Early Music REVIEW

Number 77 February 2002

ISSN 1355-3437 Price £2.50

Published on the first of each month except Jan. and Aug. by King's Music, Redcroft, Banks End, Wyton, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE28 2AA
tel +44 (0)1480 52076 fax +44(0)148450821
http://www.kings-music.co.uk/

First, apologies to customers and readers for the difficulty you have had in getting in touch with us. Soon after you received the December issue, our e-mail failed. I assumed that it was something to do with our equipment: it never occurred to me that the successor to our national phone company, BT, would just close down one of its online services without notification. By the time I discovered this, I couldn't sign up to an alternative because the computer was infected with the virus *magistr*; it apparently lurks unseen for a couple of months before becoming active. Luckily, we'd just got a new (new to us, anyway) computer, so tried using that. We had a few initial problems, then picked up 350 messages from attglobal and nearly as many from hotmail; but before we'd managed to deal with them, we were thoroughly caught up in the post-Christmas and New Year rush of orders and also needed to concentrate on the other task I had set myself: to transfer the setting of *EMR* from Acorn to PC.

But our email problems were not yet over. After our first down-load, attglobal got clogged and wouldn't send on further messages. They are now being transferred, but there is a batch that we have not seen. So if you have not received a reply to an enquiry, don't hesitate to send it again. But if you repeat an order, make it clear that it is not a fresh order, or you may get it twice. Please use the following addresses:

clifford.bartlett@btopenworld.com	*preferable*
cbartlett55@hotmail.com	*alternative*
earlymusicreview@hotmail.com	*for Diary entries only*
cbkings@attglobal.net	*should also still work.*

The attempt to set *EMR* on PC hasn't yet worked. I have most of the layout sorted, and if the font had installed itself without hassle, at least some of the pages would have been on the new system. The main visible benefit should be a sharper image, particularly useful for the CD reviews. If there are slight variations between sections in the next couple of issues, our apologies in advance. *CB*

New Subscription Rates

UK: £17.50 Europe: £22.50
Rest of World: £35.00 (air), £22.50 (surface)
Sterling cheques payable to King's Music

French cheques in Euros (€36.00)
$US checks ($50.00 airmail, $33.00 surface)
payable to C. A. J. Bartlett

Our new subscription rates are shown in the adjacent column. We naively believed that banks in countries adoping the Euro would treat all cheques as equal, but apparently there will be no central clearing system (nor is there planned to be), so cheques from one country will still being charged as foreign in another (a defect of the system which was omitted from the euphoric publicity of the introduction of the coinage). The former Eurocheques stopped being useful here a year ago. So Europeans outside France, please use credit or debit cards or electronic transfer. We accept the following cards (but NOT AmEx).

Visa Mastercard Eurocard Delta Switch Solo

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

NOHM III.I

Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages Edited by Reinhard Strohm and Bonnie J. Blackburn. (*The New Oxford History of Music Volume III Part One.*) Oxford UP, 2001. xxxi + 460pp, £75.00. ISBN 019 816205 7

The trouble with calling something 'new' is what to call its replacement, as Grove has discovered and New Labour will in due course. Vol. II (covering 1300-1600) of *The [Old] Oxford History of Music* was published in 1905. Its successor, vol. III of *The New Oxford History of Music* appeared in 1960. I bought it at the time, but haven't used it very much. This is the second of what should have been a distinctive new title: the description 'new edition' in the list of volumes is misleading, since that term suggests a revision, not a completely new book. The only explicit series names I can think of are flippant: 'new, new' or 'newer'. The book avoids any chronological scope in its title, though one infers from the surrounding volume that it and its companion cover 1300 to 1540. There is an inconsistency in the typography of the part number: the half-title spells it out, the volume list uses capital Roman I, the spine has lower-case Roman i. Wearing her copy-editing hat, surely Bonnie Blackburn would correct an author submitting such inconsistent citations. In fact, it would have been more appropriate to number the volume ii (or II), since the editors admit that none of the chapters included relate to mainstream topics. They comprise only eight out of 17 chapters that were commissioned: the others were not forthcoming. This seems a very odd way to revise one of the standard histories of music issued under a title that implies a certain level of authority.

The introduction attempts to justify the book on several counts, though not the obvious one that the volume of miscellaneous articles related to a theme but not necessarily covering it systematically or comprehensively has of late been replacing the single-author book on a clearly-defined subject. So this is at least a representation of how musicological publication is working at the beginning of the 21st century. And in many ways it is a good example. Some of the contributions are outstanding, others are good. I usually find discussions of theory and theorists hard going, so congratulations to Jan Herlinger and Bonnie Blackburn for their two sterling surveys. Strohm's attempt at a summing-up on music, humanism and rebirth starts well, but then gets tied up in a specific case: it is the opposite scenario to the common periodical-article format, where a specific topic is pushed unnecessarily into generalisation.

The introduction emphasises that earlier studies neglected certain geographical areas. This has a long chapter by Tom Ward on Middle Europe (a pre-war concept that the fall of the iron curtain has revived). But he cannot disguise that much of the music is chiefly of local interest. I would suggest a hierarchy of values for such matters (though to be convincing the following would need to be translated into more fashionable language):

a. music that was recognised then and is now as being of international significance
b. music that may have been of limited circulation but is worth performing and studying
c. music that fills out the map, is sociologically interesting, and appeals primarily to local interest.

Allocation to categories is, of course, subjective, but that's part of the game.

I suspect that our readers are most likely to read the chapter by Howard Mayer Brown and Keith Polk on instrumental music. This is a fine survey of a tricky topic. I was, however, worried that it cited only modern (and not even very modern) musicological studies with no reference to the vast amount of research and experimentation being done, often with careful scholarship, by makers and performers, but not documented by the printed word. For instance, the remarks on *alta capella* (a term not indexed) might have taken advantage of the experience of those who regularly improvise on 15th-century tenors on period instruments: they must have a knowledge that can't be found in books. The chapter seems to have been completed nearly a decade ago; it would be helpful and good for all the authors' reputations if the dates of submission and of substantial revision were appended to each chapter.

Walter Salmen is enthusiastic in his advocacy of widespread cultivation of dance, but I get suspicious of the sort of magpie study that picks up bits of evidence from all over Europe. It may be true, but I wouldn't be surprised if such activity had more local variation. I also wonder how accurate a study of current dance would be were it based chiefly on theological writings.

The opening chapter on Muslim and Jewish music is very disappointing. I read it hoping to learn, but it seemed to me (as a non-expert) inadequate as an exposition of the subjects in themselves and no help in explaining the vexed and topical questions of the Arabic influence on medieval secular music (as believed by most performers of the repertoire) or the antiquity of what is widely performed as medieval Sephardic music. If the chapter wasn't intended to discuss the relationship of Arab and European music, why was it restricted to the Muslims in Spain?

There is, commendably, one chapter on chant: it is too easy to think of it as already established and unchanging through

this period. Andrew Hughes's contribution is valuable in itself (I suspect that extent of the rhymed offices will surprise many readers), but seems more a statement of what he is interested in than a considered survey.

The editors, in support of their decision to print the peripheral chapters alone (only the volume number implies that the missing contributions, or substitutes for them, might eventually be published) are sceptical of the possibility and usefulness of the traditional narrative history of music. That is odd, since Reinhard Strohm has himself produced such a fine example, even if he might now squirm at the title *The Rise of European Music 1380-1500* – it's not a study of pitch standards! I wonder whether his time might have been better used in writing a prequel to it than putting this volume together. It has good things, but is likely to be of more ephemeral interest than its predecessors (or the new Vol. II of the series).

ANGELS AND MINSTRELS

Richard Rastall *Minstrels Playing: Music in Early English Religious Drama... Vol. 2.* D. S. Brewer, 2001. xxi + 549pp, £60.00. ISBN 0 85991 585 9

This is a sequel to *The Heaven Singing,* favourably reviewed in *EMR* 27. Rastall quotes another reviewer as hoping that the successor 'will not be long – in either sense'. Five years is a reasonable time for a busy scholar to assemble such a volume, but it *is* long and is not a book that many will feel the need to read from cover to cover. That is not, of course, a criticism: vol. 1 is intended for that purpose. What it contains is a systematic survey of the possible references to music in the cyclic religious plays and other similar works, discussing them all and commenting from the viewpoint of their performing implications. Each chapter is devoted to a cycle or play and has

1: an introduction, useful as a summary of current research.
2: a systematic survey of the original 'dramatic directions' ('stage directions', irrespective of the type of staging, would accord better with normal usage).
3: similar treatment of possible references to music in the text of the plays.
4: a list and commentary on all Latin quotations, tracing them to their biblical or liturgical source (important, since liturgical texts might have been sung).
5: other documentation, such as financial records.
6: 'music and other aural cues', where musical opportunities not covered in the previous sections are considered.

So the information required by anyone mounting a performance of a play or cycle is clearly set out, though sectionalised.

It is difficult to imagine and provide music appropriate for the whole chronological span during which some of the cycles were performed – through much of the 15th and 16th centuries. Either there was little in common between earlier and later performances, or else older music was fossilised, sounding as incongruous as a Victorian ballad at a modern pop concert. We are concerned with the use of historical performance practice because we find that a style rooted in a particular time and place is more meaningful than a stylistic hybrid; but to achieve that is impossible unless the director of the play has addressed the problem and doesn't fall back on a late-medieval-cum-Elizabethan mish-mash of the Maid Marion-serenaded-by-*Greensleeves* variety. Late-16th-century music has tonal and chordal implications that 15th-century music doesn't.

The book ends with practical advice. Musicians will find the remarks on acoustics useful, not only for their sense, but for having them in print, which may mean that they are considered in advance by directors, who may well make irrevocable decisions before any musicians are involved. There are not many books on early music that have a section devoted to the weather, though playing outdoors inevitably affects the choice of instrument; perhaps there needs to be a wet and dry classification cutting across *haut* and *bas*. That classification in itself causes problems anyway, in that the practical differentiation is indoors/outdoors, which would exclude *bas* instruments from exterior dramatic performances, but the symbolism requires both.

The scope of the book is wide, including not just the more familiar York, Chester and other cycles and extant cycle-excerpts but the Cornish cycle, a variety of saints plays, and the Moralities *Castle of Perseverence, Wisdom* and *Mankind*. It should be read at an early stage by anyone intending to perform them. Musicians acquainted with the period may find some of the repetitions tedious, but it is worth putting up with that for the detailed information, while non-musicians will benefit from the author's alertness to the possibilities in the surviving evidence.

RELIGIOUS HATRED

Rebecca Wagner Oettinger *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation.* Ashgate 2001. xiv + 435 pp, £49.50. ISBN 0 7546 0363 6

The summer before last, some of the singers at the Beauchamp Praetorius course were a little uneasy at the crudity of the antipapal sentiments of the text of *Erhalt uns, Herr* (Praetorius set more than Luther's original three stanzas in *Polyhymnia...*). At the time I did not know its background, but compared with the texts given here, it is tame indeed. The core of the book is what is modestly called a 'catalogue of songs', which in nearly 200 pages not only lists 230 polemic songs and parodies but prints text and translations of many of them in parallel columns. As with English ballads, they were usually sung to common tunes, so the absence of the music is not too serious. This is preceded by 200 pages of discussion of the issues involved in the broadside war between protestants and catholics in Germany in the first four decades of the reformation. It was a rather one-sided polemic, waged chiefly by the Lutherans. Had the proposed UK anti-religious-hatred legislation been passed at the end of last year, the publishers might have

been worried. As well as setting out the historical background, the author tries to discuss the extent to which songs were a way of passing information and propaganda to what might have a decade or so been called the proletariat, but here is called 'the common people' and other such terms. Figures for illiteracy are quoted, though there is little discussion of whether the illiterate were very concerned at the ideas behind the civil and religious changes of the time. Generally, protestant enthusiasm, being based on Bible study, leads to an increase of literacy (perhaps matched by a decrease in the understanding of visual symbolism), and the impression I have picked up (without serious study) is that there must have been quite a high degree of literacy among those attending Lutheran churches in the major centres, and perhaps beyond. (Two centuries later, one must postulate a high degree of literacy if rural and industrial Wesleyan congregations could really cope with the theological and literary vocabulary of Charles Wesley's hymns: I suspect that they pass over the heads of younger members of modern congregations). Music is not the main topic of interest here, but I'm glad I have read the book and it at least gave me the background of the Praetorius piece I mentioned above*.

* It is scored for one choir of fiffari/violins/mute cornetts, one of four soloists (SATB), with or without accompaniment of viols, a cornetts and four sackbuts, and an SATB *chorus pro capella*. Opportunities for singing it in public are probably limited unless the words are suppressed, but if anyone wants to try, score and parts are available from King's Music.

LOBO MOTETS

Motets attributed to Alonso Lobo (1555-1617) surviving in instrumental sources – their texts newly restored by Bruno Turner, with an appendix of spurious attributions. Hispaniae Cantica Sacra (HPW 3). 45pp, £8.50. [Available from Mapa Mundi: see advert]

Lobo was unkown to most of us until Bruno published his double-choir, canonic *Ave Maria* in 1978 as one of the early issues of Mapa Mundi. The marvellously specific title quoted above makes a description of the contents unnecessary. There are nine pieces in the main section. Adding texts may seem easy, at least if the title tells you what the text is; though judging by the problems Hugh Keyte had here over Christmas trying to revise his texting of Taverner's *Quemadmodum*, I can well believe Bruno Turner's claim that the process was 'one of trial and error, time-consuming but highly instructive'. There is no questioning in the introduction of the attribution of these nine motets to Lobo, so the use of that word in the title is perhaps misleading. The publication is completed by five motets which survive (with underlay) in late-18th-century sources, Évora 7 & 10. Each begins plausibly, but the style jumps a century or so at the end. One possibility is that they are genuine works which, for some reason, were required to be shortened: if so, completion in the style of the opening might be an interesting exercise for students at institutions that still teach composition in historic styles. Another possibility is that they were written as deliberate pastiche, but the composer lost interest towards the end. They are all quite short, each fitting on two pages, which are printed half-size side by side. This seems an excellent way of making music of dubious authenticity available at minimal cost. The nine motets in the main sequence are all in four parts, those in high clefs being transposed down a fourth. In terms of modern voices, this makes them most suitable for ATBarB (some, though not all, of the alto parts are quite low), though other transpositions are available from the publisher.

FLORENTINE MUSICIANS

Warren Kirkendale *The Court Musicians in Florence During the Principate of the Medici with a Reconstruction of the Artistic Establishment.* (*Historiae Musicae Cultores*, vol. 61) Leo S. Olschki, 1993. 752pp + 13 plates + 2 charts in pocket. €97,09. ISBN 88 222 4108 8

This is the companion volume preceding *Emilio de Cavalieri* (reviewed in *EMR* 72, of July 2001). Its format may look off-putting, but it is filled with well-selected material which makes fascinating reading. An achievement in itself, there may be no book to compare with this. Aside from appendices, genealogical tables, charts listing all the musicians employed by the Medici, the book has the appearance of a biographical dictionary organized chronologically rather than alphabetically. That is what makes it so readable, significant and useful. Instead of chapters there are 14 sections (such as 'Musicians Appointed by Cosimo I, 1543-1560'), one for

each grand duke, under each of which we find 20-40 numbered entries, identifying musicians or artists hired by the court, whom Prof. Kirkendale discusses in great detail, including transcriptions of the most significant documents he has accessed. The organization of such a monumental amount of material is staggering, and the reader is quite easily engaged either to read it straight through, or tempted to read only about selected figures (e.g. musicians such as Striggio, G. Caccini, Peri, Marenzio, F. Caccini, Malvezzi, S. Caccini, D. Belli, M. Effrem, Gagliano, Frescobaldi, Anglesi, Cesti, Cristofori). Section IX 'Men of Letters, Court Gentlemen, Etc.' begins again with the appointment in 1552 of the poet P. Aretino, and includes not only other writers (e.g. Guarini, Chiabrera) but aristocratic musicians who, despite receiving great recognition as musicians, were hired in other capacities (F. Rasi, *provisionato di cappa corta et veste lunghe* [a 'short cape and long gown' employee]. The 364 numbered biographies vary in length from a pair of lines to the 50 or 60 pages given to Caccini or Peri. The author links them together by cross-references, and provides infinitely helpful bibliographical information and lists of their works, in addition to family histories, and musical, personal, political, or otherwise newsworthy events (including rapes, murders, conspiracies and ensuing legal consequences).

The documents incorporated into the account (letters, petitions, wills, poems etc.) are in the original languages, but they support the story primarily told by Prof. Kirkendale. The principate of the Medici extended from 1543 to 1737. Consult this book if you have any interest whatsoever in the figures of this period in Florence, remembering that Cavalieri is essentially missing, having a companion monograph of 600 pages all to himself.

The new or corrected information uncovered through Prof. Kirkendale's indefatigable research cannot be summarized, and to give examples would be arbitrary. The book was not as widely reviewed as it deserved, though the praise it received was unqualified: inestimable, reliable, monumental, stupefying, meticulous, comprehensive, indispensable. A terrifying photograph of the stacks of the State Archives of Florence (from 1987, still in the Uffizi) faces the title page.

I have dipped into this amazing book from time to time and my impression confirms the closer study of our reviewer, Barbara Sachs

ENGLISH VIOL MSS

The Viola da Gamba Society Index of Manuscripts Containing Consort Music Compiled by Andrew Ashbee, Robert Thompson and Jonathan Wainwright. Vol. 1. Ashgate, 2001. xvi + 402pp, £47.50. ISBN 0 7546 0130 7

This continues the composer-based *Thematic Index* compiled chiefly by the late Gordon Dodd for the Viola da Gamba society, which was published in six loose-leaf packets. A strong case can be made for amalgamating these into a single sequence and publishing them, updated as required. But this is the first volume taking a different approach to the repertoire by cataloguing individual manuscripts. Strangely, the reason for selecting the 50 sources covered here is given only in the blurb on the front flyleaf, not as part of any explicit editorial policy: the common feature is that they all have known copyists or original owners. The physical details of each MS are described and the contents listed with great care and attention to detail. Space and effort has not be wasted on non-essentials. There is no listing of concordances for individual pieces (easily found from the *Thematic Index*), though composer ascriptions and titles are added in brackets. Watermarks are described, and there are 80 pages of facsimiles to show the handwritings. There are biographical notes on the owners and copyists – the only reading matter in the book. Identifying scribes and drawing conclusions from the interlinking between sources has been a fruitful area of study over the last few years: this book makes the raw data more accessible, and helps scholars without easy access to London and Oxford; it avoids wear on the MSS themselves and provides additional information to those studying them on film. When I started playing the viol, it was quite normal for players to transcribe parts direct from the MSS; the Gamba Society's Supplementary Publications were a formalisation of that. The Society also encouraged a more sophisticated study of the sources, and future editors will need to consult this volume. The identity and relationship of the scribes is a topic that will surely continue to be studied. This is a summary of information that it will continue to be a standard reference book even if some details require modification. Congratulations to the editors on their skill and labour and to the publisher for issuing what can never be a best seller!

SAINT-CYR MOTETS

Petits motets *from the Royal Convent School at Saint-Cyr* Edited by Deborah Kauffman. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era,* 112) A-R Editions, 2001. xix + 102pp, $53.00. ISBN) 89579 491 8

The shortage of early music intended specifically for girls should make this anthology a popular one. A school for the daughters of impoverished nobility was founded in 1682 and moved to Saint-Cyr (near Versailles) in 1686; it survived until 1793. Singing and regular liturgical activity were part of the curriculum. Initially, all the 250 girls may have sung the unison choruses, but one suspects that the introduction of two parts was linked with a specialisation. The sources connected with Saint-Cyr are for voices only, without organ. The organ parts were presumably kept separately from the choir's music, perhaps in a different format, and haven't survived. But the scoring is made explicit in the published edition of Clérambault senior's six *Motets A Une et Deux Voix pour tout le Chœur Avec la Basse Continüe pour L'Orgue* (given by Kauffman the unfortunate siglum *MUD*), which also survive in the Saint-Cyr MSS. The *Avertissement* recommends placing the two singers or choirs on either side of the organ 'comme on fait à S^{t}. Cyr'. The edition includes a couple of monophonic pieces by Nivers. The transcriptions give a greater feeling of metrical

precision than the facsimile and I wonder whether the two-part versions might give some hints how the archaic monophonic notation was actually sung. Bass parts are added throughout, providing the harmony in solo sections and doubling the lower voice an octave below in the duets, as in Clérambault's edition. (There are a few motets for three voices.) The presence of ornamentation on parts that were sung (at least at times) chorally suggests that we should perhaps be bolder in the addition of trills in all choral music of the period. 21 of the items are by Nivers and Louis-Nicholas Clérambault; there are also three motets by the latter's son César-François-Nicolas, two by Guilleminot DuGué and one by Jean-Baptiste-Louis Thomelin.

TELEMANN CANTATAS

Georg Philipp Telemann *Fortsetzung des Harmonischen Gottes-dienstes... Edited by Jeanne Swack. Vol. V. Cantatas No. 4, 8, 10, 11, 13, 25, 30, 41, 46, 49, 51, 57.* PRB Production, 2001. 118 pp+ 5 parts, $105.00. ISBN 1 56571 088 6

Regular readers will know about this commendable publication of Telemann's second cycle of church cantatas. Unlike the first set, published by Bärenreiter, this requires two obbligato instrumental parts in addition to a solo voice and continuo. PRB has decided that grouping by instrument is more sensible than the original liturgical sequence, and this volume is devoted to pieces requiring two violins. Four of the cantatas, in fact, have unison violins. I presume that this is a quirk of the movement's origins in cantatas for larger ensembles in which there were more than one violin to a part, and they will probably sound better thus or with a single instrument. There is also one cantata (with alto voice) in which the violin II part (with lots of bottom Gs) is alternatively designated to viola. There is, however, no alto clef copy. There is a part labelled Viola, but that contains the bass part an octave higher – a legitimate practice in orchestral performances (which would presumably have the same part at 16' pitch as well). But as I've said before, if you are expanding the instrumentation, it would be sensible to perform the larger-scale cantatas from which much of the music here derives. The package comes with parts and a two-stave vocal copy (complete bass and instrumental cue when the voice is silent) so is self sufficient. Voices required are soprano (4 cantatas), alto (7) and bass (1). The single bass cantata looks particularly good.

MANFREDINI CONCERTO

Francesco Onofrio Manfredini *Concerto in F, Opus 3 No. 1 for Strings with Optional parts for Two Oboes and Bassoon* Concerto Editions (CE01-Man0301R), 2001. Score & parts.

I enjoyed playing Manfredini's Christmas Concerti op. 3/12 in December so was interested by Maxwell Sobel's score of op. 3/1. The first four pieces in the set are scored with unison violins almost throughout and no solo/tutti contrast. To provide a little more interest, the editor has added three optional wind parts, quite imaginatively done. He tells me that he happened to have two oboes and a bassoon coming for a playing session so wrote parts for them. Several Vivaldi concertos have been recorded of late in enlarged versions emanating from Pisendal on Dresden, so there is no objection in providing parts for additional instruments such as an enterprising musical director might have penned, providing he could be bothered to score up the original. This version couldn't have been concocted without a score, since it is not just a matter of simplified or embellished doubling of the existing parts. My feeling is that, once heard, the concerto would sound empty without them. The parts are printed on nice stiff paper, though the glued pages of the score are already coming loose at the ends. We hope to report on the editor's progress with unaugmented editions of Zelenka soon.

MATURE MOZART

Mozart *Mature Piano Pieces* Edited and annotated by Richard Jones. Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 2001. 103pp. £8.50. ISBN 1 86096 195 9

In my first draft of this review (lost while playing with the format on a different computer) I began jokily about the use of the word 'mature'. But having just found myself referring in a programme note to Haydn's mature quartets, I won't joke about wine and cheese but be specific and tell the reader that this begins with K. 269b and K. 284, dating from 1777 when the composer was 21. There is, in fact, a dearth of short piano pieces between those of his childhood and then, so the cut-off point is uncontroversial. An interesting piece is the group of Four Praeambula K. 284a. NMA prints them as a single piece. But assuming they relate to Nannerl's request for a Prelude modulating from C to B flat (as the first does), it must have been intended for playing separately. Jones quotes the relevant letters, but follows NMA in treating them as if they were to be played as an entity (with key-changes anticipated at the end of the preceding system, for instance). But the request for a specific modulation surely implies that Nannerl already has a piece in C and another in B flat that she wants linking, so she would have no need for it to be followed *attacca* by a second, third and fourth piece. In Mozart's autograph, they are separated by double bars with pauses, and there is no reason to link the pieces. Nothing is said about their function. I presume it relates to the custom I know of from a few decades later, when pianists would improvise links between pieces. So if these are played, they should probably be used thus, not played as a group. And they might also be used as models for ones own improvisations.

There is one point of editorial technique that I would question. In the Rondo in A minor K511, Jones adds an editorial slur to notes 2-4 of the right hand  (and similarly whenever it is repeated). This is presumably by analogy with bar 129. But that is the only time there is no turn between the upbeat and the first note of the bar. That may be a coincidence, but the possibility that it is deliberate

is a reason for leaving Mozart's notation alone. There is a similar point at the beginning of bar 2 of the Adagio in B Minor. It would seem obvious to slur the 6/4 chord to its resolution, especially as Mozart writes a slur for the left hand in bar 23. But in the right hand that resolution is the beginning of a sequence of paired slurs, and I would be reluctant to print a note slurred in both directions. These notational points may or may not affect performance, but I think one has to be very cautious in deciding when passages are parallel. But at least it is perfectly clear what the editor has done, and a compliment that I am only questioning such minor details. I'll merely mention that there are fingerings to think about or ignore (but not follow slavishly). Does it really matter whether you begin the Adagio with a fourth finger (as in the Henle edition) or the third?

RECERCARE XII

Recercare XII 2000 journal for the study and practice of early music LIM Editrice, 2001. 166pp, €23,24. ISBN 88 7096 279 2

Although slightly smaller than usual this issue contains a lot for the English reader, and the articles, while technically pertaining to Italian music, have much broader significance. Peter Williams writes about the ambiguity of the term *organum* which between the 7th and 13th centuries could have referred to ensemble music with or without instruments or even to the liturgy itself. A re-reading of all the references in this light is welcome.

Adalbert Roth's 'Judocus de Kessalia and Judocus de Pratis' challenges the conjectural identification of the two, the latter of which is Josquin des Prez, or of either with Judochus de Francia. As a result of the new documents presented there is now no reason to believe that Josquin had any connection with the Duomo of Milan or the court of F. M. Sforza, and most biographical entries on him will need editing.

It's a virus, I'm afraid...

Wolfgang Witzenmann's essay, in Italian (*Recercare* summarises in English), enlarges on a lecture given at the 1999 conference in Irpinia 'Giornate gesualdiane internazionali'. He compares the style of Gesualdo's more traditional motets of 1603 with his Responsories of 1611 (more like his madrigals in declamation). Similarities and differences in treatment of modality, chromaticism, counterpoint, influences, lead him to ask whether the latter are *madrigali travestiti,* and to conclude not, the differences being quite clear. How rich a mixed style Gesualdo's genius produced is well illustrated.

Shorter communications include Stephen J. Milner's 'Organ culture and organ contracts in renaissance Pistoia' with the original documents in Latin from the state archives of Florence and Pistoia. Francesco Nocerino documents 'Il tiorbino fra Napoli e Roma'. The instrument referred to seems to have been a small harpsichord, and from the intriguing documents presented (dating from 1657 to 1722) one gleans some amusing names for plucked keyboard instruments: *tiorbinetto, urpicordo picciotto, ciambalo, appicordone, appicordo, tiorbina, spinettone.* Francesco Cera describes sixty versets and a Pastoral in a previously unknown manuscript in Bologna attributable to Bernardo Pasquini. Anna Tedesco contributes to what can be known about Giacomo Meyerbeer, thanks to letters about an unstaged opera, L'Almanzorre. Writing in English, Mimmo Peruffo records the surprising conclusions reached by examining gut strings (as well as a violin bridge and two bows) which belonged to Paganini.

Barbara Sachs

****

I was puzzled to receive a copy of *Encomia: Bibliographical Bulletin of the International Courtly Literature Society,* Vol. XX-XXI, 1998-99 (ISSN 0363-4841) from its editor, Jean Blacker, Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio 43022. It is devoted to an International Bibliography for 1996-97, some items with abstracts. There is an index entry for *music,* but that doesn't pick up all items with musical relevance. Entries are grouped by the country of origin, with no UK submissions (though I noticed an *Early Music* article by Christopher Page masquerading as USA-Canadian).

LETTER

Dear Clifford,

In answer to Andrew van der Beek, if *referendum* were a gerund, it would mean 'referring' (The Latin Gerund is a Verbal Noun of the Active Voice – R. D.Wormald. N.B: it does decline, but the Nominative is not found). As you surmise, *referendum* is a gerundive (a Verbal Adjective of the Passive Voice), and as such both declines and agrees – in this case, not with any understood noun, but in the general neuter sense of 'something'. Thus, *referendum* means something 'to be referred', its plural being *referenda,* like *addenda* and *corrigenda.* Although *agendum* is not used in English, it has a legitimate meaning – something 'to be done'.

Simon Hill

HANDEL'S GLORIA REVISITED

Peter Holman

The musicological event of 2001 was undoubtedly the discovery of a Gloria apparently by Handel in the library of the Royal Academy of Music; the manuscript came from the library of William Savage, who had sung for Handel as a boy, via the library of the composer R. J. S. Stevens. We now have two editions and at least three recordings of the work, so everyone can assess it for themselves. Hans Joachim Marx, one of its two discoverers, has propounded the theory (see 'A Newly Discovered Gloria by Handel', *Early Music*, 29 (2001), pp. 343-52) that it comes from Handel's Roman period, was written for the Ruspoli household to be performed during a mass at Vignanello north-west of Rome on 13 June 1707, and was brought to England much later by Margherita Durastanti, who is known to have sung the motet *Coelestis dum spirat* HWV231 during the 1707 mass.

Marx's theory has gained a certain amount of currency, though it was demolished by Anthony Hicks (AH) in a review of the editions in the October *EMR* (pp. 7-10). Marx's case is seemingly based on the fact that the Gloria has the same scoring as the motet (soprano, two violins and continuo) and makes similar demands on the soloist. However, AH points out that, unlike the motet and other pieces written by Handel at the time for Durastanti, the Gloria is not mentioned in the Ruspoli accounts, that Marx's points about the ranges of the respective soprano parts are misleading, and most important, that Marx fails to discuss the *Laudate pueri* in F major HWV236. The *Laudate pueri* shows that Marx's attempt to associate the Gloria with Handel's other Ruspoli church music is specious, for it too is scored for soprano, two violins and continuo and has a virtuosic solo part, though it was apparently written in Hamburg before Handel went to Italy. One problem with trying to provide the Gloria with a convincing context is that it is just about the only setting of a mass movement of the period for a solo voice. However, as AH points out in the booklet to the Gardiner recording, there is a *Missa brevis* in B minor by Telemann for alto, two violins and continuo, written in Leipzig around 1705; it was published in 1994 by Carus of Stuttgart.

Having directed a performance of the Gloria and heard two of the recordings, I agree with AH's conclusion that if the Gloria is by Handel it must be very early. He suggests in the booklet to the Gardiner recording that it may be a 'rare survival from the work of the teenage Handel at Halle', pointing to 'the casual crossing of the violin parts' and the lack of 'certain types of cadence prominent in the opera [*Almira*, 1704] (and also present in the early *Laudate*)'. I would add that that the writing in the Gloria is significantly simpler than in the *Laudate*. The vocal runs in the former move mostly in simple scale or cambiata patterns, while in the latter they tend to be broken into more complex patterns involving leaps and arpeggios, making them more technically demanding. Also, there is nothing in the Gloria to match the concerto-like violin passages and the exuberant burst of semiquaver triplets for soprano and first violin in the 'Qui habitare' movement of the *Laudate*. There are also several passages in the Gloria that strike me as being gauche or uncharacteristic of even the Hamburg Handel. One is the 'Dominus Deus', an arioso movement similar to the equivalent passages in motets by Rosenmüller, Legrenzi and their contemporaries. It starts with a mysterious and rather illogical move from a root-position to a first-inversion chord, and there is no sign in the movement that the composer had yet become aware of the standard harmonic patterns of Italianate recitative around 1700 – as Handel clearly had by the time he wrote *Almira* or the 'Quis sicut Dominus' section of the *Laudate*. Another weak passage is the 'Gratias agimus' section of the 'Laudamus te', with its rather banal dialogues between the voice, the violins and the bass, and its repetitive sequences.

This does not mean that the Gloria is not by Handel. For one thing, it shares a number of melodic ideas with his genuine Italian and English church works; a couple of the correspondences are mentioned by Marx, and there is a longer list in AH's CD notes. The presence of borrowings of this sort is always a good sign in Handel that the work in question is authentic, though of course it is possible that the Gloria is one of those works by other composers, such as the Erba *Magnificat* or the Urio *Te Deum*, that Handel used as a quarry. However, there are enough characteristically Handelian passages such as the vigorous opening with its marching descending bass lines, the beautifully conceived 'Et in terra pax' and the powerful and dramatic 'Qui tollis peccata mundi' to convince me that the work is genuine.

What, then, of the two recordings I have in front of me? The Gardiner CD sandwiches the Gloria between reissues of Vivaldi's well-known Gloria and Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, while on Suzie LeBlanc's CD it comes at the beginning of a rather bizarre programme including movements from Bach cantatas, a Handel trio sonata, a Vivaldi concerto, a movement from a Handel organ concerto and 'Rejoice greatly' from Messiah. In view of what has been said above, it would be a good idea for someone to record the Gloria with the *Laudate pueri* and similar pieces from Germany around 1700 – including the Telemann *Missa brevis*. The two sopranos are sharply contrasted. Gillian Keith on Gardiner's recording has a very nice bell-like voice, though for my taste there is too much vibrato, too little variety of articulation and not enough ornamentation; Charles Burney would certainly have criticised her for lacking a good shake! Suzie LeBlanc projects a little less strongly but is much more stylish: the basic sound is more appropriate, she is

actually prepared to sing notes staccato as well as legato (a fundamental requirement for singing Baroque music, to my mind), and she always shapes the music elegantly, though I could have done with more florid ornamentation from her as well. Both recordings use an orchestra, though the Académie Baroque de Montréal allocates a number of sections to solo strings while Gardiner takes the score literally, just dropping down to a single violin in the passage in the 'Laudamus te' that precedes the sole *tutti* mark. Hearing the result, I am ever more convinced that, if that *tutti* mark comes from Handel (which is not at all certain), it is intended to be descriptive rather than prescriptive – that is, like virtually all such marks in 17th-century music, it tells you what is happening in the music rather than telling you to do something. Certainly, if the Gloria was written in Halle or Hamburg then it is highly likely that that it would have been performed one to a part, for to my knowledge there is little or no evidence of orchestras in German churches around 1700 and German orchestral music of the period always has at least one viola part. Another questionable scoring practice on the LeBlanc CD is the use of harpsichord as well as organ continuo.

In both recordings the orchestra plays well, and the speeds are generally well chosen. However, a tradition seems to be developing in which the 'Qui tollis peccata mundi' movement is taken adagio, despite the fact that the music demands a reasonably fast tempo to deliver the impassioned cries of 'Miserere' with sufficient urgency. The movement has no tempo mark, which perhaps implies that its speed should be fairly close to the *tempo ordinario* that both groups rightly assume for the other sections and the 'Laudamus te'. Thus I find both performances of this move-ment too slow, though the LeBlanc recording is more convincing because it is lighter (it is done with single strings) and it does not have Gardiner's heavy plodding accents. In fact, I found the LeBlanc performance generally more enjoyable for this reason: Gardiner undoubtedly finds more energy in the work than LeBlanc and her colleagues, but too often this seems to involve the application of heavy accents. To my mind the process of shaping Baroque music in performance is more to do with removing accents than adding them.

Handel *Gloria in B flat major* HWV deest, with *Dixit Dominus in G minor* HWV232 and Vivaldi *Gloria in D major* RV589. Gillian Keith *S*, The Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner, Philips 462 597-2.

Handel *Gloria in B flat major* HWV deest, with works by J. S. Bach, Handel and Vivaldi. Suzie LeBlanc *S*, Académie Baroque de Montréal, Alexander Weimann, ATMA ACD 2215.

The ATMA disc is available in Europe via Harmonia Mundi or can be ordered from www. early-music.com or through Lindum Records. The first recording of the work, reviewed in the Diary section of EMR 71, was by Emma Kirkby on **BIS-CD-1235**, coupled with a less exciting *Dixit Dominus*.

2001 LAUSANNE FESTIVAL: *BACH & ENGLISH MUSIC*

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The 5th annual Lausanne Bach Festival featured nine concerts over the weekend of 15-18 November – a far cry from last year's Festival, which lasted a whole month and featured no fewer than 28 organists (what a terrifying thought!) In fact, this year Bach didn't get much of a look in – only four pieces in all. But the English repertoire got a good airing, with some impressive performances.

The opening concert (in the Casino de Montbenon) of cantatas by Bruhns and Bach and instrumental sonatas by Rosenmüller, performed by Cantus Cölln, was a disappointment. Their lead violinist and soprano both dominated the proceedings. Their volume might have been acceptable if it were not accompanied by shaky intonation, unsteady tone production, overdone vibrato and an inappropriately self-conscious stage manner. Director Konrad Junghänel's lute playing was also prominent, both in his rather twangy tone and by adding confusing and unnecessary countermelodies to the soloist's line in the Bruhns arias. Unfortunately the band also featured a rather agitated trumpet player, who managed to make more noise when not playing than when in full blast! A shame, since the programme was an attractive one. Fortunately a number of the other performers were very good, including Jan Freiheit, cello, Katharina Arfken, oboe, Carsten Lohff, organ, and the alto Elisabeth Popien (particularly in Bach's *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*). Although somewhat removed from the theme of the Festival, cantatas by Bruhns are always well worth hearing.

The five viols and lute/theorbo of the Ricercar Consort provided the instruments for the second concert (Eglise Saint-Laurent). For most people, this was the highlight of the Festival, in particular the charming singing of the young Scottish soprano Susan Hamilton. Her friendly but unassuming stage presence combined with a natural affinity with her audience to draw us into the world of Byrd, Ferrabosco, Dowland and Purcell. Her clear and lucid voice was beautifully shaded to suit the mood and accompaniment of each song, the sound frequently growing almost imperceptibly out of the tone of the supporting viol consort. Without overdoing the histrionics, she added dramatic interpretation to works like the anonymous 'When Daphne from fair Phœbus did fly', humour to the Messiaenic collection of bird songs in 'This merry pleasant spring' and sensitive reverence to Purcell's *Plaint* and *Evening Hymn* – one of the most touching performances of the latter that I have heard. The instrumental playing was also superb. In all respects, a memorable concert.

No festival of English music would be complete without a countertenor, and England was represented by David Bates, a student at the Royal Academy of Music, accompanied by the Head of Organ Studies, David Titterington, in a programme of Purcell, Humphrey and Blow (Eglise de Villamont). David Bates has the makings of a pleasant voice, although on this occasion it was only apparent in the middle register and at middling volumes. His lower register was troubled, with frequent and audible breaks into a chest voice, and a tendency to force the voice was to the detriment to the timbre and intonation of his higher register. The church was resonant but not large, so a more refined tone would have been more successful. Realizing Purcell's continuo bass lines on the organ is fraught – chord indications and harmonic movement can seem quite bizarre and it can be difficult to make the organ sound convincing against the vocal line. The sustained tone doesn't easily allow for chords to be shaded, but that is often what is needed in some of his progressions. On this occasion the organ continuo wasn't always successful, either harmonically or in terms of touch and articulation, whether on the church organ or the little continuo organ used for the concluding *Evening Hymn*. The larger organ (modelled on Silbermann's smaller Saxon instruments) featured in Purcell's and Blow's Double Voluntaries – both pieces that demand clarity and delicacy of touch to bring them to life.

Refinement was the hallmark of the excellent performance by London Baroque of music by Jenkins, Gibbons, Simpson, Lawes, Blow, Purcell and Handel (Eglise de Villamont). With clarity and delicacy a plenty, this was thoughtful and inspired playing that engaged the audience from the start. The sparkling interaction between group members did much to bring the audience alongside, notable in the cat-and-mouse chase between the two violinists, Ingrid Seifert and Richard Gwilt, in the Almaine from Lawes' Sett No1 in G minor. Gibbons' exquisite Fantazia of Foure Parts was given a most eloquent reading on the harpsichord by Terence Charlston. In a nod to the Bach side of the Festival, their encores included a movement from one of Bach's organ Trio Sonatas. As ambassadors, they did London proud.

The amateur forces of the Chœur Novantiqua de Sion, directed by Bernard Héritier, put on an impressive performance of large scale choral works by Schein, Scheidt, Schütz, Pachelbel, Purcell and Bach (Chapelle des Terreaux). Their clear-toned singing was helped by precise enunciation of the text and a good balance between the voices, despite the apparently uneven matching of 21 women's voices to 11 men. Unfortunately, a far from sympathetic continuo cello player undermined all the authenticity efforts of the choir by playing with over-pronounced vibrato throughout. Was he the only person present who didn't hear how disturbing the throbbing of the cello was under the choir's clean cadential chords? On the plus side, it was nice to hear little organ toccatas and flourishes used to set the pitch for a number of the works.

Pierre Hantaï's harpsichord recital included works by Bull, Redford, Byrd, Farnaby and Bach, but played on a harpsichord that was only really suitable for Bach (Eglise Saint-Laurent). Although the sound world was far removed from that of the English virginalists, the performance was generally sympathetic. The rhythmically strong playing style particularly suited pieces like Byrd's *Galliarde For the Victorie* and Bull's *The King's Hunt*. Curiously, a number of the pieces were linked together without a break. I have heard this done before in concert, but don't really understand the logic. Perhaps listeners who let music waft over (or through) them without wanting to know anything about individual pieces might approve, but in a concert setting I think most of the audience want to have an idea of which piece is which. This disregard for the audience was also reflected in Hantaï's distinctive stage manner. He peered all round the church, but rarely at the keyboard, music or audience, seemingly in a world of his own. The Festival organisers had taken the trouble to provide proper staging for the Eglise Saint-Laurent concerts, so it was a shame that Hantaï didn't take the chance to engage with his audience more directly.

An English group that has long been admired on the Continent is The Tallis Scholars, and their concert, concluding the Festival, showed just why. The admirable acoustic of the Eglise Saint-François was ideal for their well-constructed programme of larger scale works by Tallis and Byrd – 'Master and Pupil'. The sheer inventiveness of the Tallis works, with their exquisitely scrunchy false relations, slithering cadences and harmonic twists and turns was in stark contrast to the more familiar harmonic world of Byrd. Tallis's *Loquebantur variis linguis*, *Sancte Deus* and *In manus tuas* were given especially powerful readings by Peter Philips, as was Byrd's paean of praise, *Laudibus in sanctis*. For most of the concert I was even able to forget my usual quibbles about dominant sopranos, although the last few Tallis pieces did inspire them to let rip. An inspiring conclusion to the Festival, and obviously appreciated by a large audience who demanded, and got, several encores.

In addition to the concerts, the Festival included two talks exploring aspects of English artistic life. Marielle Khoury, Professor of English literature at Avignon University, gave a lucid account of England at the time of Purcell, with a fascinating array of musical examples from the time of 'Guillaume d'Orange'. Frédéric Ogée, Professor at Paris VII University, looked at the world of the English fine artists. Somehow English history sounded so much more interesting in French. I am not sure if this is customary in Switzerland, but I was surprised that the printed programme included nothing about the music or the composers (not even their dates), although there was detailed information about the performers. But, all in all, a well-balanced and well-managed Festival. Under the artistic direction of founder Kei Koito and with an impressive list of sponsors and partners, this is a Festival that is clearly here to stay: such a neatly focused programme of events makes it an attractive weekend break for music lovers – though I hope others will be spared the gloomy covering of mist hiding what I was told is an impressive view of Lake Geneva and the Alps beyond.

LONDON MUSIC

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The 11th annual London Bach Festival featured its usual combination of professional concerts by their own Steinitz Bach Players and concerts given by students of the Royal Academy of Music. Only one concert fell outside these categories, and that was the visit of the Japanese organist Kei Koito to St Marylebone Parish Church (5 November). I will admit to suffering the reviewer's nightmare of arriving just as the final chord echoed through the doors. Fortunately there was a second half to come with enough meat in it to warrant this (by now, rather embarrassed) reviewer's attention – indeed I could write a sizable essay on the various performance issues that arose from this concert. I had sadly missed a collection of pieces by Böhm and Buxtehude's moving *Trauermusik*. The second half was devoted to Bach, with Vivaldi providing the basis for the first piece – the Concerto in D minor, BWV 596. Although performed in a true organ style, the concerto was never far from its instrumental roots – it really could have been two violins conversing in the opening section. It was clear from the start that here was playing of real musical distinction, although not without controversy. Kei Koito's expressive use of a slightly detached touch (resulting in a beautifully clear articulation) was an object lesson to most English organists, as was her use of added ornaments – frequently thought-provoking, occasionally daring, but always musical. One example I would not encourage others to adopt was the pedal trills underneath held chords in the ritornello sections of the majestic concluding Prelude in E flat. The other quibble I had was the articulation of the chorale melody in the first of the three settings of *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland* where the distinct break after the 2nd note (and elsewhere) broke up the line too much for my taste. Kei Koito played each line as though it was an independent voice, to the extent that notes did not always line up vertically – as with some of the other interpretations, this would normally be frowned on, but here worked well. Kei Koito is an excellent example of a performer who is willing to take risks but has the musical conviction and confidence to carry an audience with her. Lesser musicians copy at their peril. Incidentally, it says something for the draw of London Bach Festival concerts (and possibly the Japanese embassy) that this organist, relatively unknown in the UK, should attract such an enviable crowd.

The only other London Bach Festival concert that I could get to was the Royal Academy of Music's Vocal Consort and Period Instrument Baroque Orchestra, led by their Head of Historical Performance, Laurence Cummings, in three cantatas by Buxtehude and Bach's *Missa* (the Kyrie and Gloria from the B minor Mass). As is often the case in Festival concerts, it can be difficult to tell the professionals from the students, such is the impressive standard of the Royal Academy pupils. The players seemed to have had more of grounding in early performance technique than the singers, although the choir and solo singers were also impressive. They were mercifully almost completely free of the 'look-at-me' brigade. It is not just student choirs that test the team work of budding soloists – there are few singers who can look forward to a career devoid of choir work, so the ability to tone down the voice and vibrato for the sake of blend and sit still for the sake of decency is an essential one to achieve. By and large, they managed it, though some of the (possibly nervous) quivers to solo voices could develop into operatic vibratos that will need some controlling. Laurence Cummings managed to mould an excellent blend of voices and instruments, and set decent speeds. He also communicated the melodic flow of musical lines most effectively. An encouraging concert for the future.

The latest offering from Opera Restor'd comes with the title *Double Diva: or A Pair of Prima Donnas* (Linbury Studio Theatre, 8 November). Not a dig at some of our more flamboyant singers, but a reference to two mini operas by Domenico Scarlatti and Haydn, both dealing with the complicated role of women in 18th-century music. Scarlatti's *La Dirindina* is an intermezzo intended for inclusion in his opera *Ambleto* when performed during Rome's carnival in 1715. It fell foul of the censors and has remained unknown until the 1960s. Haydn's *La Canterina* was his very first opera (making a nice comparison to his last opera, *Orfeo*, performed recently at the Royal Opera House). An Insight Afternoon and sensible programme notes provided much information about the background to the 18th-century diva (including the castrato variety) and set the context for the two works, both of which hailed back to the Comedia dell'arte tradition. Much was made of cross-dressing in both works – in *La Dirindina* the rival suitor (a castrato) to the soprano diva was sung by a cross-dressing woman and Haydn has a female cross-dresser playing Don Ettore, the younger of two suitors, and a baritone singing the part of the diva's chaperone in pantomime roles combining Julian Clary with Les Dawson. Musical women were complex creatures in the 18th century – whether admired or seen as whores, their role generally had a strong sexual context. These pieces concentrated on the sexual frisson between elderly male teacher and pretty young female pupil (something not unknown even in our more enlightened times) with the added interest of a rival suitor. Scarlatti's text sees flirtation taught as one of the basics, whereas Haydn's diva at least has a stab at music before trying on the flirtation. One fascinating part of the Insight Afternoon was a talk by the translator of the text – an unsung hero whose job is clearly far harder than it might at first seem. As is so often the case, I found myself more in sympathy with the instrumentalists than the singers, all of whom were strong products of the opera stage. The slithers and slides and vibrato, clouding ornaments in, for example,

the aria 'When I sing', or confusing the melodic line as in 'Your two eyes' (when it was unclear whether the line was ascending by tones or semitones) seemed worlds apart from the more sympathetic instrumentalists, led from the harpsichord by Peter Holman (displaying sensitivity of direction and impressive continuo playing). The production was sumptuous and fully dressed, with an emphasis on humour and slapstick, all making for an entertaining evening.

If ever an orchestra were to tempt me away from period instrument performance, it would be the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. Now in their 21st year, they have been associated for much of their history with Nikolaus Harnoncourt, although they work with an impressive list of conductors. Probably most of the audience at the Royal Festival Hall (12 November) turned up to hear Cecilia Bartoli, but for me it was Harnoncourt and the COE that were the stars. The clarity of their unforced playing and attention to detail of phrasing and articulation was immediately apparent in Mozart's Symphony 29, with its delicate opening exquisitely moulded by Harnoncourt. The relative prominence of the modern oboe was the only reminder that this was not the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Cecilia Bartoli came and saw and conquered, as ever. With shoulders heaving and head hurled from side to side and front to back she conquered most of the notes, if not without the occasional helpful slither up to the wilder realms of her top register. Any husbands in the audience thinking of having a bit of a fling would think twice after hearing her performance of Mozart's *Voi avete un cor fedele*. With eyebrows going into overdrive she spat out Dorina's torrent of mistrust against her husband-to-be. Whatever the arguments about technique, volume and timbre (and there are many), this lass certainly knows how to seduce an audience. But those who left during the interval (no doubt for a bit of a lie down) missed the highlight of the evening – Schumann's *Spring* Symphony, given an expansive and thoughtful reading by Harnoncourt. Schumann's proto-Brucknerian use of the brass, combined with his post-Classical structural form and pre-Mahlerian harmonic thinking, made this music of universal proportions. After such an inspired concert, it seems churlish to mention Harnoncourt's noisy foot-tapping and intrusive in-breaths on the upbeat.

Even when confronted by music of such spiritual beauty as Machaut's *Messe de Nostre Dame,* Philip Picket could not resist the inevitable showmanship (Queen Elizabeth Hall, 2 December): introducing the concert as the 'Machaut Mass Experience', he even laid on dry ice for the introductory talk. This was expertly presented by Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, the real power behind the Machaut Mass throne, describing the background to the work and showing slides of the layout and position of its performance in Rheims Cathedral around the 1360s. The Mass itself was accompanied by slides of Rheims Cathedral, quasi-liturgical clothing for the singers, the inevitable dry ice (no doubt common in 14th-century French Cathedrals) and some candles with batteries that unauthentically drained themselves during the performance. Possibly written during the height of the ageing Machaut's intense affair with the young Peronne (sections of the Mass are similar to some of the songs written for Peronne in *Le Voir Dit*), this monumental work could have been written in response to Machaut's scrape with death in the early 1360s, the recovery from which he ascribed to the love of his *Toute Belle* (wouldn't most men in their 60s quickly recover their health with the love of an eighteen-year-old girl?) The Mass movements were performed within the context of a liturgical reconstruction, with plainchant from Rheims Cathedral (edited by Mary Berry) based on the propers for 15 August, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The highlight of the chant was the Offertory *Ave Maria*; an unintentional moment of humour came in the translation of the Collect when The Lord was beseeched to incline His ear! Four singers from the New London Consort joined six members of The Cardinall's Musick. All were solidly effective singers, although the higher of the two countertenors sounded too prominent from my seat. Whether Philip Picket and Andrew Carwood both needed to conduct their respective forces throughout is debatable: it certainly distracted from the visual experience, as did the rather 1970s music desks. The organ contributed solos at the opening and close and as a central motet substitution with three pieces from the roughly contemporary Robertsbridge Codex – appropriate in age if not in context (two of the three pieces were distinctly secular) and sadly played with little conviction. Neither the acoustic nor the ambience of the QEH is up to Rheims standards and, although the dramatic additions helped to set a superficial scene, this was somehow an extremely competent rather than spiritual performance. I would like to hear it shorn of some of the oddities in a different context.

The Cardinall's Musick had their own show at the Wigmore Hall (7 December) under the title *A Woman's Gentle Heart.* In the first half, the woman was the Virgin Mary – 'a remarkable girl', as Andrew Carwood boomed out in his free-ranging introductory (and overtly Catholic) mini-lectures. The second half used the image of the virgin in a more general sense in courtly songs of chivalry and passion. The Cardinall's Musick have a distinctive sound, resulting mostly from the policy of encouraging a soloistic approach from the individual singers – something that choirs generally go to some length to avoid. This results in hot-blooded and muscular performances that can be dominated by one or two individual voices. The competition between the two sopranos was particularly noticeable. Both were fine singers and no strangers to the early music scene, but with little attempt seemingly made to blend their individual styles together, the differences between them became exaggerated. One, for example, was stronger than the other (or sang louder on this occasion) and also emphatically rolled her Rs; the other didn't. So one voice entered well before the other, most notably in the opening of Byrd's *R-R-R-R-R-Rorate caeli* and in the final line of Robert Jones's *Are lovers full of fire* where one soprano 'froze' whilst the other 'frrrrroze'. Apart from the dominance of one voice over the other, there were frequent imbalances within the consort. The alto line was generally weaker than the rest (with some

shaky intonation to boot) and both sopranos had the tendency not only to be generally too loud but to increase their apparent volume when in their higher register (a common habit of sopranos, I fear). Fortunately, the more sonorous male voices generally kept themselves in control, as evidenced by Christopher Tye's *Ad te clamamus* for the unlikely combination of three tenors and two basses. The only piece that seemed to achieve the right balance throughout all the voices was Byrd's 5-part *La Virginella*, sung by a well-moulded group of individual singers. That said, their performance overall grabbed the attention and in a more helpful acoustic than the Wigmore Hall could have sounded very different. Carwood's direction was slightly subtler and with more restrained arm waving than usual – a rather more effective style for my taste. The expansive interpretation of Heironymus Praetorius's 8-part *Magnificat quarti toni* exposed his dramatic word painting (particularly in 'in bracchio', 'dispersit', 'esurientes', 'implevit bonis' and the final 'saeculorum'). Guerrero was honoured with the most beautiful cadence of the evening in his *Virgo prudentissima*, a gorgeously gentle affair for which I will forgive The Cardinall's Musick all these gripes.

I had two chances to hear related programmes from the European Union Baroque Orchestra in December. This year, the 28 young players (average age 25), toured with different four programmes, only two of which came to the UK – *Messiah* with Edward Higginbottom and the Choir of New College Oxford and *A Concord of Musical Instruments* directed by Andrew Manze and featuring works by Fux, Vejvanovsky, Scheidt, Vivaldi and Boyce. This latter programme appeared in the Banqueting House (10 December) and then at Christ Church Spitalfields (13 December as part of the Spitalfields Winter Festival). The two Serenadas performed in these two concerts showed Fux the composer to be a master of orchestral colour and joyous texture, particularly in the six-movements of the Third Serenada played at Banqueting House – the frighteningly exposed trumpet parts that open the piece was a test of the nerve of the two very able performers. Although most of Vejvanovsky's works feature the trumpet, his *Sonata Campanarum* of 1666 is written for the strings. An astonishing cacophony of bell sounds is moulded into a free flowing sonata that allows many solo opportunities for the players, including some multi-layered violins and a flamboyant concluding jam session. Scheidt's Paduan III from the 1621 collection which scholars now call *Ludi musici I* was a bit of an intruder, as none of the other composers were even born then; but it was welcomed by the Spitalfields audience. Works by Vivaldi and Boyce's self-important Symphony in D, op2/5, completed outstanding concerts, led with typical panache and stylistic integrity by Andrew Manze. He must have been an inspiring director to work with – if these two performance were anything to go by, the early music movement is safe in the hands of these talented young musicians.

I hung my colours on the mast of the three Norwegian singers of Trio Mediæval, giving them rave reviews for the first UK appearance, and remain impressed by subsequent concerts. It is a relief to see that other reviewers are also heaping praise on their deserving heads, and even CB (not always a fan of female vocal groups) liked their first CD. Their most recent Wigmore Hall concert (30 November) was similar to one they gave last year in The Temple Church, so I won't add to the review I gave them then, except to say that they need to watch the volume at high pitch levels in less than resonant acoustics. There were times when the two high soprano voices, singing very close to each other in range, produced an almost piercingly loud tone, at least in my ears and from my seat. The cavernous acoustic of The Temple Church (11 December) was a rather friendlier receptacle for their sound and a programme of Christmas music from Norway, England and Germany. The Norwegian carols and some German pieces sung in Norwegian were particularly fetching, the distinctive enunciation adding a new element to sometimes well known pieces – 'Kling no klokka' sounds much better than 'Ring the bells'. As with their other concerts, they sensibly group pieces together in coherent bundles, and include contemporary works in their programmes, many written for the group. The three singers achieve an astonishing blending of sound, although the different timbres of their voices are evident within that blend. Their intonation and timing is rarely short of perfect and they have a deceptively simple stage presentation that should be an object lesson to many other performers. So much of performance is based on the simple ability to catch the eye of the audience, stand still, adopt straightforward hand positions and look as though you are enjoying yourself – and, of course, sing well.

Virelai's Temple Church concert (18 December) also featured medieval and renaissance Christmas music, combining Catherine King's mezzo voice with the recorder/flute of William Lyons, Jacob Heringman's lute/viol and Susanna Pell on viol/lute/recorder – a seductive combination of sounds, blended flexibly. In terms of balance, the only problem was the clash between the instantly audible twang of the lute and the gentler transient of the flute, all played from sitting positions. Although they would have all been in time with themselves, from the audience's position the flute sounded well behind the lutes – standing would have helped. This is a common issue in church performances, when the musicians are often at the same level as the audience. No doubt the BBC broadcast achieved the correct balance, but this was a concert for a paying audience and the performance should have been balanced for that audience. Catherine King used the spatial possibilities of the church by singing from behind the players during the first piece, the chanted *A solis ortus cardine* set against interludes for viols and flute. For the rest of the concert she stood with the players, but blended her voice superbly, both in timbre and volume, with the sound of her companions. Her added ornaments were beautifully restrained and in Thomas Ravenscroft's *Remember O thou man* she made unassuming use of period pronunciation. This was consort performance as it should be – no divas here, just simply effective music-making of the highest order. Both the Virelai and Trio Mediæval concerts were broadcast on Radio 3 during Christmas week.

RECORD REVIEWS

MEDIEVAL

Jacopo da Bologna *Italienische Madrigale des 14. Jahrhunderts* PAN (Project Ars Nova: Crawford Young *lute*, Laurie Monahan *S*, Michael Collver *cT, cnt*, Sterling Jones *fidel, etc*) 47' 20" (rec 1985)
Ars Musici **AM 1274-2** £

I enjoyed this fine and stylish singing of pleasing music, and the relationship and balance between voices and instruments is as good as I've heard (provided that you don't expect them to be segregated completely). The only problem is that I can't now remember a single track. I blame Jacopo, not PAN, but perhaps I need to play it more. The disc is cheap enough to be worth trying. *CB*

Le Roman de la Rose Alla francesca 57' 56"
Opus 111 **OP 30303**
Music by Adam de la Halle, Binchois, Dufay, Jehan de l'Escurel, Machaut & anon

This ingenious programme uses passages from the medieval French *Romance of the Rose* as a thematic framework supporting a treasury of medieval French songs. Inspired use of harp, cittern, hurdy-gurdy, cornamuse and rebec and some very beautiful singing, particularly from the female voices, allow the mood to move easily from joyous celebration to haunting melancholy. A considerable familiarity with this repertoire built up over many years allows the group to approach the music with a confident inventiveness, and the performances frequently embody the best aspects of folk performance, free embellishment of the lines and accompanying textures which spring from the idiom of the instruments employed. In particular it is pleasing to hear the influence of the living traditions of Eastern European bagpipers on the superb cornamuse playing of Pierre Hamon. Alla francesca are also not afraid of starkly simple textures, and some of these minimalist sections supply the most affecting moments in the performance. This is clearly a programme honed carefully in concert and it also works delightfully well on disc. *D. James Ross*

Sacred Women: Women as composers and performers of medieval chant Sarband 67' 33"
Dorian **DOR-93235** (rec 1997)

The short but to-the-point booklet notes make the familiar point about St. Paul's edict forbidding women to sing church chants, while also indicating that women continued to compose and to sing, in both occidental and oriental churches. The (earlier) equivalent to the north European Hildegard von Bingen seems to have been Kassia, the most significant female composer of Byzantine church music. The pieces come from these two composers and also from the Codex las Huelgas from around 1300. It seems to me always a difficult thing to place the hearing of medieval church music (early and late). If you are a devout Christian, good and fine. But if you are not, what exactly is the sense you make of the music? Harmonically it is pristine – Vladamir Ivanoff, Sarband's director, often uses a choir as a drone to plump out, as it were, the otherwise pure sound. On track 4, an Alleluia, one voice sings the drone, while the other descants above. Fadia El-Hage (Beirut) and Belinda Sykes (London) duet throughout this CD, in impeccable combination. El-Hage's sleepy Middle-Eastern virtuosity matches Belinda Sykes' full-throated tone which fades and swells under eloquent control. I think on balance, that this kind of CD functions for the secular listener as a kind of meditation; not because the music is spiritual *per se* (no music is!), but because its harmonic simplicity and melodic fluidity operate as counterpoints. The security of the drone, whether actual or conceptual, grounds the ear and therefore, perhaps, the concentration: a meditation indeed. *Michelene Wandor*

Dorian has been hit by the recent demise of its UK distributor, Nimbus, but it a successor will no doubt soon be found.

15th-CENTURY

Ottaviano dei Petrucci *Harmonice musices odhecaton* Fretwork 76' 05"
Harmonia Mundi **HMU 907291**
Music by Agricola, Brumel, Busnois, Caron, Ghiselin, Hayne, Isaac, Japart, Josquin, Lapicida, Obrecht, Orto, Pinarol, Stappen, Stokem & anon

I am surprised that there have not been more recordings celebrating the 500th anniversary of Petrucci's first print, an amazing step in the propagation of music. This is, however, certainly a worthy one (and I don't use the adjective pejoratively!) Despite the full texts that adorn Helen Hewitt's 1942 edition (an amazing piece of scholarship which surely should have been reprinted), the music seems likely to have been intended for instruments, with the newly-invented viol consort as the first choice. Some of the music works on wind instruments, but the general tone is one of courtly refinement. The renaissance viols are played here with a certain weight, which counterbalances their reedy sound. I wondered whether some vocal contrast might have made a more satisfying programme: concentrated listening to the 32 short pieces in one session is not recommended. But there is marvellous music here, a variety of courtly and popular strands in settings of great skill, performed with poise and understanding. *CB*

16th-CENTURY

Monte *Missa Aspice Domine* Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Oxford, Stephen Darlington
Metronome **MET CD 1037** 58' 24"
+ *Clamavi de tribulatione mea, Factum est silentium. Miserere mei, O suavitas et dulcedo, Pie Jesu* & Jachet of Mantua *Aspice Domine*

As a prolific madrigalist, albeit more conservative than some of his younger peers, Monte (1521-1603) deftly interweaves homophony and imitation, while making unforced and often appealing use of pictorialisms to mirror the imagery of his motet texts. I do wonder (having heard none of his sacred music before) whether his whole output is as impenitent and cheerful as this selection implies. When Monte served in the imperial Habsburg cappella in Vienna or Prague, the number of voices was probably smaller than here (15 boys and 17 men), with fewer trebles in proportion to the lower parts. But the Christ Church sonority – I can only describe the trebles and altos as sounding more womanly than in a stereotypical English cathedral choir – seems to answer well to what I imagine Monte and his contemporaries heard. I question only a few passages where the trebles dominate the balance (as at 'Mille millium ministrabant' in *Factum est silentium*) so that a point of imitation loses its profile as it passes down into the lower parts. Darlington also works against stereotype in another respect, favouring – as in other Christ Church recordings I've heard – an energetic, almost aggressive approach to declamation and dynamic contrasts. This too strikes me as basically the right way to approach late (or post-) Renaissance polyphony. Though the assertiveness can occasionally go too far, and though a handful of cadences seem mannered, I hear nothing arbitrary or contrived. And the risk of driving the music too hard is, I think, preferable to the glib smoothness that some groups pour like oil over the surface of 16th-century music. The major labels moan about the crisis in their industry while cranking out one *Rite* or *Tosca* after another; yet a small independent can still offer repertoire as unfamiliar and absorbing as this. Highly recommended. *Eric Van Tassel*

Baylado: Music of Renaissance Spain The Terra Nova Consort 63' 31"
Dorian **DOR-90298**
Music by Anchieta, Comes, Encina, Milán, Mudarra, Ribayaz, Vasquez & anon

This is so obviously Spanish right from the opening; but I wonder whether the drum rhythms and strummed chords really belong to the music or are just added for tourists. The music comes from around 1500, which seems a bit early for strumming to me. Does every lively rhythm need to be emphasised and rigidified by percussion? The individual tracks are enjoyable, but the cumulative effect is to batter the listener with effects that the music doesn't need. At times it verges towards an independent re-creation that can have its own validity (track 9 *La tricotea* is a good example). I

think that a lot of the music here sounds better without such imposed jollification; but if you want an ethnic approach, you'll find it great fun *CB*

Il Cembalo intorno a Gesualdo Paolo Erdas (hpscd by N. De Quocc, 1699) 62' 33"
Stradivarius **STR 33596**

The composers on this disc are little-known today but most were in Gesualdo's circle. Some of their pieces are lively dances, others are fantasias or toccatas. The disc also includes a collaborative set of diminutions on a Frescobaldi madrigal by Stella, Montella and Mayone, each composer trying to outdo the other. Paolo Erdas plays the dances with verve but sometimes seems hesitant in the toccatas: there wasn't enough momentum to carry me through the ebb and flow of the free sections. Nevertheless, a well-researched and interesting release. *Stephen Rose*

17th-CENTURY

Buxtehude *Sonate a due op. 1* Manfredo Kraemer *vln*, Juan Manuel Quintana *gamba*, Dane Roberts *violone*, Dirk Börner *hpscd*
Harmonia Mundi **HNC 901746** 62' 17"

The more I hear of Manfredo Kraemer, the more I think he's the violinist of the moment. In the last issue, I was full of praise for his Locatelli/Leclair recording; this month, he's wonderful on Jordi Savall's Ostinato CD (see below), and this Buxtehude set is pure delight. Of course, it helps that I'm a great fan of the music, but the balance between violin, gamba and continuo couldn't be better. There are seven sonatas (one on each degree of the scale); Peter Wollny suggests that they become more highly developed from one to the next. If you don't know them, look no further than this CD! Although each of the sonatas sounds like an extended patchwork, the CD tracking subdivides for ease of access. *BC*

Frescobaldi *Keyboard Music* Colin Booth *org & hpscd* 76' 19"
Soundboard Records **SBCD 201** ££
Canzonas 1 & 4; Ricercar 3, Toccatas Bk I, 1, 8, 11, Bk II 5 & 7; Capriccios on *La Bassa fiamenga, Or chè noi rimena, La sol fa mi re ut*; Partite on *L'Aria della romanesca*

Colin Booth is one of those really annoyingly talented people who can both build and play harpsichords very well. In fact, I'd go as far as to say as this is one of the best Frescobaldi recordings I've heard so far, from the point of view of both the playing (which is excellent) and the harpsichord (which is fascinating). The disc opens with the deservedly well-known Toccata I from 'Book 1', and it nicely showcases the double-manual Italian instrument (by Colin Booth, of course) after an original in Nuremberg. Some sections of the toccata are played on both manuals, with one of them playing only a 4-foot set of strings – totally convincing and an interesting 'new' texture. For some tracks Colin Booth also uses an organ (after nothing in particular) by Robin Jennings. This sounds pretty good, but is a touch weak in the bass, hums a bit, and comes over rather too 'dry' for my liking. I'm a fan of the way this CD is put together – the pieces are grouped in pairs or in threes, always beginning with a Toccata and ending with a Canzona or other contrapuntal movement, which sometimes sandwich a Capriccio. It's an approach that works, and is surely immeasurably preferable to those CDs that give you 75 minutes of straight toccatas (yawn). Overall then, a super disc – intelligent interpretations, organological interest, and great music. *Robin Bigwood*

Gibbons *The Woods so Wild* John Toll *hpscd, org* 73' 00"
Linn **CKD 125**

John Toll played on so many records, often with the occasional solo toccata or interlude, but this is his only solo disc, made in November 1999 and February 2000, when he was already ill. The photos show a prematurely aged face (still boyish till quite recently), a poignant memory of someone who was a leading figure in our musical life for over a quarter-century. Would that he had played solo more often. This is a delightful recording. There is a hint of the understating English continuo player* which suits the music of Gibbons so well. About half of his keyboard music is included, but everything you would expect. The choice of harpsichord or organ is not made on any clearly functional basis, but feels right. The Adlington Hall organ (c. 1693) may be a little late – one is more used to hearing it in 18th-century music – but it sounds well once one gets used to the blatant consecutives, which really do sound like *organum* at the beginning of track 4. The touch of melancholy that imbues Gibbons' music makes a fitting valediction. *CB*
**Not an aspersion on John's playing. We were both organists at a Monteverdi Vespers a few years ago; I played with the choir and was most impressed by the imagination with which he accompanied the soloists.*

A Voce Sola, con Sinfonia: Claudio Monteverdi e la musica del suo tempo Roberta Invernizzi *S*, Accademia Strumentale Italiana, Alberto Rasi *dir* 63' 33"
Stradivarius **STR 33562**
Music by Cima, Grillo, Guami, Marini, Monteverdi, Picchi, D. da Selma

I have problems with this disc. I should really have passed it on to someone else, but the programme looked so attractive. There is some marvellous playing (with interestingly-prominent continuo organ), and everything is right about the vocal items (Monteverdi songs and the *Lamento d'Arianna*) except that I just don't like the sound Roberta Invernizzi makes nor the mannered way in which she sings. She is too affected for my taste, especially when simplicity is a sophisticated part of a song's expression. What is simpler than the scale that forms the tune of *Si dolce è 'l tormento*: the tension between tune and words, and hence the power of the song, is undermined if the singer imports into the music the emotional content of the text. If you don't share my problems with Invernizzi, buy this disc at once:* I suspect that for many listeners, it could be the record of the month. *CB*
** It comes with a complete Stradivarius catalogue*

Pachelbel *The Complete Organ Works Vol. 11.* Antoine Bouchard *64' 00"*
Dorian **DOR-93211**

This is the final volume in Bouchard's Pachelbel series. It is hard to recommend his playing, which is erratic in rhythm and articulation. He uses French-style registrations that, for all their colour, are eccentric and historically inappropriate. The programming of the CD is unimaginative, with no attempt to create contrast by interspersing free works with chorales. Tracks 14-17 are labelled 'liturgical convenience for human death and funeral', evidently to appeal to the market of funeral directors. *Stephen Rose*
Why specifically human *death, I wonder. Did an earlier disc have a section for death of animals, or is it intended for heretical sects with a liturgy for the death of God?* *CB*

Purcell *Fantazias* **Z730-747** London Baroque
BIS-CD-1165 62' 50"

It's interesting that Charles Medlam's minimalist sleevenote note draws a parallel between Bach's *Art of Fugue* and Purcell's consort music, because listening to London Baroque's recording (played on instruments from the violin family), I was constantly reminded of hearing the Bach 'on the wrong instruments'. Compared with the two performances on CD, this sounds so harsh and (dare I say it?) mechanical in a way that Bach purists would thoroughly enjoy! There's a bit of confusion in the booklet (very unusual for BIS): no third violinist is listed for the Pavan, and Terence Charlston (whose contribution I can't hear anyway) is listed inside the back cover (with two instruments) but nowhere else. This is not to my taste – beautifully in tune, very precise, but somehow other-worldly. *BC*

A. Scarlatti *Bella madre de' fiori: cantatas* Maria Cristina Kiehr, Concerto Soave, Jean-Marc Aymes *dir* 72' 48"
Harmonia Mundi **HMC 901725**
Bella madre de' fiori, Correa nel seno amato, Poi che riseppe Orfeo

For a Christmas treat we ate zabaglione as a fitting accompaniment to these sumptuous secular cantatas: warm, rich and luxurious, but with a lightness of touch which avoids surfeit. Kiehr's beautiful voice is well suited to this music, and particularly to the smooth, sustained passages, of which there are many. In semiquaver runs (e.g. 'Vanne, o caro', the voice sounds a little sluggish, but this is more than compensated for in such moments as the serenely slow descending chromatic scale in 'Onde belle' (tr 23). Her 'sonno lusinghier' (deceiving slumber) seems to last for ever, drawing the listener into its lethal depths (tr 8). There is no anger in her voice: the nymphs and shepherds seem resigned to their lonely fate, apart from an

occasional petulant outburst. Even the optimistic end of the Orpheus story is tinged with sadness. Scarlatti revels in the sensual strains of tragedy, exemplified by rich harmonies, voluptuous suspensions and gorgeous chromaticisms, which are reflected by the two excellent violinists and the continuo band of the aptly named Concerto Soave. The cellist lacks full sympathy with the music, and there are a few lumpy phrases and careless entries, but the sound is ravishing, and the harp, archlute and harpsichord ripple away together giving the singer generous support.

Here are just three of Scarlatti's 600-odd cantatas! Of these, the aria to listen to in the record shop, if you are not yet convinced, is the sublimely slow 'Ombre opache' (tr 17), comparable to the greatest of Handel's sleep arias. I think you will be as captivated as I am. *Selene Mills*

Tomkins *Cathedral Music* Choir of St George's Chapel, Windsor, Roger Judd *org*, Christopher Robinson *cond* 62' 42"
Hyperion *Helios* **CDH55066** ££ (rec 1989)

I enjoyed this reissue of an attractive anthology containing the Mag & Nunc of the Third Service and 11 anthems. The performances do not escape Anglican preciosity and are in accordance with collegiate tradition – who knows how many of the musical practices of Tomkins' time that preserves. The disc offers a varied sampling of his music in performances that present the music strongly, though the tempi are at times a bit lax at cadences. *CB*

Donne barocche Roberta Invernizzi, Bizzarie armoniche 68' 45"
Opus 111 **OP 30341**
Music by Badella, A. Bembo, Jacquet de la Guerre, Leonarda, Meda, Strozzi

A flowing extract from a painting by Artemisia Gentileschi is the warm invitation on the cover of this CD. The 'baroque women' of the title are divided between those composing out in the secular world (de la Guerre, Strozzi), and those practising their art in a devotional context (nuns Leonarda, Badalla, Meda). My guess is that if you knew nothing about the circumstances of their lives, you would be unable to say who was which. All show knowledge of and sensitivity for the 17th century's baroque conventions. Indeed, Rosa Giacinta Badalla, a composer new to me, living in a convent still under the proscription of polyphony, opens with a bell-like, sensuous triple-time bass line, with the voice swooping down into chest notes. Isabella Leonarda's Sonata in D minor opens with a long held pedal note in the bass, with Spanish flourishes from the violin, as a rhapsodic Adagio leads into more jaunty movements. The secular composers, on the other hand, are marked by their more prolific output. We have here examples of early and late de la Guerre: a free-form prelude, and one of her violin sonatas, the D major, where the third movement nods in tribute to Corelli, and the cello takes over the lead in the fourth movement. The ensemble is good throughout, with Roberta Invernizzi's voice showing a range which takes in contralto as well as soprano registers. Elena Russo's cello is superb, with sensitively shaped lines responsible for much of the impetus of the pieces. I was not at all surprised to see her credited as post-session producer of the CD. A rewarding addition to the repertoire. *Michelene Wandor*

Krieg und Frieden; War and Peace, 1568, 1619, 1648 Bob van Asperen *hpscd, virginals*
Aeolus **AE-10014** 77' 30"
Music by Byrd, Cabezon, L. Couperin, Düben, Froberger, Gibbons, Lejeune, Padbrué, Philips, Sweelinck & anon

Van Asperen offers an imaginative programme commemorating the wars of the late 16th and early 17th centuries – the French religious wars, the struggle for independence in the Netherlands, and the Thirty Years War in Germany. He plays English and Spanish battaglias with panache, even shouting war-cries of 'Tan-ta-ra' in Byrd's *The Battle*. He also includes many pieces reflecting the social and religious troubles, such as a lamenting Ballet from Germany and an intabulation of a Huguenot psalm. He links familiar pieces with political events, explaining that Gibbons's *Pavana Lord Salisbury* was written for the director of English religious espionage, and also espouses several unfamiliar composers from the low countries. He plays throughout with commitment and energy, using three Flemish and Italian instruments. A well-illustrated booklet relates the pieces to their historical context. Highly recommended. *Stephen Rose*

Miserere Ensemble William Byrd , Graham O'Reilly *dir* 61' 27"
Naïve *Astrée* **E 8846**
Misereres by Allegri/Bai, Leo, F. Scarlatti & Moro da Viadana

Four settings of *Miserere* may seem too much of a wallow, but these are for a variety of scorings and have very different moods. The Allegri dates, in its familar form, from roughly the same time as Albinoni's *Adagio* (the 1940s), but can be restored to an original form rather more successfully. Whether anyone would want to hear the original is another matter, since its fame derives from the style of its performance, which involved elaborate ornamentation. The version here is the reconstruction by Hugh Keyte from late 19th-century Vatican MSS representing the performances that became famous through the 18th and 19th centuries. It sounds more full-blooded than the Westminter Abbey recording, but a little stilted – or is the intent to show a tradition of improvisation that has become fossilised? The Francesco (brother of Alessandro) Scarlatti setting is for five voices, strings and continuo; its no-nonsense approach works well as a foil to the Allegri, and it is certainly good enough to stand on its own. Moro provded a fine duet for two tenors of the first four verses only, rather more interesting than the small-scale pieces of his compatriot Lodovico. The Leo setting is for double choir (the Ensemble Wiliam Byrd performs throughout as an ensemble of solo voices), a fine example of late baroque *stile antico*. An interesting programme, well sung: you may buy it for an Allegri with a difference, but you will probably find yourself listening to the fillers rather more than the main item. *CB*

My Thing is My Own: Bawdy Songs of D'Urfy Hesperus 72' 11"
Koch **3-7499-2 III**

If these times are really so distracted as to require seventy-two minutes and eleven seconds of pills to purge melancholy, then this is not a bad way to do it. More sensible, though, to treat it as a library recording of D'Urfey's collection and avoid the overdose. The musical treatment is very convincing, achieving a well-judged crossover between so-called art and folk, which delivers the ballads most effectively. There is excellent violin and recorder playing, the latter particularly employing genuine Irish folk idioms as well as imaginative divisions. The singing is easy and pleasant, but for my taste is a touch weighted by technique compared with the instrumental style. The recording manages to avoid sameness by varying the style to enter the spirit of each song. The result is a pleasing record of this very particular genre. *Stephen Cassidy*

Ostinato Hesperion XXI 72' 55"
Alia Vox **AV 9820**
Music by Correa de Arauxo, Falconiero, Marini, Merula, Ortiz, Pachelbel, Purcell. S. Rossi, Valente

I've listened to this CD a lot. There's something quite mesmeric about ground basses and the endless imagination of composer and performer alike. I haven't followed any of the performances with a score so I can't say for sure where the written material ends and improvisation takes over. There are some odd things, though: I'm not too keen on the combination of violin and treble viol in trio sonata line-ups, especially when an excellent second fiddler is available – the treble viol just sounds too squeaky in its upper range (even in the hands of a player of Savall's calibre). Track 14 (referred to as Purcell's Sonata a 2) is the G minor sonata from the *Sonnata's in four parts*. When the two violinists get together, they are fantastic. *BC*

Virgo gloriosa: a stroll through baroque Europe La Maîtrise de Caen, Cyrille Dubois, Clément Lengliné *trebles*, Alain Buet *bar*, Robert Weddle *dir* 73' 31"
Herald **HAVPCD 267**
Music by Bach, Cazzati, Charpentier, Danielis, Grandi, Handel, Monteverdi, Purcell, Stölzel, Vivaldi

This disc is an eloquent testimony to the dedicated work of Robert Weddle, once organist of Coventry Cathedral, on the staff of the Caen Conservatoire since 1980 and creator of the post-revolutionary *maîtrise* 200 years after its predecessor was closed down. They are thus just old enough to be able to use former choristers on the lower parts in an SATB ensemble.

The boys sing with a really well-focused tone which is heard to good effect in the baroque 'lollipops' (*Jesu, joy*) of which much of the programme consists. Many of these feature the outstanding Cyrille Dubois as soloist, justifiably, as his is the kind of voice most choirmasters will have at their disposal but once in a lifetime. His partner in Monteverdi's *Pulchra es* does not have quite the same security of intonation, but the overall results are still very fine. The tourist-pleasing gems in the recital are complemented by Charpentier's Marian Antiphons H44-47, which certainly pleased me. From a fundamentalist early music point of view, there are some eyebrow-raising moments (ornaments which start in 1610 and end in 1710 and organ-plus-lute continuo in domestic Bach) but the general impression is of a fine choir which I would like to hear again, both recorded and live. *David Hansell*

LATE BAROQUE

Bach *Cantatas: Praise and Thanks, Death and Eternity* Bach-Collegium Stuttgart, Helmut Rilling 297' 22" (4 CDs in box)
Hänssler **CD 94.208** ££
Cantatas 21, 38, 51, 56, 76, 79, 80, 82, 93, 106, 137, 140, 149

These are older recordings than the others whose repackaging we have reviewed of late, and it shows. The earliest (the *Actus Tragicus*) dates from 1975, and is far too ponderous – not helped by the presence of a chorus: the score itself makes more than four singers superfluous for reasons that have nothing to do with the arguments about the use of a chorus in the Leipzig church music. *Wachet auf* however, which follows it on disc 4, is far more acceptable; it is the most modern recording (1985). I would not suggest a direct link between date and success within that decade, but Rilling certainly learnt a lot between the Bach celebrations of 1985 and 2000. I have been happy to play this as background music, but too often found that, when something did grab my full attention, there was as much to irritate as enjoy. *CB*

Bach *The Works for Organ vol. 14: The Rudorff Chorales* etc. Kevin Bowyer (Marcussen Organ, Sct. Hans Kirke, Odense) 147' 49"
Nimbus **NI 5689/90** (2 CDs) ££
BWV 528/ii, 533a, 549, 561, 580, 581, 586, 595, 597, 695, 707, 711, 715-7, 730, 742-3, 745, 747-9, 754, 757, 766, 899, 900, 917, 952, 985, 1110, 1102, Anh. 47,114-116, 122, 126, 132, 171

Although I was initially sceptical about Bowyer's choice of modern instruments and his not altogether authentic approach to Bach performance, this series is growing on me. Each issue has a logical programme, and he is not afraid to concentrate on the less well known repertoire. He plays the music straight, avoiding the wilder mannerisms of some of his contemporaries. For example, he sensibly resists the temptation to ornament the last line of the chorale in *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* – the only line not ornamented by Bach, and most effective in its simplicity. He has a finely tuned sense of the structure of the musical line and a good sense of touch and articulation. His registrations are often sprightly, but generally stop short of neo-baroque tinkles, although he relies rather too much on 16' tone in the pedals for my liking, particularly when the pedal holds the chorale melody. If you can forgive the modern instrument, these CDs are worth a try.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

Bach *Organ Works Vol. 11* Gerhard Weinberger (G. Silbermann Organ, Dorfkirche Ponitz, 1737) 65' 34"
cpo **999 757-2**
BWV 534, 540/2, 588-9, 672-5, 679, 681-2, 685, 687, 689, 802-5

Weinberger plods through Bach's F minor Prelude & Fugue and the Canzona and Alla Breve with little drama or drive. But his performances of the manualiter chorale preludes in *Clavier-Übung II* are much better, with nicely varied registrations on a Silbermann organ almost exactly contemporary with the pieces. *Stephen Rose*

[Bach] *Die Historische Joachim-Wagner-Orgel in Treuenbrietzen* Wieland Meinhold 52' 43"
Motette **CD 12811**
Bach? BWV 551, 533, 561, 577, 586-7, 591; Vivaldi/Bach BWV 593; Meinhold *Hommage à Sebastien*

The rather unwieldy title covers an interesting (but short) programme of pieces that are not quite Bach: once attributed to Bach, they are now generally accepted as by others, except for a genuine Bach transcription of a Vivaldi concerto. The programme is fascinating and the organ well suited to the repertoire, but I do wonder how imbued Weiland Meinhold is with the subtleties of early performance on historic instruments. There are a number of occasions when his release of chords creates a surge in the winding of the organ and the characteristic burp at the end of chords. This is generally (but not always) controllable by the player by making sure that fingers are gently released to control the closing of the palette, rather than leaping his fingers off the keys, allowing the palette to slam shut. His touch can sound rather unyielding, and his style of articulation harks back to the 1970's style with over-emphasised articulation and rather too many slurred notes – a style that has not entirely died amongst organists, but is showing its age. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach *Italian Concerto* Terence Charlston
Deux-Elles **DXL 1017** 75' 02"
BWV 902-3, 906, 912, 971, 988-9, 999

This is Terence Charlston's second recording of Sebastian Bach's solo keyboard music for Deux-Elles, and to me it has formed a highly impressive introduction on CD. This is no easy programme, for in it the famous masterpieces which challenge any good player are heard beside less attention-seeking works like the fine, early, multi-sectional Toccata in D, BWV 912, the *Aria Variata* 'in the Italian style' (but the French manner) and the Prelude and Fughetta in G, BWV 902. All are very musically shaped and delivered by one who obviously knows well how to make the best use of a really sensitively-weighted, actioned and amplified harpsichord copy. Even though I find that the version of 'good' temperament that Robert Howarth has set is somewhat aggressive, I have been drawn by the completely persuasive playing of the music itself into placing it immediately among my most favoured Bach harpsichord discs. *Stephen Daw*

Bach *Music for Oboe and Harpsichord* Gail Hennessy *ob*, Nicholas Parle *hpscd* 68' 39"
Signum **SIGCD034**
BWV529, 871, 1020, 1030b, 1031, 1033

Bach: Music for oboe? I raised an eyebrow when I saw this CD in my pile this month: 'Did he write any?' I asked myself. The answer, of course, is, 'Well, he might have.' Hennessy and Parle stake a reasonable claim for the pieces on the CD: four sonatas with harpsichord (part as continuo, part as duetting partner), and one unaccompanied. There is also the C minor Prelude and Fugue from Book II of the 48. Although Hennessy features on many Eliot Gardiner recordings, this is the first time I've heard her play solo, and a very good player she is, indeed; fine phrasing matched by perfect tuning. Parle is an excellent partner. Having listened to it a lot this month, my eyebrow has returned to its normal position. Maybe now she'd like to get together a string band and record Bach's oboe concertos? *BC*

Böhm *Orgelwerke* Jozef Sluys (Trost-organ, Walterhausen, 1722/30) 67' 08"
Ars Musici **AM 1321-2**

Böhm was originally from the Bach homelands in Thuringia; he settled in north Germany in Hamburg and was from 1698 organist at the Johanniskirche in Luneburg (covering the period of Bach's schooldays in the nearby Michaelskirche). His music is a fascinating combination reflecting his Thuringian roots, his North German employment and just a touch of French inspiration, notably in his use of ornament. Jozef Sluys adds a number of ornaments and stylistic touches of his own, all appropriate to the music. The organ is a very good choice for this repertoire, and its vast range of colour stops are used most effectively. An example of central German registration style of the period is the opening of track 3, with no fewer than five 8' stops combined together. This CD concentrates on Böhm's variations on chorale melodies – his most important contribution to the repertoire. Many of them raise questions about whether it is the harpsichord or organ that Böhm intended – if for the organ, they show an interesting use of what is generally seen as harpsichord style. Both the organ and the music lead to a strong recommendation, although there are times when the playing is a bit too predictable for my taste. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

£ = bargain price ££ = midprice

All other discs full price, as far as we know

Boyce *Pindar's Ode; New Year Ode 1774* Patrick Burrows, Andrew Johnson, Christopher Josey, Charles Daniels, Michael George *TrTrTTB*, Choir of New College Oxford, Hanover Band, Graham Lea-Cox 74' 20"
ASV **CD GAU232**

This is the first chance I've had to hear Lea-Cox's Boyce. Previous issues have been welcomed, and I would add my pat on the back to the assembled forces. Boyce is no mean composer and both of these pieces show off his melodic flair, his great skill at writing choruses, and a sense of overall structure which not all composers have intuitively. Lea-Cox says he's striven to find voices appropriate for the music, but I think he should re-think the use of high tenor in Pindar's Ode: Christopher Josey, who seems perfectly at ease with the Ode for the New Year, is severely taxed by the earlier piece (and sounds uncomfortable). That aside, this is an excellent disc which can only do Boyce's reputation good. *BC*

Fiocco *Lamentations* Anne Mertens *S*, Peter van Heyghen *rec*, Wieland Kuijken, Richte van der Meer *vlc*, Kris Verhelst *kbd* 75' 29"
Eufoda **EUF 1302**

Joseph-Hector Fiocco's Lamentations date from 1733. They are written for soprano solo, cello and continuo (although the cello is only occasionally independent). They contain some nice movements and this performance features the warm but pure voice of Anne Mertens, but I found them unmemorable. Better are the recorder sonatas by his father, Pietro Antonio, one from a manuscript source, the other from a set of ten published in Amsterdam. *BC*

Forqueray *Pièces de clavecin* Christophe Rousset Decca **466 976-2** 148' 11" (2 CDs in box)

Antoine Forqueray's five suites exist in two forms for bass viol with continuo and for solo harpsichord. Both versions were prepared for publication by the composer's son, whose keyboard versions deliberately preserved the low tessitura of the original. This is scarcely a disadvantage, as the tone in the lower half of the 18th-century French harpsichord is one of its great glories as this 1761 Hemsch instrument from the Paris Musée de la Musique effortlessly demonstrates. If one could hear the finest dark chocolate this is what it would sound like! (Try *La Bellmon* CD I iv.) This does make the recital as a whole a rather lugubrious listen – though monumental documentary editions such as this should surely be explored with more discrimination. I think I might discriminate in favour of CD2, if only because of its sensational opening and closing tracks (*La Marella* and the always startling *Jupiter*) and the amazing richness of all the minor key harmony. Immaculate playing/recording and a well-written booklet combine to make this a worthy successor to Rousset's Rameau and D'Anglebert *intégrales* – an absolutely must have. *David Hansell*

Handel *Deborah* Elisabeth Scholl *Deborah*, Natacha Ducret *Jael*, Lawrence Zazzo *Barak*, Ewa Wolak *Sisera*, Knut Schoch *Canaanite Herald*, Jelle S. Draijer *Abinoam/Priest*, Junge Kantorei, Barockorchester Frankfurt, Joachim Carlos Martini 162' 24" (3 CDs in box)
Naxos **8.554785-87** £

The fourth of Martini's live recordings of Handel oratorios issued by Naxos is the first to have a rival in the series directed by Robert King for Hyperion. King's *Deborah* of 1993 presents the original 1733 version with the 1744 overture (there was no overture in 1733) on two full-price CDs. Martini includes the same music – he acknowledges the use of King's performing material – but adds eight extra numbers (four orchestral, four vocal), all originally composed for other works. His version is accordingly about 22 minutes longer and requires a third CD, but the Naxos set is still half the price of the Hyperion. As in Martini's previous recordings, the extras are more intrusive than enhancing, and his notes about them are unhelpful and, occasionally, untrue. The three arias added near the end of Part 1 were all inserted by Handel himself in various revivals, but not at the same time; the selection and sequence adopted is Martini's own. One number, however, is of interest: the attractive if leisurely soprano aria 'Cease. O Judah, cease thy mourning' (based on the discarded aria 'Bramo di trionfar' from *Alcina* and originally composed for *Athalia* as a second setting of 'Through the land so lovely blooming') is not a piece likely to be heard very often. (It is printed in the appendix to Arnold's edition of *Deborah*.) In Part 3 the insertions are all Martini's ideas; *La réjouissance* from the Fireworks Music, added before the final chorus, is especially disruptive, spoiling the mood of exalted joy and all the more annoying because of its familiarity. Yes, *Deborah* is partly a pasticcio, with a few make-weight solo numbers sitting incongruously amid great choral splendour, but adding to the inconsistency does not help.

These reservations aside, Martini's performance has many good points and is fair value for money. Elisabeth Scholl (Deborah) and Natacha Ducret (Jael) are a little pallid beside their equivalents on Hyperion (Yvonne Kenny and Susan Gritton), but blend strength with sweetness. The fine American countertenor Lawrence Zazzo (Barak) is less characterful than James Bowman, but his tone is more even, especially in the florid virtuoso numbers. Ewa Wolak is a Polish contralto with a powerful voice probably best suited to late romantic opera but out of place here; her English is fractured and her chest notes seem to have been dubbed in by a different singer. Martini's choir, the Junge Kantorei, show notable improvement in comparison with their earlier recordings, being better focussed and given clearer recorded sound, but they lack the edge of King's choral forces, with their incisive treble line. Ensemble is not always perfect in the live performance, but Martini's direction is, as usual, well-paced and has a sense of drama. I regret his unhistorical taste for elaborately coloured continuo ('care has been taken to match the chosen instrumentation with the character of the singer and dramatic circumstances') but it is so widely shared these days that it would be unfair to make it a point of complaint. Robert King's *Deborah* remains the best choice, but Martini's makes an acceptable introduction to a fascinating work, and Handelian completists will have to have it for 'Cease, O Judah'. *Anthony Hicks*

Handel *Gloria in B♭, Dixit Dominus* Vivaldi *Gloria in D RV 589* Gillian Keith *S*, Monteverdi Choir, English Bach Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 78' 21" Philips **462 597-2**

Handel *Gloria in B♭ [etc]* Suzie LeBlanc *S*, Académie Baroque de Montréal, Alexander Weimann 53' 38"
ATMA Classique **ACD2 2215**
+ **Bach** BWV 182.1, 84/3; **Handel** op.4/2 mov. 2, op. 5/2, *Rejoice greatly*; **Vivaldi** RV 545, *Domine Deus* from RV 589 [NOT 120]

These two discs are reviewed by Peter Holman on pp. 8-9

Handel *Harpsichord Works Vol. 2* Sophie Yates Chandos *Chaconne* **CHAN 0669** 72' 51"
Suites 1-5 (1720)

Although amongst the best-known harpsichord works of the late baroque, Handel's Suites of 1720 are a somewhat unique blend of North German and French styles, and attracted very few imitators, at least in England. Sophie Yates plays the first five of them on a copy of the Colmar Ruckers by Andrew Garlick. In the past I've found some performances of this repertoire (notably Blandine Verlet) rather heavy-handed, and the recording I know best, by Colin Tilney, is interesting but hardly desert island stuff. This disc, on the other hand, is wonderful. Initially, the most outstanding feature is the recorded sound – it's warm and transparent, and surrounds the harpsichord in a supportive acoustic that never obscures detail. But the playing is every bit as good – generous, good-natured and refreshingly light-hearted. All the really telling stuff, like the Adagio from the F major suite, comes off beautifully, and the fast movements bound along with lots of enthusiasm and some rip-roaring ornamentation. For the *Harmonious Blacksmith* purists – yes, she plays the first low E by itself, and, no, it doesn't detract from what is a very enjoyable interpretation. A lovely disc – Handel Suites for the 21st century. *Robin Bigwood*

Handel *The Complete Flute Sonatas* Lisa Beznosiuk, Richard Tunnicliffe, Paul Nicholson Hyperion **CDA67278** 72' 30"
HWV 359b (op. 1/1), 363b (op. 1/5), 367b (op. 1/9), 374-6 (*Halle*), 378, 379 (op. 1/1a)

Handel *Flute Sonatas* Konrad Hünteler, Rainer Zipperling, Carsten Lohff 52' 05"
Dabringhaus & Grimm **MDG 311 1078-2**
HWV 359b, 363b, 367b, 378, 379

'How many flute sonatas did Handel write?' – Stanley Sadie's opening words in the notes for the Hyperion disc are pertinently underlined by the fact that both these discs are labelled *Complete Flute Sonatas*, despite the MDG set omitting the

questionable so-called Halle Sonatas. Lisa Beznosiuk's excellent performances originally appeared as part of a three disc set devoted to the complete 'opus 1' sonatas (reviewed in *EMR* 16). Here they are supplemented by HWV 378, the most recently authenticated (and arguably the finest) of the flute sonatas. Hünteler is, of course, one of the best Baroque flautists around, and his warm, evenly produced tone here gives great pleasure throughout. Slower movements are musically and expressively shaped, while the allegros are imbued with a bright-eyed sturdiness that is most appealing. In general he prefers marginally steadier tempos than Beznosiuk, although the gap widens in Handel's largos, where I prefer Beznosiuk's greater sense of momentum. She is also more generous with ornamentation, and overall I find her performances just that bit more imaginative. The odd moment where one feels Hünteler is possibly a little straight-laced is underlined by some stolid harpsichord playing, although his cellist provides outstandingly vital support. Those who already own Hyperion's opus 1 and want HWV 378 can safely supplement it with Hünteler's disc; newcomers to these works are better directed to Beznosiuk's recording, which has greater character and provides a more generous selection. *Brian Robins*

Schickhardt *VI Concerts à 4 Flutes et Basse Continue* Flautando Köln 57' 45"
Freiburger Musik Forum **AM 1320-2**

Having seen these pieces listed in various catalogues of recorder music over the years, I've often wondered what they were like. Well, as played here, the answer is 'most enjoyable'. This collection is the composer's Op.19 for four treble recorders and continuo, published by Roger in 1715, which seems to have been designed with the amateur player in mind, as the keys avoid complex fingerings and the technical demands are relatively modest, especially when compared with Schickhardt's solo sonatas for the instrument. There is relatively little counterpoint: instead much use is made of solo episodes, both lively and wistful, and of writing for antiphonal pairs, especially in the 5th Concerto. The performers surmount the handicap of a truly awful photograph on the back of the booklet to deliver committed playing featuring sparkling articulation in the allegros and a well sustained cantabile in the slower movements. There are a very few moments where intonation is not all it might be, but this is almost inevitable, given the scoring. My only real quibble concerns the instrumentation of the continuo. Cello and harpsichord was surely the expectation, but here we have everything but, and the combinations including organ are ineffective, while the bassoon sounds vaguely embarrassed by his presence in Concerto 3. But don't let this put you off – the recorders do a cracking job.
David Hansell

Telemann *Solos & Trios* Maurice Steger *rec*, Continuo Consort, Naoki Kitaya 65' 08"
Claves **CD 50-2112**

Fantasias in A & e *fl* (TWV 40:2 & 9), sonatinas in c & a *rec & bc* (TWV 41:c2, a4), trio sonatas in d, F, a, B♭, (TWV 42: d10, F3, a4, B4)

Maurice Steger (on a variety of instruments, including one change for the slow movement of one piece) plays two solo Fantasias, two Sonatinas, one Sonata, and four Trio sonatas (two with violin, one with gamba, and one with obbligato harpsichord). The 32-page booklet could have been made much more compact by omitting some of the pages that say nothing, and the bright orange disc within a blue-rinsed cover and booklet is garish beyond belief. When it comes down to the playing, that's pretty eccentric, too. There's no denying that Steger's fingers and tongue can move quickly enough – listen to Track 5 if you don't believe me (and enjoy the rich cello sound, while you're at it); but there's too much whooping and breathiness for my liking. It's not that he isn't capable of playing the notes cleanly (Track 6 is a perfect illustration of control). Perhaps he gets carried away in performance (like his harpsichord partner). Whatever the reason, I found it distracting, and what's the change of instrument in the middle of a piece all about? I've mentioned it twice now, so I'm sure you know what I mean... *BC*

Vivaldi *Concerti con multi istromenti* Collegium Instrumentale Brugense, Patrick Peire
Eufoda **1303** 62' 13"
RV 537-8, 563, 566, 569, 576-7

This is a lovely CD. It's not the first of its sort, but there are two concertos which I haven't heard before in this context (the concertos written for what must have been a wonderful orchestra at the Dresden court): these are a work for two horns and cello (in the slow movement) with strings (RV538), and a concerto for violin and strings with two added trumpets (RV563). The playing (on modern instruments, though it took me a while to be absolutely sure!) is excellent and I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending the disc. *BC*

Barocke Orgelmusik aus Mitteldeutschland Mario Hospach-Martini (Silbermann organ Petrikirche, Freiberg/Sachsen) 70' 23"
Arte Nova **74321 85203 2**
Bach BWV 546, 585; **Böhm** *Jesu du bist all zu schöne*; **Buttstett** *Fuga in g*; **Krebs** *Fantasia sopra Freu' dich, Von Gott will ich, Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*; **Pachelbel** *Ciaccona in f*; **Walther** *Concerto in B♭ after Albinoni*

Although the words Silbermann and Freiberg usually go together in connection with his famous Dom instrument, there are other organs in the city by this important Saxon organbuilder. Whereas the Dom organ was one of his first organs, the Petrikirche is one of his last. Its rich and noble sound is well captured on this CD, with the recording made far enough away to hear the organ as a unity, much as it sounds to an audience. It is good to hear Krebs taken seriously – he can so often sound trite if played with too much whimsy. The Krebs pieces include *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*, once thought to be by Bach. One interpretational quirk is that the double pedal lines are given a very different articulation from the two manual voices. Mario Hospach-Martini plays with a gently lilting rhythm underlying the pulse – an effective approach, although there are occasions when speeds become a bit unsteady, as in Buttstett's *Fuga* (once thought to be by Pachelbel). Bach's monumental *Präludium und Fuga* in C minor is given an expansive reading which always avoids the ponderous and there is an inspiring performance of Pachelbel's *Ciaccona* in F minor played, as it should be (but rarely is), on the pleno, in this case supported by the speaker-busting 32' pedal Groß-Untersatz.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *Flute Concertos* Rachel Brown, The Brandenburg Consort, Roy Goodman
Hyperion **CDA67226** 69' 05"
d (H425, Wq22), G (H445, Wq169), A (H438, Wq168)

Being a long term fan of Rachel Brown's flute playing, I had high expectations of this recording, and I was not disappointed. In fact both orchestra and soloist alike give superb performances on this disc, which has all the flavour and excitement of a live performance. Particularly impressive (apart from some outstanding technical playing from Rachel Brown) is the consistent and convincing delivery of the rhetorical *Affekts* demanded by the music. In the course of the performance, every gamut of emotion is explored with great depth of feeling; all three concerti are longer than average and there are many outstandingly beautiful moments. They all exist in alternative versions for solo harpsichord, cello or organ, and the performers have drawn freely from these works in the execution of ornaments and cadenzas, and most notably in the use of extra horns in the outer movements of the D minor concerto. This is a very well researched disc, with informative notes by Rachel Brown. Definitely one to play again and again. *Marie Ritter*

C. P. E. Bach *The Solo Keyboard Music, 7. Sonatas from 1748-49* Miklós Spányi *clavichord*
BIS-CD-1086 78' 34"
H55-57, 59, 61 (=Wq62/8 & 10, 65/22, 23, 25)

Miklós Spányi recorded these five highly-interesting yet little-known sonatas in 1999 and 2001. Born in Budapest, the mature and persuasive Spányi made all of these recordings in the quiet and (as he sees it) highly sympathetic country seaboard location of his present home in Finland where, in the summer, the sun barely sets and modern concert life is far from emphasised. I find the resulting performances magical for their remarkable musicianship. The clavichord (new to this series), after one by Christian Gottlob Hubert, has just the right combination of mellow richness of tone, with a restrained, melancholic quality that is absolutely ideal for this repertoire. It is played with what I consider to be highly impressive authority. *Stephen Daw*

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

Boccherini: *Gioas Re di Giuda* Susanna Rigacci *Gioas*, Barbara di Castri *Sebia*, Maria Billeri *Atalia*, William Matteuzzi *Gioida*, Gastone Sarti *Matan*, Eugenio Favano *Ismaele*, Polifonica Lucchese, Orchestra da camera "Luigi Boccherini", Herbert Handt 117'11" Bongiovanni **GB 2253/54** (2 CDs)

Dating from 1765, *Gioas* is one of two oratorios that Boccherini presented as part of his efforts to win a permanent position in his native city of Lucca. Set to a text by Metastasio, it is a highly dramatic work, telling the tale of the restoration of Judah's rightful king and faith against the pagan usurpation of Queen Athalia. Italian oratorios of this type and time are operas in all but name, and the young Boccherini rises to the occasion with a succession of supple recitatives and rhetorically potent arias distributed among characters engaged in what is presented as a political and religious struggle between the forces of good and evil. In the event, Boccherini failed to get the post he sought, which went instead to Antonio Puccini, the son of Lucca's reigning orchestral director and an undistinguished member of the prolific dynasty that eventually gave us the composer of *Tosca*. In a sense, this live 1998 recording from the Lucca Festival of Sacred Music might therefore be considered a belated act of recompense to the man who was undoubtedly the more accomplished candidate. Hearing *Gioas* today makes one regret that Boccherini's later career in Madrid left him no chance to develop what was, on the evidence of the piece, a talent for theatrical composition that could have given us some notable contributions to the operatic repertoire if he had remained in Italy. Prospective purchasers of this revival of Boccherini's oratorio will find it well sung throughout and also mercifully free of that distracting mass of superfluous noises-off that mars many live recordings from the impassioned opera houses of Italy. Herbert Handt directs with a convincing feel for Boccherini's style in a field of composition that he was never to revisit; and the result is a fascinating glimpse of a young composer who was already an assured master of an idiom and scale of composition so remote from those intimate chamber works on which his subsequent reputation was to rest. *David J. Levy*

Brunetti *String Quartets* Schuppanzigh-Quartett cpo **999 780-2** 66' 10" op. 2/1 & 3; qtets in A & B♭

It is not often that one comes across a relatively unknown classical composer whose works spark an interest on a level consistently above eighteenth century muzak, but these four string quartets by the Italian Gaetano Brunetti, working in comparative isolation at the Spanish court at the height of the classical era are worthy to rank with the chamber music canon of the period. Written between 1774 and 1792, all the quartets display a refinement and elegance, with some virtuosic writing for all the instruments. The A major quartet, perhaps the least interesting of the four on the record, has some interesting high cello writing in the variations, the last movement of the three. The remaining four-movement works on the disc (two of which place the minuet and trio before the slow movement) are all contrasting in style, with the G minor having some interesting textures in the minuet, and the pathetic largo having some unusual quirky figuration. The B flat major quartet, Brunetti's last work, gives interest to all the instruments, and stands up well against many of Haydn's middle period quartets. Most unusual of all is the rondo finale of the E flat major quartet, where the recurring opening theme is *sul ponticello* in the first violin part. The Schuppanzigh Quartet is an ensemble to note. Using period instruments, but not afraid of discreet vibrato or the occasional portamento, and playing (at least on my equipment) at a suitable classical pitch, theirs is a spirited, refined and technically assured performance. It is to be hoped that more of Brunetti's extensive chamber music will be recorded by this ensemble. *Ian Graham-Jones*

Dittersdorf *Giob* Markus Schäfer *Giob*, Romelia Lichtenstein *Zara*, Jörg Waschinski *Baldad*, Ekkehard Abele *Ismaele*, Beat Duddeck *Elifaz*, Linda Perillo *Angelo*, Rheinische Kantorei, Das Kleine Konzert, Hermann Max 151' 56" cpo **999 790-2** (2 CDs in box)

Nothing I have previously encountered in the estimable works of Dittersdorf had remotely prepared me for the imaginative intensity and power of this superlative oratorio. Rediscovered masterpieces are more rare than scholars and archivists would ideally like, but this remarkable sacred drama is surely one such piece. Composed in 1786, when the composer was at the height of his reputation and powers, *Giob* tells the story of the Old Testament's most put-upon believer in a way that is both emotionally convincing and outstanding in its musical invention. Dittersdorf writes superbly lyric arias, as might be expected from a composer of several successful operas, but also complex ensemble scenes in varied combinations and sustained choruses of rare potency and contrapuntal density in a work in which the characteristic theatrical gestures of the period are never allowed to override the high seriousness of what is, after all, an oratorio on the irresolvable theme of the undeserved trials of one of God's most memorable suffering servants. That the work begins as it ends in a spirit of achieved and then renewed well-being does nothing to diminish the exquisitely rendered intervening occasions of pain that Job and his wife Sara must endure for reasons that sorely try their faith and which only their God may rightly know in the recesses of his mortally impenetrable heart. Dittersdorf's music rises, or falls, to every occasion of human grief in ways that continually strike the ear and the mind of the listener with their dramatic and melodic aptitude in a work of consistent inspiration and originality that is here performed, as one expects from these artists, with a finely attuned sense of what such a powerful piece requires. This, then, is a splendid recording of an extraordinary musical rediscovery that is all the more notable because it comes from the pen of a man whom history has hitherto consigned, perhaps too readily, to the rank of a minor master of the classical style. Whatever the New Year may hold in the way of desirable recordings I doubt that it will provide another issue more surprising and fascinating than this. *David J. Levy*

Gossec *Four Symphonies (Brook 62, 81, 85, 87)* Orchestre de Bretagne, Stefan Sanderling ASV **CD DCA 1123** 66' 03"

Of the four symphonies on this disc, two have three movements, two with four, the latter including a lively *La caccia* with horns, trumpets and prominent clarinets. The booklet notes talk about Gossec's output (he wrote about 50 symphonies) and then discuss the works in question, complete with details of which repeats are taken and which omitted (something more booklets should mention – if only the author had access to the recording!) The playing is pretty much modern chamber orchestra style, in a slightly warm acoustic. The brass playing, in particular, is enjoyable. Gossec's music is nice, very singable, but doesn't really linger in the mind. *BC*

Haydn *Five Sonatas & Capriccio* Joanna Leach (Stodart square pf of 1823) 71' 09" Athene **ATHCD22** H XVI/23, 34, 36, 37, 51; XVII.1

This is a rather curious record: a Stodart square piano of 1823 is used for music that mostly dates from half a century before, and was almost certainly intended for harpsichord or clavichord rather than piano (Robbins Landon's opinion, quoted in the booklet, that Hob. XVII:1 of 1765 'may have been written specifically for the new instrument' is now known to be untenable; and the existence of dynamic markings in the fragmentary autograph of Hob. XVI:20 does not, of course, rule out the clavichord – or, for that matter, the two-manual harpsichord). However, the Stodart has a good sound and is remarkably well balanced, although notes in the extreme bass have the slight tendency to 'clunk' that is inevitable with such short strings. I also found the often out-of-tune unisons on the very top notes irritating: I know that this is a problem with English squares, but there is little excuse for a sour d3, e3 or f3 the first time it occurs in a movement, as happens particularly noticeably on Track 10.

Despite my reservations about the Stodart as a suitable instrument for Haydn, though, I'm glad to say that the playing itself is first-rate and there is much to enjoy on this disc. I particularly relished Hob. XVI:51 (which, not surprisingly, works better on the Stodart than the earlier music); especially the finale, where the rhythmic subtleties are lovingly expressed within a performance of impressive virtuosity. *Richard Maunder*

Haydn *Esterházy Sonatas – I* (H XVI/21-23, 43). Ronald Brautigam *fp* 70' 28"
BIS-CD-1095

This is another excellent disc in the series of Haydn recordings by the gifted performer Ronald Brautigam. The booklet states that he is using the Wiener Urtext Edition, but as one would expect from an interpreter of this calibre there are subtle variations on the repeats – notably a dotted minim in bar 99 of the brief contemplative adagio from the first movement of the A flat major sonata that rises to C instead of being a repeated A flat the second time round. Tempi throughout suit the character of the music and there is a military hint to the minuet which sounds bright but never rushed. This recording brings Haydn's music to life in a way that is not possible on the modern piano.

Margaret Cranmer

Haydn *Complete Piano Trios Vol. 3* (H XV/5, 18-20) Trio 1790 (Susanne von Bauszern *vln*, Philipp Bosbach *vlc*, Harald Hoeren *fp*)
cpo **999 468-2** 62' 48"

These late piano trios receive spirited and expressive performances from the distinguished Trio 1790. Ensemble and balance are excellent, and the trio's sense of period style is well-nigh impeccable, with little or no resort either to sustaining lever or to vibrato, and everything beautifully articulated. My only small quibble is that the semiquaver appoggiaturas in the last movement of No.20 are played short, in the 'trendy Cologne' manner to be heard on a few other recent discs originating from that city. Strongly recommended, all the same, though it would have been nice to hear a Broadwood grand instead of a Heilmann copy in works written for London in the mid 1790s. *Richard Maunder*

Haydn *Symphonies Vol. 2 (nos 21-29, A & B).* Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra, Adam Fischer 334' 37" (5 CDs in box)
Nimbus **NI 5683/7**

Congratulations on the completion of the Nimbus/Fischer recording of the Haydn symphonies. It is a worthy successor to the pioneering Dorati set, performed likewise by central-European musicians on modern instruments, so not exactly a rival to the uncompleted early-instrument projects. Congratulations must be tempered, however, by regret at the demise of Nimbus, which happened between sending out sets for review and their being available in the shops. So it would be unfair to tantalise readers by recommending it too strongly. When it becomes available, it is certainly worth buying, though it shares a common defect of modern bands playing early music: the slower movements sound less convincing than the quicker ones. But the playing is well-considered throughout and often stylish; it would be a great shame if the set never appeared. *CB*

PS. Nimbus discs should soon be available again: the management buy-out of that part of the company seems to have been successful.

Jommelli **Il Vologeso**, Jörg Waschinski *Vologeso*, Lothar Odinius *Lucio Vero*, Gabriele Rossmanith *Berenice*, Helene Schneiderman *Lucilla*, Daniel Taylor *Aniceto*, Mechtild Bach *Flavio*, Stuttgarter Kammerorchester, Frieder Bernius, 175'17"(3 CDS)
Orfeo **C420 983F**

When *Il Vologeso* appeared in 1766 Niccolò Jommelli was probably the most highly esteemed operatic composer in Europe, admired for his rich orchestration, his grasp of dramatic structure and his individual musical invention. Unlike his contemporary, Gluck, Jommelli did not aspire to change the form of Italian opera seria but to enrich it harmonically, melodically and through an increased use of ensemble in order to increase its dramatic immediacy. Since Jommelli worked in the service of Duke Carl Eugen of Württemberg from 1753 until his return to Italy in 1769 it is appropriate that it should be an orchestra and conductor based in Stuttgart who should be responsible for this impressive recording, which is a worthy successor to their previous issue of the composer's 1762 setting of *Didone Abbandonata* – one of no less than three that Jommelli made in the course of his career.

Set in the aftermath of war between Rome and the Parthians, *Il Vologeso* is a tale of political intrigue and amorous jealousy – the normal stuff of operatic plotting of the period. It is, however, raised to a higher plane by Jommelli's compositional gifts, which have seldom been sufficiently recognised in the centuries since his death in 1774. Like his older contemporary Hasse, Jommelli has not received the attention he deserves from the early-music movement probably because, being predominantly an operatic composer, his greatest work belongs to a genre that for reasons of scale and expense lies beyond the scope of the sort of groups on whom the revival of interest in early music has traditionally depended. Recordings like this may help redress the balance in favour of works to which the 18th century accorded pride of place in its own musical hierarchy.

Among the cast of *Il Vologeso* the male soprano Jörg Waschinski sings the title role of with great conviction and is in no way overshadowed by the more conventionally pitched voices of the rest of the singers, who are here vigorously directed by Frieder Bernius. This then is a welcome issue of an opera that should do something to revive interest in a composer whom many of his contemporaries regarded as being, in the words of the poet, Johann F. Schubart, 'one of the foremost musical geniuses who have ever lived'. *David J. Levy*

Krebs *Complete Organ Works vol. 3* John Kitchen (organ of Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh) 75' 22"
Priory PRCD 736

This series of CDs is beginning to grow on me. Although not strictly within the *EMR* remit in the choice of distinctly non-historic organs, and with playing that is not always in tune with generally accepted thinking on early performance practice, this is nonetheless something of a labour of love. What else can explain the determination to get through fugues lasting nearly 15 minutes? Rather like Wagner, you can safely snooze through large amounts of Krebs, and wake up without noticing that you have missed whole sections of the score, so I hope it isn't too pathetic a recommendation to say that this is a CD to have on in the background; but keep an ear out for Krebs's magical moments, of which there are many. Although the organ would not count amongst my favourite UK instruments, John Kitchen knows how to make it sound grand in the monumental Preludes and Fugues and the more thunderous chorale fantasias. I am afraid this is another CD for the lovers of 32' pedal stops – as well as the 32' Bombarde, this organ has a 32' flue stop named, quite appropriately, Rumble. But there are a number of pieces where the pedal line sounds too quiet against the manuals (e.g. tracks 3 and 7). There is an offer that, once you buy one CD of the series, gets you the rest at a reduced price, so if you like Krebs on a variety of UK organs, have a listen.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Mozart *Quintets K 581, 580b, 516c*; Stadler *Trio in F* Consortium Classicum, Dieter Klöcker 74' 04"
cpo **999 802-2**
Clarinet quintet in A K581; qnt movements in F K580b, in B♭ K516c; Duo in B♭ K424 *vln, vla* **Anton Stadler** Trio in F *3 bassethorns*

This programme was recorded as long ago as 1974 and is now re-issued as part of the extensive Dieter Klöcker Edition. The music-making and choice of repertory is of pleasing quality, and the recording, though close, remains high. For Mozartians, the seldom-recorded quintet movements will be of greatest interest, though the Stadler trio is never less than intriguing. The clarinet quintet emerges bright but rather soulless, and Klöcker isn't always at his nimble, expressive best; there is good work from three members of the Kussmaul family in the string parts, and fine support from the basset-horn players.

Peter Branscombe

Paisiello *Don Chisciotte* Sergio Rocchi *Don Chisciotte*, Mauricio Leoni *Sancio Panza*, Orchestra Filarmonica Italiana di Piacenza, Valentino Metti *cond.* 106' 38" (2 CDs)
Dynamic **CDS 366/1-2**

Paisiello wrote this opera for Naples in 1769 when he was 29. Demonstrating his mastery of the comic genre, Don Chischiotte is among the works that ensured him an international reputation that lasted well beyond his death in 1816. Everything in the piece is as one expects – a stream of unforced arias that almost sing themselves, successive scenes of well-conceived comic interplay between the characters and, above all, each of the three acts brought to closure by an extended and robust finale in which everyone in the cast participates in a melodic maelstrom that

confuses, if only to resolve, everything but the composer's innate sense of harmonic direction and the work's unfailing theatrical flair. This music is designed to entertain and amuse and that is just what it does in an energetic performance recorded live in the communal theatre of Piacenza. Paisiello had a distinctive gift for incorporating overtones of warm sentimentality in the unfolding business of his musical comedies, and it is this that sets his style apart from the more brilliant, but also more brittle, artifice of his contemporary and rival in the art of opera buffa, Cimarosa. A whiff of Neapolitan folk-song gives Paisiello's music an aura of ingratiating warmth, and in later works, such as *Nina* and *La Molinara*, he was to emphasise this feature in order to develop a new type of work – an opera of overtly naive sentiment – that points the way toward the music of the succeeding century. This, however is an early work and all hints of what was to come in Paisiello's oeuvre are firmly embedded in the conventions of an 18th-century comedy of misplaced ambitions that cunningly exploits, without explaining, the psychic hinterland between private fantasy and public farce. Operas as airy and effervescent as this are not to everybody's taste but if you want an hundred or so minutes of innocent and novel delight, then this vivid recording of *Don Chischiotte* may be just what the doctor ordered to lift a touch of the winter's blues. *David J. Levy*

The Age of Elegance: 18th Century Music for Flute and Strings The Galeazzi Ensemble (Lesley Holliday *fl*, Richard Wade *vln*, Virginie Guiffray *vla*, Gareth Deats *vlc*) 65' 30"
London Independent Records **LIR001**
J. C. Bach *Qtet in C (1776)*; Haydn *Qtet in G (1768)*; Bach/Mozart *Str trio in d K404a/BWV 853/2*; Hoffmeister *Qtet in A op. 27/2* Pleyel *Qtet in D op. 25/1*

The Galeazzi Ensemble is a new group to me, but first impressions are very promising. Their programme (four flute quartets placed around the Mozartian string trio setting of Bach's D sharp minor fugue) is well balanced, and performed elegantly (as the title suggests it ought to be) and with more than a little flair. Just very occasionally my ear smarted at a bit of dodgy tuning, but overall this must rate as one of my recordings of the month: I look forward to hearing more, and would love to hear them play some Vanhal! *BC*

Galant with an Attitude: Music of Juan and José Pla Musicians of the Old Post Road, La Fontegara (Mexico) 70' 52"
Meridian **CDE 84419**

This is an intriguing disc of trio sonatas by the Spanish Pla brothers, who are enjoying something of a revival if this recording and the recent remarkable South Bank performance by La Fontaine (reviewed in October's *EMR*) are anything to go by. Like La Fontaine, The Musicians of the Old Post Road (USA) and their Mexican team-mates La Fontegara also opt for a somewhat offbeat style of presentation, with dark glasses all round, anarchic disc title and suitably bizarre cover picture after Goya. In actual fact, the performances, though lively and characterful, are by no means as rebellious as the presentation might suggest. The brothers Pla were clearly an imaginative pair, expert at the conversational style of the trio sonata and not afraid of athletic passagework (ably executed by flute soloists Maria Diez-Canedo and Suzanne Stumpf); there is also a distinctly Spanish flavour to many of the pieces, enhanced by the use of baroque guitar as part of the continuo group. This is an interesting recording, with informative booklet notes; my only quibble is in the slightly unfocused recorded sound which detracts from an otherwise refined and well-balanced ensemble.
Marie Ritter

Flute Music at the Berlin Court Frank Theuns *fl*, Ewald Demeyre *hpscd* 64' 43"
Accent **ACC 20140**
F. **Benda** Sonata in e (Lee III 47); **C. P. E. Bach** Sonatas in a (Wq 128, H555) & D (Wq 83, H505); **J. G. Graun** *Trio in F;* **Kirnberger** *Sonata in G, Tempo di Minuetto*; **Quantz** untitled pieces QV 1: 188.9 & 1:178.7

This is a very fine recording of flute music by members of Frederick the Great's illustrious circle of Musicians. The programme is well chosen to represent some of the most convincing *Empfindsamer* pieces, including the beautiful E minor Sonata by Benda and C. P. E. Bach's well known D major Sonata Wq 83 with obbligato keyboard. Frank Theuns really gets under the skin of this extraordinarily turbulent music, drawing out every nuance and angular turn of phrase with enviable clarity, whilst Ewald Demeyere adds a certain piquancy of touch, offering a firm, if occasionally uncompromising supporting voice. This is a wonderfully direct, muscular recording and well worth investigating. The booklet notes too are well researched and interesting.
Marie Ritter

19th CENTURY

From Two to Six: Music for one, two and three performers on a wide selection of keyboard instruments Richard Burnett, Steven Devine, David Ward 78' 23"
Finchcocks Press **FPCD003**
Music by Brahms, Croft, von Esch, Hässler, Haydn, Liszt, Mayerl, Mozart, Offenbach, Paderewski, Schubert, S. Wesley

This well-packed programme begins with the Overture to *The Barber of Seville* in Czerny's three-players-on-one-piano setting (small-scale compared with the one for 32 hands on eight pianos): part of the fun is missing without the sight of the players squashed into a confined space, but it sounds entertaining nevertheless. This, played on a Streicher 1867 piano, is followed by the oldest piece, a Croft solo minuet on a c.1700 bentside spinet perhaps by Cawton Aston. The most substantial pieces are Haydn's F minor varations, beautifully played by David Ward on a Rosenberger grand of c.1800, and a Trio in D for three pianos by S. Wesley, written in 1811 and played (with some difficulty, judging by the booklet notes) on contrasting instruments by three UK makers of around 1800: Broadwood, Stodart and Clementi. The note surmises that it must have been written for specific players but omits that the first performance was given by Charles Stokes, Vincent Novello and the composer. The pairing of Billy Mayerl's *Marigold* with a 1866 Erard is a surprising and incongruous success; otherwise the disc demonstrates how fine performances on contemporary 19th-century pianos can bring new life to major works and also bring character to lesser pieces which can sound anodyne on modern pianos. (The booklet includes commendatory quotes from *EMR* for FPC001 & 002, so I suppose that last sentence will be quoted in the eagerly-awaited 004.) *CB*

MISCELLANEOUS

Wayfaring Stranger: folksongs Andreas Scholl *A*, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra 65' 09"
Decca **468 499-2**

I don't want to be too discouraging to a fine singer who dares to sing a programme of folk songs in a foreign language – and linguistically it is almost perfect. But there are pitfalls in the presentation of folksong that this doesn't solve. There are three choices of accompaniment: discreet, distinct and none. Although the idea of English folksong being the exclusive preserve of unaccompanied soloists (which emanated from the collectors of a century ago) is now outdated, it would have been nice to have heard a little more than the odd verse sung thus. Discretion is not here thought the better part of valour, and very distinctive accompaniments are used. There are excellent models for such a practice – Britten's *O waly waly* with its pattern of piano chords and the declaiming viola in Berio's *Black is the colour* come to mind, with Schubert's imitation folk-song *Erlkönig* being an outstanding example. But on each hearing I find the versions here more irritating: they don't support the songs nor are they strong enough to set them off. The style of singing, too, doesn't work for me. The music is slowed down because each note has to last long enough to be properly formed: too much emphasis on singing in a repertoire for which there is mostly no doubt about *prima le parole*, even if it is the tune that is remembered. (The one song that is quicker than expected, thanks to recollections of Kathleen Ferrier, is 'Blow the wind southerly'; perhaps the rare use of unaccompanied voice for the opening verses is in her honour). I suspect, too, that the music should lie lower in the voice – and the reason that I don't find the countertenor voice suitable (and I feel the same with Deller's folk recordings) is that the voice souns high even if the range itself is quite comfortable for the singer.

Quite how to perform this repertoire is unclear. It certainly *should* be performed: what used to be found in my youth in National Song Books – mostly acquired by collecting tokens from newspapers in the 1930s, I believe – in everyone's piano stool

is now sadly neglected. Many of the songs here I've known from childhood, in some cases just phrases sticking in the mind rather than compete songs ('...on my wedding day' or 'and we'll all go together...' – I was puzzled by 'wild mountain time', since thyme wasn't part of my childhood vocabulary). One reviewer was grateful that regional accents were not adopted: I'm not so sure. As with early music, putting on an accent is one way to get away from the upper-class sound of the English art-song. The alternative is for the voice to sound completely natural (and a countertenor voice brings with it an image of artificiality). I once overheard Emma Kirkby lulling a folk-song to her baby in her kitchen: if she could maintain that casualness in a studio, a disc of folksongs from her would show that it could be done. The booklet has excellent scholarly notes on each song. *CB*

DVD

Bach *Mass in B minor* Ruth Holton, Matthias Rexroth, Christoph Genz, Klaus Mertens *SATB*, Thomanerchor & Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Georg Christoph Biller *cond* 114'
TDK **DV-BAMBM**

Bach *Christmas Oratorio* Claron McFadden, Bernarda Fink, Christoph Genz, Dietrich Henschel *SATB*, Monteverdi Choir, English Bach Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 198'
TDK **DV-BACHO** (2 discs)

Of the two, the Gardiner is by far the more worth buying: it's a pity we got it too late to mention in our December issue (in which the DVD reviews were on pp. 23-24 of the Diary, not in the main magazine). The orchestral playing in particular is excellent, though I have doubts about the singing. Had I not been reviewing it, I would probably have not listened beyond the first section of the opening chorus. The conductor seems not to have decided on any hierarchy of stress: I don't mind if I hear *JAUCHzet* or *frohLOCKet*, but I don't want to hear both accented equally: just as there is a hierarchy of stress within the bar (described in contemporary textbooks), there must surely be a similar hierarchy between the bars, which the textbooks don't discuss. There is also a lot too much rather ugly staccato instead of a natural shaping of phrases. These practices are relics of the early days of 'authentic' performance, which orchestras (including this one) have grown out of. One might wonder whether it is a consequence of using choirs instead of an ensemble of soloists, but the soloists do the same when they have movements with short bars. But there's much to enjoy, with impressive solo singing (apart from the stressing), and the visual aspect is well handled (except for the weird reflection of the conductor on the floor of the nave's central gangway). One does get the feel of a genuine performance, the opening of the Gardiner Bach Pilgrimage. The discs are enhanced with two documentaries on the Pilgrimage. They cover a lot of important points without getting too heavy; but they will become tedious if the rest of the pilgrimage comes out on DVD with similar programmes. As I said last month, how about concentrating on rehearsal?

The Mass DVD is a 250th anniversary commemoration by the Leipzig home choir and orchestra. I most enjoyed the solo oboe playing (name not given, of course – the Xmas Oratorio DVD also fails to name players) and Ruth Holton – a singer who impressed me enormously when she was a student, though she hasn't quite had the success I expected. I find it amazing that for an event of this nature there wasn't enough money to book a second soprano, who was replaced by the alto, the weakest of the soloists. A few years ago, one might have been interested at the upper choral parts being sung by boys as in Bach's day; but even if the one-to-a-part theory is wrong, his choir wouldn't have sung the B-minor Mass. At times, the Leipzig boys sing with verve, but are just not reliable enough in tuning and phrasing. I'm sure that it would have been a moving occasion had one been there, but I spent most of the time hoping for more shots of the church to provide some justification for the time spent watching. *CB*

LETTER

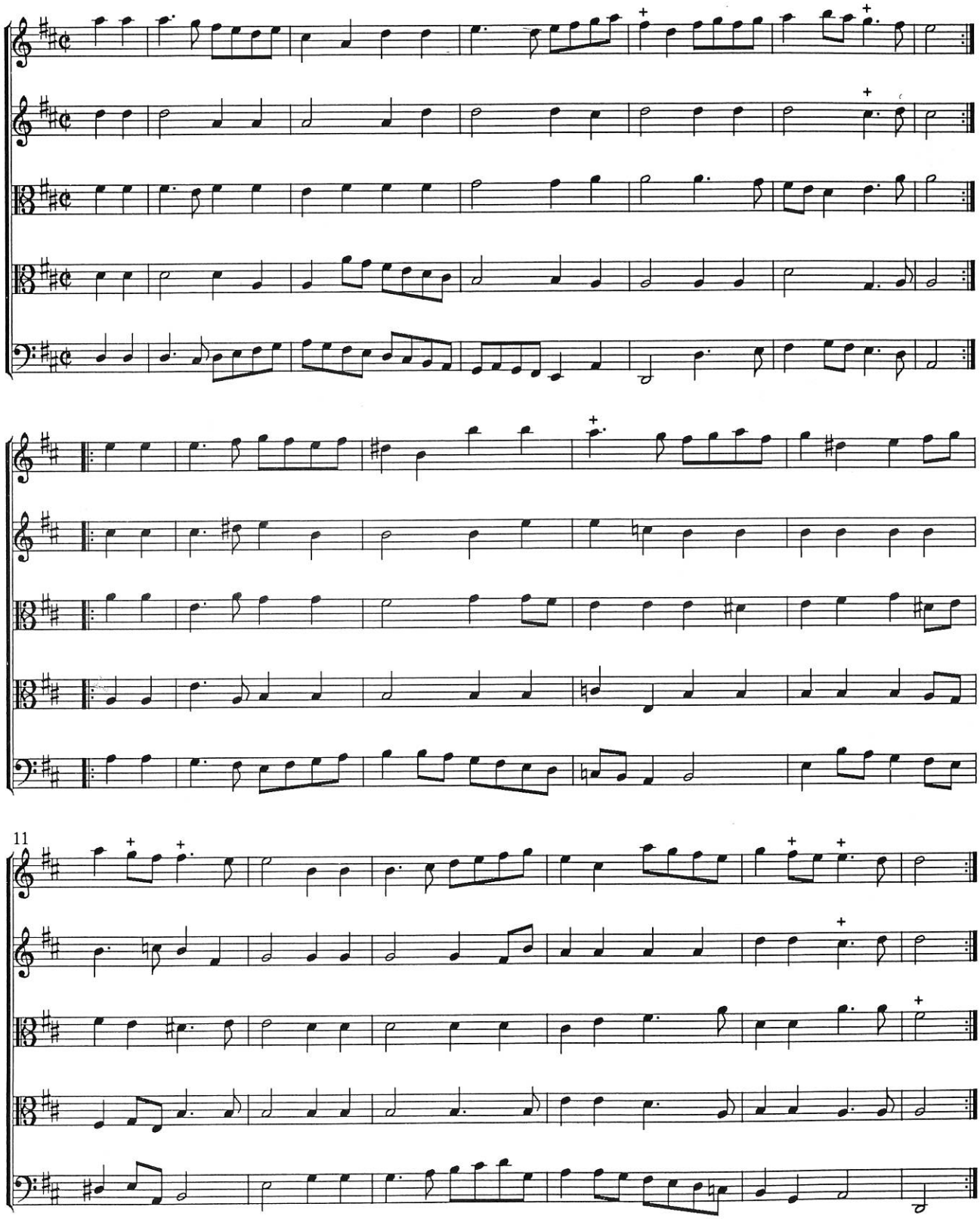
Dear Clifford,

No, I haven't a clue where 'the tyranny of the barline' comes from but it's a phrase I often use when rehearsing choirs in renaissance polyphony. It really does transform the music when the words are allowed to create an independent metrical structure for each of the parts, a joy seldom heard in performances by even our most distinguished choirs and consorts. Try Gibbons' *Hosanna to the Son of David* with the opening in triple time, starting on a second beat or, for a less well-known but amazingly complex example, the opening of Byrd's *Cibavit eos* from the 1605 *Gradualia:* 3/2, 3/4 and 6/8 there – and the 'barlines' are all over the place. Schütz's *Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt* (1648) is similarly flexible.

David Hansell

The tyranny surely comes from treating barlines as guides to short-term phrasing. *CB*

Scene Derniere (Campra *Le Carnaval de Venise*, 1699)
Marche du carnaval *Le carnaval conduisant une troupe de masques*



KM 828
Original clefs: G1, C1, C2, CE, F4

Campra's *Comédie lyrique* contains an Italian, one-act opera *Orfeo nell' inferi*, from which this dance comes. The opera will be published next month (with singing English text) and will be performed at the annual Benslow baroque opera course in April.

Bar 6: 2nd part has D on the first beat;

Bar 15 4th part has A on first beat