

# Early Music

## REVIEW

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'A Bill to make provision about the regulation of the sale and supply of alcohol, the provision of entertainment and the provision of late night refreshment, about offences relating to alcohol and for connected purposes.' Why should anyone giving a concert of Josquin and Palestrina expect such a piece of legislation to have any relevance whatsoever? But any performance of a play, music or dance in the presence of an audience is covered by the proposed Act of Parliament, and those who have waded through the document are afraid that its impact could be wide (including rehearsals, for instance, or casual music-making: put flippantly, how many innocent circumstances are there when a skilful barrister might argue that singing 'Happy Birthday' in an unlicensed place was an offence?) Any building in which such entertainments take place will have to be licensed, and the Bill gives no indication of the level of fees such licences will cost: the charges are left to local authorities, who may well see it as a way of raising easy money that is not controlled by central government.

It was expected that the requirement of a licence when more than two performers made music in a pub would be rescinded. Instead, a licence is now to be required for even one performer, and the requirement is extended beyond pubs. The bill started its progress towards law in the House of Lords, which has been showing the necessity of a second chamber by revealing its shoddy drafting. The government's defence when anomalies are pointed out is that it didn't mean the bill to prevent so-and-so. But the courts will be concerned with what is printed, not the legislator's intentions.

The most offensive feature of the bill is the association of music-making with lawlessness. There is no inherent relationship between disorderly behaviour in pubs and the entertainment they offer: far more relevant are activities nearby (football matches, for instance) which excite people *before* they enter the pubs and the amount of alcohol that is consumed, which the liberalisation of opening hours will probably increase. Safety is already covered by existing legislation, and if the European decibel limits that are already exercising orchestras become law, unruly pub music is unlikely to survive anyway. So the exercise is a complete waste of valuable parliamentary time. The best thing to do with it is to withdraw it. CB

## BOOKS &amp; MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## IN MEMORIAM ROBERT J. SNOW

*Encomium Musicae: Essays in Memory of Robert J. Snow* David Crawford, editor; G. Grayson Wagstaff, Assistant Editor. (*Festschrift Series* 17). Pendragon Press, 2002, vii + 765pp, \$60.00 (£43.00). ISBN 0 945193 83 1

The size of this volume, with 36 contributions, gives some idea of the respect in which Robert J. Snow was held. The list of his writings given here is surprisingly short on independent books, just a pair published by Information Coordinators in 1978 and 1980. Many will have first encountered his work in the section on Old Roman chant he contributed to Willi Apel's *Gregorian Chant* (1958) and he published widely on topics mostly related to hispanic church music. This begins with a comparison by Robert Stevenson of the effort devoted to black and to hispano-american studies in the USA. The fact that the former win hands down is hardly surprising: I've mentioned before that even to the casual tourist in the USA, PC anti-racism is extremely colour-conscious. But there seems to be a further issue lurking beneath the text which, as an outsider, I cannot identify. This essay is followed by seven more on 'hispanic music in the diaspora' (does the use of a word normally associated with Judaism have any significance?) The biggest section, with 19 contributions, is 'Music in Spain and Portugal', mostly on church music. I alluded last month in my review of the Duke of Lerma CD to Jane Hardie's account of a job-description of a *maestro di capilla* at Tarazona, which made me wonder why chant would have been sung without the inclusion of boys. Admittedly, it's a different place and a century earlier, but the maestro is instructed to 'teach the four most able boys plainchant, *canto do órgano*, and counterpoint, thereby inculcating dexterity in performance' (p. 274), so it would be odd if they didn't participate fully in the church's musical activity. Having in that review also expressed my love for Victoria's *Salve Regina* a8, it was gratifying to see a chapter on Victoria's setting of the text, but disappointing to find no attempt by Lucy Hruza to explain, if she is aware of it at all, why the final section in particular is so moving: something to do with expressive vocal lines and slow-moving chords. Her discussion of the conventions relevant to the settings and the compositional procedures is nevertheless interesting. The final section has nine contributions ranging from fauxbourdon to *Die Winterreise*, including Jeffrey Kurtzman's survey of Palestrina's Magnificats through the eyes of early accounts on how to write them. David Hunter rightly attacks the pervasive idea that the Walshes were reprehensible pirates in their dealings with Handel. In the final two pages (excluding the index), José López-Caló describes Snow's literary estate, now at the Centro de Investigación de Música Española at Santiago de Compostela. Apart from his books and music, it contains his wide collection of microfilms, which are being catalogued: information from [jlc@corevia.com](mailto:jlc@corevia.com).

Most of the material has been waiting several years for publishing. Fortunately, nearly all of the articles are of permanent value and not dependent on the fashions of musicological ideas.

## STAGE, SET &amp; DANCE

*Opera on Stage* edited by Lorenzo Bianconi and Giorgio Pestelli. Translations from the Italian by Kate Singleton. (*The History of Italian Opera, Part II/Systems, Vol. 5.*) University of Chicago Press, 2002. xiii + 346 pp + 134 plates, \$55.00, £38.50. ISBN 0 226 04591 9

The Italian original appeared in 1988; La Fenice may then have been merely altered since 1792 (p.82), but hasn't the translator heard of the fire? Of the three chapters, the first two have updated bibliographies, while the third is the author's revision of her original English text. It is a little perverse that, although presented as a single book, the three names on the title page are of the series editors, not those of the authors. Mercades Viale Ferrero writes on 'Stage and set', Gerardo Guccini on 'Directing opera' and Kathleen Kuzmick Hansell on 'Theatrical Ballet and Italian Opera'. A major asset is the book's wide historical sweep: despite the many changes, the reader feels a continuity from the Venetian stage of the 1640s to the 20th century. As with most such surveys, though, I suffered from a surfeit of general information and longed for more specific examples to keep interest alive. I suggest that the best way to sample what the book has to offer is to work through the illustrations, whose captions tell the story in parallel to the main text. There may not be much about music here, but the exposition of some of the other elements of the operatic experience is a valuable counter-balance to our one-sided view of the form. It's not just a matter of first the words and then the music, or vice versa: sometimes the set comes first. It is excellent that this survey is available in English: the only disappointment is the absence on the jacket of a list of volumes in the series with an implication that they too will be translated.

*Erratum* The price given on page 7 of the last issue for the biography of Noah Greenberg should have been £33.00, NOT £43.00: our apologies for implying that Rosemary Dooley imposes a massive mark-up on imports from the USA.

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## WILLIAM LAWES

William Lawes *Collected Vocal Music...* Edited by Gordon J. Callon. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 120-3). A-R Editions, 2002.

1. *Solo songs*. ISBN 0 89579 513 2 \$49.00

2. *Dialogues, Partsongs, and Catches*. ISBN 0 89579 514 0 \$85.00

3. *Sacred Music*. ISBN 0 89579 518 3 \$110.00

4. *Masques*. ISBN 0 89579 520 5 \$50.00

If you mention the name Lawes in connection with instrumental music, you naturally think of William; but in a vocal context, Henry first comes to mind. William's vocal music is now brought centre-stage by this substantial publication containing about 560 pages of music. In addition, there is an enormous amount of information in these four volumes: ample introductions, facsimiles, editions of texts, commentaries and footnotes. Congratulations to publisher and editor for making this material available. I'm not sure if it will cause a fundamental revaluation of the composer, but there is much music of interest and worthy of performance, and it will be particularly useful for providing contrast from the intensity in programmes of his viol consorts.

The sacred music has hitherto been the least accessible since, surviving in parts, it needs scores, not just facsimiles, for evaluation. I wondered whether the 12 Oxford Psalms, with 'common tunes' as conclusions, might be useful to enable audiences to participate in a concert. It has been argued that they may well have been performed thus during the Siege of York. But a glance at them reveals problems: some are pitched impossibly high for congregational use, but the ranges of the parts in previous sections makes transposition impossible. The alternative is to sing them an octave lower. It is frustrating the 'An Antheme with Verses for Cornetts & Sagbutts' does not survive, though I think the wording probably means 'with Verses [for voices] and [Symphonies for] Cornetts and Sagbutts' rather than cornets and sackbuts accompanying verse sections. Only one piece of religious music entered the choral tradition: 'The Lord is my light'. It looks quite manageable for modern churches with, in terms of clef, SATB soli and tutti, though the A suits tenors better than altos. Throughout the four volumes, Callon sensibly transcribes alto clef into octave-treble. On the whole, the religious music relates more closely to life at court than to the ecclesiastical world.

Vol. 1 includes 58 solo songs, mostly short, with few taking more than a page. They are, worth singing, but for more substantial pieces one must turn to the dialogues in vol. 2. Some of the catches have words that are less refined than the courtly lyrics of the songs and several texts need completion. I was tempted to print 'Tom Ned and Jack' as a competition for readers. Instead, a more elegant three-voice song is given on our back page; other sources prefer shorter bars. The Masque volume is a bit disappointing, since Lawes's music is taken out of context and, apart from the commentary and the absence of a keyboard realisation, it is not great improvement on Sabol's *Four Hundred Songs and Dances*.

There are some ways in which the volumes could have been made more usable. Vol. 4 needs to end with a first-line/title index to the whole set. (Titles are often ignored, but even if they only come from literary sources, they should be included: on the day I wrote this review, I was defeated by a request by title for a Henry Lawes song: none of the three indexes I checked listed them. Incidentally, I was surprised to find that Grove<sup>7</sup> does not list Henry's songs at all.) There should only be one set of item-numbering per volume. One expects preliminary staves to show what is in the source, so the allocation to modern voice should not be mixed with them; range is more useful anyway, though the original clef is probably adequate without further indication. It is illogical that this information is sometimes bracketed, though that doesn't imply that unbracketed voice-names are original. Anyone who can use a volume with no keyboard realisation can understand the original time signatures without having C or slashed C translated as 4/4. It would have been useful to have some brief instruction for inexperienced continuo players: the section on the subject in the introductions avoids the basic issue of what chords to play. The rules are quite simple, though may, of course, need modification occasionally. But it is refreshing to see the pages uncluttered with editorial additions. I can't see many singers paying nearly £200 for the set, but academic libraries that don't subscribe to the series should certainly buy it.

## THE 48

David Ledbetter *Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier: the 48 Preludes and Fugues* Yale UP, 2002. xvi + 414pp, £25.00. ISBN 0 300 09707 7

A natural expectation of a book on the 48 is that it will concentrate particularly on analyses of fugues. They are, of course, present, here but in the section on the individual works (pp. 143-332) the preludes receive as much attention as the fugues, while the earlier parts of the book are a stimulating and informative account of the 48's context and background. The author takes the title page of Book I and writes a chapter on each element. The old mistranslation of *Clavier* as clavichord is still alive: only yesterday I happened to read a reference to a 'poor Teuton, sick from too many well-tempered clavichords' in *Foucault's Pendulum* (I don't know whether Umberto Eco was joking, ignorant or mistranslated). The influence of Thurston Dart and Michael Thomas makes me sympathise with that tradition, but Ledbetter points out that 'the only instrument which was available through the whole period 1720-40 which can cope satisfactorily with everything [the whole 48] is the harpsichord'. 'Well-tempered' may have changed meaning over that period, eventually meaning 'equal tempered', but not necessarily so when Book I was compiled. The options available and extended by Bach for writing preludes and fugues each have a chapter. The discussion of 'all the tones and semitones' focuses on the language in which Bach expressed major and minor (*Ut Re Mi* and *Re Mi Fa*). I heard a pianist introducing one of the late-night TV screenings of the 48 recently say he could not conceive of it being music for teaching – a hang-over from a romantic attitude that placed art on an isolated pinnacle and dissociated it from the real world. However



transcendent some may find the 48, the Preludes and Fugues are firmly rooted in the teaching of how to play, how to compose and how to understand music: anything more is a bonus. Reading this book will help us to understand how Bach achieved his aims, and possibly something more than that as well.

*We should also have printed a review of David Yearsley's Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint (Cambridge UP, £45.00) by Stephen Rose, but by the time I realised that I hadn't sent him the copy, it was too late for him to read it in time. So we must wait till next month to discover what the chapter entitled 'Bach's taste for pork or canary' is about.*

### BÄRENREITER BACH

Frieder Rempp's edition of *Chorales from the C. P. E. Bach Collection (according to the printed edition of 1784-7) for clavier*, to quote the English title which avoids translating the tricky word 'clavier' (what's wrong with 'keyboard'), is reprinted from NBA III/2.2 (BA 5237; £18.50). Both modern and 18th-century editors' introductions are given in German and English. Like many of my generation, I have had as my basic collection of Bach's chorales the once-ubiquitous Schirmer volume edited by Albert Riemenschneider of 371 harmonized chorales and 69 chorale melodies. It is still useful for its brief annotations, which give the instrumentation and text of chorales from surviving works. The new edition is far more elegantly printed and spaciouly set out, but it lacks any such information apart from the BWV number. Taking the first chorale, *Aus meines Herzens Grunde* BWV 269, for comparison (since the new volume includes a facsimile of it), Riemenschneider prints ties in the alto part at bars 14-15 and 15-16 which are in the original but not in Bärenreiter, but ties appear later, so there can be no policy of omitting ties in principle, and there is no extant cantata to offer corrections – though if there were, it would be irrelevant, since the editor claims to treat the 1784 edition as the primary source. Curiously, though, the two ties are also missing in BG (no. 17). I find annoying the Bärenreiter edition's practice of numbering the bars as if the repeats were written out in full. Turning to the last chorale, *Christ lag in Todesbanden* BWV 278, Bärenreiter (like BG) modernises the notation by omitting redundant accidentals (Riemenschneider anticipates the best modern practice of retaining them), yet adds a ludicrous cautionary natural on the bass C in bar 10 as if one might play a diminished octave on the strength of a C sharp in the previous bar four notes earlier. These are trivial points, but they undermine confidence in what looks an impressive volume.

I'm far more enthusiastic about the other Bach issue. At least, the main title is Bach, but the subtitle is *Motets of doubtful authenticity* and it contains editions, also by Rempp, of two items censored from NBA's main motet volume (III/1) but reprinted here from NBA III/3 (BA 5239; £5.50). *Ich lasse dich nicht* (BWV Anh 159) is certainly by a member of the Bach family, since it survives in the Alt-Bachisches-Archiv (the introduction does not state whether the editor had the benefit of access to the recently-emerged MS). Recently, J. S. has overtaken Johann Christoph as the likely

composer. It is scored for double SATB with no continuo part extant (not really necessary if the organist used a score). It's a fine piece, less difficult to sing and more compact than JS's later motets. The edition appends an irrelevant chorale added when Breitkopf published the work in 1802. The other motet is *Jauchzet dem Herrn*, BWV Anh. 160. The first movement appears to be a reworking by Bach of a lost motet possibly by Telemann. This is followed by a four-part contrapuntal setting of the chorale 'Nun Lob, mein Seel' more or less as in Cantata 28 but with no instruments and with independent sections of the continuo part absorbed by the vocal bass. The choirs divide again for the last movement, arranged, probably after Bach's death, from a cantata by Telemann. It is perhaps disappointing that the only movement entirely by Bach is just for single choir, though that may be an advantage if you need a bit of unaccompanied Bach to sing as an anthem with a small choir of doubtful ability. Both works are available separately from Carus, but having the two together here is useful. The only snag is that the text, especially the editorially-added bits in italics, might be hard to read in a dim religious light.

The publicity sheet enclosed with *Kleine Praeludien und Fughetten/Little Preludes and Fughettas* (BA 5238; £6.50) is headed 'Bach for beginners', and that might have made a catchier title if it had been printed on the cover, since it is a handy selection of comparatively easy pieces that would make a good introduction to one aspect of Bach's keyboard music for less-experienced players. It could perhaps be followed by a second volume of selections from his dance-based music. It contains the six Little Preludes BWV 933-8, eight preludes from the WF Bach book, the preludes BWV 815a and 999, the fughetta BWV 961, and preludes and fughettas BWV 855a, 896, 899 and 902a. The music is reproduced from various NBA volumes, which causes one curiosity. BWV 999 is given as it appears in the lute-music volume with the two staves printed very close together. The selection has a potentially high market, but to be successful it needs more explanation of what the music is and also of the significance of the trappings of an Urtext edition – what the preliminary clefs signify, for instance. The Associated Board editions (apart from their added fingering) are a good model to follow, with practical and scholarly introductions as well as good musical texts.

### BÄRENREITER TELEMANN

Telemann's *Die Hirten bei der Krippe zu Bethlehem*, TWV 1: 797, of which I have received a vocal score (BA 5852a; £9.50), is a large-scale piece in 12 movements requiring two horns, three trumpets, timps, two oboes, bassoons, strings and continuo together with recorders of two sizes and flutes. The first problem is that the instrumentation lists *Flauto dolce soprano I, II*, *Flauto dolce I, II* and *Flauto traverso I, II* without indicating if these play simultaneous with each other and with the oboes, so there is no way of costing a performance. The full score is included in vol. 30 of Telemann's works, costing £65 – the information sheet accompanying the review copy does not suggest that it is available separately or on hire. So it is a pity that basic information such as the author of the words (Ramler) and



available separately or on hire. So it is a pity that basic information such as the author of the words (Ramler) and the date (1759) are not stated. The general mood is pastoral and the drama is, as in many Italian oratorios, instilled by the ingenuity of the librettist rather than any inherent narrative. The recitatives are full of orchestral illustrative interruptions, while the arias are mostly more placid. The chorales (including *In dulci jubilo* and *Wie schön leuchtet*) are simple compared with Bach, but that isn't a helpful reference point. I got a better impression of the work from hearing a recording (cpo 999 419-2), which calls it an oratorio. The vocal forces required are SATB soli and chorus; a second solo bass is called for, but one bass can cover all the solos – both are quite high.

Rumour has it that Bärenreiter are going to complete publication of Telemann's violin concertos in conjunction with a recording by one of our subscribers. Meanwhile they have issued separately scores of the seven individual concertos in *Collected Works* vol. 23, published 30 years ago; parts are available on hire. It would have been sensible to have issued a solo violin part with each score. The sample sent (TWV 51: D9) is an interesting, four-movement piece, with rather more to engage the ripieno players than in a Vivaldi concerto.

#### BÄRENREITER HANDEL

Turning to Handel, a vocal score of *Deidamia*, (BA 4070a; £21.50) is based by Michael Pacholke on Terence Best's edition for HHA. The full score (BA 4070), which I haven't seen, costs £148.50. The volume happened to fall open at page 105, the beginning of No. 14, 'D'amor ne' primi instanti', and I was puzzled why the bass was in octaves: surely it's much easier for the player to decide if the bass needs extra weight or not rather than prescribe it, especially since the line includes octave leaps. There is no justification in the scoring. A flick through the score shows that elsewhere the reducer has done the same, though not with any consistency. It also seemed a bit pointless to show the scattering of bass figures, except perhaps in the secco recits: they are of absolutely no use to a pianist. Anyone wanting to buy a score to learn the music or for study needs to ask whether the musicological improvements and large print are worth sacrificing for an A4-sized photocopy of Chrysander's full score from King's Music costing £1.50 less. Two of the appendix items are in Chrysander, but the new edition has an extra recitative link and an earlier version of No. 28 not included there. I would myself prefer to play keyboard from Chrysander's score, since many da capos involve impossible page-turns in the vocal score. I am returning to my usual theme of the pointlessness of vocal scores for music that is only ever going to be performed by top professional singers with highly-skilled répétiteurs: Handel wasn't writing for the amateur market. I'm not commenting in any way on the virtues or otherwise of the fundamental edition, which shouldn't be reviewed from a vocal score anyway. A German singing translation is printed beneath the Italian text; it would have been helpful if an English translation had been added as an appendix.

I've been somewhat lukewarm about this Bärenreiter batch, so let me finish with enthusiasm. I've already welcomed Terence Best and William Gudger's edition of the opus 4 organ concertos (the revised HHA IV/2); now they are being issued separately in score and parts. I haven't seen the parts, just the separate issues of two of the scores (BA 8341-6, prices between £7.50 and £13.00). Ultimately, whether to use these or the new Breitkopf material depends on how clearly the parts are printed: the musicological differences can probably be handled by a conductor who has done his homework whichever parts the players have on their desks (though avoid the old Bärenreiter ones). But this has a greater depth of musicological authority and looks good. The only doubt is what the solo organist will play from, since the page turns don't work: it is not clear if there is a separate organ part. Each score has a standard preface and a section on the specific concerto. The comments on the organs available to Handel are valuable, but is it a corollary of the comment that with the registration Handel would have used, filling in of inner parts was superfluous that, if played on unsuitable modern organs, such fill-ins may be desirable? The harp concerto score includes the organ part from Alexander's Feast, which doubles the harp and orchestra in the tutti sections and four bars at the beginning of the second section of the first movement (the latter perhaps a copying mistake, if the scribe was using the harp part rather than a score and had assumed it was tutti). A curious rubric at the beginning states 'to be play'd an 8. Lower'. This makes little sense for both hands, requiring a bottom F in the second bar, and produces crossed hands if it applies just to the upper stave. But whatever it means, isn't it likely that 'come sta' at the beginning of the other movements means 'at written pitch'. I am sure that there is still a lot to be done in working out how Handel used the organ in accompaniment.

Finally, Handel's mysterious Oboe Concerto 3, known only from editions based on one published in 1863-4. In 1985, the same Dr Marx who assumed that the recently-discovered *Gloria* was written in Italy in 1707 proved that the concerto was not by Handel. But a few years later a MS set of parts with an ascription to Handel and dateable to around 1720 was found in Rostock. It is now issued separately in advance of a revised edition of HHA IV/12, whose original edition contained a hypothetical clean-up of the 1863-4 source. The main difference is the scoring: the MS has both 'Flut travers. è Hautb;' on the outside of the folder but reverses the order on the part. The new edition favours the flute (and puts oboe in brackets) presumably for commercial reasons: there are more flautists than oboists and the editor doesn't appear to favour one over the other. The differences from the previous HHA IV/12 are not as great as one might have expected, the most obvious being a fewer slurs and dagger staccato marks. The curious string writing at the opening of the second movement should have caused previous editors (including me) to be suspicious: they are not in the early source. This new edition is most welcome: those with earlier versions should throw them away and buy replacements (BA 8533, score £12.50, strings each £2.00, harps-chord realisation £4.00, BA 8533a flute and piano £8.00).

But why does the soloist have to buy a piano reduction to get his part: cannot it be sold as an orchestral part?  
STORMS AND BATTLES

Richard Will *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven*. Cambridge UP, 2002. xi + 329 pp, £47.50. ISBN 0 521 80201 6

'Characteristic' is the period term for 'programme'. The main works discussed are Dittersdorf's *Les Quatre Ages du monde*, Haydn's *Seven Last Words* and Beethoven's heroic, pastoral and battle symphonies. Examination of the scores is conducted hand in hand with commentary from writers of the period and exposition of their often-contradictory attitudes. These were changing and inconsistent: it seems from the examples quoted that pointing to an excess literalism was a way of denigrating music that a critic thought second-rate or objectionable. The context is primarily Germanic: *The Seven Last Words* are taken out of their Spanish setting, and there is no mention of the Spanish tradition of battle music at Easter: did it still exist? It strikes me as odd that the comments on *The Creation* concentrate on the trivial illustrations of nature rather than Haydn's most profound 'characteristic' writing, the *Representation of Chaos* or the C-major chord for 'Light'. The book has good things on the *Eroica* and *Pastoral*, and counterbalances the tendency of analysts to ignore or despise their extramusical significance.

#### MISSA SOLEMNIS

Ludwig van Beethoven *Missa solemnis Opus 123. Dirigierpartitur... Herausgegeben von Norbert Gertsch*. Henle, 2000. viii + 268pp. [Distributed by Breitkopf & Härtel, PB 14650, €90.00.]

I'm mentioning this primarily as a peg upon which to hang the information that performance material based on the Henle Collected Works of Beethoven is now available from Breitkopf & Härtel. This is a sensible move, since Breitkopf is one of the major suppliers of orchestral music, and even though some of the successors to the Collected Works series that they published in the late 19th century have been undertaken by other firms (Bärenreiter in particular), Breitkopf has worked hard to update its orchestral material. They may now find themselves with competing editions of Beethoven's Symphonies and Concertos (or will they drop their own?) but the deal does mean that the product of the complete edition will be more accessible and more likely to be bought by orchestral librarians. The prices seem quite reasonable. For the Mass the string parts cost only 5 euros each and the wind set is 70 euros. For the piano concertos, overtures etc, string parts are 4 euros. (At present, the euro and dollar are roughly comparable and the pound is two thirds of a euro.)

As for the edition itself, my only points of comparison are two Eulenburg miniature scores; the current one has an introduction by Willi Hess with a critical commentary and two supplementary pages dated 1952 but headed 'Addenda and corrigenda to the 1985 reprint'. The innocent user might therefore assume that the Eulenburg edition dates from 1952. But when I bought my copy in 1960, there was

no evidence of Willi Hess; the introduction was by Max Unger. Both scores seem to be the same. The first point about the new edition is that it is a pleasure to read. Considering the size of the forces involved, it is clearly legible (though wouldn't stand reduction to miniature format) and the words nice and clear. There is a brief critical commentary, drawing the user's attention to some specific problems. But the source situation is complicated. In theory, the fair copy which Beethoven used as his working copy should be the most accurate version. However, it is not as accurate as it should have been, and Beethoven made some corrections to the autograph after it was copied. So an edition has to pay regard to both. Norbert Gertsch has chosen to use the autograph as the principal source, adding from later MSS the trombone and organ parts (which are not in the autograph, the former to save space, the latter perhaps because realising the part was an afterthought). Beethoven did not see proofs of the published version, so that is disregarded. It is, of course, very convenient for an editor to be able to write off the need to consider the readings of secondary manuscripts; perhaps the full commentary with the collected works volume will amply justify the choice. This is evidently the current edition to use, but there seems enough options for another editor to come up with some minor differences.

Breitkopf are also issuing material for the parallel Brahms edition, though so far only Symphony No. 1 is available, edited by Robert Pascall.

#### SOR ARIETTS

Fernando Sor *The Complete Italian Arietts, Italian Duets and the Three Canons... [Facsimile] With an introduction by Brian Jeffery*. Tecla, 2002. 2 vols. pb (Tecla 385-6) £17.00 each; hb (387-8) £34.00 each.

Brian Jeffery has done more than anyone to show that Sor wrote a much wider variety of music than a handful of guitar favourites, with a book on the composer and a comprehensive series of facsimiles and editions: for details see his website [www.tecla.com](http://www.tecla.com). These two volumes are facsimiles of a series of Italian songs for voices and piano issued while Sor was working in London between 1815 and 1823. They include a thorough introduction (identical in both volumes) with biographical and source information. The texts are printed separately as poetry and translated, and a few suggestions are made to correct errors in them. Vol. 1 also includes the surviving contemporary reviews of the publications – far lengthier and more detailed than publications of new music (or, indeed, facsimiles like this) are likely to receive now. The facsimiles themselves are clearly legible and the notation is similar enough to that still in use not to require a modern edition, as Tecla has done for the solo guitar music. Sor is known to have sung in London accompanying himself on the guitar; arrangements by Rob McKillop of some of the songs are available on the Tecla website. The original prints treat *arietts* as the plural of *arietta*, since each individual item is headed by the latter word, whereas the title pages (each issue containing three songs) use the former. The vocal ranges are generally from just above middle C to top G. I'm not sure if I would want to hear a whole programme or CD of

## RECERARE XIII

Barbara Sachs

*Recercare XIII 2001: journal for the study and practice of early music* LIM Editrice, 2002. 312 pp, 24.00. ISBN 88 7096 316 0 ISSN 1120 5741 (from [recercar@tin.it](mailto:recercar@tin.it) or [lim@lim.it](mailto:lim@lim.it))

This journal appears late in the year after the date of the volume; the present hefty double issue is mostly in English.

It is terribly frustrating that we will have to wait a year for the second half of Marco Gozzi's exceptional essay, 'New light on Italian Trecento notation', which breaks off toward the beginning of the fourth section (or chapter, should it become a book) out of eight. He proceeds to address the question 'how was tempo conceived and beaten in the performance of madrigals, *cacce* and *ballate*?', with an exemplary exposition of the theoretical notational systems (going slightly beyond the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and beyond the borders of Italy), interpreted thanks to a highly original logical method for surmising how to apply them: the comparison of tenor density. The number of notes per beat and hence the number of notes per minute reveals or confirms whether a tenor part has a breve beat or semibreve beat, and what the prevailing rhythm and metronomic beat value is likely to be. Major discoveries emerge from this analysis, clarifying the historic changes in mensuration and distinguishing the styles of various composers. We have to wait for the conclusions (on composers, metre in modern editions, advice for performers), but the rigours of the first half are in themselves very thought provoking, and recommended reading for anyone who wants a better perspective on mensuration.

The other theoretical essay is on 'Galileo's' coincidence theory of consonances, from Nicomachus to Sauveur' by Patrizio Barbieri. He guides us from the theories of Euclid to Descartes and Mersenne (and beyond, with modern theories on the sensation of dissonance), in the process of which he shows how Galileo corrected erroneous notions of Ptolemy, which others continued to hold even afterward.

Mariagrazia Carlone gives 'New biographical information on Francesco da Milano' exploiting a long satirical poem addressed to him in the light of facts known from other documents. Claudio Annibaldi uses speculation and analysis (of documents and above all of the *Fantasia a quattro* of 1608) to deduce information about 'Frescobaldi's early stay in Rome' and his difficult acceptance there, precisely by winning over a powerful patron such as Francesco Borghese, dedicatee of the compositionally extraordinary *Fantasia*.

In 'On the choreography of Claudio Monteverdi's ballet music: aspects of (re)construction' Michael Malkiewicz tries to describe the types of dance structures Monteverdi's dance music might have been for. The most suggestive conclusion is that dancers corresponded to voices, so that a fugato would be 'visible'. But generally the conclusions are drawn from other ballet composers' output, and the premise that

ballet-composing proceeds normally from the choreography to the music to the text did not convince me (wouldn't an experienced dance composer set a text to danceable music according to a general plan, leaving the ultimate choreography to be decided?), though I found the article full of interesting examples.

About instruments there are one long essay and four short communications. Teresa Chirico thoroughly covers, in Italian, the history of the psalter in Italy from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There is an appendix of 18<sup>th</sup> century manuscript sources of music, a comparison of all the types of psalteries built and their builders, and the article traces the use of the instrument in the theatre (e.g. Vivaldi's *Giob* of 1724), church, in popular song and dance music, in various social contexts, gradually declining into oblivion.

Francesco Nocerino's 'Liutai del 16° e 17° secolo a Napoli' presents numerous German and Italian luthiers active in Naples, from archival documents relating to sales and domestic contracts, while Bernhard Nentrich, in 'Nuove notizie sui liutai tedeschi' uses documents from Roman parish archives, especially about David Tecchler and Alberto Platner.

Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini writes about discovering the provenance of one of the most important harpsichords in his collection. 'Mattia di Gand: un clavicembalo del 1685 ritrova la sua paternità' attests not only to this discovery, but to the restoration of the instrument into playing condition. Lamberto Tronchin and Chiara Consani analyzed this and one other instrument of Tagliavini's, a Giusti of 1679, in 'The acoustical behaviour of the soundboards of two Italian seventeenth-century harpsichord'. I cannot paraphrase the data or even type the formula for the fraction of vibratory mechanical energy loss per cycle, but this factor is linked to the acoustic radiation and transfer function, and it is heartening to think that physicists are so interested in the sonority of harpsichords.

The issue concludes with some brief reviews of recent Italian books, mostly on organology or acoustics.

Readers might be interested to know that Barbara Sachs has available for rent a spacious 2-room apartment (plus kitchenette and bath) sleeping 2-5 in a medieval Tuscan village 10 minutes from the A1 autostrada and convenient to Florence, Arezzo and Siena. Reasonable rates for any length stay (ca.€300/week; monthly, low season and long-term reductions). For further details contact Barbara directly by tel. +39 055 9172506 or at [lastanza@val.it](mailto:lastanza@val.it).

See [www.tuscanlastminute.com/template.php?id=1209](http://www.tuscanlastminute.com/template.php?id=1209) for pictures.



## TOMKINS MADRIGALS

Peter Grahame Woolf

**Tomkins Songs of 4, 5 & 6 Parts** Budapest Tomkins Vocal Ensemble, János Dobra; linguistic advisor György Imre Hídvégi (2000) Hungaroton HCD 31514 70'22"

**Tomkins Songs of 3, 4, 5 & 6 Parts I** Fagiolini/Robert Hollingsworth (2002) Chandos CHAN 0680 77'15"

Thomas Tomkins published his single secular collection of vocal music, the swan-song of the English madrigal, in 1622. Kerman dismissed Tomkins as a 'feeble composer – in a declining market', but Denis Stevens agreed with Fellowes, who rated the 1622 Songs 'among the most important of the English madrigal school publications'. That opinion of this oeuvre is belatedly recognised by these first recordings. The book is a miscellaneous collection of madrigals, canzonets and balletts, together with some sacred anthems, their texts ranging from frothy pastoral conceits, replete with 'fa-la-las', to biblical solemnities such as *Turn unto the Lord our God* and *When David heard that Absalom was slain*. Fa-la-las, however, are not always frivolous, as *Too much I once lamented* (dedicated to William Byrd) shows.

I Fagiolini is known for its Theatre of Music project (*Carnevale Veneziano* Chandos CHAN 0665) and The Tomkins Vocal Ensemble of Budapest came to notice here displaying their prowess in the Hungarian Spring Festival 2002, when they impressed in diverse repertoire, including *Madrigal Comedies* by Peter Eötvös, a music-theatre piece which inhabited the nonsense world of Ligeti's *Aventures*, with all possible extended vocal techniques. The CD of their eponymous English composer (a dozen of the pieces claimed as first recordings) was recorded in the studios of Hungarian Radio in 1992, but only produced in 2000. János Dobra brought together fellow graduates from the Ferenc Liszt Academy in Budapest in 1978 and many founder members of the flexible Ensemble are still with him. It was the first vocal ensemble in Hungary to concentrate on the great English tradition; they have performed and broadcast music suitable for 5 to 16 vocalists of all countries and periods. In the commentary, reflecting Dobra's passionate study and commitment to Tomkins, he suggests that the many *fa-la-las* 'will provide vast opportunities for readers and listeners to complete an idea with any self-favoured interpretation personally worked out'!

Whilst his notes might better have been translated by a native English speaker, the English pronunciation by the ensemble is impressive. It is good to have discovered this island of Anglophilia in Hungary, and the surprise of this admirable project is reinforced by seeing the parallel Hungarian translations to the sung words; Hungary is not one of those European countries where most people speak English – I needed an interpreter in London to talk with the choir and with Mr Dobra. Piquant to see Oyez become *Figyelmezzetek!* The music is well recorded in a sympathetic acoustic, and sung in good English with care, good blend of

voices (Dobra and coach Anna Pauk worked towards achieving a homogeneous sound) and evident enthusiasm; my only quibble with the presentation is that spare space was not utilised to name the singers and to indicate which were involved in each item.

Such information is clearer in the thicker Chandos booklet. John Milsom and Robert Hollingsworth explore the publication's genesis and significance, the numerous dedications suggesting that it was 'a thanksgiving gift to family, friends and colleagues' upon Tomkins' appointment as organist of the Chapel Royal.

I Fagiolini gives the Book complete, in a CD which runs to a generous 77 minutes, including the six madrigals for 3 voices, which I greatly enjoyed with these expert soloists. They are omitted by the Hungarians, who give us instead *The fauns and satyrs tripping*, Tomkins' five-voice contribution to *The Triumphs of Oriana*. That consideration might be decisive for purchasers. I wonder whether Dobra might have been influenced by New Grove, in which Peter le Huray writes that the book 'gets off to a dull start', with none but the last of the three-part madrigals at all memorable, a conclusion which may owe more to study of the scores than to experience of the music in performance. Both Robert King (Purcell) and Graham Johnson (Schubert's strophic songs) have written about how compositions which look oversimple and unlikely to be interesting on the page can surprise when performed.

The I Fagiolini interpretation is perhaps a little more detailed than Dobra's, and their recorded sound is more sharply focused and forward. Tempi and dynamics vary between the two CDs, but neither ensemble is consistently slower or faster than the other. The spacing in the Chandos booklet indicates that I Fagiolini's sequence is designed to be heard in six sections, each planned with varying textures, whereas the book itself follows the normal pattern of progressing in sections from three voices up to those for six; some *EMR* readers might have found a consecutive ordering more convenient, given the programming capability of CD players. (The Hungaroton track listing gives the original numbering in brackets.) If finances allow, and unless you have a strong prejudice against more than one-to-a-part, these are both well worth acquiring.

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We are glad that our cartoonist has not abandoned us completely, though may not contribute to every issue.

A silent demonstration by musicians was held on Monday January 27 (Mozart's birthday) at Parliament Square to protest at the music licensing proposals. If you feel strongly on the subject, you may email your MP through [www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/alms.htm](http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/alms.htm). The bill is also available on line and can be downloaded (all 182 pages of it).

## LONDON MUSIC

Andrew Benson-Wilson

English National Opera's 1985 production of Handel's *Xerxes* returned with an excellent new cast that included the ENO debut of Robin Blaze (as Arsamenes), a counter-tenor who has been making his mark in the early music world in recent years. I have seen a number of opera debuts of singers that I know well from their concert appearances, and it is always a curious sensation seeing them dressed up and acting. Robin Blaze certainly acquitted himself with aplomb, deservedly gaining the loudest applause at the end of the evening that I was there. In fact, with one possible exception, all the singers were on particularly good form, including Sarah Connolly (*Xerxes*), Anna Burford (*Amastris*), Mark Richardson in the bumbingly sycophantic role of Ariodares, Mary Nelson as a skittish Atalanta (very effectively almost speaking some of her recitatives) and Iain Paterson at Elviro. The setting veered towards the surrealist, with several references to Handel himself, including the famous Roubiliac sculpture relabelled as Timotheus (court musician to Alexander, *Xerxes*' descendant) and several appearances of the Handelian fob cap. Huge green reproductions of the British Museum Lions of Ninevah added a suitably Persian air to the sets, and the separation of the uniformly grey clad chorus, the blacked coated and talcum-powdered flunkies, and the colourful lead roles provided visual depth, as well as a social comment. Musically, of course, *Xerxes* is in a world of its own as a one-off experiment in a more coherent fusion of aria and ensemble numbers, albeit relying to a large extent on borrowed music. As one of Handel's last operas, this style was not developed by him, although his departure from his roots in *opera seria* seem to be apparent in the gentle mockery of much of the action. Although Harry Bicket did his best with the unreconstructed ENO orchestra, it was a bit of a losing battle. Surely, one day, English National Opera will get round to buying in a period band for early opera.

A new venture for Les Arts Florissants is the setting up of *Le Jardin des Voix*, a group of nine young singers chosen from 180 candidates, who then work with William Christie and other specialist voice and drama coaches at the Théâtre de Caen before touring. Their programme, with the instrumentalists of Les Arts Florissants, (Barbican, 19 November) was clearly put together to showcase their particular talents. It was a mixture of Purcell, Monteverdi, Lully, Rameau, Handel and Telemann that, despite the lack of a common theme, made for a satisfying whole. Of the nine singers, six impressed on the evening, notably the counter-tenor Christophe Dumaux (who has already landed his Glyndebourne debut for 2005), but also soprano Orlanda Velez Isidro, mezzo Blandine Staskiewicz, baritones Gabriel Bermúdez and Marc Mauillon and bass João Fernandes. The other three suffered respectively from unsteady intonation, a slight

tightness of voice, and blatant overacting combined with a very unconvincing voice. William Christie, having presumably done all the hard work before the concert, spent much of the time sitting to one side just smiling benevolently at his protégées. The instrumentalists were, as ever, excellent, as was the concept of *Le Jardin des Voix*. It was a shame that there were no British singers. Any interested readers, send your contact details to [jardindesvoix@arts-florissants.com](mailto:jardindesvoix@arts-florissants.com)

The Classical Opera Company made an impressive debut in 1998, and are going from strength to strength. Their latest offering was a concert performance of Arne's *Artaxerxes* (St John's, Smith Square, 7 December). *Artaxerxes* is not an easy work to stage. There are no surviving recitatives, although various attempts have been made to provide replacements. In this performance a narrator was used to provide the essential story line. This was an interesting experiment, although one unfortunate side effect was that the typically daft operatic story line was thrown into even more prominence, and there were several moments when the audience couldn't restrain their giggles. Emma Bell's voice (in the leading role of Mandane) displayed a persistent deep and fast vibrato that was too much for me. Guðrún Ólafsdóttir was far more effective, helped by a slower pulse of vibrato and the lower pitch of a mezzo voice. Her haunting 'O too lovely' and the melting 'Why is Death forever late' were beautifully sung (and impressively written by Arne). Andrew Kennedy was a particularly good Artabanus, notably in the proto-Mozartian 'Behold, on Lethe's dismal strand'. Christopher Saunders (*Rimenes*) was the only performer to sing from memory and to attempt any acting, which he did extremely well by simple gestures and postures. But soprano Maria Arnet (*Semira*) was the star of the evening for me, particularly for her vocal virtuosity in 'If the river's swelling waves' and her lilting melismas in 'Tis not true that in our grief'. Ian Page's undemonstrative conducting was notable for his close attention to the singers, working with them to shape the pulse and phrases. The impressive instrumentalists were either extremely well rehearsed, or had very thorough markings in their parts, or both. The work is a fascinating one, in the hinterland between the late classical and early romantic style, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Act changing style as it progresses.

Sir Roger Norrington, the Orchestra and Choir of the Age of Enlightenment, and Bach's B minor Mass – with this combination this was a concert to dream of (Royal Festival Hall, 13 November). And it nearly was. Of course, the RFH is not the hall for our enlightened ears to listen to Bach in, but Norrington did his best in balancing authenticity and pragmatism, both with his choice of choir and instrumental forces and in his pacing of individual movements. In the Kyrie, he contrasted a very fast opening

articulation was occasionally overdone, here and elsewhere. Some of the choir entries were also rather mannered, notably in fugal entries and in the explosive 'C' at the beginning of the Credo. But the amount of exploratory detail that Norrington managed to bring to each movement was extraordinary. The shading back of the final *eleison* just after the high treble entry; hanging onto the resolution at the end of *Qui tollis*; the clipped enunciation of the second Credo chorus – a cry of affirmation; the delightful little linking phrase between 'facta sunt' and 'Qui propter' in *Et in unum*; the plangent sighing violin phrases in *Et incarnates est*; the macabre totentanz of *Crucifixus*; the delicacy of 'in remissionem peccatorum'; the perfectly timed, and perfectly simple, link between the end of *Confiteor unum* and *Et expecto*; and the joyful dance of 'Pleni sunt coeli' at the end of the *Sanctus*. There was some excellent playing and singing, particularly from Mark Padmore and Alastair Miles, although the overly operatic contributions from Rosemary Joshua and Susan Bickley didn't suite the mood. But overall, the performance just didn't reach the heights – there was a lack of spirituality. It was a performance, rather than an event. However much the detailed little touches were appreciated, the effect was all rather short lived. I expect to cry in works like this, but found myself smiling more often than not. Was this the intended reaction? Norrington certainly did his best to bring an air of vaudeville with his stage antics. He often charmed, but occasionally irritated. He didn't so much conduct, as dance his own merry dance, sometimes at odds with the music. He occasionally pointed out a phrase, pointing directly at a group of singers as though daring them to get their entry right. He swooped his arms around towards the audience as though tossing us a spare Gloria. On several occasions, he did nothing, and in one astonishing moment in *Et resurrexit*, stood with his arms nonchalantly grasped behind his back, as though sitting on the right hand of God the Father as the men of the chorus got on with judging the quick and the dead. Although clearly inspiring the performers, this was just too much for me. Fine for the recording studio, but not for a live performance of a work like this. It was nice to see the conductor's bouquet of flowers being handed to Alistair Ross, the deserving organ player – he had even had the foresight to bring a glasses case to match the striking blue case of the organ.

One of the strengths of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment is the quality of their individual instrumentalists. This was thrown into focus by a Wigmore Hall performance (on 20 November) by just four of them – Lisa Beznosiuk and Neil McLaren (flutes), Elizabeth Kenny (lute and theorbo) and Richard Tunnicliffe (cello and viola da gamba) under the seductive title 'Flutes and Lutes'. The Gigue from Marais *Pièces en Trio in G minor* was described as representing 'theatrical bijou nymphs', and the theatrical theme was to remain for first half of the programme, notably in Michel Blavet's arrangement of a suite from Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*. Richard Tunnicliffe was particularly effective in expressing the lugubrious elegy of Marais *Tombeau pour Monsieur de Lully*, and in the flourishes of the concluding Chaconne of Marais' *Pièces en Trio*. His experience as a cellist showed in his ability to retain

good intonation well above the frets of his viol. In the second half, having showed off their collective talents, the OAE soloists were let out one by one to display their solo wares in music by Bach and Telemann. A talented lot.

As part of the St Lawrence Jewry series of concerts reflecting the organ music of Bach and the French tradition, Terence Charlston gave a recital of Bach, Locke and Boyvin (19 November). The Locke pieces were not as incongruous as they might seem, given the series title – his keyboard music is very close to the French idiom of the mid-17th century, a style that he would have been very familiar with. A number of Bach pieces show direct, or at least generally assumed, French influence, including the 5-part Fantasia in C minor and the 3-section *Pièce d'Orgue*. The Fantasia was given an expansive reading, growing in tension and volume from a particularly growly start. The gently lilting rhythms applied to this piece were amongst many examples of the musical intelligence apparent in Charlston's playing. He demonstrated a nice sense of rubato in Bach's *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr* and a genuine understanding of the French style in the *Suite du 5e ton* (1689) by Boyvin. It was good to hear an organist thinking about semiquavers as music rather than merely a sign to relax the speed limit. There was also some very well placed phrasing, although a slightly more articulate playing style might have been more appropriate given the acoustics of the building and the organ (a 2001 Klais, a curious beast not altogether suitable for the early repertoire).

Regular readers will have already noted my past enthusiasm for Ricordo, a young group that I have followed since their debut. Although their repertoire has now expanded into English and North German music, they returned to their roots in the exploration of transalpine musical links for their Wigmore Hall concert (14 November), albeit with an expanded cast of 2 violins, cornetto, viola da gamba/cello, sackbut, theorbo and organ/harpsichord. Under the title of Master, Pupil, Rival, they compared Schmelzer and Bertali with Biber, Kühnel and J. J. Walther; with Biber, not surprisingly, coming out as the clear winner. It was after all, the launch concert for their new Biber CD. Although all members of the group are inspired musicians, it is difficult not to focus on the exquisite violin playing of Kati Debretzeni. Her control of texture and volume is superb, and she has the ability to grab the attention of an audience with a single note, or even the short period of silence before a note. Theorbo player Matthew Wadsworth has the same ability. The very start of the concert (the hushed opening of Biber's youthful and extravagant Sonata in E) was a good example of this, with its delicate trippy-down scale. Later in the same piece the group's imaginative interpretations were also demonstrated, with plucked gamba, percussion on the harpsichord case and more than a hint of gypsy dance and Irish jig. The enthusiastic audience couldn't wait to applaud. The second anonymous Sonata, (possibly by Biber or his teacher Bertali) turned an opening scale into a peal of bells, and showed the strong Italian influence on the young Biber (if it was by him). Walther's dance Suite in d minor from *Hortulus Chelicus*, was much more serious and – well – German. Another link between teacher and-



pupil was shown at the end of the first half, with Biber pinching the theme from Schmelzer's Pastorella in G for his Pastorella in A – the latter with a lovely hoedown section and a hushed ending that matched the mood of the opening of the concert. The final piece showed Biber in his mature, but nonetheless playful, style. With excellent contributions from Fiona Russell (cornetto) and Adam Woolf (sackbut), this was another fine concert by a group that is rapidly building up an enviable reputation.

The St Cecilia's Day concert at Stationers' Hall featured violinist Jaap Schröder and the young Spanish group Hippocampus (Fernando Paz, flute, Jordi Comellas, viola da gamba and Alberto Martínez Molina, harpsichord) in a programme of late baroque German music (22 November). Trio Sonatas by JS Bach, CPE Bach and Telemann were contrasted with solo violin pieces by the two Nicola Matteis (father and son), Bach's Sonata in G for violin and harpsichord and Telemann's expansive Paris Quartet XII in E minor. Jaap Schröder, now well into his 70s, has had a long and distinguished career as performer, conductor and teacher. It was fascinating to hear his playing style, so far removed from that of most period instrument violinists today. Although it was good to hear a young group playing with him, the disparity of styles between the two sides became very noticeable. Schröder plays with extraordinary expression, using many techniques that we have come to associate with a more romantic style of playing. Although a number of period violinists are beginning to use vibrato again, they tend to do it gently and, in the manner of a good singer, merely to add warmth to a note that has already settled comfortably into its pitch and texture. But Schröder's vibrato was more or less persistent, causing me to have the sort of qualms I normally reserve for hapless sopranos. His use of a wide variety of tone colours within individual phrases was particularly noticeable in Bach's Sonata in G, and his frequently forceful bow strokes caused occasional upsets to the intonation, noticeably in Matteis senior's flamboyant *Passaggio rotto*. This work was an interesting example of the Italian style of the Neapolitan Matteis that became so influential in England. His son, although born in England, moved to Hapsburg Vienna aged 20, where he no doubt continued in his Italian-inspired playing. It was interesting to compare a Trio Sonata written by the 16-year old CPE Bach in the style of his father, with one written several years later by his father in the style of his son.

A 400th anniversary that some *EMR* readers may have inadvertently missed is that of Chiara Margarita Cozzolani. Born on 27 November 1602, she entered by convent of Santa Radagonda in Milan aged 17 and quickly became well known as a singer. On the date of her anniversary, Musica Secreta presented (at St Bartholomew the Great) a programme of works by her alongside two pairs of motets by two other Italian nuns born just a few years before. Caterina Assandra's *Duo seraphim* featured three intertwined voices, normally either in contrary scalewise motion or together stepwise. Her *Ave Verum Corpus* was reconstructed from an organ transcription, although I did wonder whether the lovely flowing movement was in the original lost vocal version or added as typical keyboard interpolations for the organ version. Lucrezia Vizzana's

*Usquequo oblivisceris me infinem* was the musical highlight of the evening for me, with Catherine King's exquisite voice making the most of the haunting melody. As well as three motets by Cozzolani, which seemed rather formulaic to me, we heard her 1650 8-part Vespers Psalms and one of the Magnificats. And pretty impressive pieces they were too, with a distinctive style that included a large array of vocal colours, a wide vocal range, the use of repeated phrases, occasional fragmentation of textures, lots of unison canons and some jaunty, almost Iberian, rhythms. The concluding Magnificat was probably the most coherent and substantial work of the set, with a magnificent concluding Gloria. The 15 women singers included one very sonorous tenor (such very low tenors, or *bassi*, were a feature of convent choirs) and were supported by a small instrumental group of organ, chitarrone and harp. Although the vocal bass lines were transposed up an octave (and in some cases the tenor lines as well), the polyphony seemed to survive although I think an Italian convent organ of the period would have had rather more bass presence than the little box organ used on this occasion. As well as Catherine King, there were one or two other excellent soloists within the choir, although it has to be said that there were also quite a few weaknesses in individual voices. But in full chorus, they made an impressive sound. A couple of practical quibbles: giving an organ note before most of the pieces was not very subtle – a ping on the harp or chitarrone would have been more effective. And the stage lights were, rather curiously, set up in such a way as to shine directly into the eyes of most of the audience. I ended up hiding behind a pillar just to avoid the glare, but most people sat it out. Perhaps this was their way of reminding us that singing nuns were generally not visible in convents of the day.

During the next stage of the restoration of Christ Church, the Spitalfields Festival moved to Shoreditch Church for their Winter Festival. It opened with the first half of Bach's Christmas Oratorio (10 December) from the Gabrieli Consort and Players directed by Paul McCreesh. When I first noticed that there were concerts at 7 and 9 pm, I assumed that the complete work would be performed in two parts, but sadly the second concert was a repeat of the first – a good sign for the ability of the Festival to attract audiences though. There were four soloists and four additional chorus singers. Cecilia Osmond had a lovely rich and focussed soprano voice, but the clarity was occasionally affected by over-application of vibrato. Michael Chance, Charles Daniels and Roderick Williams completed the strong solo line up. The opening instrumental movement showed some effective placement of the instruments, with the flutes, oboes and trumpet forming a triangle to the left, right and rear of the stage, although the flute's opening twiddles were rather lost. In contrast, there was some over-emphatic cello playing, notably in *Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe*. This chorus showed how well the *turba* chorus retained clarity despite the most complex musical texture. The soloists were placed to the left and the remaining chorus to the right, behind the instruments, but for some reason the pairs of voices were not symmetrically placed – it might sound a petty point, but on occasions this was audibly noticeable even from my seat towards the back. McCreesh's direction was as-

sured and sensitive. The pace of the chorales was brisk, but not excessively so by today's standards, and the momentum of the recitatives was particularly effective. I am never quite sure about the use of the harpsichord as well as organ for the continuo of Bach cantatas. If Bach did use one, would it have been audible to listeners in the body of the church? Was it just used to give a rhythmic impulse to the musicians in the gallery? In any case, on this occasion the harpsichord was particularly prominent, both in volume and in the over-complexity of the realisations. On the other hand, it made a change for the continuo organ to be audible from the audience, noticeably in the recitative *So recht, ihr Engel*. Even the quietest stop on Bach's gallery organs would have audible throughout the church and the organ sound would generally have been far more prominent than we have become used to through the use of little box organs.

A concert that always lifts my spirits is the annual visit of the European Union Baroque Orchestra to Banqueting House. Each year, around 30 young baroque musicians are chosen from a shortlist of 100 from across Europe to spend about six months working together, normally preparing and touring around four separate concerts led by a different director. Sadly, only one of the programmes ever seems to get to the UK, and even then there are normally only three or four engagements. This year, the UK got to hear how violinist Fabio Biondi had managed to mould the group in a programme of Handel, Vivaldi and Haydn, with Porta and Geminiani thrown in as encores. My admiration for these young musicians has never faltered over the years. The future of the early music instrumental world is absolutely assured as long as there are sufficient opportunities for these superbly talented youngsters to make a decent living. I wonder how many of them will make that living in the UK? One aspect of their professionalism that was particularly noticeable this year was the way that they managed to perform convincingly in the quirky style of Biondi. Although I have admired the way that players like Biondi have shed new light on many of the Italian baroque composers that have suffered for years from stale automaton performances, there is a limit to how far my admiration will stretch. I certainly draw the line at presenting such a mixed programme in a single style. Every note and every phrase was over-emphatically given its own little twist. Even in Haydn, a single melodic line was not allowed to flow through to a natural break. Admittedly the Haydn was an early work (the Violin Concerto no. 3 in G) in a style close to the baroque idiom, but surely he wouldn't have placed quite so much accent on the first beat of every bar, or accentuated so many little phrases. Handel suffered the same way, with Vivaldi the only composer where the style seemed a bit more acceptable. Unlike Andrew Manze last year, Biondi took the opportunity to showcase himself as soloist for much of the concert – a shame, as I am sure that a number of the younger violinists would have made a pretty good job of it. The only solo drawn from the band was the chamber organ in the second movement of Handel's Concerto Grosso Op 3 no. 6. But the organ (with a delicate flutey tone far removed from the more forthright English sound) was so quiet as to be almost inaudible, and the orchestral

interjections soon drowned out what little sound there was. The whole thing sounded strangely rococo, a fault, I am sure, of the director, not the player. Anyway, the important thing is that the young musicians showed sufficient versatility to adapt this curious style. Their sense of unity was outstanding and I wish them all well.

The talented young musicians of the EUBO reminded me of how much the early music world has changed over the years. Although founded on the tradition of worthy amateurs (in the best possible sense of both words), the last couple of decades has seen the rise of the true early music professional, trained from their earliest conservatory days on period instruments. Although conservatory singers have some way to go before they match the credentials of their instrumental colleagues, there are far more specialist early music singers around as well. But there is still a thriving world of amateur early music making, often to a high standard and often performing in public. I found myself at two concerts in November that reminded me of two different strands of this world. The Whitehall Choir, with its roots in the Civil Service, would not remotely consider themselves as a specialist early music choir, but they nonetheless had a go at Monteverdi, Carissimi and Purcell in their concert at St John's, Smith Square (16 November). Of the eight young professional solo singers, Natalie Clifton-Griffith impressed as the Filia in Carissimi's *Jephte*. The ten instrumentalists came from the regular pool of London players. Director Paul Spicer is an experienced choral director and had clearly done his best to pull the choir into line. But I doubt that the choir is quite ready to give up their day jobs of running the country. They managed some reasonable consistent consonants and were pretty confident in the large-scale choruses, but individual entries and quieter moments were not altogether spot on and the combination of a wide range of vocal styles produced that rather typical 'choral society' sound. But good for them for having a go. It is important that the early music world doesn't become so precious about authenticity that choirs like this are afraid of ever attempting the repertoire.

The sizeable forces of Discantus and the Kirtanam Choir, formed of members of the School of Economic Science in London and Dublin respectively, gave another concert by amateurs. The orchestra was the Linden Baroque and the programme was Mozart's Piano Concerto 21 in C, played by conductor David Ward, and the Great Mass in C minor. Most of the piano concerto was spoilt by an astonishingly noisy, if not ill-mannered, audience, with people arriving well after the start of the concert, many wandering about and the noisy tinkling of entrance money. But the science of economics had managed to produce a huge audience – perhaps they were all on a three-line whip. As can often be the case with less than sympathetic audiences, there was also the inevitable man in the audience who started the applause far too early, quite disrupting the mood that the performers had worked hard to achieve. The piano playing, on a copy of a 1795 Walter, was expressive (if not altogether accurate) although the cadenza to the first movement included an unfortunate fake ending that caught most of the players out. The direction was sympa-

thetic to the Mozartian style. The largely amateur period-instrument players of the Linden Baroque Orchestra were impressive, with a refined tone and a good sense of intonation and period style. There were very few of the intonation problems that can bedevil violins in particular in bands like this. In the Mass, the large choral forces made an impressive and coherent sound. They were at their best in the fuller textures although some of the quieter soprano and alto entries were a bit exposed. Of the four professional solo singers, soprano Laura Mitchell was particularly impressive. She has a beautiful bright and clear tone with a fresh tingle of innocence that sent shivers down the spine in her opening *Christe eleison*, sung from a gallery. Her intonation was impeccable as was her grasp of notes, notably in the frequent runs and ornaments. I hope she survives the rest of her time at the Royal Academy of Music with her voice intact.

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## MANZE'S CORELLI

Ian Graham-Jones

Corelli *Violin Sonatas, op. 5* Andrew Manze vln, Richard Egarr hpscd 131' 11"  
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907298.99 (2 CDs)

Considering the importance of the op. 5 violin sonatas and the influence they had almost throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it is surprising that there are so few recordings available of the complete set. In this new recording, no concessions are made to the listener by re-ordering the sonatas or by having a variety of continuo instruments. Andrew Manze's individualistic approach to these sonatas, however, offers much variety in his approach to ornamentation. There is no attempt to reproduce or to imitate in any way the ornamentation (supposedly based on Corelli's own) in the Roger edition of 1710. Indeed Manze's interpretation is entirely personal and at times quixotic. In some adagios the basic pulse is lost in a sea of ornamentation; others are left entirely plain, even omitting standard cadential trills. Often the opening phrase of an adagio is left unaltered, allowing the ornamentation to develop throughout the movement. The decoration of the phrygian endings of slow movements is always imaginative and never falls into the formulae which one too often hears at such cadences. Having grown up with upper note appoggiaturas to trills, I had to get used to many trills starting on the note itself. The G minor sonata no. 5 perhaps showed the most personal interpretation of the *da chiesa* sonatas, where the seemingly innocuous opening is immediately transformed into a movement of dramatic intensity. Generally the adagios have some very slow tempi but the allegros are always brisk and exciting, with some particularly brilliant interpretations of the extended arpeggiated cadences that are a feature of some of the sonatas.

The *da camera* sonatas are generally more conventional in tempi and interpretation, with steady largo movements and spirited dance-like middle movements. The giges [*Gigas* sounds wrong, *Gigi* even worse] are exciting, although

that of the E minor sonata (no. 8) is given a strangely whimsical character, with some unexpected rubato. *La Follia* (no. 12) gave opportunity for the performers to let rip, and the opening harpsichord solo, an improvisation on the first section of the bass line, and not even starting on a note of the D minor chord, came as somewhat of a surprise. In one variation the harpsichord plays the solo line, shadowed by the violin, creating a novel texture, the printed cadential trill being perhaps wisely omitted! A literal interpretation of the score was far from the players' minds in this performance, giving rise to some Sarasate-like wizardry in the violin part and some thunderous Wandowska-like 16-foot effects from the harpsichord.

Turning to the continuo, I found the lack of a cello to support the bass continuo line a little worrying, as in so many of the movements the bass has a distinctive imitative role. Other idiosyncrasies that the listener should be aware of are: the harpsichord doubling all the passages, usually in fugal allegros, where the violin starts alone (this may well have some historical precedent but was a practice that I found a little disturbing), the occasional addition of some luxuriant suspensions not indicated by the figuring, and some Byrd-like clashes of flattened and raised sixths (and occasional leading notes) which the players clearly relished.

The recording, made in USA, has a particularly reverberative quality, most noticeably with the harpsichord, where the resonances of one chord somewhat disturbingly sustain into the next. This is a recording that the reader prepared to try it will either love or hate. There are no half measures here.

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## RARE BAROQUE

Brian Clark

In my quest to ensure that *EMR* contains the most comprehensive CD listings, I often go net surfing and contact companies who don't seem to have agents in the UK, or whose market is perhaps mostly European. Several of this month's reviews are from Austrian Radio, while the next few paragraphs (in no particular order) are about recent releases from Arion and Pierre Verany, based in Paris.

Two CDs of Boismortier are played by the flautist Stéphane Perreau, first on his own (*Variations en mineur*, 47' 30", Pierre Verany PV702111) and then joined by Benjamin Gaspon (*Sonates à deux flûtes traversières sans basse*, 50' 03", Pierre Verany PV700023). The former is a tribute to the performer's late brother, and features pieces from five sets (Boismortier being, of course, one of the baroque's most prolific composers), while the latter raids six publications for a range of sonatas and suites. The performances are nicely done, and brightly recorded. I fear that the brevity of both, and the fact that the solo recording features extracts only of three of the chosen pieces reflects on Boismortier's relatively limited vocabulary – there's none of the fire or conflict, let alone the virtuosity, of, say, Telemann's duets and ultimately, I confess, I did tire slightly of the music.

No such worries with the next disc, devoted to Tarquinio Merula, named after one of his sonatas, *La Caravaggia* (*Mottetti e Sonate da chiesa*, Ensemble Suonare e Cantare, Jean Gaillard, dir. 67' 37", Pierre Verany PV700040). Four singers and a range of instrumentalists perform psalms, motets and instrumental pieces. The continuo section features gamba, colascione, lute, guitar, harpsichord and organ (a maximum of three at a time, though). The singing is full bodied, with some nice agility in the passagi and nicely blended, although perhaps very occasionally too much in the foreground. The disc is an excellent introduction to the composer if you're not familiar with his music. Purists might not approve of the involvement of recorders (Merula is a common source of early trio sonata repertoire for the instrument), but I don't think performances like this can do anything but enhance Merula's image.

One of the highlights of the bundle for me was a complete recording of Rosenmüller's *Sonate a 2, 3, 4, 5 Stamenti da Arco & Altri* of 1682 by the Ensemble Mensa Sonora, directed by Jean Maillet (75' 16", Pierre Verany PV700041). Played in the published order, there is a real sense of building up from the first two-part sonata to the twelfth sonata in five parts. Rosenmüller's sonatas are like musical patchwork – slow, somewhat declamatory, homophonic passages sandwiched between extended, often chromatic, 'fugues', and dance-like triple time sections. Mensa Sonora play with the lightest of touches, the minimum of added ornamentation (perhaps a little dull in live performances, but right, I feel, for something that has the sense of being

a complete works volume), and the recorded sound is excellent. I was puzzled why one of the contrapuntal movements was played without continuo, though.

The first of the Arion discs was a slight disappointment (Bach *Pièces pour hautbois & Airs de cantates* Olivier Doise ob, Gaële Le Roi S, Jérôme Pernoo vlc, Jérémie Rohrer hpsch & org 62' 12", Arion ARN 68566), firstly, because a similar Dutch recording of a few years ago by the Oostenrijk sisters (Vanguard Classics 99166) did the same sort of thing in a vastly superior fashion, and secondly, because there is very little attempt to get into the feel of the music. The performances inhabit some sort of no-man's-land between the Oostenrijks' stylistically aware disc and an ultra-modern 'let's get Bach's emotions out there and discuss them'. For the life of me, for example, I could not work out the rhythmic basis of the first movement of the partita (BWV 1013), and I was horrified by the bleeding-chunk extraction of the 'Quia respexit' from the Magnificat, whose whole shape is dictated by the fact that a chorus crashes in at the end. I was not impressed by the singing much, either.

Lebegue's *Premier Livre d'orgue* (Jean-Patrice Brosse 138", Arion ARN 268561 (2 CDs)) was, on the other hand, a revelation. His is a name with which I am, of course, familiar, so it was nice to have the chance to enjoy some delightful music. Amid what I would consider to be the standard language and stock phrases of organ music of the time, I felt I was hearing some novelties, in the form of harmonies building up over pedal points, and some very interesting colours, doubtless the choice of the performer, but (to an outsider at least) neatly contrived to bring out the flavour of the music. I listened to both discs back to back and was never even tempted to pause for a coffee break, or put something else on for the sake of variety. A lovely set.

The last CD was possibly the best of the lot, Handel's *Apollo e Dafne* (Salomé Haller S, Jérôme Correas B and dir, Les Paladins, 59' 34", Arion ARN 68565). The performance was given to a live audience in the church of St-Genest-Lerpt, Loire en Rhône-Alpes, during the festival of Les Musique d'Automne. The recording engineers have performed miracles, in limiting the effects of such a boomy acoustic, and the playing and singing sound fantastic. One player per part is quite daunting in such virtuosic music, but there's no doubt that Les Paladins are a force to be reckoned with – the cello on Track 12 is particularly worthy of note, and the director deserves double congratulations, firstly for such splendid singing and secondly for such a judicious choice of tempi: everything just feels right. Brilliant.

## CD REVIEWS

## MEDIEVAL

*The Medieval Experience* Benedictine Monks of Münsterschwarzach and of Notre-Dame de Fontgombault, Pro Cantione Antiqua, Early Music Consort of London, Hamburger Bläserkreis für Alte Musik, London Cornett and Sackbutt Ensemble. 256' 25" (4 CDs in box) Archiv 449 082 2 £ (rec 1970s)

This retrospective collection of 1970s recordings has an excellent line-up of performers (including ten subscribers to EMR) and represents what was thought to be the best that could be produced a quarter-century or so ago. But there would have been doubts even at the time. Bruno Turner once (or possibly several times) told me of recording sessions at which he turned up to direct music with PCA and found that the record company had laid on a superfluous collection of sackbuts and cornetts. Don't think that, because of my comments here and on the Gabrieli disc below, that I don't like the instruments, but they now seem utterly irrelevant in 15th-century church music, and anyway probably didn't exist in the late-16th-century forms used here (or am I being charitable about sawn-off trombones?) The result is that discs 3 (motets by Dunstable, Dufay, Binchois, Obrecht & Josquin) and 4 (Josquin *Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales*, Ockeghem's Requiem and *Nymphes des bois* to link the two composers) are less fluent than they might be – though it's not just a matter of instrumental presence, since tracks without them feel fairly similar. Since Gothic Voices, we have got used to a different style of singing medieval music.

The first two discs mix chant and secular music, the latter from recordings by David Munrow's Early Music Consort. As a further contrast, music for Palm Sunday on disc 1 is sung by a German choir, while music for the dedication of a church by a French choir, each with very different sounds. Both, however, seem romantically soft-edged by contrast with the brightness of the consort. As was the custom then, polyphonic songs mostly have instrumental participation (tolerable except for the percussion); the vocal sounds have an instrumental brightness that gives the music a clarity and precision that I'd like to hear in the chant; most experiments with livelier chant performances have fallen foul of mensural theories and have been discredited.

I'm not very happy about the packaging, in particular the absence of texts: admittedly this is a very cheap set (and as such is worth getting; I have

enjoyed listening to it), but why isn't the original documentation available on the net? The introductions are curious (de Vitry a troubadour!) and while it was a good idea to list a few general books on the period, the choice is a bit odd. But I'm pleased to see that French (but not English) readers are directed towards the book that gave me my first understanding of medieval Latin culture (though it was never mentioned by the elderly scholars with whom I studied the subject), Ernst Curtius's *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Amazon for \$35.00 pb). CB

## 16th CENTURY

*Ferrabosco I & II Madrigals, Ayres & Consort Music* Josep Cabré bar, Private Musicke, Pierre Pitzl dir 53' 52" ORF CD 280

Richly toned with treble, alto and three bass viols plus lute, and a baritone singing the cantus (in one piece doubled discretely by treble at the correct octave), this is enjoyable listening. One could complain that renaissance music needs a more reedy, less boomy sound, but the music is lovely, and the parts are well-balanced with playing of intensity and shape, if lacking in variety of articulation. Josep Cabré sings very musically with a beautiful, mellifluous sound and seamless technique, using very little vibrato. But his legato deprives the line of its verbal shape, losing consonants altogether which could articulate the meaning, making both his English and Italian unidiomatic. A further complaint is the booklet, which supplies only one verse of several songs when two are sung, translates the Italian and English texts into German only, does not attribute the words of 'Like Hermit poor' to Raleigh, (and we only hear the first verse – perhaps a relief in that the declamation is more musical than verbal). It's curious that Cabré doesn't choose to sing those songs Ferrabosco II wrote for Ben Jonson's masques, for which he has an ideal range, and their melismatic idiom would suit his style. The consort pieces include the younger Alfonso's Hexachord fantasia beautifully played, the Dovehouse Pavan, and one of his consorts for three lyra viols. The father is exceeded by the son, but still bears repeated hearing, and this disc, despite being only 54' in duration, is well worth having.

Robert Oliver

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

A. Gabrieli *Psalmi Davidici* Capella Ducale Venetia, Livio Picotti 69'01" cpo 999 863-2

I retained this disc to review myself, since I remembered from reviewing the score (vol. 9, the first to appear of the Collected Works in 1988) that the music looked interesting, but I had never heard it. Initially, I played it through without the score, and was disappointed, not by the music but by the performance which, summed up in one non-technical word, was boring. I love the sound of cornetts and voices as much as anyone, but found it rather wearing here. My surprise that the Penitential Psalms had instrumental participation was countered when I read the composer's dedication to Pope Gregory XIII (quoted at length in the booklet), which specifically mentions their use. But it fails here in that players hamper the vocal response to the verbal nuances: other performers of similar repertoire manage to surmount the problem. The feeling of strain is increased by the failure to transpose psalms in high clefs to the tessitura of the rest. The music is indeed worth hearing, but this disc makes it very hard going. CB

Victoria *Officium Defunctorum, 1603* La Stagione Armonica, Sergio Balestracci Symphonia SY 01190 66'06"

Only last month I was bemoaning the lack of a good continental recording of the Victoria Requiem, so when this disc plopped on my doormat I thought that my wish had been granted. By the indeterminate end of the first word of *Taedet animan meam*, which begins the disc, I realised that my wait was not over. That first word irks me, less because the consonant at its end is all over the place than because there is no shape given to the first syllable's semibreve chord. Vocally the performance is monochrome, here and in what follows. And although there is a token dulcian involved, there is little of the instrumental colour associated with music of the late Spanish renaissance. For over an hour, the performance ploughs along rather like a supertanker, oblivious to the waves and cross-currents of Victoria's polyphony. It's earnest and sincere, and may appeal to those who prefer to think of this as music without any significant human element Simon Ravens

*The Royal Lewters: Music of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I's favourite lutenists* Paul O'Dette lute 74' 51"

Harmonia Mundi HMU 907313  
Music by Collard, de Countie, Ferrabosco I, Henry VIII, J. Johnson, van Wilder & anon

This collection of pieces composed by lutenists associated with the courts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I is a revelation. While some of the composers and even some of their works are familiar, others most definitely are not, and it is in this latter category that we find some of the most pleasing music. The publication of John Johnson's complete compositions for lute in 2001 has made some intriguing material more generally available, while the Fleming Philip van Wilder, the French Anthony de Countie and the English Edward Collard are also revealed as gifted composers. Paul O'Dette takes a suitably open-minded approach to his sources and ornaments and varies the music freely, demonstrating once again his superb technical skill and musicality – particularly impressive is the dexterous decoration of inner parts. He uses two six-course lutes, based on instruments of 1550 and 1580 respectively, and both have a warm ringing tone which has been beautifully captured by the HM engineers.

D. James Ross

**Songs of Angels: Music from Magdalen College, Oxford** Choir of Magdalen College, Oxford, Bill Ives dir 74' 16"

Signum SIGCD098

*Collaudemus Magdalene lachrymas* (Sarum chant), *Appleby Magnificat*, *Davy Stabat mater*, *Jacquet of Mantua Aspicere Domine*, *Mason Quales sumus*, *Preston Confessio et pulchritudo*, *Resurrexi III*, *Sheppard Dum transisset*, *Libera nos*, *Lord's Prayer*

This is a most impressive disc of 16th-century music connected with Magdalen College sung convincingly by its present choir. *Jacquet of Mantua* seems a bit of a stranger, but David Skinner's note makes a strong case for its inclusion. The trebles, fortunately, don't soar quite as stratospherically as in the Wulstan performances, which were a major stage in the revival of Sheppard's music, so the textures are far clearer. One often hears him as the earliest composer in a late-Tudor context, so it is refreshing to approach him here as a modern. Highly commendable. CB

#### 17th CENTURY

**Corelli Violin Sonatas, op. 5** Andrew Manze vln, Richard Egarr hpscd 131' 11"

Harmonia Mundi HMU 907298.99 (2 CDs)

See p. 13

**Ferrabosco II**

see Ferrabosco I under 16th Century

**J. C. F. Fischer Blumen-Strauss: Complete Organ Works** Serge Schoonbroodt (Balthasar König organ, 1714) 78' 46"  
Aeolus AE-10321

Fischer was born in 1656 in Bohemia, where he became Capellmeister to the

Prince of Saxony-Lauenburg and then the princely Margraves of Baden. After various wars, Fischer followed the Baden Court to Rastatt, on the Rhine in 1715. He died in 1746, aged 89. Most of Fischer's music has been destroyed, but his organ works survive in two volumes, *Ariadne Musica* (pub 1702) and *Blumen-Strauss* (pub c.1740, but probably written c.1700). The first volume consists of 20 little Preludes and Fugues using all keys, a precursor to Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier*. Although there is no evidence to support the theory, it has been suggested that these pieces were written for an organ built in 1700 for the Bohemian Monastery of Tepl and tuned in equal temperament. Although the organ used is not that far from Fischer's eventual home on the Rhine, the style of the music is rooted in Bohemian Catholicism, for which a rather different organ sound is required. Even discounting stylistic factors, the organ does seem rather brittle on occasions. Schoonbroodt's playing is generally fairly sympathetic, although not without minor quibbles, not least the abrupt release of final chords which never works on organs with sensitive winding (at the end of tracks 3 and 69.1, for example). One or two registrations sound odd, not least in the opening of the *Ricercare pro Festis Natalis*, where a break in the mixture causes havoc with the highest note of the fugal subject. With 119 pieces in a 78 minute CD, this is perhaps a CD for the organ buff rather than the casual listener.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Jenkins Fantasias** Les voix humaines  
Atma ACD2 2205 61' 10"

Susie Napper and Margaret Little are joined by Jay Bernfeld, playing treble viol, and Eric Milnes, organ and harpsichord, in an exceptional recording of music for up to three viols, in various combinations: two trebles and bass; treble, two bass and organ; treble, lyra, bass and harpsichord; two basses and organ; two basses. The playing is absolutely assured, beautifully and subtly shaped. The repertoire is less explored than Jenkins' consorts of 4, 5 and 6 parts, and reveals him as a composer who continually endears himself to his listeners. He occupies a recognisable landscape which is no less lovely for being familiar, but within it he produces ideas of sometimes startling beauty. The recording opens with *The 5 Bells* for treble, lyra, bass and harpsichord, in which a simple, rather typical melodic idea encompassing a 6<sup>th</sup> gradually turns into a bell pattern with the notes taking on irregular patterns. Four fantasias for two trebles and bass are played as consorts rather than trio sonatas, with assurance, beauty of tone and phrasing. The choice

of treble viols rather than violins works superbly because they are so well played and the music thrives. I have sometimes found all these players a bit mannered, but here their mannerism work superbly. The sound is voluptuously full but never cloying, the phrases are shaped dynamically and with tempi, perfectly attuned to Jenkins' rhetoric. There is a lovely pavan-like movement in the D Minor suite for treble, lyra, bass and harpsichord called *The Pleasing Slumber* where the two repeated strains have such tumbling roulades, so easily played and pleasingly bowed without the hint of a squeak or hurried start to the note, that one is not in the least inclined to snooze. Highly recommended.

Robert Oliver

**Monteverdi Madrigals Book 1** Delitiae Musicae, Marco Longhini 63' 47"  
Naxos 8.555307 £

It is pleasing to hear Italian musicians at last starting to do justice to their birthright. Monteverdi is far from being neglected these days, but how rare it is for an Italian group to perform him in a way that meets international standards. *Delitiae Musicae* is such a group, and it lives up to its name. While its individual singers are not of the highest calibre, they really delight in the music, and communicate every nuance of text, line and harmony, giving individuality to each part, and ornamenting judiciously. Longhini seems to have a perfect grasp of what is required in terms of tempo, volume, decoration, restraint and enthusiasm, and the speed changes and pauses are extremely eloquent.

The singers are all male, and though the countertenors are a little on the hooty side, the blend is quite good and 'unnecessarily high melodic lines' are avoided by transposing down the pieces which use *chiavette*. The sense of movement through the music to illuminate the sense of both words and music is exemplary, and there is evidently a good rapport between singers and director. The continuo band makes an excellent contribution to some madrigals, subtly audible while not impeding the voices.

In addition to the *Primo Libro de' Madrigali* of 1587, the recording includes 'Monteverdi's complete secular works taken from manuscript copies rather than official printed sources'. Others could comment better than I can on the accuracy of this 'complete', but five pieces are included here: *Voglio di vita uscir*, possibly a model for *Zefiro torna*, and unfortunately sung by the B-side countertenor; an undistinguished duet for tenors, *Ahi, che si part' il mio bel sol*; the charmingly embellished *Se d'un angel il bel viso*; and the sublime *Lamento d'Olimpia*, the only piece on the CD to merit a lirone on the continuo team.

Selene Mills



**Monteverdi *Vespro della Beata Vergine***  
Soloists, Coro della Radio Televisione  
Croatia Zagreb, Filarmonica di Zagreb,  
Lovro Maticic 98' 50" (2 CDs in box)  
Nuovo Era 7324/25 (rec 1974)

At first I thought this was beyond comment. Certainly, don't buy it unless you have several recordings already or know the work inside out. But the more I listened, the more intrigued I was. In most respects it is not HIP, at least not as currently understood. The orchestrations are outrageous, yet the 'additional accompaniments' are at times almost convincing and often made me smile and even laugh aloud: the booklet is silent about who was responsible for them. There is a vigour and intensity surviving from the innocence of the first discovery of the work which is missing in the half-hearted 'authentic' UK performances of this period. Don't throw your Parrott recording away, but don't feel too superior. CB

*I'll use this as a peg to note a misprint in my edition of the work: I had corrected it in the copy I play from and hadn't realised that it was still wrong in everyone else's. On p. 25, bar 61, the continuo F should be sharp (as in bar 39). My thanks to Anne Graff for pointing it out.* CB

**Sartorio *L'Orfeo***, Ellen Hargis *Orfeo*, Suzie Le Blanc *Euridice*, Ann Hollenberg *Aristeo*, Anne Grimm *Autonoe*, Laurie Revial *Tetide*, Petra Noskaiová *Orillo*, Olof Lilja *Erinda/Ercole*, Rodrigo del Pozo *Achille*, Josep Cabré *Chirone/Bacco*, Harry van der Kamp *Esculapio/Pluto*, Teatro Lirico, Stephen Stubbs, 144' 22" (2 CDs)  
Channel Classics 72020

Sartorio's *Orfeo* was written for Venice in 1673 and the style of its score, seductive throughout, stands midway between that of the late operas of Monteverdi and those of Alessandro Scarlatti. It says a great deal for the composer that, judged by this work, his music stands comparison with these two giants of Italian lyric drama. *L'Orfeo* was composed at a time when audiences were increasingly keen that their operas contained set piece lyric arias, and Sartorio obliged them in his rather worldly retelling of the Orpheus myth with more than fifty such pieces, each, it seems, more delectable than the last. And yet, despite this feature, this is a work that remains close enough to the origins of opera as musical declamation for the songs to flow almost effortlessly in and out of the admittedly complex action of the tale without the later, sometimes distracting, dramatic gulf between long contemplative arias and the heady rush of narrative recitatives. The musical texture on this finely engineered Dutch recording is as seamless and gratifying as the way the opera is performed. Stephen Stubbs

has a superb cast of soloists, an aptly scaled string band, and a continuo group that includes himself and Paul Odette on archlutes, along with an assorted group of bass viol, lirone, harpsichord, violone and cello – all beautifully played. This ensemble is deployed with exemplary taste, always supporting without ever challenging the primacy of the sung line. All in all, I cannot recall ever having taken greater pleasure from a record of 17<sup>th</sup> Century opera and I strongly recommend this as an issue that has the best of everything, in both music and performance, for all lovers of music of this period and indeed for anyone who is not simply and regrettably tone-deaf. David J. Levy

**Tomkins *Songs of 4, 5 & 6 parts* (1622)**  
Budapest Tomkins Vocal Ensemble, János Dobra 70' 22"

Hungaroton Classic HCD 31514

**Tomkins *Music Divine: Songs of 4, 5 & 6 parts* (London, 1622)** I Fagiolini, Robert Hollingworth dir 77' 15"

See p.8

**Folias! *Virtuoso guitar music of 17th on period instruments*** Taro Takeuchi with Reiko Ichise *gamba* and Eligio Quinteiro *narrator* 64' 00"

Deux-Elles DXL 1030

Music by Corbetta, Derosier, Le Cocq, Matteis, Sanz

This is an anthology of music from four major MSS of guitar music (those to whom an exact citation matters will probably have the disc already) played on a Venetian guitar of c.1650 (attrib. Matteo Sella) and a modern copy of René Voboam (1641). I don't associate the guitar with the battle genre, and the collection of short pieces that make up Sanz's *Clarinas y Trompetas...* wears a bit thin, though most are only half a minute long (Eligio Quinteiro's role is to say the titles). I would probably use the disc for background rather than foreground music, but expect that baroque guitarist would call me a philistine. The playing is certainly worth one's full attention, but some of the more substantial pieces have sections that sound naïve rather than eloquently simple to me. CB

**Meraviglia *d'amore*** Marco Beasley T, Private Musicke, Pierre Pitzl 59' 24"

ORF CD 296

Music by Calvi, Carbonchi, Corbetta, Foscari, Frescobaldi, M. Galilei, D'India, Kapsberger, Marini & Pellegrini

This Private Musicke is not to be confused with Silas Standage's group: it was founded in 1998, is based in Vienna and consists of two pluckers (Luciano Contini *archlute and theorbo* and Hugh Sandilands *guitars*), a cellist (Claire Pottinger-Schmidt) and its director Pierre Pitzl, who plays bass viol and also guitar. The guitar is

very much the focal point of this CD, either as soloist, in duo or as part of an accompanying ensemble. It infects its bowed colleagues too, so that they spend much of their time pizzicato. The overall effect is one of a disciplined jam session, with a wealth of improvised strumming, rippling arpeggios and added counterpoints. Private Musicke does its best to bring sometimes slight repertoire to life, but after a while the limited tonal colour and bass-light quality begin to pall. There is a jaunty rhythmic dance step underlying most of their playing, yet this too often slides into hyperactive syncopations and noisy strumming. The unexpectedly dramatic harmonies in a toccata by Foscari and the richer sonorities of Galilei's music for archlute give welcome respite. Marco Beasley's light, slightly folksy tenor [cf p. 23] is used to excellent effect in the songs: in these strophic villanelles by d'India, Marini and Kapsberger the tunes are clearly more significant than the texts. Beasley responds with a delicate touch, appropriately tuned into the catchiness of the melodies. The recorded sound is bright and forthright; however, the liner notes are partially illegible against a background of a heavily graffiti-covered door and give no background information on the music other than its sources (which fall between 1609 and 1650. In small doses there is much to admire here, but the joys may not be solid and lasting. John Bryan

**Musik aus Brixen: Sätzl, Stadlmayr, J. J. Walther** Ensemble Prihsna, Vokalsolisten Ratisbona, Florian Appel & Christoph Hamme dir 101' 40" (2 CDs)

ORF CD301

**Sätzl *Missa I & IV* (1661) Stadlmayr *Missa III* (1642), *Miserere* (1646) Walther *Organ music***

Brixen is an ancient town in the southern Tyrol. In the 17th century its musical life was similar to Innsbruck's and absorbed many fashions moving northwards from Italy. This CD is the fruit of a local project to research the town's musical heritage. Centre-stage is taken by two masses of 1661 by Christoph Sätzl, with ornate vocal writing above energetic, dance-like bass lines. An earlier version of the concertante style is represented by a Mass and psalm setting by Johann Stadlmayr; in these sumptuous pieces for several choirs of voices and instruments, I particularly enjoyed the rich *Agnus dei* (CD2, track 5). There are also Froberger-style organ pieces by Johann Jakob Walther – a local organist and not to be confused with the north German violinist. This is a live recording but very rarely shows it; the performances are spirited with lots of lift. The booklet essay is full of information not in Grove. As a local initiative this is praiseworthy – would other cathedral towns follow suit! – and the music is well worth hearing too. Stephen Rose

**Vêpres sous Charles VI a Vienne** Arslys Bourgogne, Pierre Cao, dir., L'Arpeggiata, Christina Pluhar, dir. 57' 43"  
Ambrosie AMB9924  
Music by Fux, Gletle, Reinhardt, Sances, Zächer

I so enjoyed this CD that I've listened to it again and again. Regular readers will know all about my continued championing of church music by Bertali and Schmelzer but, although I have actually edited a couple of masses by Sances and drafted a few pieces by Gletle, I haven't gone as far even as perform them, let alone suggest to Clifford that they might be worth publishing. Hearing the combined forces of the four soloists, 12-voice choir and the instrumental group L'Arpeggiata, I'm well impressed by the stuff and hope that the disc, which is as beautifully recorded and presented as the music is performed, will attract a wide audience. My favourite piece, is a gem of a setting of the *Ave Maria* by Gletle, showing that choirs can sing what might look on the page like soloist music stunningly. BC

#### LATE BAROQUE

**Bach Arias** Angelika Kirschlager mS, Giuliano Carmignola vln, Venice Baroque Orchestra, Andrea Marcon 72' 47"  
Sony Classical SK 89924  
BWV 42/3, 54/1, 74/7, 82/3, 83/1, 156/1 & 4, 170/1, 232/6, 244/39, 248/4-5

Rarely are Bach cantatas sold on sex appeal, so the packaging of this disc came as a surprise. It's an album of set-piece arias, including such favourites as 'Laudamus te' plus some less well-known numbers from later Leipzig cantatas. At first I felt a mismatch between Kirschlager's Covent Garden voice and the more subtle sounds of the band: in 'Erbarme dich' her heavy vibrato wrecks the poignancy of the violin solo. Yet she is good at over-the-top arias such as the laughing fury in 'Nichts kann mich erretten' or the twisting snakes of sin in 'Widerstehe doch der Sünde'. Even in the simplicity of 'Schlummert ein' – that unaffected song that Anna Magdalena probably sang as she contemplated the deaths of her babies – Kirschlager is still moving. Although the singing is generally on too large a scale, the Venice Baroque Orchestra play with such richness that I enjoyed listening to this disc several times. Your verdict will depend on your sympathy to ample voices, but try to come with an open mind. Stephen Rose

**Bach Matthäus-Passion** Nico van der Meel Evangelist, Kristinn Sigmundsson Jesus, Maria Cristina Kiehr, Claudia Schubert, Ian Bostridge, Peter Kooy SATB I; Mona Juksrud, Wilke te Brumme-

stroete, Toby Spence, Harry van der Kamp SATB II, Boys' Choir of St Bavo Cathedral Harlem, Netherlands Chamber Choir, Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, Frans Brüggen 160', (3 CDs in box)  
Philips 473 263-2 ££ rec 1996

I started by enjoying this, but worries grew. Don't the words of the chorales matter? Shouldn't the balance between voice and instruments in arias feel more like chamber music? Should the Evangelist sound quite so happy? This is a good performance in the current style. If you're a poor student and want a cheapish set, it's fine; if you are wealthy and want a slightly different experience from the sets you have already, you won't be disappointed. But I don't think that it offers the profound religious experience, which a Matthew Passion should give, whether you believe or not. CB

**Bach Organ Works Vol. 13** Gerhard Weinberger (Christoph Treutmann organ, Grauhof Monastery, 1734-7) 72' 02"  
Cpo 999 867-2  
Clavier Übung III

Gerhard Weinberger's latest contribution to his complete Bach series is the *pedaliter* chorale preludes from the *Clavierübung* and the *Praeludium* and *Fuga* in E flat. The organ at Grauhof (between Hannover and Magdeburg) is a magnificent example of the late Baroque organ that Bach probably had in mind for many of his organ pieces: the rich and sumptuous pleno is contrasted by some wonderfully sensuous solo stops. Both aspects are very well demonstrated by Weinberger, from the authority and grandeur of the opening and enclosing free works to the spiritual grace of chorale preludes such as *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr* (using the lovely Hautbois stop) and the measured pace of *Dies sind die heiligen zehen Gebot*. After a rather shaky start to the series, this is one of the best CDs so far. And such sublime music! Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Bach Partitas Nos 1-6** Masaaki Suzuki  
hpsc 161' 20" (2 CDs)  
BIS-CD-1313/1314

By the time the mature J. S. Bach was assembling and polishing his opus 1 at Leipzig in the late 1720s, he was clearly very intent on composing music that would make even expert musicians and players sit up. So rich a range of ideas submitted to such wide-ranging a series of expressive processes is only even adequately the property of the highest standards of performance, and deserved by the most acutely aware of listeners.

Masaaki Suzuki certainly renders the great partitas with consummate mastery. Some marvel at the seemingly extempore energies of Partita 1, and if they pay care-

ful attention to the subtleties of hemiola applied to Dr Suzuki's performance of its Giga, they will find newly invented surprises. Those whose taste favours Partita 4 with its opening *Ouverture* will similarly marvel at the manner in which he revels in exploring the very French classical dignity of the succeeding 'formal' dances and *gallantries*. For many, the triumph which crowns the arch of the complete work is that consistently excellent Partita 6 in E minor. Possibly, even in that overwhelming suite, the Gigue is once more the most richly endowed movement. The very last four bars sound, in Suzuki's telling hands, as though all of the preceding array of contrapuntal contrast and elaboration has really been little more than plain and simple accompanied tune!

Stephen Daw

**Bach Italian Concerto BWV 971, French Overture BWV 831** Lucy Carolan hpsc  
Signum SIGCD030 67' 43"  
+ *Chromatic Fantasia & Fugue* BWV 904, *Duets* BWV 802-5

Lucy Carolan plays with immense vigour, tempered by a steely control. Only rarely does she linger on a note for emphasis but such moments always sound just right. She dispatches the outer movements of the Italian Concerto with speed – perhaps a touch too efficiently. But in the Four Duets, I enjoyed the resonant and relaxed rendition of no. 3. As for the French Overture, this is an excellent performance. She gives energy and a regal sweep to the opening rhythms. The subsequent dances are well characterised and their ornamentation is precise. The sarabande is captivating; the gigue has a steely spring; the Echo is sheer silliness. Carolan writes a thoughtful booklet essay; and although as a performer she does not force her personality on the music, her intelligence is evident throughout the recording. Stephen Rose

**J. S. Bach and the Möller Manuscript: music for harpsichord** Carole Cerasi 76' 49"  
Metronome MBT CD 1055  
Music by Bach, Böhm, Fabricius, Lully, Reincken, Ritter & Zachow

Anybody who, like me, has spent hours studying baroque MS anthologies of mixed repertoires of keyboard music will have yearned for the assorted masterworks they contain to be performed on disc by knowledgeable and stylish interpreters. Looking at good music is an education: hearing or trying to play it oneself is even better, and pleasurable to boot. The Möller Manuscript was supervised and mainly copied by Bach's oldest brother Johann Christian. It is expertly drawn from expert composers and even includes a few remarkably promising works from the pen (and fingers) of the boy Sebastian. Carole Cerasi has already demon-

strated her strengths in music from widely contrasted backgrounds and composers with distinct personalities; she has made an excellent choice in recording this music. The playing hardly includes an un-stylish half-bar. The instruments (copies of a Fleischer by Goble and of a Zell by Bruce Kennedy) are appropriate and sound very well prepared. The music itself was wonderfully chosen as an educational project by the closest relative of 'the most learned composer' and deserves the repeated attention that only 21st-century technology can give. *Stephen Daw*

**Handel Gloria, etc** Suzie LeBlanc, Académie Baroque de Montréal, Alexander Weimann *dir/kbd* 53' 38"

Atma ACD2 2215

+ Bach BWV 84/3 & BWV 182/1; Handel op. 4/2 mov 2, op. 5/2, *Rejoice greatly*; Vivaldi RV 545, *Domine Deus* from RV 589

This CD is a well planned recital that seems designed to showcase the ensemble's repertoire and virtues and be a post-concert souvenir purchase. There are three substantial works (a trio sonata by Handel and a Vivaldi Concerto complement the *Gloria*) and a number of individual vocal and instrumental movements. The final item is a rather safe reading of *Rejoice greatly* that finally takes wing in the reprise, which includes a stunning ornament that I can imagine many of SLB's fellow sopranos shamelessly hi-jacking! She sings throughout with commendably even tone and agility though the faster music would definitely have benefited from a more extrovert approach. The voice is also rather forward in the aural spectrum and overall a little more acoustic bloom might have been permitted. The sound is definitely more studio than church, despite the recording venue. All the performances are well prepared, though some continuo instrumentations will raise an eyebrow or two, such as bassoon and organ with the violins in Handel's Op. 5/2. The booklet essay deals only with the *Gloria* and, like the biographies, appears in French and English. Where necessary, these are also the languages into which the sung texts are translated. *David Hansell*

This was also discussed in Peter Holman's review-article on Handel's *Gloria* in *EMR* 77. Other Handel reviews are held over to next month.

**Heinichen Galant Court Music II** Fondazione, Paul Dombrecht *dir.* 62' 14"

Passacaille 921

Overtures (Seibel 205, 206)

Concertos (Seibel 214, 224, 228, 237)

Heinichen is one of those mid-18th-century German composers who gets to bask in J. S. Bach's shadow, along with his Dresden contemporaries, notably Zelenka

and Pisendel. His is a familiar name to me, because it's thought that the young Johann Friedrich Fasch travelled to the Electoral court to study with him, and certainly surviving scores of music for the Catholic Chapel there. (They contain all sorts of useful notes on scores, such as the duration of pieces and how well they were received by the royal patrons, in Heinichen's hand). The six orchestral pieces on the present CD (only one of which overlaps with another excellent recording of Heinichen's wind concertos cpo 999 637-2) are full of charm and invention, and it's all too easy to see in the first place why Heinichen enjoyed the patronage of such an influential court, and secondly why his music has been so long forgotten – they are lovely, but forgettable: indeed, the fact that I had to check if there was an overlap meant that the G minor oboe concerto, which is actually a beautifully written, balanced piece, given first-rate performances on both discs, was totally unfamiliar to my ear. If you're looking to get away from the beaten paths, this could be a really pleasant surprise. *BC*

**Moyreau Pièces de Clavecin 1753** Douglas Hollick *hpacd, org* 71' 59"  
Riverrun RVRCD60

Some composers deserve their obscurity, but there is reason to be grateful to Douglas Hollick for the light he here casts on the hitherto shadowy figure of Christophe Moyreau (c.1690-1772). All six of his *livres* were published in 1753, probably in a small private edition from which only one copy of each volume has survived. In style the music ranges from forceful *ouvertures* through inventive character pieces to Italianate, three-movement *symphonies* and features graceful melodies, virtuosity and, to use a word from Graham Sadler's helpful essay, zaniness in more or less equal measure. Hollick plays on a two-manual instrument he built himself and uses its resources sensibly. His playing has an expressive spaciousness which, however, never lapses simply into a reluctance to play the next note and he is certainly up to all the technical challenges – on a par with those of Scarlatti and Rameau – that Moyreau presents. A refreshing and recommended start to the New Year. *David Hansell*

Editions of the music are available from Musica Repartita

**Rameau Pieces ed Clavecin (Suites in e, d & a)** Tilman Skowronek 78' 58"  
EC 3921-2

Tilman Skowronek is man of wide-ranging talents and interests. For this well-filled disc he has not only played the music but also acted as producer and

author of the useful note, while readers of November's *Early Music* will also know of his study of Beethoven's pianos. His is a thoughtful approach to Rameau, with a willingness to linger over important details and with gratuitously fast tempi conspicuous by their absence. Yet there is certainly no lack of either direction or energy in the playing and it is good to hear the famous *Gavotte* with its variations at a speed that permits appreciation of subtleties rather than just technical brilliance. I did, however, miss the repeats in this movement. Any recording of this music is up against severe competition (Rousset, for example) but this distinctive release certainly has its merits. *David Hansell*

**D. Scarlatti Sonatas** Kenneth Weiss *hpacd* Satirino SRO11 71' 23"

K 8, 18, 27, 56, 64, 124, 175, 181, 200, 212-3, 222, 235, 265, 396, 444, 450, 460, 466, 477-8, 490, 492, 507, 519, 531, 545,

This welcome collection of 27 sonatas is taken from across Scarlatti's output. They are not in their usual pairs: Weiss does his own pairings based on related keys with the whole programme planned to make a satisfying key-sequence. He eschews repeats, presumably in the interests of getting so many sonatas on one disc; for some of the shorter sonatas this can leave one a bit short-changed. All are played on a single instrument – a copy of a Ruckers-Hemsch harpsichord – rather than on at least two, as on many recent Scarlatti recordings. This highlights the variety of Scarlatti's figurations and harmonic genius. The playing is impressive though perhaps not always as nuanced as I would have liked. Weiss wears his virtuosity lightly, with the overall result being a bit safe and lacking some of the excitement that playing more 'on the edge' can give this music. But it is as good an introduction as any to the wide stylistic range of Scarlatti's music. *Noel O'Regan*

**Telemann Overture & 3 Concertos** Dan Laurin *rec*, Mark Caudle *gamba*, Arte del Suonatori 76' 45"

BIS-CD-1185

Recorder concertos in C, F; Concerto in a for rec & gamba, Overture

A couple of months ago I received an email telling me of an exciting forthcoming CD, marking the collaboration of the Polish Baroque orchestra, Arte dei Suonatori, with Rachel Podger. I have to confess that I had never heard of the group previously, so I was slightly surprised when this disc arrived unheralded. Dan Laurin is one of the world's leading recorder virtuosos, and here he teams up with the Poland-based English gambist, Mark Caudle, in a programme of three concertos and an overture by Telemann. The playing is very exciting, indeed – I am really looking forward to the Vivaldi



set! I found some of Laurin's ornamentation a little overdone, although most of what he does is clean (especially in the fantastic acoustic). The gamba is the ideal partner in concertos, and the popular A minor double concerto gets put through its paces with great drama in the hands of two wonderful soloists and a very fine orchestra indeed. Definitely a group destined for great things. *BC*

**Telemann *Pariser Quartette* 1-6**  
Freiburger Barock-Consort (Karl Kaiser *fl*,  
Petra Müllejan *vl*, Kristin von der Goltz  
*vlc*, Hille Perl *gamba*, Santana *lute*) 71' 34"  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 901787

These are the six quartets published in Hamburg in 1730 by the ever-commercially-minded Telemann. There are two concertos (in five and three movements respectively), two sonatas (both in four-movement da chiesa format) and two suites (seven and five movements). The pieces are scored for flute, violin, gamba (or cello in Sonata 1 and Suite 1) and continuo. The players listed on the reverse of the CD package play the four instruments I've mentioned plus lute. The publicity shot in the book is missing one of the ladies and has gained someone I think I recognise as a harpsichordist, and my ears also tell me there's a keyboard involved – somehow the original parts suggest that the lute should play with the three concertino instruments and the harpsichord only when the string bass joins in. These minor foibles aside, I have to say this is another disc that has ravished my ears this month – the balance between the instruments, the richness of a texture with two basses and two continuo instruments (wow!), and the music itself are almost too much. If the name of Telemann has you running from the room for fear of boredom, this is the cure. If you don't enjoy this, you're possibly in need of a good shake. *BC*

**Vivaldi *Late Concertos*** Giuliano Carmignola *vl*, Venice Baroque Orchestra, Andrea Marcon 71' 47"  
Sony Classical SK 87733  
RV235, 251, 258, 296, 386, 389

This is the third CD by Carmignola and Co. that I'd had the pleasure of reviewing. He is fast becoming my favourite virtuoso violinist, having all the thrill of the tightrope walker when playing in the stratosphere (at least as far as the baroque violin is concerned) and all the grace of a prima ballerina in the lyric sections. The strings of the Venice Baroque Orchestra (5.4.3.2.1 with archlute, theorbo/guitar, and harpsichord/organ) create a sumptuous sound-world into which he floats effortlessly. Vivaldi emerges triumphant as well – these are pieces which Stravinsky clearly didn't know... A fantastic CD! *BC*

**Vivaldi *La senna festeggiante*** Carolyn Sampson, Hilary Summers, Charles Daniels Andrew Foster-Williams SATB  
*Gloria e Imeneo* Tuva Semmingsen, Hilary Summers *mS A*,  
The King's Consort, Robert King 144' 21"  
Hyperion CDA67361/2 (2 CDs in box)

It is seldom anything other than a complete pleasure to receive a Hyperion issue and this release certainly maintains their enviable standard. In the booklet, Michael Talbot is allowed a full eight pages to put this unfamiliar and charming repertoire into context, offer helpful plot summaries and make other necessary comments. These notes also appear in French and German. The lengthy Italian libretti, however, are translated into English only. As one who is quick to criticise recording companies who offer short measure for our money I also must emphasise just how much music there is here – two very well filled discs. These serenatas – a hybrid genre with elements of cantata, oratorio ad opera – are sequences of recitatives (mostly short) and arias/ensembles designed to divert and flatter the assembled aristocracy. The vocal demands of some of these are extraordinary with all the singers requiring a wide range and good agility, though it has to be said that the music for bass in *La Senna*... is particularly outrageous and full marks and a medal for gallantry under fire to Andrew Foster-Williams for so splendidly rising (and falling!) to the occasion. In this work I found myself doubting the pitch of much of the recorders' music – should it not really be at the lower octave? – and wondering whether it was wise to expand their role to quite this extent. It may have been partly in reaction to these feelings that I enjoyed the more sombre sounds of *Gloria & Imeneo* more – mezzo and alto with just strings/continuo. Impressive low singing distinguishes the ladies too and the whole ensemble is its usual alert and musical self. Full marks and thanks to all concerned. *David Hansell*

**Les maîtres de la vielle: baroque French music for Hurdy-Gurdy** Matthias Loibner & Riccardo Delfino *hurdy-gurdy*, Laurent Le Chenadec *bsn*, Thomas Wimmer *gamba*, Norbert Zeilberger *hpscd* 71' 02"  
cpo 999 864-2 ££  
Music by Dugué, Buterne, Dupuits, etc

Amazing though it may seem, well over 150 publications of music for hurdy-gurdy appeared in France during the second quarter of the 18th century and continued to trickle from the presses for some years more, reflecting a re-design and subsequent surge in popularity of the instrument. From being the tool of busking beggars, it rose in both musical and social esteem to become the instru-

ment of choice for many a middle class or aristocratic lady, who, naturally enough, required a repertoire. And here is a representative cross-section of what she played, both solos and duos, with and without continuo. The virtuosity of these performers has crossed my *EMR*-path before on a Naxos disc of Boismortier and I was therefore happy to be astonished again by their control of and, indeed, artistry with what is apparently a limited instrument. Here is as nimbly played passage-work and as neatly played ornaments as would find anywhere. Inevitably, there are some spiciness moments when modulations take the music beyond the regions that the drones can reasonably be deemed to inhabit, but after an ouch or two, one does adapt to and even start to enjoy them! This music may be little more than a footnote to the achievements of the age of Rameau, but it well worth exploring. *David Hansell*

#### CLASSICAL

**Boccherini *Stabat mater* (1781)**  
Ermannuela Galli S, Piccolo Concerto Wien, Roberto Sensi 59' 24"  
ORF CD 307  
Haydn *Divertimento in b Hob V:3*

This is a new work to me. From the opening chord of F minor, the traditional *Stabat Mater* key, I thought that the work might prove to be an imitation of Pergolesi's better-known masterpiece. How wrong I was! I was bowled over by both the quality of the work and the performance. Boccherini composed the work in 1781 for soprano solo and string quartet with double bass, but in 1800 revised and extended it for three soloists. This recording is of the original version which, lasting about forty minutes, requires considerable stamina from the soloist. Ermannuela Galli is admirable in this role, with great purity of tone, yet with sufficient vibrato at appropriate places of emotional intensity. Piccolo Concerto Wien complement her solos with most stylish playing on period instruments. The work seems more unified than either the Pergolesi or the earlier Vivaldi setting (both in F minor), with a well-planned key structure and contrasting emotional content to each movement. Starting in the 'pathetic' keys of F minor and C minor, the central movements work their way sharpwards in major keys. *Quis est homo* is treated as an accompanied recitative, which leads into increasingly operatic-style arias. Most notable is the *Tu nati*, starting with a truly operatic allegro but suddenly moving to a slow F minor section at the word 'crucifixo'. In the final movements the work reverts to the opening keys of C minor and F minor, concluding with a gentle *Amen* in the major key.

The title *Divertimento* is somewhat misleading for the three-movement filler. It complements the *Stabat Mater* with all three movements in the tonic minor key, and is scored for two violins and bass (cello doubled by violone here). The first violin part is particularly notable for its virtuoso passages, soaring at one place to a high B. This is a most enjoyable record that can be thoroughly recommended.

Ian Graham Jones

**Cartellieri Gioas Re di Giuda** Katharina Kammerloher Gioas, Gesa Hoppe Sebia, Ingeborg Herzog Atalia, Thomas Quasthoff Giojada, Hugo Mallet Ismaele, Jörg Hempel Matan, Bachchor Gütersloh, Detmolder Kammerorchester, Gernot Schmalfuss 96' 15" (2 CDs) Dabringhaus und Grimm 338 0748-2

Antonio Cartellieri was born to Italian parents in Danzig in 1772. He died three weeks short of his 35th birthday in 1807 after a brief but successful career in Vienna. The first part of this richly orchestrated oratorio received its premiere in 1795 at a concert that also saw the debut of Beethoven's First Piano Concerto. Adapting an old text by Metastasio to the demands of a new age, Cartellieri wrote a vivid setting, full of a splendid arias and ensemble pieces, of the biblical story of religious restoration that had once provided Handel with the plot of his 1733 opera *Athalia*. Here it receives an exemplary performance by a talented cast of soloists under the well-judged direction of Gernot Schmalfuss. The accompanying booklet provides excellent information both about the composer and this his most extended work, even though the libretto, which appears in Italian and German, lacks an English translation. This however is the only, very minor, drawback to an issue that is sure to give a great deal of pleasure to anyone with an interest in the vocal music of late 18<sup>th</sup> Century Viennese classicism. David J. Levy

**Carvalho Testoride Argonauta** Elisabeth von Magnus Icaro, Curtis Rayam Testoride, Lucia Meeuwssen Irene, Daniela Hennecke Leucippo, Lina Akerlund Nicea, Orch. Baroque du Clemencic Consort, René Clemencic dir 124' 30" (2 CDs) Nuova Era 7376 ££

This two disc set is two-for-the-price-of-one re-release of a 1990. The orchestra includes such illustrious names as violinist P. Szüts and bassoonist M. Minkowski, and they do make a very commendable contribution, to which the recorded sound does not really do justice. The singers, on the whole, come over better, although the coloratura of what is possibly best described as a Neapolitan opera is sometimes a little too much for some of them. The piece ends with a chorus in honour

of the King of Portugal, and the soloists blend well. The texts are given only in Italian, although there is an English synopsis. I don't think the piece is destined to be rescued from obscurity on a regular basis, but it's very nice to have this recording, made at live performances in Paris. BC

**Clementi Early Piano Sonatas** Susan Alexander-Max fp 71' 08" Naxos 8.555808 £ Op 2/4, 8/1 & 3, 13/6, WO14

This disc contains an interesting selection of Clementi's early sonatas, starting with works containing two fast movements and progressing to those containing a slower middle movement. None of these pieces are included in the four volume collection of Clementi sonatas edited by Adolf Ruthardt and published by Peters, which is a pity because they are more interesting than some that are. The quality of the recording is second to none and Susan Alexander-Max is a distinguished performer who makes excellent use of the knee levers on the reproduction Rosenberger fortepiano in the fast movements as well as the slow. This instrument was chosen because Clementi travelled to Europe in the 1780s and the performer felt that its Viennese action suited the music. It serves her purposes well although purists should note that in 1781 Clementi had a Broadwood harpsichord and fortepiano (with English action, of course) shipped to Paris. Excellent value for money. Margaret Cranmer

**Haydn Symphonies 70 – 78** The Hanover Band, Roy Goodman dir 209' 37" (3 discs) Hyperion Heliodor CDH55120-22 £

There are more delights here, following on from the reissue of nine symphonies of the years around 1760 from the same performers, reviewed in the November *EMR*. This time we have nine symphonies from roughly twenty years later, few of them generally familiar (only 73, 'La chasse', has a nickname), all of them in their own ways marvellously rewarding. If you thought 73 was exciting, try 72, also in D, which has a first horn part of staggering difficulty – and which, despite its numbering, probably dates from 1763, and was intended to display the capabilities of the full quartet of horns Haydn had then just acquired. Throughout these performances, the balance between intensity and relaxation, solo and ensemble, winds and strings is close to ideal. Roy Goodman directs the readings with great skill and insight, though I did find his harpsichord continuo over-insistent at times. Tempos are well chosen, mainly swift, and well sustained; high drama and high spirits jostle as they only do in Haydn. If most of the works

are in familiar keys for the repertory, no. 78 in C minor, with its turbulent, fragmentary thematic material, comes as a welcome contrast. Short but lively booklet notes, and clear, nicely focused recording quality, add to the attractiveness of these re-issues from sessions held in 1990 and 1991. Peter Branscombe

**Haydn Piano Trios Hob. XV:27-30** Ensemble Trazom 73' 34" Arte Nova 74321 92814 2 £

Four of Haydn's excellent late piano trios, played by a group new to me – although the violinist, Susanne von Bauszner, also appears with Trio 1790 on the Haydn discs I reviewed in February and September last year. The performances are spirited, and the balance and ensemble are first-rate; yet I can't say I listened with unalloyed pleasure. For one thing, the violinist's intonation is occasionally suspect. This is not a fault I noticed on the earlier discs: it may be that the new group hasn't yet played together enough, or possibly that von Bauszner and the fortepiano tuner are not in total agreement about which temperament to use. Whatever the cause, the problem should have been resolved before the recording was made. More seriously, the keyboard part is played on what is said to be a 'copy after Stein'. It works well enough in Hob. XV:30, presumably written in Vienna after Haydn's return from his second visit to London (although the knee-operated 'moderator' is a pretty dubious addition to a Stein copy when he never fitted anything of the kind himself). But in Hob. XV:27-29, written for Therese Jansen, anything other than a 1790s English grand is apt to sound rather silly, especially in the powerful right-hand octave passages. It's not so much that a Stein lacks sufficient volume, but its much crisper dampers inevitably make rapid octaves sound staccato. Again, the moderator, even granted that it was a normal addition to Viennese-made instruments by the time of Stein's death in 1792, is a poor substitute for the magical effect of Broadwood's *una corda*. When will performers and record producers wake up to the fact that the 'Viennese fortepiano' was only one of a rich variety of keyboard instruments in use at the end of the 18th century?

Richard Maunder

**Haydn Die Schöpfung** Simone Kermes Gabriel, Dorothee Miels Eva, Steve Davislim Uriel, Johannes Mannov Raphael, Locky Chung Adam, Balthasar-Neumann-Chor, Balthasar-Neumann-Ensemble, Thomas Hengelbrock dir 99' 15" (2 CDs) DHM 05472 77537 2

There seems to have been no new recording of *Die Schöpfung* for some years,

and it's good to welcome this latest version. Right from The Representation of Chaos, with its clarity of part-writing and firm tread, this is a performance that grips the attention. Few of the performers will be familiar names to readers, but there is no need to fear that means any lack of distinction: all the soloists are fine, and the choir (28 voices) and orchestra (built on 6-5-4-4-2 strings) are excellent. The recording is quite close, yet spacious and comfortable, easily able to convey both the grand tuttis and the delicate chamber textures. Thomas Hengelbrock sets and sustains lively tempos, and there is no lack of weight and breadth where these are required, as well as a freshness and light appropriate to Haydn's depiction of 'the first of days'. An imaginative realization of the keyboard continuo on a copy of a fortepiano from J.A. Stein's best years is a further welcome feature. The full sung text is clearly printed in four languages, and there is a useful introductory essay.

Peter Branscombe

**Haydn Arianna a Naxos, Scots Songs, English Canzonettas** Catherine Bott S, Melvyn Tan fp, Alison Bury vln, Lisa Beznosiuk fl, Anthony Pleeth vlc, Frances Kelly harp 47' 45" (rec 1985) Meridian CDE 84495

This elderly CD makes a welcome re-appearance for Meridian's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, offering a very short but attractive programme, beautifully sung and played. The ambience may be rather too spacious for such intimate music ('With verdure clad' is performed in Clementi's keyboard adaptation), yet the alternate performances of seven Scots songs in lively instrumental versions, and characterfully sung by Catherine Bott, makes a pleasing start to the programme. Her versatility is equally striking in Scots dialect, the number from *The Creation*, and in the Italian cantata. Melvyn Tan plays the fortepiano with wit and sensitivity. Less information is given about the music in the leaflet than was the case in 1985 – Ms Bott is no longer credited with the good note and translation of *Arianna*, but there are now short entries about each of these talented musicians. This is a welcome re-appearance.

Peter Branscombe

**Krebs Complete organ works vol. 4** John Kitchen (Organ of The Reid Concert Hall, University of Edinburgh) 75' 11" Priory PRCD 7638

John Kitchen's continues his tour of the organ music of Krebs, and of Scottish organs, with the fourth in his series of six CDs. As with the previous CDs, *EMR* readers might be unhappy with organs so far removed from those that Krebs would have known, but this is still a series worth listening too. Krebs is almost unique

amongst organist-composers in that his own organ still exists in good condition, so any recording made other than at Schloss Altenburg is open to the same question. This CD includes many of his small-scale free works together with a few chorale preludes. The choice of registrations is generally effective, if not entirely authentic, and the Ahrend organ has survived the usually discredited 1970s rather well. There is some slightly unsteady timing in the opening section of the first track – very tempting to do in Rococo music of this type, but best avoided. The Praeludium in F (track 4) demonstrates the exciting sound of the organ's pleno, and the Fantasia in F (track 4) demonstrates the more tinkly sounds that no self-respecting 1970s organ would be complete without. John Kitchen is a persuasive and musical player.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**The Mozart Album** Lorenzo Alpert bassoon, Cordula Breuer flute, Concerto Köln Capriccio 67 014 71' 06"

*Andante in C K 315, Betulia liberata Overture, Bassoon Concerto K 191, Symphonies 29 and 35*

This is a very enjoyable disc by the excellent Concerto Köln orchestra, whose ensemble and intonation it would be hard to fault, and who play in a lively style with exemplary precision and plenty of dynamic contrasts (there's some lovely pianissimo playing, for example, in the second movement of K.201). A bonus mark, too, for using an unobtrusive but audible harpsichord continuo in music from Salzburg and Vienna; and another for the fast one-in-a-bar minuet in K.385 instead of the usual plod. I have a few reservations about the bassoon concerto and the flute andante, where the band based on strings 6-5-4-3-2 seems much too big (Mozart's Salzburg concertos are more likely to have been accompanied by at most 2-2-2-1-1). And, although the Savary Jr bassoon is a beautiful instrument and is most interesting to hear, it was made over fifty years after the concerto was written and is rather a daft choice for a period performance. Apart from anything else, it makes the sensational high B-flats sound much too easy! But Alpert and Breuer play very nicely, and my niggles don't stop me strongly recommending this recording. It's particularly good to have a chance of hearing the astonishing *Betulia liberata* overture in D minor, with its Don Giovanni-like brass, written when Mozart was only fifteen.

Richard Maunder

**Johann Gottlieb Naumann Aci e Galatea osia I Ciclopi Amanti** Brigitte Geller Galatea, Martin Homrich Aci, Klaus Häger Polifemo, Christiane Libor Dorinda, Ulf Bästlein Orgonte, Markus Ullmann Lisia, Wilhelm Schwinghammer Nettuno,

Kammerchor Stuttgart, Barockorchester Stuttgart, Frieder Bernius dir. 106' 42" Orfeo C 222 022 H

This is an excellent recording of a wonderful performance of an opera I'd never heard before. I've long been a fan of Naumann's church music, and I'm more than pleased to report that his last theatrical piece is full of the melodic grace and skilfully handled harmonies that are so typical of his other work. The singers get into character very well, only Aci struggling with the virtuoso coloratura. There is an additional pair of star-crossed lovers to liven up the familiar plot, and much use is made particularly of the woodwind to colour the atmosphere – there's some fantastic clarinetting in one of the early arias. The recording was made over two nights in 2001, when the 200th anniversary of Naumann's death was celebrated in Stuttgart. It's a pity it takes such an event to bring these gems to wider note. I hope this first class CD release will spread the work even further! You'll need to read Italian or German to follow the text, though.

BC

**Paisiello Il Barbiere Di Siviglia** Antonio Siragusa Almaviva, Anna Maria Dell'Osto Rosina, Luciano Di Pasquale Bartolo, Pietro Spagnoli Figaro, Donato Di Gioia Don Basilio, Angelo Nardinocchi Lo Svegliato, Stefano Consolini Il Giovinetto, Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Lirico Di Trieste, Giuliano Carella, 114' 04" (2 CDs) Dynamic CDS417/1-2

I have long enjoyed this glorious comic opera since first acquiring it on LP with Graziella Sciutti in the role of Rosina. Paisiello wrote his Barber of Seville in St. Petersburg in 1782 and it is full of inventive music in both sentimental and pointedly witty mode. Mozart heard the piece when it was produced in Vienna and it encouraged him to take up its Beaumarchais sequel as the subject of his *Marriage of Figaro*. Rossini's 1816 setting of Paisiello's theme, with a different libretto, may have displaced its predecessor from the mainstream operatic repertoire but the earlier opera has always maintained a precarious toehold both on the stage and in the catalogue of recorded music by virtue of its own undoubted and distinctive virtues. I may be rare but am surely not unique in continuing to prefer Paisiello's treatment of the plot to its ever-popular Rossinian successor. This new recording of the opera, while not ideal, gives a more than acceptable outing to a comic drama that is both Paisiello's masterpiece and a high point in the history of opera buffa.

Catherine the Great liked her operas to be short, and the need to satisfy the demands of an audience few of whom spoke Italian encouraged the composer to construct a taut score replete with ingrat-



ating melodies and lively comic situations. The result is a work that has an enduring appeal that far outweighs its undoubted historical significance as a spur to Mozart's creative genius and a precursor to Rossini's best-known comedy. There are those grave souls who turn up their noses at everything from the tradition of Italian opera buffa, and nothing I say will encourage such unfortunates to give this recording a try; but for everyone else I can almost guarantee that they will find much to enjoy in this recording from what seems to have been a highly appreciated production from performances first given in Trieste in the year 2,000.

David J. Levy

**Wagenseil Concerti per Organo** Elisabeth Ullmann, Piccolo Concerto Wien 62' 27"  
Symphonia SY 01194

The Piccolo Concerto Wien is indeed very small. What impressed me most about this CD was the excellent balance achieved by single strings (with bassoon, archlute and harpsichord) and the organ in the Lutheran Church at Rust in Austria, most of which dates from around 1800 – some of the pipes were melted down during the First World War. Another mid-century minor composer, Wagenseil reveals himself a gifted composer, with original ideas, a knack for combining catchy themes with sequential passage-work, some virtuosity, and sudden shifts into the minor key. The playing of soloist and accompanying band are faultless, and I think I might go off and buy the other Wagenseil recording the group has made – quartets for three cellos and double bass (or two violas, cello and bass). This is delightful music in nicely captured, neat performances. BC

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**Annum per annum: Arvo / Chant grégorien** Aare-Paul Lattik org, Ensemble Vox Clamantis, Jaan-Eik Tilve dir; Aare-Paul Lattik org 71' 02"

Arion ARN 68595

**Pärt Annum per annum** Mein Weg hat Gipfel, Pari intervallo Trivium + chant

Strictly, this is only relevant to us to the extent that about half of its running-time (8 out of 12 tracks) are devoted to chant, with four organ pieces by Pärt (though, unless you know the Pärt pieces, it seems from the packaging that the whole disc is choral). His *Annum per annum* is the most substantial item, a quarter-hour organ mass with some chant, chiefly the Preface. The chant is confidently sung by a mixed group of ten, though I'd rather be told more about the music than what the pretentious booklet-notes offer. Pärt's music is nearer chant than most of the music inbetween. CB

**Extempore II: a modern Mass for the Feast of St Michael based on the medieval melody L'homme armé** Orlando Consort, Perfect Houseplants 62' 47"  
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907319

This feels more disciplined than *Extempore I*. It may be fanciful to think that it is because the music uses the form of a mass with propers (for the feast of St Michael), and also because there is the thematic link of the 15th-century tune 'L'homme armé' [Josquin's setting is on the Archiv anthology reviewed on p. 15]. It may also be that the extempore aspect is more limited, since each track is allocated the name of a member of the ensemble, presumably because he was (to a greater or less extent) its composer. Some of the slower tracks drag a bit, but the Gloria, for instance, would waken any drowsy congregation. The booklet reminds us that Michaelmas is one of the quarter days when debts should be paid: so if you receive a copy on Sept. 29th, it could be a subtle hint. CB

**La Tarantella Antidotum Tarantulae** Lucilla Galeazzi S, Marco Beasley T, Alfio Antico voice, L'Arpeggiata, dir. Christina Pluhar 51' 22"  
Alpha 503

This is an intriguing and utterly successful exploration of the tarantula myth and its associated rituals and symbols. The music ranges from the *Antidotum Tarantulae* printed by Kircher in 1641 to a song that Alfio Antico wrote one evening during the recording sessions. The opening item, incidentally, is based on a 1954 recording by the great song collector Alan Lomax, who died last summer. Mark Beasley's 'slightly folksy' tenor voice (to quote John Bryan's review on p. 17) is highly effective here. The booklet is excellent: a model demonstration of how, with scholarship and sensitivity, a thematic mix of art and folk music can avoid the usual pitfalls and become a coherent programme that is instructive and entertaining. CB

#### MUSIQUE D'ABORD

Harmonia reissues at bargain price

**Charpentier Deux Oratorios** Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 61' 02"  
HMA 195066 (rec 1979-81)  
*Caecilia virgo et martyr* H397, *Filius prodigus* H399, *Magnificat* H73

**Muffat Armonico tributo** Ensemble 415, Chiara Banchini, Jasper Christensen 69' 08"  
HMA 1951581 (rec 1995)

**Handel Sonates en trio op. 2** London Baroque  
HMA 1951379 (rec 1991) 58' 10"

**Handel Concerti grossi op. 6 (nos 1, 2, 6, 7,**

**10)** Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 67' 54! (rec 1994)  
HMA 1951507

**Rameau Pièces de clavecin en concerts** Christophe Rousset *hpscd*, Ryo Terakado vln, Kaori Uemura *gamba* 73' 32"  
HMA 1951418 (rec 1992)

These are all worth hearing: I'd personally pick the first as my favourite, since apart from its merit it is one of those early Arts Florissants performances that helped put Charpentier on the map. I wonder, though, whether the *Magnificat* is fundamentally misinterpreted: it mostly sounds jolly, but being built on the minor descending fourth ground (stated 89 times, according to a note at the end of the MS score) that is associated with laments, perhaps it should have a different mood. Unless you are a systematic collector, the Biber/Muffat anthology in the following group is a better bet than the complete *Armonico Tributo*. The others are all stimulating. CB

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#### BAROQUE ESPRIT

Deutsche Harmonia Mundi reissues at bargain price

**Lasso Prophetiae Sibyllarum** Cantus Cölln, Konrad Junghänel 69' 43" (rec 1993)  
DHM 05472 77854 2

**Il Pastor Fido: Madrigals** Cantus Cölln, Konrad Junghänel 72' 28" (rec 1991)  
DHM 05472 77853 2

**Biber, Muffat Sonatas** Freiburger Barockorchester Consort 59' 00" (rec 1993)  
DHM 05472 77844 2

**Purcell Dioclesian Suite; Handel Concerto Grosso op. 6/6, Il duello amoroso** Nancy Argenta, Michael Chance S cT, Freiburger Barockorchester, Gottfried von der Goltz 68' 48" (rec 1993)  
DHM 05472 77858 2

These recordings from the early 1990s are all worth buying. My favourite is the Biber/Muffat. The latter is represented by nos 2 & 5 of *Armonico Tributo* (most listeners will recognise the marvellous Passacaglia of no. 5, bringing the disc to a fine close). No. 2 begins with rich Corellian suspensions which need rather more weight than single strings for the tempo adopted and a Handelian *Aria*. There are also nos. 2, 3, 5 & 11 of Biber's *Tam aris quam aulis*, which don't need orchestral forces. Whet your appetite for next year's joint anniversary.

The Purcell is mostly stylish, but I was disappointed by the singing of Nancy Argenta. I thought I liked her voice and

felt somewhat indignant at Andrew Benson-Wilson's brief comment on p. 8 of our last issue. But the Purcell doesn't have quite the right tone and she doesn't use her vibrato in the Handel in a way that helps the music. (That's one way to lose a customer!) Op. 6/6 is the most enjoyable item on the disc.

Neither of the vocal ensemble discs are easy listening. *Il pastor fido* contains 18 settings of Guarini, the most dramatic being the opening five pieces in d'India's Book VIII, *Se tu, Silvio crudel*, a continuous scene from Act IV of the play (which is no excuse for failing to track the individual sections). Any SSATB quintet that has managed the *Lamento d'Arianna* and wants a challenge might like to try this; the singers here meet it successfully. Other composers include Gagliano, Grandi, Marenzio, Monteverdi and Schütz.

There is the same parsimony in layout in the Lassus disc, which treats the whole Sybilline prophecy as a single item. This is as convincing a performance as I've heard (though not everyone will appreciate a lute continuo and I won't embark on the problems of *chiavette*), and is followed by 15 madrigals and chansons. I've been a bit critical of the Cantus Cölln CDs that I've reviewed previously, so it is nice to be able to recommend these. CB

#### DVDs

*These were received too late for the last issue, and I doubt if anyone will want to buy them now. We hope to review them in December.*

**Baroque Christmas Concert from the Cathedral in Freiburg.** Barbara Bonney, Matthias Goerne SB, Freiburg Barock-orchester, German Brass, Freiburg Doms-knaben. 60' (rec 1999)  
TDK DV FBBCC  
Music by Bach, Handel & Mozart

**Gloria in Excelsis Deo: der Thomanerchor singt Weihnachtslieder** 59' + 29' film on the choir (rec 1995)  
TDK  
DV-CHTBC

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*I had intended to leave the following review until next month, since the Books & Music section conveniently finished at the end of page 6. But there is space for it here, since a few CD reviews that I hoped I would find before finishing this issue are still missing (my fault, not the reviewers').*

#### MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

**Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding** edited by John Rink. Cambridge UP, 2002. xiii + 245p. ISBN 0 521 78300 3 £40.00 hb; 0 521 78862 5 £14.95 (pb)

This is not specifically devoted to HIP, as I suppose we can now abbreviate it. There is a good and undogmatic chapter on 'Historical performance and the modern performer' by Peter Walls, which mercifully touches lightly on the theoretical controversy. One page (30), which mentions Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart and Bach, claims: 'All the composers examined in this essay combine very precise instrumental preferences with a willingness to acknowledge the exigencies of real performing situations.' An interesting remark in Janet Ritterman's chapter 'On teaching performance' is that Czerny required the music of contemporary composers to be 'executed in the style in which he wrote', an instruction which is fundamental for HIP, though he was thinking of national rather than historical styles.

With an average of 15 pages each for the 16 chapters, most topics can be covered either very generally or by selecting isolated examples. Some of the more psychological contributions don't take us very far: much of the work seems not yet to address questions that are sufficiently sophisticated and seems not to go much further than testing common sense. Even the idea that listening to Mozart is good for you, whether in the womb (mentioned briefly on p. 92) or the classroom, doesn't (as far as I know) distinguish Mozart from Dittersdorf and show whether it is the period style rather than the individual genius which has the effect. If bodily movement is so important in front of an audience, have there been experiments evaluating the same performances on video and in sound only? Similarly, can one tell when a player is reading the notes and when playing from memory when hearing a CD or broadcast? The list of possible alleviations for performance nerves (p. 173) is so extensive that one wonders how many more one might think of: two obvious omissions are having or not having sex before the concert – this is a matter that seems important in sport. In fact, judging by the bibliographical references, there is little common research with sport; I wonder whether there should be more collaboration, since both are dependent on close mind and body interaction with many decisions made with no apparent time for conscious evaluation.

There is plenty to dip into here, but I'm not sure how far it really takes us into understanding how performance works. I found nothing about the main problem I have (apart from lack of technique): the apparent absence of stage fright although I consistently play better (or at least feel that I am doing so) at rehearsals or workshop sessions rather than at performances. Clifford Bartlett

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## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

Your review of John Butt's *Playing with History* didn't really do it justice, if I may say so. It would be a bit unflattering to expect him to have written a 'how to do it' book about historical performance. No one who thinks deeply about the subject could do that now, except as a description of what modern performers like to do in turning vague writings from the past into performances we want to hear today. While hearing them talk about it sounds like a good idea, what can we expect them to say other than 'I do it like this because it sounds right to me'? Far more interesting is to think about what people have done with the *idea* of historical performance. John's book is an expertly guided tour of a mass of literature, literature (if that's the word) that few of us would want to read undigested, but that nevertheless offers many helpful ways of thinking about what it means to use historical information in performance. John's commentary on all this is invaluable. And did you find it so hard to read? I thought it was pretty digestible, considering the abysmal communication skills of some of the people he's writing about. As for that persistently ironic acronym (surely it *was* ironic?), it serves to remind the reader over and over that the whole notion of historical performance, however trendy, is a delusion. The musical results, thanks heavens, have been wonderful, but that's a tribute to modern musicianship, not historical reconstruction.

Daniel Leech-Wilkinson

*I was aware that I'd been following my hobby-horse rather than reviewing the book, but the musicological journals will deal with the substance and arguments. I'm still disappointed that John didn't write the sort of book that he with his foot on both sides of the 'divide' could write so well, one which could represent the different outlook of those whose main activity is being practitioners, not writers and thinkers (not that they don't think, but they do so in different ways from musicologists). Most of the theory follows rather than guides practice, and I have doubts how much the post-Taruskin theorising has to do with musical practice.*

*It's not that John can't write well, but there wasn't a clear-enough thread of argument to lead me through the book. Or put another way, I'm pre-modern and like a beginning, a middle and an end. (In fact, I'm so Aristotelian that I'd put plot before character.)*

Dear Clifford,

In your review of Rameau for bass (*EMR* Dec. 2002) you state that 'these are hardly pieces to sing with too much decorum'. Your use of the word *decorum* to mean 'somewhat restrained' is quite different from its use in rhetoric, where it means 'speaking appropriately' (Hogarth calls it 'fitness'). Thus, if shouting and screaming are appropriate, this would qualify as 'decorous'. It would seem

that decorum in the rhetorical sense doesn't come in amounts, but tends to be either 'on' or 'off'. Judy Tarling

*I'm not sure if this is offered as interesting information (in which case, thank you) or as criticism; but if a word has a general meaning that differs from a technical one, surely the former is assumed unless in a technical context? If this were the Review of Historical Rhetoric, one would have to be careful; but in a review of a Rameau edition, if the rhetorical meaning was intended, it would have to be signposted in some way. It is a good example of a word which can mean the opposite of what it means in modern English. I was reminded of 'In reason's ear they all rejoice' in Addison's hymn, when from a modern viewpoint, the music of the spheres is contrary to reason.* CB

Dear Clifford,

'It sounds right' (*EMR* 86, p. 2) – how easily the words run off the tongue or pen! How insidiously they insinuate 'so that is how it would have been in the past'.

Musician and musicologist are of necessity playing different games, having different rules. Musical performance is art, not bound by facts or logic, demanding fancy; but, a performance done, it becomes historical fact: the moving finger has written. Study of historical practice is not art but science – history – and facts and logic are sacrosanct. Facts are determined by evidence. Fancy – taste, artistic judgment, intuition, feeling, call it what you will – is itself, without more solid support, worthless as evidence, for it varies so much according to time, place, fashion, and the individual performer or listener.

It is the received wisdom nowadays that small forces in baroque music favour vitality, attack, phrasing, articulation, perfect ensemble. These are precisely the adjectives used by a critic (*Musical Times*, Nov. 1899) eulogising Henry Coward's Sheffield Festival Chorus – 322 strong. The conductors – Manns, Henry Wood, Weingartner, no mean musicians – presumably thought that the sound was right. 'They knew no better then?' That is beside the point: the issue is not knowledge but artistic judgment – fancy. Burney approved of large forces – over 500 strong – at the 1784 Handel Commemoration. Did he know no better? He was there at the time and had played in Handel's band under the composer.

Any critic of reviewer who finds himself writing 'it sounds right (or wrong)' should pause and consider whether he should not instead write 'I like (or don't like) it'. It would encourage clearer thinking.

John Catch

*It is perfectly possible for a critic to write 'It sounds wrong but I like it' (as I might have done about the Monteverdi Vespers recording reviewed in this issue) or vice-versa. More generally, I don't believe in so clear a distinction between science and art, knowledge and taste. Science and history tell us the truth as we believe it now. To take a very petty example, Burney believed*



that Handel was born in 1684, but we know that he celebrated the centenary a year too early (unless Handel was baptized more than 54 days after his birth). In any artistic matter, judgement depends on a juggling of fact and opinion; and one fact is how a performance sounds. For the purposes of EMR (and that doesn't imply that other criteria may not apply in different circles), we assume that our writers have applied considerable effort to study what 'scientific' information exists so that their natural subjectivity is continually checked against such scientific information as is available as well as their experience in platiying/singing/conducting and listening to the music. Any knowledge is an approximation to the truth. Scientific knowledge extends by every hypothesis being continually questioned. While musical hypotheses may not have the apparent objectivity of Newton's or Einstein's, they are nevertheless not entirely arbitrary. We cannot question every single statement we make. But surely it is sensible to believe that if someone who has studied a subject seriously and critically says 'It sounds right', his opinion is based on at least some comparatively objective criteria?

Dear Clifford,

I thought you might be interested to print a letter I sent to Glyndebourne.

Thank you for sending the recent questionnaire. Rather than reply to the detailed questions, which appear to have more to do with financial than artistic matters, I thought I would write you this letter. It will also explain why, with great regret, I have decided not to renew my subscription to the Glyndebourne Festival Society.

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For many years my wife and I looked forward to our visits to Mozart operas at Glyndebourne as highlights of the year; but more recently we have found the production styles less and less enjoyable, to the point where we no longer wish to see them. For my part, as a musicologist with a special interest in historical performance practice, I find it increasingly hard to accept the glaring incongruity between the use of a period orchestra and productions in the manner currently fashionable in the theatre. With a few reservations about details – to which I return below – I applaud the use of historical instruments and a corresponding style of performance, without which Mozart's supreme mastery of the classical orchestra cannot be fully realized. Moreover, as I know from my own experience in working with period groups, attempts at recreating 18th-century styles of performance can be most reinvigorating since every detail of balance, phrasing, tempi and the like has to be considered afresh, and as a result many new insights into the music are gained.

But there is obviously more to an opera than the score. While musicians may try to respect the composer's intentions, on the whole directors and stage designers, seemingly more concerned with stamping their own personalities on the productions, adopt a completely different approach and appear to have no interest in or even awareness of historical styles. I particularly deplore the use of minimalist sets, which contradict both the letter and the spirit of the original stage directions, and whose only virtue is their relatively low cost. Can designers not be persuaded to revive the almost-instantly changeable sets that were used by every 18th-century opera house and can still be seen at Drottningholm? Like the musicians with their period instruments, they might find the experience stimulating! Directors, too, seem to think that they must 're-interpret' works for modern times, even if this is plainly at odds with the composer's and librettist's ideas. To mention just one example, the glum production of *Don Giovanni* some five years ago robbed it of all humour, turning Giovanni himself into a thoroughly unpleasant character with no redeeming features. This is surely not what Mozart and da Ponte envisaged in their *opera buffa* (which, contrary to popular myth, is what Mozart called it in his own catalogue).

My reservations about the music concern points of detail rather than principle. The combination of period brass and timpani with an otherwise modern orchestra, as sometimes used in recent years, strikes me as rather absurd: if period brass is thought to be more suitable for Mozart, why not also period strings and woodwind? I am glad to see that the OAE will be used for *Idomeneo* next year, if not – regrettably – for *Figaro*: though I must say that the photograph of Kapoor's work on p.7 of your programme does not augur well for a congruous style of production. The use of a fortepiano rather than a harpsichord to accompany the recitatives has no historical justification, and appears to stem from the erroneous belief that the harpsichord was defunct in Vienna by the 1780s (for a detailed discussion of this point see Chapter 7 of my *Keyboard Instruments in Eighteenth-Century Vienna*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1998). And, although vocal appoggiaturas are sometimes added in recitatives nowa-

days (though rarely if ever in arias), many are still missing. They are not, as the late Frederick Neumann tried to argue, optional expressive devices, but rather a matter of musical grammar and notation. To omit one is simply to sing a wrong note.

Please be assured that my remarks are intended in a spirit of constructive criticism. I have many happy memories of Glyndebourne productions, and wish you well for the future.

Richard Maunder

Dear Clifford

In his glee at being invited to have yet another dig at my reviewing, Kah-Ming Ng has missed the point of my comment – which was about the upper voice of an organ accompaniment copying the soprano's line in a performance of Charpentier's Lamentations. Indeed, he misses several points in one go, starting with the fact that I did not write that the practice was 'unhistorical', merely that it was 'rarely required for pitch purposes and is equally rarely successful.'

In his letter, the only 'evidence' that KMN comes up with in support of the continuo player following the treble line is a reference from 1775 (100 years after the Lamentations) of how Italian (not French) female singers accompanied themselves on the harpsichord (not organ). What has that got to do Charpentier? The quotation doesn't even necessarily imply that it is the singer's vocal line that is doubled. The second sentence suggests that the accompaniments are chordal rather than melodic, and the final sentence could be interpreted as saying that, in moments when the singer is silent, the harpsichord plays the same line as the singer has just sung, or is just about to sing.

KMN also calls in aid Rousseau and his 'rule' of the 'unity of melody' (1753). But Rousseau was also referring to Italian music and, again, his comments are open to different interpretation. When he mentions unison accompaniment, could he be referring to everybody playing a single melodic line in unison, rather than any specific continuo practice? I wonder if North isn't referring to the same practice.

CB's editorial addition to KMN's letter fails to bring us any nearer to the point. Of course English 17th-century organ accompaniments were often intended to double, surely not just the treble and bass (as CB argues), but most, or even all, of the lines of a consort piece. This is also often the case in fugal writing of other periods and countries. But what is the relevance of that, or the Italian *partitura* of the Monteverdi period that CB also quotes, to later French practice?

Although neither KMN or CB have managed to find any evidence to support the practice

of consistently following the treble line, they might be interested in the following references, all of which seem to provide arguments against the practice: Agazzari 1607, Ebner c1653, Penna 1672, Albert 1640, Bologna ms P140, Gasparini 1708, Tosi 1757, Quantz 1752, CPEBach 1762 and Kollmann 1807.

But regardless of whether the practice is historical or not, it still sounded curious in the Charpentier piece, which only used soprano, bass viol (generally playing in the treble register) and continuo organ.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

I asked KMN for information because I wasn't at all familiar with French sources whereas he had written his doctoral thesis on the matter. I'm sorry he wasn't helpful. What is interesting in the written-out accompaniments by William Lawes, for instance, is that they make a point of doubling the top and bottom of the texture, rather than filling the middle, which is often out of reach of either hand: i.e. they do not function in the way a modern continuo player might expect, which would be to leave the treble undoubled and play in the middle. This doesn't, of course, prove anything about French practice, but it is an encouragement to experiment and not to take too seriously every elementary textbook. I don't know whether Charpentier would have doubled the melody, but it might be interesting to ask why the player whose performance began this debate did so and why it sounded wrong. This is an area of performance practice that is changing. I quoted the Sonata sopra Santa Maria because it is a clear instance of what would have seemed silly a decade ago being normal now.

CB

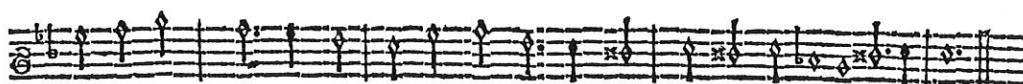
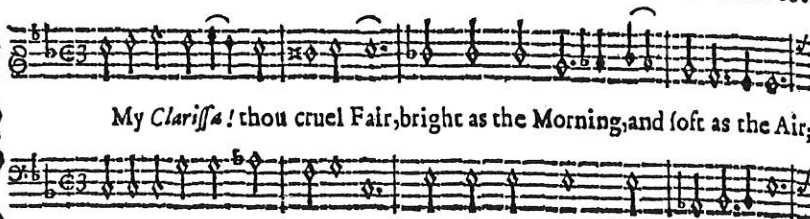


I must ask you to come quietly

A. 3. Voc.

Cantus Primus.

Mr. William Lawes.



Fresher than Flow'rs in May, yet far more sweet than they ; Love is the subject of my prayer.



When first I saw thee, I felt a flame,  
Which from thine Eyes like lightning came ;  
Sure it was Cupid's Dart,  
It peirc'd quite through my heart;  
Oh, could thy breath once feele the same !

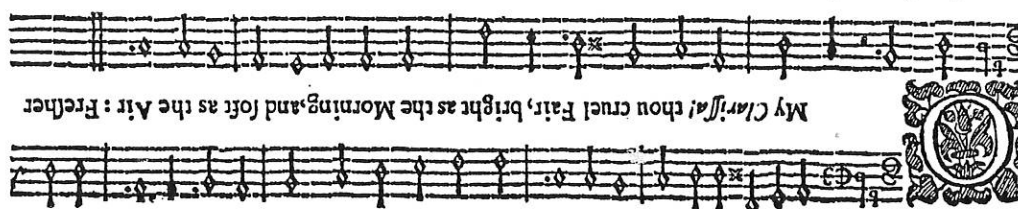
Let not such Fortune my Love beride ;  
Oh, let your rocky breast be mollifi'd !  
Send me not to my Grave  
Unpirttyed like a slave ;  
How can love such usage abide ?

A wound so powerfull would urge thy soule,  
Spight of a froward heart coyneys controule,  
And make thy love as fixt  
As is the heart thou prik'st,  
Forting thee with me to condole.

Symphatize with me a while in grief,  
This passion quickly will find out relief ;  
Cupid wil from his Bowers,  
Warm these chill hearts of ours,  
And make his power rule there in chief.

Then would the God of Love equall bee,  
Giving me ease, as by wounding thee ;  
Then would you never scorn,  
When like to me you burth ;  
At least not prove unkind to mee.

than flowers in May, yet far more sweet than they ; Love is the subject of my prayer.

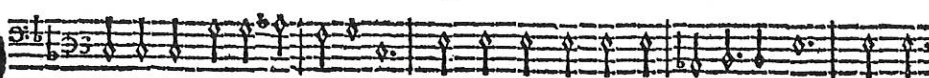


Cantus Secundus.

A. 3. Voc.

A. 3. Voc.

Bassus.



than flowers in May, yet far more sweet than they ; Love is the subject of my prayer.

One of the William Lawes songs included (in modern notation) in vol. 2 of the edition reviewed on p. 3. This is from *The Treasury of Muisick: containing Ayres and Dialogues To Sing to the Theorbo-Lute or Basse-Viol...* I, 1669, a reprint of a volume of 1659. The A-R edition includes a facsimile of an edition of 1672/3 which does not print a separate

continuo part. The critical notes make no mention of the difference, and do not show which sources have a continuo part and which don't. The differences between the vocal and continuo bass are hardly serious; more worrying is that the edition prints two versions of the song but the notes list all the sources mixed together.