variably to exploit the vocal combinations available to him (there is a certain logic to most of it, related to clef combinations but too complicated to go into here). The result is some of the most beautiful Victoria singing I have heard: it has energy, perfect tuning and a wonderful sense of line and proportion – clearly a labour of love on the part of the singers and conductor (who also sings in some of the motets). Please can we have some more! Noel O'Regan

Early Venetian Lute Music: Joan Ambrosio Dalza, Francesco Spinacino, Franciscus Bossinensis, Vincenzo Capirola Christopher Wilson with Shirley Rumsey lutes 60' 33 Naxos 8.553694 £

This evocative anthology of music from some of the earliest surviving lute sources gives a fascinating overview of state-of-the-art lute writing just after 1500. Much of the music comes from the gloriously printed collections issued by Petrucci between 1507 and 1511, and ranges from exploratory ricercars to raunchy foot-stamping dances. The highlights for me were the haunting duets of Francesco Spinacino, where a deliciously unpredictable division line wends its rhapsodic way over the supporting tenor. Christopher Wilson's playing is as agile and mellifluous as ever, and he and duettist Shirley Rumsey achieve an exemplary precision of ensemble. A beautifully recorded disc, which is a real bargain. Lynda Sayce

Factor orbis: sacred vocal music of the renaissance Singer Pur 65' 48" rec 1996 Ars Musici AM 1165-2 Music by Byrd, Gallus, Gesualdo, Hassler, Josquin, Lassus, Mol, Monte, Obrecht, Rore, Rupsch, Senfl, Utendal, Victoria

I approach small continental vocal ensembles with trepidation, but this group live up to their name in an admirable fashion. They produce a beautifully blended and tuned sound and sing the music with great empathy and understanding. As this is also by no means the standard tourist route through vocal classics of the Renaissance, the repertoire too is a revelation. Ludwig Senfl's setting of *Verbum caro* reveals an

altogether subtler side of the composer than I had hitherto experienced, while works by two composers new to me, Conrad Rupsch and Ranlequin de Mol, proved very acceptable. Overall the programme is a cunning mixture of the momentous and the unpretentious, and the concluding account of Gesualdo's *Miserere* sealed the impression of a highly versatile and talented ensemble. I shall be watching out for this group in the future. D. James Ross

In Paradisum: Music of Victoria and Palestrina The Hilliard Ensemble 75' 21" ECM New Series 457 851-2

The title quoted above from the front of the box doesn't mention that the music by the named composers is for the Requiem, set amidst modernised chant from a 1627 Gradual from Toul (near Nancy). Hilliard's baritone, Gordon Jones, writes in the booklet: 'This programme is an attempt to show the close relationship between the chant and vocal polyphony in a period of considerable flux', and it is indeed rare to hear performances in which polyphony and chant feel quite so convincingly as if they are two sides of the same coin: utterly unlike performances of, say, Monteverdi's *Vespers*, where they inevitably seem from different worlds, however mensuralised the chant. I suspect that this shows the beneficial feed-back from the Hilliard's improvisatory activities to their singing of fully-notated music. CB

Music at All Souls, Oxford: The Lancastrians to the Tudors The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood, David Skinner 71' 45" ASV *Gaudemus* CD GAU 196 Music by Davy, Dunstable, Henry V, Lambe, Merbecke, Parsons, Power, Sheppard, Sturgeon, Tallis, Tye, White

This intriguing programme sinks a musical-trench through 150 years of music at All Souls College, at the same time selecting items with a direct relevance to the College's function. The earliest stratum yields a Sarum requiem, movingly accompanied by passing bell, as well as some splendid 15th-century polyphony, including two pieces just about gauche enough to be the work of the musical amateur Henry V. I have not heard The Cardinall's Musick tackle such early repertoire before, but their singing is exemplary with particular laurels due to the nimble-voiced Steven Harrold. Equally authoritative accounts are given of the Eton Choirbook music which dominates the next layer, before we pass through the relative musical wasteland of the Reformation, and the tragic funeral sentences of John Merbecke – tragic not so much in their effect (this is a slight monophonic piece) but in their context; on Gau 148 the Cardinall's Musick showed us the magnificent music he wrote for the Latin rite, the small fragment of his output to survive destruction, perhaps at his own hands. The final layer provides recusant Catholic music including the sublime *Ave Maria* by Robert Parsons and Robert White's *Lamentations*, given performances of enormous insight and

technical assurance. This is a fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable disc, sung and recorded to the very highest standards. Superb.

D. James Ross

O Lusty May: Renaissance Songs of Spring The Toronto Consort, David Fallis dir Dorian DOR-93172 62' 38"

This well-thought-out programme will have wide appeal: songs and instrumental pieces about springtime from the mid-16th to mid-17th century, mostly English, some French. The singers all have good conventional techniques, the four and five part chansons/madrigals being very polished, tonally rich, but with minimal vibrato and lots of control. Instrumental pieces are sometimes brilliantly played, particularly Alison Melville's recorder (with sweet-toned, nicely tempered tuning), harpsichord (a rather later-style sound) and lute. The songs range from Ravenscroft and Durfey to Dowland and Corkine in English, from Chardevoine to Costeley in French. The soprano, Meredith Hall, has a rich voice, and almost no vibrato in the ensembles, though some in her solos. The mezzo, Laura Pudwell, full-toned and almost free of vibrato, sings very expressively. There are two tenors. David Fallis has a ball in Ravenscroft's second version of Trenchmore (*Willy prethee go to bed*) though I liked *Ma belle si ton âme less*. Paul Jenkins sings Dowland's *Come away, come sweet love* exquisitely. Period pronunciation in French, English and Scots is variable but appropriate. There is some arrangement (folksy versions of Playford tunes and a ballad), adaptation (the bass viol divisions of *Woodcock* are very effective on recorder), with contemporary versions of popular songs alongside the more formal music. A very enjoyable and well-performed programme.

Robert Oliver

Psalmes et Chansons de la Réforme Ensemble Clément Janequin, Dominique Visse dir Harmonia Mundi HMC 901672 79' 21" Music by Appenzeller, Bourgeois, Du Courroy, Certon, de l'Estocart, Goudimel, Janequin, Le Jeune, Lassus, Sermisy, Vallet

The beautiful cover photo alone – an illuminated sixteenth-century Protestant prayer book – would tempt me to buy this, but the content is equally beguiling. I was quite arrested by the first piece: a solemn homophonic psalm chanted inexorably by three basses. On its repeat, two other voices are added, and a lute, which softens the edges but does not detract from the seriousness of intent behind the performance. This fascinating repertoire sprang from the Reformation not only into the churches, but into domestic daily Bible-reading, and thence into the streets and workshops, where it replaced 'immoral' secular chansons. Half of the music recorded here is Huguenot psalm settings by such as Goudimel, Lejeune, Janequin and L'Estocart; most are very simple, some elaborated into more complex pieces, but all are for general use rather than concert or church performance. The Lord's Prayer chorale, known to Bach

lovers from the St John Passion and Clavierübung III, is given in a beautifully-played version for lute. All this Protestant religion struck me as going against the usual grain of the Ensemble Clément Janequin, but keeping their other guise in the back of my mind added a frisson to their 'straight' singing. But those who buy the CD for the Ensemble's extravagant vocal presentation will not be disappointed. A group of songs by Lassus takes us to the common people and their reaction to the new religion: trying hard to be good by not moaning about one's husband, or shunning the vices of gambling. The words are quasi-religious - 'pechez', 'sauve-toi' - but the music shows how attached the singers really are to their old evil ways. The sacred chansons which make up about half of the recording are described as 'French spiritual madrigals', and they are much less straight-laced than the psalms, owing more to secular chanson style than to Lutheran hymns. There are some wonderful pieces here, including Lejeune's unbelievably Marenzian *Helas! mon Dieu*. Highly recommended. *Selene Mills*

Songs from Renaissance Gardens; or, A Day à la Boccaccio. Musica Fresca Prague 66' 32"

Divox Antiqua CDX 79804

Music by Arcadelt, Berti, Besard, Bruck, Byrd, Donato, S. Festa, Foggia, G. Gabrieli, Gastoldi, Gervaise, Hume, Janequin, Jones, Josquin, Mainero, Marenzio, Morley, Nola, Ponce, Vallet, Vautour, Wilson & anon

Boccaccio is misleading, since the repertoire is centred about two centuries later. We begin with genuine birds, but they stop as Janequin begins and other sound effects set the scene rather than interfere with the music in the way, so are not so irritating as those on the king'singers' [sic] Spanish disc last month. The performance of *Le chant des oiseaux* sets the tone: skilful and pleasing singing at a tempo that is rather slower than is now the fashion but is nevertheless convincing. The theme works well, with a scenario set out in the booklet. Texts are not printed, but readable from the disc itself with an 'equipped player': I'm not sure if it is the player or me that is unequipped, though the principle is fine. Despite a sweet Suffolk owl that sounded as if it had been blown off course to foreign climes, I found this a very enjoyable collection, with the singers perfectly catching Marenzio's sultry evocation of a hot summer day *Scaldava il sol* (though why a distant saw at the end?), though the jolly pieces are not quite so successful. Perhaps it's as well that Robert Oliver is now back in New Zealand and not reviewing this: Hume's *Tobacco* used to be his party piece, and it needs the rich gamba chords. Vallet's *Slaep soete slaep* is a minimally-elaborated entabulation of Robert Jones's *Farewell, dear love.*) *CB*

17th CENTURY

Blow An ode on the death of Mr Henry Purcell Gérard Lesne, Steve Dugardin AA, La Canzona 64' 14"

Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45342 2 5

Blow Ground in d, Fugue in g, Sonata in A, Suite in G Purcell *Here let my life, In vain the am'rous flute, Music for a while, Sweetness of nature*

European musicians performing English music is a rarer phenomenon than the reverse. This disc justifies itself with magical performances, casting a new light on familiar repertoire. Songs and duets by Purcell and Blow, plus the latter's sole trio sonata, some keyboard music and, as the major work, his wonderful *tombeau*. Gérard Lesne is a falsettist who uses his 'full' voice for the bottom notes, with a seamless join between registers. He sings with great artistry and a flexibility which puts him, in my opinion, with the best countertenors: Bowman, Scholl, and particularly Deller, whom he clearly admires. His English isn't always perfect, and English listeners must be prepared to overlook an occasional Peter Sellers sound-alike, but he is the sort of singer who always convinces, whatever he does, and he is well matched by Steve Dugardin. And the recorders plus organ (switching to harpsichord), viol and theorbo are marvellous: voluptuous sounds from the voice flute (by Fred Morgan) substituting for the violin. A very French sensuality and languor, which enchant here, and builds to an intensity there, is frequently moving and never less than enjoyable. *Robert Oliver*

Buxtehude Orgelwerke Rainer Oster (Arp Schnitger organ, St. Jacobi, Hamburg) 66' 06" Arte Nova 74321 63633 2 BuxWV 140, 146, 153, 155, 157, 160, 161, 168, 174, 188, 203

Although it lost its front pipes to the war effort during the First World War and its case during the second round, the Jacobikirche organ is a remarkable survival, escaping the worse of 19th-century zeal and surviving a number of restorations in the 20th century to emerge resplendent in 1993 as one of the most important organs of today. Although frequently used for Bach recordings, it is in the music of Buxtehude and his ilk that this instrument really comes into its own. As with Oster's earlier Bach CD, this is well worth a listen, although the recording quality is not up to the standard of other discs of this organ, making it sound rather more brittle than it actually is in the accommodating acoustic. Oster's playing is approachable and musical, with a good sense of building up the excitement in pieces such as the Toccata in F# minor (transposed to G minor for this unequal temperament) and the Toccata in D minor. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Charpentier Messe en la mémoire d'un Prince Caroline Pelon, Pascal Bertin, Hans-Jörg Mammel, Jean-Claude Sarragosse SATB, Chœur de Chambre de Namur, Ensemble La Fenice, Jean Tubéry 62' 36" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45394 2 8

Charpentier Messe pour les trépassés (H2), *Miserere des Jésuites* (H193-193a), *Motet pour les trépassés* (H311); L. Couperin *Les Carillons de Paris*; Roberday Fugue 8

Having previously enjoyed these forces in a similarly structured disc of Lassus, I was,

I admit, well-disposed towards this before I started to listen and was pleased to discover that my optimism was well justified. The programme was conceived by the late Jean Lionnet and he would have been more than satisfied with its execution. The disc opens with a tolling bell, following which we are led into the Mass by organ music by Louis Couperin. A suitably tortured *fugue et caprice* by Roberday rounds off this sequence of ordinary, motet and elevation and prepares us for an unrelated *Miserere*. The performances are delivered with loving care and create a suitably devotional atmosphere, though naturally the intense music is a factor here. The relaxed sound of the choral singing is not always matched by the soloists, the soprano sometimes seeming strained and the falsettist is given some passages that would have been more effective from a tenor - but he later sings one of the most moving phrases in the recital. You win some... The booklet is a model of its kind.

David Hansell

Pierre Antonio Fiocco Le retour du printemps, cantata, aria e sonata Caroline Pelon, Julie Hassler, Raphaëlle Kennedy, Françoise Masset, Gilles Guénard, Philippe Noncle, Vincent Bouchot SSSSATB, La simphonie du Marais, Hugo Reyne 64' 13" Cyprès CYP 3616

Le Retour du printemps, Cantata Tutto accesso d'amore, Sonatas in C & g, Aria Dimmi Amor *Fiocco Missa concertata quinti toni; Sacri concerti* Roberta Invernizzi, Lia Serafini, Sylvie Althaparro, Stefano di Fraia, Giuseppe Naviglio SSATB, Chœur de Chambre de Namur, Cappella della Pietà de' Turchini Antonio Florio 49' 01" Cyprès CYP 3615

I must confess that Fiocco was barely a name to me, but these two discs reveal a composer of skill and imagination, while the booklet notes by Manuel Couvreur provide thorough biographical information. (One mistranslation: the first *published* opera of 1637 should read *public*.) The secular disc contains a one-act *Divertissement* of 1699, probably written for some semi-private occasion with an audience that would have appreciated the references to Lully. This French music is supplemented by an Italian aria, a cantata which adopts a more serious tone than the *Divertissement* and is impressively sung by Françoise Masset, and two recorder sonatas eloquently played by Hugo Reyne.

Fiocco's *Sacri concerti* (Antwerp 1691) comprises one mass and 15 motets; the sacred disc contains the Mass that begins the print and the concluding four Marian antiphons: it is rather short value, so could have had a fuller sample. The mass seems to have had some contemporary success; J. G. Walther scored the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* and Brossard adapted it. I wonder whether it is really meant for chorus and orchestra rather than single performers, but here the choral sections work better because the soloists don't blend so well. New Grove comments: 'the surviving works... are not those of an imaginative musician'; the secular disc at least does not bear this out. *CB*

Gesualdo *Tenebræ Responses for Good Friday* Taverner Consort & Choir, Andrew Parrott 67' 16"
Sony SK 62977

By a fortunate coincidence, this arrived on Good Friday morning, so the day on which I first played it was thoroughly authentic. Although this isn't a full liturgical reconstruction, Gesualdo's music is placed among the relevant chant and benefits enormously from it; as Eric Van Tassel writes in the booklet, 'without the steady progression of chants, Gesualdo's music would create an unbearable sense of surfeit'. It is sung, as one expects, one-to-a-part: the sound of the full compass of the solo male voices emphasises the power of Gesualdo's music by contrast with the more restricted range of the chant choir. The rhythmic drive that one expects to find in a Taverner performance is absent; Gesualdo's music is treated as a series of independent incidents, which is indeed how it looks on the page. The performance goes for clarity rather than mystery, and the music sounds far more logical than usual – which I think is a compliment. CB

Gibbons Anthems and Verse Anthems Robin Blaze, Stephen Varcoe AB, Choir of Winchester Cathedral, Stephen Farr, Sarah Baldock orgs, David Hill 72' 31

Hyperion CDA67116

Behold thou hast made my days, Blessed are all they, Glorious and powerful God, Great King of Gods, Hosanna to the Son of David, If ye be risen again, O clap your hands, O God the King of Glory, O Lord in thy wrath, Sing unto the Lord, Thou God of wisdom, This is the record of John, 2nd Service (Mag & Nunc), Fantasia in a (Parthenia)

Quite a lot – in fact, too much – of the music here is already in the current catalogue in other performances. But the motivation behind this kind of release is to enlarge not the composer's discography but the choir's. I haven't heard the Oxford Camerata's CD of Gibbons (Naxos), but its choice of repertoire is equally interesting, and I'd probably prefer the (fewer) mixed voices of the Camerata over Winchester's boys and men. Jacobean trebles were older than these boys; and, since there were fewer of them in proportion to the men, they probably sang louder with a more forward, 'edgy' voice production. In the solo verses the trebles are downright shaky. We wouldn't readily accept such diffident, uncertain singing on a commercial CD if the sopranos were adult women; to make allowances for their frailty merely because they are children is a spurious 'authenticity' – as if one preferred an ill-tuned, badly regulated 'original' Ruckers to a good modern harpsichord. What I like about this recording is its insight into the sober, almost po-faced stylistic language of Gibbons's verse anthems, less affectively vivid than Tomkins or Weelkes. The influence of the consort song produces an archaizing effect; Hill shows effectively that Gibbons builds large-scale forms as coherent and shapely as in the full anthems. Stephen Varcoe is particularly fine in 'Glorious and powerful God' (is this

Gibbons's masterpiece?); it begins a good deal faster than I'm used to, but if the semiquaver flourish on 'powerful' is a bit of a scramble, it pays off later in the electrifying *tirade* on 'arise'. Eric Van Tassel

Kerll *Missa Non sine quare* La Risonanza, Fabio Bonizzoni 53' 57"
Symphonia SY 99171

This is a thoroughly excellent recording of much previously unknown music. As well as the Ordinary of the *Missa Non sine quare*, there are three motets (one with two violins), two trio sonatas (one for the Gradual, the other *Post Communion*) and a *Regina cæli*, where the second tenor part is taken an octave higher on cornett and the soprano and alto parts doubled by violins. The performances are so good that it seems petty to quibble about such things, but as the organist director uses his part of the booklet notes to explain his choices, I feel quite happy questioning his logic. The main introduction says a full printed set of 19 partbooks survives in Bologna. Using a set of manuscript parts, which might be incomplete, is therefore rather strange. From my experience of Austrian church music, a cornetto part which doubles the soprano would have been part of a wind band (cornett, two trombones and bassoon). It seems bizarre to double just one vocal part – particularly in a one-per-part performance, and even more so to double upper voices with strings in the *Salve Regina* and leave the lower two to fend for themselves, with the cornett in a world of its own. Still, as I have said, the performances are very good indeed. The violin playing (the 'icing on the cake' in the Mass) is first rate, and the sonatas give them a chance to show off, which they happily do! I hope La Risonanza have more such projects in the pipeline – they are a wonderful ensemble! BC

Joseph Chabanceau de la Barre *Airs à deux Parties* (1669) Stephan van Dyck T, Stephen Stubbs lute 53' 15"

Ricercar 233352

This must be some of the hardest repertoire to perform convincingly. In the original print these fragile and intimate miniatures are encrusted with florid embellishment, which can so easily swamp words, music and the singer's technique and obscure the song like an elaborately spiky seedpod hiding the seed. But if ever there was an object lesson in how to do it, this is it. Stephan van Dyck captures every nuance of the words, using early pronunciation which brings clarity and colour to the text. His ornamentation is stunning, and seems to grow organically from the original simple line, which remains audible and coherent no matter how dense the thicket. This is beguilingly beautiful singing. Stephen Stubbs is a sensitive and versatile accompanist, though occasionally I yearned for that last degree of subtlety in the phrasing and articulation which only a nail-less technique can provide. However his inventive introductions and *ritornelles* are perfectly judged. Highly recommended. Lynda Sayce

Marais *Le Labyrinthe & autres histoires: Pièces de caractère* Paolo Pandolfo gamba, Mitzi Meyerson hpscd, Thomas Boysen theorbo, gtr, Juan Carlos de Mulder gtr, Alba Fresno gamba, François Fauché reader, Pedro Estevan perc 67' 02"
Glossa GCD 920404

This is a splendid introduction to the fantasy world of Marais' *pièces de violes*, played with flair and imagination by a complete master of his instrument (a rich-toned Bertrand). Paolo Pandolfo has selected a widely varied programme from four of Marais' five published books, arranging the whole CD to act as a giant suite, beginning with a delicately arpeggiated *Prélude* and ending with a celebratory foot-stomping *Chaconne*. Much of the music is programmatic, or based on visual imagery: Pandolfo and his large team of accompanists consistently summon up vivid pictures, whether in the tensely angry discords of *La Georgienne*, the tender warmth of the *Tombeau pour Marais le Cadet* or the frenzied whirlwind of *Le Tourbillon*. With its wide dynamic range and subtle variations of continuo colouring, this disc emphasizes the theatrical qualities of Marais' music. So Pandolfo's journey through the monumental *Labyrinthe* takes him from frightened whispers and wild panic to the joyful light of day. Purists might object to the addition of drum rolls in the *Marche Persane*, which makes it sound almost like Berlioz at his most macabre, but there is no doubt that Pandolfo's finely judged use of rhetorical gestures, rubato and silence always serve to heighten the music's impact. Some of the most enchanting music-making is in the less extrovert pieces, such as a gently lilting *Polonaise* or a forlorn and pensive *Plaint*. Mitzi Meyerson's harpsichord playing is a model of continuo accompaniment: by turns powerful and discreet, inventive and restrained. The lavishly illustrated booklet and spacious recorded sound quality add to the attraction of this thoroughly welcome release.

John Bryan

Pachelbel *Organ Works, Vol. 1* Wolfgang Rübsam (Holzhey Organ, 1785/7 at Weissenau) 72' 52"
Naxos 8.554380 £

Pachelbel *The Complete Organ Works, Vol. 6* Antoine Bouchard 71' 35"
Dorian DOR-93189

Pachelbel *The Complete Organ Works, Vol. 8* Joseph Payne (Christoph Donat & Heinrich Gottfried Trost Organ, 1683/1731, Eisenberg Castle Church) 59' 48"
Centaur CRC 2419

Pachelbel is a popular chap at the moment, with at least 3 complete organ recordings in progress. His works are deservedly popular, with their relaxed and undemanding style and comparative ease of execution for the amateur player. But, however easy the notes might be, they require a sound technique and matters of touch and articulation are important – like a number of composers, it is easy to make the music sound boring. In this matter, Rübsam's

albeit distinctively mannered style stands head and shoulders above Bouchard and Payne, even if it may upset the purists. If the rubato and off-the-wall articulation in Rübsam's opening pedal solo in track 1 doesn't infuriate you, you should cope with the rest of the CD. Payne and Rübsam both use appropriately historic instruments but Bouchard's choice of a French-style modern instrument is a curious one, and I would challenge his assertion that it is based on building traditions from Saxony. The dry acoustic, combined with rather methodical playing and unstylistic ornaments make this the least satisfying of these CDs. If Rübsam's quirks drive you to distraction, try Payne. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Schütz *Die 7 Worte Jesu Christi am Kreuz* Akademia, Françoise Lasserre 70' 30"
Pierre Vérany PV700013
SWV 37, 42, 282, 285, 324, 380, 382, 383, 396, 447, 467, 470, 478

This selection of Schütz's motets and Gospel settings traces a musical narrative from Lenten penitence to Easter joy. The still centre of this narrative is his *Die Sieben Worte Jesu Christi am Kreuz*, performed with appropriate restraint (although I would query the use of more than one voice per part in the framing choruses). The other pieces on the CD have been frequently recorded, but here receive imaginative, worthwhile interpretations. Lasserre is one of the few performers bold enough to follow Schütz's suggestion that the *Geistliche Chormusik* motets be sung by *ripieno* with occasional reinforcing *cappelle*; she thus finds polychoral elements in such motets as *Ich bin eine rufende Stimme* that 1970s recordings treated as *prima pratica* polyphony and most 1990s recordings treat as spiritual madrigals. By contrast, two of the polychoral *Psalmen Davids* are realised with wonderful intimacy, like small-scale vocal concertos. Sadly, Lasserre does not separate her forces spatially as Schütz recommended, and the recorded sound is bland. And while Akademia's restrained singing suits the veiled writing of *Die Sieben Worte*, it cannot unleash the full rhetorical force of Schütz's more usual styles. Nonetheless, Lasserre's stylistic sensitivity and imagination make this a convincing alternative to the many recent Schütz recordings by Weser-Renaissance. *Stephen Rose*

Weser-Renaissance's Kleine geistliche Konzerte will be reviewed next month. Welcome to a new reviewer, one of John Butt's PhD students who is working on music in Leipzig 1610-50 and is also an organist.

Amour et Mascarade: Purcell & l'Italie Patricia Petibon S, Jean-François Novelli T, Ensemble Amarillis (Héloïse Gaillard rec, ob, Violaine Cochard kbd, Ophélie Gaillard vlc, Richard Myron db) 62' 27"
Ambroisie AMB 9902

Frescobaldi Canzon 1, 3, 5, 6; Mancini Quanto dolce e quell' ardore; Purcell Bid the virtues, O dive custos, Sound the trumpet, The plaint; anon masque dances

This is a new label and a new group to me. The players are the same as on the disc reviewed below, though this has a super-

fluous double-bass. The group's problem is to some extant that of the Palladian Ensemble (whose Matteis disc we review next month): they want to play 17th-century music, but need music with a prominent recorder, though the instrument seems to have gone into decline during that period. It is difficult to see any logic in the programme, and the notes in the over-designed booklet don't help (they probably read better in French – a comment on their style, not the translation). The masque dances are from early in the century: I suppose a recorder may well have played these cut-down versions. They are far away from Frescobaldi's 1628 Canzons. The most powerful music comes from Purcell. To English ears, *The Plaint* seems over-stated, but *O dive custos* is impressive. The foreign approach to *Sound the trumpet* is intriguing, though the pronunciation is odd. A cantata by Mancini (with Héloïse Gaillard taking up her oboe) is probably the most enjoyable item on the disc, though the Leo cantata on the disc reviewed below is musically superior. So an interesting recording, but this disc needed more careful focusing. *CB*

Furioso ma non troppo: Italie 1602-1717 Maryseult Wieczorek S, Ensemble Amaryllis Ambroise AMB 9901 73' 11"
Music by Caccini, Corelli, D'India, Falconieri, Frescobaldi, Jacchini, Lotti, Pandolfi Mealli, Salaverde

There is something a little arrogant about a recorder player indulging in the sort of creative distortion that his accompanying harpsichord cannot imitate. At first, I was interested in hearing what a recorder could make of violin music and was convinced. But eventually I became unhappy with the gap between the high treble and the bass. (The strange notes mention the Corelli as transcription but not the Mealli.) I also found the continuo changes in d'India's *Dido's Lament* fussy, though the singing is impressively passionate. Overall, though, this is a well-planned disc, with performances that powerfully express some fine music. I particularly enjoyed Lotti's cantata *Ti sento, o Dio*. *CB*

LATE BAROQUE

Bach Cantatas Matthias Goerne B, Salzburger Bachchor, Camerata Academica Stuttgart, Roger Norrington 60' 20"
Decca 466 570-2
Cantatas 56, 82, 158 + sinfonias from 35.

The extremely agreeable singing style of the Weimar-born bass-baritone Matthias Goerne has led to his adoption by Decca as a leading new advocate for a wide range of song in the German language, and his combination with Norrington in Bach is particularly impressive. All of this music will be comparatively familiar to Bach devotees, and without hesitation I am happy to report that each movement here seems better than even a strong assembly of competitors. The disc has been very tastefully played and recorded, and the information from the sleeve notes that the

word *Kreuztab* refers not only to the cross borne by Christ but to a nautical navigating quadrant known by this term in the times of both Luther and Bach certainly added a new insight for me. *Stephen Daw*

Bach Johannes Passion Hellen Kwon, Ursula Ettinger, Lothar Odinius, Wolfgang Newerla, Peter Lika SmSTBarB, Chor & Orchester Bach-Ensemble der EuropaChorAkademie, Joshard Daus 112' 07" 2 CDs in box
Arte Nova 74321 67521 2 £

Regular readers may recall the special welcome I gave to the same performers' *Mass in B Minor* last year, with its hypnotic treatment of the central portion of the *Credo*, added very late by Bach so as to include both a distinct 'Et incarnatus est' (probably after the examples of Zelenka) and a new 4-bar instrumental introduction to the *Crucifixus*, all involving the insertion of a new single folio in what was already the first form of the full score. This *John Passion* has a similar special highlighting, here of the third quarter of the setting between 'Durch dein Gesaengnis' and the short recitative reporting Christ's fulfilment in death. The summarising and commenting chorales are taken somewhat slowly than is normal by groups aiming for 'authenticity', but at least they are well sung and played. Those who like me (and probably *EMR*'s specialised readership) prefer low pitch and the new insights accorded by the considered use of original instruments may be disappointed. But though a little distant in focus, this is quite clearly serious, sincere and stylish recording, wonderful value (unless the absence of an English translation of the text worries you), with many delightful touches and no serious flaws. *Stephen Daw*

Bach Christmas Oratorio Catherine Bott, Michael Chance, Paul Agnew, Andrew King, Michael George SATB, New London Consort, Philip Pickett 146' 42"
Decca 458 838-2 2 CDs in box

Philip Pickett and the New London Consort bring nothing spectacularly new to Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, but their's is certainly one of the most worthwhile recordings in terms of the sheer quality of the forces. With such a line-up of soloists, the disc would seem to be a winner even before one listens to it – and certainly none of these disappoint. Catherine Bott, in particular, emerges as an extraordinary Bach singer who has an intuitive sense of both instrumental textures and the verbal rhetoric. Pickett chooses a chorus of 'two or three singers per part' (the chorus singers are, unfortunately, otherwise unmentioned and unnamed) with the soloists acting as section leaders. He adopts this position within the ongoing debate about Bach's choral forces as 'the only satisfactory thing to do today to meet listeners' expectations' – a rather odd assertion (particularly for those who might expect a larger chorus, or, indeed, performance just by soloists). But, in all, the chorus – whoever they are – certainly fulfil one's best expectations of

quality. The odd thing is the instrumental scoring, where Pickett adopts a single violin per part as opposed to Bach's customary two (or three) per part. In this respect, Pickett (like the Purcell Quartet's recent recording of two of Bach's shorter masses) goes for string forces smaller than those proposed by Rifkin. There is, of course, some logic in using single strings, given that the wind habitually play solo; but the string parts of the larger choruses do occasionally sound thin and careful, even when led by so skilled a performer as Pavlo Beznosiuk (whose solo playing in the arias is generally excellent). In other words, there are certain sounds that a single violin simply cannot produce in the larger pieces. If the larger numbers sometimes lack a certain energy - e.g. the sensuousness of the opening chorus of Part IV or the infectious enthusiasm opening Part V - some pieces seem to me right on the mark: the opening chorus of Part VI has excellent rhythmic drive and the soprano aria from the same cantata (in a comparatively unusual Polonaise style) must be one of the best recorded accounts of this rather difficult number.

John Butt

Bach Magnificat Susan Gritton, Lisa Milne, Michael Chance, Ian Bostridge, Michael George SSATB, Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Academy of Ancient Music, Nicholas Cleobury cond & organ solo 152' 35" EMI 7243 5 56994 2 8 ££

Also contains *Weinen Klagen BWV 12, Wachet auf BWV 140, Der Geist hilft BWV 226, Lobet den Herrn BWV 230, Missa brevis in A BWV 234, Sanctus in C BWV 237, chorales BWV 22/5, 147/10, 373, 386 493, Prelude & Fugue in G BWV 541, Organ chorales BWV 650, 729*

Once again what makes a recording marketable is a famous choir in a hallowed venue, even though using this choir in this venue distorts Bach's concerted music by opening a chasm between ensemble and solo writing where Bach must surely have intended continuity. Semiquaver passagework, for instance, is nimble and relaxed in the arias and well-drilled but strained (and occasionally panicky) in the choruses. When the choir declaims 'Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen', the word-painting, though only lightly touched in, sounds overdone. But in its own vein this CD offers much to enjoy. Most of the varied programme is well chosen (though I could forgo the plain chorale harmonizations and the Air from Suite No. 3). More important, there's great musicality here; and although the motets are on the lacklustre side, all the concerted works are vividly stylish in many details, like the overdotting on the homophonic 'Gloria' in the last movement of the Magnificat. The soloists are less than perfectly matched: for example, Ian Bostridge's highly dramatized approach needs more answering drama than Michael Chance seems willing to provide. The two sopranos sound a trifle matronly, contrasting oddly with the boys' ultra-Anglican sonority. Musicologists and history-minded critics who object that this kind of anachronistic performance is historically 'wrong' are dismissed as killjoys and spoilsports. Rather, the reverse:

a non-anachronistic approach, with four or eight singers in all - as we can now hear on numerous CDs from the Taverners, Rifkin's Bach Ensemble, Cantus Cölln or the Purcell Quartet - is right: not just (or mainly) musicologically correct, but musically coherent and satisfying. But if you prefer long-familiar 'choral' sonorities and contrasts - in a forgivingly resonant acoustical space - this set is for you.

Eric Van Tassel

Bach Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord; Preludes and Fugues from The Well-Tempered Clavier Alison Crum gamba, Laurence Cummings hpscd 55' 12" Signum SIGCD024 BWV 1027-9; 'The 48' I: D, G, g (850, 860, 861)

A warm welcome for a new recording of these works. Both harpsichord and viol are chosen for their appropriateness, and the sound is beautiful, but I have reservations about the balance. The viol sounds distant and, though never obscured, too much in the background. The instrument itself has the dynamic range to dominate more, and where the harpsichord is naturally loud, with the flurries of notes in the faster movements, I would prefer that it did. The booklet notes by John Butt say that the third sonata in particular, 'buries the traditionally introverted natures of both instruments' and indeed these are comparatively introverted performances. The excellent ensemble and care with articulation are uppermost in the players' minds, yet the music itself is at times so outgoing and ebullient - particularly the allegro of the D Major sonata and the final allegro of the G minor. The gamba sonatas are interspersed with Preludes and Fugues in the same keys from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, beautifully played on the richly toned copy of an instrument such as the one owned by Bach himself. Robert Oliver

Blavet Sonates pour flûte et basse continue, œuvre 2 Claire Guimond fl, John Toll hpscd, Jonathan Manson gamba 77' 04" ATMA Classique ACD 2 2204

Michel Blavet was widely celebrated during his lifetime not only as the finest flautist in France, but also as one of the first composers to give the flute an individual 'voice' of its own, through his substantial solo sonatas. These pieces successfully combine the purest expressive qualities of traditional French airs and dances, with exciting and fashionable *allegros* and *prestos* imported from Italy. Backed by a forthright and dramatic continuo team, Canadian flautist Claire Guimond gives riveting performances on this recording, capturing the changing moods and demands of the music with a fine flexible sound, sparkling articulation and a wealth of intelligent ideas. This is baroque flute playing at its most beguiling and exciting. Top quality all round.

Marie Ritter

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Caldara *Suonate da Camera a duo violini con il b.c. op. 2 L'Aura Soave 79' 19"*
Tactus TC 670301

A couple of months ago, I was lamenting the obscurity into which most of Caldara's church music has fallen; this month, it's the turn of his chamber music. This set of eleven trio sonatas and a *Chiaccona* (like Corelli's Op. 2 set, of course) is very good indeed. There is no set pattern to the preludes and dances which make up each piece: two have no prelude, but all 11 have an *Alemanda*. L'Aura Soave is a new group to me (the second violinist, the cellist and the theorist overlap with the Visconti recording reviewed below) and they rate as one of the better Italian ensembles. The balance is very good, and there's no special pleading – the music simply speaks for itself. As such, this is a welcome addition to the catalogue, and I hope Tactus will follow it with further Caldara recordings. BC

Chilcot *Songs and Concertos* Buddug Verona James, Charles Daniels, James Ottaway *mSTB*
Andrew Wilson-Dixon *org/hpsc*, members of the Welsh Baroque Orchestra, Clare Salaman *leader* 70' 26"
Meridian CDE 84428
12 English Songs, Organ concertos in a (1756/2) & D (1765/3)

Chilcot's *Twelve English Songs* [1744] is an impressive collection, calling on Anacreon, Euripides (probably *Herakles* lines 763-5), Marlowe and, chiefly, Shakespeare for its texts. The subscription list, though not as long as that for Boyce's trios (see p. 7) shows considerable contemporary respect for the composer and the music is well worth reviving. So I couldn't resist keeping this recording. Sadly, I didn't warm to Buddug Verona James, who sings more than half the songs; her sound is uningratiating, and is not helped by being too separated from the instruments. It might not be her fault that tempos tend towards the sluggish, and the instruments give little rhythmic impetus. The whole effect is to make the songs seem duller than they are. I was puzzled by a note on the back of the box that the music was 'edited and realised... from original sources in the British Library': you can get a photocopy of the songs by sending me £10.00. But Andrew Wilson-Dickson has had to write the instrumental accompaniment for the concertos, and they sound convincing: it would have been a better CD had there been more of them and fewer songs. CB

Dornel *Réflexions* Wilbert Hazelzet *fl*, Brian Beryman *fl*, Jaap ter Linden *gamba*, Jacques Ogg *hpsc* 74' 45"
Glossa GCD 920806
Suites 3 in d, 5 in d *Plaïnte* (1709), 1 in G *La Forcroy*, in b (1711), *La Marsillac* (1723); Sonata in Bb (1713)

This is another beautifully presented disc from Wilbert Hazelzet on Glossa to follow up the previous collections of Hotteterre and *Music by Bach's Students*, previously reviewed. On this disc, a selection of Dornel's most successful music for one or two flutes and continuo offers a broader

view of the composer's work than was previously available. Dornel remains a shadowy figure in French baroque music, living in the centre of Paris away from direct Royal patronage. However, market influences and the tastes of the aristocracy evidently led the composer to experiment, like Blavet, with Italian forms, resulting in a number of chamber music publications which contain traditional suites and symphonies alongside solo sonatas.

There are some exquisite moments on this recording: led by Hazelzet, the players immerse themselves completely in the expressive qualities of the music and perform with a passionate commitment evident even in the simplest of dance movements. For some listeners, though, this may all prove too much – one longs for a sense of light and space and easy flow to relieve the tension. But technically and musically this is a fine recording and should go some way towards raising awareness of Dornel's flute music.

Marie Ritter

Facco *Pensieri Adriarmonici: 6 Concerti op. 1*
L'Arte dell'Arco, Federico Guglielmi 63' 17"
DHM 05472 77514 2

The six concertos of Giacomo Facco's *Pensieri Adriarmonici* have three movements in the standard fast-slow-fast sequence. Inside the booklet, we find that L'Arte dell' Arco follow their normal procedure of allowing each of the three violinists the chance to share the solo work. I've had problems with this approach before, as the technical demands of the music are not always met – there is some very dodgy tuning! My accustomed complaint regarding the bassline also applies: the booklet lists cello, bassoon, violone, theorbo, harpsichord and organ. Even if they don't actually ever all play at once, this is surely overbalance – pity the poor solitary viola player! It's no more apparent than in the Vivaldi concerto tagged on to the end of the recital – a piece played far more stylishly and stylistically by Collegium Musicum 90. But Deutsche Harmonia Mundi are surely to be congratulated for undertaking the recording. BC

Handel *Opera Arias and Overtures – 2, from the latter part of Handel's operatic career*. Emma Kirkby, The Brandenburg Consort, Roy Goodman 70' 40"
Hyperion CDA67128

Arias from *Alcina*, *Arianna*, *Berenice*, *Deidamia*, *Ezio*, *Lotario*, *Partenope*, *Sosarme*; Overtures to *Atalanta*, *Deidamia*, *Lotario*

When typing the heading for this review when the disc first arrived, I expected to write that it was such a pity that Emma Kirkby had not been asked to sing any of the great Handel operatic roles on disc. But then I played the disc, and am worried: this is the first performance or recording by her that I have heard in, I would guess, 28 years which does not absolutely convince me. We have got used to singers who can't quite get round the semiquavers or sing in tune; but we expect perfection from Emma, and we don't quite get it here. Her voice is, as always, so clear

that a slight missing of the mark stands out so much more than with the normal Handelian soprano. There is, of course, much to enjoy (try, for instance, 'Caro padre' from *Ezio*); I hope that others are less aware of the problems than I am. CB

Handel *Opera Arias & Cantatas* María Bayo *S*, Capriccio Stravagante, Skip Sempé 63' 47"
Astrée Naïve E 8647
No se emendará jamás (HWV 140), *Tra le fiamme* (HWV 170); arias from *Alcina*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Rinaldo*

Maria Bayo is a Spanish soprano with a lightish yet full-bodied voice well suited to baroque repertory. She can command the brilliance needed for Cleopatra's 'Da tempeste' from *Giulio Cesare* and Morgana's 'Tornami a vagheggiar' from *Alcina*, but her careful phrasing and attention to words pay highest dividends in the more emotionally intense arias, notably 'Se pietà' and 'Mi restano le lagrime' from the same operas. It is also in the slower numbers that Sempé provides the most sensitive accompaniments (despite his re-scoring of 'Lascia ch'io pianga' for solo gamba and continuo), a tendency to percussiveness appearing at faster speeds. The two cantatas do not quite gel with the rest of the programme, but the lively and transparent account of *Tra le fiamme* is nevertheless an attractive and welcome alternative to other recordings. One would expect Bayo to be ideal in Handel's only Spanish cantata (with guitar obbligato), especially with the cleaned-up text now available in the HHA. (The usual invalid spelling 'emenderá' is simply Handel's mistake, corrected when he entered the words in the early copy now in Münster.) Unfortunately I found her reading superficial and disappointing in comparison with earlier versions on CD from María-Cristina Kiehr and Lina Maria Åkelund. In the final aria she adopts (under Sempé's influence?) an oddly brisk tempo for the main section but slows down heavily for the mid-section, though there seems no cause for such an approach in either music or words. The booklet text and translations for this cantata have curious footnotes, not consistent between the different languages, implying the existence of an 'original' version of the text by Baron Astorga, from which variant readings are cited. The absence of a bibliographical reference makes me suspect that wires have got crossed somewhere (the text is not among those of the bilingual Italian/Spanish cantatas published by Astorga in 1726). However, one reading prompts the thought that the HHA may have been wrong to change Handel's 'bella' to 'bello' in the last line of the first aria, the sense perhaps being 'todo es, bella, entendimiento'.

Anthony Hicks

Telemann *Trio Sonatas* Bart Schneemann *ob*, Pieter Wispelwey *vlc*, Menno van Delft *hpsc*, Siebe Henstra *org*, Frans Robert Berkhout *bsn* 63' 04"
Channel Classics CCS 14098
Partita 2 in G (TWV 41:G2), Sonatas in g (41:g6) & a (41:a3), Suite in g (41:g4), Trio Sonatas in d & E

This is an extraordinary CD. The booklet notes start with six pages of biography of the (excellent) performers. Then, there's a two-page GCSE Music essay on how the improvement in communication in 18th-century Europe led to wider dissemination of music. (I'd have to deduct some marks, though, for failing even to mention that Telemann turned this to his advantage by carefully preparing and distributing his own editions). Then the oboist (Australian by birth) gives us a potted history of the oboe, again over two pages, squeezing Telemann into the last few lines (comparing one piece to the equivalent of a Beatles' song...) So there's no relevant documentation to speak of; some of the pieces seem incomplete, and at least one of the Trio Sonatas doesn't sound as if there's a second soloist (the other has harpsichord as a solo instrument). Criticisms such as these, however, fade into utter insignificance alongside playing of this standard: rarely has the baroque oboe sounded so effortless! And with the superstar continuo team, there could be no going wrong. Absolutely wonderful Telemann playing. BC

Visconti Sonate à Violino, è Violone, à Cembalo, op. 1 Andrea Rognoni vln, Marco Frezzato vlc, Marco Ruggieri spinet, Diego Cantalupi theorbo 57' 53"
Villa Marcello, Cremona, MVC/999-001

Visconti's op. 1 Sonatas were dedicated to William Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, in 1703. There are six solo sonatas (the first has only three movements, the remainder four) and a seventh piece with *Ripieni*, when a second violin plays (it's a more continuous piece, without dance movements). Andrea Rognoni plays a violin attributed to Hieronimous Amati, which is well captured on the CD. Rather than take the titlepage's *o* literally, the performers opt to have cello and harpsichord as well as theorbo – but there are no balance problems. The music reminded me of Vivaldi rather than Corelli, and is very pleasant indeed. The two violin sonatas are a strange affair: it's basically a concerto with a second part added in *tuttis* rather than doubling for *ritornelli*. There are some extended cadenzas, with interesting modulations! All a bit experimental, in fact. BC

Vivaldi Flute Concertos Vol. 2 Béla Drahos fl, Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia 59' 14"
Naxos 8.553101 £
Op. 10 + RV441 in c

As well as the set of six concertos for flute with strings, Op. 10, Béla Drahos and the Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia play the C minor recorder concerto RV 411. The soloist plays extremely cleanly, with very little in the way of vibrato, and some exceptional semiquaver runs. The strings accompany lightly, the bass is nicely bouncy. The continuo cello can push notes with vibrato just every now and then. The harpsichordist is fairly restrained in *tuttis*,

and one might almost say reticent in the solos. Being modern instruments, this will never be our first choice for a recording, but these are fine performances. BC
Vivaldi 12 Sonatas for Violin and Continuo, op. 2 Cordaria (Walter Reiter vln, Shalev Ad-El hpscd, Katherine Sharman vlc, Lynda Sayce theorbo 106' 34" (2-CDs)
Signum SIGCD014

Two CDs of Vivaldi violin sonatas might seem a little daunting. It's a mark of the standard of this set that Cordaria held my attention throughout more than 100 minutes. The violin playing is excellent – this may not be the most virtuosic music the composer ever wrote (he presumably hoped that lesser mortals would buy the print), but these are truly virtuoso performances. The fast movements bounce along, the slow ones have a certain poise about them, and the dances dance – it sounds a strange thing to say, but it's so rarely the case! The continuo consists of harpsichord, theorbo (Lynda Sayce uses two different instruments) or baroque guitar, and cello. One sonata is without cello, and the plucked continuo only plays in Sonatas 8, 9 and 12. This recording is to be followed by Biber's Mystery Sonatas and I for one cannot wait to hear that set! Buy this and find out why. BC

Zelenka Prague 1723 Il Fondamento, Paul Dombrecht 66' 20"
Passacaille 9524
Concerto a8 in G, Hippocrate a7 in A, Ouverture a7 in F, Symphonie a8 in a

This was enthusiastically reviewed by BC in EMR 50 (May 1999) as Vanguard Classics 99724.

J. S. Bach, Vivaldi, Handel Mischa Mischaikoff vln. NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini (rec. 22-11-1947) 58' 42"
Naxos 8.110835 £
Bach Suite 3; Bach/Respighi Passacaglia & Fugue in c; Handel op. 6/12; Vivaldi vln Concerto in Bb, RV370

This is a broadcast concert issued along with the announcer's brief introductions. Nothing is said in the notes about the occasion: surely people buying recordings like this want information on that rather than notes on the music itself: perhaps, too, some comments on how styles have changed. The sound seems (to my non-technical ears) to be remarkably crackle-free but not deadened. It is unfortunate that the disc begins with a French Overture, the inevitably slow tempo making the performance feel anachronistic before it gets under way. The quick movements have plenty of spirit but are a bit breathless. The close recording of the violinist in the Vivaldi produces a nasty sound which is nothing to do with the quality of transfer. Two recordings of the Respighi in consecutive months is two more than it deserves; the main interest in this one is trying to relate the conductor's vocal obbligato to the orchestra. When I asked for a copy of the disc, I was hoping to find positive virtues to outweigh the archaic style, but sadly the balance is negative. But buy it as a period piece. CB

£ = bargain price ££ = mid-price
Other discs are full price, as far as we know

CLASSICAL

Dittersdorf Requiem in c, Offertorium for St John Nepomuk, Lauretine Litany Hanna Farinelli, Birgit Calm, Heiner Hopfner, Nikolaus Hillebrand SATB, Regensburger Domspatzen, Consortium musicum München, Georg Ratzinger 62' 42" (rec 1986)
Ars Musici AM 1158-2

It is good that Dittersdorf's sacred music is getting some recognition. While not of the highest standard, it is nevertheless worthy of recording. The Requiem is perhaps the best work here, where there is a sense of unity and direction in the writing, with the *Dies irae* as the longest and central movement of the work. The *Offertorium* consists of a minuscule recitative followed by an extended aria for bass in G major and a chorus with full orchestra in C major. The *Litaniae* are a mish-mash of a couple of choruses and arias for various solo voices in a variety of related keys, with a concluding *Agnus Dei* aria, rather than a chorus. The performance is not on period instruments, with some rather shapeless orchestral phrasing that was typical of performances twenty years ago (this was recorded in 1986), and the choral singing is likewise not of the highest quality, though the recording is redeemed by an excellent team of soloists. A disc worth buying, perhaps, by those with a keen interest in off-beat classical church music, particularly for the Requiem, but its dated style lets it down.

Ian Graham-Jones

Hasse Sei Sonate a flauto traversiere solo è basso op. 5 (1744) Stefano Bet fl, Francesco Cera hpscd 54' 19"
Nalecco Records NR 003

It has to be said that the best thing about this disc is its beautiful presentation box – full marks to the design team. Venturing inside the case, however, one is faced with numerous printing, spelling and translation errors – all of which could be forgiven, perhaps, if the performance quality was a notch more inspired. As it is, the playing is a trifle lack-lustre throughout, with little variety in tone, articulation or musical shape to captivate the listener. The sonatas themselves are attractive, representing the eclectic, elegant post-baroque style typical of the Prussian court of Frederick the Great, for whom they were probably composed. Not unpleasant – just unremarkable. Marie Ritter

Haydn Symphonies vol. 21: 66, 67 & 68
Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia, Béla Drahos
Naxos 8.554406 £ 76' 05"

Two of the three symphonies here are more or less in the standard Haydn form: four movements – fast, slow, minuet and trio, finale (the minuet and trio are second in No.68). The third, No. 67 is the comedian at his absolute best. The opening Allegro, in 6/8, has all the feel of a finale, there's a *col legno* passage at the end of the adagio, the trio is for two solo violins (one muted and exclusively on the E string, the other muted and playing on the F string!) and the

finale breaks off to be replaced by a string trio. Béla Drahos chooses excellent tempi for all the movements (his adagios are particularly un-slow!) and draws fine performances from his orchestra. BC

Krumpoltz *Classical harp music* Jan Walters ASV *Gaudemus* CD GAU 209 56' 08"
Sonata 1 (c.1780), Variations on Air by Mozart, op. 10, Symphony op. 11, Sonata op. 17

If you think that spending an hour listening to classical music on the harp might be soporific, do not despair! I'd never (knowingly) heard any Krumpoltz before, but I thoroughly enjoyed this disc, which has three substantial pieces and a set of variations. Jan Walters tries to give an oversight into the composer's work from shortly before his marriage (to the woman who was to become the best harpist in the world, and was to precipitate her husband's death by running off with a lover) to late in life, where he starts investigating what we might even think of as romantic notions - the Sonata, Op. 17, for example, has five movements in the manner of fantasies. I'm not at all qualified to comment on the technical aspects of harping (period or not!), but it did strike me occasionally that some notes were very slightly out of tune. That didn't at all spoil my enjoyment of the disc, though. In fact, I listened to it several times (and not just because I was reviewing it.) BC

Mozart *Solemn Vespers* Greta De Reyghere, Marijke van Arnhem, Renaat Deckers, Jan van der Crabben *SmSTB*, Collegium Instrumentale Brugense, Capella Brugense, Patrick Peire 60' 38"
Naxos 8.554158

Dixit & Magnificat K193, *Vesperae solennes de Dominica* K321, *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* K339

What gives this CD a head-start over all but one of the numerous rival pairings of the two sets of Vespers is that it also contains the isolated *Dixit* and *Magnificat* K186g of July 1774. The Collegium Instrumentale Brugense uses modern instruments but prides itself (on this evidence, justifiably) on its 'historically informed' performing style; Patrick Peire's direct, no-nonsense approach to the faster movements does not exclude affectionate phrasing in the slower ones, most tellingly in the glorious *Laudate Dominum* in K339. Dynamic shadings are nicely observed, and tempos are well chosen. All four soloists are good, especially Greta De Reyghere, who has most to do. The choir is alert and bright-toned. The recording (made as long ago as August 1996) is perfectly acceptable. Peter Branscombe

Mozart *Piano Concertos No. 5, 14 & 18* (K 175, 449, 451) Robert Levin, The Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood Decca 458 285-2 70' 50" (rec 1997)

Yet another Levin-Hogwood recording, with ample rewards for those who, like me, appreciate Levin bravely wearing his compositional contributions on his sleeve. In this CD, Levin again propounds the notion that artistic aspirations can be

realized well beyond the printed page. He is most persuasive in his cadenzas, getting convincingly under the skin of Mozart, and drawing on a rich vocabulary of idiomatic figurations and stock phrases. Less apparently significant is his accompaniment, or the realization of the bass line. But then, it is hard to imagine how he could have added to the tutti, for the meaty AAM play with such verve, and produce such a wide palette of tonal colours, thanks no doubt to their leader Andrew Manze. The insert notes contain two essays, the first detailing some rather convoluted source history about the concerti at hand, the other an exposition by Levin of his performance philosophy. My only moan is the background moans in the slow movements, emitted presumably by the keyboardist. Kah-Ming Ng

Oley *Orgelwerke* Jan Van Mol (organ of the Steinfeld Basilica, 1727) 72' 19"
Pavane ADW 7314

Whatever the pressures on the students of Bach, it seems that they survived the experience as jovial and good natured characters, if their generally charming and approachable surviving music is anything to go by. Johann Christoph Oley was one of Bach's last pupils. Two volumes of his chorale preludes were published during his lifetime (in 1773/76), with two further volumes appearing after his death in 1789. The only known copy of these 77 pieces is in the library of the Brussels Conservatoire. Although they include scant evidence of registration practice, they do have detailed indications of articulation, which give more than a hint of the approaching Classical and early Romantic style. It is difficult to judge how far performers should take the mannerist style of composers like Krebs and Oley without descending into parody, but Jan Van Mol adopts a sensible approach, relishing the harmonics oddities but rarely overdoing the affects. Apart from an uncomfortable edit towards the end of track 9, this is an enjoyable CD. Andrew Benson-Wilson

The World of the 18th-Century Symphony
Various performers 76' 27"
Naxos 8.554761 £

C. P. E. Bach: in Bb Wq 182/2; J. C. Bach in D, op. 3/1; Hofmann in F (F2); movements by Beck, Cannabich, Dittersdorf, Gossec, Kraus, J. Stamitz, Vanhal

Naxos have done the early symphony proud, and this represents selections from nine discs, three played by the Northern Chamber Orchestra, two by the Nikolaus Esterházy Sinfonia, one each by Capella Istropolitana, Camerata Budapest, the Falloni Orchestra and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra. All play modern instruments, which I think is a pity, since I suspect that the sort of listener who likes lesser-known music is also likely to prefer period sound. But the performances are stylish, and have the benefit of new editions from Artaria Editions. When I was a student, these composers were just names in Landon's *The Symphonies of Joseph Haydn*: an anthology like this would have been a revelation.

Mozart and Haydn may have written better symphonies; but this (and even more so the source discs) gives a context and is also enjoyable in its own right. CB

19th CENTURY

Mendelssohn *Symphonies no. 3, op. 56; no. 4, op. 90* London Classical Players, Roger Norrington 64' 33" (rec 1989)
Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61735 2 1 ££

As always with Norrington, he may appear to be primarily concerned with period style and instruments, but his performances work so well because his curiosity about how the music might have been played when written is part of the total approach by an outstanding musician and conductor. I sometimes worry that the presence of a conductor cannot but distort early music, even if it improves the quality of the performance. But Mendelssohn was himself a famous conductor, and by the fourth decade of the 19th century, orchestras as good as this one is expected inspirational direction such as that which is found here. This CD and the Norrington Schumann (see below) are both extremely welcome reissues. CB

Mendelssohn *String Quintets op. 18 & 87*
L'Archibudelli 59' 55"
Sony Classical SK 60766

This recording admirably captures the charm of the earlier of these quintets - in the finale the very fine ensemble playing and spirited tempo enhance the freshness and vivacity of the young composer's work. The later quintet has a tongue-in-cheek Andante that is a masterpiece; the interpretation on this disc preserves its lyricism and sensitivity and adds a wonderful lilt to the phrasing. It is followed by a lovely Adagio where the fine sonority of these instruments reveals an almost orchestral texture. The notes do not admit that Mendelssohn did not rate the finale of this work highly, but this performance masks its lack of substance by adding panache to the liveliness. Highly recommended. Margaret Cranmer

Schumann *Symphonies no. 3, op. 97 Rhenish, no. 4 op. 120 (rev. 1851)* London Classical Players, Roger Norrington 56' 59" rec 1989
Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61734 2 2 ££

I have a soft spot for Schumann's music for orchestra since the Piano Concerto was one of the first orchestral scores that I got to know, thanks to the Penguin miniature scores; like Dover scores today, being published by a book publisher they were far more widely stocked than other miniature scores and were available in the school bookshop. I learnt the symphonies by playing them as piano duets, so never had to worry about the allegedly thick scoring. So I can't proclaim that I found these performances refreshingly clean after modern orchestral ones. But considered in isolation, the music comes over with power and charm as appropriate and with excellent shaping. Well worth buying. CB

Antique Brasses: Beethoven, Crusell, Lachner, Löwenstein, Neukomm, Nicolai, Rossini, Salieri London Gabrieli Brass Ensemble, Christopher Larkin 79' 34"
Hyperion CDA67119

The period from the late 18th to the early 19th century was one of rapid and fundamental developments in wind instruments. The previous brass ensemble (cornets and sackbuts) and the twentieth century brass ensemble are both very homogeneous in tone, so to hear in the same ensemble the keyed family (bugle and ophicleide) together with the overtone instruments (trumpets and horns) strikes the ear very forcibly. The music varies from brass razzmatazz to some exquisite lyrical playing, with extraordinarily beautiful tone colours. Hearing the delicious playing of the keyed bugle by Ralph Dudgeon makes one realise that the articulation styles possible on this class of instrument have been completely removed from the musical landscape by the articulation imposed by valves. Using all the possibilities afforded by these instruments, much colour is brought to many fine works. My favourites were the Beethoven septet, a sublime sonata for two horns by Nicolai, and a varied set of daring pieces attributed to Crusell whom I had hitherto only known through the clarinet.

Stephen Cassidy

VARIOUS

Lute Music for Witches and Alchemists Lutz Kirchhof 72' 42"
Sony Classical SK 60767

This recording is ostensibly an exploration of the spiritual aspect of the lute and its power to transport the soul to regions rarefied and neglected in this coarse, materialistic modern age, an ambitious aim supported by a fascinating collection of brief quotes from 17th and 18th century musical writers. Alas, the brevity of a booklet note does not allow Kirchhof to develop his philosophical case sufficiently to satisfy those of a mystical bent, and his efforts to distil such a nebulous and etheric concept to coarse matter in the form of specific pieces look rather contrived. The programme is a fragmentary assortment of bits and pieces whose connection to the theme is often tenuous or imperceptible. If the result was sufficiently good this would matter little, but the musical quality is rather patchy. The most successful items are the later ones; Kirchhof's Dufaut, Weiss and Falckenhagen are splendid and reminiscent of his fine Bach and Weiss discs. However, he often sounds flustered and ill at ease in the 16th century material; for example Narvaez's wonderfully poignant setting of *Mille Regrets* is despatched briskly with no hint of regret or even reflection. The timbre of the Renaissance instruments is also rather odd; they sound as though they are strung with cobwebs in the treble and hawsers in the bass, a combination which ill-suits Kirchhof's quite bass-loaded technique. A pity, because a better-thought-out exploration of this fascinating theme could have been very fruitful.

Lynda Sayce

A Many Coloured Coat: Songs of Love and Devotion Evelyn Tubb, Anthony Rooley

CTE 004

Music by W. Babell, Bernart de Ventadorn, J. Dowland, A. Fernandez, Hildegard von Bingen, C. Monteverdi, A. Mudarra, D. & H. Purcell, L. Rossi, J. Wilson

Anthony Rooley's programmes can never be accused of lacking imagination. Here he has taken the three religions that share Jerusalem as a point of departure, dividing the recital into Western European songs that have a (sometimes tenuous) connection with the Islamic, Christian and Jewish faiths, adding for a good measure a final section devoted to Platonic love. As might be expected the programme ranges far and wide, encompassing music that covers a gamut from Hildegard through Luigi Rossi to Purcell. Equally as imaginative and compelling are Evelyn Tubb's performances, the now-familiar tour de force covering a staggering range of dynamics, technical devices such as swooping and swooning portamentos, and extremes of expressive nuance. You'll either love or loathe these highly personal performances – you can't ignore them. And in a largely bland and colourless world, that's a form of recommendation in itself.

Brian Robins

Limited edition of 400 copies; available from the performers, 13 Pages Lane, Muswell Hill, London N10 1PU tel +44 (0)208 444 6565, fax ... 2008, e-mail consort@easynet.co.uk, or from Lindum Records

HARMONIA MUNDI CATALOGUE

The following two reissues are at bargain price, and each includes the 2000 Harmonia Mundi catalogue: but beware – the discs are still available under their former numbers with no catalogue and at full price.

HMX2901620 Mozart Requiem Herreweghe
HMX2907010 Handel Water Music McGegan

ERRATA

We omitted the label details from the following:

Carolus Maximus: Music in the Life of Charles V Pomerium, Alexander Blachly
Glissando 779 008-2

Firewater: The Spirit of Renaissance Spain King'singers, The Harp Consort, Andrew Lawrence-King
BMG 09026 63519 2

In March (p. 16) the number for Jeffreys *Whisper it easily* should have been CDE 84414

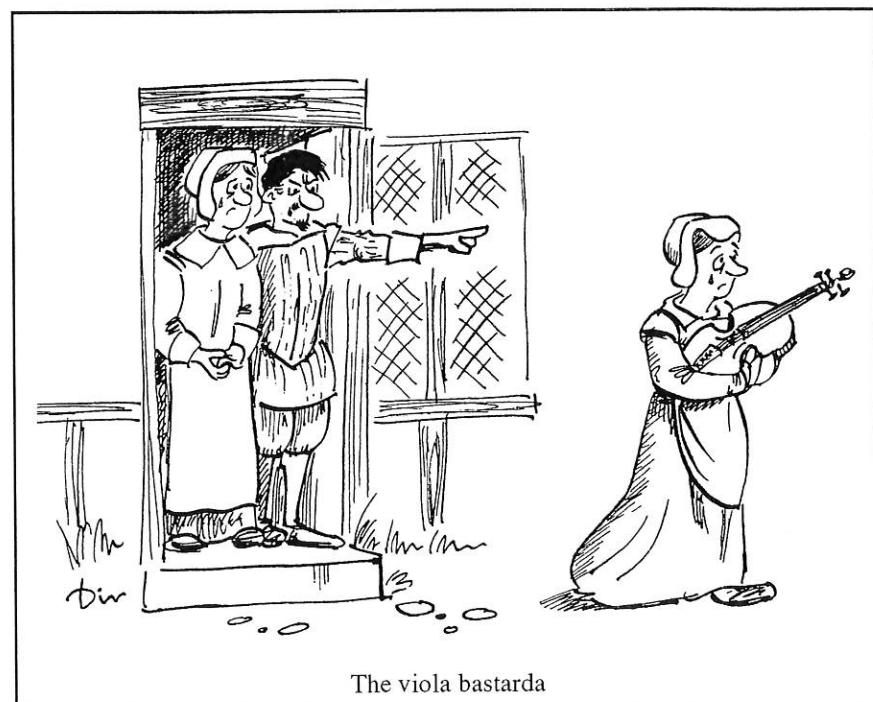
PRIZEWINNERS

The Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition, run by *Musica Britannica*, was this year for keyboard players and required the contestant to play music from the series. Not surprisingly, the contestants played harpsichord or organ (there's not much piano music in MB). The three prize-winners were:

First: Katarzyna Tomczak from the Guildhall School.

Second equal: Jonathan Scott from the Royal Northern College of Music and Robert Quinney from Cambridge University

Each won cash plus three copies of *Musica Britannica*; the winner also was given the opportunity to play at lunch-time concerts at the universities of Leeds, Sheffield and Birmingham. The judges were Alan Brown, Davitt Moroney, Julian Rushton and Harry Diack Johnstone. This seems an excellent way of spending memorial funds and remembering a figure who, along with Thurston Dart, did so much to foster publication and performance of early music. Are there similar competitions in Austria and Germany linked to DTO & *Das Erbe Deutscher Music*?



LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

In a journal which is so clearly concerned with performance practice I was surprised to read Robin Bigwood's review of my Scarlatti, since this recording is about precisely that aspect of the sonatas. I am not complaining because he did not like it – it takes all sorts to make a world – but because he seems to have missed the point, and in dismissing it as he did has prevented your readers from coming to their own conclusions.

Of all the 'early music' composers Domenico Scarlatti is the only one who has remained almost untouched by performance practice. The tradition laid down by the great pianists has been followed by all harpsichordists. In 1974, after a conversation with Basil Lam, I was invited to give an illustrated talk for the BBC which they called *Scarlatti an Spain*. The review in *The Listener* found it 'as convincing as it was fascinating'. Since that time I have been invited to write articles in journals in Britain, France, Spain, Holland and the USA and to give lectures and recitals in as many countries demonstrating the practical implications of the Spanish influence. Starting life as I did, playing for the Spanish dancing classes of the distinguished folklorist Lucile Armstrong, I knew a certain amount about the music that so affected Scarlatti.

Begged by people keen to have a more permanent reference of what might be done, I made a CD. I chose my programme carefully, juxtaposing purely Spanish with purely Italian styles. In the Spanish sonatas, as I explain in the liner notes, I use the rhythmic alterations and ornamentation used by folk singers. In the dances I adopt the tempos of Scarlatti's models instead of the generally-accepted ones set by Horovitz and Rachmaninov. I fill out sonatas that are clearly sketches, following patterns set by folk singers and guitarists, or by Soler, who gives the player more help than Scarlatti.

Listeners who want the *pizazz* (sic) so sorely missed by Mr Bigwood on my CD have no problem in finding admirably brilliant performances of Scarlatti. Some listeners might, however, be interested in hearing another approach; and it is because I think they should be given a chance that I am writing this letter.

No doubt Robin will want to reply, but I thought it best not to distract him from the reviews due for this issue by sending the letter on to him. (The reviews haven't come anyway.) Jane Clark's covering letter to me also included the following: 'Lionel Salter rang up just before he died saying how it had cheered him up to hear Scarlatti played by someone who really understood it.' CB

Dear Clifford,

In your review of the Eliot Gardiner Bach Easter cantatas you ask why singers find intonation more difficult than violinists. I am constantly exercised by an allied question – why can so few singers (even so-called 'specialists') execute

a trill properly? I am weary of reviewing discs on which one hears instrumental trills perfectly executed as a matter of course, while singers make no attempt or produce a pathetic apology. This of course reaches the height of absurdity in imitative passages, where the all too common discrepancy of technique revealed should cause singers to retire with red faces. Yet it is something rarely remarked upon by critics. Do we judge instrumentalists by one standard and singers by another, significantly lower, one?

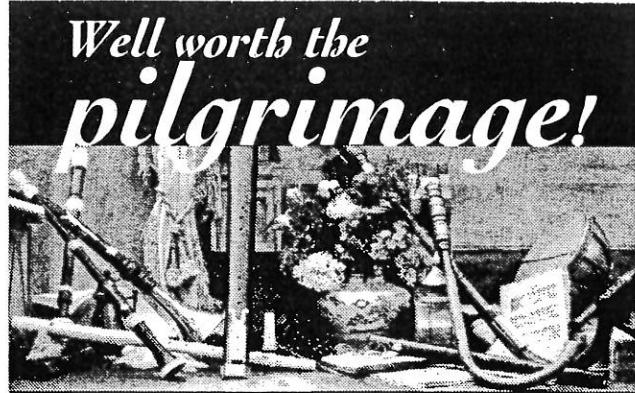
Brian Robins

Dear Clifford Bartlett,

The Essential Bach Choir and your review made me happy in April. A Bach Festival on the Danish State Radio with a St Luke Passion played and sung by big modern forces under Mr. Koopman himself made my Easter very dreary... It is very hard to make people believe that it pays to seek honest solutions to performance practice, even if you may lose other beauties. A German early-music programme (Bernhard Moorbach, OBR 3) taunted the Bach minimalism with being philological. But isn't the basis of the whole early music interest philological?

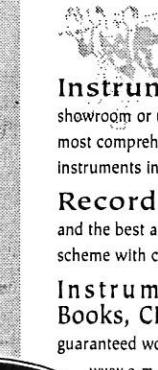
Helge Therkildsen

Well worth the pilgrimage!

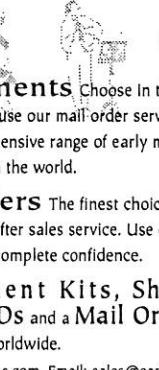




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NEW WRITING

This listing continues the sequence from my *William Byrd: a guide to research* (New York: Garland, 1987), items 1-140; *Tudor music: a research and information guide* (New York: Garland, 1994), items 141-189; 'Byrd at 450', *Brio* 31 (1994): 96-102, items 190-212; and *Annual Byrd newsletter* 1-5 (1995-9), items 213-287.

The final three new writings last year were misnumbered. They therefore begin this year's sequence, items 288-290.

288. Turbet, Richard. *William Byrd, 1540-1623: Lincoln's greatest musician*. Rev. ed. Lincoln: Honeywood, 1999. Second edition of 210. Takes into account the biographical findings of Harley (250, 280, 290) and other writings subsequent to the original edition, 1993. (1999TW)

289. Harley, John. *William Byrd, Gentleman of the Chapel Royal*. Aldershot: Scolar, 1997 rev. 1999. Amended reprint and paperback edition of 250. (1999HW)

290. Wadmore, J.F. 'Thomas Smythe, of Westenhanger, commonly called Customer Smythe'. *Archaeologia cantiana* 17 (1874): 193-208. Master of Symond, elder of William's brothers.

291. Duffin, Ross W. 'New light on Jacobean taste and practice in music for voices and viols'. In *Le concert des voix et des instruments à la Renaissance: actes du XXXIVe Colloque international d'études humanistes*, Tours, 1991, ed. Jean-Michel Vaccaro. Paris: CNRS Editions, 1995, pp.601-19. (Arts du spectacle.) Introduces the Blossom partbooks, a new source for *Ne irascaris, Deus venerunt gentes* and *In resurrectione tua*.

292. Clayton, Janet. 'A visit to Old Thorndon Hall'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 4 (1998): 11-12. Archaeological observations on a home of the Petre family where Byrd had a chamber. The house was demolished but the site is visible.

293. Purser, John. 'On the trail of the spies'. *Scotlands* 5 (1998): 23-44. Suggests that Byrd and William Kinloch may have been in contact as Roman Catholic spies, noting passages in common in their keyboard music and draws on other musical and biographical material. (1998Po)

294. Turbet, Richard. 'More early printed editions attributed to Byrd'. *Brio* 35 (1998): 105. Supplement to 206 & 221. (1998Tm)

295. Bolingbroke, Douglas. 'English Catholics in the time of Byrd'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 5 (1999): 4-5.

296. Buckley, David. 'A comparison of William Child's *Sing we merrily* with William Byrd's *Sing joyfully*'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 5 (1999): 8-9 (1999Bc)

297. Harley, John. *Orlando Gibbons and the Gibbons family of musicians*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999. Contains many references to Byrd, such as the discovery that Gibbons's *Second Preces* are based on Byrd's *First Preces*.

298. Irving, John. 'William Byrd and Thomas Tomkins's Offertory: (re-)evaluating text and context'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 5 (1999): 10-12. Reconsiders Tomkins's *Offertorium* in the light of its debt to part of the *Great Service* recently revealed in 195. (1993Iw)

299. Kemp, Lindsay. 'A Byrd in the can'. *Gramophone* 77 (October 1999): 18-19. Interviews Davitt Moroney about his recording of Byrd's complete keyboard works. (1999Kb)

300. May, Katharine. 'Top flight'. *Early music today* 7 (October/November 1999): 18-19. Interviews Davitt Moroney about his recording of Byrd's complete keyboard works. (1999Mt)

301. Pinto, David. 'Marsh, Mico and attributions'. *Chelys* 27 (1999): 40-58. Notes that the third strain of Byrd's *Echo* pavan is quoted by Mico in the third strain (sic: Pinto says second) of his pavan no.3 for four viols MB65/14.

302. Smith, David J. 'Byrd reconstructed: in search of consort models for keyboard dances by Byrd'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 5 (1999): 6-8. Review article in which the author discusses reconstructions of what may have been the original versions of several of Byrd's pavans and galliards, and reaches challenging conclusions concerning the number of works that may have originated in this way. (1999Sb)

304. Patrick Macey *Bonfire songs: Savonarola's musical legacy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Contains a chapter on the influence of Savonarola in England, referring specifically to *Infelix ego*, from Savonarola's meditation on Psalm 50, which became associated both with protestant and catholic martyrdom. Brief review in *Early Music Review* 56, pp. 2-3.

FORTHCOMING RESEARCH

The book by Richard Rastall and Julie Rayner about Byrd's six-part fantasias in g is now scheduled for publication by Ashgate after 2000.

Editions Minkoff are to publish a facsimile of *Will Forster's virginal book*, a major source for the music of Byrd; this is reflected in the selection of Oliver Neighbour to write the introduction. They are also to publish facsimiles of the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* and the Weelkes MS, with introductions by another distinguished Byrd scholar, Alan Brown.

In an earlier issue I expressed my intention of including a continuation of my bibliography of Tudor Music. It has now outgrown the Newsletter and will, I hope, appear elsewhere in 2003.

John Harley continues his researches on the Byrd circle by connecting it with the Roper family of Kent, with a view to an article in next year's Newsletter.

Having edited the *Psalmes, Songes and Sonnets for The Byrd edition* (volume 14), John Morehen's interests are now in music printing, specifically in Byrd's 1611 collection, although he is also broadening this out to a more general study of the printer Thomas Snodham, which may result in two distinct pieces of work.

Last year the distinguished Sweelinck scholar Pieter Dirkson wrote to me about the composer's connection with Byrd. As a result of our ensuing correspondence he will be contributing a paper about Byrd and Sweelinck to next year's Newsletter, including some new conclusions.

Peter James is researching Byrd and the verse anthem, while Ian Kemp is considering Tippett's debt to Byrd.

Scheduled for publication in July by University of Bristol Library are the proceedings of the 13th annual seminar on the history of the British provincial book trade, edited by Michael Richardson and including my paper on Byrd and H. B. Collins.

SIGNIFICANT NEW RECORDINGS

The past year has been nothing short of glorious for recordings of Byrd's music. The Newsletter has been sent copies of two, reviews of which appear below, followed by briefer remarks on some. Could I urge consorts of viols or recorders to look at the large pool of unrecorded Byrd if they are making a disc? Fretwork's wonderful CD only had room for those Byrd consort pieces that survive without need of reconstruction; however there is a quantity of fragmentary but reconstructed pieces eagerly awaiting (and deserving) recording, as well as pieces surviving complete in one medium but which have been reconstructed for another, such as keyboard pavans presented on viols.

BYRD EDITION 3

It seems incredible that a composer of the stature of William Byrd should have to wait so long for a complete recording of his works. While his masses and a few of his Latin motets are often recorded, there are many motets of the highest quality that deserve to be better known. Thankfully, Cardinall's Music is rectifying the situation with a recording project for ASV which will include all the Latin sacred music. Cardinall's Music is an ideal choice of ensemble for such a venture. Its members cut their teeth on music by Tudor composers of an earlier generation, so their recordings of Byrd seem to grow naturally out of the affinity they feel for the music with which Byrd himself would have grown up. Vol. 3 marks the end of the first phase of the project, with the completion of the recording of all the motets surviving only in manuscript sources. The group has adopted a policy of mixing these works with motets taken from Byrd's two volumes of *Gradualia* (1605 and 1607). The result is a wonderful contrast between the expansive nature of many of the motets taken from manuscripts and the concise motets of Byrd's later years. In fact, though, Byrd provides us with sufficient contrast within the sections of the CD devoted to the manuscript works.

Although volume three does not contain any experimental works such as the extraordinary *O salutaris hostia* (vol. 2), there is a great variety of texture, from the predominantly imitative *Domine ante te* to the homophonic writing found in sections of *Domine Deus omnipotens*. David Skinner faithfully conveys the reservations held by Joseph Kerman about some of the motets that did not quite make it into press. Although he does not always agree, one senses some sense of apology over a few of the works. For example, Skinner writes of *Domine ante te* that 'Kerman rather unfairly condemns the work', but suggests that 'the opening points of imitation admittedly are somewhat hollow and sparse'. There is a danger here of adversely judging pieces because Byrd did not see fit to publish them. Pieces such as *Domine ante te* are served extremely well by the performances they receive here, and should be judged on their expressive effect in sound, not on what has been written about them.

Even greater variety is provided by the inclusion of Philippe de Monte's eight-part *Super flumina Babylonis*. Monte and Byrd probably met one another during Monte's visit to England in 1554, and kept in touch with one another afterwards. In 1583, de Monte sent Byrd a setting of the opening of Psalm 136, rearranging the order of the verses so that the motet ends with a question: 'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.' Skinner suggests that this was a plea for Byrd to flee the religious persecution of his native land for more tolerant pastures elsewhere. Byrd's response was to send back a setting of verses 4-7. Byrd's polyphony, and especially his use of canon, seems to be intended to show de Monte that the true faith was still strong in England, and that there was no reason for Byrd to seek employment on the continent. The inclusion of Monte's motet alongside

Byrd's enables the listener immediately to hear the contrast between the styles of the two composers. The disc also includes two works which survive only in instrumental sources, to which David Skinner has added the appropriate texts, *Te lucis ante terminum* and *Christe qui lux*. While the latter is most likely to have been intended as an instrumental work, it is just as valid for a vocal ensemble to adapt an instrumental pieces as for a viol or recorder consort to play vocal music. However, it might have been interesting to have experimented with the use of solmization syllables in the performances of pieces untexted in their sources.

One of the great strengths of this series of recordings is that it appears to be the product of a happy marriage between scholarship and performance. The liner notes are excellent, and include a list of the sources used for each piece. There are succinct expositions of any issues associated with a piece: for example, Andrew Carwood briefly highlights the liturgical problems associated with Byrd's Propers for Epiphany. The Byrd Edition will prove to be an indispensable educational tool in university libraries around the world. However, it is far more than this. Cardinall's Music manages to achieve a true sense of vocal polyphony in which no one part is dominant. There is clarity of texture in which the ear can follow each voice part, and the inner parts are truly audible. So often performances of this repertory are marred by an approach in which the outer parts are given the greatest prominence. This is an anachronistic view: only after 1600 did composers gradually evolve musical styles in which the top part and bass served as the structural framework of music. Renaissance polyphony should not be performed with an aesthetic of a later century in mind.

The individual voices of Cardinall's Music are not afraid of a little vocal colour, and each line is beautifully shaped. There is always a sense of vertical sonority, and a wonderful blend of sound. For me, the first three issues of the Byrd Edition contain some of the most satisfying performances of Renaissance polyphony on record, and ASV should be heartily congratulated for their commitment to the project.

Dr David J. Smith

The fourth volume of the The Byrd edition (ASV CD GAU 197), consisting of Byrd's contribution to the *Cantiones sacrae* of 1575, is as good as the other three. Some initial expectations are challenged by the use of low pitch, but such is the incandescent quality of the singing, the sensitivity to individual lines, and the judicious blend, that this never obscures the beauty of the music. Its style shows a development from the mainly early pieces on the first three discs. This does not make the *Cantiones* better, merely different. For instance, in a piece such as *Domine secundem actum meum* Byrd is more inclined to argue a knotty point, as at the words 'in conspectu' in his counterpoint, rather than expound such a point expansively. Discographically this recording is significant for including *Libera me Domine de morte* for the first time on compact disc, and it emerges as

perhaps the finest work in the collection. Most pieces are performed with one voice to a part, but those which are predominantly homophonic are sung with two. The repeat concluding *Attollite portas* is omitted as liturgically unnecessary, but the sonorities in *Memento homo* compensate for any notes absent elsewhere. Indeed there is so much excellence both in the music and its performance. A random selection of moments to savour might include the sudden return to homophony in *Aspice Domine* after Byrd has relentlessly unravelled his polyphonic knot at 'sedet in tristitia': this is the emotional crux of the work; the mature sense of structure uniting the huge *Tribue Domine*: why did it take four hundred years to realise this was one tripartite piece? And the final cadence of the final piece, *Libera me Domine de morte aeterna*: glorious in its own right, distilling all that has gone before, leaving the listener eager for more, while Byrd himself offers hope – theological, musical and creative. The preparation for this recording was, as usual with the Cardinall's Musick, meticulous – it is a masterstroke to sing *Libera me Domine* one to a part but with two voices on the cantus firmus – and Andrew Carwood directs with a light touch yet a firm sense of direction. The singers never miss a trick, be it in dissonances, sonorities, suspensions, individual lines within counterpoint or unanimity in homophony. The next two discs will consist of the masses (scheduled for November) and the Easter music from *Gradualia* (February 2001). Volumes seven and eight will each consist of motets from the *Cantiones* of 1589 plus a Lady Mass and other propers from the *Gradualia*. The next recording session is programmed for November.

The most significant event since the inauguration of the ASV Byrd edition has been the release of Davitt Moroney's recording of *William Byrd: the complete keyboard music* on Hyperion CDA66551/7. The Newsletter was not sent a review copy, but in any event I could add nothing to Clifford's ringing recommendation in *EMR* 55 (November 1999), page 26. He concludes by hoping that the confidence of Ted Perry, owner of Hyperion Records, is repaid; Davitt informs me the box is selling splendidly. My own review, limited to 250 words, is scheduled to appear in the forthcoming issue of *Cathedral Music*, April 2000. The box of seven discs sells for the cost of five. It is available from Lindum Records for £60. (But keep your recording of the dubious *Malts come down* and the *Medley*, eschewed by Moroney.) In the accompanying booklet, a work of scholarship in its own right, Davitt writes perceptively about Byrd and his music and discusses each piece individually.

Of scarcely less significance is *William Byrd: consort songs* (Ricercar 206442) performed by James Bowman and the Ricercar Ensemble. It too has been reviewed in *EMR*, by Robert Oliver (no.52, July 1999, p.15). There are no Byrd premieres, though of the seven anonymous pieces included, three have been attributed to Byrd at various times. The only anonymous piece for consort is an unidentified fantasia in five parts. It is in fact Viola da Gamba Society no. 1615, and has been published as no. 147 in the Society's series of supplementary publications.

Phantasm continue their investigation of Byrd with a disc entitled *Byrd song: songs and consorts by William Byrd* (Simax PSC 1191). Of the 14 items, 11 are songs, sung by Geraldine McGreevy (soprano) and Ian Partridge (tenor). None are new to disc, and some that used to be unfamiliar are gratifyingly becoming repertory numbers, such as *Fair Britain isle*, *My mistress had a little dog* and *Rejoice unto the Lord*. Most familiar are the *Lullaby*, *Ye sacred muses* and *Though Amaryllis dance*, while the least recorded is *Though I be Brown*. Phantasm play three pieces in four parts: the two surviving In nomines and the Fantasia from the 1611 collection.

On page 3 of Newsletter 3 I referred to an unnumbered disc *Cantiones sacrae: music by Tallis and Byrd* sung by The Choir of Christ's College, Cambridge, available from the Organ Scholar. It is now numbered SP1. It contains the only recording of the austere ecclesiastical version of *Christ rising* with organ accompaniment. I understood I was receiving a review copy from the said Organ Scholar but it never materialized. Nevertheless I would be happy at this distance of time to proclaim the opening *Ave verum corpus* the most convincing on disc by a mixed sacred choir.

Michael Greenhalgh's superb "Gibbons discography" in *Brio* 36 (1999): 42-59 ("part 1: introduction & instrumental music") contains an entry for two preludes, GK 46-7, that survive in one source as one piece entitled *A touch* attributed to Byrd. Current opinion unanimously agrees with the ascription to Gibbons, but those wishing to hear the music can follow up the references on p.59 of Michael's discography.

CONCERT REVIEW

Music for an Elizabethan Household The Frideswide Consort and members of The Cardinall's Musick, Friday 21 January, 2000, Wigmore Hall, London

The Elizabethan consort repertoire has long been the unsailable domain of the viol consort. But from Henry VIII's time various wind consorts were part of the professional court musical establishment. Names of recorder, flute, cornett, shawm and sackbut players and accounts of their playing in consorts are plentiful in court records. The recorder consort was one of the more highly visible from about 1540, when Henry VIII appointed five brothers of the Bassano family from Venice. They carried on a recorder-playing dynasty in England well into the 17th century. A significant amount of the repertoire taken for granted to be for viols is so well suited to recorders, and to a lesser extent, transverse flutes, that certain pieces may have been written for the winds in the first place. So it was refreshing to hear the Frideswide Consort in company with the as-ever supremely musical singers from The Cardinall's Musick performing vocal and instrumental pieces by William Byrd, Christopher Tye, Thomas Tallis, Robert Fayrfax and others at their Wigmore Hall concert on 21 January.

In the acoustic of the Wigmore Hall the instruments, a matched set of Renaissance recorders by Thomas Prescott

(USA) sounded rather more subdued than instruments I have played by Bob Marvin. I wished for more clarity particularly in the tenors. But the playing style matched the singers beautifully in the sacred pieces which made up the first half, and was particularly effective in their antiphonal rendering of Thomas Tallis's *Ave Dei patris filia*. I couldn't help wondering as the evening progressed if the players could experiment with a more Italian vocabulary of techniques such as those described by Ganassi in his recorder treatise *Fontegara*, published in Venice in 1535, just five years before the Bassanos set sail for England.

The second half of the programme was a mixture of instrumental fantasias and consort songs sung in a bright and exuberant soprano by Carolyn Sampson. The tone was set by a lively reading of Tye's *In nomine Crye*. A highlight for me was William Byrd's song *Out of the orient crystal skies*. Perhaps it was its rendering on recorders that gave the piece a naïve quality, with soaring angular lines and four-square phrases delightfully capturing the piece's fresh, ballad-like features, quite unlike the reverent performances I have heard with viols. Performing consort songs was a brave thing to do, because of course here the counterpoint is turned upside down, the top voice of the recorder often sounding above the vocal line and the bass and tenor lines closer by an octave. But they chose their pieces carefully, so that I could accept the octave displacements (I am a wind player, too, after all). Byrd's ever-popular fantasia on *The leaves be green* ended a very enjoyable evening, and I should like to add that the thoughtful and colourful narrative provided throughout the evening by David Skinner and Andrew Carwood was a bonus.

Nancy Hadden

MISCELLANY

Stainer and Bell has just published volume 9 of The Byrd Edition, *Latin motets II (from manuscript sources)* edited by Warwick Edwards: see the review by Clifford Bartlett on p. 11 below.

Fretwork have entered into an agreement with Stainer and Bell to publish viol parts to many of the consort songs published in *The Byrd edition*. Their aim is to issue two sets of consort songs for soprano and one set for alto, each containing ten songs. The project should begin this year.

The Dunedin Consort brought an all-Byrd concert to Aberdeen on 12 February 2000. The quintet performed the masses for four (minus Creed) and five parts, *Gaudeamus omnes* and *Assumpta est Maria* plus a great deal of plainsong, interspersed with the Pavan in d, *Clarifica me pater III*, the concluding Voluntary from Nevell, the Salisbury pavan, and the huge Fantasia BK 62.

The *Dunedin Consort* newsletter no. 10 for September 1999 contains a poem by Pauline Whitfield entitled *William Byrd 1543-1623* [take the first date as poetic license], inspired by their performances of the three masses and motets at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe last year.

At the end of August Timothy Byram-Wigfield resigned as Master of the Music at St Mary's Scottish Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh (to become Director of Music at Jesus College, Cambridge). From 16-26 August he scheduled an almost continuous festival of Byrd's music at Evensong and Communion, including the masses à 4 and 5 complete, all four surviving services, eleven motets and two anthems.

Philip Brett, David Mateer and Jeremy Smith have been awarded a Collaborative Research Grant for two years by the National Endowment for the Humanities to collate and edit volumes 12 and 13 of *The Byrd edition*, the final two.

Katy Todd has left as manager of the Lincoln Cathedral Music Appeal and Sue Ridley, the Appeal secretary, is holding the fort. Donations can still be sent to Mrs Ridley at 4 Priorygate, Lincoln LN2 1PL, telephone 01522 535599.

Readers will have seen above (p. 4) in the Newsletter Nancy Hadden's report on the recent concert 'Music for an Elizabethan household, for voices and recorders' by The Cardinall's Musick and the Frideswide Consort. This was their first concert platform collaboration. The editions of Byrd's songs for voice and recorders are published by Fretwork Editions. The Frideswide Consort is working on its first solo disc. Anyone interested in booking the Consort should email post@cardinall.demon.co.uk

The 2nd Annual William Byrd Festival took place last year in Portland (Oregon) from 28 August 28 to 5 September, sponsored by Cantores in Ecclesia, and comprising three masses, three lectures and a concert spread around three Roman Catholic churches in the city.

John Harley writes to observe that Byrd's chamber in the Petre household was at Thorndon Hall, not Ingatestone as I wrote in Newsletter 5. This is not to say that Byrd did not also have a chamber at Ingatestone Hall, but there is no surviving evidence that he did.

The recent film *Elizabeth*, which provides a view of the early years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, includes as part of its soundtrack a striking arrangement of *Domine secundum actum meum* to accompany a dramatic sequence leading up to the arrest of the Duke of Norfolk. The eclectic soundtrack also includes Tallis's *Te Deum* and Elgar's *Nimrod*. I should be most grateful if anyone who knows of other examples of Byrd's music used in the cinema would get in touch with me.

At last year's Proms Byrd was represented by *O lux beata Trinitas*, sung on Sunday 18 July by Oxford Camerata conducted by Jeremy Summerly.

Last year's Byrd Memorial Concert, sung as usual by the Stondon Singers in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, Stondon Massey, Essex, took place on 4 July and included *Sing joyfully*, *Haec dies à 6* and *Infelix ego*. This year's is again on 4 July, a Tuesday, at 8 pm in Stondon Church.

Just in time for comment in the Newsletter is the publication of the third edition of *William Byrd: Keyboard Music: I* edited by Alan Brown (London: Stainer and Bell, 1999 [recte 2000]), *Musica Britannica* vol. 27. For some time it was anticipated this would be a revised reprint of the second edition, but in view of the extent of the revisions it is appropriate this should be a separate new edition. In his 'Note for the third edition' Alan draws attention to amendments and revisions as compared with the first edition. By far the most significant change is the omission of the second setting of *The hunt's up*, no. 41, now universally regarded as spurious, and its replacement by Byrd's own revised version. Elsewhere he comments on some pieces omitted from the present volume which would now find a place here, but which can be found in *Musica Britannica* vol. 55. There is now a select bibliography, and Thurston Dart's original notes on 'The instruments' have been replaced by a section on 'Instruments and performance' which Alan points out is largely derived from a paper by Davitt Moroney (200). The 'List of sources and their abbreviations' and textual commentary have also been overhauled.

The spirit of Holst lives on. About eighty years ago he transcribed and edited *O magnum mysterium* from GB-Bl Add MS 35001 in Samuel Wesley's hand, and Stainer & Bell published it with Wesley as composer. Recently Broude issued Byrd's *Hodie Christus natus est* (present in the same MS, f.92) in their series *Accademia Monteverdiana* (general editor Denis Stevens) attributed to Wesley.

MEANINGS

An occasional series in which contemporary composers are invited to say what the music of Byrd means to them.

At my cottage in Deal in Kent, where I do much of my composing, I have an electric keyboard which I use in conjunction with a computer with a Sibelius music programme – as many composers do nowadays. The instrument can produce a fairly respectable harpsichord sound, and for relaxation I like to play virginal music on it, particularly by Byrd, Gibbons and Bull. Among my favourite pieces are the pavans that Byrd and Gibbons wrote for the Earl of Salisbury. They are both in A minor, and both are perfect short pieces, the Gibbons more extravagant in its gestures, the Byrd more precise and direct. I am also fond of the Byrd pieces based on popular tunes, with their infectious lilt.

In the late 1960s, as a practising Roman Catholic, I heard the Byrd Masses for the first time, sung liturgically in the awesome acoustic of Westminster Cathedral. I remember clearly their extraordinary beauty, which seemed almost inaccessible, but which remains today as an ideal to be aimed at in the music I write, an almost impossible one if you do not deny the time you live in (which I cannot do), but worth struggling towards, however imperfectly. The Masses are not simply beautiful, of course. The four-part setting in particular has considerable drama; first of all in its sombre G minor tonality, which makes one immediately

aware that it was written at a dark time for English Catholics; and also in its details: in the Credo, for instance, the solemn shift into D minor for the 'Crucifixus', the joyful rising scales at 'Et resurrexit' and 'Et ascendit' (the Cantus part reaching a unique high G at 'caelum'), and the florid climax at 'sedet ad dexteram patris'. And then the wonderful ending of the Mass with the seemingly endless canonic repetitions of 'dona nobis pacem'. A falling scale motive that at 'pacem' leaps up aspiringly, then falls again. The dramatic word-setting here and elsewhere makes Byrd a modern composer for his time, but it is never forced; it is part of his matchless craft, from which all composers can still learn.

David Matthews

BYRD TERCENTENARY DINNER

On 24 April 1923 in Stationers' Hall the Worshipful Company of Musicians gave a celebration of Byrd's music. The twelve-page programme was printed by the Chiswick Press and included short accounts of Byrd and of the Company by, respectively, E.H. Fellowes and R.H. Hadden. The singers were Mary Bourne, Grace Austin, Courtenay Boyle, Malcolm Boyle and Fellowes (*S mS cT T B*), with a 'Band of Musick' consisting of Charles Woodhouse, Herbert Kinsey and Frank Howard (violins), Ernest Yonge and James Lockyer (violas), Charles Crabbe and Edward Robinson (cellos) and Eugene Croft (double bass). Fellowes and Woodhouse directed. They performed *Non nobis Domine*, *Fantasia à 6 II*, the *Sanctus* and *Agnus* from the Mass *à 5*, *My little sweet darling* (Grace Austin), *Who made thee Hob* (Fellowes and M. Boyle), *Awake mine eyes, I thought that love, Lullaby, While that the sun, Come jolly swains* and *Fantasia à 6 III*. Richard Turbet

The event is not mentioned in the recent history of the Company, *Apollo's Swan and Lyre* by Richard Crewdson (see review in *EMR* last month) though it is evident that it had an interest in the revival of early music. The Rev. R. H. Hadden was a member of the Company and Fellowes was elected an Honorary Freeman in 1937. CB

BYRD THE FARMER

John Harley

It was probably in 1594 that William Byrd moved from Harlington in Middlesex to Stondon Massey in Essex. He obtained from the Crown a lease of the house and farm known as Stondon Place, in the names of his three eldest children. Documents relating to the lease are mentioned on page 113 of *William Byrd: Gentleman of the Chapel Royal*.¹

About the middle of 1595, Lord Burghley and Sir John Fortescue signed an instruction to 'Make A Lease of the p'misses to the saide xpofer Byrde Elizabeth Byrde and Rachell Byrde for their Lives successively yeldinge to the Queenes Ma^{te} the yerely Rente and fyne aforesaide'.² (A note gives the annual rent as £26 13s 4d and the fine – the

sum paid by an incomng tenant in consideration of a low rent – as £10). The document's signature by Burghley and Fortescue reflects both the small size of the Elizabethan administrative machine, compared with that of today's government, and the tight control exercised by the Queen's closest advisors. Burghley was the Lord High Treasurer and Fortescue was his assistant, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a second cousin of the Queen.

Burghley and Fortescue also signed a parallel document (Public Record Office, E310/13/40, m. 35) not mentioned in *William Byrd*. This refers to Byrd 'and others' (his family) as the tenants, and goes into some detail about 'Malipardues coppice', a part of the property variously known as Malperdus, Mellow Purgess or Malpergis that featured several times in Byrd's career as a farmer.³ The document describes it as 'Certaine woodes upon the ffarne groundes called Stondon place late parcell of the possession of Willm Shelly esquire of high Treson attaynted'. The Queen had deprived Shelley of his property after his involvement in a Catholic plot, but that does not seem to have bothered the Catholic Byrd, who was for many years to engage in a legal battle over the property with Shelley's widow, who herself suffered a period of imprisonment as a Catholic.⁴

A map of about 1700 shows Stondon Place as a house with gabled end sections, and it is known from other sources that it had a hall and bedchambers, a kitchen and a larder house.⁵ Indeed, it was probably very like the house that Byrd's brother Symond owned at Brightwell, of which the inventory was published in *Annual Byrd Newsletter* 4 (June 1998). The whole property amounted to some 200 acres, on which there were a pond, a hopyard, a rabbit warren and an orchard, as well as the ten or twelve acres of Malperdus. The new document describes the ash and hornbeam trees in 'Malipardus coppice' and says that the underwood there was a valuable resource for hedging, fencing and fuel. Byrd evidently made good use of it, for Mrs Shelley complained in 1608 that 'The said Bird hath cutt downe great store of tumber Trees worth one hundred markes growing in the groundes belonging to the said place, hath felled all the underwoodes worth 100ii & made therein greate spoile'.⁶

The practicalities of farming and property maintenance seem to have formed as large a part of Byrd's life as his duties in the Chapel Royal and his work as the outstanding English composer of his time.

1. John Harley, *William Byrd: Gentleman of the Chapel Royal*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd (with a Scolar Press imprint), Aldershot, 1997; amended and reprinted 1999.

2. Public Record Office document E310/13/42, m 5.

3. 'Malperdus', as it is spelled in Byrd's will, is thought to have been an old manorial name deriving from a family called Maupertius.

4. According to Mrs Shelley, Byrd started a case in the Court of Exchequer soon after Shelley's death in 1597, in an attempt to gain her ratification of the lease given him by Queen Elizabeth. See *William Byrd*, p. 138.

5. *William Byrd*, plate 7 and p. 114.

6. *William Byrd*, p. 147.

THE JUDD MEMORIAL

John Harley

It is no more than a truism to say that a knowledge of the intellectual and artistic current of Byrd's time contributes to an understanding of his music. *The Story of Time*, an exhibition now at the Queen's House in Greenwich, includes as almost its last item a curious manifestation of that current. It is a painting which belongs to the Dulwich Picture Gallery, and which is known as 'The Judd Memorial' or 'The Judd Marriage'. It is illustrated in the fine catalogue of an exhibition that is well worth seeing.

The sombre painting, in oils on panel, is dated 1560, and shows William Judd and his wife, who stand at either side of the picture, each with a hand resting on a skull which is placed on a table. On another table, across the bottom of the painting, is stretched the almost naked figure of a dead man. There are a number of apparently symbolic objects in the picture, and several inscriptions: 'WE BEHOWLDE OUR END', 'LYVE TO DYE AND DYE TO LYVE ETERNALLY', 'THE WORDE OF GOD HATHE KNIT US TWAYNE AND DEATH SHALL DIVIDE US AGAIN', and (on the original frame) 'WHEN WE ARE DEADE AND IN OWR GRAVES, AND ALL OWRE BONES ARE ROTTUN, BY THIS WE SHALL REMEMBERD BE, WHEN WE SHULDE BE FORGOTTYN'. It is for historians expert in the period to judge how generally and strongly held were the ideas reflected in the picture, and whether its symbols and inscriptions include any that would have struck contemporaries as particularly Catholic in an England which had recently reverted to Protestantism. It is likely that such ideas formed part of the mental equipment of many people when Byrd was young (he was about twenty in 1560), and the Elizabethans and Jacobeans, of course, continued to exhibit a keen appetite for the occasional *memento mori*, not to mention assorted funerary monuments, paintings and verses. But can we say more than this about the picture's connection with Byrd?

William Judd was the second son of Thomas Judd, of Wickford in Essex, a village close to Ingatestone, where Byrd's distant ancestors came from. Ingatestone Hall was the home of John Petre, who became Byrd's patron and who may have known Byrd and his family no later than the 1560s. As early as 1567 Petre's records refer to someone named 'Brugges', who brought him a lute, and who could be a relation of Byrd's sister-in-law Anne (née Bridges). This was about the time when Petre gave a penny to 'Byrdes boye'. In 1567, too, Byrd's brother Symond married Anne at All Hallows Lombard Street, where in the same year his sister Martha was also married. The choice of church suggests that the Byrd family lived nearby. William Judd had then been living in Gracechurch Street, in the parish of All Hallows, for some years. London was still a comparatively small place, and it would be no surprise if inhabitants of the same parish, such as the Byrds and the Judds, at least knew one another by sight. A further link between the two families arouses curiosity as to whether

they could have been on more familiar terms. William Judd's uncle, Sir Andrew Judd, was the father-in-law of Thomas Smyth, the Queen's Customer Inward. Thomas Smyth was not only the master of Byrd's brother Symond, but probably also the uncle of the Philip Smyth who married Byrd's sister Martha.

Do these connections mean that Byrd may have known of a painting that must have been unusual even in the climate of the time? Is it even possible that he saw it? Perhaps speculation is idle, but there is no denying that the question is intriguing.

HERBERT HOWELLS' NOTES ON BYRD

These notes on Byrd are in a notebook, as yet unnumbered, which forms part of the residue of Howells's private papers now in the Library of the Royal College of Music. The notebook contains material on a number of different works by a variety of composers. There is no indication of the purpose for which these notes were made. One possibility is that they may have been for lectures on Music History at the College. They could have been compiled at any time between 1930 and the mid-fifties. Of the nine pages devoted to Byrd, the first five consist of little more than a classified catalogue of Byrd's publications and manuscripts. It contains nothing that is original, and is now out of date as well as occasionally inaccurate. Since it tells us nothing about Byrd nor Howells, I have not reproduced it here. The remaining four pages contain Howells's notes on the Mass for Five Voices.

I have expanded Howells's abbreviations and regularized his punctuation. I have not adhered to his layout, but his words are all present and in the correct order. I am grateful to Paul Andrews for alerting me to this material and describing its provenance and to Ursula Howells for permission to reproduce it.

Richard Turret

5 part Mass. Probable date 1588. No barring on original, though Gibbons used barlines irregularly. Byrd's different from Palestrina's ideas:

- 1) Byrd has very few of Palestrina's double cadences.
- 2) Palestrina differentiates Christe more than Byrd did.
- 3) Palestrina more of a purist: imitation stricter, no original 'modern' cadences, no suggestion at cadence of a 'double 7th' like Byrd. In this Mass, not a piece of imitation is worked exactly for more than 3 parts. Often it is little more than suggested. Florid passages mostly conjunct. So are Palestrina's. Fine writing for the tenors (as in Bach, and in Vittoria) and skilful placing of the parts. This Mass was revived (in performance) by Terry, 1899.¹ Birmingham Festival gave 4 items, 1900.² Then great revival.

Byrd's style. Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Agnus all start with 'imitation' on same subject. In the Kyrie, imitation is in 4 out of the 5 parts, and not very strict. The other 3 movements start rather similarly, with 3 part writing for

upper parts. Entries in descending order, the middle one being tonal. Imitation is never for more than five notes (Credo, which repeats 1st note 6) except that in Agnus tenor is in canon with treble for a whole page. The 3 entries are in the same place in latter 3 movements. Palestrina also starts movements on same theme. The theme itself is that of Tallis, used in 1910 by R.V.W.³ In Kyrie, Gloria, Credo there is a *nota cambiata* in 2nd voice against the 3rd entry. (It comes about 15 times a page in Credo: 'et vitam Amen'.) There is elaborate modulation at end of Credo. Simpler (3 parts only) at 'Et in spiritum sanctum'. Imitation always short-lived and inaccurate. Far less exact than Palestrina's. Anticipation like Purcell (end of 1st Kyrie – tenor I, end of 2nd Kyrie – alto) and about another ½ dozen times elsewhere. Never in Palestrina? N.B.: Repeated notes without changed syllable (Benedictus p.43,⁴ Agnus p.50). Unprepared discords (p.1 of Sanctus – tenor II, end of 'Christe' – soprano) an unprepared 6/4 in Credo (p.30): 'vivificantem' – tenor I. 'Village-organ' cadences when he ends on a 'dominant' (Kyrie, Sanctus, Credo - 'non erit finis'). The cadences are actually very fine and original, especially Credo and Gloria. Chromatic contradictions pp.8, 18, 48. Major-minor triads pp.11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 24, 50. Musica ficta p.16, 22, 24. Chords 8, 47, 29, 33, 45, 46. Suspended 9ths, secondary 7ths (34, 39), dominant 7ths (11, 24, 26, 39, 48). Collisions (unison by step etc.). Unresolved discords, incomplete cadences (13). Rhythm p.17. Word-painting p.21, 26, 32, 35. Tenor brilliance 34, 39, 42. (Also bass.) Repetition (Hosanna). Also p.49. Cf. theme with Tallis in R.V.W. (and cf. Taverner). Also, cf. opening of Gloria with Bach E minor prelude.⁵

East's list of publications of 1596 mentions no masses. Playford (based on East's 1609 lost list) mentions 3 "Kirries" by Byrd. Probably all 3 masses were issued in 1605 with the Gradualia. The Mass à 5 is the most modal of the 3 masses.

1. Timothy Day, comp. *A discography of Tudor church music*. London: British Library, 1989, p.17.
2. Richard Turbet. "Byrd, Birmingham and Elgar". *Elgar Society journal* 6 (1989): 7-8.
3. Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis*. From 1909 to 1911 Howells was an articled pupil Herbert Brewer, the organist at Gloucester Cathedral, and heard the first performance there in 1910.
4. These and succeeding page references are to William Byrd, *Mass for Five Voices*, ed. Edmund H. Fellowes, London: Stainer & Bell, 1922.
5. BWV 548.

BYRD AND BAX

Graham Parlett

The plain title of this article was suggested by a passage from Stephen Wilkinson's piece in the *Annual Byrd Newsletter* 2 (1996), in which he lists various 'Byrd and...' programmes performed by the William Byrd Singers of Manchester: 'Byrd & Gibbons, Byrd & Bach, even Byrd & Bax', the adverb in front of the last pair drawing attention

to the juxtaposition of two unlikely musical bedfellows living three centuries apart. William Byrd, the devout composer of masses and motets, and Sir Arnold Bax, the arch-romantic composer of colourful tone-poems and tempestuous symphonies, seem at first glance to have little in common. It is true that they were both sometime in the service of their respective monarchs, but whereas Byrd maintained a long and fruitful connection with the Chapel Royal, Bax had moved in Irish Republican circles during his youth and was a reluctant Master of the King's Music. Appointed when his creative powers were waning, he was only occasionally prodded into action when a fanfare or march was unavoidable or when someone had to arbitrate on issues of grave national importance, such as whether Sir Malcolm Sargent should be allowed to begin the national anthem fortissimo at the start of the 1948 Olympic Games. (Of more interest is a letter dating from 1944 in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle that reveals Bax's involvement in moves to resuscitate the 'King's Band', which had been formed under Charles I and effectively discontinued under Edward VII, though in the event nothing came of it.)

Evidence from his writings and from people who knew him suggests that Bax's appreciation of pre-classical music was very selective. His mildly shocking opinions of Bach's Suites ('sewing machine music') and Handel's *Zadok the Priest* ('chiefly remarkable for noise') are well known, but he does seem to have had a genuine liking for composers of an even earlier period: 'Bax does not evince much delight for either Bach or Handel', wrote his friend Christopher Whelen, 'although he enjoys the early English Byrd and Tallis and the Spanish Vittoria.'¹ Furthermore, Bax did occasionally dabble in music that one might not immediately associate with him. In 1918 he made an arrangement of Thomas Campion's song *Jack and Jone*, and in 1927 (the year in which he composed the Overture, Elegy and Rondo, whose first movement is perhaps the closest he ever came to neoclassicism) he arranged Bach's Fantasia (BWV 572) for piano and Vivaldi's Concerto in D minor (RV 540) for harp quintet. Ten years later, perhaps as a purgative after the labour of scoring his march *London Pageant* for large orchestra, he actually sat down and wrote a piano sonata in 18th-century style: the 'Salzburg' Sonata in B flat, which he teasingly inscribed on the score with the words 'Author unknown' and 'Date: (conjectured) circa 1788'. In 1945, for his brother Clifford's play *Golden Eagle* (about Mary, Queen of Scots), he produced some incidental music that, unusually for him, incorporates pastiche elements in the manner of Peter Warlock. But on the whole Bax is not generally associated with 'early' music, and his rarely played arrangements are naturally frowned upon by purists.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the pianist Harriet Cohen (Bax's paramour) used to hold musical evenings at her homes in Swiss Cottage and later in Wyndham Place at which fellow musicians were invited to perform, and it is clear that pre-classical music held an honoured place on these occasions. Miss Cohen herself had been a staunch champion of Byrd's keyboard works at a period when they were disdained by

most other concert pianists. Elgar chided her about it: '[He] did not care for this music at all. He used to tease me from time to time during our long friendship about my "queer" musical predilections. Still wantoning after William [Byrd] and testifying for Tommaso [Vittoria],' he once said.² Others were more encouraging. After one of her performances, the musicologist Alfred Einstein described Byrd's pieces as 'those first fruits of keyboard-music which surpassed by far both in delicacy and in ripeness all their continental contemporaries'. In her autobiography she claims to have given the very first performance of *My Ladye Nevells Booke* edited by Hilda Andrews (1926): 'I remember the joy of putting bars to the great *Fancie* and of the queer feeling I had on realising I was the first artist ever to perform these wonderful keyboard pieces.'³ The work had originally been commended to her by Richard Terry, who had published his edition of Byrd's Five-Part Mass in 1899 and whose performances at Westminster Cathedral during the first two decades of the century played such an important part in the modern revival of interest in his music.

In May 1931, Miss Cohen gave a party at Wyndham Place for the Tudor Singers under their conductor Cuthbert Bates, who performed an unspecified motet by Byrd and pieces by Bax, Grainger, Holst, Vaughan Williams and Warlock. The recital also included Orlando Gibbons's *What is our life*, which greatly impressed everyone. The event had been suggested by Vaughan Williams, and 'both he and Arnold agreed that the Gibbons was so beautiful that it didn't matter if they themselves never wrote another note again.'⁴ At one of her earlier soirées, probably in 1920, the Oriana Madrigal Society under its founder and conductor, Charles Kennedy Scott, had given a recital of unaccompanied works that included Byrd's five part Mass, which Miss Cohen was later to cite (together with the *St Matthew Passion*) as 'the greatest music in the world'.

The performance also made a deep impression on Bax and inspired him to tackle a medium that he had hitherto ignored.⁵ He was already established by this time as the creator of richly orchestrated tone-poems such as *The Garden of Fand*, *November Woods* and *Tintagel* and was soon to start his cycle of seven symphonies. His chamber music, piano pieces, and songs were frequently played but, unusually for an English composer of the period, he had written only three choral works: two with orchestra, and the third, *Of a Rose I sing a Song*, with harp, cello and double bass. Deeply moved, however, by the revelation of hearing Byrd's Mass for the first time, Bax set about composing his first work for unaccompanied voices, one that would somehow meld the austere purity of Tudor music with his own late romantic musical language.

The result was one of his most notable works: a setting for double SATB choir of the anonymous 16th-century carol *Mater, ora Filium*. The words are taken from a manuscript in Balliol College: 'A Boke of dyueris tales and balettes and dyueris Reconynges etc: the Memorandum-book of Richard Hill, citizen and grocer' (Balliol MS 354, f. 177v). This

contains the words of several carols written out in about 1504 and reproduced in Roman Dyboski (ed.), *Songs, Carols, and other miscellaneous Poems from the Balliol MS. 354, Richard Hill's Commonplace-book* (Oxford, 1908). Bax's use of a 16th-century text is characteristic of his wide-ranging literary tastes. Apart from being a composer, he was a man of letters himself, the author of poems and short stories under the pseudonym Dermot O'Byrne, and this is reflected in his attitude to word-setting: 'Poetry has its own rhythm and intrinsic melody', he maintained in a 1949 radio talk, 'and at its highest should be reverently let alone' – not a very flattering reflection on the verses that he did set to music. As well as writers of the 'Celtic revival', such as Fiona Macleod, AE, and even Dermot O'Byrne himself, he set poems by many 16th and 17th-century figures, such as Breton, Crashaw, Herrick, Jonson, Ravenscroft and Spenser, and earlier texts too, including *A Lyke-Wake Dirge*, *Now is the Time of Christymas*, *There is no Rose of such vertue*, and *This Worlde's Joie*. The first performance of *Mater ora Filium* ('the best I ever gave', according to the conductor) was given by the Oriana Madrigal Society under Charles Kennedy Scott at a 'Concert of Recent Works of Arnold Bax' at Queen's Hall on 13 November 1922, an occasion that caused the *Daily Telegraph* music critic to enthuse: 'It may be that the future historian of music in England will write down the event that took place... last night in red letters.' In *The Nation*, Edward Dent wrote: '[Bax] appeared in various disguises – as a Russian, as a Spaniard, as a Bergerette, and even in a job lot of ecclesiastical vestments.... Mr. Bax uses such ecclesiastical tags as he finds attractive, and decorates them with all sorts of fantastic ideas. The result on paper looks an almost unsingable jumble. In performance it was admirably calculated, full of the most adorable surprises...' Bax himself was delighted: 'I am looking forward so much to hearing *Mater Ora Filium* again', he wrote to an acquaintance, 'for I feel very happy about this work, although I should not say so aloud perhaps.' Norman Demuth's enthusiasm for it led him to make the startling assertion: 'I doubt if J. S. Bach at his most inspired and greatest moments is any more impressive and moving than this'.⁶

Byrd's Mass clearly made a deep impression on Bax and prompted him to produce what many people regard as one of his finest works. But are there really any significant connections between the two composers and their scores? Byrd was first and foremost a devout Roman Catholic; Bax professed no religious beliefs, though he had pantheistic tendencies and was fascinated by religious matters. Byrd's setting of the Catholic Ordinary of the Mass in Latin lasts around twenty-five minutes in performance; Bax's piece is a carol with a mixture of Latin and English, the latter predominating, and usually lasts between ten and eleven minutes. The Byrd is for five-part chorus; the Bax is for two separate choruses of SATB, with frequent use of a semi-chorus and even smaller groups, such as the 'Amens' for six sopranos on p. 7 and for three sopranos on p. 11.⁷ Byrd's Mass is written in his more austere and concise style, with the minimum of notes, and calls for no extremes of

technique; Bax's carol, although it starts in simple vein, blossoms into complex polyphonic writing and contains several horrendously difficult passages, such as the top C that some of the sopranos are required to sustain for about fifteen seconds on page 13 at the word 'Right' (or 'Rart', as it inevitably becomes).

It has been established that Byrd himself was influenced in the writing of his own masses by John Taverner's *Meane or Sine Nomine* Mass, and Philip Brett has conjectured that he probably had a copy of it open on his table as he wrote. It would be idle to imagine that Bax had sat down with a copy of the Byrd five part Mass in front of him or had even made a systematic study of its technique; he was not that kind of composer. Like Brahms and Vaughan Williams, for example, he tended to be flippant about musical technicalities: 'What is a major third', Elisabeth Lutyens once asked Bax. 'Damned if I know, Betty' was his disarming reply.⁸ It is likely that he was influenced more by Byrd's general sound-world than by specific passages in the Five-Part Mass. Nevertheless, the two scores do have points of contact, notably their imaginative use of counterpoint. 'My harmonies', Bax once said, 'come about as the result of contrapuntal movement. It's no use thinking in up-and-down blocks of harmony if you're trying to read my things: each part must be taken as a melodic line', and this is certainly reflected in the contrapuntal dexterity of *Mater ora Filium*. In this respect he differs from a composer like Delius, whose harmonies tend to be conceived chordally rather than polyphonically. Bax's view of his harmonies is in accordance with the trend in the second half of the 19th century for chromatic harmony to be seen as an alternative to diatonicism rather than as a method of local embellishment. Bax had earlier shown his contrapuntal mastery in his chamber and orchestral works, and his 1910 setting of part of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound (Enchanted Summer)* contains choral part-writing of extreme complexity and luxuriance. As a teenager, Bax had acted as the accompanist to his father's private choral society, which had doubtless taught him something of choral technique from the inside, even though they rarely tackled anything more adventurous than 'long-outmoded British works... by composers who by virtue of their mildness might well have been described as "sheep in sheep's clothing".⁹

One common feature of Bax's musical language that often gives it an archaic quality is his fondness for themes with repeated pitches that usually appear in parallel fourths or fifths and with the highest pitch as the central apex. Bax referred to this kind of theme as 'liturgical', aptly enough since it has its origins in the Russian nationalist composers (especially Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov), who in turn had inherited it from the Orthodox Church. In his book *Sixteen Symphonies* (p. 352), Bernard Shore refers to a liturgical theme in Bax's Third Symphony as sounding like 'a pronouncement in a saga', and there are obvious parallels with traditional Icelandic *tvisöngur* ('double singing'), a direct descendant of organum (and hence a collateral with the musical tradition of the Russian Church) which survived in Iceland through the Reformation to the present

day. This use of organum-like textures is tempered in *Mater ora Filium*, as in so many of Bax's works, by his tendency towards chromaticism.

As David Goode has remarked: 'His counterpoint... moves between straightforward diatonicism (with occasional hints of modality) and the most sumptuous and obscure chromaticism, often resolving unexpectedly into one of his characteristically enriched cadences', and he wonders too whether Bax might have been influenced not only by Byrd but by pre-Reformation polyphony.¹⁰ Even if we cannot point to specific resemblances to the five part Mass, there is at least a general stylistic connection between the two works. *Mater ora Filium* consists of four verses sung in English and separated by the Latin refrain

*Mater ora filium
Ut post hoc exilium
Nobis donet gaudium
Beatorum omnium. Amen.*

[*Mother, pray to your son that after this exile [on earth] he will give us the joy of all the blessed. Amen.*]

The refrain also opens and closes the work, the first time softly and mostly homophonically, the final time in a great flowering of exultant counterpoint. One of the work's characteristic features is the sharp contrasts of mood and textures, from the single melodic line for the tenors that follows the opening refrain to the complex eight-part counterpoint that blossoms at more exuberant moments.

Unlike the five part Mass, *Mater ora Filium* was not specifically intended for performance in a church or cathedral, and its rhapsodic flights of fancy, sometimes bordering on glossalia (though nowhere as extreme as in, say, Tippett's *The Vision of St Augustine*), have a distinctly secular, not to say pagan, air about them. The man who could re-use a fanfare from his erotic, Swinburne-inspired orchestral work *Spring Fire* for the wedding of the present Queen in Westminster Abbey was not one to be restrained by conventional propriety. In contrast, the four-part harmony of the church works that Bax wrote in the 1940s (*Gloria, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, Te Deum*) sounds positively orthodox. *Mater ora Filium* is undoubtedly Bax's choral masterpiece, though the short, grim motet *This Worlde Joie* for SATB (1922) also makes a deep impression whenever it is performed.

Curiously enough, although he was primarily an instrumental composer, his swansong was for unaccompanied voices: the brief part-song *What is it like to be young and fair?* (with words by Clifford Bax). This was commissioned for *A Garland for the Queen*, a collection of ten pieces by British composers intended as a modern counterpart to *The Triumphs of Oriana* (1601) and first performed on the eve of Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953, only a few months before Bax's death. But by this time he was a spent force, and this bland trifle is a pale reflection of past glories. Over thirty years earlier, William Byrd's five-part Mass had inspired a masterpiece, and none of Bax's later pieces in this medium can match the richness and ardour of what Charles

Kennedy Scott called 'the finest purely choral work that has appeared since Elizabethan times'.¹¹

1. 'Arnold Edward Trevor Bax', *The Music Masters*, ed. A. L. Bacharach, 4: *The Twentieth Century* (London, 1954), p.32.
2. Harriet Cohen, *A Bundle of Time* (London, 1967), p.28.
3. Op. cit., p.47.
4. Op. cit., p.188. Three years earlier Vaughan Williams had written for Harriet Cohen his *Hymn Tune Prelude on Song 13 by Orlando Gibbons*.
5. Colin Scott-Sutherland, *Arnold Bax* (London, 1973), pp. 39 and 56.
6. Norman Demuth, 'Sir Arnold Bax', *Musical Trends in the 20th Century* (London, 1952), p.165
7. Page references are to the octavo score issued by Chappell & Co. Ltd. in 1947 (now Warner Chappell Music Ltd.). Murdoch's 1921 score has an additional piano reduction for rehearsal purposes and hence different pagination.
8. From a telephone conversation quoted in Meirion and Susie Harries, *A Pilgrim Soul* (London, 1989), p.165.
9. *Farewell, my Youth* (London, 1943), p.18.
10. From notes to a recording of the work sung by The Rodolfus Choir (Herald HAVPCD 176). The earliest of the eight commercial recordings of *Mater ora Filium* was made by Albert Coates conducting the 1925 Leeds Festival Chorus (HMV D 1044/5).
- 11 In a letter to Colin Scott-Sutherland, Bax's first biographer.

Some readers who are more familiar with Byrd than Bax may think the praise given to *Mater ora filium* is excessive, but it is an amazing piece (though I must confess that on none of the occasions on which I have sung it have I thought of Byrd). Despite being difficult, it is extremely vocal; I'd love to know how Bax learnt to write choral music like it and *This Worldes Joie* (which is a little easier). CB

BYRD EDITION 9

Clifford Bartlett

William Byrd *Latin Motets II (from manuscript sources)* edited by Warwick Edwards (*The Byrd Edition*, 9). Stainer & Bell, 2000. xix + 202pp, £69.00. ISBN 0 85249 371 1

Some Collected Editions have run on for half a century following the same basic set of editorial principles. *The Byrd Edition* has fortunately been more flexible. With some volumes, I have looked at them but reverted to *Tudor Church Music* for most purposes, since even if the new versions had better readings, I preferred reading original note values and the originally notated pitch. Fortunately, *The Byrd Edition* now retains these two important features, so this volume is less likely to need replacement than some others. Of course, if missing parts that have here been written by the editor, eventually emerge, a corrected version will be needed. But otherwise, this should have as long a run as TCM, whose vol. IX was published in 1928.

This completes the collection of the Latin motets which Byrd decided not to publish. One naturally speculates why he did not do so. Unlike vol. 8, these are not early works; most seem to date from the 1580s. The editor suggests that the texts of *Circumspice Hierusalem* and *Quomodo cantabimus* were too obviously applicable to England's beleaguered catholic population for publication to have been safe. Only

in one case, *Domine Deus omnipotens*, does he suspect that a motet may have remained in manuscript because it is 'somewhat lacklustre'. Some pieces to which Byrd's name has probably been attached in error are included as an appendix, though motets as dubious as *Haec est dies Domini*, published in *Annual Byrd newsletter 2* (1996) are omitted. [Richard Turbet, incidentally, wishes me to state that neither he nor John Harley 'claimed [it] for Byrd', as is stated in footnote 9; the comments in the issue itself are neutral, and John Harley describes it as 'probably... spurious' in *William Byrd* p. 289.] New to this volume is *Domine exaudi orationem meam* for five voices, of which three survive. This is one of several pieces with complete parts in small print. *Circumspice Hierusalem* also has two missing, but there is a lute version for guidance. I find the smallness of the print of these additions a little exaggerated: I wouldn't like to have to sing them in a gloomy church.

The volume contains one substantial motet not by Byrd: *Super flumina Babylonis* by Monte, to which Byrd's *Quomodo cantabimus* is a response. Byrd's setting doesn't adopt the same mode and clefs, and even though he uses eight parts, he doesn't divide them into double choir (not an English convention). The source of the story – comments by John Alcock in a MS of 1763 – is late, but in two early sources the two pieces are placed together and Alcock's inclusion of a specific date (1583) suggests that he had some precise information available. The editor is suspicious of Alcock's underlay, so in this respect the new edition differs from TCM, as, indeed, it does for the first entry of alto 2. The textual commentary is not as helpful as it might be here. We are told that the Alcock MS begins with 5 breve rests, with the remaining 1½ breve rests after the first phrase. No mention of the Baldwin MS, also a score, which has the same error. It is misleading to talk about breve rests in connection with barred scores (as both these MS are): a copyist would be thinking by the bar, not by the breve, and is unlikely to err by bring in a part at the beginning of a bar rather than mid-bar unless copying from an erroneous part. It is useful to have the two pieces in the same volume (they have been recorded together by the Cardinall's Music: see above p. 2). Something that puzzled me about the transcription of the Monte is the use of treble clef for parts originally in alto clef, one of which goes down a seventh below middle C. The same happens in the opening piece, *Peccavi super numerum*, with an alto part going a full octave below middle C. Elsewhere, though, the C3 clef is transcribed into octave treble.

As is customary, there is an extensive introduction on the music and its performance. Suggestions for transposition are made in the commentary. But there is no reason to assume that the music was written for any standard ensemble, so the usual conventions need not apply, and the possible use of women and instruments also suggests flexibility. As always in the series, full regard is given to the text – as underlay, setting it out with translation, and advising on pronunciation. Obviously, with such disparate and secondary sources, there is less certainty that the

underlay represents the composer's careful intention than with the printed sources; but major variants are noted on the music pages. Apart from the one qualification already made about the size of the editorial parts, the edition is a delight to read. But the format isn't ideal for eight-voice pieces, and the Monte with its rejoinder take up 50 pages; perhaps they might be issued separately reformatted onto slightly larger pages with two systems per page. If I might suggest one motet for singers to try, it would be *Audivi vocem* for (if untransposed) ATTBarB. There are only two volumes to go (the 1588 & 1589 secular collections) – the Fellowes editions were revised by Thurston Dart but need thorough replacement. Then, I suppose, they will start revising the earlier volumes again!

BYRD SLEEVENOTES

Richard Turbet

An unresolved problem in music research and information is the status of sleeve notes (or liner notes) on longplaying records and compact discs. Such writings tend to be regarded as an ephemeral form, having no existence independent of the disc to which they are attached and which is their *raison d'être*. In the past, writers of sleeve notes have tended to regurgitate known facts, but recently they have used them to disseminate new information or to express some profound musicological thinking. I do not propose to list sleeve notes amongst the 'New Writing' section in the Newsletter, but it is appropriate to draw attention to some notes of high quality that have accompanied recent discs.

Oliver Hirsh announced his identification of a hitherto elusive theme in the solo *Ut re mi fa sol la* in his notes to *The Spirit of Byrd* performed by The Duke his Viols on Helikon HCD 1016.

Laurence Dreyfus has written penetratingly about the consort music and songs in his notes to two of Phantasm's recent discs *Still Music of the Spheres* and *Byrd Song*, both on the Simax label, PSC 1143 and 1191.

The Cardinall's Musick are unusual in having as part of their regular team a resident musicologist. David Skinner edits and publishes all the music they sing, and his notes to successive discs in the ASV Byrd Edition are adding up to into a significant commentary on Byrd's Latin church music, with a comprehensive catalogue. Four of a projected dozen discs have so far been issued on ASV CD GAU 170, 178, 179 and 197.

Davitt Moroney's boxed set of *The Complete Keyboard Music* is noted elsewhere in the Newsletter (Hyperion CDA 66551/7). His accompanying booklet of over a hundred pages, though keyed into the recording, is of monographic proportions and status; indeed Davitt would like to publish it as such, with appropriate modifications. Each piece

receives individual attention, and Davitt not only synthesizes existing research, but also adds new information and insights of his own.

We are lucky that the Byrd Edition includes properly-edited texts and translations, but for much of the early repertoire they are only available with recordings. CB

JUBILATE FOR MR BIRDS SERVICE

Richard Turbet

In the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, the Jubilate is the alternative canticle to the Benedictus at Morning Prayer (or Matins). Both of Byrd's two surviving full services, the Short and the Great, contain a setting of the Benedictus, eschewing the Jubilate. In the case of the Short Service, this has been made good by the 18th-century singer, composer and clergyman Robert Shenton (1730-98). Shenton was dean's vicar in the choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, from 1757, and a vicar choral in the choir of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, from 1758, having begun his musical career as a vicar choral at Hereford Cathedral.

He used sections of the music of Byrd's Short Benedictus and he underlaid instead the text of the Jubilate. The opening, from 'O be joyful' to 'His courts with praise' is set to the opening music of the Benedictus, from 'Blessed be the Lord' to 'all that hate us'. The Jubilate text continues with 'Be thankfull unto Him' jumping over several bars of Benedictus music and resuming at 'to our forefather Abraham' which musical phrase is repeated to the next passage of verbal text 'and speak good of His name' and in turn this verbal text is repeated to the music that follows in the Benedictus originally set to the words 'that he would give us'. Several bars of music from the Benedictus are then omitted and the Jubilate text proceeds from 'For the Lord' to 'is everlasting' set to Benedictus music originally set to the text from 'And thou, Child' to 'prepare his ways'. The final stretch of Jubilate text before the Gloria, 'And his truth endureth from generation to generation' is set to music provided by Byrd for the Benedictus verses from 'Through the tender mercy' to 'hath visited us'. In the cadence concluding this passage Shenton has ironed out the melismatic writing in the contratenor and, particularly, the tenor parts. Several more bars of the Benedictus music are omitted before the Gloria; naturally Shenton uses the one from Byrd's Benedictus.

The sole source of this arrangement is Durham Cathedral Library MS A18, pp.18-23, copied by John Mathews while a stipendiary of Christ Church Cathedral. He sent the MS to Durham Cathedral in 1777, and was the following year appointed a vicar choral. I am grateful to the Dean and Chapter Library, Durham Cathedral, for permission to publish it.

The edition printed on pp. 14-17 of this issue of Early Music Review is available separately from King's Music at £2.00.