Nema NEWSLETTER

Editor: Francis Knights

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Welcome to the latest *NEMA Newsletter*, the online publication for members of the National Early Music Association UK, which appears twice yearly. It is designed to share and circulate information and resources between Britain's regional early music Fora, amateur musicians, professional performers, scholars, instrument makers, early music societies, publishers and retailers; and contributions and news items are welcomed. As well as the listings section (including news, events, obituaries, and a register of international conferences and festivals) there is an interview and a number of articles, including work from leading writers, scholars and performers.

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Interview with Brian Robins

Francis Knights: How did you first get interested in music, and what was your early training?

Brian Robins: Unlike most of the previous interviewees in these Newsletters I've glanced over there was no strong musical tradition in my family. My mother was a war widow who 'liked music' and had a few Classical 78s, while the only other family member I recall as having any real interest in music was my paternal grandfather, whose taste was limited to a rather strange juxtaposition of Wagner and Gilbert & Sullivan. So there are no childhood reminiscences, and in those post-war times we were never sufficiently well off to be able afford anything more ambitious than a school recorder, my efforts on which induced an ambivalent attitude to the instrument that exists to this day.

My first conscious arousal by music stemmed from an unrequited adolescent love that lasted most of my teenage years and severely disrupted my attention to school lessons. I had already been powerfully affected by a school showing of the beautiful Laurence Harvey version of *Romeo and Juliet* (1954), which not only introduced me to Shakespeare, but with which I could readily identify given the 'tragedy' of my own 'love life'. When a mature French student staying with us – my mother took in foreign students to help supplement our income – introduced me to Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet,* it of course only added fuel to the fire. Just so many passionate feelings that echoed my own! I've always had a natural curiosity, a desire for one thing to lead to another and it was this encounter that inspired the development on an insatiable desire to listen, to come to know as much music as possible. My investigation was initially restricted to the few records in the house, but those exhausted I soon discovered the BBC Third Programme, the source of the next catalyst – the discovery of the music of Mozart and Haydn. In contrast to today this was a relatively arcane taste, particularly regarding Haydn, then on the verge of being re-discovered by H. C. Robbins Landon. One of my strong teenage memories is being asked by one of mother's friends, in the patronising way that adults adopt towards the young (or did then), 'So who is your favourite composer?'. 'Mozart is the greatest of all composers!', I replied with all the authority and certainly that only a sixteen-year old can muster. And although my answer would today certainly be far more nuanced, it is a view that has never wavered over the years. I recall, too, spending the whole of one summer washing up in local hotel in order to buy a Dansette record player (older readers will know what I'm talking about) capable of playing LPs.

By the time I left grammar school, deemed a miserable failure denied even the chance of taking A-Levels, I was suited to nothing better than going into the retail record business. Which of course suited me, as it offered the opportunity not only to hear even more music, but also to talk about it with other enthusiasts, hugely important to me, existing as I was in a musical world I shared with no-one. I was also extremely fortunate to be living in Bournemouth, a town with a top quality resident symphony orchestra, then under the benign leadership of Charles Groves. After starting to earn my own income the final years of my teens found me regularly attending the Thursday night symphony concerts at the old Winter Gardens. By the time of reaching twenty I had therefore become familiar with a substantial part of the standard repertoire. It was also during this time that my grandfather introduced me to opera. Unfortunately he chose D'Oyly Carte's *Ruddigore*, thus for a while convincing me that opera was not for me. It was my passion for Mozart that later induced me to give this 'exotic and irrational entertainment' (to quote Dr Johnson) another try when Sadler's Wells brought their *Marriage of Figaro* to town. Needless to say I was hopelessly hooked and a lifelong passion was born that I was again fortunate to be able to develop at the hands of a remarkable lady named Josephine Janes. Josie, as

she was universally known, was an excellent harpist and quite simply the most cultivated person I have ever met. After I moved to Sussex following a short spell in London in 1960 she took me to Glyndebourne for many years and also introduced me to the late Beethoven quartets, then unknown to me. Incidentally, it was during my brief residence in London that I saw my first Handel opera, *Radamisto,* given by the Handel Opera Society at Sadler Wells under the direction of Charles Farncombe, and with a stellar cast including Jennifer Vyvyan and Josephine Veasey.

The second part of your question asks about my training. Well, I'm somewhat embarrassed to confess that as a practical musician it is near non-existent. After becoming so deeply involved with music I took lessons in both piano and violin, but quickly became so impatient with my own efforts compared with all the wonderful performers I was hearing that tuition was short lived. A great mistake, of course, and one of the things in my life I would change if things could be changed. Some years later I would have a similarly short-lived encounter with the bass viol, again coming to the conclusion that if I couldn't play like Jordi Savall after a month then it proved I was just not intended to be a performer. To claim some mitigation, when I became a professional critic it seemed to me (and still does) that there are certain advantages in not owning to an agenda that a performer cannot but help have.

When did you start to feel particularly drawn toward early music?

I don't think there was any particular eureka moment, more an accumulation of experience. The visits to Glyndebourne mentioned above included the Monteverdi *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* and a couple of Cavalli operas, all of course done in the un-historical 'realizations' by Raymond Leppard, but splendidly staged and especially notable for Janet Baker's Penelope in *Il ritorno.* Naturally, at the time of *Poppea* (first given in 1962, when I saw it) I had no idea how far from historical performance practice Leppard's versions were, but in the 1970s Roger Norrington and Kent Opera produced stunning productions of the Monteverdi trilogy that literally came as a blinding revelation, setting a stylistic benchmark that still resonates today.

A similar damascene moment arrived in the case of the music of Bach. During the 60s the BBC mounted a brave series of the complete cycle of Bach cantatas. It was brave because it was unlike anything previously attempted. Even at the time, I recall finding many of the performances, given mainly by provincial German ensembles, little more than worthy and stolid. At the start of the 1970s all that changed for ever with the start of the series recorded for Teldec jointly by Nicolas Harnoncourt and Gustav Leonhardt using small period instruments ensembles and boys voices, light, airy textures and dance-like rhythms. Many disapproved, but for me this was like entering a new world of sound, aural Elysian fields I had sensed existed but had not previously encountered. Later not only the scholarship behind the development but the sound of one-per-part Bach choruses would equally convince me, though not to the point of dogmatic fundamentalism.

I suppose the last piece of the jigsaw fell into place with the launch in the 70s of a number of CD series devoted to early music. Although DG's rather austere Archiv label dated back as far as the 1950s, it was only with Decca's Florilegium series and its rivals that early music and the attendant revival of period instruments suddenly became seen as a marketable product. I still recall the thrill of the arrival of the first Florilegium releases – I was still in the record business – with their stylish sleeve designs and the thrillingly vibrant performances of such things as Arne overtures with the AAM. For the next 25 years or so those of us who became hooked on what was then termed 'authenticity' (later deemed a naughty word) gorged on a seemingly endless stream of goodies.

Tell us about your career as a lecturer

Well, that is directly related to a seismic event that occurred in 1970, the detail of which need not trouble you. It was one of those cathartic moments many of us experience at some point in life and it left me not just changed but suddenly eager to start correcting my lack of academic achievement. I discovered just the thing in the form of an external Diploma in the History of Music from the University of London, a four-year course equivalent to a BMus. It would mean travelling up to London from Sussex once a week during term time, but in those days it was possible for adult students to get a local authority grant to cover such expenses. It turned out to be a game changer, for not only could I now channel all the knowledge and experience accumulated over some 15 years, but new ways of applying and supplementing it opened up, not least extending my knowledge backwards to Renaissance music. Sometimes my learning related to disciplining my perhaps at times slightly arrogant auto-didactic past. I remember, for example, being severely taken to task by the composer Geoffrey Bush, one of the year tutors, for lazily writing in an essay of Ebenezer Prout being a 'Victorian pedant known for an outmoded version of Messiah', or something like that. Such lessons were invaluable. Not withstanding such solecisms I managed the annual exams successfully and emerged at the end of four years with a high commendation.

Not long after completing the diploma course the music tutor of a popular adult education class in Seaford in East Sussex asked me if I would be interested in taking it over from her. Since it seemed an excellent way of sharing the knowledge I'd accumulated, I accepted, though not without a degree of trepidation. It was something I'd never done before and the class was a large one consisting almost entirely of ladies who would then have been described as being 'of a certain age' (I'm not sure if that's allowed now). However, we all got on very well and over the course of several years even managed to increase the size of the class to being in excess of 40, a phenomenal number. Later I became involved as a tutor with the WEA, giving classes in Eastbourne and Battle, but before that gave an ambitious privately organised two-year course devoted to the history of music from medieval times to the Baroque. Held initially in the home of my co-organiser and subsequently in a local church hall, the course also gave rise to my first publication, *All the World Sings*... a spin-off devoted to medieval and Renaissance music. I have to say that while having never been tempted to teach in schools – where my patience would have been sorely tested by those who did not want to learn – the experience of teaching adults anxious to further their understanding and love of music has been one of the most richly rewarding of my life. That despite the fact that the pay was desultory, given the considerable time spent in preparing classes.

I should also add that over the years I have been invited to give papers at a number of academic conferences and societies, usually related to my long years of work on music in 18th England.

Speaking of which, how did you get interested in John Marsh? What is his importance to us today?

That stemmed from that innate sense of curiosity mentioned earlier. I had become interested in music in England in the 18th century, not just Handel, but more particularly the work and activities of native composers. One question that seemed of interest was that of the relative lack of interest in the symphony among English composers. Given that the genre swept across Europe from the 1770s onward, and indeed was popular in this country in the hands of immigrant composers like J. C. Bach and Abel, it seemed odd. So I did some research, discovering in the process that although English symphonies were indeed few and far between, a certain John Marsh – an amateur composer of whom I had never heard – had been a prolific composer of symphonies. This to the extent of having composed more than 40, printed parts of some of which were

housed in the University of Cambridge Library, where there were also some manuscript journals by Marsh housed. A trip to Cambridge followed - this was in the summer of 1978 – where I examined the symphonies, which seemed pleasing works but in no way remarkable. What really caught my eye were the journals, which seemed to provide uniquely fascinating insights into not only the musical life in the cities in which Marsh resided during the course of a long life (1752-1826) - Salisbury, Canterbury and Chichester – but also into the social life of the times. I soon made the life- changing decision to try to produce an edited version of the journals, obtaining microfilm of them with the financial assistance of Josie Janes, the fairy godmother already mentioned.

During the course of the 1980s I worked on the journals as much as professional work permitted, being by this time a partner in a retail music business. It soon became apparent that the Cambridge version was not the original, being rather a clumsily edited version from which much had been redacted. At the same time I produced an edited version of a Symphony in Bb, but gave up the idea of editing the music after discovering that Ian Graham Jones of Chichester, a far more experienced and capable music editor than I was, had started work on them (Ian's published editions of all the extant symphonies are today available from A-R Editions; he has also edited some of Marsh's choral music). By the end of the decade my work had reached a point where I had started making tentative enquiries about possible publication, in particular with Macmillan, where Stanley Sadie was at that time editing *New Grove*, but drew a blank. At the same time my business and life partner Anne Young and I made the bold (some might say foolhardy) decision to sell the business to allow me to continue to work on the Marsh fulltime, while trying to get reviewing work to provide some kind of income. This effected we gave up our business at the end of 1989.

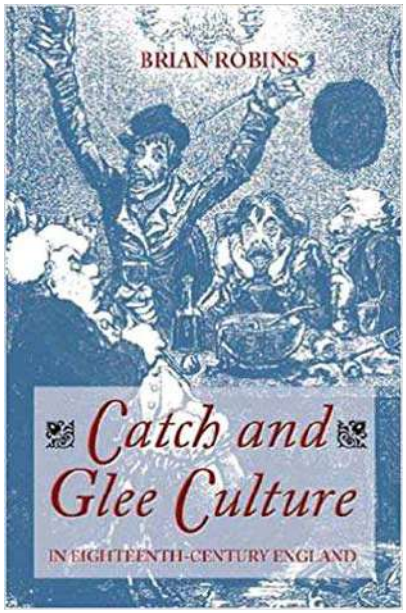
Illus.1 Brian with William Weber and his wife (Burgundy, 2009)

The next chapter in the story can be dated precisely to 14 January 1990. This was the day on which I learned that the original version of John Marsh's journals, long considered irretrievably lost, emerged after 175 years to be sold at auction with Christie's. Where they had been during that period has never been established. Exactly one month later the complete journals, running to nearly 7000 pages, were sold for a substantial sum to the Huntington Library at San Marino, California, an institution rich in 17th and 18th century British artefacts. It was obviously a good home, but all my work on the abridged Cambridge version over the past ten years had suddenly become redundant. I was ready to abandon the project, unable to face the prospect of starting again from scratch. Enter at that point several heroes: my partner Anne, who refused to countenance my giving up; the then-Curator of Manuscripts at the Huntington, Mary Robertson, another of the special people I'm grateful to have known, who when she heard of the work I'd already done arranged for a waiver on the libraries rule that newly acquired manuscripts could not be photocopied for seven years; almost inevitably Josie Janes, without whose help I could never have obtained the microfilm; Stanley Sadie, who henceforth became a kind of godfather to the whole project, and the redoubtable US musicologist William Weber (illus.1), who not only lived in California, thus providing an in-situ link the Huntington, but was one of the pioneers in taking seriously the study of music in 18th-century England.

The project thus revived work started on the original journals. It soon became apparent just what was lacking in the Cambridge version, not just how much content been excised but also that much of Marsh's pithier writing had also been omitted by the editor, who I suspected to be Marsh's younger son. (Some years later my attribution was confirmed.) In 1993 I was awarded a Fellowship to fund a two-month visit to the Huntington to work not only with the original journals, but also to use its extensive resources for the mass of background material need for many hundreds of footnotes. In late January 1994 I travelled to Los Angles, only to be greeted within hours of arrival by an earthquake that caused considerable damage! Happily I was not lodged near its epicentre, but received plenty of stick from friends about my impact on the US! At the Huntington, a supremely cultured complex that is not only a library but also an art gallery, all set in world-famous gardens, I of course had the enormous pleasure of meeting Mary Robertson and Bill Weber, establishing friendships that exist to this day. But the most thrilling part of an exciting trip was reserved for handling the 27 vellum-covered volumes in which Marsh had written about his entire life-span.

The question of a publisher now again reared its head. I had already decided that publication of an edited version of the whole work was impractical – not only would it be an immense book, but it was also apparent that the 18th century part of the book, when Marsh was composing and practically involved with music making, was of greater interest than the 19th century years. So I decided to terminate it in 1802, in which year Marsh had reached his 50th birthday. Even so representation to UK publishers met with the same response: the project was too large and not financially viable. Then Stanley Sadie put me in touch with the Pendragon Press in the US, a specialist publisher of music books whose managing editor he knew. To its lasting credit Pendragon had the courage to boldly go where no British publisher would; although our relationship has not always been smooth I have always been and remain eternally grateful to Bob Kessler. The volume, the largest publication ever undertaken by Pendragon, eventually appeared in 1998, with a revised version being issued in 2011.

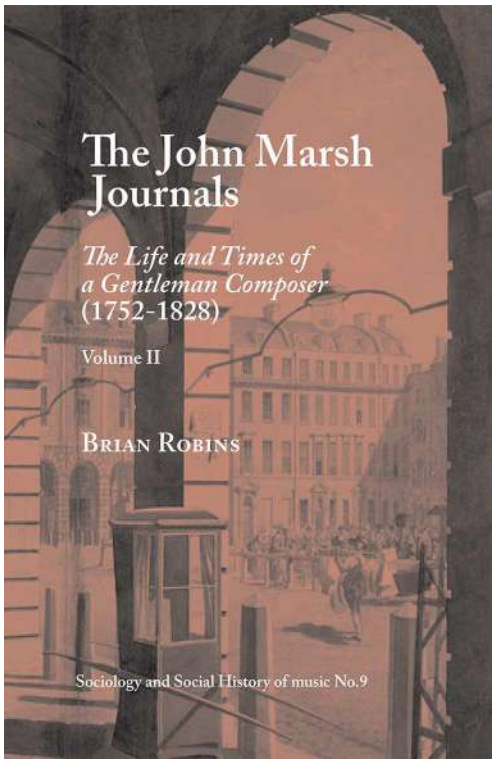
John Marsh's importance today? I think it lies primarily with the massive amount of invaluable first-hand material with which his journals provide us, not only as to his accounts of provincial musical life, but the social life of Georgian England. They have already been drawn upon by countless historians, not the least of their joys being that they have something to offer historians of all kinds in addition to a more general readership. The music is less important, but a growing number of performances of the symphonies and church music have proved it be accomplished music capable of providing considerable pleasure to audiences.



Illus.3 Cover of Catch and Glee Culture

What about your other publications?

In the course of work on Marsh I became increasingly interested in his accounts of and involvement with the catch and glee clubs that sprang up in innumerable towns and cities of Britain. Both catch and glee have a unique place in British musical history, both being forms that have no real equivalent in the culture of mainstream Europe. It was a culture that has been for the most part passed over by music historian, so taking Marsh as my point of departure I decided to research the topic in greater depth. My concentration was on the social importance of the clubs and their membership rather than the music, a vast repertoire that I had neither the



Illus.3 Cover of John Marsh journals, vol.2

resources to investigate nor the time. It have involved as many years work as I'd spent on Marsh! During the course of this research I was fortunate enough to be awarded another two-month fellowship to the Huntington Library, which I knew to be a rich source of material. The work was finished after we moved to France, leaving me to make monthly trips back to the British Library with the help of another grant that allowed for such travel. *Catch and Glee Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* appeared under the imprint of Boydell & Brewer in 2006 (illus.2).

Even before it had been published, thoughts had turned to revising my view that the 19th century part of Marsh's life might not be worth working on. The decision made I started work on a second volume, less extensive and less demanding than the first, and in 2009 I approached Pendragon Press to see if they would publish a follow-up. Somewhat to my surprise they agreed, and so the second volume, taking in Marsh's life up until his death (a codicil to Marsh's own writings was added by his son) in 1826, appeared in 2013 (illus.3), the year we returned to England from France. While it has had neither the publicity nor the impact of the original volume, I certainly don't regret undertaking the task, the completion of which has left a satisfying feeling of 'job done'. I also believe there is much in it for music and other historians still to explore.

What about your work as a reviewer and other writing?

Well, as mentioned above, when we sold the business I looked for an income, the work I was doing on Marsh obviously bringing in nothing, though Anne wanted to continue doing some sort of paid work, which of course helped. I'd done sporadic CD reviewing previously, mostly without pay, but now found professional work with a series of publications, among them the excellent *Fanfare*, a US publication for which I wrote for over a decade, becoming their principal Baroque contributor, eventually taking on a massive workload. I still have vivid memories of working on piles of CDs in our huge and in winter freezing cold *sejour* in the depths of Burgundy with at least six layers of clothes on! I was also approached to become a founder-contributor to the Spanish-based *Goldberg* magazine, the most beautiful early music magazine ever produced, becoming a member of its Board and English-language editor. It was always financially a stretched operation, but even so the demise of *Goldberg*, a victim of the financial crises of 2008/9, was in every respect a bitter blow. More latterly most of my reviewing work has been undertaken for *Opera* magazine, reflecting what has now become my prime interest, although I still also write on a *pro bono* basis for *Early Music Review*, started by the late Clifford Bartlett and now continued as an online publication by Clifford's long-standing colleague Brian Clark.

Over the past fifteen or so years, I've undertaken an increasing amount of live reviewing, particular at major European early musical festivals such as the Göttingen, Beaune and Ambronay. This was a part of my activity than expanded greatly during the years we lived in France (2002 to 2013), a period of my life that I value as having substantially broadened my horizons in a num-

ber of respects, not least to provide a broader outlook on the early music scene.

An aspect of music journalism developed particularly during the *Goldberg* years was interviewing prominent people in the early music world. Over the years I came to interview many luminaries, perhaps most notably Gustav Leonhardt, a majestic, dignified figure who gave his final major interview to me in his beautiful historic home situated on one of Amsterdam's canals. Happily it still has considerable circulation, having entered the annals of Leonhardt biography. It was – indeed is, since I interviewed the outstanding Italian conductor and harpsichordist Ottavio Dantone only weeks before this interview – a side of my life I have enjoyed immensely and feel privileged to have talked with so many great figures of the early music world.

One polemical point I'd like to make before leaving this topic. I note you asked about my work as a reviewer rather than use the word 'critic'. I've usually referred to myself by the latter appendage and it's more than once got me into trouble, most recently when a French writer challenged my use of it, suggesting my use of the word 'critic' carried negative connotations. I find this strange, but perhaps it is symptomatic of an age that simply does not like even constructive criticism. It is my view that far too much reviewing today lacks critical rigour, frequently emerging as little more than reportage or even hype welcomed by artists incapable of accepting that their work should not be simply rubber-stamped. It is surely the duty of a critic (or even reviewer) to contribute to and engender debate.

Tell us about your website

The website https://www.earlymusicworld.com started life around fifteen years ago, primarily as an outlet for my articles. It has been particularly rewarding to give a number of major pieces first published in *Goldberg* new life in that context, including the interview with Leonhardt mentioned above. But I was also more than happy to give space to an important article on the staging of Baroque opera by historians Frans and Julie Muller that I commissioned for *Goldberg*, but which didn't quite make it into print before that magazine folded. More recently I have added several polemical articles expressly written for Early Music World. But rather than say any more about the site, readers should take a visit if they don't yet know it!

You have strong opinions on Baroque opera staging these days - where do you think we have gone wrong, and how can we put it right?

Indeed! And they have made me unpopular in various quarters. The answers to your questions are complex and involved, but I'll try to be as direct and succinct as possible. For some time now we have lived in an era in which the opera producer has total hegemony, casting a seemingly hypnotic spell over conductors, singers, critics and audiences alike. Just occasionally the dominance of the director manifests itself in excesses often referred to by the German name *Regietheater*, productions in which for whatever reason – let's be kind and call it 'innovative imagination' - the producer has chosen to ride roughshod over the explicit intentions of both composer and librettist, whose stage directions are included in the libretto. All periods of opera can be included in this contemporary malaise, including Baroque opera, which although it has completely different parameters and needs to those of later opera, is erroneously lumped together with mainstream opera. This ignores the fact that that the objectives of early opera were based not on the ability to act in a histrionic manner and sing arias while rolling on the floor at the back of the stage, but were concentrated on the ability of the singer to act with his or her voice, employing the full range of their vocal technique and beauty of voice, supplementing such skills only with graceful gesture born of the emotion of the aria. In short, singers came to the front of the stage and addressed their aria to the audience. So when I hear even early music

singers talk mockingly of the static so-called 'stand and deliver' kind of production it is sobering (or amusing, dependant on one's mood) to realise that they are totally unaware of the irony of what they are saying.

And is not just the singing that should concern us. The drab-dark staging with a single set adorned with metal scaffolding – or some close variant - so beloved of modern producers is diametrically opposed to the entire ethos of Baroque opera. That sought to create a magical, exotic world of grandeur and opulence, of powerful rulers, much put-upon queens and dastardly villains, a world that enacted out its dramas in a variety of different settings. Often a librettist's setting is of critical importance to the kind of music we will hear at a certain point in the drama. Many of Handel's arias evoking the pastoral, for example, were placed in pleasing countryside surroundings, thus evoking an empathic ambiance between what we see and what we hear. To move such numbers to a decayed warehouse is, well … need I continue?

So, how do we put right such stark conflict between Baroque opera and modern staging? I've outlined some of the answers in the forgoing paragraphs and it is of course only fair to say that some of these things do happen, especially in historic opera houses like Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic. But it is sobering to recognise that for many opera lovers such initiatives merely result in museum pieces. So the first answer is to change public perception of just what early opera is. The only way to do that is by mounting convincing productions that display Baroque opera in all its exotic, irrational glory, with singers who have the necessary technique to thrill audiences as their forbears did. Such productions do not come cheaply, but it is my belief that developments in digital technology will make possible the recreation of the magnificent architectural sets of the likes of the Bibiena brothers.

Your latest career move is as a stage director - how did that come about?

Given my response to the previous question it is hardly likely that I would not have evolved ideas of my own as to how we might stage Baroque works. Long and close study of Dene Barnett's seminal work on Baroque acting and gesture left me anxious to attempt to get to grips with some of the problems. A couple of years ago I formed a partnership with Opera Settecento, whose outstanding young conductor Leo Duarte shares many of my ideals. Then at the start of this year I made the acquaintance of two outstandingly talented young sopranos, Angela Hicks and Penelope Appleyard, who had recently formed Fair Oriana, a duo singing mainly Elizabethan repertoire (illus..4). When I broached the subject of working on Baroque gesture with me, both were keen and I suggested we might work on Handel's marvellous early cantata *Aminta e Fillide*, which allows a modest start toward realising my ideals. Leo was soon brought in on the project and the upshot is that we will now be presenting a staged version of the cantata in St George's, Hanover Square on 28 November under the auspices of Opera Settecento and the Handel Friends. This will not only obviously involve Baroque

Illus.4 Early Aminta *rehearsal with Angela Hicks and Penelope Appleyard*

Illus.5 With Penelope Appleyard and Angela Hicks of Fair Oriana, publicity photo for upcoming Robin Hood concert in Vienna

gesture, but also be as historically informed as possible, with the singers improvising ornamentation and including such beautiful but rarely heard embellishments as the *messa di voce*. It goes without saying that I'm thrilled to have opportunity not only to put into practise some of my ideas, but also to work with such talented young artists.

My association with the two sopranos will continue into next year when at the end of January we take part in a programme devoted to Robin Hood at the Vienna Resonanzen early music festival (illus.5), in which I will make my professional stage debut narrating some of the ballads associated with the character. So a life in which I have done most things late continues to bring surprises!

Ancient Goddess love songs and the transcultural lyre

Emma Louise Weston

My journey into ancient music came out of my ancient art history and archaeology research into the Mesopotamian sex Goddess Inanna (as she was known as in Sumerian, or Ishtar in Akkadian), and a significant body of ancient literature 'love songs' dedicated to her and performed for a ritual at the New Year festival.

The sites from which the songs originate are in ancient Mesopotamia, 'between rivers' of the Tigris and Euphrates, in a region often referred to as being part of the 'Fertile Crescent'. They were uncovered in archaeological digs in sites within what is modern-day Iraq. The songs mostly originated from Ur III and Early Babylonian periods dating around the period of c.2100-1800BCE, recorded in the Sumerian language. There are however some Old Babylonian love songs in the Akkadian language, and there is additional documentation of the love ritual in first millennium BC Mesopotamia also, evidencing the longevity of the tradition.

The Goddess love ritual, and the 'love songs' – most a form denoted as 'BAL-BAL-E' songs, were strongly associated with the lyre. Lyres are documented as having been fashioned for and dedicated to the Goddess Inanna (such as in the reign of King Ibbi-Sin).[1] Texts describe the Inanna love ritual for the New Year Festival, 'making silver alĝar instruments sound for her, they parade before her, holy Inanna'.[2] John Franklin has recently published work evidencing that the lyre (*kinnāru* and *zannāru*) were defined by scribes as 'Inanna instrument' by OB period, while the Hittites called the lyre 'INANNA'.[3] Indeed the Hittite vessel known as the 'Inandik vase' depicts a 'love ritual', with musicians playing box lyres of medium and large sizes.

Illus.1 Terracotta clay plaque of naked female playing assymetric lyre, standing on pedestal. A male figure faces her, playing a tambourine or drum at her feet, with leg extended towards her. Dating c1800 BCE. Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin (VA 7224). Size: 13.7 cm × 10.4cm (Photo: the author, 2015)

This tradition of sex Goddess, love ritual and the lyre appear to have been transmitted from Mesopotamia – to Egypt, to the Levant, into the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus, intermingling with pre-existing 'Great Goddess' culture. On the island of Lesbos, Sappho composed and sung songs of Aphrodite, while in Homer's Odyssey there is a song sung by Alcinous of Aphrodite's love-making with Ares. There is visual evidence of the love ritual practiced in ancient Canaan, and even the Bible appears to hold traces of the broader love song tradition in the Bible's canticles - the Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon).

So can these ancient love songs be to some degree sung and performed, to the lyre (illus.1)? My belief is yes, to some degree. From a musical recreation point of view, the song lyrics exist, the oldest songs being predominantly Sumerian BAL-BAL-E songs. We also have later records on papyrus of Egyptian love songs honouring Hathor (linked to the Inanna tradition, star of Venus and New Year), and Sappho's song lyrics to Aphrodite sung to the lyre, as well as the poet's song by Alcinous in Homer's *The Oydssey*.

We have visual and written evidence of the types of ancient lyres played, including 'bull lyres', assymetric box lyres (illus. 1), and the *barbiton* (barbitos) lyre made from a tortoise shell, and the phorminx lyre with curved boat-shape base. We also have actual lyre remains in the case of the so-called 'Royal Tombs of Ur', where archaeologist Leonard Woolley poured wax into small holes in the sand, to later excavate the forms of complete lyres with inlay intact.

Archaeomusicologists such as Richard Dumbrill have developed a theory of ancient music, based on tablets describing, for example, lyre strings, and from which they have reconstructed what they believe to be the intervals and modes.[4] Ancient texts describe in some passages the effect of the music, in evocative metaphors and emotional language.

Luthiers are producing reconstructions of ancient instruments, aided in some instances by modern scanning, X-rays, measuring technologies and material analysis, alongside archaeomusicologists and specialists, informed by ancient texts and evidence. Knowledge of playing techniques is also able to be gleaned to a large extent from the art-historical representations in ancient vases, reliefs, seals and other artifacts. Experimental archaeomusicology is also possible, playing reconstructed instruments themselves with knowledge of the texts and theory in mind, as well as ethnographic knowledge of instrument-playing techniques. The possibilities and potential of the instrument can be explored in this light.

What is missing of course is the musical notation. However, what we do have is ancient hymns such as *Hurrian Hymn number 6 to the Goddess Nikkal* fragment, and the *Epitaph (Skolion) of Seikilos* in Greek – the oldest complete song, and other later fragments and works which may help inform musical practice.

This article discusses the beginnings of the 'love songs' for the Goddess tradition in ancient Mesopotamia, associated with the love ritual performed at the New Year festival, and cross-cultural evidence of cross-cultural transmission of the ritual, love songs and lyre. It is only from weaving together the materials – from song lyrics, historical accounts, visual imagery, instrument artifacts, modern technology scanning and archaeomusicology theory, that we can begin attempting to recreate something of the music of the Goddess love song tradition.

The ancient Goddess love song: 'Lover-man, Stay the Night 'Till Dawn' (A BAL-BAL-E to Inanna for Su-Suen). Istanbul 2461 tablet

Mesopotamian love songs come in the form of clay cuneiform tablets, incised with Sumerian song lyrics by a stylus instrument used to impress the cuneiform onto damp clay. Often the tablets themselves are broken and with pieces missing. In some cases, parts of the same tablet have been recently found to have inadvertently been separated and lying in storage of two different museum collections, and had to be pieced back together by Sumerologists and archaeologists.

An example of one of the many Goddess Inanna love songs comes from a tablet known as Istanbul 2461 (illus.2), in the collection of the Istanbul Museum of the Ancient Orient. It was uncovered in the 1889-1900 excavation season in Nippur, and translated by Samuel Kramer in

1951. He wrote:

The little tablet numbered 2461 was lying in one of the drawers, surrounded by a number of other pieces. When I first laid eyes on it, its most attractive feature was its state of preservation. I soon realized that I was reading a poem, divided into a number of stanzas, which celebrated beauty and love, a joyous bride and a king named Shu-Sin (who ruled over the land of Sumer close to four thousand years ago). As I read it again and yet again, there was no mistaking its content. What I held in my hand was one of the oldest love songs written down by the hand of man.[5]

The song lyrics are 29 lines, which approximately translated from Sumerian into English read:

Lover-man, my heart's beloved,
Your attraction is so sweet, honey-sweet,
Lion-lad, my heart's beloved,
Your attraction is so sweet, honey-sweet.

You've captivated me, I come freely, willing before you,
Lover-man, draw me into the bedroom.
You've captivated me, I come freely, willing before you,
Lion-lad, draw me into the bedroom.

Lover-man, let me do sweet things touching you,
My precious touch brings sweet honey,
In the bedroom, honey's dripping, enjoying your attraction,
Lion-lad let me do sweet things touching you,
My precious touch brings sweet honey.

Lover-man you've taken in my beauty
Speak to my Mama, and I'll give myself to you,
Speak to my Papa, and he'll give me away to you,
I know where to give pleasure to your body
Lover-man, sleep in our house 'till dawn.
I know how to give happiness to your heart,
Lion-lad, sleep in our house 'till dawn.

Because you're in love with me, lion-lad,
If only you'd give me your sweet touch.

My lord god, my lord lama guardian angel
My Shu-Suen who brings cheer to Enlil's heart
If only you'd give me your sweet touch.
If only you'd caress and pleasure that honey-sweet place

Put your hand there like the covering of a chalice
Cup me over the curls of a chalice[6]

This is a love song/sex song (BAL-BAL-E) of Inanna

Illus.2 BAL-BAL-E to Inanna for Shu-Suen, song lyrics inscribed in cuneiform on tablet Istanbul 2461, Istanbul Museum of the Ancient Orient. Dated 1972-1964 BCE short chronology, or 2037-2029 long chronology (Photo: Andriy Makukha (2017), Wikicommons)

This four thousand year-old song is dated from the historical reign of King Shu-Suen (alternatively rendered from the phonetics as Shu-Sin) who ruled the city of Ur from 1972-1964BCE in short chronology, or 2037-2029 in long chronology.

Mesopotamian Goddess BAL-BAL-E 'love/sex songs'

There are particular features of the lyrical compositions which are denoted by the ancient scribe as 'BAL-BAL-E' at the bottom of the lyrics. They feature subject matter relating to sexuality, courtship, desire, love, libido, sexual arousal and joy; and botanical and agricultural fertility and abundance. The lyrics tend to elucidate the Goddess's readiness, appeal and desirability for sexual relations; and ends with bestowing blessings for abundance and prosperity for her chosen consort God (Dumuzi, or the King-as-God). A large proportion of BAL-BAL-E songs relate to the Goddess Inanna and her chosen consort the shepherd God Dumuzi, also known as 'Tammuz'. (A small proportion of the BAL-BALE-E are to a closely related Goddess such as Ninegala, or other paired deities of God/Goddess consorts within the pantheon of deities.)

Fifteen BAL-BAL-E songs are gathered by Yitschak Sefati in the book *Love Songs in Sumerian Literature* (1998), along with some fragmentary songs in which the song type notation is broken or not recorded, but the significant majority are believed to be BAL-BAL-E songs. (A very small additional number are denoted other song types.)[7] In addition, the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL) has gathered the songs together online.

The BAL loom shuttle, reversal, and hypothesised connection to playing the lyre

The literal meaning of BAL-BAL-E is not known. However the root 'BAL' has its origins in the loom shuttle, which carries the weft yarn through the 'shed' of a weaving, its movement back-and-forth in relation to the yarn strings, in-and-out of the shed formed by the weaving. In use, the term BAL often being used to connote the action of 'reversal' of movement (such as a King reversing direction politically).

Whenever I give a Powerpoint talk of my research, explaining the root BAL as loom shuttle (illus.3), audience members invariably propose the phallic form of the shuttle and copulatory rhythm of the shuttle moving 'in-and-out' of the shed. There is certainly some validity to this possible association implied, and other examples of a 'copulatory rhythm' implied within the texts themselves, for example, there is a BALBALE which likens the rhythmic sound of the milk churn rocking to cause Inanna pleasure:

Illus.3 Loom shuttle, weaving, suggestive of a possible connection to association with lyre playing across the strings

The rocking of the churn will sing for you, Inanna, thus making you joyous. The holy churn will sound…for you, thus making you joyous Ninegala.[8]

Additionally from a musicologist's perspective, the movement of the BAL loom shuttle in relation to yarn strings of the weaving, is interesting because of the seeming link between songs performed with lyre instrument. One of the main playing techniques of the lyre is the 'strum-and-block' technique. The left hand fingers (usually) are used to block the strings which are one doesn't want - to be muted, in a kind of reverse play, while the

right hand or plectrum plays strums across all the strings. The movement of the BAL loom shuttle along all the strings of the loom is thus similar to the movement of a strum across or along all the strings of a lyre (or indeed other stringed instrument played in this manner; such as on the harp etc).

The Mespotamian terracotta clay plaque in the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin (illus.1) shows an example of the assymetric box lyre in Mesopotamia, and which was also found in ancient Egypt and Levant, with an assymetric lyre featured on Megiddo ivory. In this plaque, a naked woman wearing jewellery (both her nakedness and jewellery are traits associated with the Goddess Inanna) is playing a type of instrument known as an 'assymetric lyre' on a pedestal, and appears to play with strum-and-block technique (the strings being close together, and there is a plectrum in her right hand). A young man plays a drum or tambourine on the ground with his leg extended towards her.

It is unknown whether this plaque itself relates to the Goddess love song tradition. The female figure is not wearing the horned crown associated with the Goddess, but both her nakedness and jewellery are traits associated with the Goddess Inanna and particularly with the love ritual elements, demarcated and discussed further below.

Many of the songs lyrics have a declamation back-and-forth quality or structure to them, with male voice/female voice sections, each following the other, back-and-forth. (Some sections of the lyrics are in plural, which may denote a chorus or a particular language structure associated with the sacred formed in plural feminine in Emesal, which is a dialect of Sumerian used for direct speech of Goddesses and women in Sumerian language.) Some of the BAL-BAL-E songs are monologues, in which the singer addresses the lover-God or lover-Goddess, as in the BAL-BAL-E for Su-Suen.

What appears to unify this body of BAL-BAL-E songs is amatory speech format, and their subject matter – of songs towards love. Relevant to this is the Sumerian term IMIN-BAL, conversing – but with erotic connotation. When one King is speaking of his rival King, and their relationships with the Goddess Inanna, he says:

> *Upon a flowered bed he may lie with her,*
> *(But) I will lie with her in sweet repose upon an ornate (bed);*
> *He may see Inanna at night in a dream,*
> *(But) I will IMIN-BAL 'converse' with Inanna while awake.*[9]

The King is essentially bragging of a more intimate relationship with the Goddess than his rival. It is unknown if the comparison may be to a high-priestess enacting her role as opposed to a sculpture of the Goddess.

However, the BAL-BAL-E songs in light of all this cumulative evidence are best interpreted as amatory 'love speech songs' (towards the sexual union/lovemaking ritual).

The context of BAL-BAL-E Goddess performance: sacred marriage *quršu* and the lyre

The BAL-BAL-E songs are related or for the sex ritual which was known as the *quršu* in Neo-Assyrian sources, which was a conjugal/sexual union of Goddess and consort God. The majority are dedicated to the sex Goddess Inanna with her consort Dumuzi for the New Year Festival. This is often referred to in academic study by the Greek term *hieros gamos* or 'Sacred Marriage', the term used for example for the divine marriage of Zeus and Hera in ancient Greek

sources.

The components of the Goddess *guršu* ritual tradition, garnered from the songs and paralleled in ancient artifacts and visual imagery, include:[10]

PROCLAMATION/PRAISE OF SEXUAL MATURITY of Inanna's pubic hair on her vulva, and breast's formation and roundness, etc.
SELECTION OF LOVER CONSORT BRIDEGROOM of shepherd God Dumuzi.
SETTING UP OF RITUAL BED which is flowered / honeyed ornate bed (for the *guršu* conjugal union).
BATHING OF LOVER-DEITY with body washed with water and soap, with ritual basin and/or jug and soap bowl.
ANOINTING WITH SACRED OIL perfumed with incense myrrh/fragrant oil on head.
HAIR - ARRANGING with hair prepared/pinned in a particular style.
DRESSING IN SACRED ROBE/vestments worn.
MAKE-UP COSMETIC with kohl on eyes.
ADORNING WITH SACRED PRECIOUS STONES & JEWELERY such as lapis lazuli, gold earrings, necklaces etc.
ARRIVAL OF MALE CONSORT LOVER AT HOUSE (or other venue).
GIFTS FOR INANNA (in the Sumerian era these tended to refer to the sheepfold products of butter and milk in containers, or of lambs, kid goats etc. There are also examples in which the gifts to Inanna are semi-precious stone jewels or gold jewellery which are put on her.)
PROCOLOMATION COMPLIMENTS TO THE LOVER'S (DEITY'S) ATTRACTIVENESS & DESIRABILITY
LOVER LIKENED TO BOTANICAL PLANT OR APPLE TREE/ORCHARD AND ANIMAL METAPHORS
DESIRE FOR & ENJOYMENT OF SEXUAL RELATIONS ON THE FLOWERED / ORNATE BED or couch.
GODDESS BLESSING OF ABUNDANCE of the sheepfold and prosperity for Dumuzi/ King-God.
FEASTING with beer and ritual food.
DANCING (with arm-in-arm dancing frequently rendered in visual imagery).

The tradition appears to have had temporal longevity within Mesopotamia, and a significant geographical cultural spread of its ideas and construct. For example, many have noted the similarities between the ancient Egyptian love songs and the Mesopotamian *guršu* tradition, and to the Biblical canticles 'Song of Songs' (or Song of Solomon). Ancient Greek literature also features Aphrodite undertaking bathing, beautification and sex rituals, with strong continuity to Inanna-Ishtar and the *guršu* 'love ritual' tradition.

Cross-cultural 'Sacred Marriage' with box lyres: the Bet Ha'Emeq scene and Inandik Vase

The love song tradition and 'love ritual' have much more ancient origins that go earlier than the texts we have, and with a broad geographical spread. A *pithos* (large storage vessel) found at Bet Ha'Emeq in Israel, dating to around 3,000BCE, features what appears to be a 'sacred marriage' (love ritual) scene. The actual imagery was created using a cylinder seal rolled along the surface of the clay. On the top row is arm-in-arm dancing; on the next row figures with what has been identified as lyres, while the bottom two rows feature a figure approaching a Goddess, and bottom row the love ritual (illus.4).

Large box lyres are also featured in a 'sacred marriage' or love ritual scene of the Inandik vase (illus.5 and 6). The terracotta Hittite culture vase was excavated from the site of Huseyindede Tepe, in Turkey, in the province of Çorum. The frieze feature box lyres of small portable size and large standing size, along with other musicians and instruments, and dancer-acrobats. There are scenes of lovemaking *a tergo* (from behind) as well as a figure waiting on a bed in a 'sacred marriage' or love ritual scene. What these contribute to our musical knowledge and understanding is that the love ritual was clearly a cross-cultural tradition, and linked to the lyre instrument in particular.

The Hittite lyre was also called the INANNA instrument, speaking to the connection of the Mesopotamian sex Goddess Inanna to the lyre instrument played by the Hittites. Franklin notes that the common qualifications of the titles INANNA.GAL and INANNA.TUR may correlate to the large and small lyre types on the Inandik vase.[11]

Illus.4 Rendering of the seal impressions on pithos vessel (c.3000 BCE) from Bet Ha'Emeq with box lyres and figures in second frieze from top.

Recreating ancient Goddess love songs in the modern era

Having traced the body of ancient love songs to Inanna, and evidencing the association with the lyre and 'love ritual' tradition, the question is how can one 'play' and sing the music? First, we have the lyrics. The Sumerian 'BAL-BAL-E' and other love songs uncovered from cuneiform clay tablets have been published by Sefati in Sumerian and English translation, along with the online Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature.[12]

Illus.5 Inandik vase

Illus.6 Inandik vase with sacred marriage love ritual and featuring lyres which Hittite texts name as 'Inanna instrument' (detail), c17th century BCE, Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Hittite culture frieze with box lyres in processional (Photo: Carole Redatto (2016), Wikicommons)

There is strong evidence the lyre was played for the love ritual. It was in turn at this ritual that the Goddess love songs were played, and the lyre known as the Inanna-instrument. (Other instruments such as what appears to be a tambourine or drum look likely to have added a percussion element.)

Illus.7 Sir Leonard Woolley holding the excavated Sumerian Queen's Lyre, site of Ur, modern day Iraq (1922), Wikicommons

The Mesopotamian lyre instruments we are familiar with not are not only from visual images and textual references but also from actual artifacts. Woolley excavated a site referred to as the 'Royal Tombs' of Ur (but which may have been priestess tombs) in Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq), in which lyres were found. Famously, Woolley saw small holes in the sand, and realizing something must have once occupied that space but now disintegrated, he poured molten wax into the holes. These filled the spaces that the organic parts of the lyre once occupied. And so, from out of the site, Woolley and his team lifted the lyres out of the ground. A 1922 photograph (illus.7) shows Woolley with a plaster mould impression of one of these ancient Ur lyres. These instruments from Ur stunned the musical world, and were reconstructed and put into the museum collections of the British Museum (illus.8), Penn Museum and the Iraq Museum in Baghdad.

Anne Kilmer was amongst the archaeologists who worked away and wrote on the Musical Instruments of Ur and Ancient Mesopotamian Music, advancing a theory of heptatonic, diatonic system consisting of seven different interrelated scales.[13]

The archaeomusicology of Mesopotamia was aided by the existence of Old Babylonian cunneiform tablets (such as 'UPM N 3354' fron Nippur) containing instructions relating to the playing and singing of hymns.[14]

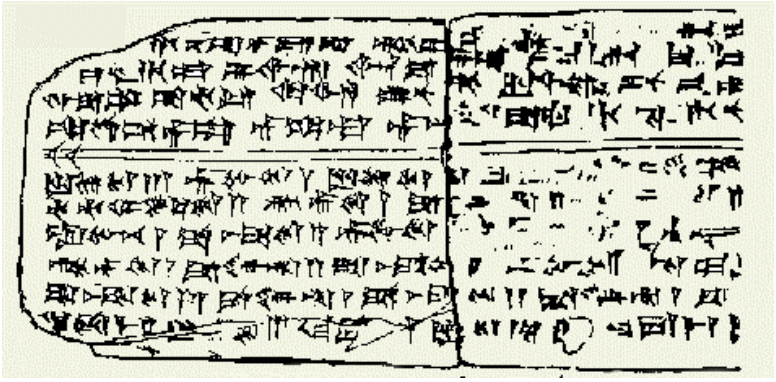
There are also fragments of actual notated music, known collectively as the 'Hurrian Hymns', excavated from the Royal Palace of Ugarit (now Ras Shamra, Syria) in the 1950s. The hymns date to the 14th century BC, and the most complete of those is a song known as the *Hurrian Hymn #6 to the Goddess Nikkal* (illus.9) which has been interpreted by a number of scholars. This is the oldest notated music so far found.

One of the issues of contention in the interpretation of the music, however, has been whether the scale is ascending or descending, leading to quite different interpretations. One of the rival interpretations is strongly argued by Richard Dumbrill, whose views are informed by expertise in Middle Eastern and Oriental Musicology, and in this sense quite persuasive.[15]

In order to attempt to recreate the 'love songs' of the Goddess Inanna a certain creative leap is

Illus.8 The British Museum's 'Mesopotamia' collection (Room 56), with ancient lyres from Ur reconstructed: the Golden Bull's Head 'Queen's lyre' on left, and the Silver lyre on right. c.2500BCE
(Photo: Osama Shukir Muhammed Amin, Wikicommons)

required, compared to approaches of most historic music. One must compose music to the possibilities suggested by all the evidence: taking the song lyrics, the instruments, evidence of how they were played, the musical theory, and interpreting these and transmitting the music in a manner which not only communicates to but also enchants the audience. And perhaps it wouldn't hurt to make a quick prayer to the Goddess before doing so! And a few of the muses also.



Illus.9 Hurrian Hymn no #6 to the Goddess Nikkal, found in the site of the Royal Palace at Ugarit. c14th Century BCE
(Photo: Wikimedia)

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Notes

1 For example, 'Ibbi-Sin, king of Ur, fashioned the balang (instrument likely a lyre) Ninigizibara for the goddess Inanna'. Sigrist and Gomi (1991) 329, year 22; Heimpel, 'Balang-Gods,' cited in John C. Franklin, 'The Cult of Kinnaru' in *Kinyras: The Divine Lyre*, Centre for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University Press (2015), and online: https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/6340.part-i-the-cult-of-kinnaru-2-instrument-gods-and-musician-kings-in-early-mesopotamia-divinized-instruments#n.21

2 A *sir-namursaga* to Ninisiana for Iddin-Dagan (Iddian Dagan A) line 35, ETCSL t.2.5.3.1

3 Rendered as *za-anMÙŠ, giš.zaMÙŠ*. See https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/6344.6-peripherals-hybrids-cognates and Franklin (2015)

4 Richard J. Dumbrill, *The Archaeomusicology of the Ancient Near* (East Trafford Publishing, 2005)

5 Samuel Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), pp.245-246

6 The translation from Oxford University 'The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature' (ETCSL) renders these lines 28-29 'Touch me like a cover does a measuring cup. Adorn(?) me like the cover on a cup of wood shavings'. See 'A balbale to Inana for Su-Suen (Su-Suen B) t.2.4.4.2. I am fairly certain that the cup is metaphor for the vulva, and the wood shavings being curls like public hair curls, which is also consistent with the art history sources which emphasize the pubic triangle which is incised with pubic hair. I have opted to render cup as 'chalice', in its origin from the Latin of *calix*, *calic*, rather than associations to the Christian Eucharist cup.

7 The main publication which brought the Inanna-Dumuzi works together is Yitschak Sefati, *Love Songs in Sumerian Literature* (Bar-Ilan University Press, Israel (1998). It should be noted some were other subscript or genre songs other than BAL-BAL-E, including as Sefati notes, three *širnambšub* songs, two *kungar* songs, and one a *tigi* song, etc. Fifteen songs in Sefati's selection are BAL-BAL-E songs, but Sefati notes that there are grounds for surmising that a substantial number of the fragmentary songs (in which only partial tablet fragments exist, broken in piece/s) were BAL-BAL-E songs. See Sefati (1998), pp.21-22.

8 'A BAL-BAL-E to Inanna', Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL) t.4.08a, lines 9-12

9 'Šulgi and Gilgameš: The Two Brother-Peers', Kramer Anniversary Volume, *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* (AOAT) vol.25 (1976), pp.271-92; and Sefati (1998)

10 This is my own analysis of the elements, from the BAL-BAL-E texts, historical accounts and visual evidence combined, and I have not seen a satisfactory breakdown of these done previously, so in this sense it is new analysis. Each song has parts but not all of these, with overlapping to other songs. They also neatly parallel the visual evidence from art history, carried through to texts of Aphrodite rituals and artifacts found in Cyprus and at the site of Paphos in Cyprus, British Museum collection, Vorderasiatisches Museum, compied over eight years

11 Franklin (2015)
12 Published in Sefati (1998), also available on ETCSL online

13 Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, 'The Musical Instruments from Ur and Ancient Mesopotamian Music' in *Expedition*, vol.40/2 (1998), pp.12-19

14 Kilmer (1998), p.14

15 Dumbrill (2005)

Twenty years of singing music from the Peterhouse partbooks

Scott Metcalfe

Blue Heron was founded in 1999 by two singers, Noël Bisson and Cheryl Ryder, and a director, myself. We intended to focus on lesser-known music from two broad areas of repertoire - 15th-century Franco-Flemish polyphony and English sacred music from before the Reformation - with a vague notion of exploring possible connections between the ornate style of late-medieval Franco-Flemish composers like Johannes Ockeghem and the florid music of the Eton Choirbook and the next few generations of English composers. As the two singers involved were both sopranos, for our first programme we turned to England, where from the second half of the 15th century boys' voices were divided into two types, a lower mean and a higher treble, the latter singing more or less in the range of an adult female soprano. (Ockeghem and his contemporaries would follow in our second set of concerts.)

Our debut concerts were planned for October 1999, and I spent the summer before poring over scores of English sacred music from Eton (copied c.1500) to the death of Henry VIII in 1547. On a visit to the Early Music Workshop of New England (an enterprise run by the distinguished recorder maker and co-founder of the Boston Early Music Festival, Friedrich von Huene), browsing through a filing cabinet of choral music I came across a piece I'd never heard of, *Ave Maria dive matris Anne*, by a composer whose name was ever-so-slightly familiar, Hugh Aston. It was scored for just the sort of ensemble we'd been envisioning - in five parts, from bass up to treble, with two tenors - and looked marvellous. The editions were beautiful, too, at once elegant and practically laid out, with extensive introductory notes and a full critical apparatus but clearly designed to be sung from. This editor, Nick Sandon, obviously knows what he is doing, I thought; I also noticed that he had reconstructed the tenor part, which was missing from the unique manuscript source, a set of partbooks in the library of Peterhouse, Cambridge. Proceeding alphabetically through the file drawer I came across more editions in the series with its distinctive light-blue covers, including John Taverner's *Missa Mater Christi*, also uniquely transmitted in the Peterhouse manuscripts.

I took the Aston and Taverner home with me, and the two pieces made up most of our first programme, along with plainchant propers for the Mass. By the time we sang those concerts, we had fallen in love with the Aston in particular, and I was beginning to realise what good fortune had revealed to us: a treasure trove of music composed between the mid-1510s and 1540 - 19 settings of the Ordinary of the Mass, 46 antiphons, and seven Magnificats, all preserved in a single set of partbooks. Originally five in number, the Peterhouse partbooks contain the largest and most important collection of English sacred music from the decades before the Reformation, and most of it is completely unknown to modern scholars, performers, and listeners. The reason for this is that the tenor book and part of the treble book have been missing since the early 17th century. Now, due to the extremely high rate of loss of English musical manuscripts from this period, 39 of the 72 works in the Peterhouse partbooks are found uniquely there, while another dozen or so are incomplete in their other extant sources. The result is that some 50 pieces of music - a significant portion of what survives from pre-Reformation England - now lack their tenor, and some of these are also missing all or part of their treble. Only in the last few decades have these pieces been rendered performable once again by Nick Sandon's brilliant and highly idiomatic recomposition of the missing lines.

A short history of the Peterhouse partbooks

There are actually three sets of partbooks now residing at Peterhouse, the oldest and smallest of

the Cambridge colleges. The two sets known as the Caroline sets were compiled in the 1630s, during the reign of Charles I, for use in Peterhouse's newly-built chapel; they contain a very large and chaotically disordered mass of music, in many different hands and in varying states of completion, which was rather haphazardly sorted into part-sets before being bound. The music Blue Heron has recorded, the music to which Nick Sandon has devoted himself since the 1970s, comes from the earlier, so-called 'Henrician' set, which is entirely the work of one person. The Henrician partbooks appear to have been copied in 1540, in the latter years of the reign of Henry VIII, by the professional singer and music scribe Thomas Bull, just before he left Magdalen College, Oxford (illus.1), to take up a new position at Canterbury Cathedral. The story was pieced together by Nick Sandon in his 1983 dissertation.

Illus.1 The chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford. (Photo: Scott Metcalfe)

Bull wrote down, within a very short time, a great quantity of music in plain, carefully checked and highly legible copies that were evidently intended to be used for liturgical performance, rather than for study or for presentation to a noble as a gift. (A presentation manuscript would have called for decoration and fancy trimmings.) He appears to have been acting on a commission to supply Canterbury Cathedral with a complete repertoire of polyphonic music. The monastic foundation at Canterbury was dissolved by Henry VIII in April 1540, one of nearly a dozen monastic cathedrals to meet with this fate in 1539-40. Most were refounded as secular (i.e. non-monastic) institutions, which were subject not to an abbot - a member of a religious order answerable to the pope - but to a bishop and thence to the king, who had declared himself head of the Church of England. Monks sang mostly plainchant and did not generally attempt virtuosic polyphonic music, but the New Foundation cathedrals aspired to more pomp and circumstance and so they needed to hire a choir of professional singers and to recruit and train choirboys. By the late summer of 1540 Canterbury had assembled a roster of ten *queresters* (choristers, 'quire' being the normal 16th-century spelling of the word), their master, and twelve vicars-choral or professional singing-men. In the 1540 roster Thomas Tallis is listed first of the *vyccars*, with Bull sixth. In addition to singers, the new choral establishment required an entire library of up-to-date polyphonic repertory. This Bull supplied, bringing nearly 70 works with him from Oxford and adding several more to the collection once in Canterbury (illus.2).

The music Bull copied includes works by the most famous masters of the early 16th century, such as Robert Fayrfax, John Taverner and Thomas Tallis, music by less celebrated but nonetheless first-class composers such as Nicholas Ludford and Hugh Aston, and a number of wonderful pieces by musicians whose careers are less well documented and who have been virtually forgotten for the simple reason that so little of their work survives: Richard Pygott, John Mason, Robert Jones (illus.3), Robert Hunt and others. Several named composers cannot be identified with certainty. And, although Bull was quite scrupulous in providing ascriptions for the music he copied, two of the unique Peterhouse works are anonymous, including the Missa sine nomine Blue Heron recorded on volume five of our series, the disc which won the 2018 Gramophone Classical Music Award for Early Music (illus.4). Intriguingly, there are also two

Illus.2 The choir of Canterbury Cathedral (Photo: David Iliff, license: CC-BY-SA 3.0)

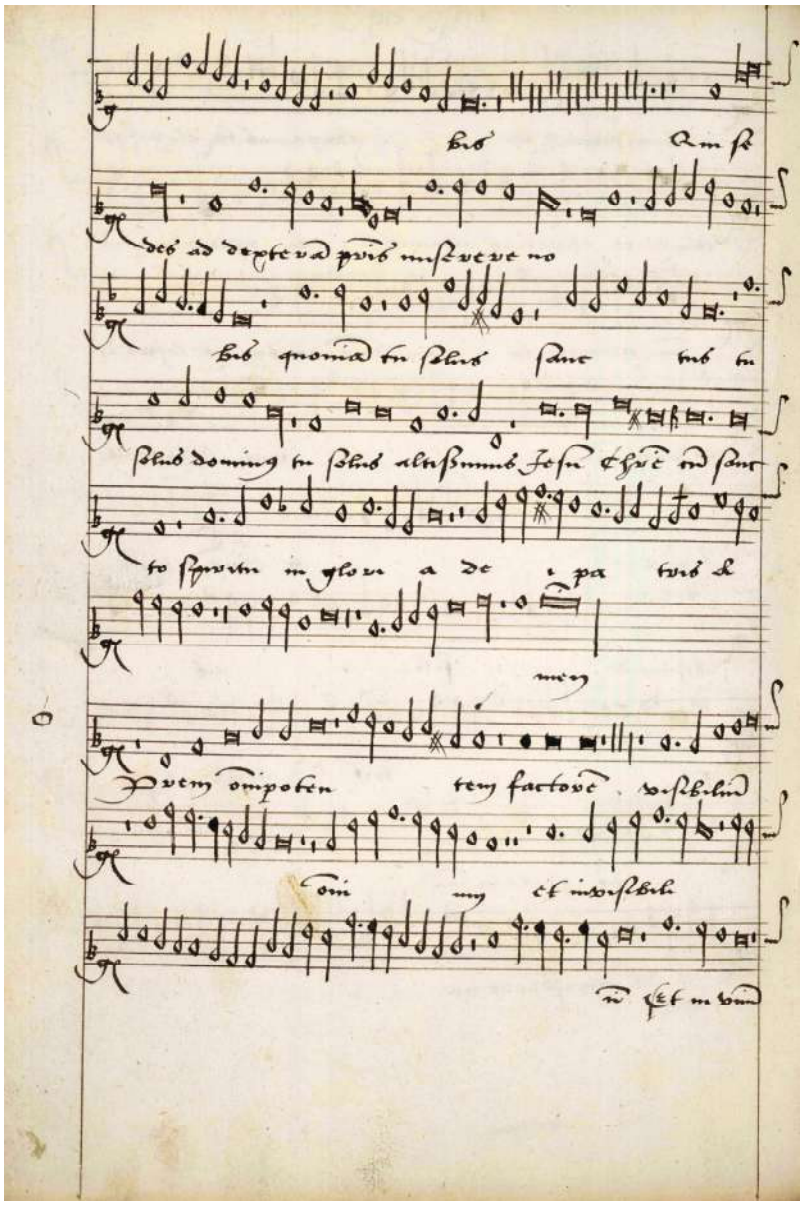
works by Continental composers, Lupus Hellinck and Jacquet of Mantua (both ascribed to 'Lupus Italus').

Presumably Bull's partbooks were put into service shortly after he arrived in Canterbury, but the new choral institution would not last long. The Protestant reformers who came to power in 1547 took a dim view of such popish decorations as professional choirs and the highly sophisticated Latin music they sang. The elaborate polyphonic music of late medieval English Catholicism became, at best, obsolete; at worst it was viewed by zealots as a gaudy ornament to a despicable ritual. Many musical manuscripts were lost and many destroyed, and if a manuscript escaped deliberate destruction, it might yet be subjected to other indignities:

Neither had we been offended for the losse of our lybraryes, beynge so many in nombre, and in so desolate places for the more parte, yf the chiefe monumentes and moste notable workes of our excellent wryters, had been reserved. … But to destroye all without consyderacyon, is and wyll be unto Englande for ever, a moste horryble infamy amonge the grave senyours of other nacyons. A great nombre of them whych purchased those superstycyouse mansyons [the former monasteries], reserved of those librarye bokes, some to serve theyr jakes [privies], some to scoure theyr candelstyckes, and some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sope-sellers, & some they sent over see to the bokebynders, not in small nombre, but at tymes whole shyppes full, to the wonderynge of the foren nacyons. Yea, the universytees of thys realm, are not all clere in this detestable fact…. I knowe a merchaunt man, whych shall at thys tyme be namelesse, that boughte the contentes of two noble lybraryes for .xl. shyllynges pryce, a shame it is to be spoken. Thys stuffe hath he occupyed in the stede of graye paper [wrapping-paper] by the space of more than these .x. yeares, & yet he hath store ynough for as many yeares to come.

The Preface, 'Johan Bale to the Reader', from *The laboryouse Journey & serche of Johan Leylande for Englandes Antiquitees* (1549)

Very few collections of church music survived. The main sources extant from the entire first half of the 16th century are a mere three choirbooks, four sets of partbooks, and one organ manuscript. (Compare this paucity to, for example, the 16 choirbooks owned in 1524 by a single establishment, Magdalen College, Oxford; not one survives.) We do not know what happened to Bull's five partbooks (one each for the standard five parts of early 16th-century English polyphony: treble, mean, contratenor, tenor and bass) after 1547, but by the 1630s they seem to have made their way to the library of Peterhouse, where they would survive yet another cataclysm of destruction, that wrought by the Puritans in the 1640s.



Illus.3 Robert Jones, Missa Spes nostra, end of Gloria and beginning of Credo, in the treble partbook: Perne Library, Peterhouse (Cambridge), MS 40, f. 33v. (Photo: courtesy of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music, www.diamm.co.uk)

Or, rather, most of the five partbooks survived. By the time the books were described and catalogued for the first time in the middle of the 19th century, the tenor book had disappeared, along with several pages of the treble. This calamity led to the Peterhouse partbooks and the repertoire they uniquely transmit being almost completely ignored by musical history. (An exception is Frank Llewellyn Harrison's classic *Music in Medieval Britain*, but Harrison could perforce render an only partial account of the music.) Nick Sandon took up the cause of the partbooks in the 1970s and finished his dissertation, which included recompositions of most of the missing parts, in 1983. In the years since he has revised and refined his work and issued it in Antico Edition, completing the entire monumental project in 2015. (The editions may be found at www.anticoedition.co.uk/html/peterhouse.htm.)

Performing and recording the music

In the Autumn of 1999, bewitched by Aston and intrigued by the prospect of exploring a large repertoire of superlatively good music that appeared to have been completely overlooked, we resolved to make the Peterhouse music a regular feature of Blue Heron programs. Before too

Illus.4 Nick Sandon in his study with the Gramophone Award

long we had sung Robert Jones's gorgeous *Missa Spes nostra* and then his Magnificat - the entire extant music by a composer who must surely have created a substantial body of works, all lost but two superb pieces. I'd also written (in ink, on paper, by post) to Nick to let him know of our interest and sent him a recording of our first efforts; he replied with (appropriately cautious) enthusiasm at the prospect of a newly-founded American ensemble delving into the music he had restored to singable form, and thus we entered into a collegial relationship and friendship that deepened from year to year. (After years of trans-Atlantic correspondence, we finally met in person in April 2017 when Blue Heron welcomed him to our Cambridge in Massachusetts, to celebrate the release of the fifth CD.) The idea to record a number of discs of the Peterhouse repertoire, starting with Aston, occurred to us pretty soon after that first fall, but it was quite a while before we felt ready to start - ten years, in fact! But by the time we recorded the first volume in 2009 (illus.5) we were planning for a series of five.

Illus.5 Blue Heron in 2009, from the first CD (Photo: Liz Linder)

Our five discs[1] contain, besides Aston's three Marian antiphons and the complete extant works of Jones: two masses by Nicholas Ludford; three of the four surviving works by John Mason (a chaplain in Thomas Wolsey's household); Richard Pygott's astonishing *Salve regina*; the two surviving works by the completely unknown Robert Hunt, including a rhetorically powerful and dramatic *Stabat mater*; the exuberant *Exultet in hac* die by one Hugh Sturmy, probably a Kentish man (the name derives from the River Stour) whose music Bull encountered in Canterbury; and the Mass without a name by an unnamed composer—a promotional challenge if ever there was one. In all we have recorded 16 compositions of the 72 in Peterhouse: four Masses, eleven antiphons, and one Magnificat, that is, no more than two-ninths of the total or about a third of the unique works (illus.6). We've performed a further dozen or so in concert and plan to continue singing new repertoire for many years; and if an eager patron were to come along, we'd love to record more!

Why no other ensemble took on the Peterhouse music before us I think must be put down to chance - we happened to come across Nick's editions at a propitious moment, and no-one else

Illus.6 The five CDs and the boxed set

did - or perhaps to reluctance to try out 'new' music by unknown composers, a suspicion of restorations, or a combination of all of the above. And as I said above, it would be quite possible to be well-read in English musical history and remain completely ignorant of the Peterhouse collection and the riches it contains. Another reason may be the considerable difficulty of the music. The pieces are long—an average Mass movement will last ten minutes or so, and many of the antiphons are longer yet, with one, Pygott's *Salve regina*, coming in at well over 20 minutes—and place great technical demands on the singers.

In the notes to the CDs, I've written at (to some) utterly exasperating length about how we answered the various questions of performance practice posed by pre-Reformation vocal polyphony, in particular the size and constitution of the ensemble, the pitch we sing at, and what to do with music written in high or low sets of clefs. To summarize: we used a mixed ensemble of adults, generally 3/3/2/2/3 from top to bottom, with women replacing the 16th century's boy trebles and two women and one male falsettist in the place of boys singing mean (illus.7). Tenor and contratenor parts are both sung by tenors, the contra usually emphasizing a higher range than the tenor but written in the same clef and often sharing the same overall compass. After some experimentation we eventually settled on a pitch of A465 (a semitone above the modern standard of A440) as a satisfactory and practical approximation of the most probable quire-pitch of the 16th century, which was circa A473. Music in high clefs (with the treble part notated in G clef on the first line of the staff, and so on) or low clefs was transposed a fourth or fifth down or up, respectively. The evidence in support of these essential practical decisions is presented in the CD booklets, to which I refer the interested reader; they can be downloaded from Blue Heron's website www.blueheron.org. The booklet for the boxed set also contains lengthy notes by Nick Sandon on the history of the partbooks, the process of restoring missing music, and the individual works recorded.

Illus.7 Blue Heron recording at the Church of the Redeemer (Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts) in September 2016 (Photo: Kathy Wittman)

It is my hope - one I am sure that Nick shares - that Blue Heron's venture into the Peterhouse repertoire (illus.8) will soon inspire others to sing this marvellous music. What's more, the glories of the music ought to catalyse a serious reappraisal of Catholic music in the years just before Reformation. The splendor of the festal masses and the vividness and intensity of the votive antiphons

Illus.8 Members of Blue Heron outside Peterhouse chapel on 6 October 2017 (Photo: John Yannis)

copied into the Peterhouse partbooks offer dramatic support to the picture of late medieval English Catholicism drawn by Eamon Duffy in *The stripping of the altars* (1992). Duffy shows that lay Catholicism in the parishes was deeply-felt and thriving on the very eve of its being officially extinguished: the Peterhouse music proves the same was true for the 'high culture' of Catholicism practiced at Canterbury and Oxford, in cathedrals and collegiate chapels. The Peterhouse repertoire is hardly the artistic product of a religious culture that was decaying, losing its sense of purpose, or doubting the efficacy of its traditional rituals. Quite the contrary: bold, confident, and entirely traditional in its devotion to the Virgin Mary and the urgency of the supplications addressed to her, it testifies to the vitality of Catholic musical practice in the 1540s. Grateful singers and listeners may thank the vagaries of history that the Peterhouse music survived at all; we all owe an enormous debt to Nick Sandon for restoring it to sounding life.

Scott Metcalfe is director of Blue Heron.

Notes

1 Available separately and also in a boxed set, *The Lost Music of Canterbury*; in the UK through Select Music, www.selectmusic.co.uk

A new Tomkins edition

Ben Byram-Wigfield

I was recently commissioned to produce a new edition of Thomas Tomkins' Fifth Evening Service. The request came as a surprise: Tomkins' works have been a core component of the Anglican choral repertoire, and his entire output has been well documented in modern editions. Surely there was no need for another? If I were to produce another, it would need to be sufficiently distinct to justify the effort. Questions were asked about the 'standard' practice of halving the note values and transposing up a minor third, and there were understandable concerns about the compass of the Contratenor parts.

Sources

The posthumous publication in 1668 of most of Tomkins' sacred music, *Musica Deo Sacra* (MDS), is one of the great treasures of music composed before the Civil War. Printed by William Godbid and compiled by Tomkins' son Nathaniel, it contains five settings of Canticles for Morning and Evening prayer, and many Psalms, Collects and other liturgical texts. MDS is not as conclusive in its authority as it might be. There are a number of obvious errors, which can safely be ascribed to the printer typesetting: occasional wrong notes, missing stems and incorrectly placed melisma slurs; and there are other problems which might be ascribed to the curator of the volume, Nathaniel Tomkins. These mostly relate to issues with the underlay. There are occasional consecutive fifths and octaves, either between different parts, or within the organ book (usually as a consequence of combining different voices).

The MDS Organ book provides independent accompaniment to the solo voices in verse sections and doubles the choir's music in the chorus sections. Some differences are found, such as dotted rhythms instead of even notes, chromatic contradictions (which cannot always be explained by contrary motion) and the addition or absence of ornaments. There are also places where the 'hand reach' is too great to be playable.

While the Fifth Service is found only in MDS, there are additional sources for the other settings (to a greater and lesser extent). The First Service is found within the Peterhouse 'Former Caroline' set of partbooks (and a tenor book at Queens' College). Sets of parts are also at Durham, Oxford and York, with a few individual parts and organ books in other libraries. The Second Service is also found in part books at York; a Cantoris Bass part for the Fourth service is at Gloucester Cathedral; and Organ books for the Third and Fourth Services are extant.

It occurred to me that I would gain a more complete understanding of how to proceed by considering all five evening services together, and by considering all the source material together, even if incomplete. This way, I could arrive at an alternative, or more plausible, viewpoint for the 'collection' as a whole.

Performing vs Scholarly

Much is made of the distinction between 'performing' and 'scholarly' editions: though this is a false dichotomy, as performing editions should be scholarly, and scholarly editions ought to be performable. This description suggests more about the objective than the method. Scholarly editions, first and foremost, attempt to replicate the original music as accurately as possible, with a few concessions to modern notation as can be comfortably allowed. There is still the freedom to suggest corrections to possible errors, fill in a missing part or organ line, and choose pre-

ferred variants. Performing editions should of course mark editorial contributions clearly and distinctly, but there is perhaps a greater degree of latitude in what those contributions might be. My intention was to make editions that are as practical to performers as possible, at the minimum cost to their authority.

Note Values

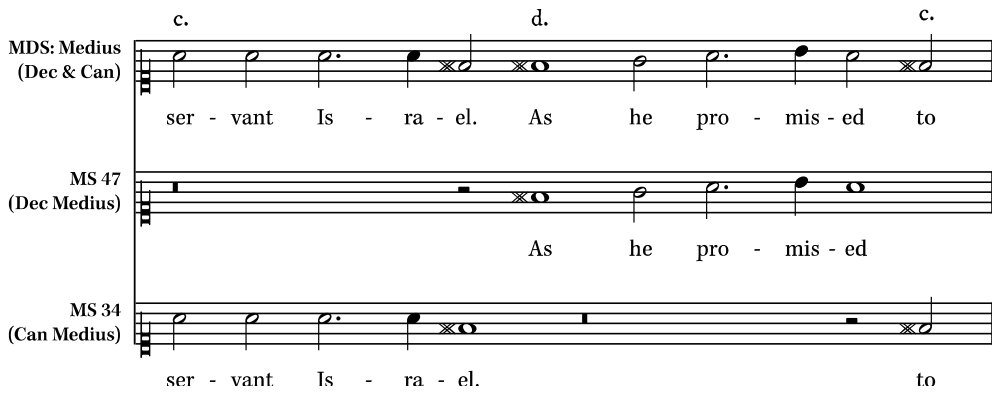
Modern readers are able to cope with a time signature of 4/2 just as well as 4/4, and there is nothing esoteric or unfamiliar in Tomkins' use of note types. There are quavers and even occasional semiquavers for ornaments, and otherwise minims and crotchets prevail. There is therefore no need to alter the notes from their original values.

Barring

No barring is used in the vocal parts, though the organ part displays barlines. They are, however, quite irregular, and matching them will not produce a useful result. While it is tempting to 'shift' the meter in places so that Verse and Chorus sections conclude at the end of a bar, this is not always desirable. Tomkins employs a rhythmic stress 'in 3' at the text 'For he that is mighty' in the First, Second, Third and Fifth settings; a similar pattern is seen at 'To be a light' in the Third Service, possibly echoing the Medius duet in Byrd's Second Service.

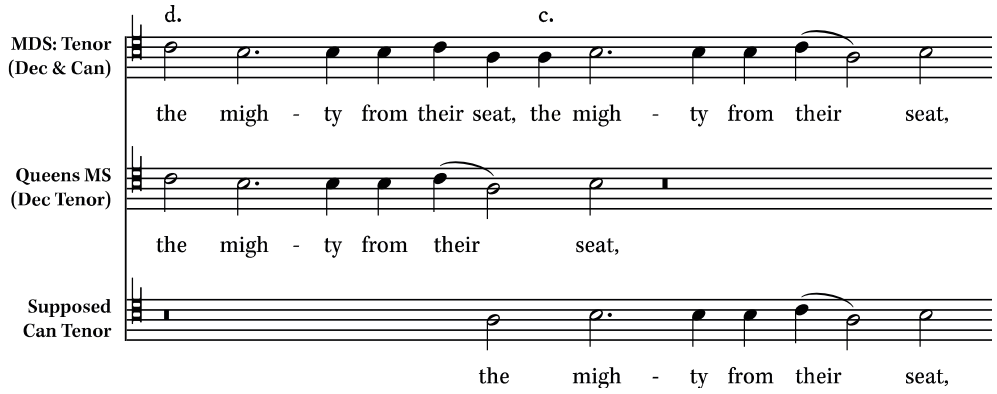
Antiphonal and Verse

The First and Second Services are four-part antiphonal settings, where alternating phrases are sung in turn by Decani and Cantoris. The Second Service is strictly *alternatim*, but the First Service has some interesting 'overlapping' between the sides. The Peterhouse Caroline manuscripts have the outgoing antiphonal side 'lingering' for an extra beat, overlapping the incoming side, where the chord is the same. MDS cuts these overlaps short (ex.1).



Ex.1 Overlapping antiphony

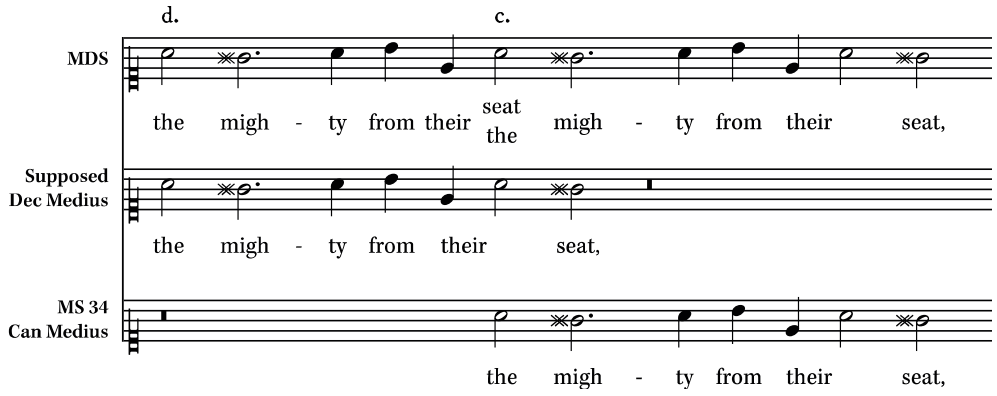
It is notable that these lingering semibreves are not seen where the harmony changes, though overlapping chords are marked across chromatic contradictions. Previous editions have either followed MDS and ignored the overlap, or confused the score with attempts to display both overlapping notes on one staff line. In order to indicate this device in the least obtrusive way, the final notes have been written as minims, but with an asterisk above them. The First Service also has passages where this overlap is extended beyond one note, creating imitative phrases bordering on the contrapuntal. MDS frequently cuts these short, trying to fit both choirs on the same staff line (ex.2).



Ex.2 Overlapping Tenor parts

The Queens' College MS shows the Dec Tenor overlapping the incoming Can Tenor for two notes. There is no surviving Cambridge MS of the Can Tenor, but it is supposed that the original part started with a minim, rather the crotchet shown in MDS. Conceivably, the Can part could start with a C, in direct imitation of the Decani line, though MDS would have surely shown the crotchet note at that pitch. (A Cantoris Tenor part is at York Minster, which needs consulting.) The two Contratenor manuscripts also show an overlap of at least two beats (three, where there are lingering semibreves), where MDS shows only one line demarked antiphonally; and all the Bass sources agree on similar patterns, with MDS showing two voices at the same position on one staff line.

Having established this overlap in the lower three parts, the music in MDS for the Medius part seems unsatisfactory, again splitting the two parts on one staff. Although the Cambridge sources do concur with MDS, ending the Decani line on a weak stress, an overlap similar to the other parts seems more likely (ex.3).



Ex.3 Overlapping Medius parts

While some may rule out this (and the Tenor parts which it echoes) on the basis of consecutive octaves, I suggest that this is a deliberate unison, albeit with different words. Most assuredly, all of this points to a deliberate practice in which the antiphony is a 'cross-fade' rather than a 'cut', to use modern audio terms. It would seem likely that a similar 'lingering semibreve' overlap would have been performed in the Second Service between antiphonal phrases, and the same asterisk marking has been used in the edition to suggest this. (Further work involves checking the Gostling partbooks at York, to see if they corroborate this line of enquiry.)

The Verse settings of the Third, Fourth and Fifth Services do not show any marked use of an-

tiphony, despite divisi indications for each of the voice types. Verse sections frequently have Cantoris singers of one part paired with Decani singers of another and *vice versa*. The Contratenor book shows 'Primus' and 'Secondus' parts on the verso and recto pages for the Third and Fourth settings, which is not necessarily concordant with Decani and Cantoris. The Fifth Service uses Decani and Cantoris indications occasionally, though they are perhaps otherwise implied, if not stated.

Underlay

Another cause for query across all the settings is in the text itself and its assignment to the music. For such a standard text as the Magnificat, there are curious inconsistencies between parts of the same setting, such as 'hath rejoiced' / 'rejoiceth' / and even 'hath rejoiceth'; spirit and sp'rit; throughout and thoroughout; 'father' / 'fathers' / 'forefathers', 'and to his seed' / 'and his seed'; 'is now' / 'and is now'; and assorted numbers of imaginations and hearts.

Beyond this, some underlay seems ungainly, clumsy or even unfeasible in its attempt to fit the words to the notes. Obvious points of imitation are set with melismas in different places. Repeat marks in the underlay sometimes have fewer notes than the repeated text requires for syllables; and sometimes more, which leaves only the problem of where to place the melisma. The syllabic stress is at times at odds with the natural stress of the music phrase (even allowing for the lack of metre and considering 16th-century pronunciation). The Cambridge source material frequently varies from MDS (and variations can be seen in the Decani and Cantoris books of the same part). It is very easy to think of MDS as not entirely trustworthy or, at the least, simply one of a number of variants. As Denis Stevens writes:

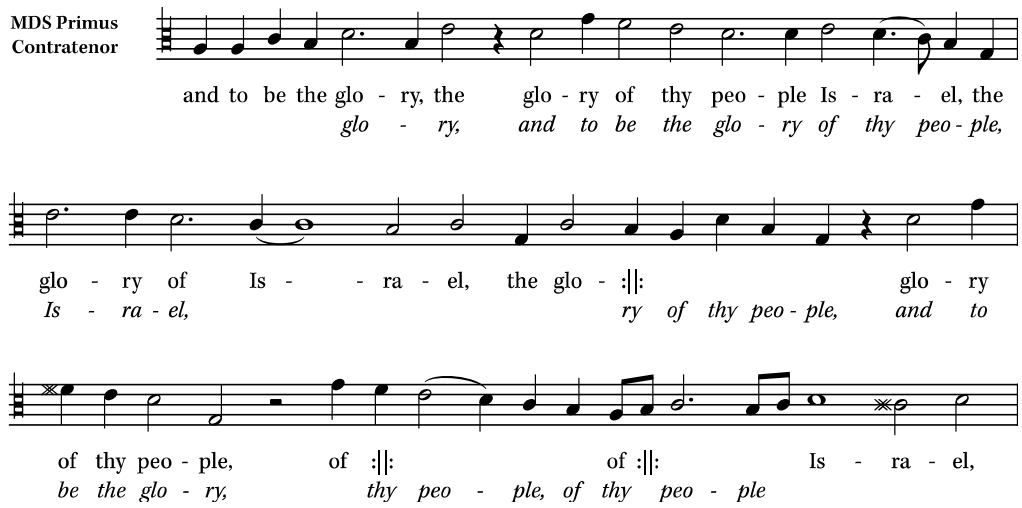
> *The editors [of Tudor Church Music] are, with some justification less pleased with Nathaniel's care in seeing to the correct underlay of text to music. … He evidently placed his trust, not unwisely, in the ability of singers to adapt the text in a convincing and artistic manner to the varying lengths of the musical phrases.*[1]

As a consequence, there is a great temptation for an editor to indulge in 'tidying up', and it is often difficult to know when to stop. The rough, untidy quality of this music is perhaps a considerable part of its charm.

Alterations in the new editions were limited to what might be considered 'stylistic consistencies': removing variation at points of imitation; favouring variants found in the manuscript sources, and the occasional adjustment of melismas, particularly for anacrucis, in a consistent manner. However, one passage in the Third Service seemed so awkward — the strong accent on 'the' immediately before a rest; the omission of 'thy people', giving 'glory of Israel'; the clumsy positioning of the repeat marks — that I felt compelled to offer an alternative, should performers feel similarly (ex.4).

This was the sole example, in all five settings, of a complete 'rewrite', and presented as an alternative alongside the original. Elsewhere, alterations to underlay can be mitigated if they are detailed in a commentary, though as John Caldwell points out with his customary pragmatic wisdom:

> *Variant underlay in a commentary is not likely to be consulted by a performer; the scholar who interests himself in such matters is unlikely to get a clear picture from a commentary and will need to consult the originals.*[2]



Ex.4 Clumsy and alternative word setting

Pitch and part allocation

Perhaps the most vexatious issue is how to 'sit' the music within the vocal ranges of a standard, modern Anglican choir. In the near 400 years since the works were written, the make-up of choirs and attributes of the human voice itself have altered, through better nutrition, vocal training and the formalisation of voice types. The welcome appearance of Contraltos and Girl Trebles in church choirs is also a factor. One might argue that the usual treatment of transposing up a minor third has little to do with accurately replicating an authentic pitch, and more to do with producing a pragmatic compromise wherein each part can be comfortably sung by modern Trebles, Altos (of any variety), Tenors and Basses.

The Bass, Tenor and Treble (Medius) parts in MDS are, broadly, singable using a modern assumption of the nominal written pitch, with perhaps a small increment of a tone to curtail extremities, particularly in the Bass, and to place the music more comfortably in the Treble's register. But the Contratenor lines are more awkward. There is generally a greater degree of overlap between the Alto and Tenor ranges than between other neighbouring voices (Table 1).

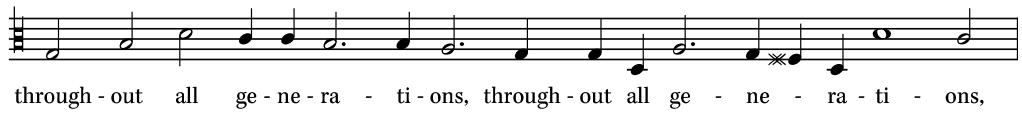
	First	Second	Third		Fourth		Fifth	
			1	2	1	2	1	2
Chorus	g – g'	f# – g'	d – g'	d – g'	g – a'	d – a'	f – a'	—
Verse	------	-----	c – g'	e – g'	g – a'	d – g'	e – g'	d – f'

Table 1: Range of Contratenor parts across Tomkins' evening services

The ambitus of the Tenor parts across all five services is from c to e'. Of course, extremities are not always the most useful guide: a single low note may throw off the general range by as much as a fourth. Plotting the frequency distribution of each pitch is a task for another day, though it is easily apparent that the Contratenor Verse sections tend to sit lower than the Chorus sections.

The First and Second services, with no verse sections, have a range broadly in keeping with the comfortable expectations of a modern Alto part (unsurprisingly fitting around the staff of the Alto clef), and need no special treatment beyond the transposition up a tone of the entire music. For the remaining settings, it might be argued that modern-day Tenors could sing the Contratenor staves at least as easily as modern-day Countertenors or Contraltos. The Tenors are underused, rarely divided and sparsely used in the Verse. The Contratenors, however, are almost entirely in two parts: divided as 'Primus' and 'Secundus', and sometimes as 'Decani' and 'Cantoris'. (Readers of contemporary partbooks will know that sets often contain first and second Decani Contratenor books, and first and second books for Cantoris: thus a choir could divide the Contratenor part across the sides or within each side.)

Without wishing to disparage the abilities of any modern-day Alto, it is not unreasonable to suggest that 'low phrases', which we could define as those whose median note is around a low G, might be more usefully sung by a Tenor (ex.5).



Ex.5 Example 'low phrase' from Secundus Contratenor, Tomkins' Third Service

There are three solutions for how to proceed. The first is that a Tenor might be assigned to the Secundus Contratenor part in its entirety. This is uncontroversial, and would broadly work for the music of the Fourth Service, leaving only a couple of places where the Primus Contratenor has 'low phrases', and a couple of 'high phrases' for the assigned Tenor. The second is for one (or two) Tenors to sing the lower-placed Contratenor Verse sections, leaving the Altos to sing the higher Chorus lines. This again seems pragmatic and reasonable, and this approach fits the music of the Fifth Service well. Luckily, the Tenors are rarely divided in these settings (and sparsely used in the Verse), so there is no difficulty in this arrangement. As already mentioned, there are few clear antiphonal effects in the Verse settings, so assigning the 'notionally Cantoris' Contratenor Secundus to a Decani Tenor does not spoil any antiphony.

A third solution is required for Tomkins' Third service, where reassigning one Contratenor part, or the Verses, to a Tenor is not sufficient help. This is his 'Great' service, which calls on divisi parts in all voices (though not all at the same time). The Contratenor parts contain phrases whose entire compass sits at the lower extreme of an Alto's range, more frequently than the other settings. As usual, the Tenors are divided only occasionally (for the verse at 'He hath filled the hungry' and the chorus at 'As he promised'), and absent from much of the verse, while the Contratenors are divided throughout and shouldering most of the verse work.

If it is no violence to assign an entire Contratenor part to a modern-day Tenor in the Fourth Service, and allowable to divide the verse and chorus sections between Tenor and Alto respectively in the Fifth, then that leads us to a logical, though perhaps contentious, solution for the Third setting, which is to divide the music into smaller discrete sections and 'share out' the Contratenor parts between the Altos and Tenors, as fits their range. I stress the words 'discrete music sections'. I would baulk at the practice used in some mid-20th-century editions of Tudor mu-

sic, where individual extreme notes would be swapped between parts, thus ruining the composer's contrapuntal lines. No adultery of this kind has been done to any of Tomkins' musical lines, which have been entirely preserved; merely re-distributed.

This treatment may well provoke spluttering and letter-writing. Had this project been the first modern edition of Tomkins' music, then I might have been more circumspect. However, there are (or have been) previous editions —from Ivor Atkins, to E.H. Fellowes, to Barry Rose, to Ramsbotham/Greening— which can be used in preference, or consulted alongside. Indeed, in this digital age, performers can consult the original source material online to inform their reading of a modern score.

My goal is, ultimately, to make these works more useful to church and chapel choirs who maintain a tradition of sung Evening Prayer, rather than to specialised ensembles performing them in concerts and recordings. If these editions encourage or embolden choirs to perform them, when they might otherwise have been put off by the range of the Contratenor lines, then that is all for the best.

Ben Byram-Wigfield has been producing editions of sacred choral music for 25 years, under the banner of Ancient Groove Music. He has a PhD in the sacred music of Antonio Lotti from the Open University. His editions of five Evening Services by Tomkins are available from http://ancientgroove.co.uk

Notes

1 'Musica Deo Sacra' in Anthony Boden (ed), *Thomas Tomkins: The Last Elizabethan* (Ashgate, 2005)

2 John Caldwell, *Editing Early Music* (Oxford, 2/1995), p.44

Reconstructing our early music histories: the Baroque violin revival

Mimi Mitchell

The funeral of the harpsichordist and conductor Gustav Leonhardt (1928-2012) seven years ago was the primary catalyst for my decision to research the Baroque violin revival. Surrounded by many of the early music pioneers, some already in their eighties, I suddenly became aware that time with this generation was limited. Important figures in the early music movement, such as Leonhardt and Nikolaus Harnoncourt (1929-2016), had often been interviewed. The violinists, lacking the figurehead status of these conductors, seemed to have been overlooked. Would their stories be lost when they were no longer with us? This realization fueled a desire to interview the Baroque violin pioneers, record their stories and examine the instrument's revival through this lens. Mindful of the importance and responsibility of this undertaking, I hoped that my university training as a historical musicologist and my profession as a Baroque violinist would give me the tools to do so.

Through one-on-one interviews with ten figurehead Baroque violinists - which often stretched over a period of days or months - the individual threads of the revival become clear. Simultaneously, the tapestry I thought I knew began to unravel, as the accepted historiography was shown to be both incomplete and inaccurate. Speaking with other older violinists, the pioneers' students, museum directors, instrument restorers and makers provided complementary material that confirmed these insights. As players and makers related how they grappled with new ideas, equipment and techniques; the excitement of these mid-20th-century experimentations became palpable. The enthusiastic idealism of this time period was also tempered by pragmatism, and it was important to record the compromises as well as the achievements. I am incredibly grateful for the generosity and honesty of all the interviewees; without their contributions this revised history could not have been written.

Illus.1 Jaap Schröder

The ten Baroque violin pioneers interviewed, in birthdate order, were: Jaap Schröder (born 1925) (illus.1), Sonya Monosoff (1925), Eduard Melkus (1928) (illus.2), Marie Leonhardt (1928), Alice Harnoncourt (1930) (illus.3), Stanley Ritchie (1935), Simon Standage (1941) (illus.4), Marilyn McDonald (1943), Sigiswald Kuijken (1944) (illus.5) and Catherine Mackintosh (1947). I planned to organize three interviews with each of these violinists, but this was only possible with a few of these busy musicians. I also tried to experience many of these violinists 'in action' and was able to see many of them rehearsing, performing, conducting, teaching and speaking. Observing these violinists in a number of different roles provided me with a fuller picture of their musical lives and personalities.

The choice of violinists to be interviewed was determined by whom I and the professional music world considered a Baroque violin pioneer. My criterion was simple: I chose violinists who had never had lessons on the Baroque violin, with the assumption that these musicians would be uniquely qualified to discuss their trajectories to this 'new' instrument. Within this group, violinists with the most prominent performing and recording careers, as well as those with important teaching positions, were chosen. The nationalities (or immigrant status) of these violinists confined the geographical scope of my study to

Illus.2 Eduard Melkus

Austria, Belgium, The Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Important figures and developments in other countries, therefore, were only touched upon. The timeframe ended with the International Baroque Violin Symposium during the Utrecht Early Music Festival in 1989, a symbolic beginning of the post-revival phase.

In one of the first interviews, I discovered that Marie Leonhardt did not fit the criterion; she had studied the Baroque violin in the 1940s at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Switzerland. This mistake alerted me to the fact that these pioneers were not the first generation interested in the historical violin, and to the realization that the early music movement had not always been transparent about its origins. Research revealed a new narrative that stretched back to violinists playing other historical instruments in the 19th century.

Illus. 3 Alice Harnoncourt playing a pardessus de viole under the chin

Reviving an instrument that had been so successfully modernized was an enormous achievement, and it took numerous generations to be able to recreate the historical equipment, develop a new aesthetic and perform in what is considered a historically and musically convincing way. The appearance of the first known modern-day Baroque violin made by Arnold Dolmetsch in the 1920s is often seen as the beginning of the revival, but interest in historical string instruments was soon shown to begin more than a century earlier. 19th-century violinists performed early music (and modern compositions) on 'exotic' instruments such as the viola d'amore, *quinton* and *pardessus de viole* with great success, but the smaller members of the gamba family were played under the chin rather than between the legs. The concept of the violin as a historical instrument did not emerge until the following century. Even in the 20th century, violinists often first played early music on other historical string instruments before exploring the Baroque violin. It is significant that 75% of the pioneers I interviewed played some form of the viola da gamba and, for most of them, these instruments were their first introduction to early music. Even for pioneers born in the 1940s, their journeys from the modern to the Baroque violin were often circuitous ones.

Illus.4 Simon Standage

This new history of the Baroque violin revival suffered from large gaps between 19th-century musicians, Arnold Dolmetsch and the mid-20th-century pioneers. These empty spaces became filled with a concert hall full of soloists and ensembles in the USA, the UK and continental Europe; and the list I compiled is sure to be far from complete. The interviewees' memories were essential to be able to reinstate the important contributions of almost forgotten and/or misaligned figures such as the Briton Kenneth Skeaping, the Swiss Walter Kägi and the American Sol Babitz.

Illus.5 Sigiswald Kuijken with a violoncello di spalla

These multiple generations of pioneers, intent upon trying to recreate the soundworld of the past, could not help but be influenced by the present (to oppose it, at the least). These violinists' backgrounds, teachers, colleagues and work situations all influenced how they approached the instrument, and it was important to try and codify the various factors that influenced their work. These violinists' early training had far-reaching consequences. The very different aesthetic ideals of the Austrian and Dutch school, for example, can be explained primarily as the result of the differences between their modern violin pedigrees. The question of how far back these differences reach, and if the present-day distinctions reflect national styles of the 17th and 18th centuries, is an intriguing one.

It has been a honour to speak with these important violinists and to be entrusted with their stories, but it has simultaneously been a struggle to confront the less honourable side of a profession of which I am a member. The mythologizing of many of our early music icons and the idealization of the movement had combined to produce a 'created myth' of the Baroque violin revival. However embarrassing it might be to mention costumed concerts (complete with beauty marks), blatant forgeries of music and instruments, connections to amateur music-making and the Nazi youth movement, belligerent figures, and the fact that practicalities often trumped idealism; it is vitally important that this is also included in any discussion of the revival. A more inclusive history does not diminish the pioneers' achievements nor should it shake the fundamental ideals of the movement, but acknowledges that an awareness of what people did is just as important as a romanticized account of what they wanted to do.

The Baroque violin pioneers wanted and did do something new, and their use of historical equipment and creation of a new musical aesthetic, both strikingly different from the prevailing models, was indeed revolutionary. It is impossible to know if the Baroque violin pioneers were able to reproduce the sounds and musical ideals of an earlier period, but it is of great importance that we - and the modern music world - were convinced by their attempts to do so. The early music movement would not have succeeded if these violinists' music-making had not spoken to the audience, whether heard in the concert hall, on the radio and television or on recordings. Generations of younger violinists were inspired by their playing and studied with the pioneers during private coachings, summer courses, university and conservatory studies. The artistic achievements of these violinist resulted in the acceptance of the Baroque violin into the world's most prestigious venues and its most importnat educational institutions.

In an exciting coda, I was asked to co-curate the STIMU symposium with Jed Wentz as part of the Utrecht Early Music Festival in 26-28 August 2019. Thirty years after the STIMU symposium about the Baroque violin in 1989, this year's symposium reflected on what must now be called The Historical Violin. This multifaceted event - including concerts, masterclasses, lectures and roundtable discussions - honoured the pioneers, discussed the state of the field today and hopefully inspired future generation of historically-informed violinists.

Some articles from the 65th *Händel Jahrbuch* 2019

Mark Windisch

Each year as part of the Händel Festival in Halle there is an International Academic Conference. Papers are printed in the *Jahrbuch*[1] in the year following the conference. In this report I shall only summarise those in the English language, but I will list the others below.

Matthew Gardner, 'Italian Opera for the English Taste: Handel's Early London Operas 1711-1715'

Dr Gardner sets the scene by describing the way 'opera' had been performed before in London in the early 18th century – basically spoken plays with interspersed songs. A number of noblemen who visited Italy began to demand that London should introduce Italian style of opera. Setting up all-sung opera required considerable logistic activity, with the tasks of arranging the migration of singers, composers, librettists and stage designers from Italy where such works were well established. Handel first visited London in 1710-11 and then returned in 1712, producing *Rinaldo*, *Il pastor fido*, *Teseo* and *Amadigi di Gaula*, which required the setting up of The Royal Academy of Music in 1719 as a joint stock company. Aaron Hill, manager of The Queen's Theatre, was very influential in defining the requirements.

Prior to fully composed operas being performed before *Rinaldo* were *pasticcios* comprising selections from Italian operas. Handel was the first composer capable of putting a unified opera together in London. Hill drew on the experience in the 1680s of visionaries like John Dryden, Granville and John Eccles to design *Rinaldo* as an opera with stage machinery, magic and heroes. A combination of a first class cast of singers, an exciting story where Christians emerge victorious, spectacular stage effects and an easy-to-follow storyline ensured a great success for *Rinaldo*.

The second opera, *Il pastor fido*, enjoyed none of the spectacular effects of its predecessor. This might have been because finances were limited, but again Handel touched on a tradition of pastoral stories following a long English tradition. An attempt to increase this opera's popularity was further enhanced by limiting foreign language recitatives and having more orchestral interludes. Unfortunately, it never enjoyed the success of *Rinaldo*. Handel learnt from this and the next two operas, *Teseo* and *Amadigi di Gaula*, relied heavily on magic effects. The main thrust of Gardner's article was to show how Handel was able to adapt his style to produce opera which would greatly please English audiences.

Donald Burrows, "'To set the Italian performers in the most contemptible light possible, they are invidiously represented as a Set of Beggars". The controversy about the London opera company in 1745'

Professor Burrows shows by significant quotes from the contemporary press how important Italian composers and musicians were throughout the other European countries in the 18th century. Musicians came to London from France and Germany and other countries too, but most came from Italy. Records show how much these musicians became an important part of cultural life by giving concerts. This applied also to actors, particularly those of French origin. The article shows how this was affected by political disturbances of the time and some animosity towards Roman Catholics. The problems between England and Scotland in 1745 had a very pronounced negative effect. In summary, however, animosity towards foreign musicians was not as pronounced as might have been surmised from some articles and letters in the newspapers and journals of the time.

Ivan Curkovic, 'The Duets of Alessandro Scarlatti and George Frideric Handel: Two individual Paths and Some Intersections'

Ivan Curkovic takes his starting point Richard Taruskin's quote in the *Oxford Dictionary of Western Music* about Handel's compositional methods. Taruskin is looking to younger composers than Handel when he referred to Handel's operas being 'more craftsmanly and structurally complex'. Curkovic looks at an earlier composer, Alessandro Scarlatti, and his vocal compositions in view of their close proximity in Rome in 1707, to examine in particular how his composition of vocal duets might have had an influence on Handel. It is surmised that *pasticci* which were still and important part of opera performances in London up to 1720, often included duets by Scarlatti senior. A number of examples are quoted where it is possible that music composed by Scarlatti are included. Parallels are drawn between the composers' arias, but the paper ends with the thought that further scholarship will be needed to establish the connection with more certainty.

Graydon Beeks, 'Sir George Smart's Performance of Messiah'

Professor Beeks has made a detailed study of a performance of *Messiah* in Vienna in the 1780s with Mozart's additions. The article opens with a description of musicians, including Smart and slightly older contemporaries like Smart's father and Joah Bates, who might possibly have heard Handel towards the end of his active life. Smart himself became closely identified early on with Messiah with Mozart's additions and went on to make Messiah an important part of concerts he presented, culminating in his performance at the Handel Festival in Westminster Abbey in 1834. Beeks describes how Smart did a cut-and-paste job by adding some of Mozart's additions to an earlier score (held in the British Library). Smart's selection process is in itself interesting, using the Mozart additions quite sparingly. Smart was very precise as to tempi and his score indicates the precise times for start and end of each section.

John H. Roberts, 'Rosenmüller in Italy: Traces of a Shadowed Life'

Professor Roberts traces the career of Johann Rosenmüller; a tragic figure who was to succeed Thomas Michael as Cantor at Thomaskirche in Leipzig when his activities of a sexual nature with some members of the choir were brought to light. Following this he fled to Venice where he found employment as a trombonist in San Marco. During his period of exile in Venice he composed a large body of church music. Roberts carried out detailed examination of the accounts of the Ospidale della Pieta, where the composer is said to have worked, but found these records very difficult to unravel. Examination of the Chigi archives (a wealthy noble family, including a Pope) indicates involvement by Rosenmüller in the opera Adalinda by Pietro Simone Agostini. Rosenmüller's life seems to have been very complex and quite difficult to unravel. He made friends with Weissenfels composer Johann Philipp Krieger, who performed a large number of his works there, and ended his career in Wolfenbüttel. He was held up an as an example of compositional methods by no less a person than Marcello.

David Vickers, 'Giulia Frasi in English Music'

Dr Vickers describes Frasi's reputation as reported by Charles Burney, then goes on to record her prominence in British cultural life, particularly with regard to regular appearances in charity and fund-raising events. She was noted early on for her ability to breathe life into the characters she was representing in song, and her ability to sing in unaccented English. Initially required by Handel to sing oratorio in English, when released from this she blossomed out to more elaborate Italian Opera arias and heroic roles specially written for her by Thomas Arne in an ex-

panded Alfred. During the 1750s, as her opera career diminished, she sang often for Arne and for William Boyce at the Three Choirs Festival in 1756. She also played a pivotal role in John Stanley's *Zimri* and in J. C. Smith's *Paradise Lost* and *Rebecca*. Her final concert in Hickford's Great Room in April 1774 also featured the eight-year-old Nancy Storace, who was to be Mozart's inspiration for Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Alison C. Desimone, '"Lov'd at home and fear'd abroad": The war of the Spanish Succession in English Songs and On the Stage'

The Treaty of Utrecht signed in April 1713 was celebrated in London with a great procession, accompanied by music by William Croft and the Te Deum & Jubilate by Handel. During the course of the war a large number of foreign musicians deprived of patronage came to London and spawned pasticcio operas and initiated a rise in printed songs. During the thirteen years of the war musicians arrived from Italy, the Low Countries and German-speaking lands. Britain took the side against Louis XIV, who had backed James III, contrary to the British preference for the Hanoverian claimant. In Britain music was used for patriotic purposes which gave ample opportunities for foreign-trained musicians to join with their home-grown colleagues to provide the impetus for much patriotic music. The first composer who ventured into composition of Italian style opera was Thomas Clayton with *Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus*. Composers emphasised the Britishness of the words to downplay the mainly Italian nature of the music. An example was Bononcini's opera *Camilla* being performed at the height of English successes against the French, set to words which echoed patriotic sentiments. The article goes into considerable detail in describing how the words reflected patriotic sentiments.

Moving on to printed songs, a profitable market soon opened up for composers to cash in on the demand for songs which could be sung by amateurs, and John Walsh as ever was ready to play his part by printing and selling them. An interesting spinoff was that these songs enabled and atmosphere of cordiality between Protestants and Catholics.

Luca della Libera, '"Stante sia opera di famosissimo sonatore": New documents on Handel in Florence in 1707 and on the Forentine music life between 1705 and 1707'

Luca del Libera examined the files in Florence, where the Nunziatura Apostolica reported events to the Vatican regularly. Amongst the papers are records of theatrical and musical activity, the travels of Prince Ferdinando de' Medici, solemn events in churches, performances of oratorios, and marriages of the nobility, including music and dances.

Following Mainwaring, Handel's first biographer Handel began his Italian discoveries in Florence and wrote his early opera Rodrigo there. Earlier information had been provided by Prince Anton Ulrich of Saxe-Meiningen who wrote that he had attended a performance of *Rodrigo* on 9 November 1707. The article provides a list of performances and musicians during this period. What is hinted at is that Handel arrived in Florence having previously written a large part of Rodrigo while he was in Rome. Unusually Handel is mentioned by name in these documents when many Italian musicians were not.

Andrew V. Jones, 'A Handel Copyist identified'

Dr Jones presented this paper at the Handel Conference in London in 2018. The names of Handel's copyists are an endless source of debate amongst Handel scholars. Four Handel cantatas owned privately by a collector in South Germany have recently come to light. The composer is not named but they are identified as being by Handel from other sources. The paper, water-

marks and the unusual clefs chosen are interesting. Two of these cantatas are available from the Malmesbury collection and were originally part of the collection of Elizabeth Legh, who passed them on to James Harris (father of the first Earl of Malmesbury). Her passionate support and close friendship with the composer is well known. A significant clue as to the identity of the copyist is that it is evidently not the work of a professional copyist. Dr Jones has therefore concluded that Elizabeth Legh, having prevailed on Handel to allow her to copy some of his music for private consumption, acquiesced and these are the result.

Articles in German

Reinhard Strohm, 'Türken, Inder, Indianer: Abstufungen des Zivilisationsmythos in Musiktheater der Händelzeit'

Hans Dieter Clausen, 'Cleopatra auf dem Parnass'

Berthold Over, 'Paradigmen musikalischer Mobilität Händels Pasticci'

Julianne Riepe, 'Deutsche Ideolgeme der Musikermigration am Beispiel Georg Frideric Handels'

Margret Scharrer, 'Zwischen Orient und Okzident: Musikerreisen Abseits europaischer Wege'

Livio Marcaletti, 'Alexander der Groβe, Bacchus und der Begegnung mit der Orient in der venezianischen Oper vor Händel'

Jana Spáilová, 'Zur Händel-Rezeption in dem böhmischen Ländern in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts'

Notes

1 Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft e.V International Vereinigung, Geschaftstelle, c/o Stiftung Händel-Haus, Groβe Nikolaistr. 5, D06108 Halle (Saale), Germany, gesellschaft@haendel.de

Guidelines for the systematic evaluation of early music theorists

Francis Knights

Let him not consider it adequate to pull out four or five little words; let him consider the origin of what is said, by whom it is said, to whom it is said, when, on what occasion, in what words, what precedes it, what follows. For it is from a comprehensive examination of these things that one learns the meaning of a given utterance.

Erasmus, *Methodus* (1516)

Introduction

The 20th century early music movement, which in fact started with 'ancient music' concerts in the early 19th (or arguably, early 18th) century, has had to rely heavily on written texts for much of its information about past performance practice; even where continuous performing traditions allegedly existed - pupils of pupils of pupils - these were insufficient and unreliable evidence on which to base recreative performing styles. Many of the instruments, manuscripts and physical venues still existed from earlier periods, and were carefully studied, but *how* to perform the music from long-vanished traditions required reading numerous contemporary theorists and commentators, supplemented with (or sometimes, replaced with) imaginative conjectures as to the pitch, articulation, scoring, soundworld and many other key components of historical musical traditions. Those results showed that a loose reading of the sources could result in a wide variety of performing styles, especially where present-day musicians were unable or unwilling to compromise with the traditions in which they had been brought up. Nevertheless, a large number of highly detailed and descriptive or prescriptive sources, including those written by eminent musicians and composers, have remained the essential starting point for an understanding of the music of the past.[1]

Those modern writers who first aimed at providing systematic guides to early music and its performance, such as Arnold Dolmetsch[2] and Robert Donington,[3] largely assembled musical and descriptive quotations from a variety of disparate pan-European sources, but without much attempt to distinguish in detail between their wider applicability or validity. They provided a guide to a growing world of musical performance (from the late 18th and early 19th century onwards, the widespread use of cheap printing, mass production of musical instruments, the founding of conservatoires), in response to a demand that expanded particularly as then-modern composers' experiments distanced themselves from their audiences and helped lead to a general increase of interest in the music of the past.

These anthologized guides were and are still useful,[4] but it has since become clear that any view of 'old music' can not be well balanced if it just culls and assembles quotations from older writers across an entire continent and across many different centuries, rather than attempting to understand the specific stylistic, geographical or aesthetic milieu of each writer, and carefully assessing the context or importance of each source. What exactly might each piece of 'evidence' for past performing traditions really mean? More recent comparisons[5] between late 19th century writers and the earliest sound recording examples of the traditions they apparently describe gives some indications of the potential pitfalls of relying on text descriptions of musical performance - as so many writers of the past have noted, eventually words must fail in describing the sounds of the music that would have been recognizable to contemporary musicians. Indeed, even today the meaning of some important texts (for example, Étienne Loulié, *Les Éléments ou Principes de Musique*, 1696) remain the subject of strong debate,[6] and this may also have been true at the time they were published.

What follows is an attempt to create a systematic set of questions through which theoretical and other writings on music can be interrogated. Although addressed principally to the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical periods - to use those now-contentious but still useful terms - much of this is also applicable to texts from the Medieval and Romantic periods. The organization is arranged in a standard what/where/who/when/why question format, and within these headings specific questions are grouped; examples of relevant theorists are included.

Guidelines

All types of relevant sources are considered here, including single-themed printed volumes, manuscript guides, dictionaries, supplements to printed music, and descriptions of musical performances and activities within literary and other texts.

1. Description and contents

(a) How substantial a volume is it? What is the attempted scope? How it is organized? How much rigour is there to the organization of the material?

(b) Is it primarily descriptive or prescriptive? Is it primarily historical, technical, theoretical or aesthetic?

(c) What is the physical size and format? Is it portable, or usable on a music stand?

(d) Is it a supplement to an actual volume of music (eg Alessandro Piccinini, *Intavolatura di liuto, et di chitarrone, libro primo*,1623)?

(e) Does it represent the mainstream tradition, or else a provincial or marginal view? Is it, or does it claim to be, indicating common usage?

(f) If a manuscript volume, was it copied by the author, the user or another? Was it intended only for limited or specialist circulation?

(g) What was the print run and price? How many editions did it go through? Were there revisions made in later editions, and what do they indicate? What was the last reprint date? What was the last known period of sale, circulation or usage?

(h) What language was it written in, and why? What does this tell us about the intended readership? Was it later translated?

(i) Are music examples or illustrations (woodcuts, engravings) included? What is their purpose?

(j) Are there identified links to other publications or sheet music (eg François Couperin, *L'art de toucher le clavecin*, 1716, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, 1753, 1762)?

(k) What is the historical background to the volume? Are previous writers and sources used, or credited? What textual borrowings can be identified?[7]

(l) What genres are discussed, and why? Is there a particular repertoire focus, for example sacred or secular? To what extent can specific observations be carried over to areas not

mentioned by the author?

(m) Are standard notational systems used, and do they relate to specific places, styles or instruments?

(n) What claims does the author make for originality or novelty?

(o) Does it draw on previous or current scientific theory (eg Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Traité de l'harmonie réduite à ses principes naturels*, 1722)?

(p) Does it concentrate on specific components of music? For example, instruments (Sebastian Virdung, *Musica getutscht*, 1511; Jacques Hotteterre, *Principes de la flute traversiere, de la Flute a Bec, et du Haut-bois, Op.1*, 1707; Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch einer An weisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*, 1752; Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violin schule*, 1756); ornamentation and divisions (Sylvestro Ganassi, *Opera intitulata Fontegara*, 1535); composition (Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, 1597); William Crotch, *Elements of Musical Composition*, 1812), fugue (Luigi Cherubini, *Cours de contrepoint et de fugue*, 1835) or orchestration (Hector Berlioz, *Grand traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration modernes*, 1844).

(q) Who was the dedicatee, and why? What benefit did the author receive?

(r) Was there a patron or source of financial support?

2. Production and location

(a) Where was it published, and by which printer, why and how? What else did that firm print? What was their level of competence and experience? How do any subsequent editions differ?

(b) What were the technical means of printing? What in-score information could the given print format not encompass?

(c) How was the book circulated and distributed, and over what areas and countries?

(d) Was it circulated as part of the normal book trade?

(e) Was it intended to represent a particular national style or tradition, or for wider circulation?

3. The author

(a) What was the author's level of general education? Were they professionally trained in music? Were they primarily a performer or a composer?

(b) What tradition were they trained in? Who were their teachers? Did they have significant pupils, or create a school or tradition?

(c) What was their professional employment, and in what musical and cultural environments? Were they particularly connected with one institution?

(d) What were their political, cultural and musical prejudices? Did they regard themselves as regional, national or international in their interests and activity?

(e) Did they travel, and were they directly exposed to foreign musical cultures? Did they meet, know or correspond with musicians, patrons or writers abroad?

(f) How old were they at the time of writing or publication? Are their writings retrospective (codifying or describing a previous tradition)? Are they forward- (Giulio Caccini, *Le nuove musiche*, 1602) or backward-looking (Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 1671-6)?

(g) Does the author have equal authority or competence (eg as performer, composer, theorist; C. P. E. Bach, 1753/1762) across all the areas they describe?

(h) Were they a collector of music, books or instruments?

(i) Did they have contact with or influence on instrument makers, or design and make instruments themselves?

(j) Do they significantly disagree with any other contemporary authors or experts in terms of fact or judgement?

(k) What were their non-musical interests, activities and contacts?

4. History

(a) What period do the writings cover? Is that an established or a transitional era in music history?

(b) Do they see themselves as working within a particular musical lineage?

(c) Do they cite specific earlier sources (Morley, 1597), composers or works? Do they show a real knowledge and understanding of these?

(d) Which contemporaries cited them as an authority, and why? When were they last cited and by whom, and how long did this influence last? How long did their reputation last? If a composer, for how long after was their music also performed, known, appreciated or cited?

5. Purpose

(a) What was the purpose of the writings? Were they intended to be systematic or comprehensive (eg Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 1618-1620)?

(b) What sales and usage were anticipated? Was a profit expected?

(c) Were they intended as a supplement to an actual teacher, or an alternative where no teacher was available?

(d) To what extent are they a public statement of authority, helping to establish the reputation of the author as a significant writer, teacher or composer?

(e) What is the nature of the expertise that they convey? Is this an introductory or a more detailed guide?

(e) Were they intended for amateurs or professionals, men or women, aristocrats and/or the middle classes?

Application

A single book example lists will suffice, to show how collecting this information can help understand the use and value of historical theory publications. Here are selected, by way of illustration, just four questions from the more than 80 above - 1.(g), the first of 4(d), and 5.(b) - with reference to Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, and starting with the publication history. Morley has appeared complete in print or electronic form as follows:[8]

Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (London, 1597)[9]

Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (London, 1608), second edition[10]

Thomas Morley ed William Randall, A *Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (London, 1771)

Thomas Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (London, 1937), facsimile reprint with an introduction by E. H. Fellowes

Thomas Morley ed Alec Harman, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (London, 1952), modern transcription

Thomas Morley ed Ben Byram-Wigfield, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (Great Malvern, 2002), modern transcription but with facsimile music examples

Thomas Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (1597), electronic text transcription (2005) at http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A07753.0001.001

Thomas Morley ed John Milsom and Jessie Ann Owens, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (forthcoming 2021)

Later published writers citing Morley (1597) included Thomas Ravenscroft, *A Brief Discourse* (1614), Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum* (1618-1620) and Charles Butler, *The Principles of Musik* (1636), and it was very likely also a source for John Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Music* (1665), Christopher Simpson, *A Compedium of Practical Musick* (1665) and Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676),[11] as well as being known to historians like Burney (Charles Burney, *History of Music*, vol.3 (London, 1789), p.99. Roger North (1653-1734) used it as one of his source books for the private study of composition when young,[12] although by then neither he or Burney cared much for Morley's dated and quirky prose style.

Although the formal study of Renaissance counterpoint in Britain took second place to the study of fugue in academic circles during the 19th century, Morley's book has probably had an almost continuous role of influence in the teaching of this style for the past four centuries; it is still quarried today by the writers of textbooks.

Finally, to answer the fourth question, Tessa Murray's detailed work on Morley as publisher and businessman has led to her being able to estimate a print run of the first edition of 1000 with sales of about 300; the production costs were £64 14s, with £90 income and a profit therefore of £25 6s.[13] This information itself impacts upon other questions from the lists above, showing the complexity of information that is needed for a full contextual appreciation of even a single source.

Conclusion

In order to assess the importance of past writers and theorists, it is needful to understand the context of their work and the traditions within which they wrote. A sense of where they lie within wider historical and geographical traditions is very helpful, as is an understanding of their place within the mainstream composition and performing traditions of the past, as we now understand them. By asking systematic and detailed questions of past theorists, it is possible to achieve a more sophisticated sense of the evidence they present, and how they relate to present-day concerns of, for example, performance practice. Many of the questions above are unanswerable, but are still well worth asking. However, it is also important to be clear about what we (and indeed, they) do not or can not know about the past. Only by clarifying such areas can we see the nature of the practical judgement that still need to be made by scholars and musicians today in order to understand the music of the past and bring it to life through performance.

Notes

1 Many of those relating to musical instruments have been conveniently gathered together in the extensive *Méthodes & Traités* facsimile series published by Fuzeau

2 Arnold Dolmetsch, *Interpretation of the Music of the 17th and 18th Centuries: Revealed by Contemporary Evidence* (1915)

3 Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music* (1963)

4 They are at their most useful when restricted to areas where some mapping of technique, style or taste plausibly crosses geographical or temporal boundaries, as in Peter Croton, *Performing Baroque Music on the Lute & Theorbo: a practical handbook based on historical sources* (2016)

5 Robert Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950* (1992) and *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (2004)

6 With reference to the single-beat/double-beat metronome theory, in this case; see Lorenz Gadient, *Takt und Pendelschlag: Quellentexte zur musikalischen Tempomessung des 17. bis 19. Jahrhunderts neu betrachtet* (Munich, 2010)

7 See for example, Karen M. Cook, 'Text mining and early music: using Lexomics in research', *Early Music*, xliii/4 (November 2015), pp.661–665

8 For more background on the printing and distribution of the treatise, see Tessa Murray, *Thomas Morley: Elizabethan Music Publisher* (Woodbridge, 2014), and John Milsom and Jessie Ann Owens, *Reading Morley's Plaine and Easie Introduction: Interpretation and Context* (London, 2017)

9 Online facsimile at https://imslp.org/wiki/A_Plain_and_Easy_Introduction_to_Practical_Music_(Morley%2C_Thomas)

10 Online facsimile at https://imslp.org/wiki/A_Plain_and_Easy_Introduction_to_Practical_Music_(Morley%2C_Thomas). For full bibliographic information about the two early editions, see Murray (2014), pp.218-219

11 Thurston Dart, introduction to Harman (1952), pp.xxiv-xxv

12 John Wilson, *Roger North on Music* (London, 1959), p.137, North was writing in c.1715-1720

13 Murray (2014), p.195

A History of Eastern Early Music Forum

Robert Johnson

EEMF cannot claim to be the earliest of the regional Fora to be founded, having been beaten to that by NWEMF and SWEMF. However, the origins can be traced back to an inaugural meeting at the Colchester Institute in June 1981, where Peter Holman, then Senior Lecturer at the Institute, and John Wellingham of Dartington College were the speakers. A recorder player called Andrea Maltster (Kirkby) seems to have been the meeting's convenor, and a Colchester Institute A-level student called Francis Knights present at that meeting was many years later to become EEMF Chairman. One gets the impression that this meeting consisted of 'milling around and drinking of coffee and the odd bit of music making' to quote one well-known member. But later developments are easier to trace. Peter Holman then left to work in USA for a while, and management of the embryonic forum passed into the hands of various local musicians, many of them active or former professionals, teachers or instrument makers, including Alison and the late Michael Bagenal, Alan Turner (harpsichord maker, also deceased), the late Marjorie Harmer (viol player and cellist), and Anne Jordan (wife of Brian, renowned music retailer of Cambridge).

After about a year there was a crisis because of other commitments, and because of the geography of our large area, but a reorganisation saw things moving again. The register of members then stood at about 60. Committee offices changed hands often; publisher and musicologist Clifford Bartlett came on board early, as did wind player Stephen Cassidy. There was always an intention to produce a quarterly newsletter, and some of the early editions contained quite learned articles, as well as extensive diaries of concerts in East Anglia. It reached epic proportions under editor Ann Elliott, who, with Marjorie Harmer, has kindly provided much of the information on which these notes are based. In the early days forum activities naturally concentrated on viol consorts and a string orchestra, as these were the skills of the committee, and there was also the occasional early wind workshop. It's interesting to note that there was a musical picnic and playing day at Thetford for which the entry fee was 75p a head! There wasn't much for singers at the start, but that has been more than adequately compensated for in recent years, as described below. One name that looms large in the early list of tutors is that of Philip Thorby , of whom more below. Members recall with pleasure the New Year Meetings near Beccles in Philip's Old School House and, later on, his Elizabethan Mansion, Roos Hall, and the wonderful cooking feasts (the Epiphany Party, intended to relieve any post-Christmas dullness) organised by Jennie Cassidy and friends.

At this point it's worth mentioning that detailed information about the early days of EEMF is scarce and hard to come by. Memories have faded, certain key people are sadly no longer with us, and if an archive was ever kept it seems to have been mislaid. The internet was not yet available, social media likewise, and mobile phones had not been invented.

Other reminiscences of the period include Belinda Hambling Boulton's workshops (eastern European and middle-eastern yodelling) and Robert Hollingworth's workshops, which attracted high praise. Andrew Lawrence-King taught members how to begin and end a passage together without a conductor, at the Mexican workshop. Steve Player taught the steps and meaning of a pavane one year at Rushmere, and, with Andrew Lawrence-King, how important it is for musicians to understand the dances which are so much part of music up to the Baroque.

A great expansion of membership took place over the three-and-a-half decades of EEMF's existence, such that the register of members now stands at about 250. This has led to a considerable

Illus.1 The EEMF Epiphany Party in Beccles (January 2017) (Photos: Francis Knights)

extension in the range of activities, much of which was due to the indefatigable Selene Mills, an arts administrator with an extremely wide circle of contacts who organised annual events for many years. One significant move was the opening up of the Epiphany Party (illus.1), which still takes place annually in Beccles, Suffolk, and could be called EEMF's flagship event. It is a day for players of all renaissance wind instruments and singers, with organ continuo, at which the polychoral works of major and minor Renaissance or early Baroque composers such as Palestrina, Heinrich Schütz, Michael Praetorius, Gabrieli, Benevoli and Marenzio are given a good outing under the authoritative direction of the implacable tutor Philip Thorby, whose immense knowledge, drive and enthusiasm for this period are now legendary in Early Music circles at home and abroad. An important additional feature of the Party is the delicious lunch prepared in part to recipes of the period by Jennie Cassidy, who with husband Stephen undertook all the organisation for many years, but who now gratefully has culinary assistance from the membership in general.

Another important annual event in the 1990s and 2000s was the series of liturgical weekends in Cambridge directed by Michael Procter, an expert in renaissance polyphony, who used his own beautifully produced editions. These weekends always attracted a large crowd of a cappella singers desirous of spending a Saturday exploring some of the choral masterworks of the 16th century and at the same time preparing a Mass for liturgical performance in a local church (usually St Giles') on the Sunday morning, followed by a convivial lunch. These were managed by Selene Mills for many years, until Belinda took over and found herself acting as Michael's hostess! Another regular organiser of similar events was the late Mavis Brown, of Hook End, near Brentwood.

In addition to this, a number of themes have been explored by the forum in the 21st century. There have been workshops on Spanish and Mexican music and dance (Andrew Lawrence-King and Steve Player), opera weekends such as *La Dafne*, *L'Orfeo* and *Ruggiero* (Philip Thorby), music for recorders and viols (Margaret Westlake), medieval and traditional song (Belinda Sykes), solo and group singing masterclasses in Cambridge and Ipswich (John Potter and Richard Wistreich), Monteverdi's *Vespers* of 1610 in Norwich (Philip Thorby), a klezmer day (Ilana Cravitz and friends), a viol masterclass (Amit Tiefenbrunn), a choral workshop on Lalande (Jeffrey Skidmore), workshops on Bach and Charpentier in Suffolk (Peter Leech), Renaissance polyphony singing days (David Skinner and David Allinson), a Victoria workshop (Roger Wilkes), medieval music (Jon Banks and Belinda Sykes), weekends on Biber's *Missa Bruxellensis* and Monteverdi's *Selva Morale e Spirituale* (Philip Thorby), a new focus on singing from facsimile (John Milsom, illus.2), some small-scale events (Francis Knights, Dan Tidhar) and other events too numerous to mention. A full list can be found on the EEMF website's Events page.

Obviously the choice of events depends on many factors such as willingness of someone to organise the event, finding a suitable date and venue, and availability of a good tutor charging an affordable fee. Fortunately in the latter case there is no shortage at all! Unlike some Fora we haven't held many untutored events, but who knows, that could change.

Particularly worthy of mention is the series of baroque choral/orchestral workshops taken by Peter Holman, usually at the converted Baptist chapel that is the charming home of our member Michael Taylor (warmest thanks to him for his hospitality) in the village of Elsworth near Cambridge. This event, which ran from the 1990s to the 2010s, drew together people from all over the country for a day of cantatas, odes, operas or oratorios, often by Purcell, Handel, Draghi or Arne. This series continued for many years as it was a day where old friends were reunited in a special musical atmosphere. Visiting tutors included Catherine Mackintosh, Paul Goodwin and Gary Cooper. Eventually people began to prefer a larger, more urban location for these workshops, so the EEMF meetings there tailed off, but Peter Holman still continues with this strand in other venues.

Illus.2 John Milsom's facsimile workshop at Fitzwilliam Collee, Cambridge (March 2015)

Illus.3 EEMF/TVEMF workshop on Striggio at Waltham Abbey with Philip Thorby (May 2016)

For many years we have organised joint workshops with Thames Valley Early Music Forum at various venues such as Waltham Abbey, Essex (Philip Thorby again, illus.3) and we usually lend some assistance to TVEMF in recruiting new members at the Early Music Exhibition held every November in London. Indeed we are accustomed to seeing many members of TVEMF and other Fora at our workshops, and we are grateful for their support and hope they enjoy what's on offer.

We have also been glad to provide some financial support for Cambridge Early Music's Summer Schools (another of Selene's enterprises) in order to provide bursaries for young 'rising stars' who may not otherwise be able to take advantage of the tuition on offer there. EEMF continues to maintain an actively updated website at www.eemf.org.uk with details of our own activities, free adverts for Early Music concerts in East Anglia, a list of courses both locally and further afield, a set of interesting links, and a gallery page.

What of the future? We have faced some uncertainties in recent years due to changes in key personnel, including the retirement as Chairman of Clifford Bartlett due to illness (and his subsequent death, which has left many early musicians feeling bereft of a friend, guide and helper), the retirement of our loyal and professional Treasurer Paul Williams, and the sad death of long-serving Membership Secretary Selene Webb (Selene Mills), after many years of illness which she strove bravely to overcome. Peter Holman (illus.4) is now our Patron, and although our hard-

Illus.5 Peter Holman directs a Handel workshop in memory of Selene Webb and Christopher Hogwood, Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge (September 2015)

working Secretary Ellen Sarewitz has given way to an urge to move to a different, less flat part of the country, she is determined to continue to organise some large-scale events for EEMF remotely.

On the positive side, attendance at events is holding up well and there is a perennially healthy bank balance (although there is a bias towards holding many of the events in the west of the region, where most active members live). The committee continues to endeavour to maintain a full programme of attractive workshops and to provide a good service to the early music world of our area, but volunteers to help organise would be warmly welcomed!

Robert Johnson joined EEMF in 1999, and thanks various contributors for their reminiscences, and would be pleased to have any further comments, documents or information via webmaster@eemf.org.uk

Clifford Bartlett (1938-2019): an appreciation

Mark Windisch

Illus.1 Clifford playing organ continuo in Handel's Messiah*, directed by Peter Holman in Great St Mary's Church, Cambridge (June 2011) (Photo: Francis Knights)*

When I joined NEMA Council in 1999 Clifford Bartlett (15 August 1938-12 August 2019) (illus.1) was an active contributor just brimming with ideas. This was typical of the man. Such a wide range of knowledge and so much energy. There was no end to his ability to contribute to NEMA's activities. When Peter Holman retired from the chairmanship, Clifford was the natural successor, a great help in defining NEMA's purpose and helping us to start our current activity in arranging conferences on a variety of subjects intended to inform early music practitioners, professional and amateur of the scholarly foundations of musical practice.

The first of these was held at The University of York in 2009, and for more than a year Clifford steered the NEMA organising sub-committee to find the venue, and co-ordinate matters with The Centre for Early Music in York. He helped to draw up the programme, found appropriate contributors and chaired the conference itself in an efficient manner. This was not always easy. At one midwinter meeting when it snowed heavily, our sub-committee had to traipse through the snow from the University to the station – no buses – no taxis- only shanks's pony, and only one umbrella to share amongst three of us. Clifford never lost his sense of humour! Disappointingly, Clifford had to stand down through the unfortunate situation when his business was caught by a fraudster, and it took NEMA quite a while to recover from the loss of his guiding hand.

He had a very busy and active life outside NEMA as we all know. His magazine *Early Music Review* was much loved and admired. It was the one non-academic music journal which you could rely on to be fair and factually correct – Clifford's integrity saw to that. That is not to say it was in any way dull. Clifford's editorials were always guaranteed to bring a smile to the readers face and his occasional comments on other's writings were always full of wit and wisdom. It did not end there. His musical editions for King's Music were never other than musically correct in every detail, and much valued by everyone who has conducted or performed music using them. Those of us who knew him and worked with him will never forget him.

Reports

Society of Recorder Players National Festival

Helen Hooker

I've often wondered about the correct collective noun for recorder players. A piping? A dolce? Or perhaps a whistle of recorder players? No doubt those who were forced to learn this much maligned instrument at school would have countless less than complimentary suggestions! Whatever the right answer, such a term would have been very handy in Durham on 12-14 April 2019, as no fewer than three hundred recorder players gathered for the Society of Recorder Players' (SRP) National Festival.

Illus. 1 The magnificent St Cuthbert's Chapel, Ushaw College (Photos: Helen Hooker)

Every year a different branch of the Society hosts the Festival, bringing it close to a different population of players as it moves around the country. This year Durham and Newcastle branches banded together to run the show, and they did an exemplary job. The event took place at Ushaw College (illus.1), an architectural gem just a few miles from the centre of this historic city. Originally built as a Georgian country house, the building was massively expanded and embellished in the 19th century, most notably by Augustus Pugin. Quite aside from the musical activities during the weekend, it was a joy to be able to look around and marvel at the awe-inspiring architecture between phrases.

Traditionally, the SRP's National Festival mostly focuses on giving attendees a chance to play together, in groups of all sizes. This was certainly true this year, and a vast array of opportunities were available, for recorder players of all abilities. Conductors from all over the UK, and continental Europe too, generously gave their time to lead players through an astonishing variety of music of all styles, from Renaissance polyphony right up to the present day, with several pieces hot off the printing press. One of the joys of such events is being able to try out unfamiliar mu-

Illus.2a/b Two of the many playing sessions, conducted by Harriet Oliver and Mary Tyers

sic, often with an eye on what might be suitable to take home to one's own local consorts. Other players like to explore the expansive list of conductors (over twenty this year, illus.2a/b), picking up useful musical and technical advice through their teaching.

One of the highlights of the National Festival, for many players, is the chance to play in a large massed ensemble. Thirty years on from my first experience of massed recorders at a summer school, I still clearly remember the thrill of hearing the largest instruments, giving an undreamt-of depth to the overall sound. As a teenager at the time I was so moved by the experience I went as far as sending a postcard home to my parents to tell them! This year's massed playing, conducted by Joris Van Goethem of the Flanders Recorder Quartet, was the world premiere of Rosemary Robinson's *Dunholm Suite* (illus.3). This melodious work was perfectly matched to the occasion, and I wonder if some of the young players felt as excited as I did all those years ago, raving about it to their own parents?

As I've already hinted, this year's Festival wasn't just about playing the recorder ourselves. An impressive Fringe event ran alongside the ensembles all weekend, including concerts, masterclasses, youth workshops and competitions. It's very easy to forget to take breath during these festivals, stopping only for food and refreshments. Having access to such a variety of concerts meant one could take some time out to relax and simply listen for once.

Illus.3 Joris Van Goethem directs the world premiere of Rosemary Robinson's Dunholm Suite

Performers included seasoned professionals like Piers Adams, alongside the younger talents of ensembles such as the Boxwood Duo and Parandrus. The success of virtuosi such as Charlotte Barbour-Condini and Sophie Westbrooke (both of whom performed here, illus.4) in recent BBC Young Musician of the Year competitions has given the recorder performance world in the UK a real injection of energy and enthusiasm. It's great to see so many exciting young players coming through the UK conservatoire system.

It was easy to miss out on exciting opportunities, with such a plethora of options on offer. Two of my favourites were the masterclasses and a performance by the Tom Ridout Trio. Seeing Piers Adams and Joris Van Goethem coaxing musical and technical nuances from the performers in their masterclasses was a joy, and those in the audience learnt just as much as the players.

Illus.4 Parandrus (Sophie Westbrooke, Daniel Swani and Charlotte Barbour-Condini) performing on the Sunday

Over Sunday lunch we were serenaded by Tom Ridout (recorders), Billy Marrows (guitar) and Flo Moore (double bass) (illus.5). Tom made his style of jazz look absolutely effortless, and this combination of instruments was the perfect accompaniment to our dining. Even those early music enthusiasts in the room were catered for, with Tom's own jazz reinterpretation of Handel's well-known Recorder Sonata in F major.

Illus.5 The Tom Ridout Trio serenading us on Sunday

Another highlight of the weekend, and a new venture for the Society of Recorder Players, was the inaugural SRP Composers Competition. Dozens of composers, from around the globe, submitted six-minute-long pieces for consideration by Jonathan Dove, the Society's President. Prior to the Festival Jonathan whittled these down to a shortlist of nine compositions in two categories – Open and Under 18. During the course of the Saturday, recorder quartet Block4 rehearsed each piece in open workshop sessions, attended by Jonathan Dove and the composers, enabling them to guide Block4 on their musical vision. I only got to watch one piece in rehearsal, but it was fascinating to see how closely matched (or otherwise) Block4's interpretation matched the previsualisation of the composers.

Illus.6 Block4 in action during the Composers Competition open workshops

The purpose of this competition was to provide a raft of exciting new professional repertoire for recorder quartets. While the music may not be attainable for many of those attending the Festival, such exposure can only encourage more composers to consider the recorder a serious instrument and write new music for players of all abilities. As someone who is utterly lacking in compositional skill, it was fascinating in the final summing up to hear an open discussion about the music. Emily Bannister from Block4 gave the players' perspective, while the composers told us about their visions for the music. All this was led by Jonathan Dove, who gave many insightful and considered thoughts on the music from his perspective as a successful composer. The Open prize was awarded by Dove to Robert Fruewald for *Fast Ride in a Short Machine*, while the Under-18s prize went to James Sparkes for *Twitten*. An additional Audience Prize, judged by those who listened to the final performances, was awarded to Matthew Wootten for *Power of Five*.

I think it's fair to say that this year's SRP National Festival contained something for everyone. Huge credit must go to Mary Tyers and her team from Durham and Newcastle SRP branches for their achievement in putting on such a wonderfully varied programme. Doing so takes immense amounts of time, effort and teamwork. I loved every minute of the Festival and spent the journey home reliving the many musical highlights of the weekend. The 2020 Festival will take place in Ipswich, hosted by the Suffolk branch of the Society, between 17 and 19 April. Further details will be available at www.srp.org.uk/national-festival in due course.

Friends of Square Pianos study day

Francis Knights

Illus.1 The instrument display (Photos: Francis Knights)

The third of the annual meetings of the Friends of Square Pianos (http://www.friendsofsquarepianos.co.uk) took place on 13 April 2019 at Chelveston near Wellingborough, and was expertly organized by David Hackett in the usual format: a lively and informal gathering of about 45 players, makers, collectors, scholars and enthusiasts, with a mixture of talks and instrument demonstrations (by volunteer performers), plus an instrument exhibition and a 'shop'. The previous two events had focused on the spinet and on the clavichord, and this year the theme was 'restoration': what are the appropriate goals, materials and issues, and when might it be justified and when not.

The 16 instruments displayed (illus.1) were all brought along by the participants, and included a mix of originals, copies in historic style and 'revival' keyboards. They included clavichords by Karin Richter and Robert Goble, virginals by Morley (rebuilt by Olaf Van Hees in an ornate outer case, illus.2), spinets by Edward Blunt (1704), Archibald Pringle (1775), Dolmetsch, David Hackett, Mark Stevenson and John Storrs, and square pianos by Christopher Ganer (1777) (illus.3), Adam Beyer (1782), Longman & Broderip and Southwell. The generosity of owners in bringing antiques to this event is, as ever, to be warmly commended.

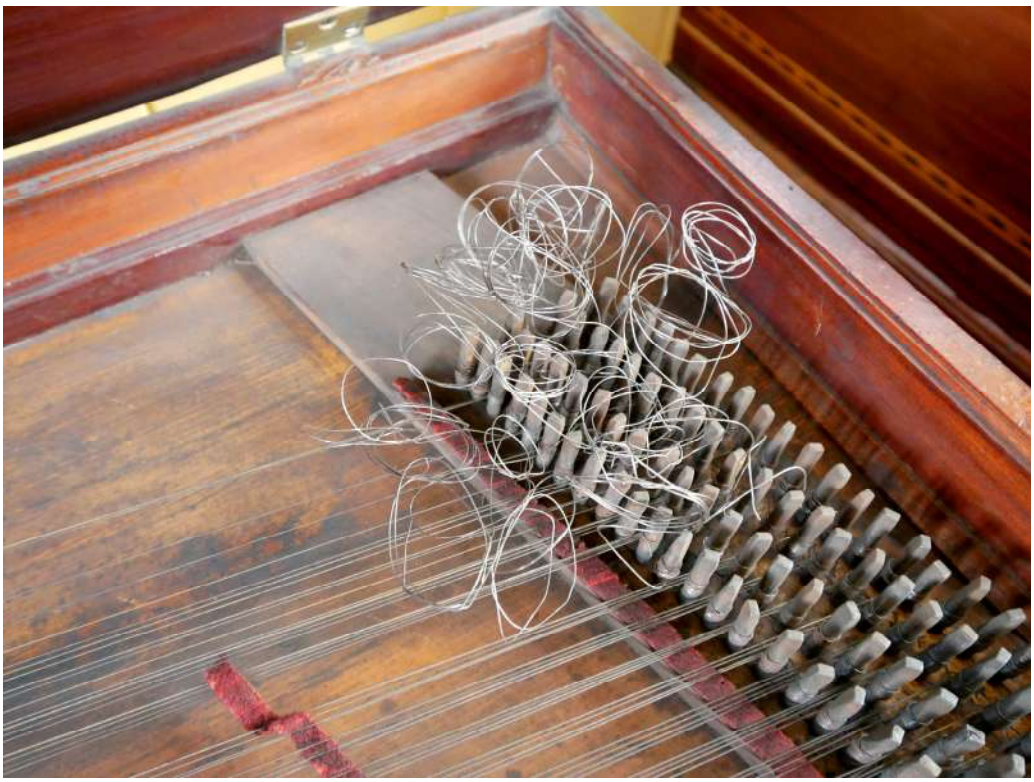
Illus.2 Virginals by Morley, rebuilt by Olaf Van Hees

Supported by many contributions from the instrument owners and expert comments from the floor, the main talks were given by David Hunt (illus.4), Olaf Van Hees and Lucy Coad, raising such issues such as the use of ivory within the new CITES regulations, appropriate action cloth

Illus.3 Square piano by Christopher Ganer (1777)

Illus.4 Talk by David Hunt

and string material, quilling choices, pitch standards, and the difference between conservation and restoration. Square pianos were the main subject, as there are still many available in un-restored form which could be put back into playing condition, and how and whether this should be done depends on many factors; Lucy Coad made a strong case that some instruments at least should be left untouched (illus.5).



Illus.5 Square piano, original condition

International Colloquium: 'The Musette, a court instrument, a short (lived) instrument'

Amanda Babington

The above title is possibly not the best translation of the French title of this conference, held at Université de Rouen on 27-29 May 2019, but it more or less sums up the theme of the conference, only the second Musette conference ever to be held. The Musette is a bellows-blown bagpipe with a double chanter (the *grand* and *petit chalumeaux*), whose closest living relatives are the Northumbrian pipes and the Uillean pipes. Popularised by Louis XIV, the Musette's life as a high-art instrument was short-lived. Compositions for it date from c.1640 to 1780. Thereafter it lay forgotten until the 1960s when Remi Dubois, Jean-Christophe Maillard and Jean-Pierre van Hees set about remaking it and rediscovering its repertoire and function.

Since then, Remi Dubois has made a number of Musettes, and trained a few apprentices in the art of making these beautiful instruments. Jean-Christophe sadly passed away suddenly in 2015, but he and Jean-Pierre both introduced the instrument to a number of brave musicians. That said, the Musette world is still very small and everyone knows (or knows of) everyone else. The majority of players come to Musette via their own regional bagpipes (the majority are French or Belgian), and perhaps because of this it tends to be the makers – rather than the players – who continue to carry out what we might term 'serious' musicological (or organological) research. However, because of the part played by the Musette in 18th century French culture, there is also a sub-set of musicologists whose research strays slightly to include the Musette, often in the realm of iconography. But what really bound together all of the participants at the colloquium was a shared delight in this beautiful instrument.

Held in the Université de Rouen, the colloquium lasted three days. The theme of the first day was organology and iconography, and the colloquium began with an outline from the guest of honour, Remi Dubois, of the work that he, Jean-Christophe and Jean-Pierre had carried out in reconstructing the instrument from museum copies. While several examples exist in relatively good repair (for example, in the Musical Instruments Museum in Brussels and in the Bagpipe Museum in Morpeth, Northumbria), the problem lay in constructing reeds that made them playable. Some of the later models of Musettes, such as the Musette de Lissieu, had six drones, each with a reed, in addition to the two reeds of the chalumeaux. Musette reeds look similar to Baroque oboe reeds, but their dimensions vary considerably according to different models of Musette. Musettes made by Hotteterre (for example) differed greatly to those of Chédeville. The advantage of Musette reeds over Baroque oboes reeds, however, is that they don't get wet and so should last for around ten years (as long as they aren't dropped).

Following Remi's introduction, Florence Gétreau (CNRS, Institut de Recherche en Musicologie, Paris) explored and summarised Musette research of the last 25 years, with an extremely useful bibliographical list of publications, the authors of which were almost all present in the room. Ending with a question about where research into the Musette should lead next, she set the scene for the next event, which was a presentation given by the class of François Lazarevitch, director of Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien, and professor of Flute and Musette at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Versailles.

More live music occurred after lunch when Éric Montbel (Université Aix-Marseille) presented us with the amazing results of the last ten years' of his work, spent reconstructing the Sourdelline, the 'Italian cousin' of the Musette. There to play this resplendent instrument was Marco Tomassi (illus.1), who explained later to me that all they had to do now was to rediscover the Sourdelline's repertoire. The Sourdelline was contextualised amongst its relatives the Uillean

Illus.1 Marco Tomassi playing the Sourdelline

pipes and Musettes de Béchonnet by Jean-Yves Rauline (CeRedl, Université de Rouen), before the afternoon moved onto a study of the Musette in iconography in a fascinating and beautifully illustrated paper by Pauline Randonneix (École du Louvre, Paris).

Based in Limoges, Nicolas Rouzier's skills as a maker of fine Musettes were put to good use in an in-depth study of the Musette's bellows, their various types of construction and historical function. And our knowledge of the instrument was further added to by Vincent Robin's (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris) excellent explanation and illustration of the different sizes of Musette that make up the Musette family. The day's theme was expounded (at some length) at a round table session but participants were re-energised by a massed play-in (illus.2) before the day ended with a reception.

Day two began with my own paper (illus.3), in which I explored the function and repertoire of the Musette at the Stuart Court in exile in Rome. Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) is reputed to have owned two Musettes, one of which can be seen in the Instrument Museum at Fort William, the other of which is part of the National Collection, Scotland. Vincent Robin's second paper of the conference followed, in which he presented his study of the Musette-playing Garden designer, Simon Charles Boutin (1720-94). Boutin probably played much of the repertoire detailed in the following paper by Dominique Paris, who has spent many years tracing and cataloguing Musette repertoire out of copyright and therefore available to freely download. Dominique very kindly offered to share his downloaded repertoire with anyone who wished a copy, thus illustrating the generosity of spirit that pervaded the entire colloquium. We were treated to further live music that morning, with a demonstration of repertoire for Musette duo given by members of the Bourdon Collectief, Pieterjan van Kerckhoven and Bart van Troyen. This was followed by an illustration by L'Ensemble Chédeville of the sort of music that the large market of amateur Musette players might have enjoyed.

Illus.2 The massed play-in

Patrick Blanc (Académie Supérieure de Musique, Strasbourg) was another contributor whose research is so extensive that it covered two papers. The first was an in-depth exploration of Lully's use of the Musette, complete with beautiful contemporary engravings showing the Musette portrayed in various scenes. His second paper – presented with Marie-Ange Petit, percussionist in Les Arts Florissant – concerned the close connection of Musette and percussion, and examined how both instruments used a variety of articulation to portray the same effects. Thomas Leconte's (Centre de Musique Baroque, Versailles) paper actually used some of the imagery as Patrick Blanc's first paper. But his eloquent discussion of the place of Musette in court ballets and divertissements in the 17th century complemented Patrick's paper very neatly. In the

Illus.3 The author with her Daniel de Coudignac Musette

midst of these papers was Joann Élart (GRHIS, Université de Rouen), who provided a slightly odd but nonetheless welcome departure by examining how early 19th century piano music picked up on the Musette's pastoral heritage in its adoption of the title Musette for romance-style movements. The day ended with another round table, this time discussing whether extant Musette repertoire suggests that it was more of an instrument of the artistic elite, or an instrument of the amateur players. Much evidence exists in support of both arguments, and the round table finished just in time to allow delegates to make their way into the centre of Rouen to hear a concert of music by Jacques Hotteterre given by Les Musiciens de Saint Julien (illus.4). Presumably the church venue dictated the inclusion of the organ and organist but it was a little odd to hear a first half at A440, with music by Zipoli, Pachelbel, Bach and Couperin. Perhaps if the church had been a little warmer, or the benches a little less hard, the effect would not have been quite so noticeable. In any event, it was a very pleasurable way to spend the evening.

François Lazarevitch (Les Musiciens de Saint Julien) was up bright and early the next morning to begin the final day of colloquium with a paper detailing the expressive role played by articulation in Musette repertoire. This was of particular interest to me because, as a recorder player, I am used to using breath and tonguing to articulate passages. However, neither of these are options for the Musette. Too much or too little air has a negative effect on pitch, and the instrument is not mouth-blown. All of the articulation therefore has to come from the length of time the fingers spend on the keys. However, there is a further twist. Because the Musette – like most bagpipes – operates using a closed system of fingering, the articulation actually depends not on the length of time spent on the notes you see before you on the page but on the length of time spent on the 'fundamental' note to which you return between each single note. A final (similarly lengthy) round table provided the conclusion to the formal part of the colloquium, with an appropriately lively discussion of what research perspectives should now be pursued and what the future holds for the Musette in terms of its integration into the musical landscape. No conclusions were reached but there are many avenues to be explored, for this is a movement still in its infancy.

Illus.4 Les Musiciens de Saint Julien

Delegates had the option of following a guided, bagpipe-themed tour of Rouen that afternoon, which included the amazing Saint Joan of Arc church, built in 1979 on the site of her martyrdom. The church looks from the outside rather like a Hobbit house, but inside is closer to a large ship (albeit upside down, the roof resembling the beams of a ship). And the 13 panels of stained-glass windows are 16th century, removed from the church of Saint Vincent in Rouen just before the Second World War as a precaution. At the top of

Illus.5 16th century stained-glass image of a shepherd bagpiper, originally from the church of Saint Vincent, Rouen

one can be seen a tiny but perfect image of a shepherd, playing his bagpipe (illus.5).

The care taken by the conveners of this colloquium, and the Musette's French heritage, was further displayed by the closing evening's events. These began in the small garden of Rouen Cathedral, with an outdoor mini-concert of music by Jackob van Eyck shared by Musettes (played by students of François Lazarevitch) and the carillon of the Cathedral. A public concert, it attracted an audience of all ages, which was then led 100 metres down the street by a small group of players of the traditional bagpipes of the region, Central French pipes. Once at the Joan of Arc Museum, we were led into a beautiful ballroom rarely open to the public and the rest of the evening was spent being taught 17th century contredanse, accompanied by Musettes, *vielles* (or hurdy-gurdys in English), recorders and violas da gamba, many of the players of which were also in costume (illus.6).

The majority of those with interests in the Musette live in France and Belgium, and although there are one or two small pockets of players and makers (for example in and around Leuven, Belgium) this Colloquium provided a unique opportunity to begin and continue conversations about research, development and future projects. There is a plan to hold another Colloquium in four years' time. Let's hope that it will still be possible for those of us from the UK to participate in such essential cultural exchange.

Illus.6 The Baroque ball

VIII Nordic Historical Keyboard Festival

Anna Maria McElwain

The eighth Nordic Historical Keyboard Festival in Kuopio, Finland, on 21–29 May 2019, offered 20 events, most of them focusing on the clavichord. It was also a pleasant tour of the local history and architecture of Kuopio, with concerts in as many as 13 exciting venues around the city, even though several favourite venues were under construction. The Festival takes place in Kuopio, a town – it is said – with more clavichords and clavichordists per head than anywhere else in the world. Definitely there are more clavichord recitals in Kuopio yearly than anywhere else, with a nice audience of people who have been awed by the instrument. It may be that the quiet intimacy of the clavichord suits the Finnish temperament especially well.

The Festival opened with two clavichord recitals in the chapel of Kuopio Cathedral. It is a tiny space with wonderful acoustics for the clavichord, but unfortunately there are never enough seats for all who want to attend. The first recital was played by Eija Virtanen (Finland) with a program including Buxtehude, J. S. and C. P. E. Bach, Haydn, Anna Bon and James Hewitt. Last year an International Clavichord Composition Competition was arranged by the Festival, and Gabriele Toia (Italy), the winner of that competition, performed in his recital that evening his winning piece *Tamutmutef*, which was inspired by the story of an Egyptian princess. Toia begun with Sweelinck, Froberger and Clementi, improvising toccatas and preludes in between, and concluded with Bartók, Chick Corea and Antonio Zambrini, an Italian composer working with jazz genres.

I have tried to include interdisciplinary performances in the programme of the Festival for several years already. 22 May was an exciting day for me since I had the opportunity to combine clavichord with black-light theatre, which had amazed me on a visit to Prague years earlier. Performing together with Manda Konttinen (Finland) we did three performances of music by Mozart played by me wearing white gloves. Being in a black-box theater and having ultraviolet lights one could only see my hands and my scores. Manda's performance was filled with all kinds objects which glowed from the darkness: baby boots, high-heeled shoes, a veil, skirt, blouse, white feathers... all which had an adventure with the music. The three performances had attracted the attention of local kindergartens and schools, and I was excited to present the clavichord to over 400 children during the day, in addition to the usual adult audience. And they all said they liked it!

Illus.1 Duet recitals

The same evening five of us, Mads Damlund (straight from the airport), Albert Mühlböck, Gabriele Toia, Eija Virtanen and me performed at the Old Kuopio Museum with two clavichords situated in front of an unplayable square piano. In pairs we performed pieces on two clavichords (illus.1), such as a Bach concerto, Christian Heinrich Müller (edition by Gabriele Toia), Handel, and J. C. Bach, the latter on one instrument four hands. The Old Kuopio Museum consists of a block of eleven wooden houses from the late 1700s to the late 1800s. Again, the audi-

Illus.3 Mads Damlund, with Anna Maria McElwain

ence was packed tightly and spread into several rooms.

On the following day we returned to the chapel of Kuopio Cathedral. Albert Mühlböck (Austria/Taiwan) played a programme combining Bach and Mozart on clavichord. The evening recital in St Peter's Chapel in Kuopio old cemetery was preceded by a guided botanical tour of the cemetery. Mads Damlund (Denmark) took the audience, as he said in his introduction (illus.2), on a musical journey to Copenhagen at the end of the 18th century, a time when the clavichord was immensely popular there. Even today, the largest number of clavichords built by the Hass family can be found in Copenhagen. At the centre of attention of the thriving musical culture was the Opera. That flamboyant world may seem distant to the quiet, introvert clavichord, but one may be surprised to learn that in this pre-Wagnerian time the opera owned more than 20 clavichords, used for study and rehearsals by the singers. Only around 1820 did the opera acquire a pianoforte. The programme, played with great virtuosity and lightness, consisted of music by composers connected to the Royal Danish Opera: Naumann, Kunzen, Schulz and Mozart.

The first recital of 24 May concentrated on female composers. I played works by Marianna Martinez, Maria Teresa d'Agnesi, Anna Bon, Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre, Sophia Westenholz, and the second prize-winner of last year's clavichord composition competition, Alissa Duryee's *Forager's Journal*. The recital was held in the Alava church, which has been described as representing the dignified brutalism of concrete (this 1960s church is considered the ugliest building in town). The evening recital was held in the beautifully painted congregational hall of Kuopio Orthodox Church, quite a contrast to greyness of the earlier venue. Jan Weinhold (Germany) played a very appropriate program in front of the beautiful iconostases: the keyboard version of Haydn's *Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross*, played naturally on the clavichord (illus.3).

The first one of the three recitals on May 26 was interdisciplinary, with me playing Bach's sixth Partita and Tiina Saraiaho's (Finland) meditative dance at the Central Lutheran Congregational Hall. The two later recitals were at St Joseph's Church, a beautiful wooden building erected in 1912. It was formerly Lutheran and currently houses the Catholic congregation of Kuopio. Päivi Vesalainen and Janne Malinen (Finland) performed a very pleasant recital for a full audience. St Joseph's used to be a very popular concert church, but since currently there is hardly any concert activity

Illus.3 Jan Weinhold clavichord recital

there people rush to it whenever they have the chance. This was also the first ever clavichord-guitar duo heard at the Festival: Malinen played a guitar from the Romantic period (Panormo 1828). The programme included music by Aguado y Garcia, J. S. Bach, Weiss, and Graham Lynch. In the evening recital Jan Weinhold played in his deeply emotional style a transcription of the Bach Chaconne, C. P. E. Bach's *Fantasia in F# minor*, Müthel, W. F. Bach and Beethoven.

On May 27 Albert Mühlböck gave a Russian themed recital at Kuopio Town Hall. The first half of was played on the clavichord, with composers such as Trutovsky, Palschau, Hässler, Glinka and the Finnish-born Thomas Byström. The second half with Skriabin and Rachmaninov was played on the modern piano. Heli Kantola (Finland) performed at Kuopio Old Parsonage, the oldest building in Kuopio (1776). Her program of Haydn, Sweelinck and Pasquini was concluded with Mussorgky's 'Dance of the Unhatched Chicks', which was surprisingly delightful to hear on the clavichord. The third recital of the day was the only recital without clavichord: Dóra Pétery (Hungary) touched the hearts of her audience first by singing the choral 'Es ist das Heil uns kommen her' and then playing Matthias Weckmann's variations on the chorale. With the Bach Passacaglia C minor it was indeed a recital to remember.

The festival offered also two public lectures. The first one on May 28th was given by Dr Claus Köppel (Germany) on the topic 'The Life and Death of J.S. Bach from the Point of View of Medicine'. The lecture at Kuopio Town Hall was followed by Esther Yae Ji Kim's (Korea/ Australia) recital of Bach and Beethoven. The evening recital was at the Kuopio Art Museum. Dóra Pétery and Mónika Tóth (Hungary) performed Anton Zimmermann's six sonatas for keyboard and violin obbligato. It was pleasant for the exhausted Festival organizer to sit at the back of the art exhibition, a display with the topic of motion, and just enjoy the music. After a full day it was only natural that performers wanted to spend the late evening at a lakeside cottage, enjoying the heat of the sauna and a dip into the nearly-freezing water, a treat frequently offered to the bravest Festival guests.

Illus.4 Esther Yae Ji Kim, Heli Kantola, Albert Mühlböck and Anna Maria McElwain: four players at one clavichord

On the last day of the festival Esther Yae Ji Kim presented parts of her doctoral dissertation written for the University of Sydney, with the title *The Clavichord Revival in England, the U.S., and Finland: Exploring the concept of cantabile and legato in clavichord playing.* After the lecture I played yet another interdisciplinary recital with the topic When the Rowan Blossoms. It consisted of pieces on the clavichord with nature titles from composers such as Byrd, Sweelinck, Couperin, Leonardo Coral, Jean Sibelius (a premier of his *Tree Suite*, a piano piece, on the clavichord), Chopin, a rerun of Alissa Duryee's *Forager's Journal* and Beethoven's *Sonata Pastorale.* I had combined a slide show of nature photography, with Albert Mühlböck kindly assisting at the computer. The idea of the recital came during my personal combat with environmental anxiety, which is a concept more often experienced than talked about. With more trees being cut down than is

good for the world I wanted take a stand against it, and at the same time portray the beauty of nature and music inspired by it. The recital was concluded with scenes of aggressive forestry which were accompanied by silence. The final recital took place at one of Kuopio's old wooden buildings, the former bishop's residence, which now houses Kuopio's Design Academy. The audience was delighted to hear two clavichords in Mozart's Sonata in D major, as well as Mozart and Beethoven duos. In the end the performers, Albert Mühlböck, Heli Kantola, Esther Yae Ji Kim and myself surprised the listeners by transforming W. F. E. Bach's 'Das Deryblatt' into a piece for four players (illus.4).

The historical keyboard instruments used in the concerts were a five-octave unfretted Specken-Svensson clavichord by HansErik Svensson belonging to the Sibelius Academy, another Specken-Svensson by Stig Lundmark owned by me, a fretted clavichord by Thomas McElwain and a Baroque-style organ with 25 registers by Verschueren Orgelbouw.

The Nordic Historical Keyboard Festival is an excellent opportunity to meet other clavichord-lovers, to hear music from the 1500s to World Premieres in exciting performances, or to fall in love with the clavichord, if one has not already done so. We are already looking towards 2020, with its emphasis on the Beethoven Jubilee. In addition to a clavichord experience, we promise beautiful surroundings of lakes and forests, with hikes into the nature preservation area of Puijo.

The Bach-Fest, Leipzig

Stephen Roe

The 20th Leipzig Bach-Fest, 14-23 June 2019, the second under the aegis of the dynamic Intendant Michael Maul, was the first with new president of the Bach-Archiv, Ton Koopman, who succeeded Sir John Eliot Gardiner earlier this year. Almost alone among major festivals, the Bach-Fest is run by an academic institution, the Archiv, on behalf of the city of Leipzig, and is a showcase for the latest research and discoveries. An essential element in the artistic life of the city, it is strongly supported by local organisations such as the Leipzig Sparkasse. As a result, 25 per cent of the concerts are free to the public. Over the first weekend a large stage dominates the central Markt, where a wide range of music and events are enjoyed by relaxed audiences sipping beer, eating sausages and ice cream until late. Other performances take place at the main station, the former city swimming pool and the zoo. The main locations for concerts are the Thomaskirche and Nikolaikirche, places where Bach worked and performed; and the Gewandhaus (apart from this year when it was closed for repairs). The Thomanerchor and Gewandhaus Orchestra are the most regular performers, alongside other local musicians, ensembles and organisations. The Aula Paulinum, a new university and ecclesiastical building on the site of the Bach church of St Paul's, wantonly destroyed in the DDR, is an exciting and attractive soundspace. Other music venues such as the Haus Leipzig, Kupfersaal and Salles de Pologne, are more problematic. The beautiful Salles de Pologne lack air conditioning: windows must be thrown open in the stifling summer heat, and street sounds distract the audience and performers. The weather this year was indeed hot, with temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius. Concerts also take place in a range of other churches around the city centre.

The Fest is also a showcase for German and international performers and ensembles, including Sir András Schiff, Jordi Savall, Pierre Hantaï, Isabelle Faust, Andreas Staier, Herbert Blomstedt, Andreas Scholl, Kristian Bezuidenhout (the artist in residence), Vox Luminis and Solomon's Knot collective. Leipzig attracted visitors to the festival from over 40 countries and from every continent - except Antarctica (as Michael Maul informed us in one of the opening speeches). Over 40,000 tickets were sold, the visitors and locals enjoying a festival that is didactic, serious, sometimes challenging, mostly approachable and fun. The festival celebrates Bach, his family and friends, his forebears and successors in over 150 events, during which more than 200 of Johann Sebastian's works are performed. Each year has a different theme. The mood of the Fest is generous and catholic, allowing audiences to experience all aspects of the composer in differing performance styles, Bach on the piano, harpsichord, clavichord, organ and even in some years on the marimba - ranging from the apparently authentic to the modern performance practice of the largeish RIAS chamber choir and Gewandhaus Orchestra. Metal as well as gut strings abound. Jazz and pop approaches are also strongly represented, most memorably this year with Uri Caine's Septet in a concert entitled 'Goldberg re-imagined'. It is very different from snootier, less intellectual international festivals, with their celebrity Intendants, celebrity singers and conventional programmes; and the tickets are relatively cheap.

The changes between the Gardiner and Koopman eras are already visible. The dynamic, patrician, buccaneering John Eliot, his eyes directed more towards the Gewandhaus than the churches, has been succeeded by the lively, but more self-effacing harpsichordist Koopman. We can expect more chamber concerts, more intimacy, reticence and subtlety than perhaps in previous years. One of the most touching concerts in this Bach-Fest celebrated the presentation of the Leipzig Bach Medal to the singer Klaus Mertens, who sang the bass parts in all Koopman's complete Bach cantata recordings, an astonishing feat. Mertens and Koopman performed vocal and harpsichord music by the Bach family. But the most memorable moments were the moving

speeches given by Koopman (who conjectured that Bach himself may have sung some of his own bass arias) and Mertens, friends and colleagues for forty years and superb artists. In the new era, let's hope Gardiner will also return to Leipzig. During his tenure he conducted many memorable concerts, not least participating in three of the 'Bach Cantata "Ring"' performances in 2018. His spontaneous conducting of the audience in an encore of the chorale 'Wachet auf', which can still be seen on YouTube, won many hearts.

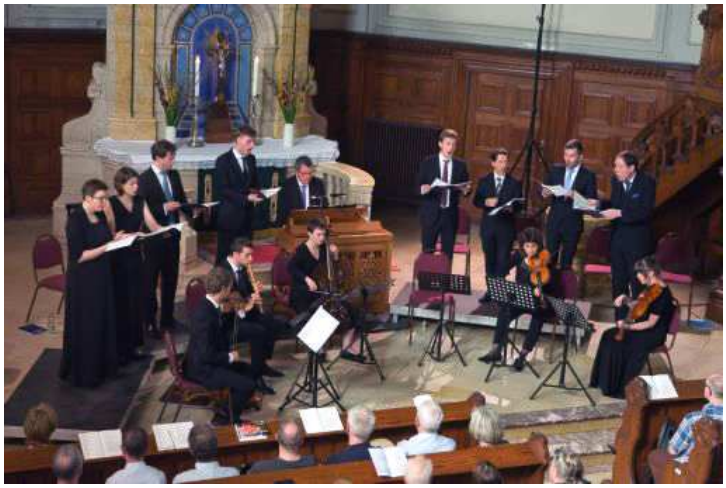
The Festival always opens with a lavish concert combining church and state, customarily beginning with an organ work by Bach followed by speeches of welcome to visiting ambassadors, local politicians, captains of industry and local worthies. Saxon politics are currently turbulent, with the Afd more popular than in many other places, and even the old Communists finding favour. Oberbürgermeister Jung (SPD) has stubbornly resisted the rise of such monsters, making defiant speeches in his role as President of the Council of City Mayors. Old rivalries between Dresden and Leipzig are thinly concealed, and Jung managed to give a few (friendly) digs at the visiting Dresden-based Saxon prime minister Michael Kretzschmer (CDU). The theme of the festival was 'Hofcompositeur Bach' - Bach the Court Composer, featuring music written for Weimar, Köthen and, of course, Dresden. Leipzig, lacking a court, played second fiddle this year. An exhibition in the Bach Museum complemented the theme, with the loan from Berlin of a fragment of the original manuscript of the Brandenburg Concertos. Although on display for little more time than the duration of the Festival, the presence of this great and immensely valuable manuscript was a real coup.

Illus 1 The Thomanerchor (photos: BachFest Leipzig)

Weimar and Köthen predominated, the former memorably represented by most of the cantatas composed there in four concerts over three days performed by widely differing ensembles. The Thomaner (lllus 1), the finest school choir in the world, kicked off the mini-series with a splendid concert on home ground, the cantata *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* BWV21 being the high point. We all assembled next day on Saturday 22 June in the Schloss Kapelle, Weissenfels, where the Ricercar Consort and soloists performed five cantatas, invisible to the audience. Perched high in the organ loft, three stories above us, they suggested how the cantatas might have sounded when first presented in the 'Himmelsburg', Weimar. For this listener, five cantatas in one concert is at least one too many. The performances, with a minimum number of singers and using the 17th-century organ, were a bit shapeless, sometimes wanting in tuning and ensemble. There is a great danger of production-line performances in cantata marathons: one piece over, now on with the next. Such marathons, though interesting and fun, are profoundly inauthentic: each work was written for a single performance within the context of a church service with time for reflection and contemplation, during and afterwards. This is not possible when the cantatas are closely pressed together.

The third and fourth concerts were more successful. The RIAS Choir provided more than satisfactory performances of three Weimar cantatas, adding 'Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring' as an encore. The four cantatas by Vox Luminis on the afternoon of Sunday 23 June in the 19th century Michaeliskirche was perhaps the high point of the festival, certainly for vocal music. A group of eight soloists led discreetly by founder Lionel Meunier and a small group of instrumentalists.

This hugely enjoyable concert, where four cantatas paradoxically did not seem enough, contained numerous exquisite moments, many of them in the contributions of Alexander Chance (alto), son of Michael, who sang radiantly in *Himmelskönig, sei willkommen* BWV182; and the tenor Magnus Dietrich, who has a great career in prospect. He has a big voice for an early music singer. Perhaps one day he will be the Siegfried we are all waiting for; he is a very exciting young singer.



Illus 2 Solomon's Knot

Earlier in the week the Solomon's Knot collective (Illus 2), a title worthy of *Private Eye*'s Pseuds' Corner, received high praise for their *St John Passion* (1725 version) in the Nikolaikirche. I was unable to attend but watched the video recording issued by the Bach-Archiv. While musical standards are high, with some beautiful singing, the self-conscious posturing of this group, à la Peter Sellars, with meaningful glances, choreographed movement and informal, 'cool' garb, failed to draw out my inner hipster. Bach's passions have no need to be overlaid with an additional psychodrama devised by the performers. Less is more here. The arduous role of the Evangelist was shared between two tenors, unsurprising given that all the choral and solo parts were covered by only eight singers. This wonderful revision of the *St John Passion*, so different from the original as to seem at times almost a new work, begins with the chorus 'O Mensch bewein' dein' Sünde gross', later used in the St Matthew, which propels the work on a new trajectory. It deserves to be heard more frequently.

Illus 3 András Schiff

Sir András Schiff (Illus 3), a regular and most welcome visitor to the Bach Fest, usually provides a blockbuster event. In recent years he has played all the French Suites in one concert and, another year, the Italian Concerto, French Overture and the Diabelli Variations. This time he performed all six keyboard partitas, reordered, in the sequence G major, A minor, B flat major, C minor, D major and E minor, in two unequal halves, the last two partitas alone in the second half. It was a hot and stormy evening; the hall, the Haus Leipzig, once a Soviet Intourist building in DDR times named Hotel Antifa a paltry substitute for the Gewandhaus. The noisy air-conditioning had to be switched off for the duration. Though the audiences sweltered in their shirtsleeves, Schiff exuded a cucumber-cool calm, his playing, on his own 1960s Steinway, exalted, clarifying the most complex textures, making them sound as if they were almost playable by the rest of us. He is the most gifted Bach performer of our age, and it is to be hoped that he will resume his annual visits to the Bach Fest, but in a better and more congenial venue.

If Schiff's concert was a sublime lesson in musical taste and judgement, another didactic element of the Festival was revealed in the concert of Vivaldi string concertos alongside their organ arrangements by Bach. The string playing of La Cetra Barockorchester, Basel, directed by Andrea Marcon, was ferocious, the soloist Chouchane Siranossian in particular taking no hostages with her fiery, direct, passionate performances. Vivaldi's music can take this pummelling, but this listener wanted more poetry and contrast. The organist Jörg Halubek could not compete with this string onslaught against which Bach's wonderful organ transcriptions sounded, unfairly, somewhat weedy. More enjoyable was the passion oratorio of Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel (1690-1749), *Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld*, performed by the Rheinischer Kantorei and das Kleine Konzert, under Hermann Max. Bach himself programmed this work in Leipzig in 1734 and in the following years performed a complete cycle of Stölzel's church cantatas. The composer is known now only for the lovely aria 'Bist du bei mir', found in 'Anna Magdalenas Notenbuch'. Written out in her hand, it was once regarded as work by Johann Sebastian (BWV508). The sweet lyricism of the aria pervades the oratorio, which follows a strict pattern of chorale, recitative mostly in two parts, the first containing the narrative, followed by a reflection, and then an aria. It lacks the variety and searing drama of Bach's passions, but is effective in a modest way: the penultimate movement an impressive, uncharacteristically complex lament which seems to anticipate Gluck. It was an extremely rewarding evening.

A similar novelty was Reinhard or Gottfried Keiser's *Markus Passion*, performed by the Ricercar Consort under Philippe Pierlot, here on better form on the terra firma of the Paulinum, Leipzig than high up in the Schloss Kapelle, Weissenfels. Once again this was a work known and revered by Johann Sebastian Bach, and performed by him in Weimar and again in Leipzig in 1726, between his own St John (1724 and 1725) and St Matthew passions (1727). It was well worth a hearing. There is dispute about the authorship, with some scholars (including the present writer), plumping for Reinhard Keiser (1674-1739), the prolific author of operas for Hamburg; and others in favour of his little-known father Gottfried, who died before 1732. The question of authorship divided the learned scholars of the Bach-Archiv. In her programme note Christine Blanken definitively rules out Reinhard, but the Festival Programme leaves the authorship open.

This dispute inadvertently reflected a sub-theme of the Festival, relating to other historical quarrels. Visitors to the Bach-Fest over the past years cannot be unaware of the 500th anniversary of Luther pinning his theses on the church door in Wittenberg in 1517 and subsequent events. In 2019 we commemorated Luther's celebrated disputation which took place in Leipzig in the early summer of 1519, where he and his rebellious Wittenberg colleagues faced the fierce opposition of Johannes Eck, rector of the university of Ingolstadt in theological debate. A concert pitted two vocal groups, the Calmus Ensemble and Amarcord, both excellent Leipzig ensembles, performing some music probably heard during the disputation, notably the splendid 12-part mass of Antoine Brumel. The concert also contained rather shocking songs and church works, some condemning Luther, others against the pope. The *Streit* was audibly depicted with one ensemble chanting the Te Deum on the high altar of St Thomas's Church, with angry Lutherans singing simultaneously against them at the back of the church. Some of the texts, including the spoof Lutheran chorale 'Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deiner Wurst', still leave a nasty taste in the mouth.

Other contests were less contentious affairs ,with Ton Koopman and Andreas Staier pitting Louis Marchand and Bach against each other in the Stadtbad, late night on Sunday evening and Kristian Bezuidenhout on fire in the Familienduell concert, featuring keyboard music by J. S., W. F. and C. P. E. Bach, also late night in the Alte Börse. Bezuidenhout had already delighted us in a concert with the Freiburger Barockorchester in C. P. E.Bach's Keyboard Concerto in D minor, Wq.17. The Fifth Brandenburg Concerto in the same concert was less assured, the harpsichord largely overwhelmed by the orchestra.

There was no family duel in the B minor Mass, which always ends the Festival in the Thomaskirche. This year David Stern conducted his Opera Fuoco orchestra led by his wife, Katharina Wolff, whose violin solo in the 'Laudamus Te', was especially memorable. This time the Tölzer Knabenchor was the choir, the tenor and bass parts supplied by alumni, a contrast with the Thomaner, where the lower parts are sung by the senior schoolboys. The rich, fruity, Italianate sound of the Bavarian choir is not to everyone's taste, but certainly to mine. Stern placed the singers in front of the orchestra, creating an admirable balance with the orchestra in the tricky acoustics of the Thomaskirche (Illus 4). The southern-European sound of the choir chimed with the conductor's more operatic feel to the music. The starry soloists included Andreas Scholl, one of the great singers of our time. He is now in the autumn of his career and it occasionally showed. But he is a magnificent artist, musician and singer and it was a pleasure to hear him. This was one of the most enjoyable and thoughtful performances of the B minor mass I have heard.

Illus 4 The Thomaskirche, from the gallery

Not even the most avid Bach-lover could attend even half the scheduled events, concerts, talks, seminars and groups which peppered the ten days of the Fest. All major concerts had introductions in German and English by noted Bach authorities. Almost every day there was a trip out in coaches to various shrines associated with Bach or his circle, including to Freiberg to hear two of the four Silbermann organs there. Hardly a day passed without a lecture or a round-table on Bach. On the second Friday of the Festival there was a question-and-answer session, where Bach Agony Aunts and Uncles answered previously submitted queries on the composer. One question I might have submitted is, how can one get tickets for next year's Fest? The theme is 'Bach: We are Family', which will feature music by the wider Bach family, in some cases performed by the present-day 'Bach family': all the Bach-societies around the world have been invited to participate in the 2020 festival and 48 have been accepted from places as far apart as Malaysia and Paraguay. Perhaps the Paraguayan harp and panpipes will join the marimba at next year's Bachfest?

News & Events

NEWS

Dame **Emma Kirkby** has received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2019 Gramophone Awards

Sir **Roger Norrington** received the 2019 International Heinrich Schütz Musikpreis

The 2019 Leipzig Bach Medal has been awarded to singer **Klaus Mertens**

Dr **Mike Baldwin** has been awarded the 2019 Terence Pamplin Award for Organology

Edmund Aldhouse has been appointed Organist of Ely Cathedral

Matthew Martin has been appointed Director of Music at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge

The **Riemenschneider Bach Institute** is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2019

The **Cornell Center for Historical Keyboards** has a new location at 726 University Avenue, Ithaca, New York

The 1738 double-manual harpsichord by **Joseph Mahoon** from the Colt Collection has been acquired by Gainsborough's House in Sudbury, Suffolk

Resonus Classics have announced the launch of a new early music label, Inventa Records

Francis Knights completed his 30-concert series of the entire **Fitzwilliam Virginal Book** with a Byrd harpsichord recital at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, on 20 October 2019

The Ninth **Mae and Irving Jurow International Harpsichord Competition** will take place from 5-8 August 2020 at the St Paul Conservatory of Music, Minnesota, USA

A new online **harpsichord discussion list** has been created at www.jackrail.org

Marc Ducornet has a new website at http://www.ateliermarcducornet.com/en

A new website dedicated to the **medieval organ** is online at http://medievalorgan.com

The website **Vihuela de mano and related instruments in Renaissance Spain** is at https://vihuelagriffiths.com

Harpsichord & Fortepiano https://hfmagazine.info been relaunched by Peacock Press, with Francis Knights as the new Editor

OBITUARIES

Pianist, teacher and composer **Jörg Demus** (2 December 1928-16 April 2019) has died at the age of 90.

Conductor and organist **Ronald Woan** (27 August 1919-17 April 2019) has died at the age of 99.

Harpsichord builder **Cynthia Goudzwaard** (15 September 1955-28 April 2019) has died at the age of 63.

Editor, music publisher and former NEMA Chairman **Clifford Bartlett** (15 August 1939-12 August 2019) has died at the age of 79.

Renaissance musicologist and administrator **Robert Judd** (12 February 1956-24 August 2019) has died at the age of 63.

Pianist and scholar **Paul Badura-Skoda** (6 October 1927-25 September 2019) has died at the age of 91.

Conductor **Raymond Leppard** (11 August 1927-22 October 2019) has died at the age of 92.

Early Music Fora

Websites

Border Marches Early Music Forum, http://www.bmemf.org.uk

Early Music Forum Scotland, http://www.emfscotland.org.uk

Eastern Early Music Forum, http://www.eemf.org.uk

North East Early Music Forum, http://www.neemf.org.uk

North West Early Music Forum, https://nwemf.org

Midlands Early Music Forum, http://memf.org.uk

Southern Early Music Forum, https://sites.google.com/site/southernearlymusicforum/home

South West Early Music Forum, http://www.swemf.org.uk

Thames Valley Early Music Forum, http://www.tvemf.org

Musical Societies & Organizations

Bach Network, https://www.bachnetwork.org

Benslow Trust, http://www.benslowmusic.org

British Harpsichord Society, http://www.harpsichord.org.uk

British Institute of Organ Studies, http://www.bios.org.uk

Cambridge Academy of Organ Studies, http://www.cambridgeorganacademy.org
Cobbe Collection, http://www.cobbecollection.co.uk/events

Dolmetsch Foundation, https://www.dolmetsch.com/dolmetschfoundation.htm

East Anglian Academy of Organ and Early Keyboard Music,
http://www.eastanglianacademy.org.uk

The Friends of Square Pianos, http://www.friendsofsquarepianos.co.uk

Galpin Society, http://www.galpinsociety.org

London Handel Society, http://www.london-handel-festival.com

The Lute Society, http://www.lutesociety.org

National Centre for Early Music, http://www.ncem.co.uk

Plainsong and Medieval Music Society, http://plainsong.org.uk

Royal College of Organists, https://www.rco.org.uk

Scottish Lute and Early Guitar Society, https://
scottishluteandearlyguitarsociety.wordpress.com

Society of Recorder Players, http://www.srp.org.uk

Viola da Gamba Society, http://www.vdgs.org.uk

Musical Instrument Auctions

Brompton's, https://www.bromptons.co

Christie's, https://www.christies.com/departments/Musical-Instruments

Gardiner Houlgate, https://www.gardinerhoulgate.co.uk

Gorringe's, https://www.gorringes.co.uk

Ingles Hayday, https://ingleshayday.com

Peter Wilson, https://www.peterwilson.co.uk

Piano Auctions, http://www.pianoauctions.co.uk

CONFERENCES

23–26 October 2019, **Blending Past and Present: Collections and Collectors**, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Ohio, USA, website http://westfield.org/wf-40th.html

4-6 February 2020, **Playing and operating: functionality in museum objects and instruments**, Cité de la Musique, Paris, France, website https://calenda.org/653353
29 February-1 March 2020, **Beethoven 2020: Analytical and Performative Perspectives**, Conservatorium van Amsterdam, The Netherlands, contact john.koslovsky@ahk.nl

14-16 July 2020, **Soundscapes in the Early Modern World**, Liverpool John Moores University, website https://emsoundscapes.co.uk/conference

4-6 November 2020, **Beethoven and the Piano: Philology, Context and Performance Practice**, Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, website www.hkb-interpretation.ch/beethoven2020

13-15 November 2020, **Music and Science from Leonardo to Galileo**, Complesso Monumentale di San Micheletto, Lucca, website https://www.luigiboccherini.org/2018/12/11/music-and-science-from-leonardo-to-galileo

FESTIVALS

25 October-10 November 2019, **Brighton Early Music Festival**, http://www.bremf.org.uk

9-10 November 2019, **London International Exhibition of Early Music**, http://www.earlymusicshop.com/More/London_International_Exhibition_of_Early_Music.aspx

5 March-10 April 2020, **London Handel Festival**, http://www.london-handel-festival.com

1-3 May 2020, **Bristol Early Music Festival**, http://bristolearlymusicfestival.uk

20 May-I June 2020, **Handel Festspiele Göttingen**, www.haendel-festspiele.de

22-24 May 2020, **Galway Early Music Festival**, www.galwayearlymusic.com

29-31 May 2020, **Beverley and East Riding Early Music Festival**, http://www.ncem.co.uk

29 May-1 June 2020, **Tage Alter Musik Regensburg**, www.tagealtermusik-regensburg.de

3-6 June 2020, **English Haydn Festival**, https://englishhaydn.com/index.html

12-28 June 2020, **Aldeburgh Festival**, https://snapemaltings.co.uk/season/aldeburgh-festival

19-28 June 2020, **Stour Music**, http://www.stourmusic.org.uk

3-11 July 2020, **York Early Music Festival**, http://www.ncem.co.uk

11-18 July 2020, **Madison Early Music Festival**, www.madisonearlymusic.org

5-19 July 2020, **Amherst Early Music Festival**, www.amherstearlymusic.org

18 July-1 August 2020, **Carmel Bach Festival**, www.bachfestival.org

28 August-6 September 2020, **Holland Festival Oude Musiek**, www.oudemuziek.nl

10-13 September 2020, **Medieval Music in the Dales**,
http://www.medievalmusicinthedales.co.uk