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My brief comments on *The Maiden's Prayer* last month set me thinking about other repertoires to which my question 'Can you record a performance that is less than the idealistic best?' might apply. My mind turned to Bach and Holy Week. During a ten-day period he and his musicians performed passions or cantatas on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday (and, if Easter was early, the Annunciation as well). Even without believing that Bach's musicians were not of the best, it seems unlikely that each performance will have received the rehearsal and polish that lie behind the best modern recordings, though the cantata-less period of Lent did allow some time for advance preparation, as did the fallow time of Advent before the Christmas season.

How did Bach's rehearsals work? Intensive rehearsal now depends on the ability to stop and work at individual sections in detail – very difficult without letters or bar numbers, especially since only the director had a score. Modern performance also depends on a conductor with a sophisticated baton technique and the expectation that he can impose his will on the performers. No doubt every gesture or hint Bach gave would have been taken seriously. But how often did he direct, how often did he play? Laurence Dreyfus in *Bach's Continuo Group* p. 32 suggests that Bach was at various times 'hand-waving conductor, principal violinist and continuo harpsichordist'. Would he have played if he felt that the music needed the omnipresent injection of expression that the modern conductor gives?

I doubt whether the members of the Leipzig congregation (or even the performers) made detailed comparisons between performances from one year to another (the gap might be several years). We, however, have a variety of performances on disc and can rate one against another, and reviewers are expected to suggest a best buy. On the whole, our reviewers don't make a point of doing that (though it's not a matter of deliberate policy). Comparison is a useful as a way of placing various styles: it is helpful to contrast sewing-machine and rhythmically-free styles of performance, since that may give the reader a rough idea of whether one CD is more to his taste than another. But we must remember that Bach was giving one-off performances as part of a church service and that there is a danger that over-concern with perfection or control may undermine the practical and spiritual essence of the music. *CB*

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

MEDIEVAL GUIDE

A Performer's Guide to Medieval Music edited by Ross W. Duffin (*Early Music America: Performer's Guides to Early Music*) Indiana UP, 2000; pb 2003. xi + 599pp, £25.95. ISBN 0 253 21533 1

I'm sorry I didn't see this when it appeared, since I'm now recommending it three years too late. (We did not have effective contact with Indiana UP then: I hope that the arrival of a copy of this book without prompting is a sign that this will improve.) It is a book that everyone, listeners as well as students, who is interested in medieval music should read. Some chapter may be fast-read, some maybe follow their author's ideas too rigidly and need to be taken with a pinch of salt. But all are stimulating, up-to-date, readable and practical.

There are 40 contributions in three sections: repertoire, voices & instruments, and theory & practice. (That would make a nice example in a text-editing manual of the clarification obtained by the use of an Oxford comma and ampersands). The first section takes up nearly half the book. Some authors write primarily a history of their topic – and very well they do it: the book can be recommended for that alone. But not all relate it specifically to the intended reader, the performer, and the later sections do not touch explicitly on all the historical aspects covered. Perhaps each repertoire chapter should have been circulated to the authors of relevant sections in the other two sections for comment (though that would probably have delayed publication for several years). The section on instruments include chapters on untexted repertoire and ornamentation & improvisation. The theory section covers solmisation, 'musica ficta' (its author is rightly suspicious of the unhistorical usage of the term), proportion, notation & editions, and tuning.

This is all excellent if the reader is a student with access to a library that stocks all the relevant musicological editions. That may be true in the USA, but here there is a also a potential readership among the people who attend summer schools and early music fora workshops, put together programmes for local concerts, or entertain at village fetes and would like to go beyond *Greensleeves* and *Sumer is icumen in*. Thinking of the background of those at the Beauchamp Summer School, for instance, few have access to academic libraries: many are retired, and although most have academic backgrounds, their degrees were in various sciences, medicine, history, literature, archaeology, etc, and hardly any students or teachers have a music degree. The book needs more information on the extent and reliability of editions that are on sale to supplement references to the tantalisingly inaccessible *CMM*, *Polyphonic Music of the 14th Century*, etc.

LUDFORD

Nicholas *Ludford I: Mass* Inclina cor meum deus *and Antiphons* Transcribed and edited by David Skinner. (Early English Church Music, 44). xx + 98pp, £47.50.

I have previously written enough about the new, minimal-modernisation policy of EECM, especially on the Fayrfax volume two issues ago. As used here, it is readable by the small numbers of professional and amateurs who are likely to use it. I find that it is much easier to cope with horizontally than vertically: I'm not sure if that is a matter of the notation itself or the apparent smallness of the notes in relationship to the vertical distance they are apart – it may just be a reduction of my breadth of focus deriving from old age! But that is an excuse for the absence of any comment on the quality of Ludford's music, unnecessary anyway thanks to the ASV set of four festal masses. As the first volume of a new collection of his works, this begins with an extensive biography of the composer, based on the editor's Oxford D. Phil. thesis. The chief content is the mass, scored, in terms of clef, for C2, C4, C5 and F5 with a missing tenor, which in at least some sections can be derived from the chant. The first of the five antiphons, *Ave Maria ancilla trinitatis*, is related and has the same clef configuration, probably implying upward transposition by a fourth. It survives in the same source (Peterhouse 471-4) so offers no help in filling the gaps in the Mass. The other two reconstructable antiphons are from the same source: *Ave cuius conceptio* (G1, C1, C3, ?, C5) and *Domine Iesu Christe* (C1, C4, C5, ?, F5), but these have no chant to fall back on for their tenors. *Salve Regina* lacks two voices – it might have been worth including blank staves: it is misleading for the reader to be presented with just two or three staves and no visual difference between known tacets and either missing music or conjectural tacets. The final piece, *Gaude flore virginale*, survives only in one part, so is beyond reconstruction (except as a composition exercise). The simplicity of the source situation makes for a brief textual commentary of corrections to the source. An excellent publication: more soon, please!

CURTILAGE

Maggie Kilbey *Curtal, Dulcian, Bajón: A History of the Precursor to the Bassoon*. The Author, 2002. 303pp, £30.00 ISBN 0 9543492 0 2
Available from 37 Townsend Drive, St Albans, Herts, AL3 5RF
maggie.kilbey79@keble.net

This is a magnificent assemblage of information about the curtal (I'll stick to that word for brevity; the collective

term for a group of them used in my heading is, as far as I know, a local Gloucestershire usage). There are two main sections. The first, after defining the instrument, covers its history and repertoire separately in Italy, England & Scotland (Wales seems to have been a curtal-free zone), Spain & Latin America, Germany & Northern Europe, and France & the Low Countries. The second, arranged alphabetically by town, is a catalogue of extant instruments; this information is also summarised in a table. The appendices include unexpected but useful family trees of the Habsburgs and Medicis, an alphabetical list of known early players, and a chronological table.

I cannot comment on the section on the surviving instruments, but did have some concern for the first section. I found four omissions merely from checking the King's Music catalogue:

Biber: Requiems in F minor & A major.
Monteverdi: *Laetatus sum* (1650).
Schelle: *Aus der Tiefe.*
Zachow: *Vom Himmel kam*

Also, some of the references looked a bit remote from the sources, e.g. [Thurston] Dart (1967) for Florentine intermedi, a topic that has been the focus of much attention since then, and I'm suspicious of the reference on p. 189 to a Willaert piece: if it's correct, it must belong to Willaert's Venetian period, not in the French/Dutch section.

The book is well illustrated (how scanning has improved lately!) and is presumably printed from the author's own computer output. Pages are well set out, a fine example of how self-publication is a feasible route for the modern scholar. The information would form an ideal database for continuing research on the subject: gaps could be filled, and new discoveries incorporated. It would be a pity if the work embodied here just stopped; and now that the author has established her credentials and (one hopes) achieved her doctorate, it would be good if it could continue as a communal activity. Perhaps the curtal website could host it. Nice to see a picture of a very young curtalist: I wonder if she is now of an age to be introduced to the 12-year-old whose birth was hastened by curtal-playing.

VIVALDI CELLO

Vivaldi *Complete Sonatas for Violoncello and Basso continuo RV 39-47* Edited by Bettina Hoffmann. Bärenreiter (BA 6995) 2003. xii + 83pp + vlc & bc parts, £15.50

Vivaldi's cello sonatas offer an excellent example to counter the naive idea that early musicians should always use facsimiles. The Paris edition of six cello sonatas by Vivaldi from c.1740 looks reasonably authoritative, apart from some bass figures a bit too French in style. But a MS copy (Paris Bibl. Nat. Vm7 6310), which used to be assumed to have been copied from the Paris print, turns out to have been written by a Venetian copyist linked with Vivaldi; two other MSS (in Naples and Wiesentheid) have concordances for two of the sonatas and add three more. So this edition, although not much more expensive than the Performers' Facsimile (PF 125; £12.50), has three more sonatas, is based on better sources, and doesn't need photocopying for the second and/or third player or craning of the neck to read from one copy. The package includes a score with realisation, introduction and commentary, a cello solo part, and a score without realisation (i.e. as in the MSS, except that they are in landscape format, while the modern edition is portrait). The edition avoids bass figures, which in all Vivaldi's publications are additions by northern publishers. May I suggest that those who buy the editions purely for scholarly purposes pass the parts (which are self-sufficient) on to needy students. The realisation is occasionally irritating: in RV 45, for instance, what is the point of adding a right-hand semiquaver against a cello triplet? But it generally looks fine.

If you want a facsimile, there is a package from Fuzeau (5254; €34.98) which contains all the sources and an introduction/commentary. Its only fault is to give the Paris MS half size, making the printed edition the one most likely to be used for performance. I haven't seen the SPES package of the Naples and Paris MSS (€50.00); it is part of the ongoing New Critical Edition described below.

VIVALDI BASSOON ETC.

Vivaldi *Concerti per fagotto RV 468 e RV 482* Edizione critica a cura di Federico Maria Sardelli. (*Opere incomplete* 2), SPES, 2002. xxx + 29pp.

I don't associate SPES with modern scores and had missed this in the 2003 catalogue: my thanks to Anthony Rowland-Jones for showing it to me. Printed consecutively, the two fragments make up a three-movement concerto, apart from the implausible key-sequence of C, c & d. The editor produces a lengthy introduction (in Italian and English). It is a nice coincidence that San Marco abolished 'the useless office of playing the bassoon' in 1696, the year that the burghers of Edinburgh decided that it would be more up-to-date than the sackbut (see p 5). As with the Cello Sonatas edition, much of the introduction is devoted to an attempt to date the works: in both cases they belong to the latter part of Vivaldi's life. Only one name can be suggested as a possible player of these and the other bassoon concertos, and the absence of ensemble music explicitly for the instrument from Venice and northern Italy in the decades around 1700 may be treated as a warning not to include it as an automatic addition to the continuo line in orchestral music from the area. The first volume of this series contains the flute concertos RV 431-2.

After writing the above, the August 2003 *Early Music Performer* arrived, containing a short article by Michael Talbot on the New Critical Edition of Vivaldi's works. It seems that Ricordi is no longer involved in adding to the old series, having completed everything except the operas, so they and other new series will be published by SPES. Since SPES has far better links with the early-music world, this is a welcome development and the score reviewed above is an encouraging foretaste. A puzzling remark in the article is that for Ricordi it was a non-commercial project. Irrespective of the quality of the editions, performers avoid Ricordi editions whenever possible because of the outrageous cost of using them: I've heard from

reputable ensembles that the charge to hire material of a concerto is over £200 + courier charges from Italy – and that is for short pieces for which we'd probably charge £100 for typesetting from a photocopy of the main source. It is a bit of a disappointment that another new series is of facsimiles of prints that are readily available in competing versions (op. 2, 8 & 10 + the cello sonatas mentioned above): apparently the SPES versions have substantial prefaces, but they could be issued separately. What would really be useful would be complete facsimiles of the Turin MSS, perhaps on line with access for editors to download on condition that their publications were listed on the website. Is the work going into the complete recording of the Turin MSS being made available? That would avoid the need to revise all the concertos of the *Opere strumentale* and also get the operas accessible. Anyway, it is good that the editorial committee is still active.

HANDEL

Händel *Complete Works for Violin and Basso continuo* Edited by Terence Best. Bärenreiter (BA 4226) 2002. xv + 70pp + vln & bc parts, £12.50
Händel *Complete Sonatas for Recorder and Basso continuo* Edited by Terence Best. Bärenreiter (BA 4259) 2003. xii + 53 pp + rec & bc parts, £14.50
Händel *Complete Sonatas for Oboe and Basso continuo* Edited by Terence Best. Bärenreiter (BA 4260) 2003. vi + 12 pp + ob & bc parts, £10.00

I feel that much of what follows is repeating myself from earlier reviews: if so, my apologies. I've concentrated on the violin sonatas, but many comments apply to all three sets. The HHA flute sonatas are also available (BA 4225 at £10.65). I presume that the apparently irrational price relationships depend on the strength of the pound against the euro when each was published.

What constitutes a Complete Violin Works of Handel is a problem. Like most other editions, this includes the four dubious sonatas from the two Walsh editions without even separating them off into an appendix, though they are footnoted as 'probably spurious'. Otherwise, taking Chrysander (HG 27) as the 'traditional' view of what Handel's violin sonatas are, and the Faber edition* as the modern one I'm most used to, this contains:

1.	HWV 358 in G	Faber 1	not in HG
2.	HWV 359a in d	Faber 4	HG 1 (in e for fl)
3.	HWV 361 in A	Faber 2	HG 3
4.	HWV 364 in g	Faber 3	HG 6 (for oboe)
5.	HWV 371 in D	Faber 5	HG 13
6.	HWV 368 in g		HG 10
7.	HWV 370 in F		HG 12
8.	HWV 372 in A		HG 14
9.	HWV 373 in E		HG 15
10.	HWV 408 Allegro in c		
11.	HWV 412 Andante in a		

* from the same editor but with a different realisation: the new one avoids the passing harmonic clashes that characterises that of his Faber collaborator, Peter Holman.

So this volume is justified in its title of Complete Works for violin and Bc (emphasised by the sticker on the front), but for most purposes the Faber or other less extensive modern editions are adequate. It is taken from HHA IV/4 (revised) and 19, with a thorough introduction in German and English though no critical commentary. The score is accompanied by a violin and a figured bass part; however, since duos were normally published in two-stave score (Walsh may have been inaccurate, but followed convention in this respect), it's a pity that two copies of the figured score without realisation could not have been included (as with the original HHA IV/4). It is particularly odd to present a bass part with some sonatas figured, some not, according to the accident of source (using the fact that the bass part is figured as a selling point on the aforementioned sticker). An annoying feature is that, although each sonata is numbered in the contents list, there is no number printed at the head of each piece in score or parts. I can see the point of discouraging meaningless programme listings like *Sonata no. 10*, but it is inconvenient for finding the right piece without fuss. While I don't think there is any need to go out and buy this if you have a good edition, it is the one to get if you don't.

The six Recorder Sonatas included are HWV 360 in g (HG 2), 362 in a (HG 4), 365 in C (HG 7), 369 in F (HG 11) and 377 in Bb (not in HG). Taken from HHA IV/3 and IV/18, they have previously been available as Hortus Musicus 251 & 269 and now reappear in the dark red covers of the other Handel reissues.

There are three sonatas in the Oboe set: HWV 357 in Bb (not in HG), 366 in c (HG 8) and 363 in F (HG 5 in G for flute). HG 6, mislabelled by Walsh for oboe, is in the violin volume. The edition I've used hitherto has been David Lasocki's for Nova, which includes a critical commentary; but that has presumably long been unavailable, so this is the obvious successor. Comparison of the realisation is interesting: there is no clear winner, but it is intriguing to speculate why individual decisions have been made. Perhaps I'll use them as examples at my continuo course at Beauchamp next year.

Händel *Nine German Arias for Soprano, Violin (Flute, Oboe) and Basso continuo HWV 202-210* edited by Donald Burrows. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8752), 2003. 68pp + vln & bc parts, €12.50
Händel *Konzert für Orgel und Orchester F-dur op. 4 Nr. 5 HWV 293* edited by Ton Koopman. Breitkopf & Härtel (PB 5385), 2003. 16pp, €10.50

When I first encountered Handel's German Arias it was with an old Breitkopf edition. I transferred to Walther Siegmund-Schultze's Bärenreiter edition (BA 6479; current price £8.50) when that appeared in 1982, but will probably now move my allegience back to Breitkopf. Both come with score and two parts. It is odd that Breitkopf follows Bärenreiter in printing the voice part as cue in the violin part to save bar-counting. Had I been publishing them I might have experimented to see whether a tighter format

for the score might have avoided the harpsichord having to turn back more than one page for the da capo of at least some of the arias. Bärenreiter manages to use 48 pages for Breitkopf's 58: it doesn't look cramped but doesn't save enough space to make a significant difference. The new keyboard realisation is far less fussy, though one can see places where the convention of only using the upper stave leads the hands to a higher position than playing without a realisation – an ubiquitous tendency. There is an excellent introduction and commentary, with more information on the source of the texts than I've seen elsewhere and a reproducable English translation by Anthony Hicks. The critical commentary is rather long for music with only an autograph source: I'm not sure that information about Handel's first thoughts should be mixed up with notes relating to the correct reading of Handel's intended version except in special circumstances.

The latest of the Koopman/Breitkopf opus 4 is no. 5, the organ concerto adaptation of the recorder sonata in F. Handel seems to have got his copyist to write out the sonata with blank staves into which he could write the orchestral parts, but only the last page (reproduced here) has survived. There is enough unanimity among the other sources for there to be no editorial problems; the only place needing a long annotation has an obvious solution. In comparison with the Bärenreiter edition, Koopman is a bit pedantic with his editorial figuring. The main problem is practical: by taking up seven rather than six pages for the score, Bärenreiter produces better page turns and a less congested appearance. While I wouldn't base an edition on the Walsh material unless there was nothing better, it was through his edition that the work was known and there is some point in mentioning the fact that he printed separate violin ripieno parts; Koopman shows the one place where they are tacet, but this doesn't warrant a mention in the Bärenreiter critical commentary. Breitkopf has also sent their organ part (OB 5385; €8.50) in landscape fomat with better turns. This includes some editorial filling, in small print; I suspect that most of our readers would rather not have such help and would anyway prefer to use the score.

Handel *Rodelinda, Regina de' Longobardi HWV 19*. Vocal score based on the Urtext of the Halle Handel Edition by Michael Rot. Bärenreiter (BA 4064a) 2003. xi + 303pp, £20.00
Handel *Imeneo HWV 41*. Vocal score based on the Urtext of the Halle Handel Edition by Michael Pacholke. Bärenreiter (BA 4072a) 2003. xiii + 234pp, £14.50

The rapidity with which Handel's operas are appearing in the HHA may have something to do with the frequency of performances and recordings: in contrast with Vivaldi's works (see p. 3), there is a commercial incentive, since, unlike most other areas of classical music publishing, opera rights (rather than sales) actually produce a considerable return. It is presumably this income which enables substantial and comparatively small-circulation publications like these to be sold at a comparatively cheap price, though as I've said before, I'd much rather have a lower price on the full scores (or study scores produced from them): there's no reason why people wanting a score as a companion to a recording or to look through to see if a work is performable should have to use a compromise representation of the original. But my usual grouse over, at least they are well done. *Rodelinda* (is the full title really necessary?) includes an 80-page appendix of alternatives. The main text shows the work as performed in Feb-April 1725; the appendices give variants of the revivals in Dec. 1725/Jan 1726 and May 1731. *Imeneo* (originally performed in 1740) had only one revival, in Dublin in 1742; that also requires 80 pages of alternatives. A minor difference between the two editions is that the running order of the revised versions is printed at the beginning of the appendix in *Rodelinda* but at the front of the volume in *Imeneo*. Wherever it is put, it is extremely useful to have them in full with references to the main text for the unchanged items. Both volumes include German translations printed below the Italian. One wonders how useful these are. In England, major companies like ENO putting on opera in the vernacular tend to use their own versions rather than existing ones (I suppose the same happens in Germany), and the use of surtitles must surely diminish the need for translated versions anyway. More useful to the singers would be a literal translation making clear the meaning of the individual words, which could be provided at the foot of the page in both German and English. The title pages conceal the names of the parent scores' editors (unfair, but they are already quite congested). Andrew V. Jones (who conducts a staged performance of a Handel opera in Cambridge every two years) is responsible for *Rodelinda*, Donald Burrows is the editor of *Imeneo*. The latter work is lesser known and performed, but has the possible advantage of being somewhat lighter in touch, and (dating from well into his oratorio period) has several choral movement (presumably for a chorus, not just the soloists, as indicated in the Rodelinda score) – they are not substantial enough, though, to excite a choral society!

SCOTTISH FOLK AND CLASSICAL

David Johnson *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*. Mercat Press, 2003. xxii + 223pp, £12.99. ISBN 1 84183 049 6
available from tom@mercatpress.com

Not many musicological studies warrant reprints (except for the footnote industry) thirty years after their first publication. But this was a remarkable book in 1972 (when issued by Oxford UP), and deserves its revival by a smaller, Edinburgh firm. In some respects, a revised edition would have been desirable. But that would spoil a classic, so the compromise here is for the preface to draw attention to areas that need updating and let the book as a whole stands on its enormous merits. The distinctive point of interest to non-specialists is the unique inter-relationship between folk and 'classical' music in Edinburgh and, to a lesser extent, other parts of non-Gaelic Scotland. The discussion of this throws up some interesting comments

on how music functioned elsewhere. It is not accidental that the first substantial use of folk music by European composers (other than the occasional use of a local tunes) was the Edinburgh-inspired arrangements by Haydn, Beethoven and others, which anticipated the European literary influence of Walter Scott. The most-revived Scots composer of the period at present is Oswald, whose discovery David Johnson didn't predict. I was interested to cross-check this and the history of the curtal reviewed below: the information already quoted (p. 3) that in 1696 the Edinburgh waits changed from sackbuts and cornetts to *hautboyes* and *double curtle* comes in both books. This is as valuable as it was when first published; it is also very readable.

FENTON HOUSE HARPSICHORDS

Mimi S. Waitzman *The Benton Fletcher Collection at Fenton House: Early Keyboard Instruments* The National Trust, 2003. 112pp, £24.99. ISBN 0 7078 0353 5 + CD (75' 27") of 14 instruments played by Terence Charleston

Although I had heard harpsichords played in concerts (notably by Thurston Dart as continuo and George Malcolm as soloist), the first time I met one close-up was at my Cambridge interview in December 1957. Soon after, I discovered Fenton House in Hampstead. In those days, visitors could play most of the instruments without the vetting they receive now, and I spent many happy hours tinkling away. My other memory of the place was in 1974 or thereabouts when Ars Nova gave a concert of French music which was attended by Basil Lam to vet the group for the BBC. Basil left at the interval, which was probably as well, since I have my doubts if we would have passed had he heard Peter Holman and I playing one of the Couperin *Apothéoses* on two harpsichords. I played the 1770 Shudi (No 1 in this new catalogue), Peter took (I think) the updated 1612 Ruckers (no. 2).

I didn't know much about the instruments when I was a regular visitor. If only a book like this been available then! It is deliberately aimed at the interested non-specialist, ideally to be bought by visitors to the house. It is up-to-date and readable, but has rather more technical information than one might expect from its brief (and not just technical: you can find that one lady harpsichordist lived in a *ménage à cinq*). Most instruments have several illustrations. While it doesn't cover every type of harpsichord, clavichord and fortepiano, the book can also function as an introduction to the early harpsichord. The order is more useful to the visitor than the independent reader, since the items are arranged in the sequence you see them in the house, which has no organological or historical logic (as the location of the two instruments mentioned above in the first room suggests). It is extremely good value, as well: the CD alone would sell at full price (and would be a very good buy) were it marketed separately. I hope the National Trust reaps the reward of its initiative.

My box of items waiting for review is still quite full., including three first-rate books. For chant studies, see page 9.

MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER (d 1704) A TERCENTENARY ALERT

David Hansell

After our telling off for more or less ignoring Pachelbel in his anniversary year I suggested to CB that articles in advance of ought-to-be-marked-but-might-be-ignored anniversaries could be a future EMR feature. 'Right', quoth he, 'you do Charpentier'. So here we go.

In *EMR* 20 CB wrote: 'Considering the extent to which Charpentier's music has been recorded, its availability in print is amazingly sparse.' Actually, unless untold riches were reviewed in *EMR* 83/84 which I no longer have (I know to whom I lent them...) more editions of Charpentier were reviewed in *EMR* 1-20 than in the next 70 or so issues, though 26 does include, as the music insert, a movement from one of his many Christmas vocal works that a balanced SSATB ensemble of any size would enjoy (NB the typically pungent cadence at b19/20). At this point I should say that I am not going to get involved in niceties of performance practice in this short note. As someone who directs both school and amateur adult chamber choirs I'll be pursuing a policy of as many people as possible singing and playing as much M-AC as possible in 2004. Reviews of usable editions can be found in *EMR* 4, 15, 20, 26 and 50 including the Schott/Eulenburg *Te Deum* and *Messe de Minuit*. *EMR* 20 also includes a review of Catherine Cessac's book on the composer (Amadeus Press) which is a thorough if not particularly penetrating survey of the scant biographical knowledge and the music. More concise is H Wiley Hitchcock's volume in the *Oxford Studies of Composers* series (OUP) and he, of course, is also the compiler of the thematic catalogue (Picard) [which suffers from a lack of index, published separately in *Recherches* 23 *CB*].

Even the most superficial glance through any of these three books will reveal that singers have most to gain from an upsurge in M-AC performance in 2004. His output of instrumental music is tiny, though it does include the piece I would most like to hear and play, the *Sonate* for 8 instruments (H548, see article by Julie Anne Sadie in *Early Music*, July 1979) – is there a usable edition of this piece?

But the original idea behind this article was to alert those interested to what is available from where and to mention a few gems that ought not to be overlooked. Among the recording companies *Naxos* have been generous to M-AC with a number of recordings from *Le Concert Spirituel/Hervé Niquet* and at least two selections from the composer's considerable output of Christmas music from the *Aradia Ensemble/Kevin Mallon*. *William Christie's* pioneering recordings were/are on *Harmonia Mundi*, though many of the earlier ones are no longer available. *Concerto Vocale/René Jacobs* have also been active in this field. Among publishers, *Editions des Abbesses* (www.editions-abbesses.com) and the *Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles* (www.cmbv.culture.fr) are both quite prolific, and the *King's Music* catalogue is also well worth a look! One practical point – M-AC's four part string ensembles are often *Vln. Vla, Vla, bass* and the parts from eg CMBV reflect this, but a section within a large work might divide the violins so think hard if you use a one-to-a-part instrumental ensemble. The *Messe de Minuit* has this hazard.

Now, a Classic FM-type fantasy concert, though I think all of these pieces one after another might be several suspensions too many. Among shorter works I especially commend the *Salve Regina à trois choeurs* (H24), *Transfige dulcissime Jesu* (H251), *Le Reniement de St Pierre* (H424) and *Dialogus inter angelos et pastores Judeae* (H420). The first of these (from CMBV, recorded on 8.553174) is for SATB/SATB/ATB/bc and ought to be a must for those who can as, indeed, should the second (Abbesses, rec 8.553173) for SSATB/bc though this needs soli for some sections whereas the *Salve* can be fully choral. *Le Reniement* is in Latin, despite the title, and is a fine setting of the 'Peter's Denial' episode from the Passion with some lively counterpoint and a truly wonderful 'weeping' chorus. Scoring is again for SSATB/bc with passages for soli (named characters). The *Dialogus* (CMBV, rec 8.557036) commends itself as suitable companion for the ubiquitous *Messe de Minuit* to which it can be added to create a substantial half programme. The lively choruses are SATB, soli are SAB (minimum) and the instrumental forces are similar to those of the mass.

For a more extended work after the interval I would have to nominate the *Pastorale sur la naissance de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ* (H483, with alternative endings 483a and 483b) which is generally regarded as one of M-AC's very best pieces. In the HIP age it was recorded by Christie (HM1082) in 1982 but this is not currently available. Neither, to my knowledge, has an edition ever been published though there is a *Sibelius*'d set of performing material a metre away from me as I type! This requires SSAATB soli (very little for A2), SSATB choir and, as a minimum, a string trio sonata ensemble, though 2 vlns, 2fls and bc are the specified forces. This is an exquisite piece as are the others I have mentioned and any one of them will enhance your 2004.

Other composers are, of course, available Biber and Muffat within our timezone and Kenneth Leighton, while 2005 will bring the heady duo of Tallis and Tippett to the fore. I'm not anniversary-obsessed but they do help with programme-planning.

Finally, corrections/better ideas are welcome.

I have deliberately not mentioned the facsimiles, partly because of their intimidating copyright note on which CB has commented in the past and partly because anyone interested in facsimiles can probably look after themselves. For King's Music editions, see the advert. I have MS editions of several juicy MA-C petits motets *for SS/SSA+bc. David Hansell/hansells@tiscali.co.uk*

RAVENS VIEW

Simon Ravens

When I was a lay-clerk at Worcester Cathedral I stuck, on my locker door, a Gary Larson cartoon of an auditorium packed with eager concert-goers. On the stage sits an ungainly elephant at a grand piano. The audience wait for him to start, and a thought balloon drifts above the elephant: 'What am I doing here? – I'm a flautist for God's sake!'

Looking back on episodes in their careers, I would be surprised if many performers didn't feel a shudder of recognition when they look at that elephant. I certainly do. My palms still moisten, for instance, when I remember a scene back in Wellington Town Hall, New Zealand, in 1988. This particular elephant was basically able to conduct choirs ethereally singing five- and six-three harmonies in duple time. On this occasion, though, I was faced with a soprano, oboist, pianist and two percussionists, and a lengthy score by a young composer whose dual influences at the time were Xenakis and methadone. Behind me was a depressingly large and expectant audience. The piece was a grim rant, the text of which was a violent piece of graffiti taken from a Greek toilet wall where, in her youth, the composer had been raped.

Except that it wasn't violent graffiti at all. When, clutching at straws, I suggested we have the text translated, the composer came back from a local Greek restaurant bearing the disturbing news that she had actually set a rather tender love-lyric. Ignorance *was* bliss! Now, faced with the 'meaning' of these words and the frenzied atonal dots on the page, I was truly clueless, and if I contributed one useful thing to the performance that followed, (apart from a fleeting ability to conduct twirly 7/8 bars), it was an authentically confused mind.

My mistake, of course, was to think that the meaning of the words was somehow important. Put at its baldest, if the text's 'meaning' wasn't fundamental to the act of composition, it could hardly be so to the act of performance. The premise that understanding a text might inform our understanding of the music is not itself a bad one, but it is not universally valid. Barbara Bonney says that when she learns a new song, she first learns the poem on its own so that, like the composer, the music she then creates will feel like a response to the text. It is a sentiment which chimes closely with Byrd's words in the introduction to the *Gradualia*: 'There is a certain hidden power... in the thoughts underlying the words; so that, as one meditates upon the sacred words, the right notes... in some inexplicable manner, suggest themselves quite spontaneously'. These companionable approaches are relevant to the Romantic lied and the late-Renaissance motet, and much else in between. But they do not necessarily fit with 20th-century music, let alone music before the time of Josquin.

That experience with the Greek toilet graffiti may have played a minor part in my decision, a few years later, to form a group called Musica Contexta. Yes, the name primarily signalled an intent to reconstruct liturgical contexts, but I also wanted it to imply a secondary aim – to stress the germ-like function of text in the creative process. In retrospect I now realise that these two aims, however laudable they may be in themselves, sit uneasily together. The primary aim implies the performance of chant, yet chant is the musical style with which the secondary aim sits least comfortably.

An example. Read the first few words of the Easter introit *Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum, alleluia* ('I have risen and am still with thee, alleluia') and bearing in mind Byrd's dictum, think how one might reflect this joyous message melodically. Now then, how does the key of D minor, a melodic range of a fourth, and a phrase with nine minor thirds, six semitones and nine repeated notes sound? – because that is exactly what the *Liber* offers us for this moment of high liturgical drama. It might seem laughably anachronistic, to say nothing of downright unfair, for me to present a piece of chant from the perspective of a late-Renaissance composer, but for me there is a serious point here: as a performer of Renaissance music in context that is precisely the perspective with which I invariably have to approach chant. I believe that Byrd and Palestrina, by seeking to substitute or amend the chanted propers, demonstrated an unease with the aesthetic of chant. And if the composers felt that way, it is hardly surprising that I, as a performer, feel a grinding gear-change when I turn the page from polyphony to chant. The approach likely to deliver a cogent result in Palestrina's exuberant 6-part *Haec dies*, for example, will yield precisely nothing in that *Resurrexi* chant which is its liturgical bedfellow.

When I listen to a good performance devoted (and I use that word deliberately) to chant, I fail to recognise my own contextual efforts as being of the same genus. One of the best, and best-selling CDs of chant I stock in Grove Music is Ensemble Organum's 1992 recording of Cistercian chant – a sublime instance of a performance with a magic which defies analysis. The instrument in the recording is the Abbey of Fointfroide, which the unaccompanied singers play with supreme skill. What one can say about it is that Ensemble Organum never let the words obscure the meaning of the music.

Whatever the critics have said about the chant element in Musica Contexta's recordings (and it has been almost invariably positive) I, for one, remain to be convinced. The trees stand neatly in place, but can I see the wood? Barely. It leaves me with the thought that, although I may be happier having traded in contemporary Greek toilet graffiti for mediaeval sacred texts, my instinctively literal approach is no more appropriate.

BC's view on the ancient argument is shown by his advert on p. 28.

AQUITANIAN & OTHER CHANT

Clifford Bartlett

David A. Bjork *The Aquitanian Kyrie Repertory of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* edited by Richard L. Crocker. Ashgate, 2003. ix + 394pp, £42.50.

This book/edition is based on a PhD completed in 1975. A few articles based on it appeared around 1980. A couple of decades later, the author's original supervisor decided it was worth publication and, since the author was 'no longer in a position to work on it', prepared it for publication himself. The bibliography seems to be mostly the original one – very few items postdate 1975. But Crocker's remarks in his Preface suggest that original principle of editing the music (using the traditional method of constructing a stemma and deducing what the original reading must have been) has been replaced by reproducing individual sources as self-sufficient entities, which is far more appropriate to the material at hand. That must have involved a lot of work for one of our most distinguished senior scholars.

It is intriguing to speculate (as one would do if this were a book several centuries old) what happened to Dr Bjork. He seems to have abandoned musicology since he is not a member of the American Musicological Society The first David Bjork that Google lists (16-8-03) 'has over 20 years experience in the area of heavy highway construction' – the timing is right, even if there was a change of career, though JBC Associates are the other side of the country from Berkeley in Pennsylvania. Perhaps more likely is a David A. Bjork operating in a discipline requiring less technical skill than highway construction – advising how to negotiate for a salary when getting a new job. Perhaps Or he may have turned into a hippy (Berkeley is a suburb of San Francisco), perhaps only traceable in police records. But the web did turn up a reference that an article by him on the subject of this book won the Einstein Award for the best North American journal article of 1981: very modest of the publisher not to mention it! (The historical musicologist might also wonder if there was any significance in the fact that the first winner, in 1967, was Richard L. Crocker.)

Speculation apart (and my interest was not in Bjork but in parodying facile historical research), one can see why this was worth publishing, despite the rapid outdating of so much musicological work. This survives chiefly because it is a detailed study of a specific, self-contained repertoire that is (apart from the matter of editorial philosophy mentioned above) comparatively unaffected by fashion. One change, of course, is the name. Crocker's 1957 thesis was on the St Martial proses. 'St Martial' has now become 'Aquitanian', since the MSS which survive at the abbey of St Martial at Limoges are now known to have had a less precise geographical origin. A particular feature of the Aquitanian Kyries is that many survive (often in different sections of the same MS) both as melismatic settings of the Greek and with syllabic setting of Latin texts to the same music. Earlier writers called these added texts tropes, but that word is here confined to melodic and textual additions beyond the nine Kyrie statements (whether texted or not). Bjork is interested both in the texts and the music. His comments on the former have been abridged, but what survives is extremely interesting. It is by no means evident that they were added to pre-existent music, and they are considered in their own right. The music is given a detailed analysis, free of conventional modal theory. There is a catalogue of the repertoire with concordances. 170 pages are devoted to transcriptions in black blobs with conventionalised Latin spellings, both now a little old-fashioned: it would have been reassuring to have had a few pages of facsimile. I suspect that the editions must have been redone to fit the revised editorial principles, and they look computer-set. So it is a pity that the layout has not been adjusted to make sure that all nine statements of the Kyrie fit an opening. The book was evidently designed for a smaller page-size than was ultimately used; but even within that limit, the staves could have been a bit smaller. One other grouse: it is very difficult to find the 'endnotes' when they are placed on pp. 161-167 of a 394-page book; similarly the bibliography, which should at least be next to the notes if not at the end, is on pp. 207-212. This is, however, an excellent book, worth a look even by those who might think it rather recondite. And I'd like to see performers of early monody including a texted Kyrie or two in their concert programmes.

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Chant enthusiasts will be pleased that two recent journal issues have articles relevant on the subject. In the Fall 2002 (XIX/4) *The Journal of Musicology*, Rebecca Maloy studies Michelsbergs' Tonary (compiled by Frutolf of that ilk in the late 11th century) and finds evidence of how a writer of the period tried to reconcile the conflicts between chants as they were handed down and modal theory. [The issue also has an article by Stephanie P. Schlagelon of the *Liber selectarum cantionum* (Augsburg, 1520) compiled by Senfl and the source of many later reprints – fortunately, it was a very accurate edition, and by Robin Leaver on the Protestant funeral tradition behind Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, associated with the Lutheran *Totensonntag*, the commemoration of the dead on the Sunday before Advent.] *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56/1, Spring 2003, begins with Kenneth Levy on 'Gregorian chant – where it came from and how it has reached us', particularly on the relationship between Gregorian and Old Roman. He avoids mentioning McKinnon's *The Advent Project* until footnote 70 (of 72). That book receives a measured review by Peter Jeffery later in the issue. James Grier sifts Adémar de Chabannes' *Historia/ Chronicon* of Frankish history and has more faith in the deduction from it that Charlemagne's court was aware of musical notation, perhaps as part of the process of adopting Roman singing styles. Susan Boynton's article 'Orality, Literacy, and the Early Notation of the Office Hymns' suffers from keeping too close to the specific topic and not casting an eye at the complex relationship between print and memory in the modern practice of hymnody. The issue also has a disappointing review of Kurtzman's book on Monteverdi's *Vespers*; why wasn't his edition reviewed alongside it? Do musicologists prefer words to notes?

MUSIC IN LONDON
YORK YOUNG ARTIST'S COMPETITION

Andrew Benson-Wilson

London has a number of churches set up for people from other countries, including a Danish Church, forming part of an attractive early-19th-century group of building facing Regent's Park. This was the venue for a concert arranged by the five-strong group Terpsichoria, with the young Danish soprano, Jette Rosendal as guest artist, and including works by Buxtehude, Purcell, Handel and Telemann (29 June). The venue is an interesting one – a tall single room whose acoustics, although very resonant, still allowed detail to be heard. Handel's 'Nasconde l'usignol' from *Deidamia* was a brave piece to start the concert, with virtuosic and florid lines for both soprano and violin. Telemann's Cantata 37, 'Zerknirsche du mein blödes Herze' (*Forsetzung des Harmonischen Gottesdeinstes* no. 37) was more reflective, with Telemann's well-placed musical characterisation in the arias, including some hesitancy in the notation on the word *blödes* and some delightful twiddles surrounding *Fröchlichkeit*. This piece included both violin and flute alongside the singer, and the two instruments managed to match each other very well, due to sensitively subdued playing by violinist Shelley Britton against Byron Mahoney's flute. Jette Rosendal was a very impressive soprano, with an engaging stage manner and a focused and harmonically rich voice – together with the accurate intonation that such a voice demands. Her high register was clear and bright without being forced or loud, and the final aria of the Telemann showed her prowess in her lower register. Her use of ornamentation was always appropriate and her vocal expression was particularly apt in Handel's 'Credete al mio dolore' from *Alcina*, which also featured some expressive and nicely phrased playing from cellist Christopher Suckling. The church's earlier existence as a nunnery was reflected by a collection of the heraldic shields of the Queens of England, and so concluding with Purcell's 'Hark! The ech'ing Air' from *The Fairy Queen* was appropriate. For a young group, some moments of apparent stage nervousness are forgivable, although one thing that isn't is speaking to the audience without looking at them and with your hands in your pockets (from one of the players that I haven't named).

Although he is one of their two Principal Guest Conductors, Sir Simon Rattle doesn't often appear with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. However, he concluded their six-month long South Bank 'Haydn: The Creative Genius' series with a performance of the *Harmoniemesse* (Royal Festival Hall, 24 June). It was an appropriate gesture for him to hold up the score of the work during the applause at the end of the concert. This most powerful of works was given a strong reading by Rattle, a conductor clearly used to exploration of the huge range of emotions that Haydn manages to incorporate. For example, the word *miserere* at the end of the Gratias seemed to incorporate the whole gamut of emotions, just within the one word. The OAE have one of the finest gatherings of wind players around, so they were the ideal vehicle for Rattle's exploration of the contrasting colours of instruments featured in this 'wind-band mass' (it sounds better in German). This was particularly apparent in 'Et incarnatus', with its prominent clarinet and oboe writing. Although full of Haydn's jovial confidence in life and the hereafter, the darker and more turbulent moments were also given true expression, aided by some fine singing, notably from Rinat Shaham, but also from Susan Gritton, Jeremy Ovenden, David Wilson-Johnson and the choir, European Voices. Although the chamber organ was, unusually, sited on the far side of the stage behind the first violins (and was therefore, presumably, unable to provide support for the choir or soloists), it was pleasantly audible to the audience as a distinctive tone colour in its own right. I have a feeling that this would have been closer to the sound world of Haydn and his ilk that the normally inaudible chamber organs that we often hear (or rather, do not hear) nowadays. The concert opened with Haydn's jovial Symphony no. 67 in F, sounding right from the start as if it had start life introducing an effervescent stage entertainment. Indeed there was something of light opera throughout the work, with its playful and, at times, eccentric writing. For example, towards the end of the Adagio second movement, the strings are asked to play with the wooden backs of their bows (*col legno d'arco*) – a very odd sound after such an apparently refined movement. The Menuetto's om-pah-pah opening is in stark contrast to the poignant Trio, which has the second solo violin re-tuning the G-string down a tone to become a hurdy-gurdy. The whirligig finale is totally theatrical, with its extraordinary mid-stream switch to a sensuously wistful and elegiac close-harmony trio for violins and cello (with Alison Bury and Daniel Yeadon on wonderful form) and its characteristically bizarre ending. A nice contrast to the power of the *Harmoniemesse* in a most impressive concert.

The Queen Elizabeth Hall concert on 1 July marked, not only the 30th anniversary of The English Concert, but also Trevor Pinnock's last concert as their Director. Not surprisingly, it was also a celebration of Bach's music for the harpsichord, leading up to his four-harpsichord transcription of Vivaldi's op. 3/10. The concert was framed by Bach's Suites (Ouvertures) 3 and 4, both demonstrating Pinnock's absolute mastery at Bach interpretation. Both Suites were given a reading that seemed very personal, but without the imposition of personality – there was an overriding impression that one was hearing Bach. The Air of the opening Suite No 3 was played straight, but with insightful touches in phrasing and detail to make it sound

as though we were hearing it for the first time. Pinnock's little harpsichord links, in this and other pieces, were delightfully in keeping. His interpretations were architectural in scale, particularly in his use of dynamics. The concluding Suite No 4 included some wonderful bassoon playing by Alberto Grazzi, notably in the Ouverture and the second Bourée. With Lisa Beznosiuk, Pinnock then played Bach's Sonata in B minor for flute and concertante harpsichord. The QEH is not the ideal acoustic for music of this intimacy and some of the subtlety of the flute playing was lost beyond the front rows, but it was a relaxed and fluid performance by both of them with a particularly eloquent and beautifully coloured central movement. Pinnock and Ton Koopman come from opposite ends of the musical interpretation world, so they made for an unlikely and, at times, uncomfortable, pairing for Bach's Concerto for Two Harpsichords (BWV1061). With Pinnock playing with his characteristic good taste and decorum, the wild Mr Koopman gave a good impression of the sort of five-year-old boy in Wellington boots who insists on repeatedly jumping in all the puddles. Having a slightly brighter toned harpsichord made his antics all the more apparent – he was also louder and far more percussive in his playing. The orchestra has little to do in this piece, with a number of extended harpsichord solos making for an exciting game between to the ill-matched protagonists. What Koopman provided in terms of thrill and excitement, Pinnock matched with subtlety and insight. In an exciting game, the final result seemed to be England 4, Holland 3. If the two-harpsichord work was a soccer game, then the Concerto for four harpsichords was something of a tag-wrestling match or an energetic foursome on a tin roof (albeit something of a quickie). In this case, however, there were three players on one side and just one on the other. Pinnock and Koopman were joined by Nicholas Parle and Carole Cerasi, both players of the Pinnock school. This short and rather silly arrangement was clearly seen as a party piece by all concerned, even though the impressive stillness of three of the players showed that it was being taken seriously. Naturally the encores and standing ovation for the remarkable Mr Pinnock could have gone on all night. A witty cut-and-paste medley of all thing baroque (by an unnamed composer) concluded with 'For he's a jolly good fellow', but it was Bach that closed the show with a reprise of the Air from the 3rd Suite. Two of the four harpsichordists sensitively, and quite correctly, left the stage to Trevor Pinnock, although one remained to add his own little attention-seeking little twiddles. But it was musicality that won through in the end, in a most moving evening and a fitting tribute to a master of his craft.

In stark contrast to the modernist style of English National Opera's 1999 production, Royal Opera House revived its 1982 John Copley production of Handel's *Semele* during June. As with previous revivals of this production (in 1988 and 1996), Sir Charles Mackerras was the conductor. With no Buckingham Palace soap opera characters to contend with, and no flashing white bottoms to admire, this was a grand, but pretty straightforward, production with a distinctly 18th-century feel to it, including some impressive stage machinery. But although there might have been many aspects of the production that Handel himself might have recognised, dare I say that in its quest for apparent authenticity, it just ended up appearing rather dated. I am not sure if Henry Bardon's sets and David Walker's costumes impressed 20 years ago but, in comparison to the genuinely witty and striking staging from ENO, it struck me as rather twee – a chocolate box image of eighteenth century opera rather than an attempt at the real thing – although it did perhaps allow a stronger connection with the sexual shenanigans of King William than any goings-on amongst current royalty. Ruth Ann Swenson retained her title role from the 1996 revival; I found her performance overdone, with some exaggerated cadenzas and flourishes, although I must give her credit for managing to get through 'Myself I shall adore', one of the longest-seeming of Handelian arias. The audience certainly avoided the chance to give her the first applause of the evening, that honour deservedly going to a singer well known in early music circles, countertenor Robin Blaze, sporting a very silly looking beard, and making an impressive ROH debut as Athamas. His clarity of articulation and diction, and his ability to project his voice without resort to operatic affects, is hopefully a prelude to a long-awaited move towards more historically aware singing styles from the ROH, and their companions in the ENO. And if his voice did sound quieter than most of his companions, I know which voices I would change. His cadenzas were adventurous, but still stylistically appropriate. Stephanie Blythe, as Ino and Juno, also managed a clean voice and dealt well with some tricky changes of register. John Relyea was a solid and resonant bass in his roles as Cadmus and stole the show in the wonderful cameo role of Somnus, the somnolent God of Sleep who, at the beginning of Act III, first reluctantly bestirs himself ('Leave me, loathsome light') and then rapidly rises (so to speak) with thoughts of his (nowadays, probably illegal) amour, the youthful nymph Pasithea ('More sweet is that name'). My usual concerns about the ROH chorus and orchestra applied here, although Charles Mackerras kept them to a very reasonable pace throughout and had clearly tried to impart some sense of period style to these largely unreconstructed musicians.

Stoke Newington is one of those places in London that you can only easily get to by bus – terribly confusing for Tube-biased travellers and not a pleasant experience on one of London's hottest summer days. Its tiny (and frankly rather scruffy) Elizabethan Old Church was the venue for the five concerts of the Stoke Newington early music series, including a performance of no fewer than five of Handel's Opus 4 Organ Concertos, played by Matthew Halls with Sonnerie (15 July). Although most of the Concertos look relatively easy to play, they are really quite tricky, requiring nifty fingerwork and frequent improvisation. The latter aspect was prominent right from the start of this concert with a dramatic (and ambitious) flourish from the organ that, eventually, lead up to the opening chord of the first piece. Throughout the concert, the additional ornaments and elaborations were handled skilfully by Matthew Halls, notably in the opening move-

ment of the Concerto in G minor and in the cadences in the B-flat major Concerto. Matthew Halls also showed a fine sense of pulse and rhythmic drive and some impressively clean and articulate playing. His more expressive side was demonstrated in the Andante of the F major Concerto, with some pleasantly lyrical and rhetorical playing. After the first piece, the addition of Matthew Wadsworth's theorbo provided some continuo filling-in and some delightful additional tone colours, notably in the Presto of the Concerto in F. Judging from the buzz from most of the audience when the instrument first appeared, Stoke Newington has not experienced many theorbos. Monica Huggett's direction of the six-strong Sonnerie was characteristically gutsy, although it was occasionally rather loud when the organ was reduced to a single 8' stop. It was quickly apparent that Monica Huggett, not surprisingly, has not had to cope with more than a bar or two of rests before – aided by second violinist Emilia Benjamin, the attempts at counting bars were an amusing peripheral entertainment during the lengthier organ solos. Matthew Halls and Sonnerie were recording these concertos over the following few days, using a far more appropriate organ – their CD should be worth a listen.

Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music

The last half of the Lufthansa Festival demonstrated the important role they have developed in bringing to this country musicians that are not often heard here. One example was the appearance of the young French group, Les Folies Françoises with Salomé Haller (soprano) and Robert Expert (countertenor) and their programme of Scarlatti and Pergolesi (St John's, Smith Square, 22 June). It was one of those sultry days which can wreak havoc with tuning, so the intonation problems at the beginning were forgivable, and some were overcome – although it did seem rather curious to tune everybody to the harpsichord and then use the organ. Robert Expert opened with the transposed countertenor version of Pergolesi's *Salve Regina*, although his frequent slips into a tenor register suggested that the piece could have done with a bit more transposition. Clearly taught from an early age to open his mouth, he did so with gusto, producing a clear and expressive sound closer to a soprano timbre that the normal continental countertenor. He was particularly expressive in the repetitions of *lachrimarum*, although I could have done without his habit of slithering up to the first note of each phrase. He was well supported by the six instrumentalists, with one attractive passage for bowed cello and plucked double bass. In excerpts from Scarlatti's *Il Martirio di Santa Teodosia*, Salomé Haller, produced a very different voice. She sings with the type of vibrato that sounds like a persistent trill (but clouds real trill and ornaments), although in this case it didn't manage to mask moments of questionable intonation. Her rapid notes were not quite articulate enough, leading to some slurring, even in the relatively subdued acoustic of St John's, Smith Square. There were also moments where the pulse was slightly unsteady. On top of all that, I am afraid that I also found her voice rather forced and edgy. This piece, and the concluding *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi, exposed some oddities in the instrumentalists, including some rather French sounding ornaments (hanging on to suspensions), a violin arpeggio that started well before the beat and disturbed the pulse, some over-emphatic cello and bass playing and, towards the end, a tendency to become just a bit too slushy and self-indulgent.

The concert later the same evening (22 June) was an outstanding performance by the bass viol duo, Hille Perl and Friederike Heumann. This was musicianship of the highest order by two refreshingly unpretentious performers who just sat and played, producing an exquisite, unforced and beautifully matched tone with a delicate sense of phrasing and dynamic shading. They clearly have an instinctive rapport between themselves, and with the music (by Ford, Ferrabosco, Jenkins and Finger, contrasted with the very different style of Sainte-Colombe and Marais). Two of the many highlights were the Chaconne from Finger's Suite in D and the Passacaille from Sainte-Colombe's 46ème concert, *La Raporté*, the latter with some moments of outstandingly intimate playing. It was also good to hear two viols players that (with one tiny exception) could play in tune above the frets. But, for a concert that was so engaging and so gentle, I was astonished at the unruly antics of a few people sitting near me a few rows back from the stage, including persistent, unrestrained and uncovered coughing from one man, whispering, talking and dropping things from a couple where the man seemed to be there under duress, and even a couple noisily changing seats, presumably to get away from the row but just creating more disturbance. Another couple climbed over seats back to sit just one row closer. Extraordinary behaviour. Extraordinary concert.

The double bill of concerts on 23 June were both of a similar impressive quality, starting with the three-strong Spanish Armoniosi Concerti, directed by Juan Carlos Rivera, on their first visit to London. Their programme of works for two guitars and theorbo included pieces by Caroso, Negri, Murzia, Santa Cruz, Coll, Corbetto, Sanz and Kapsberger, with something of an emphasis on works by Santiago de Murzia (or Murcia) and also those based of the canarios bass. Delicacy is not a word often associated with Spanish guitar music, but this whole concert was characterised by delicate and sensitive playing. The whole thing was a delight. Even the most boisterous and rhythmically complex of dances was given subtle and imaginative readings, in stark contrast to a number of players who treat their guitars and theorbos as percussion instruments. They manage to produce a cadential fade out in a number of pieces that any recording engineer would have been proud of – just one example of the way that they drew the audience into their musical world. As with the previous Lufthansa concert, they also displayed a commendably relaxed and unpretentious stage manner.

The Lufthansa Festival finished in spectacular form with a very welcome appearance of the European Union Baroque Orchestra. I am impressed every time I hear this band, made up from annual auditions of young musicians from around Europe who work with a number of leading

directors and then tour specific programmes. This concert was directed by Roy Goodman, his last appearance with the EUBO before following the recent trend of working with modern-instrument orchestras. Their programme, 'An A to Z of Baroque, from Albinoni to Zelenka', did more or less what it said on the tin, although they did only manage six of a possible 26 composers (the two named, plus Bach, Handel, Telemann and Rameau). One thing that always impresses me with the EUBO is the ability of these young graduates, all presumably trained as potential soloists, to blend themselves into a coherent and unified consort. Although there are usually solo opportunities for many of the players, they always give a feeling that this is a cooperative effort, with no attempts at being unduly virtuosic or showy. Clearly some of this comes from the directors, but the result is that they often produce concerts that are noticeably better than a number of the period bands that they will be hoping to join as the next step in their careers. In the same spirit, I will not name individual players, but will admit that I liked the continuo strings. Roy Goodman must have been an inspirational director to work with. Unlike one previous EUBO director, he allowed the music and the performers to speak for themselves, letting pieces unfold at their own pace, almost imperceptibly building up and then relaxing the tension.

City of London Festival

The City of London Festival included a number of concerts with an early music interest, including 'A Peep at Pepys' (30 June) commemorating the 300th anniversary of the death of Pepys and held in the Livery Hall of the Clothworkers Guild, of which he was once Master. The Cardinall's Musick, directed by Andrew Carwood, gave a programme of works by Humfrey, Child, Lawes, Jeffreys, Locke, Cave, Blow and Purcell set in context by Andrew Carwood's wonderfully erudite historic interludes. The music was well chosen to follow the path of Pepys's life, some of the complex political goings-on during that time, and also something of his character, ranging from his love of flirting to some of the religious music that perhaps meant something to him in his latter years. It was the later repertoire that was the most musically satisfying, particularly the works by Blow (notably *Salvator mundi*) and Purcell (particularly the duet *O diva custos*, written for the funeral of Queen Mary in 1695). Unfortunately the dry acoustic was not at all helpful to the singers, and probably helped to make it difficult for them to present a coherent and unified sound. Their soloistic style of vocal projection and strong use of vibrato also contributed to some moments of uncomfortable consort. This was not a problem in the smaller scale pieces, but when more than four or so singers were involved, I found myself yearning for a better blend and cohesion of sound and rather less prominent individual contributions. Perhaps this vocal style is one that works better in a more generous acoustic.

There were acoustics aplenty in the vast Middle Temple Hall for an concert of Elizabethan songs from tenor Mark Padmore and Elizabeth Kenny, lute, with actress Kate Littlejohn providing the narrative for 'Elizabeth – her life in songs and sonnets' (2 July). Although the size of the space didn't help provide the sense of intimacy that a concert like this demands, the performers did a magnificent job of drawing the audience into their world. Singing teachers often make their pupils read the words as poetry, and it is through listening to performances like this that you realise the importance of this understanding of the words. One of the main benefits of this was Mark Padmore's ability to make sense of the often erratically irregular phrase lengths. He combined perfect diction and consistency of tone with outstandingly expressive singing in works by Dowland, Morley and Danyel. Elizabeth Kenny was the perfect accompanimental foil, with her fluidity of touch and expressive use of tone colour. She also excelled in a number of solos, notably a selection of Scots Tunes and Dowland's 'Loth to depart'.

Early Music Network International Young Artists' Competition

Every two years, the Early Music Network runs its International Young Artists' Competition, and the 10th took place in York in July. From the tapes and supporting information submitted to a jury, seven groups were selected for the final, each giving a concert lasting about 20 minutes. As in previous years, this was an international affair, both in the home base of the groups appearing and in the geographical spread of the individuals within the groups. Over the two days preceding the final, each group gave a short informal concert, introduced by Catherine Bott, intended to acclimatise the competitors to the performing space (the National Centre for Early Music at St Margaret's Walmgate), to introduce the groups to the audience, and to give a chance for some feedback and discussion with the performers. The judges (Laurence Cummings, Chris Sayers, Judy Tarling, Koen Uvin and Stephen Varcoe) were not present at these introductory concerts, which did not count towards the marks in the final, although these reviews draw on both concerts.

Sociall Musick (Owen Morse-Brown *recorders*, Arngeir Hauksson *theorbo/guitar*, Patxi del Amo *viola da gamba*) gave a concert of Italian-style music for the final (The Italian Taste Prevails), and English (Musick to Various Intents) for the preliminary concert. Their professionalism showed itself in a number of ways, not least their very careful tuning (done in a way that sounded pleasing to the audience), well presented introductions to the pieces, good stage presentation and well-written programme notes. They played very well as a consort, with no instrument dominating. The supporting continuo players were always sensitive to the solo recorder line, and both demonstrated beautifully expressive playing. The recorder playing was clean, crisp and articulate with a delicacy and refinement and excellent control of breathing and intonation that allowed the music to speak through. In Corelli's Sonata in F (Op5/4), the contrasting moods of the different movements were well-defined, the faster movements being virtuosic without being showy. Their selec-

tion from Playford's *Dancing Master* was preceded by a sung catch 'Hey Ho', an excellent contrast to the otherwise instrumental programme and one that worked very well. Their careful controlled acceleration at the end of their final piece was a nice touch.

Ensemble Arcadia (Revital Raviv & Ye'ela Avital *sopranos*, Tal Arbel *viola da gamba*, Yizhar Karshon, *harpsichord*) are from Israel and were one of two groups to feature two sopranos with continuo. Their programmes were of music by Purcell (Stories of Music, Love and Wine) and Monteverdi (*Bel Pastor*: Shepherds' courtship duets), both with a suitably Arcadian feel, and both complemented by some Arcadian floral headbands worn by the two engaging sopranos. Their difference in appearance and style helped them to take on the different personas that their various vocal roles demanded, and they made good use of the stage to augment the words of the pieces. They have a superb sense of interaction and communication, both between each other and with the audience, building an instant rapport. They both had lovely voices, just within the boundaries of acceptable vibrato, and with clear articulation, clear diction and a good grasp of the oddities of English pronunciation. The whole group joined in some nice semi-acted introductions to the pieces, grabbing the attention of the audience. The continuo players gave very good support to the singers and also shone in their own arrangement of Sumarte's variations on *Daphne*.

Bizzaries, a group formed from members of the 2001 European Union Baroque Orchestra, bravely overcame the difficulty of being without their violinist and appeared in the rather unusual formation of oboe, viola, cello, double bass and harpsichord (Hannah McLaughlin, Kate Fawcett, Barbara Reiter, Christian Staude and Martin Perkins). Their preliminary concert (For the Twins) gave a clue as to the reason for their reduction in numbers. Both concerts featured arrangements of Bach organ chorale preludes – a fascinating idea. In the final they added a transcription of one of Bach's organ Trio Sonatas, demonstrating a good sense of pulse and the direction of the three varied movements. Although viola players are not usually natural soloists, in this case the blend and contrast with the oboe worked well. In the chorale preludes the sound of the oboe seemed to grow out of the rest of the consort. The inclusion of a 16' bass was very appropriate for this music, and both continuo strings worked well together. The harpsichord continuo was restrained, with effective figuration in the Trio Sonata.

Savãdi (Kristine Jaunalksne & Ulrike Hofbauer, *sopranos* and Marie Bournisien *harp*) were formed at the Schola Cantorum in Basel and come from Latvia, Germany and France. The two singers have expressive, focussed and well-controlled voices, avoiding excesses of vibrato and keeping perfect intonation. Their voices blended very well together. They made good use of movement around the stage (neatly dodging some awkwardly placed BBC microphone cables) and also used some very effective hand gestures to elaborate on the words they were singing. Their programme for the final, *'Se m'amate, io v'adoro*: songs of loving and longing', started, of course, with Frescobaldi's 'Se m'amate, io v'adoro'and continued with works by d'India, Mazzocchi and Monteverdi. Their clever conversational spoken interludes between the pieces added a lot to their performance, and added to their rapport with the audience. It was lovely to hear the continuo realised on a harp rather than other more usual instruments – Marie Bournisien's playing was beautifully relaxed and expressive and seemed to belie her look of intense concentration. She made a number of delightful improvisatory links between pieces. Their preliminary programme had featured English music by Purcell, Dering, Johnson, Notari, Coprario and Dowland.

The Maresienne Consort (Clare Wilkinson *voice*, Ibi Aziz *viol*, and David Wright *organ*) gave two concerts of Italian and German music. Clare Wilkinson has a lovely clear mezzo-ish voice with a nice sense of fluidity to the tone and a good use of vibrato to colour individual notes. But, in the event, her voice did seem to be rather incidental to a concert that was dominated by the viol, not only in the choice of programme, but also in the programme notes, detailed spoken introductions, the stage manner of the performers and in the performance itself. We were told, for example, that in Buxtehude's *Jubilate Domino*, it was the viol (rather than the voice) that has the job of painting the text – for a piece normally thought of as vocal, but with a fairly prominent viol part, it was interesting to hear a performance where the voice seemed of secondary importance. A similar reversal of normal roles occurred in the anonymous 'O vaghe' in the first concert where the viol made an accent on all the false relations. The organ playing was very effective, with some nice continuo realisations and a good sense of the importance of a supporting role.

Il Vero Modo (Faye Newton *soprano*, Jamie Savan *cornetto*, Richard Sweeney *theorbo* and Steven Devine, *organ/harpsichord*) also made a feature of an instrument rather than the voice. In this case it was the cornetto that dominated the choice of programme, the written notes, spoken introductions, stage manner and the performance. Their two programmes had the same title, *'Per Cantare e sonare*: songs and duets by Monteverdi and his contemporaries'. Fay Newton has one of those focussed 'early music' voices that demands, and got, perfect intonation. Her diction was clear, her runs and ornaments nicely articulated and her tone colour remained consistent throughout the varying moods of the different pieces. She maintained good eye contact with the audience and with her fellow performers, even to the extent of allowing the cornetto player to decide when to bring off the final note of a number of pieces – a brave thing for a singer to do. Both theorbo and keyboards provided effective and imaginative continuo support – indeed, one of the nicest moments was the 'ora pro nobis' from Cazzati's 'Regina coeli', with the texture reduced just voice and organ. It was also nice to hear the delicate tones of the cornetto muto in Donati's 'O gloriosa Domina'.

ensemble fidicinium (Johannes Heim & Alexander Seibert *violins*, Heidi Gröger & Johannes Weiss *gambas*, Matthias Schick *cello* Samuel Manzano *theorbo* and Evelyn Laib *harpsichord*) is made up of students and a teacher from the Institut für Alte Musik in the Hochschule für Musik, Trossingen and were formed initially for a performance of Biber's *Missa Bruxellensis*. A feature of the group is the inclusion of two gambas as well as a cello, leading to some wonderfully rich sonorities in their programmes of Biber, Rosenmüller and Weichlein. Although one of the newest groups amongst the finalists, they were one of the most coherent and professional ensembles, perhaps through their work together as students. The two violinists were very well matched, made more apparent by some of the pieces where phrases were shared between the two solo instruments. They all played with a very sound sense of musical structure, treating slower sections in an expansive manner and retaining the flow and momentum of faster movements. Their programmes were well balanced and the programme notes were informative. For such a large group, they solved the problems of fitting onto a small stage extremely well.

As in previous years, I have tried to avoid overt criticism of the finalists in these reviews – it is nerve-wracking enough having to appear in the final of a competition like this without having the wrath of a reviewer to look forward to. Some of the points that I could have raised apply to a number of groups in the final, and also to a great many very experienced performers who have been around for long enough to know better. Not surprisingly, young performers are not always used to receiving applause – indeed, many might have been pleasantly surprised to have an audience at all. So it was no surprise that this art had not always had a chance to imbed itself. The key thing is to acknowledge applause gratefully and gracefully. 'Gratefully' includes not turning away in the middle of applause to start tuning or getting ready for the next piece. 'Gracefully' includes avoiding the look-at-me antics from some performers who seemed to feel that the applause was solely directed at them. Catherine Bott, in her sensitively encouraging chats to the groups during the preliminary concerts, made much of stage positioning, including encouraging some players to make sure that they were actually facing the audience – not always easy for violinists, for example, who often end up looking along their instrument towards the back of the stage. Eye contact with the audience is important, although performers should avoid the gleeful and almost manic grinning that one performer used to accompany an otherwise relatively melancholy programme. Equally, looking too intense or serious can be a similar barrier with an audience. For a competition made up entirely of groups of musicians, all relying on interaction with each other, there were a surprising number of attempts at domination by one member of a group. This took many, often not too subtle forms. Like it or not, I suggest that, when a group includes a singer, it is that singer that etiquette normally demands should become the focus for applause. Other performers, however important they might feel their role has been, should not attempt to distract attention away from the singer until they are acknowledged by the singer, as they usually would be if they waited long enough. More subtle attempts at domination that I spotted included waiting until all the other players were ready before making some slight, and almost uncertainly unnecessary, adjustment to their instrument, their music, or themselves. Most of the performers did very well in introducing their programme to the audience, although a few made things far too complicated, or only talked about their own instrument, or repeated the written programme notes. Giving starting notes for singers can be done very subtly, and more or less silently, at the end of the tuning of a theorbo, and this sounds much less prominent than a full chord on an organ. Tuning itself was generally done very professionally, with a couple of excellent examples of improvised keyboard preludes forming the basis of instrumental tuning. But there was one notable moment when every member of a group seemed to be tuning notes a semitone apart at the same time.

Despite these detail matters of detail, overall the musical standard and the professionalism of performance was most impressive. All the groups deserved to be in the final, and several deserved to win.

In the end, the winning group was Savādi.

CD REVIEWS

CHANT

Cantus Angelicus: Song of the Angels Benedictine Monks from the Abbey of Sainte-Marie des Deux-Montagnes (Québec)
Analekta AN 2 8104 50' 38"

Whilst there are a great many chant recordings available these days, there are few authentic recordings of chant from within the contemporary Catholic Church. Since Vatican II, restrictions have been placed on chant usage, leaving the Benedictine Order as one of the few enclaves for this music as a living tradition. I was therefore intrigued, on receiving this recording, to compare the current genuine article with the quality of chant I am used to hearing. The choir in question is from a Canadian Benedictine Abbey, one of 31 monasteries belonging to the congregation of Solesmes. The singers are all female (moniales) including, apparently, a group of four cantors. A quote in the booklet, 'The secret of this recording doesn't lie in the pursuit of musical exploits, but in the sharing of a prayer among family members', indicates that the music is intended for spiritual purposes rather than for the musicianship of the choir, who are monastics, not professional singers. However, as this recording has been submitted to a music rather than a church magazine for review, readers of *EMR* will naturally be interested mainly in its musical qualities.

At just over 50 minutes, this is a very brief CD. The repertoire is of selected chants on the subject of Angels, including the *Missa de Angelis*. The singers are clearly very enthusiastic but presentation lacks variety. Each chant begins with the four cantors and then the choir join in with minimal change in texture or dynamic. There is no use of solo voice, drone or, I believe, antiphonal singing. Additionally there is a serious ambience problem. The entire recording is marred by an echo which sounds horribly unnatural, probably engineered to try to enliven a dead acoustic. I say this because the singers don't seem to be able to hear one another clearly enough to have a consensus about pitch and timing. This echo, in association with a complete lack of hard consonants, makes the words, which I would have thought from a spiritual point of view to be the most important aspect of chant, incomprehensible much of the time.

The booklet which accompanies the disc includes most of the texts but, annoyingly, not all. There is a description of the location of the abbey, along with information about Benedictine Monasticism, Gregorian Chant, the role of the Benedictines since Vatican II, some interesting calligraphy and the use of modes.

The repertoire is very similar to a much loved recording I have, Angels *from the Vatican*, by Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge directed by Mary Berry (Herald HAVPCD 220) which I would thoroughly recommend to anyone looking for these chants. The disc is much more generous than the one under review, includes several associated motets and is beautifully sung and recorded. *Tony Brett*

15th CENTURY

Obrecht ***Missa De Sancto Donatiano; Missa Sicut spina rosam*** A:N:S Chorus, János Bali 63' 16"
Hungaroton HCD 32192

The booklet has excellent notes by Barton Hudson, who has edited both masses for the New Obrecht Edition (they are not, unfortunately, both in the same volume, so getting the scores costs €85.00) . The chant of the titles is printed beneath the running order of each mass; but Obrecht's use of pre-existent material is far more complex than just using one cantus firmus, as Hudson explains. The St Donatian mass is sung by 15 singers, with just an octet in *Sicut spina rosam*, though both Masses have solo sections. Both performances are absolutely convincing, tending towards the beautiful rather than the hard-edged style, letting the learned aspects hide in the texture to hear if you want to, but ignore if you find cleverness offputting. If this is the style you prefer, A:N:S offer well-controlled, mellifluous performances of the highest possible standard. This is their fourth Obrecht disc: if you want to chase the others, they are HCD 31772, 31946 & 32011. *CB*

16th CENTURY

Stolzer ***Missa*** Kyrie summum, ***Motets***
Voces Æquales 66' 12"
Hungaroton HCD 32079

Thomas Stolzer's music was published quite widely in Lutheran circles after his death and there are many modern editions, but it is rare in performance, and after hearing this CD I wonder why. (His best-known pieces are probably the eight five-part, textless *Octo tonorum modulae*, which work on viols and early wind.) The reason for the Hungarian singers and label is that he worked in Buda from 1522 till his early death (drowned like Parsons). The mass movements (there is no creed) are surrounded by Marian polyphony and chant (the latter from local sources). The annotator describes the music as old-fashioned; to English ears it would have seemed quite modern, though it shares the love of melisma. The performances do the music justice, and make me want to sing. I thoroughly recommend it: buy it! *CB*

Elizabethan Virginals Music Sophie Yates
Chandos *Chaconne* CHAN 0699 68' 04"
Music by Bull, Byrd, Farnaby, Gibbons, Holborne, Peerson, Tisdale & anon

This anthology of 18 pieces was chosen as a memorial to Queen Elizabeth, ending with Bull's Chromatic Pavan and Galliard described in one source as *Queene Elizabeths pavin*. I wonder, though, if *The Queenes Almain* and *The Queenes Command* might honour the next queen. Some are well-known (e.g. Gibbons' *Lord of Salisbury Pavan and Galliard*, the former of which shows Sophie Yates at her most romantic). Farnaby's *Walter Erle's Pavan* was unfamiliar and unmemorable – the only disappointing item. I expected that the keyboard version of Byrd's *Lullaby* would sound like a minus-one recording, but in fact it was utterly convincing, though it helps to know the words well enough to imagine them – you can learn them from the Consort of Musicke disc reviewed on p. 23. I like the no-nonsense style which sounds as if the player is just reproducing what's in the notation – an illusion, of course. The inner details are absolutely clear, and the music is given the best possible advocacy. It is played on two copies (by David Evans and Alan Gotto) of the Venetian virginals of c.1580 in the V & A bearing Elizabeth's coat of arms. Highly recommended. *CB*

Shakespeare's Musicke sung in authentic Elizabethan pronunciation. Simon Giles *Tr*, David Dyer *T*, Camerata of London, Barry Mason *dir* 64' 34"
Meridian CDE 84198 (rec 1990) ££
Music by Dowland, Edwards, Holborne, Johnson, Morley, Wilson & anon

This is a welcome reissue. Early pronunciation for this period often sounds a bit twee: here it is utterly convincing. So is the singing. Neither name means any thing to me, and the booklet gives no information, but both manage to make

the text audible without abandoning a singing line. The voice/lute balance is more successful than in Decca's Dowland reissue reviewed below (p. 23). Simon Giles is so confident and competent that one needs to make none of the allowances usually necessary for a boy treble. Fans of Philip Thorby might be interested in a rare appearance of him as a shawmer. The programme includes most of the pieces that may have been sung at The Globe. Educationally, the disc is extremely very useful; it is also worth buying just to enjoy the music. *CB*

17th CENTURY

Carissimi *Historia di Jephte, Damnatorum lamentio* Le Parlement de Musique, Martin Gester 63' 33"
Opus 111 OP 30296

This imaginative programme reconstructs a Lenten devotion in a Roman oratory, closely following an account of 1639 by André Maugars. The centrepiece is Carissimi's *Jephte*, framed by instrumental pieces and two other sacred histories that portray the despair of the damned and the happiness of the blessed. *Jephte* is sung one-to-a-part with a total of six singers; as the booklet explains, this disposition is implied by Carissimi's scoring, but it also adds intensity to his economic and expressive writing. The instrumental pieces are treated languidly and I wondered whether the violinists in the two Colista sonatas should play with more vigour. The continuo, however, is always colourful and resonant, variously including harpsichord, organ, violone, harp and theorbo. Two keyboard pieces by Frescobaldi are scored creatively. His *partite* on the passacaglia is played on the harp, while a toccata is arranged as a duet for harpsichord and organ, inspired by Maugars's account of Frescobaldi offering 'a thousand different sorts of invention on his harpsichord while the organ held long notes'. Such informed but novel interpretations are typical of a disc that sheds new light on Roman composers through perceptive programming and stylish renditions. *Stephen Rose*

Pachelbel Geistliche Festmusik / Festal Sacred Music Johann Rosenmüller Ensemble, Arno Paduch 67' 56"
Christophoros CHR 77257

This disc of World Premiere Recordings (as it is splashed across the back cover of the booklet) will do much to cheer up Peter Leech, who lamented in our June issue the lack of celebration of the 350th anniversary of Pachelbel's birth this year: there are four German settings (*Lobet den Herrn in seinem Heiligtum, Der Herr ist König, Gott sei uns gnädig* and the influential *Christ lag in Todesbanden*), a suite for theorbo (a contemporary transcription of four pieces for keyboard), and one of several settings of the Magnificat which survive in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The Johann Rosenmüller Ensemble have made several large-scale recordings of late, and this is possibly the best I've heard so far. It is quite obvious from the music how significant Pachelbel was in the development of later German church styles, particularly given his close acquaintance with the Bach family – the young J. S. Bach must surely have heard *Christ lag in Todesbanden*. Irrespective of the historical import of the music, this disc is long overdue, if only to show that that canon is not all that Pachelbel wrote! *BC*

Purcell *O Solitude* Gérard Lesne, Il seminario musicale 59' 09
Naive E 8882

One broadsheet reviewer of this CD referred to Gérard Lesne's 'complex, oak-barrelled blend of *haute-contre* and counter-tenor tones', adding '– yes, there is a difference'. This darkens counsel, inexcusably. Of course there's a difference; but Lesne exhibits no *'haute-contre* tones' here. What he does have is an attractive enough falsetto, with a skilfully negotiated shift into chest voice which usefully extends his range downwards. A generation ago, this recording might have been welcomed as adding to a thin discography. But the repertoire is now better known, and I'm not sure that Lesne has anything distinctive enough to say about it. Non-anglophone listeners may be more tolerant than I am of his pronunciation, which is somewhat inconsistent (his R's range between extremes of the alveolar [rattled] and the retroflex [voiced]) but is always markedly gallic. But even when the words are clear enough, Lesne doesn't seem to share Purcell's intense engagement with them. The accompaniments (mainly harpsichord and bass violin, with theorbo and organ for variety) are deft (if sometimes too busy) but not inspired. The result is less rewarding than quite a few competing Purcell CDs, by Argenta, Esswood, Kirkby, Partridge and others. I can't recommend this disc very warmly to anyone but Lesne devotees. In addition to 13 'single songs' and the inevitable 'Evening Hymn', there are six instrumental pieces. These seem to be rather casual fillers. The booklet identifies three of them (from stage works) but lists the other three – which I confess I don't recognise – simply as '(Manuscript, British Library)'. And Richard Luckett's notes – exemplary in every other respect – don't mention the instrumental pieces at all.
Eric Van Tassel

Barocke Orgelmusik aus Norddeutschland Maria Hospach-Martini (Christian-Müller organ, Grote Kerk Leeuwarden) 62' 14"
Arte Nova Classics 74321 92044 2
Buxtehude BuxWV 141, 160, 209; Reincken *An Wasserflüssen Babylon*; Scheidemann *Galliard ex D, Paduana Lachrymae*; Weckmann *Praeambumum I toni a5, Ach wir armen Sünder*

This is an essential CD, not only for all lovers of the North German organ school of the 17th century, but also as an exemplar of the refined organ performance style, with roots in historically informed performance, that has become more widespread in recent years. It is full of examples of the way an organist can use touch, articulation and a sensitive use of rubato to bring life to notes: in the middle of Buxtehude's Ciacona in E minor, for example, when the running quavers are made to dance lightly within a carefully delineated pulse. The following track (*Nun bitten wir heiligen Geist*) shows the same technique used to colour a chorale melody. Using this technique, Scheidemann's beautiful colouration of Dowland's *Lachrymae* is almost as expressive as when played on a lute. Reincken's monumental (20') chorale fantasia on *An Wasserflüssen Babylon* is one of the most complex of the genre, and is given a thoughtful and sensitive reading. Indeed, the whole CD is notable for its air of restraint, allowing the musicality to shine through. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Geistliche Musik am Münchener Hof / Sacred Music at the Munich Court Orpheus Chor München, Neue Hofkapelle München, Gerd Guglhör 70' 06"
Arte Nova Classics 74321 98493 2 £

There are two composers represented on this CD: Rupert Ignaz Mayr and Johann Kaspar Kerll. The works by the former are seven Vespers Psalms, a *Salve Regina* for solo soprano with violins and continuo, and a setting of *Jubilate Deo*. The latter's *Missa Superba* is joined by *Gaudete pastores* and a *Regina coeli*. All of the music is delightful, with Kerll just about taking the honours with his appropriately named mass – eight solo voices and choir are joined by an assortment of instruments in what might be called 'the Viennese style'. The solo singing is good, the choir is perhaps not the best I've ever heard (but neither is it the worst, by a long way!), and the instrumental sound is very good. This is another CD which has been in my player more than once these past few weeks. *BC*

Songs & Dances from the Vietorisz Tablature Klára Bodza *S*, Attila Fülöp *T*, Primavera Vocal Quintet, Camerata Hungarica, László Czidra *dir* 79' 17"
Hungaroton HCD 32133

The MS comprises 145 folios in German organ tablature and belonged to a family of Moravian landowners in the later 17th century (the last page bears the date 1679). There are 375 pieces in 14 sections; this disc concentrates chiefly on dance music played by a panoply of instruments with rapid alternations between ensembles in the early-modern Praetorius style. Some pieces go back to Praetorius and other earlier dance collections, though the booklet notes, which would be much easier to read if track references were given, doesn't distinguish clearly between concordances and other usage of the same material. It would have been interesting to have heard whether the sacred pieces were also so retrospective. On the whole, I was more intrigued by the historical aspect of the MS than by the excellent performances on the disc. *CB*

Venice to Versailles Elysium Ensemble
Move MD 3260 67' 16"

This recording with bonus MPEG video is an interesting package combining performances of a variety of 17th century Italian and 18th century French music with an 'educational' style accompanying booklet. Recorder player and baroque flautist Greg Dikmans is clearly a dedicated teacher, compiling what amounts to a step-by-step guide to understanding the music on the disc. This is obviously a bonus for the student or early music novice, but I am unsure as to the real intended audience for such a project: the packaging is clearly not designed to appeal to the younger generation, and only two tracks out of 23 get the video treatment. Moreover, the performance style is careful rather than flamboyant, and sounds a touch safe by today's standards. Nevertheless, there are some beautiful moments – I enjoyed the Kapsberger theorbo solo (Simon Martyn-Ellis), and it is good to hear the rarely-recorded 16th century divisions on chansons. This is definitely a useful introduction to performance practice from the less well understood areas of early baroque music, but there are better recordings of this repertoire on the market. *Marie Ritter*

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

All CDs reviewed here are available from Lindum Records

LATE BAROQUE

Apocryphal Bach Masses Dorothee Mields, Henning Voss, Henning Kaiser, Ralf Grobe *SATB*, I Febiarmonici, Asfelder Vokalensemble, Wolfgang Helbich 51' 47"
cpo 999 834-2
Mass in C, BWV Anh. 25; Mass in c BWV Anh, 26 (based on Durante), Magnificat in a BWV Anh. 21

No-one could have mistaken these Masses for Bach: they have BWV appendix numbers because they were copied and performed by Bach. Both seem to be of Italian origin: that that is confirmed for BWV Anh. 26, which is mostly by Durante but with a new *Christe* and other changes. Despite their mixed origins, they are worth hearing for their own sake as well as for their Bachian connections. I particularly enjoyed the clear singing of Dorothee Mields, in the masses as well as in the German Magnificat which was long thought to have been by Bach; when I played it in the 1970s, it was attributed to Telemann, and is now ascribed to Melchior Hoffmann, who worked in Leipzig between 1705 and 1715; the fine flautist is Dorothee Müller. The connection with Bach has produced a very fine recording of music that, even without the name of the master, deserves our attention. *CB*

Boismortier *Suites and sonatas* Passacaglia 71' 22"
Linn CKD 204
One work each from opp. 12, 28, 29, 31, 35, 45, 59, and 91

Boismortier (like Telemann, subject of their previous recording) is ideal material for Passacaglia's line-up of recorder, flute/recorder and continuo. In the eight pieces they have selected from different printed collections (prodigious printing activity was something else he shared with Telemann), there are solo opportunities for each of the four players. To add to the range of sounds produced by three different ranges of recorder-like instruments (not counting Annabel Knight's flute), the gamba and harpsichord/organ continuo is here augmented by Eligio Quinteiro, playing theorbo and guitar. If Boismortier lacks the profundity that even Telemann can achieve within such small works, his music is always pleasing to the ear and not lacking in humour. The catalogue is not exactly overflowing with Boismortier recordings of this calibre, which is one more reason to welcome this splendid disc. *BC*

Forqueray *Harpsichord Suites Nos. 2 and 4* Luc Beauséjour 76' 06"
Naxos 8.553717 £

The second of two CDs covering the complete suites which Antoine Forqueray's son, Jean-Baptiste-Antoine, arranged posthumously for harpsichord from his father's viol music, this also includes some pieces from the 1st, 3rd and 5th suites. The arrangements all keep the original range of the viol and so are confined to the lower and middle register of the harpsichord. The Canadian Beauséjour follows Kenneth Gilbert in showing a real identification with French music and his Hemsch-Blanchet copy has the necessary rich tenor register. Eventually one longs for just an occasional foray above alto A but it is worth persevering for a stunning final track on which the wonderfully lugubrious C minor Sarabande, *La Léon*, captures the essence of the French Baroque. *David Hansell*

Handel *Ariodante* Janet Baker *Ariodante*, Edith Mathis *Ginevra*, Norma Burrowes *Dalinda*, James Bowman *Polinesso*, David Rendall *Lurciano*, Samuel Ramey *Il Re di Scozia*, Alexander Oliver *Odoardo*, London Voices, English Chamber Orchestra, Raymond Leppard *dir* 201' 19" (3 CDs in box)
Philips 473 955-2 ££ (rec 1978)

The commercial reason for the inclusion of this in the Philips Trio series is the presence of Janet Baker in the title role. I was a fan of hers in the 1960s, remembering her as a frequent soloist (as alto to Heather Harper's soprano) in Paul Steinitz's Bach cantata programmes and for distinguished performances of Fauré songs and *Frauenliebe– und Leben* at Dartington (the latter with three accompanists in successive years, one being George Malcolm); but my taste changed in the opposite direction to that in which her voice was moving, and here she gives a performance that I can admire but don't fundamentally like. What is noticeable, however, is the brilliance of her technique: other singers are working at their limit (or a bit beyond it), while she always seems to have something in reserve to aid her characterisation of the role. Of the other singers, James Bowman makes a much less rounded, less feminine sound than modern operatic countertenors. Edith Mathis was technically capable, but we (EB heard much of this with me) didn't like the sound she made; the other singers are less skilled but pleasanter. I enjoyed hearing Norma Burrowes again: I remember her particularly as sexy student Poppea at the RAM and it is a pity that her career closed early. As always, it took a little while to cast my mind back to accept the 1960s-style orchestral playing. Modern bands are now adopting baroque practice and playing Handel successfully under the guidance of conductors with

early-orchestral experience, but Leppard, brilliant in the 1960s, sadly put his head in the sand and stopped learning. Apart from more general matters, the horn and bassoon solos are much less characterful than they should be. So to some extent this set is a historical experience, about a decade out of phase as an illustration of the revival of Handelian opera and performance style, but nevertheless convincing within its terms. *CB*

Handel *Messiah* Lynne Dawson, Guillemette Laurens., Charles Daniels, Antonio Abete *SmSTB*, Coro della Radio Svizzera, I Barocchisti, Diego Fasolis 141' 10"
Arts 47627-2 £ (2 CDs in box)

The Arts Blue Line Label series is described as audiophile, 'utilizing 24-bit 96 kHz technology'. On my conventional equipment the recording certainly has exceptional clarity, but that serves to emphasize the lean sound of Fasolis' forces, with 28 choral voices and 16 strings. Despite heartfelt accounts of 'He was despised' from Laurens and 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' from Dawson, and consistently distinguished contributions from Daniels, this is a careful, unexciting performance, notably lacking in fervour. Abete's 'The trumpet shall sound' is the most laid-back version I have ever heard, with the original full *da capo* but no embellishment apart from a brief cadential wobble. Fasolis adds needless dynamic gradations (including a pianissimo start to the Hallelujah chorus, which just sounds silly) and varies the instrumentation a bit (alternating wind and strings in the Pastoral Symphony, a solo violin in 'Rejoice greatly'). The continuo is realised reticently, but, deplorably, the organ is the only chord-playing instrument in many recitatives and arias. Fasolis uses the old (pre-Burrows) Peters edition (as its characteristic readings reveal) and, apart from the long 'The trumpet', deviates from the usual eclectic version only with the all-soprano 'He shall feed' and the short 'Why do the nations'. Mainly for the audiophiles, I think. *Anthony Hicks*

Handel La Resurrezione Nancy Argenta, Maria Cristina Kiehr, Marijana Mijanovic, Marcel Reijans, Klaus Mertens *SSmSTB*, Combattimento Consort Amsterdam, Jan Willem de Vriend *dir* 114' 51" (2 CDs in box)
Challenge Classics CC72120 ££

The 23 year old Handel really let himself go with *La Resurrezione*. Provided with a large orchestra (more than twice the size of that used here) led by Corelli, five good singers, a well-structured libretto that offers two dramatic strands and three rehearsals, he produced as vibrant and colourful an oratorio as his patrons could reasonably have expected. The care he took can be judged from the revisions made between first draft and performance, the discovery of which more or less coincided with the HIP age. AAM gave 'the first complete and authentic performance since 1708'* in the RFH on Easter Day 1981, a thrilling occasion I remember vividly, especially for the first vocal entry and David Thomas's subsequent devilish rantings, so for me this release had a lot to live up to.

The recording is of a live performance complete with opening and closing applause, various extraneous on- and off-stage noises including a very unfortunately timed cough at the end of the pivotal aria and a couple of ensemble slips, giving the whole production the feel of a broadcast rather than a recording. I almost expected to hear an announcer's voice cut into the final ovation. Also on the debit side, the fiddly continuo instrumentation may irritate some listeners but the biggest disappointment for me was Klaus Mertens who, as Lucifer, sounds just too nice. He can certainly sing the notes, but I can hear neither anger nor scorn in his voice. As the Angel, Nancy Argenta sounds a little tentative initially but soon warms up and Marcel Reijans does what he can with the linking role of St John though never quite manages a convincing trill. The chief vocal glories come from Maria Cristina Kiehr and Marijana Mijanovich as the two Marys, initially grieving but ultimately joyful. It has to be said that both singers benefit from the music Handel gave them but even so MCK is in glorious voice for both the lively *Ho un non . .* and the reflective *Per me già . .* , two arias with particularly original scoring. The orchestra (modern instruments) is very well prepared and supplies many a shapely phrase, though the overall continuity sometimes seems disrupted by the exigencies of a live performance – there is more than one audible page turn between movements, for example. But the music is absolutely sublime from start to finish and does ultimately triumph over the shortcomings of the production. I wonder what Corelli made of it. *David Hansell*

Other recordings from Hogwood (made after the 1981 performance), Minkowski and Koopman are available. The general consensus is that the English team still leads the field. DH

** The AAM chose their words carefully about their 'first complete and authentic performance'. The Handel Opera Society performed it in 1969 and Ars Nova did a complete performance on early instruments at the QEH in 1976, the singers being Emma Kirkby, Nancy Long, John York Skinner, John Dudley and David Thomas; I prepared the edition (and played the organ, which EB pumped), Peter Holman directed from the harpsichord and Anthony Hicks reviewed it in* The Financial Times. *It might not have been as authentic as the AAM since it had a smaller band: the original forces are known and were large.* CB

Giuseppe Sammartini *Sonatas for recorder* Ensemble Mediolanum 61' 52"
Christophorus CHS 77252

Talented young German recorder player Sabine Ambos leads this charismatic ensemble in a programme of little known works by Giuseppe Sammartini, an oboist whose skills were renowned throughout Europe in the first half of the 18h century. 29 of his recorder sonatas survive, far more than those for flute, oboe or violin, and they show a remarkable progression of style from the conservative four-movement plan to a lighter, more galant style with only three movements. Harmonically, the works are often experimental and surprising – many of the slow movements are characterised by a winding, indecisive phrase structure, which has varying degrees of success. The fast movements too are variable in quality, ranging from memorable and virtuosic to rambling and mediocre. Fortunately the performances themselves do much to lift the music when necessary: Sabine Ambos makes a beautiful sound and has plenty to offer musically and technically. Cellist Felix Koch and harpsichordist Wiebke Weidanz make a firm continuo team, although their range of articulation is biased towards the incisive and occasionally lacks a softer touch. A fine debut disc from this ensemble, and informative booklet notes by David Lasocki, who is currently preparing a complete edition of Sammartini's recorder sonatas. *Marie Ritter*

D. Scarlatti *Complete Sonatas vol. 5 'Scarlatti as chosen by Clementi'* Emilia Fadini *fortepiano* 71' 07"
Stradivarius STR 33618

For her latest volume in the Stradivarius Scarlatti series Emilia Fadini moves to a fortepiano (a Denzil Wraight copy of a c. 1790 Walter) and plays 15 sonatas, ten of them published by Clementi in 1791; the other five either fill up pairings or show stylistic similarities in the same keys as those issued by Clementi. The ten were important for Scarlatti reception history and include some of his better-known pieces; they are played here without the 'improvements' added by Clementi but with occasional subtle ornamentation. Fadini gives a very convincing performance, particularly of the more 'galant' sonatas, with the D major block K490-2 working especially well. She does not always exploit the fortepiano's expressive qualities to the full, preferring a percussive touch

which can be aggravated by the close miking, but this is highly musical playing with a strong sensitivity to harmonic nuance and just the right amount of rhythmic flexibility for my taste. *Noel O'Regan*

D. Scarlatti *Ladders to Heaven: 16 late sonatas* Colin Tilney *hpscd* 69' 11"
Dorian DOR-95253
K 370-1, 398-9, 406-7, 443-4, 454-5, 518-9, 536-7, 538-9

Choosing a programme from Scarlatti's over 500 sonatas is always a challenge. Tilney takes 16 of the sonatas copied during the last years of the composer's life. For my taste there is not enough variety here: almost all are in major keys and the wonderfully rich sound of the Florentine harpsichord copy by John Philips eventually begins to pall. This has probably a lot to do with the playing: Tilney is always accurate but too predictable, a bit slow at times and ultimately too careful for this music. His left hand, especially, is relentless and I began to long for some of the quirkiness and subtlety which recent Italian players bring to this music. A pity because in small doses there are some nice moments here. *Noel O'Regan*

D. Scarlatti *Sonatas* Sergio Ciomei, *harpsichord and fortepiano* 66' 41"
Challenge Classics CC 72116

This attractive selection of sonatas, covering the whole range of Scarlatti's output, is played on two harpsichords (Taskin and Mietke copies, both by Tony Chinnery) and on a Christofori fortepiano copy by Kerstin Schwarz. I enjoyed this harpsichord playing: exciting when it needs to be, there is generally a good balance between forward propulsion and agogic subtlety. As in Fadini's playing I found the transfer to the fortepiano less satisfying with the playing a bit rhythmically inflexible; Ciomei's choice of sonatas for the fortepiano is probably not the best, with the exception of K308 which comes off extremely well. Ciomei plays K490-2 on the Mietke copy: they work equally well on the harpsichord, except that I find the miking of this instrument too close and the sound very metallic. Overall, though, a very worthwhile recording. *Noel O'Regan*

D. Scarlatti *Sinfonie e Concerti* L'Arte dell' Arco, Federico Guglielmo 73' 27"
Gaudeamus CD GAU 330
Barbella *Fl concerto in C*; Durante *Concerto a4 La Pazzia in A, hpscd concerto in Bb*; Leo *Cello concerto in d*; Pergolesi *Vln concerto in Bb*; Scarlatti *Sinfonia 4, 10, 12*

It might seem odd that the disc is issued with only one composer's name as the main title despite containing just three pieces by Scarlatti taking only 11'42". But it isn't just a marketing device: these are amazing works, concise and vigorous masterpieces despite their brevity. One is known to be an opera overture (*Narcisso*), and the other two may well have similar origins. If so, then the oboe (brilliantly played by Paolo Pollastri) would probably not have sounded quite so prominent as with this single-string group, whose recorded sound is unnaturally forward. No. 4 makes a brilliant opening to the disc – though the drum is an editorial addition. Of the other pieces, Durante's *La Pazzia* is startlingly passionate. This is a fine disc of little-known music played with utter conviction. The booklet reverses the order of Scarlatti's Sinfonie 10 & 12. *CB*

King's Music has the score of the Scarlatti Sinfonie *for £12 and parts in CB's non-professional hand of nos. 2, 3, 9-12, 12-14. Commissions for typesetting them would be welcome.*

Sieber *6 sonatas for recorder and basso continuo* Thomas Kügler *rec*, Imke David *viola da gamba*, Rainer Johannsen *bsn*, André Henrich *archlute & chitaronne*, Wolfgang Kostuja *kbd*
Coviello Classics 20206

The repertoire on this disc deserves to be much better known amongst recorder players; it features a set of six sonatas printed under the name of 'Monsieur Sieber' in Amsterdam in 1732, which easily rival those of better known recorder composers Barsanti, Marcello and Sammartini. Although none of the works could be described as ground-breaking, largely following the mould of Corelli and his successors, they have plenty to offer in the way of attractive themes, interesting harmonic twists and some fiendish passagework to boot. In his accompanying notes Kügler makes a convincing case that the composer is in fact Ignazio Siber who taught at the Ospedale Veneziano Della Pieta alongside Antonio Vivaldi. The sonatas are performed with an excellent variety of continuo instruments including viola da gamba, lute, organ, harpsichord and bassoon, all of whom provide stylish and confident support in a number of creative combinations. Kügler is a very controlled recorder player, negotiating all the virtuosic passages faultlessly and with both flair and solidity; this is good, wholesome and sensible recorder playing with no pretentiousness attempted so often in Italian repertoire. Definitely worth investigating. Incidentally, for those interested, he also mentions a surviving copy of the sonatas in the Royal Academy of Music Library in London. *Marie Ritter*

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

Telemann *Trio Sonatas* Sergio Azzolini *bsn*, Parnassi musici 68' 37"
cpo 999 934-2
TWV 42: A2, B5, c1, D4, d2, e1, F1, G3; 43: e3

I first came across Sergio Azzolini at this year's Fasch Festtage, when he was the very impressive soloist with the Suonatori della gioiosa Marca in a concert of Vivaldi and Fasch. Here he features in three sonatas which help bring variety to a set of lovely performances (as we have come to expect from Parnassi musici) of Telemann's *VI Trio a Violini e Basso*. The opening piece on the CD is a quartet, with the bassoon adding a second bass line, while the other two pieces are trio sonatas for violin, bassoon and continuo, one from an earlier printed source, the other from a manuscript in Darmstadt. All of the pieces are enjoyable, and I am happy to report that I've listened to the disc several times purely for pleasure. *BC*

Telemann *Don Quixote, Overture in D, Orchestral Suites* Northern Chamber Orchestra, Nicholas Ward 57' 08"
Naxos 8.554019 £

At only £5 per disc, it seems a little churlish to complain that these performances aren't quite what readers of this magazine would expect at the start of the 21st century. I have no real problem with modern chamber orchestras playing baroque music, except when one hears more of the director than of the composer. Sounding rather like Ludwig Güttler's 1980s recordings, the Northern Chamber Orchestra give us performances of *Don Quixote*, *La Lyre* and the D minor suite with three oboes (TWV 555: d3) which I would describe as old-fashioned. The excessive speeds during some of the last-named piece result in patches of quite untidy playing. As there are several period performances that are far better, this one will suit whatever old guard there is still resisting old instruments. *BC*

The booklet states the editions used. It would be very difficult to get a decent performance from the Kalmus reprint of a pre-war German edition of Don Quixote, but the other editions are uncluttered by 20th-century bowings etc: La Lyra is credited to Eulenburg and BC's King's Music edition was used for the Ouverture in d. CB

Pellegrina's Delight Music for oboe by Antonio Vivaldi Gail Hennessy *ob*, Nicholas Parle *kbd*, Rodolfo Richter *vln*, Sally Holman *bsn*, Katherine Sharman *vlc*, Peter McCarthy *violone* 75' 13"
Signum Records SIGCD037
RV 28, 34, 53, 67, 106, 779, 801

Pellegrina was the young female oboist who first performed one of the pieces on

this disc at the Pietà. The programme includes sonatas and concertos, although the terminology is fairly unimportant: they are all essentially chamber works with prominent parts for solo oboe. The one 'authentic' solo sonata opens the disc with characteristic Hennessy/Parle style and panache. The remainder of the recording keeps up the high standards. I particularly enjoyed the 'Pellegrina' sonata with its chirpy little organ solos. It's a pity that a bassoon was substituted for the original tenor chalumeau, as it's rarely that we get an opportunity to hear it – but that is certainly not intended as a criticism of the very fine bassoonist. The two violin sonatas adapted for oboe work extremely well. All in all, in fact, this is another successful disc for Signum, although I have to confess that I found the back cover difficult to read, and the scoring listings inside a little excessive – is it really necessary to tell us that the same five players play for each of the four movements of the final sonata separately? But a small consideration beside the musical treat... *BC*

Vivaldi *Juditha triumphans* Birgit Finnilä *Juditha*, Ingeborg Springer *Abra*, Julia Hamari *Holofernes*, Elly Ameling *Vagaus*, Annelies Burmeister *Ozias*, Rundfunks-Solistenvereinigung Berlin, Kammerorchester Berlin, Vittorio Negri 163' 14"
Philips 473 898-2 £ (2 CDs rec. 1974)

This was a scholarly undertaking in its day, with two alternative arias as well as the complete work. But the success of a Vivaldi performance seems to me to depend more on the actual sound and style than performances of Handel, so I can accept *Ariodante* (reviewed above) more easily than this, all the more because Vivaldi's orchestration here is particularly imaginative. The whole performance sags, and had BC not passed on to me his copy of vol. 10 of the LP *Edizione Vivaldi*, the absence of text and translation would have made the work incomprehensible. When text and translations are available and don't have to be specially commissioned, they really should be accessible online, ideally in a format suitable for printing. *CB*

Vivaldi *Le verità in cimento* Gemma Bertagnolli *Rosane*, Guillemette Laurens *Rutena*, Sara Mingardo *Melindo*, Nathalie Stutzmann *Damira*, Philippe Jaroussky *Zelim*, Anthony Rolfe Johnson *Mamud*, Ensemble Matheus, Jean-Christophe Spinosi *dir* 150' 18" (3 CDs in box)
Opus 111 OP 30365

This is one of several Vivaldi opera recordings that have appeared in recent months as part of Opus 111's complete recording of the composer's output. Reviews I've read elsewhere of previous releases have concentrated on the wealth of beautiful music lurking in the manuscripts: *La verità* is no exception, there being several very fine arias (mostly in the pathetic vein), and some nice ensemble writing. I found the recitative a little drawn out (which might, perhaps, have been rectified by seeing the action played out on the stage, of course). The cast is of exceptionally high calibre with some of the older stars of the early music world rubbing shoulders with their worthy successors. The instrumental playing, while crisp and lively, is just a little over-cooked for my liking: some of the accented attacks and the *al niente* diminuendi are simply too romantic. Of course the music must be brought to life, and of course this approach might be invigorating for players and audience alike in live performance, but as purely aural entertainment I'm afraid it detracted from what otherwise I thought was a well-sung, well-paced and well-considered performance of an opera which has long been overdue a recording of this stature. *BC*

Vivaldi *Le quattro stagioni* Concerto italiano, Stefania Azzaro, Mauro Lopes Ferreira, Antonio de Secondi, Francesca Vicari *vlns*, Rinaldo Alessandrini 44' 24"
Opus 111/Naïve OP 30363
+ CD2 (57' 31") with Bach, Handel, Marenzio, Monteverdi, Rossini, A & D Scarlatti, Vivaldi

It was inevitable, I suppose, that eventually Alessandrini (with his previous track record of forcing us to listen to Monteverdi and similar repertoire with new ears) would turn his attentions to that most famous of Vivaldi's works, *The Four Seasons*. The final result, like it or loathe it, is no more and no less quirky than those other 'interpretations' which say more about the artists being recorded than about the composer. Being a HIP recording, that – allegedly – is the idea, I thought, but maybe I missed something. What grated in particular was the presentation: the performances are excellent, but the booklet tells us nothing about the four violinists who take a concerto each. Instead, Alessandrini waffles on for almost seven pages in a multi-personality Fux-like discussion of the printed sonnets. What a waste of time. The partner disc contains selections from past and forthcoming Concerto Italiano recordings, most exciting of which was their 2001 Rossini set with Maria Bayo, and a gorgeous aria from *Olimpiade* sung by Sara Mingardo. Less hype and more quality productions with sensible accompanying material would be very much appreciated. *BC*

En Trio: French Baroque Trio Sonatas for Two Flutes and Basse Continue The Hanoverian Ensemble (John Solum, Richard Wyton *fl*, Arthur Fiacco *vlc*, Lisa Terry gamba, Mark Kroll *hpscd*, Daniel Swenberg *theorbo*) 61' 35"
Musicians Showcase MS1087
Couperin *La Françoise*; Hotteterre I/3 in b, La Barre III/1 in G, Leclair *Deux^me Recréation*

16 months after recording *Bachanalia* (see p.22) the ensemble re-convened for *En Trio*. Again the notes are admirable and I also welcome their willingness to stay with one basic sonority – that of the trio sonata – though the continuo team does change from viol and theorbo (de la Barre and Hotteterre) to cello and harpsichord (Couperin and Leclair). There is also a change of pitch (392 to 415) for the Leclair. Compared to *Bachanalia*, the playing of both flutes and cello is generally more relaxed, sometimes to the point of a lack of clarity in the second flute especially (in the *Ouverture* of the Leclair, for instance) though ensemble and tuning remain secure. All the dances are played with due regard for their character and structure and, indeed, all the works have a pleasing overall shape, Leclair's final *Tambourin* duly dispelling the gravitas of his intense and extended *Chaconne*. Of the two discs this one therefore offers the more consistently rewarding listening experience but I would commend the repertoire of them both to anyone involved with young musicians. Despite all that is regularly said about the death of music in British schools there are still plenty of teenage ensembles who could not only play this music, but enjoy doing so. *David Hansell*

Baroque Sirena Recorder Quartet with Dan Laurin 70' 30"
BIS-CD-1234
Boismortier op. 15 and op. 34; Schickhardt Concertos 1-3; Telemann 2 Concertos for 4 violins senza basso

This is the first time I've heard Sirena, but hopefully it won't be the last; having previously released a CD of contemporary recorder music and now moving back to late baroque repertoire, maybe they'll turn their attention to renaissance material? As an amateur recorder player myself, I appreciate just how difficult it is to play four recorders perfectly in tune, but these Danish players have no problem; in fact, in two of the Boismortier concertos, they go one further! The choice of pieces is a happy one; my initial reservations about the arrangements of two of Telemann's concertos for four violins with bass (those in D and G, here played a tone higher and a tone lower respectively) were soon overcome, due to the incredible virtuosity and sheer class of the playing.

While the final bottom Fs of the latter piece cannot have the same rustic bite that the fiddle's open string gives at the end of what is essentially a hunting romp (I remember a fantastic session I did on the piece with the late Mica Comberti with particular fondness). Elsewhere the recorders are somehow clearer in projection than violins. Sirena does not shy away from vibrato, but uses it as an ornament, as they should. I look forward to hearing them in some Holborne dances! *BC*

Corelli & Co Dan Laurin *rec*, Parnassus Avenue 70' 00"
BIS-CD-945
Barsanti in C; Bigaglia in a; Boni op. 2/2; Corelli op 5/11; B. Marcello op. 2/2; G. Sammartini in f S15, trio in d; Veracini No 6 in a

Swedish recorder virtuoso Dan Laurin has over the years established a highly individual approach to baroque performance which has inevitably bordered on the controversial. He combines superlative technique and musicianship with an insatiable appetite for lucid and creative improvisation: by his own admission this frequently ventures beyond the boundaries of mainstream baroque ornamentation. Add to this a collection of stunning Fred Morgan recorders and a first-class continuo team with a remarkably similar outlook and you have a recording that demands attention. The repertoire on offer (classic recorder sonatas by Barsanti, Sammartini, Corelli et al) is the perfect vehicle for Laurin's flights of fancy and allows the continuo players to revel in feisty, energised bass lines. In fact it is lamentable that none of the three accompanying players gets their own solo spot, although multi-talented harpsichord player Hanneke van Proosdij swaps to recorder for a spirited version of Sammartini's Trio Sonata in D minor in which she is in no way overshadowed by Laurin's skills. This is a truly inspirational disc for anyone who regards the baroque original as a starting point for individual expression, a view which is gathering momentum in the wake of the more 'purist' approach of the last thirty years. Definitely food for thought. *Marie Ritter*

CLASSICAL

Bachanalia: Instrumental Music of the Bach Family The Hanoverian Ensemble Musicians Showcase MS1081 66' 19"
CPEB Trio Sonata in b (Wq 143/H 567), vln & hpscd sonata in g (BWV 1020); JCB Quartet op. 19/2; JSB Partita for fl, BWV 1013; WFB Duet in G for 2 fl (F 59)

The first of these neatly titled and well-planned recitals goes to an obvious source for its repertoire but then cunningly avoids the obvious pieces, JSB being represented by perhaps his least known chamber work, although the G minor sonata, ascribed to CPEB here, is well-known under his name. The notes also suggest that the fluent counterpoint of the B minor trio may reflect a fatherly hand hovering above that of the teenage composer. This is the moment to say that the notes in general tell listeners exactly what they want to know in terms of background and highlight 'points to listen for', a welcome contrast to some releases I have reviewed recently. The playing is all thoroughly competent, with John Solum finding a convincing path through the hazards of JSB's *Partita*, though I did feel that both he and his partner are inclined towards a rather unvaried and aggressive style of tonguing. They and the strings, however, are much more relaxed in the genial company of JCB's melodious quartet, though the balance here is not always ideal. But after the somewhat frantic finale of BWV 1020 this piece comes as a welcome wind-down at the end of a programme which, ultimately, promises a little more than it actually delivers.
David Hansell

J. C. Bach *Complete Opera Overtures* The Hanover Band, Anthony Halstead 176' 57"
cpo 999 963-2 (rec 1994-2000)(3 CDs in box)

This is a mid-price remarketing of the three separate discs (CPO 999 129-2, 488-2 & 753-2) issued in 1995, 1997 and 2002. Each of the original booklets is included separately. Simon McVeigh praised the characteristically spirited performances of vol. 2 (*EMR*37) and I have enjoyed dipping into the collection both for the music and the performances. Beware: two discs are labelled Vol. 1. *CB*

Schuster *Demofoonte* Andreas Post *Demofoonte*, Dorothee Mields *Dircea*, Marie Melnitzki *Creusa*, Jörg Waschinski *Timante*, Werner Buchin *Cherinto*, Jan Kobow *Matusio*, Bernhard Schafferer *Adrasto*, La Ciaconna, Ludger Rémy *dir* 139'07"
DHM 74321 98282 2 (2 CDs in box)

Demofoonte is the second *opera seria* that Joseph Schuster wrote in 1776 while on a visit to Italy with his senior Dresden colleague J.G. Naumann. Composed for the inauguration of a new opera house at Forli, it is a splendid example of the genre which, with its dependence on the alternation of recitative and extended, often virtuosic, arias which causes problems for modern staging, is ideally suited to the medium of recording. This is especially so in a performance of such musical brilliance and dramatic conviction that is almost more than the convoluted plot might seem to deserve. According to the booklet that accompanies the set, it was Ulla Schneider, first violinist and leader of La Ciaccona, who rediscovered Schuster's score, along with other works by the same composer; to judge by this production, she is to be congratulated for reintroducing a modern audience to the music of a considerable talent whom time and changing taste had previously consigned to an unwarranted and almost unbroken oblivion. In this performance of *Demofoonte*, Ludger Rémy, well known for his ground-breaking recordings of Telemann and C.P.E. Bach, directs a faultless cast of soloists and a well-balanced period orchestra in what is, in my estimation, both one of the most gratifying operatic revivals of recent years and an invaluable contribution to the still underrepresented recorded repertoire, that of late 18th century opera seria, which once occupied so much of the compositional attention of a richly gifted age. This is an issue that can be thoroughly recommended, not simply to opera buffs, but to all who appreciate the dramatic music of an era in which the star of Mozart shone most brightly but not by any means alone. *David J Levy*

Soler *Sonatas for Harpsichord, vol. 9* Gibert Rowland 72' 41"
Naxos 8.555032 £
Nos 12-14, 24-25, 72, 84, 86, 99, 119, 132

This is the latest volume in Rowland's complete Soler sonatas for Naxos. Played on a Goermans copy, it includes ten single-movement sonatas plus an extended four-movement sonata which is still essentially a compilation of four individual Scarlattian pieces. Soler can go on a bit; there are occasional surprises but much of the music here is in C, G and D major and glories somewhat relentlessly in its figuration. Rowland's playing is always clean and he clearly has the virtuosity for this music; however I find the playing a bit relentless and would have liked a bit more rhythmic nuance to help the listener engage more with the music. A disc to dip into rather than to listen through completely. *Noel O'Regan*

Barockorgeln in Niederbayern: Norbert Düchtel an historischen Orgeln in Vornbach, Regen, Schambach, Hellring 72' 14"
Ifo Records IFO 00 108
Music by Eberlin, Grotz, Grünberger, Kobrich, Königsperger

Early- to mid-18th-century organs in Bavaria generally, in line with their role in the Catholic liturgy, followed the Italian tradition. But although the four organs on this CD are baroque, the music veers to-

wards the pretty rococo or classical style. Vornbach has a beautifully warm and generous acoustic which enhances some gorgeous organ sounds – listen to track 2 for some delightfully breathy flutes. The music is attractive for the most part, although sometimes the repetitious nature of music of this period began to grate with me. The pieces by Grünberger are probably the least interesting, and are unfortunately played in a very dry acoustic that adds nothing to the organ. The playing is articulate, with the careful attention to detailed matters of phrasing so essential for this classical repertoire. Specifications and registrations are supplied. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

19th CENTURY

Beethoven *Sonatas op. 27/2, op. 13* Jos van Immerseel fp (Graf 1824) 61' 52"
Accent ACC 78332
+ *Andante favori* WoO 57, 6 Bagatelles op. 126

Some early and some late Beethoven, all played on a Graf of 1824. It's fine for the Op. 126 Bagatelles, which Immerseel plays in a convincingly improvisatory style that suits the music well. But it seems less than ideal for the sonatas of c.1800, despite some special pleading in the programme booklet: 'we have chosen a later Graf grand piano, which from a musical point of view must surely come closer [than earlier Viennese pianos] to Beethoven's intentions'. Does it? Wouldn't Beethoven have exploited to the full the different resources of the instruments available to him in 1800? He certainly did in the first movement of Op. 27/2, whose marking *sempre pianissimo e senza sordini* presupposes a piano which, when played very softly with the 'moderator' on and the dampers lifted throughout, sustains just long enough to produce a magical hazy effect without blurring the harmonies too much. But the greater sustaining power of the Graf means that Immerseel has to pedal at each change of harmony, and the music is too sharply in focus. As for Op. 13, Immerseel plays as well and intelligently as ever, but I still prefer Ella Sevskaya's electrifying performance on a Schantz of c.1800 (which I reviewed in the June 2002 *EMR*). By contrast, Immerseel seems a trifle restrained, and his dynamic contrasts less extreme – though this may have less to do with the instrument than with the fact that the recording was made as long ago as November 1983.

A couple of minor quibbles about the programme booklet. It's now known that Beethoven bought his 1803 Erard: he was not given it. And the London piano maker was called John Broadwood, not Thomas. *Richard Maunder*

THE BRITISH MUSIC COLLECTION

Byrd *Psalmes, Sonets & Songs 1588 – a selection* The Consort of Musicke, Anthony Rooley *dir* 65' 27" (rec 1980)
Decca 475 049-2 ££

Dowland *First Booke of Songes* (1597) The Consort of Musicke, Anthony Rooley *dir* 71'47" (rec 1976)
Decca 475048-2 ££

Purcell *The Indian Queen* Tommy Williams, Emma Kirkby, Catherine Bott, John Mark Ainsley, David Thomas, Gerald Finley, *TrSSTBB*, Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood 73' 28"
Decca 475 052 2 ££ (rec 1994)

Purcell *Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary, Funeral Sentences, Anthems* The Choir of Winchester Cathedral, David Runnett *org*, Hilary Brooks *continuo vlc*, David Hill *org, dir* 65' 48" (rec 1994)
Decca 475 050-2 ££

We've had a few of the British Music Collection series before. It is a wide-ranging series, which (if these examples are anything to go by) gives new life to excellent recordings of the last few decades. The one to buy if you can afford no others is the Dowland. I wasn't much of a record-buyer in the 1970s – I was too busy playing and going to concerts. I bought the two-LP set when it appeared, but have very little recollection of it. What strikes me now is the knife-edge sound of Emma Kirkby's voice: I had forgotten how it has mellowed even over the four years that separate this from the Byrd disc. I can see why it polarised opinion then, though from my viewpoint it was absolutely ideal. I wondered the first time I played the CD why so many of the solos were given to Martyn Hill rather than her, but second time through I was perfectly happy with the selection; his was a more mature voice. The only tracks that don't work are those with David Thomas as soloist, not so much for the singing itself but for the incongruity of a bass voice singing the melody so low in the texture; one of the disappointments is 'His golden locks'. Just a few verses are omitted to fit two LPs onto one CD: I doubt if many listeners will notice or that those who do will worry.

The Byrd, despite being published only nine years earlier, is from a different age. Dowland's music presupposes an audience (if only a handful of people sharing a room with the performers) and calls them into the music; Byrd's consort and part songs exist for the performers and draw the listeners in. They probably took the moralistic, drab texts more seriously than we can, but it is usually the music itself rather than the text setting that attracts us. When both these recordings were first issued, most found the performances far too fast; but Byrd's vocal lines are not slow cantus firmi, and require the vocal lines to be phrased as heightened speech, which is what the Consort of Musicke excel at. Of the 11 singers, 7 take solos; I particularly enjoyed hearing Poppy Holden, whose singing career sadly didn't last until the CD era. It is also interesting to hear the young Evelyn Tubb, sounding almost like an alto in 'Care for thy soul'. One track to use as sampler: the marvelous lament for Sir Philip Sidney, 'Come to me grief for ever'.

The two Purcell discs are much more recent. The church music one has most of the favourites, beginning with the various funeral pieces: Crispian Steele-Perkins and friends provide the slide-trumpets, trombones and drum – not playing the rhythm which Bruce Wood later argued should be used. Anthems with strings (Roy Goodman, Simon Jones, Judith Tarling and Angela East) are represented by *Rejoice in the Lord alway* and *My beloved spake* with strings. Other pieces include *Jehova quam multi, Remember not Lord our offences* and *Hear my prayer*, concluding with *O God thou art my God*, whose Alleluias are the jolliest of those on the disc. What stops me recommending it as 'the only Purcell anthem collection you need to buy' is that it sounds, admittedly less than most collegiate choir recordings, more Anglican than early. Purcell was, of course, an Anglican writing for Anglicans, but with three hundred fewer years of tradition behind the performance style.

Of Purcell's semi-operas I find *The Indian Queen* the least satisfactory when performed as a single piece of music, which is not to contradict Curits Price's comment in the booklet that it is 'one of best works'. Some of the music is as good as Purcell ever wrote, though one wonders how far Purcell's tongue was in his cheek in places that are not ostensibly funny; Daniel Purcell's intentionally funny bits are tedious. This is not to criticise the performance, and if you don't have a recording of the work, I can recommend this – it can't fail, anyway, with so fine a cast

Three detailed comments: congratulations for making clear that the Byrd disc does not contain all the 1588 print – I can imagine other companies not being so honest; commiserations to the organist who is Dunnett on the front of a cover, Runnett on the back; and lack of common sense in not printing more than 'Purcell' on the labels – if you have both discs out at once, you can only find the right box by checking the disc number. *CB*

LETTERS

Dear Clifford,
A footnote to Andrew Benson-Wilson's review of the recording of de Grigny's livre d'orgue (*EMR*, July 2003, p.18). Andrew writes: 'For those that [sic] are into such things, I should mention that in the famous *Tierce en Taille* movement [from the Gloria], Anne Chapelin-Dubar, quite correctly in my view, plays the sensually clashing harmonies from the original manuscript [meaning print] rather than Bach's sanitised version of it (this is one of the works that Bach copied out for study).' I guess Andrew is referring here to bar 35, which is rendered more grammatical if the left hand proceeds a step lower from its second note. In the context of a print (*Premier livre d'orgue*, 1699) which contains a relatively large number of evident engraving slips, it remains an open question as to the 'correct' reading of this unusual, not to say unprecedented bar. Bach in fact chose not to change it in the copy he made (therefore did not 'sanitise' it), but J.G.Walther did in his copy (see facsimiles published in the series La Musique Francaise Classique by Fuzeau). Indeed, as Walther began to write the 'sensual' c''s, he very plainly had second thoughts since you can still see in the facsimile these offending (offensive?) notes scratched out.

Edward Higginbottom

Dear Clifford,
As a rule I do not respond to reviews of my work, whether favorable or critical: each reviewer has a right to his or her opinion and it will be a dull day indeed for early music when we all share the same tastes and controversy becomes obsolete. However, the predication of ill-founded opinions as historical truths is a different matter altogether, and I therefore feel must respond to the review of my recording of the Handel flute sonatas by Anthony Hicks published in your June issue. Although there is much I would like to say, I will restrict myself here to a few points which are not matters of taste, but rather of fact.

1. Mr. Hicks condemns my tempi.: 'Dance-style movements are generally too fast'. All of the dance tempi on this recording are based either on 18th-century metronome markings (particularly those of l'Affillard, Choquel and d'Onzembray Pajot) or the tempi listed in Quantz' *Versuch*. I know of no better sources for determining the tempi of 18th-century dance music.
2. Mr. Hicks finds the ornamentation too florid: 'extravagances acceptable in the course of an entire opera become ridiculous when applied to a solo sonata'. The incredibly floridly ornamented adagios from solo sonatas by composers like Corelli, Benda, Geminiani, Tartini, Dubourg or Nardini (especially the latter are astoundingly rich) are at least as extravagant as anything on my disc, and unquestionably 18th-century. These examples, taken together with commentaries from the period on excessive Italian ornamentation, cadenzas and general 'showmanship', indicate that Italian musicians would not have agreed with Hicks when he postulates that 'good phrasing and... tasteful embellishment are usually more than enough to ensure an engaging performance.'
3. Mr. Hicks claims that an off-the-cuff explanation of the term *temporegiato* (made in what was meant to be an entertaining and light-hearted 1999 radio interview with George Pratt) as 'destroying the pulse' is proof that I have misunderstood the term and draws the conclusion 'What reliance, therefore, can be placed on anything else he (Wentz) says?' Brossard in his dictionary states that *temporegiato* 'signifies that those who accompany, or he who is beating time, must sometimes prolong certain beats' so that the singer can be expressive or make ornaments. If, as Brossard clearly indicates, both the accompaniment and the soloist take time together, then one certainly can speak of 'breaking the pulse' in contrast to *tempo rubato*, where the bass stays in time while the upper part delays or accelerates its beats. I use this *temporegiato* technique in its 'purest' form (for ornamentation, as Brossard describes and Tosi corroborates) in many places on the CD, especially in the initial slow movements of the B minor and G major sonatas, but I also sometimes use the term more generically (as I did in the *Spirit of the Age* interview) to indicate a tempo fluctuation in all the parts.

I fear that it was this BBC broadcast which somehow touched a nerve with Hicks. The crux of his review, my supposed incompetent scholarship in interpreting the term *temporegiato*, is based entirely on that interview, and certainly not on the extensive article I published on the subject some years ago in the *Tijdschrift voor Oude Muziek*. What a pity that, instead of accosting the BBC's Kate Bolton, Mr. Hicks didn't simply ask me directly what I was up to on this recording. I could have explained that is my interpretation is extravagant it is not because I consider Handel 'limited'(!) but because I choose to err, if err I must, as the Italians did in the 18th century, on the side of excess.

Mr. Hicks is right about one thing though: *temporegiato* is mis-spelled in the booklet which accompanies the CD. But to condemn a performer's integrity because of sloppy orthography is the uncharitable syllogism of an intelligent but prejudiced critic?

Jed Wentz

Dear Clifford
Yes, I think you're right (*EMR* 92 p. 2). With unequal hours the tenth hour would vary throughout the year from about 2 a.m. to about 5 a.m. (and also depend on latitude).

John Briggs

Dear Clifford,

It always takes me rather a long time to get round to reading anything, including *EMR*, so I may well not be the first to react to Simon Raven's comments (*EMR* 90, May 2003) on the 'growing love for deeper sonorities' in performances and recordings of Renaissance music. But I am sure that we should keep trying to establish clarity on the question of performance pitch.

Simon suggests one reason for the shift is 'the growing trend to treat the counter-tenor as a tenor'. This reference to the 'counter-tenor' will have confused many. I am sure he meant the Contratenor part, usually called Altus in continental repertoire and not the (modern) countertenor singer. But the principal reason for the correction of performance pitch in recent decades is the (still slowly) growing awareness of the significance of high clefs, what we still wrongly call chiavette. In a nutshell this means, for continental repertoire, if the highest voice is notated in 'treble' (i.e. violin) clef the piece has to be transposed down. The transposition depends chiefly on the clef of the lowest voice, but it is usually a fourth. This returns the music to ranges associated with the Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass clefs, or vocal clefs. In effect this returns the soprano part (usually called Cantus) to the falsetto singer, the Altus part to a high tenor, the Tenor part to a low tenor or baritone, and the Bassus to the low range commented on by so many composers and commentators of the time. So the Contratenor or Altus part is rightly sung by high tenors in the more informed modern performances. You will expect me also to mention that many of the better editions of Renaissance sacred music assume a willingness to experiment with transposition to an appropriate pitch!

Attentive readers will of course have noted all the other reference to transposition etc in that and many other issues of *EMR*. *Michael Procter*

Michael's latest catalogue is available at www.Edition-MP.

CHARLES BURNEY

The excerpt from Burney's op. 1 no. 1 on pp. 26-27 is edited by Brian Clark and published by Prima la musica!

LICENSING BILL

The controversial Licensing Bill (making it less bother for pubs to have canned rather than live music) has now been ratified by Parliament. There seem to have been last-minute changes to remove some of its absurdities, but I haven't seen the details and the comments I have read suggest that, as one expects with late changes, their implications were not fully thought-through. If anyone who has been following the matter closely could tell us how it affects the likely activities of early musicians, we'd be most grateful.

****

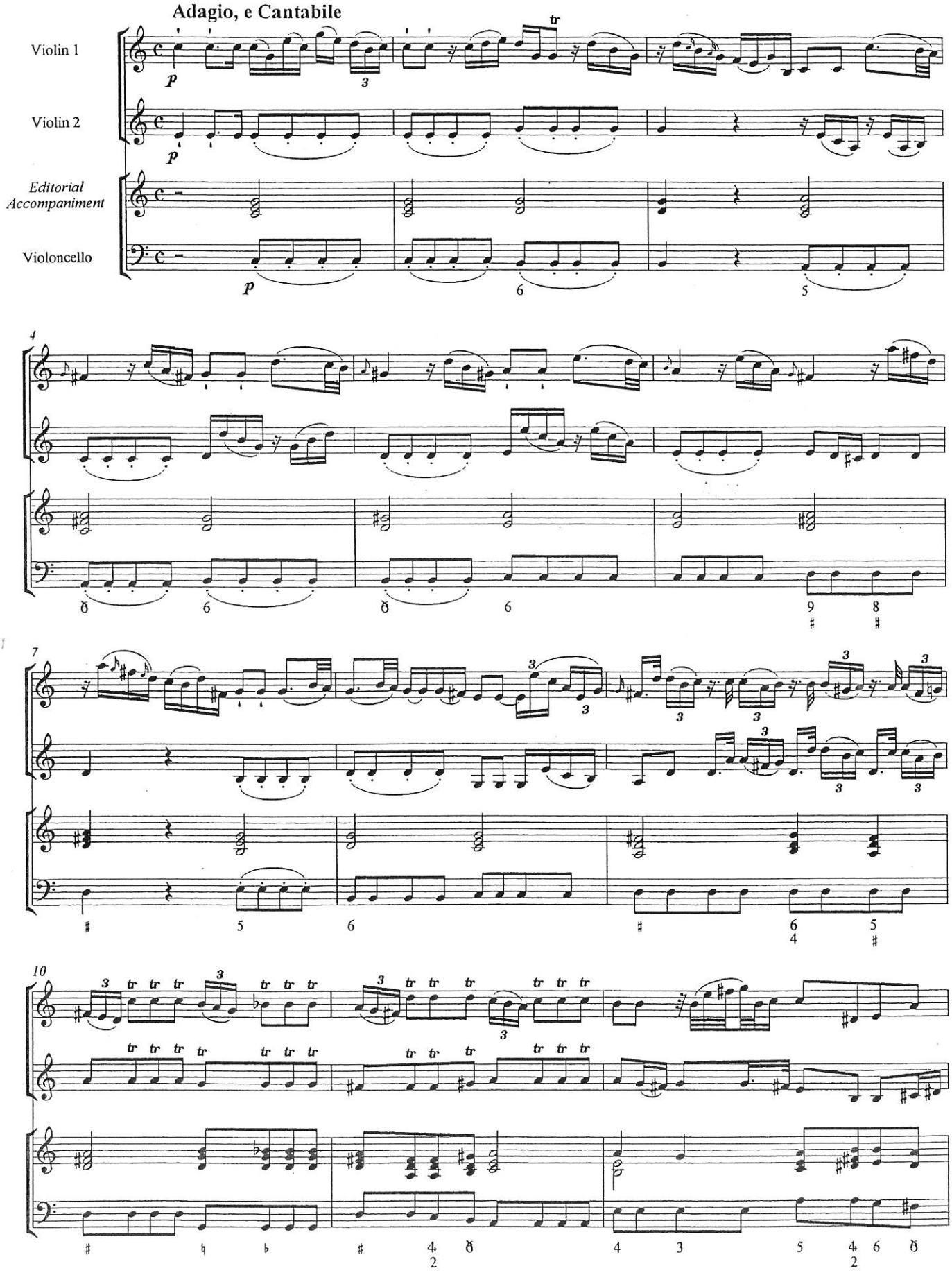
Several readers wrote to tell me that I had reversed the sex of Honey and was quoting Bella to Jack in Tippet's *The Midsummer Marriage*. If Nick Kenyon reads this, I'll offer him the suggestion that it would make a marvellous Prom to celebrate the Tippett centenary in 2005.

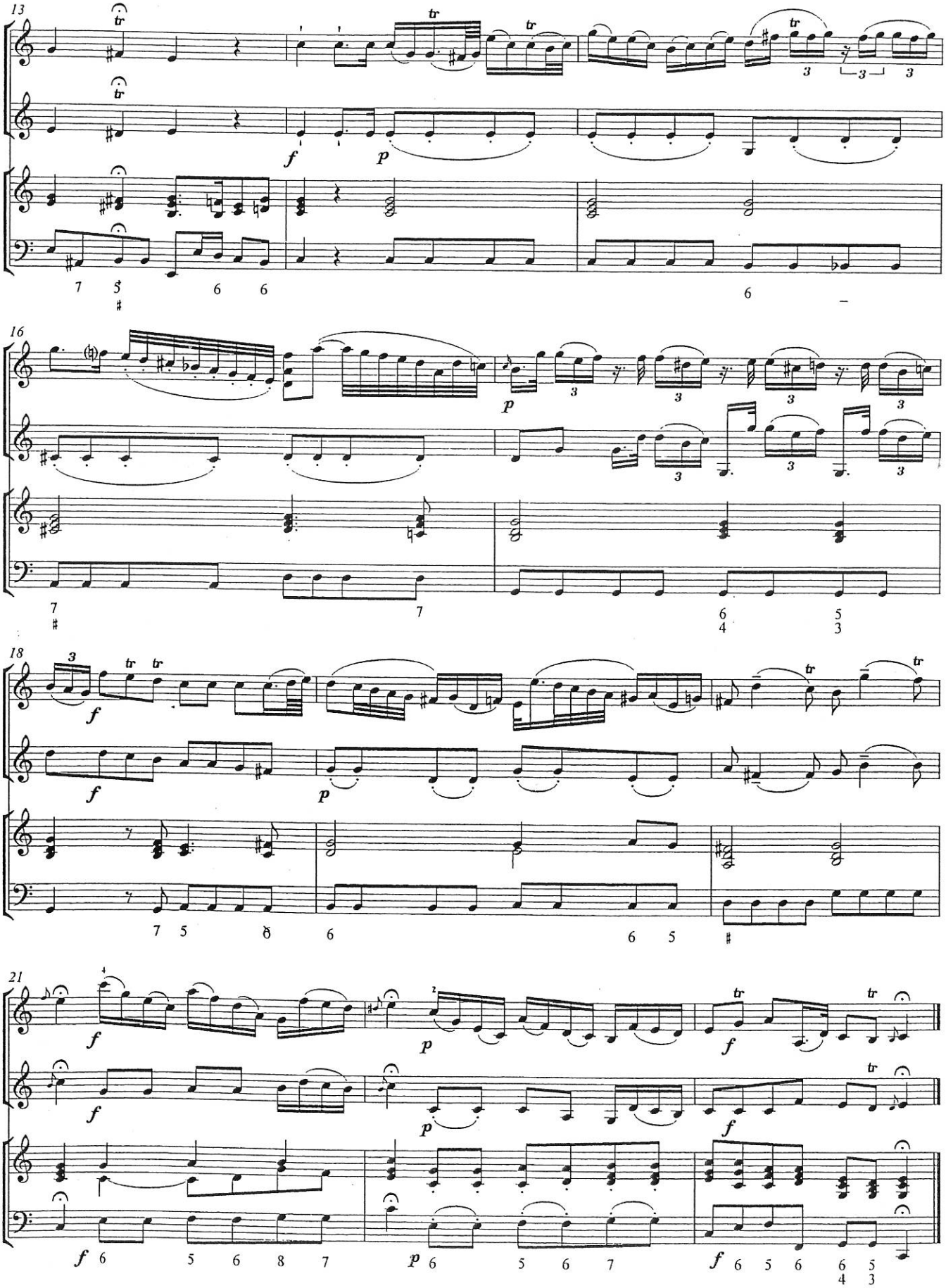
****

I promised in the last issue that I would get some viols and a singer to try through Rosemary Thorndycraft's *How long wilt thou forget me*. But I worked the Beauchamp string group rather hard on Scheidt and Simpson all week, so there wasn't time. I see from the *Viola da Gamba Society Newsletter* no. 121 p. 18 that one of our violists, Mary Earl, had sung it; she writes that it is beautiful though taxing. 'You need confidence to try it, but its well worth the ride.'

C. Burney: Trio Sonata in A minor

Op. 1 No. 1, Third movement

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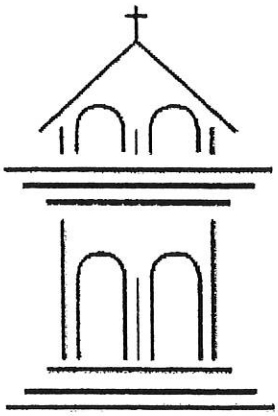

Prima la musica!

In early August 2003, EMR's Associate Editor, Brian Clark, launched a new Internet-based early music shop, making available performing editions of 17th and 18th century music.

The first titles to appear are listed; on the website, you'll also find a list of pieces that are in preparation.

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REMA

I hope at least our UK readers have heard of NEMA (the National Association of Early Music), but what about REMA? I noticed a paragraph in the latest *Goldberg* (which, incidentally, is soon to produce an English-only edition rather than the present bilingual one). The acronym stands for Le Réseau Européen de Musique Ancienne (European Early Music Network – EEMN) and its aims are 'to federate all those involved in early music in Europe, sustain and develop musicological research, develop a policy to recover, co-produce and realise in Europe major works which have been lost or forgotten, support young musicians and organize forums and meetings'. This is quoted from the summary in *Goldberg*. 'Federate' is not the best translation, but keeps to the French word used, so may be a red rag to many English readers in a European Community context. If it is so important, despite starting in 2000, why have I, as a member of the Council of NEMA, the publisher of *EMR*, and also a publisher of much forgotten music, only just heard of it? It has a website (www.rema-eemn.net) with a lot of ambitious verbiage (I could only get the French version: perhaps the English version is a little more down-to-earth, but it either doesn't exist yet or wouldn't download) but not much sign of action. The only UK connection seemed to be a link to the *Early Music News* site. If anyone knows enough to evalute it, please send us a letter. *CB*

PLAINSONG & MEDIEVAL MUSIC SOCIETY

King's Music has held the stock of the Society for the last few years. But since the Chairman of the Society is also the Director of the Royal School of Church Music and the RSCM is the main supplier of the Society's only publication with a steady sale (the English Compline), it seems sensible for the stock to be moved to Cleveland Lodge and handled by the RSCM's music shop. So all orders should now be sent to:

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