

# Early Music REVIEW

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To continue our family story from last month, by the time we got the September issue out we felt that we and the children needed a break. So on the 30th we booked a flight to San Francisco leaving on the morning of 2 Sept. We spent three days working about 20 hours a day each trying to catch up on orders that were outstanding. Alas, we were not entirely successful in clearing the backlog, so our apologies to those who were left waiting. Most of them still are, a week or so after our return, since we came back suffering from a mixture of flu and jetlag and were not in a state to do much more than answer the most urgent requests. In fact, it took all week to check the emails, let alone do anything about them!

As always on such trips, we looked up a few customers: three, in fact, with a 50% success rate (the half being the wife of the librarian of the Portland Baroque Orchestra: we missed the man himself). The failure was a lady in Sacramento, for whom we could find no house to match the address. The success was Jim Rich. We found his forge (he's a blacksmith) just on the Oregon side of the Californian border; it looked more like a shed from a cowboy film set, with a couple of horses tethered outside; the cart carried, not provisions from the local store, but an envelope with a score of *Messiah* (regrettably not my edition!) We wandered through the workshop and found a cosy parlour, complete with harpsichord and a variety of early instruments hanging on the wall, but no occupants. Returning an hour later, we met Jim and his wife Heather, who had been asleep in the room above while we were snooping. His Jefferson Baroque isn't quite as formal as the Portland band, involving local professionals who mostly live off modern instruments. Their CD that was playing in the background sounded perfectly competent (that's not faint praise, but we were too busy talking for a closer listen). Financial support is disappearing everywhere: they had just lost their backing from the Rogue River College.

The pleasingly relaxed attitude to security practised in the Illinois Valley, Oregon, will unfortunately become less common as a result of the terrorist attack on the USA. Watching the substituted programme of the Last Night of the Proms, I wondered when the Barber *Adagio* (whose emotional ambiguity I mentioned in an editorial some issues ago) acquired the significance of *Nimrod*, which must be the best music ever written in honour of a music copy editor. The Tippett Spirituals were a fine choice – American tunes in powerful settings that seem to grow from within. But to my ears the triumphal tone of the finale of Beethoven's 9th, particularly when heard without the preparation of the preceding movements, was too close to the facile and simplistic militarist attitudes that could make the possibility that 'alle Menschen werden Brüder' even more remote.

CB

## BOOKS &amp; MUSIC

## Clifford Bartlett

Most of the items reviewed here should have been included in the last issue but were held over, for reasons then explained. To keep this section of *EMR* within bounds, much of the new material we have received since July must await the November issue. We hope that we will be up to date again by December.

## A. GABRIELI ORGAN MUSIC

Andrea Gabrieli *Sämtliche Werke für Tasteninstrumente...* herausgeben von Giuseppe Clericetti... Critical report on Vol. 1-VI Doblinger (09 671), nd. 24 pp, £5.25. ISBN 3 900695 50 4

Readers who have acquired the six *Dilettus musicale* volumes that contain Clericetti's new edition of Andrea Gabrieli's keyboard works (DM 1141-6) should have no hesitation in completing them with this commentary, which lists the sources and has the usual editorial report. Even if you have no immediate use for it, its absence is likely to be frustrating when you next play or study any individual piece. There is no continuous text, so it is fairly easy for non-German-speakers to extract the information they need from it. The slim volume (in the same format as the scores) also includes alternatim chant from a Gradual of 1591, so will be of use in giving coherent performances of the liturgical music. This is written out by hand on a five-line stave in semibreves and minims, whose significance is not explained. Chant may well have been sung mensurally, but does this notation relate to that practice?

## PEETER CORNET

Peeter Cornet *Complete Keyboard Music* Edited by Pieter Dirksen & Jean Ferrard. (*Monumenta Musica Neerlandica*, XVII). Utrecht: Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 2001. xxvii + 128pp, £52.00. ISBN 90 6375 181 8

Cornet was organist in Brussels at the chapels of Archduke Albert and Isabella for the first third of the 17th century, his colleagues including Philips and Bull. This volume contains 13 securely-attributed pieces, four others, and three pieces in variant versions from alternative sources. The music is inventive and sounds well, though occasionally outlasts its invention. The edition sets it out compactly, so that page turns are minimised. The conventions used are a mixture of progressive (i.e. minimal modernisation) with the retention of original barring and beaming and even black notation) and old-fashioned (the suppression of superfluous accidentals): my choices would be the opposite, though we agree on modern clefs. But no serious problems result from the policies adopted. There is an extensive introduction and commentary in English.

## ORATORIO IN BOLOGNA

Victor Crowther *The oratorio in Bologna 1650-1730* Oxford UP, 1999, xi + 187pp, £52.50. ISBN 0 19 816635 4

It was only when I asked to borrow this volume with its sister publication (a history of the oratorio in Modena) during a recent visit to Clifford that he realised that they were not, in fact, identical – he'd been fooled by the similar subject matter and cover design! So apologies to Oxford UP for the tardy review. I am happy to recommend the volume to any scholars who have not yet read it. It is a thorough piece of work, indeed, listing in considerable detail all the oratorios known to have been performed in Bologna between the chosen dates (the cut off point is rather arbitrary). After an introduction, which deals sensibly with the important role played by the civil authorities and several minor religious orders in the promotion of the oratorio as an important form, the author then dedicates individual chapters to The Cazzati Era, The Colonna Era and The Perti Era, each followed by separate investigations of representative works (in as far as it is possible to chose – great lacunae in the surviving materials make this extremely difficult). These chapters outline whatever action there is (something I, as an editor of the music, often overlook), and discuss the musical language. I found the charts of how many arias each character was allocated a little irrelevant sometimes – it would have been sufficient to touch on such matters in the text. A final chapter of conclusions includes an interesting table showing how Old Testament subjects were gradually overhauled by stories about various saints, some particular to Bologna and therefore reinforcing the importance of local patronage. I enjoyed the book and felt inspired to investigate the music further, despite the relative paucity of sources. BC

## NEW ORPHEUS

Peter Allsop *Arcangelo Corelli: New Orpheus of our Times* Oxford UP, 1999. viii + 260pp, £50.00. ISBN 0 19 816562 5

I'm not sure why we weren't sent this in 1999, but its belated arrival is welcome. Corelli is, of course, a major figure, but much of the little that is generally known about him may well be wrong. This is primarily a study of the music, but it begins with one chapter laying some of those myths to rest and three further chapter on Corelli's life. Then five chapters are devoted to his music, with two more on its influence. The central chapters are in some ways the most important, describing how Corelli's music is put together and pinpointing what is specifically Corellian; but the surrounding chapters are more readable and are strongly

recommended to those who find detailed writing about music rather heavy going. One point of the book is that Corelli's music is not the culmination of the 17th-century Italian string tradition that it has sometimes been credited – its pedigree is more specific – and it was probably not as influential as is often assumed, despite his subsequent survival as one of the first 'classical' composers (an instrumental equivalent of Palestrina). It is valuable for its own sake. The author argues strongly that, if Corelli was famed as a virtuoso violinist, he must have written music more difficult than op. 5. I wonder what the Accademia de' Filarmonici di Bologna did with 14 recorders (p. 18). On p. 177, the reader is still assuming that Handel's op. 6 is the topic when a delay between the composition and publication of Handel's music is mentioned as a problem: this remark presumably refers on to op. 5, rather than back to op. 6, whose dates are very precise. The discussion of the notorious passage in op. 2/3 when Corelli appears to write a chain of consecutive fifths has some bearing on why the bass was notated not to sound through the suspension and whether it would have been audibly sustained otherwise: how accurately should players observe note-lengths? It is good to have proper footnotes, but the presence of the music examples in a block at the end is annoying, and a list of works (including *dubia* if not *spuria*) would have been useful. There is a dearth of bibliographical reference to the editions of Corelli's music, whether ancient or modern. Corelli deserves a more popular book, but this should be consulted by the serious player and student.

#### EARLY VIOLIN & VIOLA

Robin Stowell *The Early Violin and Viola: A Practical Guide (Cambridge Handbooks to the Historical Performance of Music)*. Cambridge UP, 2001. xv + 234pp. £30.00 ISBN 0 521 62380 4 hb, ISBN 0 521 62555 6 pb £11.95.

I'm not quite sure why I have found this disappointing. A slight problem may be the chronological parameter of the series: 1700 is an odd date now that we don't see Corelli's op. 5 as the beginning of early violin music (reading this after Peter Allsop's book above; I noticed with suspicion the phrase 'to prepare the ground for Corelli' on p. 11), and at the other end, 1900 is either too late or too early. But the book isn't strait-jacketed by these dates, and I suspect my main disquiet is that, since the violin is the crucial instrument of the period, Robin Stowell seems to have had less success than Colin Lawson in his *The Early Clarinet* in avoiding going over much of the same ground as their introductory book to the series, *The Historical Performance of Music: An Introduction*. Nevertheless, there is much here for the prospective and incipient baroque fiddler to read with profit, though more specific remarks on playing orchestral music would have been useful. The half-dozen cases taken for detailed study are well chosen: Corelli op. 5/9, Bach partita in E, Haydn op. 33/2, Beethoven Kreutzer sonata, Mendelssohn violin concerto and Brahms op. 120/2 in the viola version, though the viola isn't mentioned very much elsewhere. Since Hans Keller is quoted a couple of times

elsewhere, it's worth remembering the point he used to make about the Mendelssohn Concerto: that something is lost now that it doesn't sound difficult. Stowell rightly draws attention to the way that early 20th-century recordings represent performances and are less concerned with precision and clarity than recent ones, without going on to point out that the economic security of early musicians has depended largely on the recording industry and that there is a tension between the paymasters and the ideals. (The Stravinskian neoclassical influence is on the side of the record producers as well.) The illustrations of a 1574 Andrea Amati need a scale (p. 31), and the Praetorius illustration on the previous page would benefit from an explanation of what his scale meant. And is the 'actual size' reproduced on Spohr's string gauge (p. 37) still actual size? I would have thought that the Dover reprint of the Corelli sonatas (with op. 1-4 as well) was better value and far kinder on the eyes than the Lea Pocket Scores (p. 107), and it is odd that information on the number of editions is quoted from Pincherle rather than from Marx's thematic catalogue. The example of various embellished openings to op. 5/9 would have looked better if printed on a single opening rather than with a page turn after two bars. I hope that the likely readership of this book will be more enthusiastic than I am: perhaps I've been reading too much performance-practice literature lately.

#### THE '18'

Russell Stinson *J. S. Bach's Great Eighteen Organ Chorales*. Oxford UP, 2001. xii + 171pp, £30.00. ISBN 0 19 511666 6

This contains chapters on the variety of styles of models available for Bach when writing the music, its composition and the sources, its function and meaning, its performance (a piece-by-piece guide) and its influence. It is full of good sense and communicates with the non-academic player as well as to the scholar. Occasionally words seemed incongruous (*moniker* on p. 64): on this side of the Atlantic at least it's slang, and here at least we would not refer to a hymn *authored* by Martin Luther (p. 67): the verb for what an author does is *write*. The introduction to *O Lamm Gottes* (p. 83) is oddly worded: either the reader is assumed to have no idea of the structure of the *Agnus Dei*, in which case more needs to be said, or the point could be passed over as obvious. Bach's notation is picked up in passing on pp. 43-6: how accurately elsewhere should one take the notation of upbeats to cadences? The apparent irregularity of the rhythm of *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland* (p. 95-6) is interesting and needs relating to Bach's knowledge of the tune; the cantatas don't follow the practice of the organ pieces. My only serious quibble is about the title: *Great* is a useful distinction if there are two works of the same title (e.g. for Schubert symphonies in C), but there is no need for a Bach title to include a reference to its quality. The number is also controversial. NBA avoids it, but Stinson accepts the total number of pieces and I'm happy to keep to the traditional 'The 18' (whether the number is written out in full depends on the convention you are following; see below, p. 6).

## MORE SEASONS

Vivaldi *Le Quattro Stagioni...* Edited by Christopher Hogwood. Score. Bärenreiter (BA 6994), 2000. xvi + 100pp, £19.50. Piano Reduction [with solo part]. Bärenreiter (BA 6994a), £17.00. (String parts £3.00 each; cembalo £4.50).

Despite the vast number of recordings, there is less choice for acquiring Vivaldi's greatest hit in print. There are three facsimile editions (Alamire, Performers Facsimiles and King's Music), but the Seasons is not a one-source work and even if they are used for performance, the conscientious director and player will need to use a critical edition. Two of these have appeared comparatively recently, Eleanor Selfridge-Field's excellent Dover score of the whole of op. 8 certainly wins the best-value award, but gives less information on the MSS sources than does the revised Ricordi score of *The Four Seasons* by Paul Everett and Michael Talbot (for which good parts are available at competitive prices). Despite Everett's close involvement with the Manchester MSS, the Ricordi edition is primarily a representation of the op. 8 publication, though carefully corrected in accordance with the other sources. The Manchester version can be reconstructed from it, but only with some labour. So it is useful that the Bärenreiter edition offers an alternative that uses the Manchester MSS for its prime text. Variant bass figures from the print are shown above the continuo stave – though a check of the very first page shows that this isn't pedantically done. In bars 7, 8 and 9, for instance, the placement of the 5/3 chords on the second quaver's-worth of the crotchet isn't indicated in the print, so there is no implication that the right-hand need be restruck before the next crotchet – though admittedly, there isn't space in Le Cene's engraving to place the figures between the notes. Assuming that the orchestral parts are sensibly laid-out (I haven't seen them), this will prove a sensible alternative to the new Ricordi version: Ricordi's new distributors (UMP) will have to work hard to keep a toe in the market.

## HANDEL &amp; HAYDN

The association of names naturally makes one think of Boston, but they are linked here to group a batch of operatic vocal scores that have arrived from Bärenreiter. There are two Handel operas, *Radamisto* (BA 4066a) and *Tamerlano* (BA 4052a), each costing £23.50 for around 300 pages, good value by current standards. While I won't belabour the point, readers will know that I have doubts on the relevance of the modern vocal score for baroque opera. Performances are almost invariably professional with competent répétiteurs who can read Handel's concise scores (especially if kept compact by the omission of doubling oboes), and singers who are interested can see the exact instrumentation; if they are not, perhaps they should be authentic and learn from two-stave scores with the bass and perhaps instrumental cues when the voice is silent. The *Tamerlano* vocal score and the King's Music full score (which has a longer appendix of alternative versions) take about the same number of pages; the latter's pages are

larger but its total weight is slightly less. The KM score is a bit more expensive (£30), not surprisingly since copies are produced on demand, and it is, of course, vastly cheaper than the Bärenreiter full score (£137.00). But if you need a conventional vocal score, these are well done. The print is clear and continuo realisations are distinguished by small print. They also have the advantage for German performers of including singing translations. The reproductions of the original bilingual (Italian and English) libretti included in the full scores are not included here – no great loss, since the translations are not accurate enough to guide singers on the meanings of specific words and sentence structure. The *Tamerlano* score only includes 5 of the 29 items of the full score's appendix. The numbering is confusing, since the items in the appendix are not numbered in relationship to the movement numbers in the main sequence. For example, the first appendix item in the vocal score is numbered 5, that indicating, not that it is an alternative to no. 5 in the main sequence, but that it is the fifth item in the full score's appendix. It is a variant of no. 10 in the main sequence, but there are no references under main no. 10 or appendix no. 5 to link the two settings.

The *Radamisto* score contains two versions though the printing of HWV 12<sup>b</sup> on the cover would suggest just one. This is the version revived on 28 December 1720. HWV does not allocate a separate number to the version revived in 1728. The vocal score has an appendix that begins with a full contents list for that version, giving page numbers in the main sequence when the music was unchanged and to the appendix when it differed. Movement numbers disappear in the 1728 version, though they have them in HWV and retention of the numbering might make it easier to see how the versions relate. But I suppose that the editor decided that they were not accurate enough. Both scores depend on the full scores edited by Terence Best, so one can be sure that such decisions (as well as more musical ones) were carefully considered.

Up to now the only usable vocal score of *Acis and Galatea* that represents Handel's original vocal layout is, I think, that of Vincent Novello, published in 1851 (though I have a vague recollection of there being one from Peters); King's Music has a corrected (perhaps not adequately, if the verbal slips Anthony Hicks noticed in the recent Prom performance were my fault) reprint of this. Bärenreiter has now produced a much more elegant and legible version to accompany the HHA score (BA 4039a; £12.50). This presents all three tenor parts in the appropriate clef (octave-treble) – fine for authenticists, but probably to the detriment of sales to the many choirs that still perform the work. Fortunately for them, the choral 'Happy we' is retained – indeed, is printed in two versions, the one in the appendix being shortened by Handel for a Dublin performance for which he had carillon available. I doubt, though, whether there will be much demand for the shortened version of 'Wretched lovers'.

Haydn's *L'anima del filosofo ossia Orfeo ed Euridice* has never been at all easily available for Haydn lovers, so in this case the new vocal score (BA 4658a) falls into a void and is to be welcomed for its own sake. It is a work with con-

siderable musicological problems, which the editor sketches out perhaps a little too briefly. After centuries of neglect, Haydn's last opera is at last achieving some stage performances, so the availability of this score is most welcome. But you need to buy a CD to get hold of an English translation.

#### CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

*Christmas a cappella: Christmas carols for mixed voices...* Edited by Graham Buckland. Bärenreiter (BA 7573) 2001. 224pp, £12.00. (Discounts for multiple copies).

This is a more international collection than many available in England – not that most English carols collections don't include much that is non-English, but they tend to go back to material fancied by Neale or Woodward rather than to music sung at Christmas by contemporary central-European singers. There is, as one would expect from the publisher, a strong German emphasis; one can presume that the editor is English, probably with Cambridge associations since the book is dedicated to Philip Radcliffe, but he is connected with Regensburg, whose University Chamber Choir are thanked for trying most of the arrangements.

There are 171 items, mostly in settings for SATB and notated on two staves. The layout is compact without being squashed, though there are occasional examples of verses not being visible from the score, most annoyingly in *This is the truth sent from above*, though I suspect that most singers will prefer the Vaughan Williams setting a4 to Buckland's SAB version. Most items are given in English and German, the editor being responsible for many of the translations in both directions. They seem rather more free than those in the *New Oxford Book of Carols*, but are singable. I'm not sure if English singers will prefer this to NOBC or other English collections: the arrangements do not demand attention. But there are German carols that are worth investigating (even three yodels) and some more popular items that NOBC neglected – my wife kept on saying while we were working on that book that we should have included *Little Donkey* and *Rudolf the red-nosed reindeer*, both of which are here, but not *The Snowman*. The general tone however, is ecclesiastical rather than secular. There is no source or background information: the reader is referred to Bärenreiter's web site which, as yet at least, doesn't add anything.

#### GIRAFFES, BLACK DRAGONS, ETC

Edwin M. Good *Giraffes, Black Dragons, and Other Pianos: A Technological History from Cristofori to the Modern Concert Grand*. Second edition. Stanford UP, 2001. xxv + 368pp, £30.00. ISBN 08047 3316 3 [Distribution by Cambridge UP.]

The first edition won the AMS's Otto Kinkeldey Award for the best musicological book in English of 1982-3, and one can see why: it is masterly in conveying a lot of technical information in a way that is readable without appearing to over-simplify. It satisfies the expert, but has the readability that makes it a pleasure for the non-expert to read. I suspect

that these virtues would guarantee its failure to win such an award now: I fear that recommending it as a model to an aspiring academic author might lead to an increase in the chance of receiving a rejection slip. Although I knew the book by title, I never read the first edition, so cannot report on the degree of updating, but I suspect that it involves chiefly the period of most interest to our readers: the first century of the instrument. There has been a lot of work on Cristofori's instruments in particular, and that is fully covered here, as is the research which culminated in Richard Maunder's 1998 Oxford UP *Keyboard Instruments in Eighteenth-Century Vienna*. Good emphasises that his concern is primarily the technology, but the reader is continually aware of the musical and social implications. It is difficult when writing from the technological viewpoint not to drop into the assumption that change is improvement. If he sometimes slips into the trap, Good is at least aware of the problem: 'Music is sound, and technology provides the means of sound production. Changes in piano technology affected the objective qualitites of the tone. On some grounds, one could argue that changes were improvements... But there is no arguing with the person who listens to music played on a piano with the new technology and says, "I prefer the sound of the older one".' (p. 236) To say that this is a good book is a terrible pun, but true.

#### ANGLICAN CHORAL REVIVAL

Bernarr Rainbow *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church 1839-1872* The Boydell Press, 2001. xiv 368pp, £30.00. ISBN 0 85115 818 8

This is an unaltered reprint of the original edition published by Oxford UP in 1970. It was a pioneering study, and set the tone for subsequent discussion of the subject, like them suffering from too close an identification with the ideals of the reformers. The dislike of soloists, for instance, didn't fit well with a serious desire to revive plainsong, since the medieval liturgy has large sections sung by soloists; and the singing of chant by congregations is also difficult to justify on precedent. Anglicans took some while to realise that St. Ambrose, Isaac Watts and the Wesleys had the right idea: congregations need hymns. Rainbow based his study on the institution for which he worked, the College of St Mark and St John, and expands its early history into a valuable study of the attitudes and history of the change in Anglican music in the mid-19th-century. It did much to encourage the use of early music (which is why it is relevant here) as well as brought a new vitality to the Anglican church – although it also led, at its worst, to an effete sanctimoniousness. The appendix of service lists for May 1857 is fascinating. Much of the repertoire is 18th century. I suspect that the author intended it to show how unreformed many cathedrals and major churches were: an alternative viewpoint is to wonder whether the 18th-century Anglican repertoire it represents has been unjustly neglected. The Victorian ecclesiastical revival's destruction of the 'west gallery' tradition is now deplored; perhaps we should be at least modifying the revivalists' assessment of cathedral music as well.

## RESEARCH AND WRITING

Trevor Herbert *Music in Words: A Guide to Researching and Writing about Music*. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 2001. xii + 212pp, £11.95. ISBN 1 86096 236 X

This handy book will be useful for all who need to write about music in any formal way, not just students, but also those who write programme notes for their own concerts or for their local music society. It guides through the difficulties and dangers of do-it-yourself research, offering clues on how to use libraries and the net. There is room for rather more critical advice on the reliability of reference sources, and it might have been worth giving a few clues on how to evaluate information. A good spot check is to see what date is given for Josquin's birth: if it is c. 1440, be suspicious. (I used to use Andrea Gabrieli, but the change from 1510 to c.1533 is quite widely known now). Or see what is said about Elgar's 3rd Symphony. References to the plural *Groves* also should raise suspicion: if there is an S, there should be an apostrophe before it.

Both ways of dealing with footnotes are described. I wish something could be done to confine the use of footnotes to essential references, but I suppose the academic world needs to be attacked at a higher level on that topic. One could start by assuming that information in the latest editions of Grove and MGG should be accepted as common knowledge and only referred to explicitly if disagreed with; when reference was necessary, it should be to the name of the article (page is irrelevant with online circulation) and only mention an author when the point at issue concerned a personal judgment. The most ludicrous footnote I've seen recently was in the penultimate *Early Music*, where the joke of the title of an article ('*Mi chiamano Mimi... but my name is Quarti toni*') had to be explained!

Ever since I started writing essays at school, I was told that I must always plan them, and Trevor Herbert offers the same advice. I suppose he's right for most people, but I never did: I used to write slowly, so couldn't afford to waste exam time on thought. And curiously, I think that the best published piece of writing I've produced (not in *EMR*) was a couple of thousand words written straight off with no planning. Perhaps better advice is to approach the subject in such a way that the material itself provides a form. Also, in many circumstances, it's the first sentence that is most important: for the writer, since it gets him going, and for the reader, since it may make him interested enough to read further. The traditional advice for speakers (first say what you are going to say, then say it, then say that you have said it) is a recipe for boredom, and an essay paper based on the pattern offered on p. 13 is not likely to stimulate any examiner. Herbert is telling you how to play the examination game, but don't necessarily follow it too carefully when writing for a real audience.

The comments on writing CD notes are odd. In my experience, much of the information he mentions is provided direct by the record company, often without the writer seeing it, and he does not mention the specific constraints: length (you are usually given a number of words – or lines

in some countries) and writing circumspectly so that the reader isn't aware that you haven't been given a chance to hear the performance your notes are accompanying (perhaps less common now than it used to be). For most commercial writing, length is a consideration, as is an ability to guess the appropriate level of technicality and the knowledge one can assume that the readers have on the topic. Many writers producing concert notes may be involved in the final production of the programme, so advice on lay-out is needed. (It isn't an accident that this review fits a page.) Relating sung texts to page-turns is important, as is the need to match original texts and translations line-by-line.

When choosing illustrations, it is essential to know what quality of reproduction is being used for the final product. There is no point in having detailed photographs in a document that is being photocopied, and not many books will include colour plates.

Normal academic practice is followed in demanding that *eighteenth* be written in full: I find our practice of *18th* not only space-saving but easier to read. The advice to write numbers below 100 in full seems also to be normal academic practice, but with Brian Clark's background in popular journalism (Dundee is one of the centres of women's magazines), we have used 10 as the dividing point, though if a precise number is not intended, we would write it out ('I told him twenty times' but 'She was 20 years old.') I was taught never to begin a sentence with *however*, but it is implicitly approved on p. 98. I am glad to see that the New Labour spelling of Latin second declension neuter nouns is not adopted (so we can keep *data*, *errata* and, by implication, *referenda*); with *media*, of course, the catch is to remember that it has a singular. [For non-UK readers, I should explain that in the 1997 election campaign, all the Labour candidates insisted in saying *referendums* with such unanimity that there must have been a conscious decision about it.]

There isn't yet a standard English English term to replace *sleeve notes*. American English has kept *liner*, which Herbert seems by example (p. 182) to accept. We used *booklet* and/or *notes*, depending on which in context seemed to be clearest. It is good that the manner of reference to them is given: footnotes tend to mention too many books but not enough CD booklets, which are often clues to the research embodied in the performances.

Bibliographic reference to Collected Works of composers by the names of the editors (p. 183) seems to me to be unhelpful and pedantic, and not in accordance with the way they are catalogued: surely most libraries still place their entries for them at the head of their entries for the composer. Some collected works are identified in normal parlance by their editor (Chrysander for HG for instance, or Haberl and Casimiri to distinguish the two Palestrina editions), but I wouldn't know where to look up BG, NBA or HHA if I needed to use their editors' names and don't see why bibliographies should be thus encumbered.

The length of these comments should not be interpreted as implying that there are serious weaknesses with this book; they are rather the exercising of a few of my hobby-horses. It can be recommended to anyone needing to write about music and is full of good advice.

## HANDEL GLORIA EDITIONS REVIEWED

Anthony Hicks

Händel *Gloria* (HWV deest) Edited by Hans Joachim Marx. Preprint from *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe...* Series III, Volume 2, *Lateinische und Italienische Kirchenmusik*. Bärenreiter (BA 4248), 2001. pp. 31. Score £9.50 Vocal score edited by Andreas Köhs. Bärenreiter (BA 4248a), 2001. pp. 22 £4.50. Parts: vln I/II £3.50, Bc £3.00, Organ £5.00

Handel (attrib) *Gloria* Edited by Clifford Bartlett. King's Music (KM 790), 2001. pp. 23 Score: £7.50, parts £2.50 each

With these publications the new-found Handel *Gloria* comes fully into public view. The Bärenreiter full score is of particular importance, as it is likely to become the standard reference score for the time being, and it has a preface by Professor Hans Joachim Marx explaining how he came to find the work and setting out his theory about its origins. These matters are also covered in Marx's note in the programme book for this year's Göttingen Handel Festival, written for the official première of the work on 3 June. (I had not seen the note or the Bärenreiter score when I wrote the letter published in *EMR* 72, p. 30.) In addition, a longer essay on the *Gloria* by Marx has just been published in the August issue of *Early Music*. I have decided to ignore the *EM* essay here (apart from a reference to an illustration), since it appeared after this review was already complete in draft and none of the points made here are invalidated by it; it adds nothing of substance to Marx's other statements. (I shall be submitting to *EM* itself a direct response to Marx's essay and to Lindsay Kemp's review of reactions to the *Gloria* in the same issue.) Thus I refer here only to GPB, Marx's note in the Göttingen programme book (in German only, any translations mine) and to BFS, his preface to the Bärenreiter full score (in German and in an English translation by J. Bradford Robinson, from which my quotations will be taken).

GPB provides a more detailed account of the discovery than does BFS. In GPB Marx says that the *Gloria* 'was no chance find, but ultimately the result of a systematic investigation I have been pursuing for over two years... with my colleague Steffen Voss'. The subject of their research – 'Georg Friedrich Händel: Compositions of Doubtful Authenticity' – drew them to the RISM catalogue of manuscript sources on CD-ROM, and there they found entries for both the score and the instrumental part-books of the *Gloria* in the Royal Academy of Music (the score entered as anonymous, the parts attributed to Handel. (CB's assumption in *EMR* 69, p. 24, is thus confirmed, but Marx does not mention Nicholas Clapton's announcement of the existence of the *Gloria* in the April 1983 *Early Music*.) Marx goes on to say that he came to London last October to see the MSS, gaining information on the provenance and condition of the material he could not have obtained from microfilm.

Whether or not he studied the contents of the MSS on the Research Publications microfilm published in 1988 before coming to London is not clear, but later in GPB he thanks Voss for 'die Beschaffung und Aufarbeiten des Film-materials'. (Voss is not mentioned in the briefer and vaguer account in BFS.) This information does not affect Marx's role as 'discoverer' – the person who has brought the work to public recognition – but it is notably in conflict with what was said at the RAM press conference on 15 March.

Marx's arguments concerning the possible association of the *Gloria* with the soprano Margherita Durastanti are more significant. (The treatments of this topic in GPB and BFS are virtually the same.) He suggests she may have brought a manuscript of the piece from Italy when she came to London for the last time to sing in the season of 1733/34, and gave it to Handel. The implication (not spelt out) is that it would not previously have been available for copying in England. However, such patrons as Charles Jennens and the Earl of Shaftesbury had Handel's music copied for them long after that date, and it therefore remains puzzling why, if the source from which the RAM MSS were copied was in Handel's own library by 1734, no other copy exists in any of the major Handel collections. The reference to Durastanti prepares the way for Marx to propose that the *Gloria* was written for her, and should be grouped with the Latin church pieces that Handel composed in June 1707 for her to sing at Vignanello, the country estate of Handel's Roman patron the Marchese Ruspoli. Marx notes that the known works for Vignanello – two motets and the antiphon *Salve regina* – are all scored, like the *Gloria*, for 2-part violins and bass. (So also, of course, is Handel's early *Laudate pueri* in F, which has nothing to do with Vignanello and which Marx never mentions.) He then draws attention to the evidence from Ruspoli's household accounts that the second motet *Coelitis dum spirat aura* was written for a service at which a new altarpiece depicting St Antony of Padua was dedicated. This, Marx presumes, was a celebratory Mass, and so 'we may safely assume' that Durastanti sang the motet during the Offertory and the *Gloria* 'was performed as part of the Ordinary'. Marx (as translated in BFS) continues: 'Not only did Handel write both pieces for the same forces, the soprano part places extreme technical demands on the singer and has a relatively large ambitus ranging from d' to b"flat. Only a *virtuosa* of the caliber [sic] of Margherita Durastanti could have sung it'.

This theory is presumably the basis of what has been repeatedly said in the press and elsewhere to be what 'research indicates' or what 'scholars believe'. Manifestly, however, it is fantasy, and indeed refutable fantasy. We

know about the composition of the Latin works for Vignanello and their association with Durastanti solely through the information provided by Ruspoli's household accounts, published by Ursula Kirkendale in 1967. The documents consist of individual bills for copying music or for other work, and separate summaries. The two sets of documents thus confirm each other, and show that there are no gaps in the record. A bill for copying the three Latin pieces, together with two Italian cantatas, was presented by the copyist Angelini at Vignanello on 30 June 1707, countersigned by Durastanti herself. If the *Gloria* was composed for Durastanti at the same time, why is it not mentioned in this bill or anywhere else in the Ruspoli accounts? The question is an obvious one, but Marx shows no sign of ever having asked it.

As for the point about vocal range, Marx is misleading. The range of the *Gloria* is  $f'$  to  $bb''$ , whereas that of the motet is  $d'$  to  $a''$  (Marx's  $d'$  to  $bb''$  flat range is perhaps intended to cover both motet and *Gloria*, presuming them to be sung by the same soloist; but that is the point he is attempting to prove.) The range of the other motet (*O qualis de coelo sonus*) is also  $d'$  to  $a''$ , and that of the *Salve regina* is  $d'$  to  $ba''$  (despite a florid section in B flat major). These latter ranges are entirely in line with other vocal writing for Durastanti, both in Italy and London. (Statements by CB in *EMR* 69, p. 25, and by Richard Wigmore in the August *Gramophone*, p. 13, that Durastanti's part in *La resurrezione* reaches  $bb''$  are untrue: the note occurs only in the part of the Angel, written for a castrato.)

The conclusion, from the evidence, is inescapable: the *Gloria* has nothing to do with Ruspoli or Durastanti. Of course a Roman origin is still possible, as Handel worked with other patrons and singers there; but such associations are poorly documented and theories involving Cardinal Colonna or Cardinal Pamphili would be just as fantastic as Marx's, though they might have the advantage of not actually being in conflict with known facts. Regrettably, consideration of the origins of the *Gloria* has to be based solely on assessment of its musical style in comparison with other works, a notoriously subjective exercise. Curtis Price's note for Emma Kirkby's recording, playing down the Durastanti theory, makes a respectable case for a date of 1707, but it depends on the dubious reliability of the date of 1706 assigned to the early *Laudate pueri* in F and on an assumption open to challenge about the development of Handel's style. I continue to incline to the view that if the work is Handel's it must have been written much earlier, presumably in Germany, but I am also beginning to take doubts about its authorship more seriously, and I cannot see matters of date and attribution being settled unless some remarkable new evidence comes to light.

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And so to the editing of the music. I had better mention that I too have prepared an edition of the *Gloria*, but as a one-off exercise commissioned by Decca (with permission from the RAM) for Sir John Eliot Gardiner's recording with Gillian Keith. It was used again for the English Bach

Festival performances with Patricia Rosario at the Linbury Theatre in July, and may have one or two further outings, but will not be published and is now essentially defunct. As the only sources for the work are the MS full score and the closely related part-books in the RAM, editions are not likely to differ much from one another, but there are points of detail which need attention and which can be dealt with in different ways, and the fully figured bass of the MS score – the figures not likely to derive from the composer – has problems of its own.

Comparison of CB's King's Music edition with Marx's has to take into account that they are not prepared on the same basis. Readers of this journal will know that CB's editions are primarily clean urtext material produced for professional early music groups unconcerned with surface polish. They are sometimes prepared to meet specific requirements and are printed only in small runs, each of which may incorporate revisions prompted by feedback from users. (Reviewing such material here has a slightly surreal quality: if I point out errors which CB accepts, they will be corrected in the next print of the edition; and if I say anything here with which CB disagrees, I run the risk of an immediate riposte in square brackets, or a more stately response in italics at the end. Only when the review appears in print will I find out what has happened!) [See the brief comment at the end CB.] Thus CB's preface to his score is surely too discursive and personalised for a widely distributed edition, but in context it can be seen as part of the continuing dialogue he maintains with his clients, and it will no doubt be modified in future issues in the light of further comments on the *Gloria*.

His music text is a good transcript of the MS score. [I've removed the list to an appendix, since they will be corrected in subsequent print-runs, so the annotation is of use only to those with earlier issues of the edition. CB] There are other points where source readings are accurately reproduced but should have been questioned – some of them will be discussed below – and another mild deficiency of the edition is that insufficient attention has been paid to the MS part-books. Their main value is in explicitly supplying dynamics not marked in the MS score, especially in Violin 2 and Basso. Inclusion in future issues would obviate the need for editorial dynamics (e.g. those in the opening movement, bars 26 and 42) and would be generally helpful to players. In addition, the *tutti* marking in bar 31 of the *Laudamus*, just before it gives way to the *Gratias* section, occurs only against Violin 1 in the score but in the part-books is also found in Violin 2 and Basso. Opinions may differ as to its meaning, but it should be shown in all parts.

Marx's edition carries the extra responsibility of meeting the general requirements of a major publishing house – unlikely to be keen on revisions – and the special prestige of being issued as a *preprint* of part of a forthcoming volume in the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe. (The latter claim is, I regret to say, misleading: the HHA is now prepared according to

detailed guidelines under the supervision of general editors, an editorial board and well-trained editorial staff, but the present version of the edition seems to have had no such supervision. If it had, at least the amusing designation *Violiono* against the violin parts of *Et in terra pax* would have been picked up.) Besides the preface, there is a critical report (in German and English) with a good description of the physical characteristics of the MS sources. Bars are numbered consecutively from the beginning of the work to the end, though in the preface Marx refers to musical borrowings by the more sensible scheme of bar number within movement. (CB also uses the latter method, so to facilitate reference to either score I shall from now on identify bars by the notation a.b/c, where a is the movement number, b the bar number within the movements and c the bar number in the overall count.) Unlike CB, Marx converts the key signature of the C minor *Qui tollis* from two flats to three, a policy I agree with for movements in a clear tonality, but one that needs care in the adjustment of accidentals: Marx trips up in 5.31/241, where the a in the bass should be natural. Such modernisation is at odds with Marx's curious attempt to revive the archaic practice of allowing dotted notes to extend over bar lines (e.g. 2.6/67, 4.14/208). Marx, however, puts the dot before the bar line, whereas in the old method (exemplified in the *Gloria* MSS) it comes after. Thus Marx's notation is neither ancient nor modern, and as it is contrary to HHA guidelines it will no doubt be replaced by the usual modern form of a tie across the bar when the score is issued in the HHA.

In general, Marx's text is very accurate. In contrast to CB, he shows awareness of the dynamics in the part-books, but he is arbitrarily selective about which ones he chooses to include in his score. In 1.20/20, for example, both Violin 2 and Basso are marked *Pia.* in the part-books, but Marx omits the marks from his score, adding a confusing note in his critical report: 'Vn 2: *Pia*[no] missing in A'. (A represents the MS score, B the part-books.) Like CB, he also omits the *tutti* marks for the same instruments in 3.31/148, and his comment is both cryptic and contentious: 'A and B: *tutti* (meaning forte)'. However, he does well to pick up (as CB does not) a likely corruption in the violin parts of 6.57/307, where the semiquaver groups on the last beat should surely be the same as their *echo* two bars later. (Interestingly, the whole passage 6.57-59/307-309 is virtually a reprise of 25-27 in the first movement, as is 6.71-75/321-325 of 1.42-46. This feature seems not to have been remarked upon; one implication – *pace* Emma Kirkby – is that the first and last movements are meant to have the same tempo.) Marx does, however, go awry in 6.28/278, where note 6 of the bass in the MSS is an obviously wrong *d*. A user of the MS score has corrected the note to *f*, adding *f* above the note in confirmation. Marx prints the *d* and says in his report: 'A has correction mark (+) on note 6 (f); B: *d*'. He has thus misread the lower-case *f* as a 'correction mark' (whatever that is), but it remains unclear why he accepts the wrong note in his score.

As to questionable readings of the sources, Marx and CB

are almost equally non-interventionist. Apart from violin fifths in 3.73/190 (see below), which Marx accepts without comment, they are all points where the voice, always on the last note of a bar, has an unresolved clash with the instrumental harmony: 1.9/9 (*bb'* against F major); 3.10/220 (*d''* against C minor); and 3.32/242 (*be''* against G major). My view is that the voice note is erroneous in all three cases and should be corrected, though (as Emma Kirkby has shown) the effect of the clashes can be minimised in performance. CB reproduces the source readings without comment. Marx does likewise in the last two cases, but on the last beat of 1.9 (the end of the soprano's opening flourish) he replaces the *bb'* with *c''*, a sensible correction. However, the comment in the critical report is baffling: it says that in the MS score the final bass note is crotchet *A*, producing octaves with violin 2, while the parts have quavers A-F (which Marx prints); the editorial change to the note in the voice is not mentioned. In fact, the last beat of the bass in the MS score is also quavers A-F, as can be seen in the illustration of the first page of the MS on p. 342 of the August *Early Music* (end of stave 8). A possible explanation can be found in the Göttingen programme book. It too has an illustration of the first page of the MS, but taken from an image slightly truncated on the right, so that most of the last beat of bar 9 is lost. Here the bass reading does indeed appear to be a crotchet *A* (the final quaver being cut off) and the last note in the voice is lost. Thus when read against this image – perhaps identical to a photocopy used by Marx – the comment in the critical report makes some sense, though it would seem that the last note in the voice has been supplied by guesswork – a textual crux solved by a fluke. [It also shows that Marx did not use the Research Publications microfilm, which is perfectly clear here. CB]

The vocal score of Marx's edition comes without commentary of any kind, and is presumably intended just as a working document for soloists and rehearsal accompanists. It adds continuo realisation in small notes where the violin parts do not complete the harmony. (Neither Marx nor CB has a continuo realisation in their scores.) Occasionally the notation gets muddled and the added notes appear in large print (e.g. in 5.4/214). The realisation always follows the fully figured bass of the MS score, but the figures (as mentioned above) are unlikely to have been the composer's, and at certain points are inappropriate, perhaps as a result of following fixed note-by-note rules without consideration of harmonic context. (I would be interested in comment from anyone who has studied figured bass tutors of the period.) The figures themselves are not reproduced in the vocal score, and so the keyboard player will sometimes be puzzled by the chord prescribed. An example occurs on the third beat of the very first bar, which has B flats in the violins above G in the bass. The G would seem best treated as root *vi*, but the bass figure in the source is 6, and the vocal score duly adds an E flat, giving a less convincing IV. Marx and CB both reproduce the original figures in their full scores, but whereas Marx does so without comment, CB warns in his preface that their style is 'unidiomatic, sometimes downright wrong'.

In sum, both editions are good enough to be usable, but neither is perfect. It may well be that the next issue of the King's Music edition will be notably improved, but of course I could not possibly recommend it in advance, and certainly not in this journal.

*As implied above, the King's Music score has now been corrected in accordance with the list included in the text of the review as submitted but printed below as an appendix. In due course the preface to the edition will also be made a little more formal (it is completely different from the usual KM style). I was waiting to revise it until I had seen what Marx would write, and when I find time I will now do so.*

#### APPENDIX

*Mistakes in the first King's Music issues, as listed by Anthony Hicks, but now corrected.*

*Laudamus te* bar 3, bass: note 3 should be *f* not *g*  
 bar 10, bass: note 4 should be an octave lower  
 bar 23, violin 1, note 9: *tr* omitted.  
*Qui tollis* bar 15, violin 2: first two notes should be even quavers, as in previous bar.

In *EMR* 71, p. 11, CB suggested a solution to the fifths in the violins in bar 73 of the *Laudamus* (in the *Gratias* section),

but they are retained without comment in the edition. (Reversing just the last two notes of Violin 2 is an adequate correction: the violins are then as in bar 55.)

*I have not corrected the possible errors noted on p. 9, column 2, paragraph 1. The MS is sufficiently accurate for it to be unlikely that three such similar oddities should be mistakes in transmission; if such cadences derive from the composer, not the scribe, they may be relevant to the consideration of when and by whom the work was composed. I did not incorporate material from the RAM parts because I assumed that they were not independent witnesses to the source but merely represented the interpretation of the copyist of the late 1730s. Unless it can be shown that these parts were copied from the source of the score, not from the score itself, it has no independent authority. Having *Tutti* in the violin solo (and not in the other parts) in the *Laudamus* bar 31/148, for instance, makes perfect sense as the standard 17th-century practice of telling a player that he is no longer a soloist, not an instruction for a doubling violin to join in. As is clear from the figuring of the bass, there is no reason to believe that the scribe had any direct awareness of performance styles of thirty or more years earlier or any skill to change the reading of the score apart from guesswork and common sense. So evidence in the parts seemed irrelevant to a performing edition, though should, of course, be recorded in a full critical edition.*

CB

## EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

### D. James Ross

After last year's veritable feast of early music at the Edinburgh International Festival, which as I commented at the time was so well attended, it was disappointing to see early music again demoted to a very small fraction of the 2001 programme. I was unable to attend the concert by the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and could only go to one of three by the Quatuor Mosaïques, but that left me with only three relevant events in an otherwise very large and varied programme. The enterprising reconstructions of concerts given by Handel in 1742 and Beethoven in 1808 respectively seemed in the interests of complete authenticity to cry out for period instrument ensembles. Sadly, not so.

Having said this, the three performances I did attend were fascinating, innovative and, in part at least, brilliant. To place them in ascending order of brilliance, I am reviewing them in reverse chronological order – my Edinburgh Festivals seem otherwise doomed to end in bathos and thoughts of what might have been.

#### THE GENTLE SHEPHERD

It is not that the performance by Concerto Caledonia of Alan Ramsay's *The Gentle Shepherd* was a disappointment – indeed it had a awful lot going for it. The ceilidh band which David McGuiness had assembled for the occasion

was simply splendid, with superbly idiomatic contributions from the fiddle of Adrian Chandler and the flutes, whistles and pipes of Chris Norman, with McGuiness and Elizabeth Kenny providing funky percussive effects at suitable moments.

However, anybody planning to perform this piece is immediately faced with several knife-edge decisions and the first of these was not long in emerging. Like the *Beggar's Opera*, for which it prepared the way, *The Gentle Shepherd* was probably intended for performance by singing actors (rather than acting singers), but when the decision has been taken to present a concert performance rather than staging the piece, there is a strong argument for reverting to performers who are primarily singers. Into this latter category came most soundly the excellent Mhairi Lawson and Jamie MacDougall; but the others were definitely singing actors, and sadly in a couple of cases the singing voices were simply inadequate. Clutching my 1802 pocket edition of the piece, I noted that several of the vocalists had even had their melodies simplified for them, although in some cases to little avail.

I can't help feeling that this shortcoming would have been less painfully apparent if the piece had been staged, and it struck me that aside from the learning, very little extra effort would have been involved. It is relatively static, the settings extremely simple and anyway described in verse at the beginning of each new section, and the readers seemed to

be simply itching to throw aside their (wool-lined!) folders and act! At this point I should air my other reservation, which may seem relatively unimportant, but which is I think more substantial than it sounds. Whether by design or ignorance, the pronunciation of the Scots was heavily compromised in the direction of comprehension by an English-speaking audience. This made a nonsense of many of the rhymes and occasionally led to corruption of the text – Sir William's fake beard was not the length of five *knives* but five *neives* or fists. As one who has struggled with making the obscurer corners of 16th-century Scots drama comprehensible in performance to modern audiences, there are ways of using mime and gesture which can get round most ambiguities – quickly mime-measuring the beard in fists would be a case in point. At any rate, there seems little point in assembling a group of authentic instruments if the vocalists use a hybrid form of language which would have been unintelligible to the writer.

But all credit to Concerto Caledonia for bringing this work to a performance, much of which was very effective. There were several clever directorial ideas from Andrew McKinnon and there was some enjoyable acting – enough to show what might have been. I hope that Concerto Caledonia will now consider staging *The Gentle Shepherd*, perhaps with a few cast changes, and employing the services of a pronunciation adviser. This was so nearly very good, that another bite at the cherry would be well worth it.

#### QUATUOR MOSAÏQUES

*The Gentle Shepherd* was presented in Edinburgh's Queen's Hall, a charming performance space which used to be a church and which has an admirable acoustic, and it was also this hall which hosted three performances by the Quatuor Mosaïques. These concerts included all six of Mozart's 'Haydn Quartets', and the middle one, which I attended consisted of the two of these which have names, *The Dissonance* and *The Hunt*, as well as a quartet by Jadin. The Quatuor Mosaïques employ classical instruments and gut strings in their quest to get closer to the intended soundworld of Haydn, Mozart and the early romantics, and hearing them live for the first time I was impressed with the mellow sound, devoid of the shrillness which sometimes afflicts wire strings, and yet in no way lacking bite and attack.

Beautiful playing is not however the product of wood and gut but rather of the people wielding them, and the four performers employed many years of experience with the repertoire and a fine sense of ensemble to enormous effect. Their readings of the two very familiar Mozart quartets were delightfully fresh, but it was the music of Hyacinthe Jadin which was the real surprise. This practically forgotten Belgian composer died in 1800 at the age of 24 with relatively few works to his name. However, while he was not yet a Mozart or a Haydn he was equally no Pichl or Vanhal, and from the opening Largo of his first op 2 Quartet, it was clear that he had a considerable musical talent. Consistently in this quartet he takes the road less travelled, the route of invention rather than that of cliché.

The Quatuor Mosaïques are to be congratulated for presenting his music rather than that of a more obvious composer.

#### ZOROASTRE

Now, when the stage directions for an opera require that 'the earth opens and swallows them up, a gleaming temple appears, thronged with elemental spirit... amidst airy shining clouds' and you don't have the resources of the entire 18th-century city of Paris at your disposal, a concert performance is definitely the answer, and this solution was sensibly adopted by William Christie and Les Arts Florissants in their Usher Hall presentation of Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Zoroastre*. Strategic entrances and exits by soloists created the illusion of semi-staging, while simply superb singing and playing created as much drama as we needed.

It has been frequently observed in the past that there is a constant danger in works of art that evil can appear more immediately attractive than good, and in *Zoroastre* it is the baddies, the evil sorcerer Abrame and his ally Erinice, who are given the most dramatic music to sing. And when it is sung with the passion and technical assurance displayed by Nathan Berg and Anna-Marie Panzarella, it is in serious danger of outshining the contribution of the eponymous hero and his consort Amélie. However, Mark Padmore was a simply radiant Zoroastre, his high tenor tones at the same time weightless and penetrating. And if Gaëlle Mechally's Amélie occasionally sounded brittle, the ornamentation in her solo airs and her duets with Padmore were stunning.

The supporting line-up was equally strong, with Stéphanie Révidat's account of Céphie and Matthieu Lécroart's delightfully gauged Vengeance being particularly memorable. Rameau calls for a large orchestra providing impressive textural variety, with oboes, flutes, bassoons, horns and even a pair of clarinets, two-keyed baroque instruments which he employs not only as the expected mock trumpets but also in legato passages which anticipate Mozart's use of the instrument. Particular demands are also placed on the flutes, whose intimate interaction with the vocal soloists was exemplary. With Les Arts Florissants it almost goes without saying that the string-playing was superb, but their handling of Rameau's demandingly pyrotechnical writing in this score shows just what a first-class string section this is. If the soloists made light of Rameau's highly embellished idiom, the chorus too negotiated the more decoratively encrusted passages with great elegance, supplying a full chordal sound at the dramatic high points.

One of these was unquestionably the Hymn to the Sun, which glows luminously at the heart of the opera. Preceded by some mouthwateringly beautiful scene setting by Zoroastre and Amélie invoking the beauty of nature, the Hymn *O lumière vive et pure* is a visionary piece of writing, and in William Christie's hands an unforgettable and moving experience. I have never understood those who find French Baroque Opera boring, but these three hours of pure delight would have melted the heart of even the most hard-boiled sceptic.

## LONDON MUSIC

Andrew Benson-Wilson

### ANCESTRAL VOICES

South Bank Early Music Weekend (7-9 September)

Now a regular fixture in the London concert calendar, the South Bank Early Music weekend gives a healthy kickstart to the London autumn concert season. Combining the themes of the recent Lufthansa Festival and York Early Music Festivals, the focus for this year's weekend was music for the voice and music from Italy, from 13th century Icelandic sagas to instrumental music by W. F. Bach. The 10 concerts took place in the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room, and were interspersed by foyer performances by some excellent up-and-coming younger musicians – Masako Fujumura with some delicate music for the Baroque triple harp, Faye Newton (soprano) and Matthew Wadsworth (lute) performing Dowland and friends, and Trio Mercurio (Andrea Brown, soprano, Hazel Brooks, violin, and Elizabeth Pallett, theorbo) giving us a run through the Italian vocal repertoire. It took some time before the organisers found them a decent spot to perform from, which was a shame, but they were well worth listening to amongst the clatter and bustle of the foyer. Interval talks were a far less successful venture, with questioning of the performers ranging from the mildly intimidating and personal to the frankly vague. But few of us could hear the words anyway, so what matter.

Tragicomedia (and friends) opened the Festival with an opera that wasn't: a lively mixture of instrumental music, song, dance and commedia dell'arte performance loosely based on the fledgling Roman opera scene of the mid 17th century. The Spanish Kingdom of Naples was never far away from Rome, and much of the mood of the concert was Spanish rather than Italian, with the accent on gutsy and exotic rhythms. Most of the pieces were built on a ground bass, another Spanish import that was to prove so influential. The songs, by Luigi Rossi, Mazzochi and Michi, came from Mazarin's 1630s collection for Cardinal Richelieu. Once she rid herself of an initially rather nervous tone, Suzie LeBlanc was an engaging interpreter of the varied passions of the texts, from the inevitable broken hearts and unrequited love to the fatalistic concluding 'S'io son pazzo' (If I am mad, what is it to you). Steve Player and Eleanora Fuser provided dance and commedia entertainment. The four members of Tragicomedia were rather relegated to bit parts by the fun going on front stage, but put in such effective performances nonetheless. Alex Weiman caught the erratically changing moods of Michelangelo Rossi's well-known Settima Toccata, although he seemed reluctant to conclude the final cadence. Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs played some exotic works on archlute, chitarrone and guitar, joined on occasion by Erin Headley on gamba

and lirone. At times their improvisations veered a little off-message, with a delightful bit of 1970s folk rock and some 1990s film music allusions.

Not for the only time during the weekend, a concert was billed as a British debut when the programme notes implied otherwise. The American group Lionheart were the first casualty, their summer appearance at the Covent Garden Festival having been overlooked by the organiser and programme proof reader. The five voice all-male a cappella group gave a concert of laudi from medieval Italian manuscripts, including the earliest surviving collection, *Il laudario di Cortona*, produced around 1250/1300, and ranging through to Petrucci's early 16th century Laude books. The Cortona manuscript contains only the melodies, not the rhythm. This was reconstructed by one of the group, making use of generic European rhythms of the time [and what sources are there for those? CB] This did not convince. Apart from too wide variety of rhythms being employed for pieces from the same provenance, there was too much emphasis on catchy syncopations. Their version of 'O Maria d'omelia' came closest to what I would take to be a late 14th century style. I am afraid that the singing didn't impress too much either. Although there were moments of good consort singing, the individual voices were generally not up to the solo exposure that they had. A number of the voices suffered from tightened throats, giving an edge to the tone, and there were moments when I wondered if *musica ficta* was being applied appropriately. The staging was clearly thought out, with subtle changes to singer's positions on stage; but however earnest the intent, it did not appear very natural. The finest piece and performance was Innocentius Dammo's 'Amor Jésu divino' from Petrucci's *Libro Primo* of 1508. With a one voice holding a single tone throughout most of each verse, the hypnotically swinging of the encompassing harmonies and the little flourish on the final line of each verse made for a superb piece. But one last moan – for a concert of medieval religious texts, it seemed curious to choose a close-harmony barber-shop-style ditty as an encore.

I reviewed the young Japanese group La Fontaine when they appeared in the 1999 Early Music Network Competition in York and praised their technique, though noted that their presentational style was rather formal by some current European standards. They have clearly taken this to heart. In a refreshingly invigorating approach to performance and presentation, La Fontaine displayed a genuine and well-thought-out sense of humour. Starting with the Sonata by one or other of the two oboe-playing Catalonian Pla brothers, they broke in after the first movement for Koji Ezaki ('your host for the show') to make introductions, jazz

style in endearingly faltering English. He then explained how the Pla brothers tossed motifs back and forth between them 'like at Wimbledon'. Cue a large yellow ball and some tennis shots with the oboes. That was just the start! For the cadenza of the final movement, the ball was stuck on the end of Teruo Takamure's cello bow, and was hit over the cello's net by the two oboe players as they played, while the harpsichord player's head did the Wimbledon back and forth twist. This could have turned out to be a disastrous error of judgement, but the audience had already taken the group to heart and the whole concert was an outstanding success. Not something I would recommend other groups to try – it is a risky game, especially when attempting to adopt the humour of a nation as far apart from Japanese culture as the Brits are (and in a language that they were not entirely familiar with). Their performance was imbued with infectious good humour throughout, although this never got in the way of some fine musical thinking. Their ability to shape the phrasing and structure of pieces was both innovative and imaginative and always made musical sense. The diminutive Makiko Mizunaga's continuo harpsichord playing was a delight – fluidly rhetorical in style, she gave life to the underlying harmonies. The only other piece with out-and-out humour was the Largo from Brecianello's Sonata for two oboes, where the pizzicato bass throughout the 'straight' run through proved too tempting for the band who then jazzed the whole thing up with individual riffs from each of the players. The early music scene needs groups like this – prepared to take a risk and to project themselves, and the music, to an audience. This hugely entertaining group should be signed up by a good agent – on the strength of this performance, they deserve every success and should tour with this programme.

Countertenor Artur Stefanowicz is a new name to me, although he has had an impressive list of operatic engagements. His programme of cantatas by Handel and Vivaldi gave him ample chance to demonstrate the wide depth of emotion that his voice is capable of portraying. He had a sure grasp on the pyrotechnics and was well supported by some energetic cello playing by Richard Tunnicliffe and forthright harpsichord playing by David Roblou. But he has the sort of voice that does not do it for me. A persistent underlying vibrato of such speed and depth as to cause me to doubt the accuracy of pitch was his undoing. This had such an effect on the tone colour that it was difficult to access how attractive it might have been shorn of the interference. Others presumably think differently, or he would not have been booked for this weekend, nor had the success that he seems to have had. But perhaps this kind of voice is better suited to the opera house, and operatic roles, than the chamber platform. David Roblou made a brave attempt to shine new light onto Handel's 'Harmonious Blacksmith' Suite in E. But his articulation of the opening (and oft repeated) motif, which gave a strong pause between the trill on the second note and its apparent resolution, gave a distinctly unsettled feel to the Prelude. This mood was not entirely dispelled by the Allemande, with a rhetorical underlay that emphasised by

leaning into the pulse. The more relaxed flow of the Courante was also brought to an occasional halt by over-abrupt releases at cadences. As with the final movement of Bach keyboard transcription of Vivaldi's Concerto in D (where the opening motif encourages an unsustainable speed), the last variation really does need the notes to be played more or less as Handel wrote them. However exciting virtuosic performances can be when they work, there is a limit to the number of note slips that can be tolerated before it all sounds rushed. Roblou was a brave man to attempt these two movements at the speed he did, and I envy the fact that he obviously can play them accurately, even if the evidence was rather lacking in this performance. I must add that a member of the audience told me afterwards that she thought he was brilliant, so there we are. Two successive performances where risks were taken – one worked, one didn't. Such is life on the concert platform.

I first heard the Berlin Akademie für Alte Musik accompanying Cecilia Bartoli at the Wigmore Hall a couple of years ago, and was very impressed. The band of choice for a number of leading directors, their visit to the Queen Elizabeth Hall was up to expectation. Under their own inspirational director, violinist Stephan Mai, they showed a grasp on cohesion and control of mood, tempo, volume, balance and musical texture that eludes many better-known groups. Making subtle changes to the position of the players between pieces helped, as did having all who could standing up. Christoph Nichelmann's Suite in B flat had prominent roles for two oboes, placed centre stage as, of course, did the concluding J. S. Bach Suite in C. But the focus was on Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, possibly the least understood of Bach's sons. A curious introduction to his music was Mozart's arrangement of a 3-part keyboard Fugue, to which he added a brooding Adagio. Even with only 3 violas pitted against 8 violins and 4 bass instruments, the orchestral balance was perfect. W. F. Bach's E minor Harpsichord Concerto followed, a work I have not heard before. The differences between father and son were immediately apparent. JSB's use of the harpsichord generally grows out of the texture of the orchestral lines, but WFB's harpsichord had its own structure independent of the orchestral. The only time he approached JSB's style was in the final Allegro with its perpetual motion figuration. Raphael Alpermann was drawn from the ranks as a very assured harpsichord soloist. WFB's Sinfonie No 2 was a conglomeration of different styles, from French overture to Handelian counterpoint. The band must have read Andrew Stewart's programme note about the J. S. Bach Suite, as the string fanfare passages that back the oboes in the 2nd Gavotte were bought into much greater prominence than usual. A refreshing bit of gallantry amongst the earlier fare of the rest of the weekend, although I heard somebody asking whether it was early music.

It is bad enough having a 75-minute performance starting at 9.30, but when it overshoots the predicted timing by more than 20 minutes, an audience's patience can be tested. When that performance is given entirely in a language that

few, if any, of the audience understands, the chances of survival seem slimmer. Yet all but a few stayed the distance to hear Ensemble Sequentia, directed by Benjamin Bagby, perform *Edda* – Viking tales of lust, revenge and the everyday story of Norse folk, all in old Icelandic. Family life was nothing if not dramatic in the early history of the Germanic people (whose tales survive through Icelandic sources). There seems to have been a lot of hacking to death and the roasting of various relatives' hearts (always tempting around Christmas time, even today). This performance had Bagby as the half speaking, half singing narrator, with Agnethe Christensen and Lena Susanne Norin singing the female roles. No music of the period survives, so Bagby has reconstructed melodic patterns based on some surviving examples of ancient Icelandic song. The result is lengthy sequences based on a small group of notes, often just four or five, which by their repetition build a structure into the lengthy oration. An English translation of the text, with its relatively clear verse structure, a few recognisable names and the occasional word that is still understandable to English speakers today, helped most of us to follow what was going on. For those in doubt, Bagby's dramatic gestures gave some indication when bits were about to be hacked off some unfortunate soul. Instrumental accompaniment came from his usual six-string harp, based on examples found in 7th-century Germanic graves, a fiddle based on an English 10th century model and a series of flutes, one of which was crafted from the bone of a swan (which had presumably also been hacked to death in the furtherance of music). The first time I saw Benjamin Bagby give one of his sung/spoken performances was very late at night in a Cambridge college some years ago. His opening yelp and furious strumming of his little harp sent me into a fit of giggles that took me the rest of the evening to recover from. But he certainly managed to hold my attention, and that of this late night audience, in this performance. As well as the Icelandic sagas, we heard some prophecies from the *Völuspá*, poems based on the Icelandic tradition of an immortal female being who speaks in enigmatic expressions (rather like some present day women that I know).

The final day of the weekend festival opened with one of the most memorable concerts – an outstanding harpsichord recital by the exciting Neapolitan player Enrico Baiano. With superb technical assurance, his playing was extravagant and virtuosic whilst retaining the essential musicality and accuracy of notes. We are getting used to powerful performances of Vivaldi from Italian instrumental groups, but hearing this type of interpretation on the harpsichord was quite something. Baiano's timing and placing of notes was spot on, notably in Scarlatti's cantabile Sonata K132, and his fiery playing of Scarlatti's wilder moments kept the audience on the edge of their seats. He played Vivaldi transcriptions from the Ann Dawson book, adding his own notes to those rather sparse versions. This opened up more of Vivaldi's own instrumental writing and contrast between sections. Pietro Domenica Paradies is well worth seeking out as well, on the strength of the two

pieces played here. The wild and wonderful Presto from his Sonata X took the breath away. If more 18th-century harpsichordists had played like this there would have been no need to invent the piano.

Another memorable concert followed by the Huelgas Ensemble, led by Paul van Nevel. The 13 a cappella singers formed such a balanced and cohesive ensemble that it was difficult to believe that there were so many people singing. I have rarely heard a vocal group sing so well. Their balance was perfect, the tone of individual singers was excellent and they meshed together perfectly. Their cadences should be bottled and sold to choir directors. One noticeable departure from the English tradition was in the alto line – two male singers that spent much of their time in the high tenor register and, when in countertenor mode, blended imperceptibly in with the rest of the voices. The relaxed, clear and still voices of the other singers was ideal for consort singing. The music was by the early-16th-century Flemish composer Jean Richafort. His 6-part *Requiem in memoriam Josquin Desprez* was balanced by a *Salve Regina* and a couple of chansons, sung by a smaller group. I did wonder whether having these smaller works conducted was wise – the singers seemed to be looking at the conductor rather than each other. Interestingly, they looked at each other more during the full-scale works, although they were still conducted. Paul van Nevel regrouped his forces and shaded the volume and tone by varying the number of singers to a part. My only quibble in an otherwise superb concert was the use of a different voice type for each of the intonations in the *Requiem*. Apart from being liturgically inappropriate, it just sounded odd, particularly having sopranos intoning the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. This concert vies with Enrico Baiano, the Berlin Akademie für Alte Musik and La Fontaine for the best of the weekend.

Although the audience was grateful for Philip Pickett for bringing over such excellent performers as the Huelgas Ensemble and the Berlin Akademie für Alte Musik, it had the unfortunate effect of making his own New London Consort sound rather lacklustre. In a performance of not-THE-Vivaldi *Gloria* and not-THE-Vivaldi *Dixit Dominus* (ie the lesser known RV588 and 595 settings) both choir and orchestra came over as a series of individuals with little real sense of a unified whole or of like minds. In less elevated company, I am sure their performance would have been considered reasonable, but the lack of cohesion exposed a wide range of little inconsistencies (of orchestral intonation, vocal tone colour etc). Even the bowing (as in bending over, not as in playing the violin) was raggedy – although an interval pep talk seemed to sort that out by the second half. The soloists were fine, notably William Purefoy, but they did not make for the best consort singers. There was a wide range of vocal styles amongst the singers, but rather too many adopted a rather busy vibrato that did little to cohesion. Perhaps the familiarity of the better-known versions dominated, but I fear that neither of the two works particularly impressed me either [cf the review of another performance on p. xx]. The *Gloria* was far too

predictable in its use of Baroque formula, including the parading of the instruments in the *introductione* ('Sonoro modulamine') with its mention of the 'cithara, reed-pipe, lyre and organ'. The *Dixit Dominus*, for all its drama and bustle, never seemed to be pointing at the stars, although there were some fascinating moments, including a curious harmonic progression towards the end. Perhaps the music and performers conspired against each other - a better performance would have lifted the music, and better music would have inspired the performers.

The weekend concluded with the sort of late night concert that every early music festival should have - a mixture of some of the few surviving medieval Estampies generally played on the lute, and traditional Indian ragas played by Ken Zuckerman. The main instrument was the Indian sarod - a monophonic lute-like instrument with a goat-skin sound box, unfretted metal finger board (allowing glissandi and microtones) and plucked strings, sympathetic strings and a brass bell. Although the tone sounds rather brash to European early music ears, the range of tone colour is extraordinary. The tabla is the better known Indian drum set, small and large, with an astonishing range of tones and pitches in the hands of an expert - as Sanju Sahai most certainly was. The third instrument used was the tampura, a sort of miniature double bass with most of the strings tuned to the same tone and played as a meow-like drone, seemingly with no rhythmic connection to the other two players. My critical faculties more than usually dimmed by the weekend's 10 concerts, I just sat back and listened.

Those giving concerts who wish Andrew Benson-Wilson to attend should contact him direct on 01256 358041 or email him at [ajbw@hotmail.com](mailto:ajbw@hotmail.com).

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## KINGS MUSIC

King's Music now has the catalogue of Beauchamp Press, the series produced by Alan Lumsden (initially with Michael Procter) concentrating chiefly on music prepared for the summer school at Beauchamp House and used at the weekend courses that he regularly directs. There is an emphasis on music suitable for sackbuts and cornetts, but much purely vocal music as well. Most of the music is of the period from 1550-1650. Prices are low. The whole of Gabrieli's 1597 publication of motets and canzonas is available and some of Schütz's large works (more of which will be added in preparation for the 2002 Beauchamp course).



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## M.-A. Charpentier – Autre Noel [Laissez paître vos bêtes] (H. 531 [2])

16

*tous*

5

1 2

6

10

*Violons et flûtes reprise*

*Violons et flûtes reprise*

*acc seul reprise*

16

21

27 *tous*

32

38

Original clefs for tutti section: G1, C1, C2, F4. All violins, recorders [and oboes *ad lib*] play stave 1, violas play staves 2 & 3, bass violins and continuo instruments play stave 4.

Original clefs for bars 10-26: G1, G1, F4. Flutes and solo violins each play the top two staves; continuo instruments (without orchestral bass violons) play the third stave.

## RECORD REVIEWS

### MEDIEVAL

Landini *The Second Circle: Love Songs of Francesco Landini* Anonymous 4 61' 32" Harmonia Mundi HMU 907269

I am not a Landini expert. Nor, with my limited experience of fiedel playing with a group in Munich and some extremely amateur attempts at early repertoire with a group from my student days, would I describe myself as anything like knowledgeable of the music of the time. So the remarks here are far more based on my reactions to the performances than any specialised insight. Unlike several *EMR* reviewers, I enjoy Anonymous 4. I do, however, have to concede that it seemed strange hearing a whole CD of Landini sung by women's voices, and also that, although I listened to it several times (to ensure that I wasn't just suffering from late night syndrome!), I did actually find it rather monotone, if not monotonous. There's no attempt in the (typically) lavish booklet to justify the all-woman approach, and casual reference is made to occasionally texted lines in the originals which they concede seem to be instrumental. Be that as it may, I found this a relaxing and enjoyable CD. BC

Wings of Wisdom: Sacred Chants of Hildegard von Bingen and Medieval Scotland Canty, William Taylor harps & symphony 57' 13" Dorian DOR-93232

This disc provides welcome wider circulation for a recording issued last year on the rota label (RTCD002). I commented then on the pleasing way in which the 12th-century German music was complemented by the less familiar 13th-century Scottish chant connected to St Columba, and noted the very effective blend of the four ladies' voices as well as the accomplished contribution of William Taylor on the gut-strung mediaeval harp, the wire-strung mediaeval clarsach and symphony. The back of the present CD booklet draws attention to the latter performer's growing discography with Dorian, mainly in areas of music hitherto largely or completely neglected. The earlier release included texts by Hildegard and associated with St Columba read by Gillean McDougall, and cutting them has left the disc a little short at just over 57 minutes, but these are extremely enjoyable performances of an interesting mix of repertoire and well worth investing in.

D. James Ross

Le Manuscrit du Puy; Les premières polyphonies françaises Ensemble Gilles Binchois, Dominique Vellard 135' 48" (2 CDs) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61940 2 1 (rec 1900/94) ££

This coupling can be used as pleasing background music, but without the original

documentation it is difficult for the even moderately-well-informed listener to make very much sense of it. Fine for guess-what-it-is sessions on medieval courses, provided that the teacher has the crib sheets (the booklets of the original issues). No complaints about the performances, though. CB

### 15th-CENTURY

La Rue Chansons from the Album of Marguerite of Austria Corvina Consort, dir Zoltán Kalmanovits 73' 30" Hungaroton HCD 32018

There is something charming about the contrast between the elaborate ornateness of Marguerite of Austria's Album and the beguiling simplicity of much of its contents, and these chansons by Pierre de la Rue certainly come into the latter category. The best approach to performing them is to respect that simplicity and to allow the music's spare elegance to speak for itself, and very wisely this is what the Corvina Consort do on this highly enjoyable recording. In the past I have admired the Consort as a vocal ensemble, but the integration of a small number of instruments (rebecs, fiddle, recorder, harp and lute) is managed to perfection. Complete song texts and an erudite programme note by the group's director Zoltán Kalmanovits, all in four languages complete a very attractive package, underlining just how far Hungaroton has come in the last decade. D. James Ross

### 16th-CENTURY

Vautor Sing on sister Gesualdo Consort, Rose Consort of Viols, Gerald Place dir 64' 03" Meridian CDE 84434

'Sing on Sister' conjures up the image of a convent musical starring Whoopi Goldberg, but in fact this is merely the title track of a delightful and surprising collection of Vautor's madrigals, laments and love songs. 'Sweet Suffolk owl' and 'Mother, I will have a husband' were the only pieces previously known to me – and, I suspect, to many other listeners – but the others are worth hearing, and illustrate the spectrum of Vautor's output. Within the madrigalian sphere his style is distinctive, and he knows a good thing when he hits on one. The device of rising single notes in the solo soprano part, followed in steps by block harmonies from the other voices, as in the opening of 'Sweet Suffolk owl' is employed in several other places, and the opposition of the two soprano parts to the rest of the singers is another typical conceit, further enhanced when the lower voices are replaced by viols.

The Gesualdo Consort would not have been my first choice of performers, but they do a good job: they are well-rehearsed, give good contrasts of mood,

and have clear ideas about the effects which they aim for – and achieve. Occasional flat notes, excessive vibrato, strained top notes and rather bulgy phrasing are among their faults, and after repeated listenings I am still unsure about some of the words, which is a shame as Vautor plays some neat verbal tricks. But on the whole the singers give a pleasing account of the music, which should convince listeners of Vautor's quality. The occasional addition of the Rose Consort takes the performance to another plane, with degrees of subtlety and interaction not reached by the singers. When the viols play, one suddenly realises that this is 17th-century music. Selene Mills

Dolcesuono: Sonate e Madrigali diminutiti per fagotto chorista e basso continuo. Ensemble a due bassi (Paolo Tognon, Stefano Sornalvico Berquier fagotti, Vittorio Zanon kbd, Pietro Prosser theorba) 66' 42" Nalessi N.R. 007

Music by Arcadelt, Bassano, Bertoli, Frescobaldi, A. Gabrieli, Marini, Ortiz, Piccinini, Rore, Sandrin, Selma y Salaverde

The madrigals chosen for the divisions are the usual ones, but it is interesting to hear a disc of the generally less-heard bass divisions on dulcian, which are excellently played. A couple feature divisions on the top line on the soprano dulcian – the booklet notes citing the Spanish colony of Naples and the Ortiz associations as justification. The bass instrument follows the bass line meanwhile, as if these were continuo rather than ensemble pieces. Choosing a recorder or cornett for these pieces would have made for a perfect recording in every way. Whilst it is good to promote different sonorities, the instrument is not up to the job. Ortiz's notes are compromised to avoid near-impossible thumb-work, but still this is insufficient. The uncomfortable sound is rendered more uncomfortable by arch playing with constantly 'arty' dying notes for any length over a quaver. Fast forwarding over these few tracks will take you to some marvellous playing of Bertoli and Salaverde, with excellent handling of the playful rhythms. Worthy of mention too are three beautifully played pieces of Piccinini, played by Pietro Prosser on the theorbo. A well produced disc, and well worth having, notwithstanding the reservations.

Stephen Cassidy

Le droit chemin: Popular devotion at the time of the Reformation Lucidarium 61' 59" L'empreinte digitale ED 13126 Music by Bourgeois, Janequin, Lupi, Sermisy & anon

I first listened to this without reading any of the booklet and was puzzled where in the social spectrum the music was supposed to be set: much of it seemed very folksy, yet other tracks were clearly from the respectable middle-class. So I was very surprised to read on the blurb that the

expression of faith in the songs recorded here 'reflected the new status of the upper middle class' – the parallel French text, 'nouvelle bourgeoisie', is more plausible. Yet I felt that the sort of households for which spiritual chansons were published (like those described in Richard Freedman's *Lassus and the Protestants* which I reviewed in May) would have been more discreet in the mixing of instruments (especially loud ones and drums) with their psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. If that doesn't bother you, this is a fine recording with a wide variety of sounds and a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar music. CB

## 17th-CENTURY

**Froberger Organ Works** Joseph Kelemen (1737 Baumberger-Orgel, Klosterkirche Maihingen) 64' 47" Arte Nova Classics 74321 85322 2 £ FbWV 106-7, 109-10, 112, 201, 405, 407a, 502-3, 507-8

The importance of Froberger's influence on spreading the Italian style around Europe has long been recognised by musicologists, although his music has taken longer to become known, despite a number of recordings. Strongly influenced by his teacher, Frescobaldi, Froberger's later friendship with Weckmann was instrumental in the development of the mature North German Baroque organ school (see the review of a recent disc of his organ music below). This CD includes a representative selection of the works inspired by Frescobaldi, played on an organ that, although a bit more recent than Froberger, creates a suitable Italian-influenced South German sound world. The Cythara stop combines with the Flauten in a similar way to the Italian Voce Umana registration for elevation toccatas, and the remarkable tone of the Gambe has to be heard to be believed. The meantone tuning gives a tangy edge to Froberger's harmonies. Kelemen's playing is thoughtful and musical. He eschews the helter-skelter showmanship of some performers, giving the music (and the pipes) space to breath and speak. He sensibly avoids over-elaborating the opening chords of toccatas: a lesson that many harpsichordists could learn when playing the organ. The varying moods of the many multi-sectional works are carefully wrought. This is one of the best Froberger recordings around.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Gibbons Go from my Window** (Music for Viols vol. 2) Rachel Elliott S, Concordia 59' 14" Metronome MET CD 1039

I'm puzzled: a fine group plays some of my favourite music and I'm just a little disappointed. Perhaps it's just me: I'm probably frustrated at not playing the marvellous, once-anonymous set a6. Concordia also play the fantasias a2 and three of what Gibbons calls Madrigals and Motets (we don't know how he distinguished the terms) treated as consort songs. The virtuoso item is the title piece: the dense six-part variations can often be submerged under the weight of scurrying bass viols, but here it comes off

perfectly. I'd encourage you to ignore my doubts and buy it, though somehow, despite its faults, I enjoyed the next Gibbons disc more. CB

**Gibbons Church Music** The Clerkes of Oxenford, David Wulstan 69' 56" (rec 1975) Calliope CAL 3611 £

This is one of three Calliope reissues this month, all in brown fold-out covers and with no notes save what can be printed inside one cover. This is a pity; we are told about the difficulty of reconstructing *Praise the Lord O my soul*, but nothing about the enterprising reconstruction of the hymns. Wulstan's inner parts are highly expressive; but with very few exceptions, a hymn needs three verses at least to be effective as a musico-literary form, and none of the examples here are given a chance. (This is also a defect of the edition in EECM 21.) The performances are in many respects superb: firm, full-blooded singing with exceptionally good diction. But the rub is the pitch: most readers will know that I think that Wulstan's attempt to attach the clef-code to a high pitch-level doesn't work, and that is clearly demonstrated in *Praise the Lord*, the first track. But buy it: it's a souvenir of a musicological phase presented as convincingly as it can be, and the music is superb. Collectors of misprints will enjoy *O Lord, I lift my heart to thee*. CB

**Locke Consorts in Two Parts** Masques (Timothy Haig vln, Elin Söderström b.viol, Olivier Fortin org) 77' 00" Dorian DOR-90300 + 5 pieces from *T'Uitnem Kabinet* 1646

This debut CD by the Canadian ensemble Masques is their prize for winning the Dorian-Early Music America Competition. A professional recording is probably a more useful prize than money or a live concert: not only does it provide performers with widely available publicity, but a session in the studio is one of the most useful learning experiences a young ensemble can have. Dorian and Masques are to be congratulated on not going for a lollipops programme, but for an integral performance of Locke's two-part consorts for seavall Freinds. Locke does not specify the instrumentation, and the choice of violin, bass viol and organ is certainly appropriate, though Masques might have rung the changes by leaving out the unnotated keyboard part in some pieces, or replacing it with harpsichord. Timothy Haig's violin has an attractive 'stringy' quality, and he negotiates Locke's often bizarre melodic lines with ease; Elin Söderström provides a strongly supportive bass line and the sweet-toned organ of Olivier Fortin provides a restrained continuo part. While Masques capture the gravity and intensity of the pavans effectively, I quibble with their decision to play all the other movements in each set at more or less the same tempo and with hardly a breath between them. This results in ayres that are far from airy, courantes that miss the equivocal interplay between three- and two-beat bars and sarabands that

could be more 'toyish', to quote Mace's description. (They did this too in their performance as finalists in the York Early Music Festival/Early Music Network Competition, leaving the audience uncertain when they had moved from one piece to the next.) Masques seem more at home in the more overtly flamboyant pieces from *t'Uitnem Kabinet* which they intersperse between Locke's sets. Dorian should have helped Masques edit their insert notes. They contain some misleading statements, including a reference to Exeter's 17th-century Catholic Cathedral. John Bryan

**Monteverdi Selva morale e spirituale** Cantus Cölln, Concerto Palatino, Konrad Junghänel 229' 52" (3 CDs in box) Harmonia Mundi HMC 901718.20 ££

I could devote several pages to a detailed review of this magnificent set. But there is no need to do so: the essential point is that it is so immeasurably superior to the only other complete recording of Monteverdi's most substantial collection of church music (by Michel Corboz: I reviewed it as part of a six-disc set reissued on Erato 4509-98530-2 rather too politely in *EMR* 12) that Monteverdi enthusiasts (especially those who only know the 1610 *Vespers*) should buy it instantly. Of course, performances are variable; but the general level is extremely impressive. My one quibble is the assumption that cornetti and violins are interchangeable. The partbooks are explicitly labelled *Violino* and the rubrics to the individual pieces, while treating *viole* and *tromboni* as equivalents, don't do the same for the treble instruments. But the playing, like the singing, is so stylish that the point is trivial. CB

**Muffat Concerti Grossi 1-6** Musica Aeterna Bratislava, Peter Zajicek 54' 30" (rec 1993) Naxos 8.555096 £

This is called Vol. 1 and while that might suggest that the remaining six concertos will appear on a follow-up, I'm hoping that Naxos will go on to record the *Florilegia* sets and perhaps *Armonico tributo* too. The timbre of the playing reminds me a great deal of an old L'Oiseau-lyre recording of the second part of *Florilegium* with the Academy of Ancient Music, though there is slightly less French ornamentation here, and perhaps a little more freedom in the concertino's improvised decoration. The orchestra is one of Slovakia's leading music groups and deserves wider notice. BC

**Purcell A Collection of Ayres for recorders** Dieupart 6 Suites for Recorder La Simphonie du Marais, Hugo Reyne 147' 50" (2 CDs) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61937 2 7 (rec 1992/5) ££

The idea of a whole disc of Purcell's music for the recorder puzzled and disquieted me: where does it all come from? In fact, despite a number of arrangements of pieces that Purcell can only have conceived for strings, this is a fascinating disc that I enjoyed far more than I expected – though I can't take the Queen Mary Funeral march and *Canzona* seriously on recorders! Dieu-

part may not be such a good composer, but he did write for the recorder and this recording of his 1717 *Suites* does them justice; two Suites were written for a tenor recorder in B flat, here played on a copy of a Stanesby by Tim Cranmore; it sounds nice and mellow, but is sometimes overpowered by the continuo. An interesting coupling, though for recorder enthusiasts only (and they probably have at least one of the discs already). CB

Schenck *The Nymphs of the Rhine* Vol. 2 (Sonatas 7-12) Les Voix Humaines 72' 42" Naxos 8.554415 £

The Canadian gamba duo Les Voix Humaines (Susie Napper and Margaret Little) complete their voyage down the Rhine with the final half dozen sonatas from Schenck's publication of c.1700. The sonatas vary considerably in length and make-up: most are of the da camera variety, based on sometimes rather predictable dance movements, but there is greater individuality in the more abstract da chiesa pieces, where Schenck explores more angular lines, unexpected harmonic twists and some intricate counterpoint. Les Voix Humaines respond effectively to the different styles, playing with immaculate ensemble, including some impressively well-timed trills in thirds. Each dance is clearly characterised, with some inventive touches like the microtonal 'inflation' of the quasi-bagpipe drone in the C minor Rondeau. The recorded sound is at times over-resonant for all the detailed nuances of the music to tell, and the players have a tendency to swell notes from an inaudible start that can muddy the rhythm. They also occasionally over-indulge in a rubato that undermines the pulse of the dance movements. They are at their best when Schenck is most inspired too, for instance in the compelling G major Ciacona on an unsettling seven-bar ground, or in the gently swaying Aria Amoroso in B minor, in which their plangent tone and suave phrasing really show how to bring this intriguing music to life. John Bryan

Weckmann *Organ works* Siegbert Rampe (Organ of St Steven's, Tangermünde, 1624) 77' 15" (rec 1995) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45408 2 0

In a nice pairing with the Froberger CD reviewed above, we have the editor of Froberger's music playing Weckmann, the composer most influenced by Froberger (and also edited by Rampe). In an embarrassment of riches, this CD includes Weckmann's two most powerful choral settings – *Es ist das Heyl uns kommen Herr* and *O lux beata Trinitas*, both lasting 30 minutes or so. Weckmann's music has become much better known in the past decade or so, with a generous supply of recordings available. This is one of the best. Rampe is a mature and intelligent performer, with the inner confidence to treat the music with respect. Through careful use of articulation he makes clear the detailed musical structure and his keyboard touch is assured and sensitive, producing a record-

ing that will bear repeated listening. But a warning – you will need very good speakers and tolerant neighbours to do Weckmann's music justice. The instrument is an interesting choice – an example of the sort of organ that Weckmann inherited in Hamburg and an important survivor from that period. It sounds very different from the later Schnitger organs so often used to record this music. It has a denser, more homogenous sound, but one that allows the chorale melody to shine through, notably in the monumental concluding verses (where the choral is heard as the upper of two pedal parts). It is a shame that the registrations are not given.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

*Ay, dulce pena! Tonos humanos del Barroco Español* Marta Almajano S, Juan Carlos Rivera lute, Mike Fentross gtr, Ventura Rico gamba, Pedro Estevan perc 63' 05" Harmonia Mundi Ibérica HMI 987028 Music by Arce, Hidalgo, Vado & anon

Marta Almajeno is one of the singers in Al Ayre Español: She's joined here by two pluckers, a gamba and a percussionist in music by Hidalgo, del Vado, de Arce and the omnipresent anonymous (with four pieces). The translation of the notes needs improving – it's all very well using big words like *admixture*, but get the basic grammar right. Almajeno's is a full-on voice, oozing emotion and warmth, so a programme of love songs (even though most of them survive in church sources) is ideal for her. The accompaniment is rhythmically vital and this is a fine debut on this label. The instrumental introductions were 'composed and interpreted' by Juan Carlos Rivera – was this absolutely necessary? BC

*The Sultan and the Phoenix* Charivari agréable Signum SIGCD032 69' 12" Music by Corrette, A.-L., F. & L. Couperin, Dornel, Dumage, Duphly, Marais

Of the 15 works recorded here eight are played in arrangements by the performers, a practice of the group that has raised some hackles in the past (see *EMR* passim) including mine but ought not to here, where the new versions inhabit very much the sound-world of the composers concerned and are very artistically done. Some, such as François Couperin's *Les baricades mystérieuse* on theorbo (Lynda Sayce) are perfectly legitimate, unfussy transcriptions, and very well this is played, too. Others could even be said to be enhanced by their new garb, especially the wonderful Pavane by Louis Couperin. The programme as a whole offers a survey of the use of the viol in 17th- and 18th-century France and contrasts short pieces with longer ensemble works, among which F. Couperin's *La Sultane* is a particular success, Dornel's *Sonate en quatuor* a welcome discovery and Corrette's unlikely *Le Phénix* (for four bass viols and continuo – an amazing sound at this low pitch) good fun. Above all this comes across as a very good concert which will give much pleasure to its listeners. Great title, by the way. David Hansell

*Venetian Church Music: Gabrieli, Monteverdi, Vivaldi* Taverner Consort, Choir & Players, Andrew Parrott 148' 45" (2 CDs rec 1990) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61934 2 0 ££

This is another of those Virgin pairings of similar discs, both originally EMI Reflexe, of which target customers are likely to own at least one already; if you are one of them, this package is no great deal, especially without the original documentation (not even your concise reviewer can say much in one page of a CD booklet). Disc 1 is devoted to Giovanni Gabrieli, starting with every sackbutter's favourite, *Dulcis Jesu* (it has two marvellous cornett parts as well, and a great moment for the viola, Annette Isserlis – sadly, no players are named, not even the late John Toll, who has two solo spots in disc 2). These may no longer be the best performances of Gabrieli – players have got more confident and subtle in the last decade and the music sometimes feels a bit ponderous – but are still worth hearing. Disc 2 is more varied, ranging from Gabrieli (*In ecclesiis*) through Monteverdi (*Adoramus te, Christe adoramus te* and solo motets), Grandi, Castello, Legrenzi and Vivaldi (*Clarae stellae scintillate*) to the Lotti Crucifixus (a8 & a10): mostly not music one particularly associates with the Taverners, but convincingly performed and useful for linking the Venice of Gabrieli and Vivaldi. The Lotti sounds more intense with solo voices than in the usual choral performances. If these are new to you, buy them. CB

## LATE BAROQUE

*Bach Secular Cantatas* Bach Collegium Stuttgart, Helmuth Rilling (10 CDs) Hänsler 92.564 £ BWV 30a, 36b, 36c, 134a, 173a, 201-215, 207a, 524

This is Box 4, the first to appear of 11 boxes of *The Complete Works of Johann Sebastian Bach*. The discs and their booklets are unchanged from those which were issued or reissued individually in 1999 and 2000, and bear the same numbers: 61-68 and the two-disc box 139. I reviewed 139 last December and explained why we had reviewed some of the series, but had ignored the cantatas, because we presumed that our readers were more likely to buy the various early-instrument series. But this batch is worth acquiring since it covers repertoire that the early-instrument series will either omit or leave till last. The performances are, in fact, generally stylish and successful. Sometimes there is the sort of aggressiveness that comes from the earlier stages of the baroque revival, but there is much to enjoy; the extent to which this is a bargain will depend on whether you already have good recordings of some of the cantatas already. I must confess that a passing mention of Emma Kirkby by a visitor just before I played *Weicht nur* didn't help my enjoyment of Sybille Rubens, good though she be. CB

£ = bargain price ££ = midprice  
All other discs full price, as far as we know

Bach *Festmusiken für das kurfürstlich-sächsische Haus* (BWV 213 & 214) Elizabeth Scholl, Barbara Hözl, Jan Kobow, Hanno Müller-Brachmann SATB, Knabenchor Hannover, Barockorchester L'Arco, Heinz Hennig cond Ars Musici AM 1313-2 74' 28"

These two cantatas were later used by Bach in his Christmas Oratorio. This recording was made in September 2000 and features the strictly disciplined Hanover Boys' Choir, an orchestra from the same city (none of the players is named), and four soloists, of whom only the soprano did not quite work (especially in the echo aria, where a boy simply cannot be taken seriously as the echo!) The instrumental playing is fine (the first trumpeter even adds some ornamentation to the opening chorus) and this is an enjoyable disc, even if some readers (particularly those with the Eliot Gardiner version of the Christmas Oratorio) will find some of the tempi a little on the slow side. BC

Bach *Arrangements* Angela Hewitt pf 69' 57" Hyperion CDA67309 by d'Albert, Bauer, Bemers, Cohen, Hess, Hewitt, Howe, Howells, Ireland, Kempff, Walton,

This begins a little disappointingly, but comes into its own with the chorale preludes, the genre that is the main source of its repertoire. These generally don't need expansive pianification and sound quite beautiful. The piano does, of course, romanticise the music, and some tempi are slower than the music can take (e.g. the Kempff version of *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*); but these transcriptions and performances do not find expression that is not in the music, merely bring out one aspect of it. As someone who got to know Bach's organ music chiefly on the piano (often by supplying the third hand), I find this disc nostalgic and enjoyable. CB

Bach *Sonatas & Partitas* BWV 1001-1006 Sigiswald Kuijken 135' 46" (2 CDs) DHM 05472 77527 2

Until the recent recordings by Rachel Podger, my favourite CDs of Bach's violin solos was the old Sigiswald Kuijken (DHM GD77043). This new set was recorded in December 1999 and February/March 2000. In general, movements are taken more slowly – some only slightly so, but the Fugue in BWV1003 lasts half a minute longer. The playing is possibly not quite as brilliant as before, but the phrasing and shaping, particularly of those movements that involve double and triple stopping, is wonderful – and seemingly effortless! I did at times wonder if the microphone had been placed a little too closely, or if the acoustic was too rich, but none of these things detracted from the playing. In some ways, excellent violinist as he is, Kuijken has been somewhat sidelined in recent years by the new generation of outstanding fiddlers (Manze, Podger and Biondi among them) as he seems to have concentrated more on conducting, but this set shows that he is still very much a force to be reckoned with. Heaven only knows

which version I'll listen to next time I fancy hearing the pieces for fun! BC

Bach *Violin Sonatas* BWV 1015-1017, 1020 & 1022 Jacqueline Ross vln, David Ponsford hpscd 70' 12" ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 228

We received two copies of this disc, so thought that readers might like to read two reviews.

This very nice CD has three of the familiar six sonatas for violin with obbligato harpsichord (nos. 3-5), a sonata of slightly dubious origin (BWV 1022) and the G minor sonata which has been attributed to both J. S. and C. P. E. Bach. I feel I was not very complimentary about Jacqueline Ross's playing last time I reviewed an ASV trio sonatas set with Lucy van Dael. I'd like to redress the balance here, as there is a lot of wonderful playing on this CD. The success for any Bach sonatas set for me hinges on the Adagio of the C minor sonata, and here it is given a literal reading (by which I mean the notation is taken at face value, with three against two in the keyboard part and strictly dotted quavers and semiquavers in the violin, i.e., no attempt at turning it into some sort of 9/8). The colouring of the violin is slightly veiled throughout, but the return of really bright tone for the following Allegro is very convincing. The keyboard playing is excellent throughout – the violin is more prominent acoustically, but that is not a problem. Recommended. BC

This is apparently the first disc issued by soloists who have both studied with experts (Ross with Lucy van Dael, Ponsford with Gilbert and Leonhardt somewhat earlier). There are clear signs that they have absorbed some of the benefits that one should expect from such roots, but also indications from time to time that they might have learned more so as to have played this music with greater depth of authority. When either, or even at best both, focus concentration on the essence of the music, things go very well. There are so many good rivals in the violin with clavicembalo Sonatas now that the extra ingredients – here both very imaginatively included – are of special importance. The very persuasive harpsichord solo opening of the Sonata in F BWV 1022 [track 4] from David Ponsford still does not induce me to feel that it is by Bach rather than somebody younger. By contrast the keyboard introduction to that in G minor BWV 1020 [track 13] sounds curiously short on imaginative touch or phrasing, and virtually confirms any scepticism regarding the origins of this work, even as a poor result of Bach's own reportedly fascinating teaching.

Jacqueline Ross originated as a modern violinist of distinction and essentially musical as much of her interpretation is, she still plays too much towards the point of the bow, with one result being that she tends to prolong even phrase-ending notes quite prominently and to neglect the rhythmic and dynamic subtlety evident in the playing of her distinguished teacher. Overall, too patchy for real satisfaction. Stephen Daw

Bach *The Art of Fugue* Colm Carey organ Signum SIGCD027 63' 08" Bach *Art of the Fugue* Bernard Labadie, Les Violins du Roy 76' 53" Dorian xCD-90297

The Art of Fugue, so both sets of booklet notes tell us, was written for harpsichord. Why then, one might ask, record it in a different format? And which, if either, is the more successful: organ or orchestra? Whatever the historical background to the piece and various statements about how completely it has come down to us, it is a monumental work (made more difficult to pull off in performance because each of the movements is, of necessity, in the same key) which requires both technical mastery and structural vision. Both recordings do not fail in either respect. Colm Carey gives us Contrapuncti I-XII, while Labadie and his band add Contrapuncti XIII and XIV, as well as variants of XII and XIII and four canons and a completion of XIV 'after Davitt Moroney'. I thoroughly enjoyed Labadie's orchestration of the Goldberg Variations and I have to say that I'm equally impressed by the playing here. It does, however, seem slightly strange, to argue that the four lines of the original represent four instrumental threads and then play a hybrid sequence with some of the movements on harpsichord or organ alone. That, though, is my only minor quibble with the CD. Colm Carey is a fine young organist (though I'm not sure I like the idea of all artists inviting us to visit their websites!) and I thoroughly enjoyed his version, despite my gross dislike for the tremulant in any repertoire: its appearance in Contrapunctus III was almost enough to make me skip the track. The organ of the Dutch Church in London dates from 1954, with restoration work carried out in 1995, and it sounds splendid – as much as tribute to the fine recording as the pipework, I imagine. Bach scholars should have both recordings, of course. If you're new to the Art of Fugue, either will stand you in good stead. BC

Handel *Apollo e Dafne; The Alchemist incidental music* Olga Pasichnyn, Robert Pomakov SB, European Union Baroque Orchestra, Roy Goodman 57' 14" Naxos 8.555712 £

The young musicians under Goodman's experienced direction give a polished performance of the popular Handel cantata, but the pleasing voices of the singers suggest talent still developing – Pomakov is only nineteen – and their portrayal of the mythical characters is bland. (Riper characterisation is provided by Nancy Argenta and Michael George on their 1995 Chandos recording.) Goodman adds the first movement of Handel's concerto op. 3 no. 1 as an introduction. The incidental music to *The Alchemist* was adapted anonymously from the overture to Handel's *Rodrigo* for a revival of the play in London in 1710. One movement (*Prelude*) not from the overture is usually thought to have been added by the London adaptor, but it has a relationship with the first version of

the B flat March from *Rinaldo*, and so may be by Handel after all (perhaps it was inserted in the lost conducting score of *Rodrigo*). Goodman regards it as a fun piece, taking it at a great lick and encouraging a brief cacophony of trills on the final chord. The other movements are done elegantly, with some restoration of the original *Rodrigo* oboe parts adding variety of orchestral texture to the implied plain strings of the London version.

Anthony Hicks

**Handel Complete Violin Sonatas** Andrew Manze vln, Richard Egarr hpscd 76' 43" Harmonia Mundi HMU 907259 HWV358, 359a, 361, 364, 371, 408, 412 + op. 1 (Roger 10 & 12) & op 1 (Walsh) 12

Or put another way, all the violin sonatas Handel wrote, plus some he didn't but would probably have been happy with. Manze's essay deals engagingly with issues of authenticity and with the importance of the works to violinists and delivers performances that should sell them to all bar the most ardent violin- and Handel-haters, few of whom are likely to subscribe to *EMR*. His playing has a compelling blend of affection for the music and artistry that held the whole family spell-bound through a somewhat extended breakfast. Tempos are exceptionally well judged, ornamentation is judicious and always effective and tone and dynamics are varied without ever hinting at caricature. The restraint in the G minor sonata, described in the notes as melancholic, is particularly effective. The cello-free continuo support is excellent too, with varied textures and figuration as required by the context. If you know an aspiring violinist, buy them this – and get one for yourself.

David Hansell

**Heinichen *La Pace di Karlsruhe*** Cecilia Nannesson, Britta Schwarz, Hannes Böhm, Ingolf Seidl SATB, Batzdorfer Hofkapelle (2CDs) Kammerton KT 2009

Wow! was my initial response to seeing that someone had (at last) recorded some of Heinichen's vocal music (of which there are copious amounts, both sacred and secular), and wow! was my reaction to the actual performance and the recording – both are excellent! Don't worry if you've never heard of the peace treaty or its significance in temporarily bringing stability to central Europe towards the end of the 13th century. Heinichen's oratorio dates from his time in Venice and shows clear Italian influences. He was summoned to work in Dresden by the Prince-Elector to whom he dedicated the piece almost immediately. There are four named soloists (SATB) who join together for a brief chorus of triumph at the end, the first part having concluded with a curious duet whose B section is for a third singer. Indeed, although this is not an opera, there are several dramatic devices, as well as musical ideas which reminded not just me of Handel. The booklet includes the full libretto with German and English translations. The singing is very good, and the orchestral playing beautiful: I would have

preferred just a little ornamentation in da capos and from instrumental soloists. All in all, a very fine set.

BC

**Keiser *Der geliebte Adonis*** Marietta Zumbühl Venus, Ralf Popken Adonis, Susanne Rydén Eumene, Mona Spägle Dryante, Jan Kobow Philistus, Knut Schoch Gelon, Raimonds Spogis Proteus, Mars, Capella Orlandi Bremen, Thomas Ihlenfeldt 217' (3 CDs in box) cpo 999 636-2

It's nice to see Keiser enjoying something of a purple patch at the moment. Just a month after *La Risonanza*'s selection of operatic pieces comes a complete recording of his 1697 three-act *Adonis*. Seven soloists (singing eight roles: the bass takes both roles as Proteus and Mars) and the Capella Orlandi Bremen playing one to a part (with cello, gamba, harp, guitar, organ/harpsichord and chitarrone continuo) make a wonderful job of a long piece (the three CDs each have 33 tracks, one of which is curiously timed 0' 00"). The singing and playing are first rate, with three very different voices among the sopranos (handy when they have something resembling a singing contest in Act III when each has a couple of arias in turn), and one of the tenors makes a lovely 'simple' sound as a shepherd (not the rustic voice we're sometimes accustomed to hearing in the UK). The music is most like Italian music of the period, I suppose, with occasional nods in France's direction – there is none of the chromaticism of Blow's setting of the story, and very little of the rich harmony used by contemporary Frenchmen. Overall a thoroughly enjoyable production – hopefully the first of several, since there are other operas from Keiser's pen just waiting to be performed.

BC

let me just say that I think Fabio Biondi is an exceptionally gifted violinist with a lot of very good ideas. This 2-CD set is a version of Vivaldi's Op. 8 set, *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione*, using MS rather than printed sources. An exercise similar in many ways to Christopher Hogwood's recording of the Brandenburg Concertos with the Academy of Ancient Music, where earlier versions of No. 1 and No. 5 led to some surprises. The surprises here, though, come more in Biondi and his cohort's style of performance: the bouncing bow and pizzicato accompaniment for the chattering teeth in *Winter*, for example; sudden (often startling) changes in dynamics and tempo; re-ordering the pieces – not to fit any known catalogue system or dating scheme (at least no such information is given in the booklet). I don't have a problem with decisions such as including the oboe parts which were added by Pisendel in Dresden, or adding a cadenza at a spot which seems apposite. But if two of the concertos were originally for oboe, why not record them as such? Or did that not fit in with the recording's 'philosophy'? The CDs are undeniably exciting, but I wonder how much of them Vivaldi would recognise?

BC

**Telemann *Das befreite Israel, Der Mai, Ouverture in f*** Ingrid Schmitthüsen, Claudia Schubert, Howard Crook, Klaus Mertens, Ekkehard Abele SATBB, Rheinische Kantorei, Hermann Max 65' 36" cpo 999 673-2

This excellent recording (the latest in a sequence of exceptional Telemann CDs from cpo and, indeed, from Hermann Max amongst others) features three very different pieces, dating from two recording sessions some two years apart (the title piece dates from 1998, while *Der Mai* and the orchestral overture in F minor are from 1996) with slightly different orchestras. Apart, perhaps, from the excellent orchestral sound and the taut choral precision we've come to expect from Max, the outstanding feature of this recording is the solo singing, with some especially nice contributions from Claudia Schubert, the alto. If you haven't heard any Telemann as conducted by Max, buy this – if you have, you won't need any recommendation from me: you've probably bought it already! BC

**Vivaldi *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione*** Fabio Biondi, Europa Galante 102' 47" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61980 2 9 (2 CDs)

Before I start my review of the CD proper,

The front of the box only mentions *The Four Seasons*, ignoring the rest of op. 8, which is (at least for our readers) of rather more interest. The back cover does give the full title, followed by 'from original manuscripts', which is curious, since opus 8 as an entity is a printed edition. The note writer (hampered by a colour-blind designer who thinks that printing black on green and vice versa is an improvement over black on white) doesn't say anything about the relationship between the MSS and the edition and whether there is any greater merit in the former. Biondi's own note on the sources (in red) is fortunately more legible, and well worth reading. The *Manchester Seasons* have, of course, been recorded before; for a review of a new edition, see above, p. 6.

CB

**Vivaldi Late violin concertos** Giuliano Carmignola vln, Venice Baroque Orchestra, Andrea Marcon 74' 37" Sony Classical SK 89362 RV 177, 191, 222, 273, 295, 375

This recording was the perfect foil to what I (but not everyone) consider to be Biondi's performance excesses. Carmignola is technically outstanding (especially so in the upper reaches of the instrument), and the orchestra accompanies beautifully. The concertos (all recorded for the first time) are late works and, although they are unmistakably by Vivaldi, there is an element of truth in the statement in the notes that they reveal a new side to him, less reliant on ritornello structure, or perhaps simply freer with it. He also writes more elaborate accompanying parts for the upper strings, not simply using the continuo for that purpose in the solo episodes. This is my favourite instrumental disc of the month, and (like Carmignola's *Four Seasons* before it), I recommend it very highly.

BC

Vivaldi *Sacred Music 7* Susan Gritton, Carolyn Sampson, Nathalie Stutzmann, Charles Daniels SSAT, The King's Consort & Choir, Robert King 68' 52" Hyperion CDA66819

*Laudate pueri* RV601, *Laetatus sum* RV607, *Vestro principi divino* RV 633, *Jubilate o amoeni chorii* RV639 - *Gloria* RV588

The latest instalment of this revelatory series offers a short 'ferial' psalm setting for choir (*Laetatus*), a longer psalm for virtuoso soprano (*Laudate*), and two motets for alto, the second being an *introduzione* to the *Gloria*, which effectively and ingeniously emerges seamlessly from it. This is the composer's 'other' setting, and is, in my view at any rate, the superior, if only because of this wonderful opening. Quite frankly, this is the kind of disc that wins awards. The principal soloists impress at both ends of their ranges and at all points between and cope admirably with all that Vivaldi throws at them – and he does have a wide repertoire of vocal googlies. The choir is thoroughly competent (though, conservatively, not all female, even in the alto section!) and the orchestra offers delicious obbligato playing, a sprightly tutti and continuo playing that is lively without becoming silly. Add to all that a booklet that is both readable and authoritative and, yet again, it's congratulations to Hyperion. If you haven't yet sampled this series, start here. *David Hansell*

Zelenka *Sub olea pacis* Naomi Kiss, Anna Hlavencová, Markus Foster, Jaroslav Brezník, Adam Zdunikowski, Ales Procházka SSATTB, Czech Boys: Choir, Musica Florea, Musica Aeterna, Ensemble Philidor, Marek Strynczak cond. 95' 11" (2 CDs) Supraphon SU3520-2

This is the result of something of an epic collaborative production involving the leading period instrument groups of the Czech and Slovak Republics under the direction of the current blue-eyed boy, Marek Strynczak. With six excellent vocal soloists, a chorus of boys, a large orchestra (with both flutes and recorders in one aria, solo chalumeau in another, and solo cello in a third), the recording goes some way to recreate the sounds heard in Prague during the celebrations of Charles VI's coronation in 1723. That event also involved dancing (although there is no purely instrumental music in the score that might give scope for such things). A contemporary report suggests that as many as 150 people participated in the original performance. The sopranos are radiant, the alto rich and plummy, the two tenors (strangely like all other Eastern European tenors I've heard) rather bland of timbre but sound of tuning, and the bass masterful. The playing is very good, especially the big string sections and doubled oboes. An excellent achievement. *BC*

Barroco español: *villancicos, cantates, zarzuelas, xacara*. Al Ayre Español 142' 07" (2 CDs) RCA Red Seal 74321 845 862 ££ (rec 1994) Music by Galán, Durón, Iribarren, Literes, Torres, Valls & anon

These two CDs are part of a re-issue series from BMG and come with minimal notes – little more than a listing and very brief introduction to the composers represented and the types of musical genres common in Spain during the Baroque period. The performances are by one of Spain's leading period instrument groups, Al Ayre Español and are full of enthusiasm and style. I don't think it's because my eyes are getting older, but I found the text on the box extremely difficult to read: small black type intermixed with pale blue on a background made up of red, orange and yellow flowers (very Spanish, for sure, but hardly practical) Expect to be entertained, but not educated! *BC*

*Madrid 1752: Sacred Music from the Royal Chapel of Spain* Tamara Matthews, Kym Amps, Scot R. Cameron, Eduardo Santa-maria, Javier Corcuera Martínez, Gregorio Poblador Fuente SSATTB, Madrid Barocco, Grover Wilkins 73' 28" Dorian DOR-93237

Music by José de Nebra & Francisco Courcelle

This CD is an attempt to recreate a Matins service at the Royal Chapel in Madrid in 1752, although it can only be partially such, since no complete service is known to survive, so sources for Nocturnes in Christmas and Epiphany have been used, with a hymn for Trinity Sunday. It features music by two composers, the Spaniard de Nebra, and Frenchman (of Italian parents) Courcelle. Of the two, I'd have to say that Courcelle is the better composer, with superior contrapuntal skills and a more flowing melodic style. De Nebra, on the other hand, relies on repetition for structure and (quite frankly) has a rather limited imagination. The performances are given by an orchestra founded to participate in Spain's Jubilee Year and a choir of 16 singers (mostly Spanish) directed by American Grover Wilkins, who has been researching the subject for many years. His enthusiasm and the quality of the performances are testament to the quality of the music. *BC*

*Mungrel Stuff: Scottish-Italian Music by Francesco Barsanti & others* Concerto Caledonia, David McGuinness 72' 27" Linn CKD 140

Music by Barsanti, Bocchi, Corri, Geminiani, McGibbon, Oswald, Reinagle, Veracini

I should start by saying that this disc is enormous fun! Concerto Caledonia have sniffed out some very attractive material and given it infectiously enthusiastic performances using a selection of 18-century instruments and appropriate voices. There is considerable freedom exercised in the editing of the sources and in the ornamentation as well as the instrumentation of these tunes, but I am sure that this is absolutely the right approach to allow the music to come back to life, and the present disc is a vivid vindication of the method. In addition to utilising articulation and ornamentation borrowed from traditional musicians, David McGuinness spearheads the rhythmical *clout* as a punctuation device,

while Chris Norman's easy technical prowess seems to inspire the other instrumentalists to heights of laid-back virtuosity. The vocal contributions by Mhairi Lawson and Jamie MacDougall are also extremely engaging, and if I have slight reservations about the complete suitability of the latter's vocal quality, Mhairi Lawson is as well cast as I have heard her. Pronunciation, too, has been carefully considered and is generally convincing, while the decision not to edit out the sounds of the stop changes on the 1793 Broadwood harpsichord and other necessary extraneous noises gives the performance a wonderfully spontaneous edge. 'Mungrel Stuff' this may be, but it receives a pedigree performance here! *D. James Ross*

## CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *Hamburg Harpsichord Concertos* (H. 471-6) Bob van Asperen hpscd, Melante Amsterdam 88' 12" (2 CDs) (rec 1983) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61913 2 7 ££

These concertos, written in 1771 and published the following year, are played with the steady authority we expect from van Asperen and the Amsterdam ensemble appropriately named after the composer's godfather Telemann. Perhaps van Asperen's playing lacks the sense of exploration and of delighted discovery that I still associate with his teacher Leonhardt or even his successor in recording this composer's music, the Czech-born, Finland-based Miklos Spanyi. However, as still easily the most authoritative and expressive account of these concertos currently available, this is to be recommended. *Stephen Daw*

J. C. Bach *Salve Regina* Emma Kirkby S, Markus Schäfer T, L'Orfeo Barockorchester, Michi Gaigg cpo 999 718-2

As one would expect from this company and these artists this disc provides first-rate performances of a selection of the sacred works that J. C. Bach composed following his conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1757. Apart from the *Salve Regina* that gives the recording its title, the recital contains a fine *Laudate pueri*, taken from the second of the two sets of Vespers that Bach composed in Milan, as well as a solo motet, *Si nocte tenebrosa*, which sets an anonymous Marian text of the time. All three works were written around 1760: none has been recorded before, and each exemplifies the mellifluous style of vocal writing which the composer imbibed from his Italian surroundings and used to such effect both in his Latin church music and in the now neglected operas on which much of his original reputation was built. The *Salve Regina* features Emma Kirkby in her usual excellent form as soloist in Bach's expressive melodies, while the tenor Markus Schäfer performs the concluding solo motet despite the fact that it was probably written originally for a soprano castrato. Only in the *Laudate pueri* do we hear these two excellent voices together,

which is something of a pity considering how well they balance each other. Hearing these works one appreciates why the young Mozart, seldom over-generous in praising the skills of his contemporaries, thought so highly of Johann Christian's talents as a composer, and I hope that cpo, who have done so much to further the cause of the music of J. S. Bach's sons and younger cousins, will in the future record in full one of the London Bach's more extended vocal works. As it is, this disc must serve to whet the appetite of those who may, up till now, only know instrumental pieces by a musician who was certainly one of the most assured melodists of the late 18th century. It is hard to imagine that any purchaser will be disappointed with what is certainly one of the most appealing new recordings I have heard this summer.

David J. Levy

J. C. Bach *Symphonies* op. 18. The Hanover Band, Anthony Halstead 71' 07" cpo 999 752-2

Five of these symphonies represent Bach's finest and most mature works in the genre, from which it is but a short step to Mozart's Haffner and Linz symphonies. (The sixth, however, is a publisher's hack version of the overture and some ballet numbers from Bach's opera *Amadis de Gaulle*.) Three of them (Nos. 1, 3 and 5) are for 'double orchestra', No. 3 having started life as the overture to *Endimione*; No. 2 is the overture to *Lucio Silla*; and the Andante of No. 4 is a skilful arrangement, surely by the composer himself, of the slow movement of his *Temistocle* overture, the original *clarinetto d'amore* (i.e. bassoon) parts being rewritten for flutes, bassoon and violas.

As published by William Forster at about the time of Bach's death, there are also, unfortunately, some crude re-scoring that have nothing to do with the composer. Trumpets and drums were eliminated from Nos. 2, 4 and 6 (and possibly also No. 1), usually by simply omitting them though occasionally by transferring trumpet parts to horns; and clarinets, too, were removed from No. 6 (though, oddly, not from No. 2). Sometimes the results are not too noticeable unless you are familiar with the originals, though horn calls answered antiphonally by trumpets at the end of No. 3 sound pretty silly when everything is played by just the two horns, and there's a similarly daft passage in the first movement of No. 6 when an oboe duet is answered by themselves instead of by the clarinets. I can't understand why this recording uses the cut-down versions instead of the originals. It's not as if the extra players were unavailable, for the booklet lists three trumpeters and two timpanists who allegedly took part in the recording, plus a bass clarinet (*sic*), piccolo (*sic* again) and an additional percussionist – none of whom play a single note! True, you can hear the original *Endimione* and *Amadis* overtures on another disc in the same series (to be released shortly, I think), but it's a great pity that we are not given the full scoring in No. 4, which has been available for

years in an Eulenburg miniature score.

Having had my grouse, however, I'm glad to report that the performances are as stylish, polished and lively as we have come to expect from The Hanover Band in this series.

Richard Maunder

J. C. Bach *Symphonies Concertantes* Vol. 5 The Hanover Band, Anthony Halstead 54' 47" cpo 999 628 2  
in C (2 vln, vlc, C36a), in D (2 fl, 2 vln, vlc, C39), in Eb (2 ob, 2 hn, 2 vln, 2 vla, vlc, C40)

Perhaps the most interesting piece on this disc is the first, which was rediscovered by the late Ernest Warburton in 1996. The outer movements – at least in a revised version – had been known for a long time, but the Larghetto in C minor is a real find, inhabiting the same world as the Andante of Mozart's K364 although the violin is the only soloist. All three works receive polished and affectionate performances, fully worthy of this most civilized and entertaining of music.

Richard Maunder

Calegari *La resurrezione di Lazzaro* (1779)  
Roberta Giua, Rosita Frisani, Manuela Custer, Luca Dordolo, Salvo Vitale SSATB, Athesis Chorus, Academia de li Musici, Filippo Maria Bressan dir 78' 11"  
Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0673

Despite its elaborate presentation, complete with an historically informative CD-ROM on the background to the piece, this is a rather disappointing issue. Antonio Calegari was a Paduan composer active in the late 18th century and this oratorio of 1779 is apparently his first sacred work. The music is pleasant enough – attractively orchestrated, melodically graceful if undistinguished, and harmonically somewhat bland even for a work of early Italian classicism. The individual performances, vocal and instrumental are generally more than adequate; though I did find the soprano of Roberta Giua, as the voice of Christ, a trifle rasping and the general pace of Bressan's direction rather sluggish in a work already lacking much in the way of dramatic pace. Surely, I kept thinking, the raising of Lazarus must have been a more remarkable and exciting occurrence than Calegari makes it seem. For better or worse much of the best Italian music of this period was written for the opera house and too often its composers seem merely to have softened the edge of their operatic style when writing for the Church. Not knowing any of Calegari's theatrical works I cannot say whether this is true in his case, though I strongly suspect it may be. As it is, what we have here is a 'sacred drama' that is neither sacred nor dramatic enough to warrant more than an occasional hearing. This is a disc I am pleased to have in my collection but one that I am quite glad I did not have to buy.

David J. Levy

Haydn *Les Quatuors Oeuvre* 50<sup>me</sup> Quatuor Festetics 151' 00" (2 CDs)  
Arcana A 415

This is definitely my Record of the Month. Haydn's wonderful 'Prussian' quartets are

beautifully played by the Festetics quartet, whose performance is a model of what 'historically informed' playing ought to be. Their attention to period detail is thoughtful and scrupulous (they even play at a' = 421 Hz instead of the ubiquitous but mythical 'classical pitch' of 430 Hz); their ensemble and intonation are impeccable; and above all their obvious affection for the music makes the whole set a sheer delight for the listener. Even the booklet is – for once – well produced, with an interesting and informative essay by the distinguished Hungarian scholar Laszlo Somfai. Very highly recommended.

Just one word of warning: the discs I was sent for review turned out to be faulty, with several 'jumps' and one track that would hardly play at all. Arcana (whose e-mail address is in the programme booklet) promptly sent a replacement when I told them of the trouble, but it might be worth checking track 11 on disc 2 in case any other faulty copies are in circulation. But don't let me put you off!

Richard Maunder

## 19th CENTURY

Beethoven *Piano Trios* The Castle Trio (Lambert Orkis fp, Marilyn McDonald vln, Kenneth Slowik vlc) 139' 57" (2 CDs) (rec 1989-90)  
Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61931 2 3 ££

These recordings were first issued about ten years ago. The playing is gutsy, reminding me of the American piano teacher who explained the marking *sforzando*: 'it means: for God's sake do something'. There is good attention to musical detail throughout, with a few subtle, but highly effective, touches of rubato. The recording is excellently balanced so that the cello comes through nicely when it needs to. The notes are brief but informative. Margaret Cranmer

Beethoven, Danzi, Ries *Sonates pour cor et pianoforte* Thomas Müller horn, Edoardo Torbianelli fp 60' 28"  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 905250  
Beethoven op. 17, Danzi op. 28, Ries op. 34

Beethoven's sonata of 1800 for Giovanni Punto (alias Johann Wenzel Stich) is of course well known; but Ferdinand Ries's fine early-romantic virtuoso sonata (1811) and Franz Danzi's more lyrical work (1805) are also well worth hearing. To be pedantic, a Broadwood of 1817 is probably not what Beethoven himself played in Vienna in 1800, though the Beethoven-Haus instrument sounds most impressive on this recording and is a credit to David Hunt, who restored it a few years ago. It's also very well and sensitively played by Torbianelli. I have rather mixed feelings about Müller's horn playing, though. In quiet cantabile passages his vocal legato is very beautiful and shows how much better the hand-horn is at this sort of thing than an instrument with valves. But I don't like the slightly coarse blare, more redolent of the hunt than of the salon, when the music gets louder. And there's a marked difference between the sound of open and stopped notes, as if the player were self-

consciously drawing attention to his 'period' instrument. This is surely not how Punto played, judging by the booklet's quotation of a critic of 1821 who said that he had never 'heard a greater uniformity between the stopped and the natural notes than in Punto's playing'. Enjoyable, all the same, and worth buying for some rarely heard music.

Richard Maunder

Küffner Kammermusik mit Klarinette (Hofmusik in Würzburg) Luigi Magistrelli. Klarinette Ensemble "La Variazione", Andriani String Quartet 104' 12" (2 CDs in box) Bayer Records BR 100 330/31 CD

Joseph Kueffner is not a very familiar name to me. He worked in Würzburg (which, incidentally, is my home town's twin city) as court musician specialising in clarinet, so it is not surprising that all of the music on both of these CDs features the instrument in some guise – Luigi Magistrelli plays versions in A, B-flat and C, as well as basset horn. All of the music is very pleasant and some, I would imagine, difficult for the performer, but it comes off with ease and a sense of fun here. The recording might inspire someone to look at the composer's original work (some of the pieces here are based on Rossini and Weber). BC

## 20th CENTURY

Tavener *The Hidden Face* Nicholas Daniel ob, Michael Chance cT, Elizabeth Wilcock Tibetan bowls, Fretwork 68' 11" Harmonia Mundi HMU 907285 Picforth *In nomine a5*, Purcell/Standage *An Evening Hymn*, Tavener *Apokatastasis*, Nipson, *The hidden face*, Taverner *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas (Sanctus & Benedictus)*, Ward *In nomine a6 I & II*

There is a problem with the opening. Should you turn the volume up so that you can hear the viols or imagine that they are playing in a distant room? In fact, the latter is the intended effect, so perhaps the booklet should have printed a warning such as one used to get with clavichord recordings. Tavener can sound mesmeric: in the opening piece, *The hidden face*, the slow music had some shape but didn't grip me, nor did I sense any ecstasy in the work written for this recording, *Apokatastasis*. I found Nipson more interesting, since the countertenor and viols had some interaction. Tavener's music with viols is complemented the whole of the Taverner *Sanctus & Benedictus* from which the *In nomine* form arose. (Is it true, as a modern Tavener once told me, that the two composers are related, the family having lost an R over the centuries?) There are also two Ward settings and the one by Picforth that was such a feature of an earlier Fretwork CD. If you don't know it, before reading the note, listen and try to work out what is happening. The disc ends with a version of Purcell's *Evening hymn* for alto and six viols, sounding terribly lugubrious down there! The performances are first rate, and the principle of getting modern composers to write for early instruments is fine; but they can play quickly! CB

## VARIOUS

*Peace* Miriam Meltzer sop The Jerusalem Consort 72' 17" Arcobaleno AAOC-94492 *Cabezón Pavana son su glosa*; Couperin *La Paix du Parnasse*; David Feldman *Peace*; Marais *Plainte*; Montéclair *La Paix*; Mudarra *Israel miras tuas mientes*, *Triste estaba el rey David*; Purcell *Let sullen discord smile*; Quignard *Première Mondiale*: *La Paix*

This programme is even more relevant now than when I first played it through at the end of August. The inhabitants of the Holy Land (to use a term that I hope has resonance for Jew, Christian and Arab) have been more aware of the need for peace than most of us, and frustrated by the hopes of a few years ago being dashed. This moving disc contains some pieces with local connotations, others that are more general, and ends with a jolly celebration of peace by Montéclair, which at 25' is disproportionately long and too slight to offer a happy end. No complaints about the performances. But as a gesture, it embodies the political problem: there is enough commonality between Jewish and Christian culture to make a coherent programme, but any Arabic music would have seemed incongruous. CB

*A Fit of Mirth* Zanfoña (Carolan James & Jonathan Bynoe) 54' 24" Brewhouse Music BHCD2008

I was intrigued by a track called *Sleevenotes*, but unless I've missed something, it has nothing to do with writing and is a pun on *Greensleeves*, which is counterpointed to a Swedish melody – both fit the same silent bass. Most of the disc is scored for hurdy gurdies and bagpipes and calls on a wide range of early and folk music. The approach is that of the folk world. An early musician seeing a tune he likes in a setting by a Chédeville would investigate what instruments an 18th-century composer might have had in mind; Zanfoña just says that it suits the double-chanted Cornish pipe and play it accordingly. It's a different philosophy. The recording, released in 1998 on the group's own label, is now reissued by Brewhouse; Carolan James died in May 2000 and this is an appropriate memorial. CB

## CLASSICAL EXPRESS

Of recent titles in Harmonia Mundi's bargain-price label I would particularly recommend *A Festive Baroque Christmas* (vocal music by Schütz, instrumental interludes by Gabrieli, Weckmann and Usper) from the Choir and 'Orchestra' of the Academy of Ancient Music conducted by Paul Goodwin (HCX 3957202, recorded in 1997); full texts are available at [www.classicalexpress.com](http://www.classicalexpress.com) (Virgin please emulate!) Other early discs are Handel's *Water Music* from Philharmonia Baroque and Nic McGegan (HCX 3957010, 1988), Mozart concertos K. 456 & 569 from the same with Melvyn Tan (HCX 3957138, 1995), and Boccherini's *Guitar Quintets vol. 2* by Richard Savino and The Artaria Quartet (HCX 3957039, 1990). CB

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## AIRS & GRACES AT THE CAMBRIDGE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Kimiko Okamoto

*Airs & Graces*, Emanuel United Reformed Church, Cambridge,

What would you expect when you buy a ticket for a concert of baroque music in which dancers take part: an ordinary concert decorated by dancing or a series of period dances accompanied by music? The concert of *Airs & Graces* on 8 August at the Cambridge Music Festival was neither. Two musicians, Evelyn Nallen (recorder) and David Gordon (harpsichord) and three dancers (Moira Goff, Ian Brener and a guest from *L'Evantail* in France, Gilles Potter) provided an evening of 18th-century entertainment in which music and dance became one and together created a space of elaborate entertainment not possible without either.

In the centre of the church an open dance space was surrounded by the audience and led by a few steps to a stage, on which the musicians were positioned. The concert began with an *Ouverture* from an instrumental suite by Telemann, followed by the prologue of solo dances choreographed by Pécour. The main section consisted of three danced *divertissements* and interludes of instrumental music, based on the form of musical entertainment in the 17th and 18th centuries. The *Divertissements* consisted of male and female solos and couple dances for a man and woman, of which the second was a comedy ('Italy') sandwiched between two serious representations, 'L'Espagne' and 'Loves of the Gods'. The evening concluded with an epilogue, the only section in which the three dancers performed together. The spectacular male solo to the 'Air des Espagnols' from the third *entrée* of Campra's opéra-ballet *Les Fêtes venitientes* (choreography by Pécour) was performed in both the first and the third *divertissements* on account of its shared theme of Spain and Love. The entire programme was cleverly structured in an arched symmetry, which was articulated by the repetition. Such structure and integrity was an important factor of entertainments of the period and it was proved that such programming appealed to a modern audience as well.

The dancing was faithful to the extant original notations for dances by Lully, Campra and Desmaret. Choreographies were sometimes comical, coquettish, seductive or graceful and contained intricate foot-work and demanding jumps. The performance styles of music and dance coincided remarkably. Just as the long notes in the music were embellished and filled by ornaments of quick, short notes, so dance steps were always small and filled with ornamental foot/leg movements when a step was to be held for a long period. Musical and choreographic beats, metres and phrase perfectly matched, and their occasional temporary conflicts produced artistic excitement such as could never be represented by either art-form alone. It was

a truly distinctive art form constituted of both music and dance, neither of which submitted to the other. The relationship between music and dance had nothing to do with such notions as slavery, corset, dependence or independence, terms often used to describe the dance/music relationship in later periods.

Dances and entertainments of this style are much less familiar to the modern audience than concerts. The concept of programming, choreographic style, and the relationship between music and dance are potential sources of inspiration for productions in this century. The historical and social contexts of these entertainments are impossible to reconstruct, which paradoxically gives today's performers an ultimate freedom. The achievements of *Airs & Graces* are founded on artistic excellence and thorough historical researches, but their approach is not the sole method of representing the genre. I look forward to their future productions with interest, and at the same time hope to see further such collaborations between dances, musicians and scholars

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## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

It is usually considered discourteous to point out blatant mistakes in a fellow reviewer's writing but I fear that Andrew Benson-Wilson's review of Charivari Agréable's South Bank concert entitled 'Two upon a Ground' should not pass without correction.

He wrote that the Lawes suite for two viols was accompanied by an organ continuo which, to paraphrase, was realized too much and too high. This reveals a fundamental ignorance of both Lawes's very own written-out organ part and the broad palette of styles possible in keyboard accompaniment. The piece in question was the G minor suite, in which the organ plays an intabulation of a consort dance, around which the two viols weave virtuosic divisions. If anything, the viols accompany the organ. I refer him to Otterstedt's article entitled 'Lawes's Division Viol' in the collection of essays edited by A. Ashbee (1998), in which the notions of 'playing into the organ' and the keyboard as 'leader of the ensemble' are traced back to the 16th-century Italian diminution practice of blending virtuoso – as opposed to soloistic – parts into the keyboard.

On the subject of high realizations, any accompaniment to bass viols is bound to be high. Written-out and treatise examples tend to be mezzo soprano, and bear little relation or reference to the accompanied part. My own preference is for a lower ambitus, drawing on various artistic licences in matters harmonic, melodic and textural, as described in contemporary sources.

Yours sincerely,

Kah-Ming Ng

*Although Andrew evidently didn't know that the organ part in question was not your realisation but an integral part of the piece, he is to be congratulated for recognising that what you were playing was unusual. Was its nature described in the programme or an introduction from a performer? If so, you can criticise him for not reading or listening; if not, he has come up with a plausible explanation of what he was hearing, though sadly for your reputation as a continuo player, not the right one. The work in question is unusual, probably unique (I'm suspicious of the proposed link with Italian diminutions of popular madrigals): wouldn't it make more sense to the listeners if they had been told?*

CB

Dear Clifford,

The CD which I am enclosing in the hope of a review [we will do so in a subsequent issue CB] would have reached you six months ago, had it not been for circumstances which I have finally decided are worthy of being more widely known.

I have commented before on the current lack of interest by the broadcasting media in types of music which might be considered as 'out of favour'. In my case, this means harpsichord music. I listen to a lot of piano music myself, and enjoy musical performances of Bach and Scarlatti on just about any keyboard instrument, but feel it is important to maintain a balance by feeding listeners with a diet which also includes performance based upon the vastly increased enjoyment of instruments, tonalities, and playing styles, which the last few decades have given us. After an unbalanced presentation over the last few months of Couperin, Handel, and finally English Virginal Music played on Steinways, I have decided to restrict my music listening to recordings for the time being, and avoid a tedious weekly trawl through the listings.

At the start of this year I was not yet so pessimistic. I submitted my latest recording to Roger Wright at BBC Radio 3, in the faint hope that the offer of its use (by implication for little or no payment) just might tickle his fancy. I had already asked for a frank response to it from several friends whose views I respect, and was encouraged to think it might prove attractive. I offered to delay the release of the recording until a decision had been made. Its receipt was acknowledged in January, and I sat back to await any developments. After several months I contacted Roger Wright, but did not receive a reply. I wrote again, reminding him that I had delayed releasing the CD for the BBC's possible benefit (as well as my own), but would soon wish to do so. Still silence.

I have had nothing further at the time of writing this, and have decided to bring what I consider this act of gross courtesy to public notice. From our point of view it is tragic that Radio 3 is now a station more interested in dead artists playing early repertoire in an unenlightened way. It is perhaps even more disconcerting to find that it considers itself so separated from the public it serves that it finds it unnecessary even to maintain basic civilities.

Best wishes,

Colin Booth.

\*\*\*\*\*

We now have four members of one family subscribing to *EMR* – the Caudles: Mark, Theresa and Jill, together with their parents, to whom we send congratulations on their golden wedding. They lead from the Holmans, who muster three subscriptions. Theresa Caudle recently sent me a photo her father took of a group at Dartington showing herself as a teenager along with Andrew van der Beek playing curtal and crumhorn and me among the singers, conducted by David Munrow. We've just found our copy of the 1975 issue of *Vogue* with pictures of early musicians, including some of those just named: you can only guess whether sounds have changed as much as appearances!

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