

# Early Music REVIEW

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C. A. J. Bartlett

Two recent phone conversations came together to make me think about the preservation and circulation of source material. A customer was unhappy with the available edition of a CPE Bach work and wondered if there were any MSS available. The Helm catalogue showed that the autograph was among the Berlin Singakademie collection, recently returned from the Ukraine. According to BC, the chance of getting a copy of a single work is negligible, since the collection is being made available systematically on microfiche. That puzzled me. At one stage, microfiche seemed to be the successor to microfilm, though I saw fiche most frequently when getting cars repaired, since catalogues of parts were circulated thus – though have long been replaced by computers. Why is a medium so vulnerable to scratch damage chosen?

I also had a call from a firm that makes digital images of historical archives and wondered whether there was an opportunity for expansion into music. Apparently, digital circulation of the Bach was rejected because of the rapid obsolescence of systems. A good point. But there are other considerations. Original documents get destroyed (a terrorist in the British Library?) or lost (e.g. the Salzburg parts of Biber's Mass in F minor). If every library with an academic music department had the major archive collections in digital form derived from good-quality scans, it is unlikely that all copies could vanish or self-destruct simultaneously, and a programme could be established whereby at least some institutions regularly updated the medium. Even if that process was not institutionalised, there's a fair chance that individual scholars and enthusiasts would download images onto later systems – one would expect that any new format would be compatible with at least the system that preceded it.

As the fuss over the distribution of pop music shows, there is a widespread assumption among net users that everything on it should be free or extremely cheap. Libraries charge for providing copies, but I doubt if the costs actually cover the overheads. Surely it is better to find a way of paying the comparatively cheap cost of mass scanning and concentrate resources on preservation and providing facilities for those whose research requires study of the object itself. Perhaps a culturally-aware philanthropist like Bill Gates could cover the scanning costs!

CB

## REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## DIVIDE AND RULE

*Viole de Gambe (Méthodes & Traités 17. Série IV. Italie 1600-1800).* Fuzeau (5864-6), 2004. €59.72, 58.77 & 51.18 (All three under order no. 8086: €135.73)

The title seriously undersells these three volumes (with a further volume in the series to follow), in that it is of importance far beyond the world of the gamba player. For it includes the main Italian publication of divisions and embellishments. Any serious player (and indeed singer) of the repertoire of the half-centuries before and after 1600 will need to study these volumes, unless they have access to separate editions of the key works. There are, of course, the usual short extracts from miscellaneous writings, which are mostly specific to the viol. The entire contents of vol. I dates from before the starting date of the series. The first major treatise is Ganassi's *Regola Rubertina* (1542), explicitly a viola tutor, but with a greater musical sophistication than most examples of the genre. Then comes the Italian edition of Ortiz (1553), without any of the translations and commentary that aids the reader in the recent Bärenreiter version, but in facsimile throughout; while primarily for viol, it anticipates the later, all-purpose manuals by giving a host of cadential formulae and examples of embellishment. Girolamo dalla Casa's *Il vero modo di dimunir* (1584) is directed to 'tutte le sorti di strumenti: di fatio, & corda, & di voce humana'. This is far more systematic than Ortiz, with hundreds of ways of getting form A to B or G to A and embellished parts for many favourite chansons and madrigals, ten settings for viola bastarda, and ending with all four parts, fully underlaid, of a six-section piece by Rore. Vol. II has Riccardo Rognoni's *Passagi* (1592) for all sorts of instruments and 'per la semplice voce humana', again exercises followed by complete parts. The MS *Il dolcimelo* attempts a tabular visual presentation. Vol. III is largely devoted to Francesco (son of Riccardo) Rognoni's *Selva de vari passaggi* (1620). Working through the examples here may be boring (and I must confess I've never done so systematically myself), but serious students must get the samples here into their system so that they can come pouring forth with ease when they are required – which is far more often than we usually hear now. Singers in particular need to learn the patterns to catch up with the skills of our best players. It is a weakness of the publication scheme that there is no series for works like these that are not specific to a single instrument but are of enormous value to all. I hope they find some way of marketing these important volumes to violinists, cornettists, recorder-players and singers, let alone consorts of curtals (cf p. 23).

Further Fuzeau facsimile are reviewed on pages 8-9.

## BEGINNING LASSUS

*Orlando di Lasso Zweite nach den Quellen revidierte Auflage der Ausgabe von F. X. Haberl und A. Sandberger. Band 1. Motetten I (Magnum opus musicum, Teil I). Motetten für 2, 3 und 4 Stimmen neu herausgegeben von Bernhold Schmid.* Breitkopf & Härtel, 2003. cxxv + 240pp, €238.00.

This massive new volume fits squarely into one strand of current German musicological publication: updating rather than replacing the editions of its pioneering scholars. There's a lot to be said for this policy: some 'modern' conventions of the Bärenreiter stable of Collected Works now seem to be dated, and I suspect that had HHA produced a corrected Chrysander, we could have had a complete and reasonably accurate edition of Handel long ago.

The incomplete Haberl/Sandberger edition of Lassus never benefited from cheap reprints from Gregg Press or Edwin Kalmus as did the comparable editions of Palestrina, Bach, Handel and the major classical and romantic German composers, so knowledge of it is confined to those with access to academic libraries. The revised edition begins with a reproduction of the original *Vorwort*, as is appropriate for its importance in the study of the revival of Renaissance church music and to remind us of the breadth of bibliographical information that was available before such aids as RISM. The new introduction is set out differently and is, not surprisingly, more detailed. There are also extensive commentaries on each piece.

The music is divided into four sections:

- I: the 12 duets with text, first published in 1577
- II: the 12 duets without text, from the same 1577 print
- III: 24 vocal trios, mostly published in 1575
- IV: 42 vocal quartets from various sources – with more to follow in vol. 3 (vol. 2 contains madrigals).

Appendices give the 24 duets with a third part published in 1601 and with a figured bass part from 1625.

Despite the use of *Motetten* on the title page (a 'vulgar' synonym, according to the 1604 title page), the items are described in Latin as *Cantiones*. The pieces are numbered consecutively according to the posthumous Collected Edition by Lassus' sons, the *Magnum Opus Musicum* of 1604. The duets have been frequently republished, and are described on the 1577 title page as being useful for both the novice and the skilled. If you want to perform them instrumentally, this volume is no use, since even if you can find a music stand that can take its weight and size, there are impossible page turns – blame the 1894 engraver for that. The other obstacle for performance is the clefs. As with the Ivo de Vento volume I reviewed recently, original clefs as well as note values are preserved, which restricts use to a small number of scholars. This is another

aspect of respect for the 19th-century edition; I doubt whether there were economic reasons, since resetting would probably have been as cheap as all the fiddly work changing the notation of coloration, ligatures and accidentals and would have permitted separate, cheap issues of the duets and trios. However, all the material here will also be included in A-R's *Lassus: The Complete Motets* in a more user-friendly form. That edition keeps original note-values but uses only modern clefs. The duets and trios are in vol. 11 (RRMR 103) and five of the four-part motets in vol. 10. The Breitkopf edition has a far more detailed critical commentary than the A-R. The latter modernises the Latin orthography; it also uses angled brackets for editorially added text, while I prefer Breitkopf's traditional italics. Neither transpose chiavette pieces.

The current fashion in *Lassus* editing is to follow the earliest authoritative source rather than the posthumous (1604) *Magnum Opus Musicum*. Consequently, both editions give as editorial many accidentals that occur in that and other contemporary sources. There is clearly a difference in status between accidentals added entirely by the editor and those that exist in secondary but apparently sensible sources. In *Eripe me* (no. 84), for instance, the tenor entry in bar 9 has an editorially flattened E in both editions, which is justified in 1604. Some way is needed of distinguishing on the page modern editorial suggestions and those from other sources. This is particularly important for the A-R edition, which has a much skimpier critical commentary. As I mentioned when reviewing one of them, the only time I've ever had to edit a *Lassus* motet, I found that the 1604 editor had spotted all the editorial suggestions I made to the earlier source.

The amount of well-digested scholarship here is immense. There may seem unnecessary duplication between the American and German editions. But their basis is different in that the former presents the music grouped by the original publication. Those needing modern clefs will favour A-R, but anyone seeking the most thorough presentation of the sources will turn to Breitkopf.

While checking vol. 10 of the A-R edition I came across another example of the embarrassing slip that I mentioned last month: an error that can be corrected from the single page of music facsimile. Bar 18 of the top part (called *discantus* by Breitkopf, *Cantus* by A-R) of *Quare tristis es* should be *minim rest – semibreve – minim*.

#### Clefs – Transpositions

We generally quote original clefs in the form of letter (G, C and F) and the line of the staff on which it is placed (1 for the bottom, 5 for the top), so the usual treble and bass clefs are G2 and F4. We use the terms 'low' and 'high clefs' to refer to the standard renaissance configuration, with either C1, C3, C4, F4 (low) or G2 C2 C3 C4/F3 (high), the former sometimes called 'standard' or 'normal', the latter *chiavette*. (Additional voices usually duplicate clefs, except in polychoral music, where unusual patterns may imply instruments.) Whatever the absolute pitch (if any), *chiavette* pieces are likely to have been performed lower than the apparent pitch.

#### GESUALDO MADRIGALS

*Gesualdo Selected Madrigals* transcribed for viol quintet by Stephen Pegler (*Viol Consort Series* No. 50). PRB Productions, 2004. Score & 8 parts \$28.00. (Score only \$17.00)

As with the Fuzeau gamba volumes reviewed on p. 1, the obvious criticism of this is the title. The prime use of this anthology is to remedy the dearth of easily-accessible editions for singers. You can buy scores separately for \$17 (totting up to about £50 for five, though the print is large enough for two singers to share), or get a score and parts (\$28.00 if you don't have the alto-clef alternatives for the middle parts – and violists can do the opposite). The parts are, of course, underlaid. If you are really confident, you can get just the parts: \$17.00 if you choose which set, \$23 with the alternatives as well. The only element of transcription I can see is that the slight change in practice in beaming quavers between score (by syllable) and parts. The selection is of pieces that are less dependent on the text for their effect, though I doubt whether singers will feel that a limitation. There are nine pieces here (including two in two sections), one from Book II and the rest from Books IV-VI. The opening phrase of the first piece (*Belta poi che t'assenti*) immediately warns the singer/player that Gesualdo offers particular problems, and would make a good tuning exercise: the chords are G minor, E major, D major, G major, D major first inversion and F sharp major – but that is particularly extreme, and the madrigals should be treated as music, not examined for their modernisms. Normally, five-part music is for four voice-ranges; with either two trebles or two tenors. Gesualdo, however, tends to have five different ranges, with clefs typically G2 C1 C2 C3 F3. In one case only, *Io pur respiro*, the editor transposes down a fourth. [NB: the original clef for the bassus is printed a third too high, and in the next piece the Quintus G1 clef should be C2.] I can see why, for vocal reasons, he didn't put all high-clef pieces down a fourth, but from what we know of Italian viol consorts, the lower range might have justified the marketing towards viols. Players and singers, buy this and have a go (separately or together) at this challenging music.

#### GIBBONS CONSORT ANTHEMS

Orlando Gibbons *The Consort Anthems...* edited and reconstructed by David Pinto. Fretwork (FE 23-25) 2003. 3 vols, each score + 5 parts. (£27.00, 28.00 & 28.00 per volume for score and parts; scores and parts also available separately.)

The usual generic name of 'verse anthems' covers two distinct performing ambiances: church performance, for soloists, choir and organ, with the likely use of cornetts and sackbuts on important occasions, and domestic performance, with viols and solo voices. This edition is primarily aimed at the latter, with no organ parts included. There must be many players who have copied

out their own parts in a variety of keys (or even wrestled with the multi-flat signatures of copies made by unsuspecting choirmasters from Wulstan's EECM edition) for the best-known anthems, or more recently used the computer-set versions available from Peter Berg. Now this marvellous music is readily available in an edition based directly on the sources that are specifically relevant to the ensemble versions.

Each volume is about 60 pages long and has an identical introduction followed by thorough critical commentaries on the pieces it contains and a pair of rather faint facsimiles of the main source, Christ Church MS Mus 21. Vol. 1 also has a page of MS 18, the beginning of an embellished version (with organ) of *Behold thou hast made my days*; this version is not included in the score, but given on a separate page in alto clef, thus confining its use to a limited number of specialist singers. (I think that pages xii & xiv should be reversed: apart from putting the transcription opposite the facsimile, it then has the commentaries on page xiv following directly on xii.) It is from a post-restoration source (copied by Henry Aldrich), but is in a much earlier style that corresponds with secular embellished songs from Gibbons' lifetime. The scores are printed with middle parts in octave-treble clef throughout. The parts are underlaid in the vocal sections and are large enough for a singer and viol-player to share, but are in alto clef. One wonders whether early performers allocated the parts to players whose voice was also of the right pitch for the part, or if the words were sometimes omitted. In a series that includes Gibbons' piece for the 1617 royal visit to Scotland, the double underlaid of the royal *Great King of Gods* and *O all true and faithful hearts* with alternative 19th-century anthem versions is odd.

Two versions of *See, see the word is incarnate* are given, in separate volumes to make comparison easier (though without going so far as to follow the same page-layout). Apart from other aspects, they are at different pitches a fourth apart. With two exceptions, the other music here was notated in low clefs (see p. 3) with two altos. *Do not repine* has C1, C2, C3, C4 and F4: this non-standard layout avoids the doubling of the C3 part, which is an ecclesiastical, not a domestic trait. *Sing unto the Lord* has low clefs apart from G2 instead of C1 on top; its vocal range corresponds with that of C1 parts, so the G2 clef may be because of the top G for the instrument. Pinto makes no mention of chiavette, or the normality of the fourth pitch difference in notation. He suggests that the high-pitch version would have been played on low-pitch viols, while the low-pitch version would have been for high-pitch cornetts and sackbuts [or, one might add, organ], bringing the sounding pitches within a tone of each other. There is little evidence of the need for routine chiavette transposition in the viol consort repertoire, whereas professional wind players would have encountered it regularly. So it is odd that what Pinto calls the domestic version is in high clefs: the explanation would be easier the other way round. I'm not sure where the 'baroque pitch' tuning favoured by modern viol players comes from apart from a feeling that the music sounded better thus on modern viols: I was involved in the viol-playing world when the habit arose in

the 1970s, and the only (post facto) consideration I can remember was from Ian Harwood. If it is justifiable on historical grounds, this gives two pitch levels a tone or minor third apart between church and domestic pitch which is independent of any cleffing practice. The alto parts are the most sensitive to compass: those in C3 clef are comfortable for high tenors but a bit low for falsettists: the high *See, see the word alto*, going up to D needs a falsettist (or, domestically, a lady).

The edition gives no organ part, on the assumption that the surviving ones are not always compatible with the viol parts and are not necessary. But viol consorts played with the organ, and the lack of parts can be explained, not just by loss, but by the organist having used a score (like ChCh 21?) Perhaps the editor should produce a separate organ part, based on the extant ones and in a similar style when one did not exist. Otherwise, players can deduce the style from the parts in *Tudor Church Music* vol. 4.

The covering letter from Bill Hunt mentioned that, after much thought and debate, they had modified their policy on editorial accidentals. I didn't read it until looked up the prices to add to this review, but had noticed that the notation of accidentals seemed unambiguous, so it evidently works. It isn't far from our policy of preserving all accidentals except on consecutive notes (and, as they suggest, cadential formulae), substituting naturals when that is modern usage (though not in bass figures), and including bracketed cautionaries when modern usage would expect an earlier accidental still to be valid.

This is highly recommended: no viol consort that ever plays with singers (which is something they should do anyway, since vocal phrasing is the foundation of their repertoire) should be without it. But one practical piece of advice: with 15 partbooks divided into three sets, colour code the sets in some way for easy identification – perhaps a mark on the top right corner and the spine.

#### SMITH OF DURHAM

William Smith *Preces, Festal Psalms, and Verse Anthems*  
Edited by John Cannell (*Recent Reserarches in the Music of the Renaissance*, 135). A-R Editions, 2003. xvii 140pp, \$80.00. ISBN 0 89579 525 6

Any traditional Anglican will know Smith's *Responses*, by sound if not by name. Otherwise, his music has generally been neglected, so it is interesting to see the work of a composer at a remote if magnificent cathedral (Durham). During the reign of Charles I it adopted a distinctively high-church liturgical style under the influence of John Cosin. Cosin joined the Cathedral staff in 1624, the year in which Smith, formerly a choirboy there, became a lay clerk, perhaps after study in Cambridge. Smith's role seems to have been to supply music when there was nothing suitable in the Cathedral's repertoire. This volume contains five festal psalms and seven verse anthems, basically in five parts (SAATB) but with alternation between *tutti cantoris* and *decani* and soloists from both sides. All pieces have organ parts, mostly essential and always an expected part of the texture. Smith isn't the most skilful of com-

posers, and those trained to abhor consecutives will find fault. But since they derive from composer, not a copyist, it is pedantic for the editor to make 'simple corrections of such infelicities'. Despite them, the music creates a powerful impression, though doesn't stand the comparison with Gibbons that one dubious ascription invites. The decision to retain the original pitch notation is more justified than the editor realised with the recent demonstration that the minor-third theory for English church pitch of the period was an exaggeration by about 50%, and the unreduced note-values in four-minim bars are easy on the eyes. I'm not sure if I want to hear a CD just of Smith; but I hope that anthology programmers take advantage of this volume. *My apologies for the late review: it's about a year since a copy was sent, but it didn't arrive and the replacement reached us just a few weeks ago.*

#### CAVALLI – LA DORICLEA

Cavalli *La Doriclea* Edited by Christopher J. Mossey. (Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, 132). A-R Editions, 2004. lxxxvi + 240pp, £129.00 ISBN 0 89579 548 5

Considering the frequency of Cavalli performances and CDs, it is amazing that so few of his operas are published in any form, let alone as well as here. Perhaps they are not enough of a challenge to scholars: they usually have just two sources, a libretto and a MS score, and unlike Monteverdi's *Poppea* (which shares an overture with *Doriclea*), there is no mental exercise required to compare versions. Some editors and directors increase their input by elaborating the music. Mossey does not follow that path and instead presents intelligently and accurately what the sources tell us. He makes an exaggerated claim for *Doriclea* by putting it on a par with *Poppea* – Cavalli's recitative is dead in comparison. But it is good to have a significant work available in an unadorned and clearly printed modern edition: facsimiles are all very well (and there is a good case for issuing digital facsimiles of all the Cavalli opera sources), but not everyone reads the clefs and those who can, find the words tricky. The large number of prelims is caused by the presence of the complete libretto in Italian and English, the latter close enough to work as the basis for surtitles when the edition is performed. Singers, though, might have preferred the practice pioneered by Denis Stevens in his *Orfeo* and followed in my Monteverdi editions of placing the translation at the foot of each page of music. Someone (perhaps C. S. Lewis) once said that every story needs a map, and one is provided here (a first for an edition of an opera, as far as I am aware): despite the story being fictional, it is squarely set in historical Parthia. There is a vast list of characters: the editor could help deciding on doublings by listing what scenes they are in, as in my *Poppea* edition; the range of each part is listed on the opposite page. The score is easy to read, and Cavalli's music is charming enough to entice people to perform it. The strings are in five parts (Tr Tr A T B). I'm puzzled by the editor's precision of viola da braccio and tenor violetta for the two C-clef parts (p. xvi), and I would have printed the fourth part in alto clef – not many players

of the viola, even big ones, read the tenor clef. I don't like the use of the word 'orchestra' in the introduction, particularly as it is stated that string parts were not doubled. The editor advocates a kaleidoscopic continuo variety to reflect the emotional states of the characters. Certainly that is possible, but it can often seem fussy, and the alternative of allocating instrument(s) to characters can make dialogue more dramatic and rehearsal more efficient. It is odd that the introduction discusses the dramatic effect of extreme keys without considering keyboard tuning: Cavalli's tonal spectrum is closely tied to temperament, with F sharp major probably deliberately beyond the limits of the tolerable. This is a very welcome edition: if anyone wants to assemble a dozen copies (at nearly £75 each) and have a weekend working through it, do invite me to come and play.

#### THE RESTORATION ANTHEM

*The Restoration Anthem, Volume One, 1660-1689* edited by Keri Dexter and Geoffrey Webber. Church Music Society (Oxford UP), 2003. 95pp, £11.95.

This useful volume contains 13 anthems for choir, soloists and organ. The number of parts range from SATB to SSAATTBB, most anthems presupposing the *decani/cantoris* separation. There are two anthems each by William Child and Benjamin Rogers and one by Aldrich, Blow, Creighton, James Hawkins, Locke, Purcell, Tucker, Turner and Wise. The general impression is of expressive sobriety (if that isn't an oxymoron). I don't think it would be very sensible to sing the whole collection straight through, but any item could stand alone as a strong piece of music in any company. There are editorial features which might disappoint our readers. Since all the music comes from the same repertoire, and will have been sung at a single pitch in any particular church (though maybe at a different pitch at another), it is odd that the editors transpose some pieces and not others (particularly by a semitone). I haven't tried to check if a single historic tuning could work for the whole repertoire, which ranges from two sharps to four flats (in modern signatures); but any transposition of such expressive music is likely to demand equal temperament. 95% of users probably won't think about temperament at all, but I suspect that its use may heighten some effects in a way that the composers would have expected. It is odd that the preliminary staves give merely the clefs for pieces that are not transposed but not the normal information of original key and time signatures, though the latter are given above the organ part. Also, voice ranges (now standard, especially now that the computer saves having to look through each part) are not shown; perhaps they are unnecessary if the original clef is a guide to range, but not when there are transpositions. There is a substantial critical commentary. Nearly all the sources are scores: are the eight-part pieces to distributed with four parts on the *decani* side, four on the *cantoris* or are they for one choir on each side? This selection is good value and should alert choirs to the merits of the music. I look forward to volume two.

## THE SCOTTISH PLAY

*Music for Macbeth*. Edited by Amanda Eubanks Winkler. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 133), A-R Editions, 2004. xx + 104 pp, £68.00. ISBN 0 89579 547 7

This contains settings by Eccles and by Leveridge of mostly the same sections of Davenant's Restoration version of *Macbeth*. Eccles' setting is the lesser-known. It survives in autograph (BL Add. 12219) and the names of singers written on it imply performances in the 1690s. Graham O'Reilly (who has featured in *EMR* as a letter-writer and reviewed conductor) produced an edition for Cathedral Music in 1979. (The publisher may seem improbable, but it also issued a score of Gagliano's *Dafne* at around the same time.) Leveridge's version dates from 1702, and was still being reprinted in the 1880s. The standard edition, published in 1770, was by William Boyce, who assumed that the composer was Matthew Locke since he was known to have written music for the play. Locke's setting, however, is no longer extant, except perhaps for the two monophonic dances from *Apollo's Banquet* which begin this volume. The Boyce edition is reproduced in *Music for London Entertainment* vol. A6, at the end of his Complete Songs. This is more compact, since the engraver doesn't have the lavish blank staves at the opening of new sections that A-R has.

Eccles's music is the more interesting, though requiring far too lavish an array of voices for there to be much chance of its use in a professional production now, even assuming that any theatre would want to perform the hybrid text of the play. There are few if any other works that begin with a movement in which the serpent is the

most prominent instrument; the editor quotes Andrew Parrott for an explanation of tremolo signs; the flippant might suggest that since serpents always sound a bit wavery, the signs could mean 'play as normal'. I'm not sure that I would have put this very high on a list of music that needed to be published, but the pairing of the two settings adds to its value. One could try to argue that the popularity of Leveridge's setting says something about 18th-century taste, but its survival was more a matter of the ownership of theatrical properties (including music) than an aesthetic judgment.

## CHARPENTIER: FUNERAL MUSIC

Charpentier *Musique pour les Funérailles de la Reine Marie-Thérèse*. Édition par Jean Duron. (Le Pupitre, 73). Heugel (HE 33 698), 2000. xxi + 175pp, £65.30 (from UMP)

Marie-Thérèse, queen of France since 1660, died on 31 July 1683. The formal funeral on 1 September included Lully's *Dies irae* and *De profundis*. Funeral services were held throughout France during the rest of the year. Charpentier is reported to have written 'la musique fort touchante' for a mass and funeral oration by the Carmelites on 20 December, and the first piece here may have been for that event. It is entitled *Luctus de morte augustissimae Mariae Theresiae reginae Galliae* (H. 331) and is set for ATB soli, two treble instruments (probably violins) and continuo. This is followed by a large-scale *In obitum Augustissimae nec non piissimae Gallorum reginae lamentum* (H. 409) and psalm *De profundis* (H. 189). The editor insists that these constitute a single work in three large, indissociable parts: *In obitum* has two parts, in C minor and C major, concluding with the Psalm in C minor, so they make a satisfying tonal shape, and are for similar forces. But Charpentier seems to have thought of them as separate, since although they are consecutive in his MS, his total for the number of bars in each piece gives 352 for the first part, 473 for the second, and the combined total for parts I & II as 825. The *De profundis* has a separate total, 558 and is not accumulated. The editor, however, reinforces his point by giving a continuous bar-numbering for the three parts: imagine a conductor telling a multi-national orchestra to go back to bar 1297.

The *Luctus* is a small-scale work that the editor reckons lasts about a quarter of an hour. I listed the three voices above by original clef. The editor rightly points out that the top part needs a haut-contre 'à la française', not a countertenor, though in the music example gives the range of the *taille* in the same clef (C3) instead of the C4 in which Charpentier notated it. [As with music at the beginning of the century, the clefs used are significant.] *In obitum* appears to be for the full forces of the court band, with five-part strings, recorders and flutes, along with nine solo singers and perhaps a chorus – that depends on the significance of the various appearances of *tous*. The editor comes down in favour of soloists only. The main quibble with the edition is the fussy way in which the music is sectionalised: in the autograph, the movements flow into each other, but on the printed page each of them

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## AWARDS FOR RESEARCH

Applications are invited for Handel Institute Awards to assist in the furtherance of research into the music or life of George Frideric Handel or his contemporaries. One or more awards may be offered, up to a total of £1,000. Awards may not be used for tuition fees or for the photocopying or binding of theses. The deadline for the receipt of applications is 1 September 2004. For further information, please contact Dr Elizabeth Gibson (elizabeth@gibson.freeonline.co.uk) or Professor Colin Timms, Barber Institute, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TS.

begins with a new system, voice and instrumental name, original clef, and time signature. Ways could have been found to minimalise this. The layout is unhelpfully spacious. Charpentier may squash a lot of music onto somewhat larger pages, but his MS takes 12 pages for the *Luctus* while the edition takes 36. No information is given about performance material: I hope it is available, since this is music that needs to be performed. [This is rather a late review, but I'm only responsible for the last month of the delay.]

UMP also sent us a new (and utterly unpastiche) harpsichord piece, *Rituels*, by the Swiss composer Norbert Moret (1921-1998), written in 1975. It is written for a baroque instrument with an 8' on the upper manual and 8' 4' and lute on the lower, with two staves for each manual. I will not dare to make any comment on its musical qualities, but it looks more complicated than it would probably sound. It last about nine minutes. A modern piece for lute is reviewed on p 9.

#### HANDEL FOR BASS

Green Man Press's latest batch is of music for bass voice by Handel. As usual with the well-considered venture, each title comes with parts, and includes two scores, the one with the green cover having a realisation, the other without and a misleading heading 'Score with figured bass', since Handel's autographs rarely have figuring. All parts have the vocal line cued for recits. The very reasonably prices are £6.90 each for Han 1-4, £4.50 for Han 5a and £5.90 for Han 6. (Available from 180 Sheen Road, Richmond, TW9 1XD, email [cedric.lee@virgin.net](mailto:cedric.lee@virgin.net))

Han 1. *Cuopretal volo il cielo* (HWV 98) & Han 2. *Spande ancor a mio dispetto* (HWV 165) are for bass with two violins and bc. There are at least two editions in score (HG and HHA), but separate editions with parts are most welcome (though it is unnecessary to footnote the differences from Chrysander). Han 3 contains *Nell'Africane selve* (HWV 136A) and *Dalla guerra amorosa* (HWV 102) for bass and continuo; both are in HG, and the autograph of the former is in vol. 1 of Fuzeau's facsimile (No 5751). These three issues cover Handel's bass cantatas.

Han 4 contains four cantatas for soprano and continuo written in Rome in 1707, all available in facsimile in the same Fuzeau volume, which is interesting for study but hard going to perform from: *Aure soavi* (HWV 84), *Menzognere speranze* (HWV 131), *Nella stagion che* (HWV 137) & *Poichè giuraro Amore* (HWV 148). Han 5a, *Languia di bocca lusinghiera* (HWV 123), is an isolated recitative and aria for soprano, oboe, violin and continuo probably written in 1710 in Hanover for an unknown purpose. Cedric Lee is by no means the first to base an edition on what seems to be a reliable secondary source, only to discover that it wasn't so reliable. So this is a correction (hence the a) to his first attempt, based on the autograph in New York Public Library rather than Chrysander. Finally, Han 6 is that popular bass aria, 'O ruddier than the cherry', from *Acis and Galatea*, for bass, two violins,

continuo and recorder. Nothing is said about what sort of recorder; although the autograph only heads the stave *flauto*, other early sources have *flauto piccolo octavo*, which is the modern, probably right tradition.

Long may Cedric Lee continue to produce useful publications of fine music like this which is (except the ruddy cherry) difficult of access for non-academic performers. And the last two words remind me that I should explain the abbreviations. HG stands for Händel-Gesellschaft, the complete edition of Handel's works published by Friedrich Chrysander through the second half of the 19th century, and HHA for the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, a rather slower and more diffuse attempt to update it a century later. HWV is the Handel thematic catalogue.

#### PRIMA LA MUSICA!

Brian Clark is too close to King's Music and Early Music Review for a dispassionate review to be credible: our approach to editing is fairly similar. So I will just list and describe his recent publications. (Which is exactly what I have done above with Green Man Press, though there the reason for reticence is that there is little point in adding critical comments on the music to editions of Handel.)

Proceeding alphabetically, first comes Bach or Clark: an alternative to doodling around the two chords between the movements of the second Brandenburg Concerto and gives all the players something plausible to do. Try it out and see how your audience reacts.

#### New titles from Prima la Musica!

<p><b>Bertali</b>            Sonata a 8 (2vn, vdg, 5 vle &amp; BC)            Sonata a 2 chori (vn, vdg, 2 vle + vn, vdg, 3tbn &amp; BC)</p>	<p><b>Biber</b>  <i>Fidicinium Sacro-profanum</i> Sonatas 1 &amp; 2, ed. Pierre Pascal (5-pt str &amp; BC)</p>
<p><b>Muffat</b>  <i>Eusebia</i> from <i>Florilegium Primum</i> (5-pt str &amp; BC)</p>	<p><b>Erlebach</b>  <i>Wie lieblich sind dein Wohnungen</i>            (SATB, 3vn, 2va &amp; BC)</p>
<p><b>Fasch:</b>            Sonatas in E minor (2 ob &amp; BC),            Sonatas in G &amp; D major (fl, vn &amp; BC)            Overture in E minor (2ob, bsn, str &amp; BC)</p>	<p>Concerto in D minor (2fl, 2ob, 2bsn, str &amp; BC)            Mass in G minor [Kyrie, Gloria]            (SATB, 2hn, 3ob, 2fl, bsn, str &amp; BC)</p>
<p><b>J. G. Graun</b>            Sonata in G (2vn + BC)</p>	<p><b>A. Scarlatti</b>  <i>Totus amore languens</i> (A, 2vn &amp; BC)</p>
Check out our website: <a href="http://www.primalamusica.com">http://www.primalamusica.com</a> Or ask for a catalogue: 01480 463630 / <a href="mailto:info@primalamusica.com">info@primalamusica.com</a>	

If Fasch's Mass in D is as good as the one in B flat (which Brian edited for King's Music), this is certainly worth trying. It is scored for SATB (solo sections can be managed by good choir singers, if the tutti is a choir rather than a solo ensemble), 3 trumpets and timps, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, strings & continuo. It is a compact, multi-movement setting of Kyrie and Gloria, considerably shorter than the B flat mass (which has a creed as well). [PS. BC has just put on my desk a larger Mass in G minor.]

J. G. Graun's Sonata in G major for two violins & continuo is one of a set of ten at Darmstadt, curious because the second violin is as or more difficult than the first – so useful to have around when playing with a better player who insists on being modest: the real reason, though, is probably that the first violin was intended for a patron.

#### HAMMER FOR GAMBA

Franz Xaver Hammer *Five Sonatas for Viola da Gamba, Violoncello or Bassoon and Harpsichord* Edited by David Rhodes (Classical Series No. 8). PRB. 2004. \$35.00.

As more and more 18th-century gamba music is becoming available, Abel is less isolated as a composer for the instrument in the 1770s. Hammer (1741-1817) worked under Haydn from 1771-78, then at Pressburg (Bratislava) and from 1785 in Ludwigslust (about a third of the way along the road from Hamburg to Berlin). He was primarily a

cellist, but must also have been a brilliant gamba-player. His five gamba sonatas survive in MSS in Schwerin. No. 1 in A is firmly ascribed 'Da me' (by me): the editor doesn't tell us till his commentary to Sonata 5 that all the sonatas are in Hammer's hand. This is followed (in the MS and edition) by three very brief pieces for gamba solo. Sonata 2 in D is Hammer's arrangement of Sonata 1 by Andreas Lidl (also published by PRB): the give-away seems to be the attribution 'A. Hammer', 'A' standing for *arrangiert*. Sonata 3 in D, dated 1786, again has the words 'Da me' to claim authenticity. Sonata 4 in D is an arrangement, but the source isn't known. Sonata 5 in A has no title, though is in Hammer's hand and may be by or adapted by him. All are set out in normal duo form – in score, but no. 3 has a separate bass part as well, which the editor suggests might have been used if the piece were played as a gamba-cello duet without keyboard: he recommends the cellists make similar arrangements if they are accompanying without continuo. The edition includes a realisation in the score plus separate gamba and cello parts.

#### FUZEAU FACSIMILES

Jacques Boyvin *Premier [& Second] Livre d'Orgue*, 1690. Fuzeau (5881-2), 2004. €35.07 each

Unlike some other French organists, Boyvin presents a series of short pieces for church use that are not explicitly for any particular liturgical function. There are the usual indications of registration, and the extensive introduction to Book I gives the specification of several organs at Rouen, where Boyvin was cathedral organist from 1674 till his death in 1706. The original is clear enough to read, but needs fluency in C1 clef for the right hand and F3 for the left. Livre I is prefaced by a discussion on registration and a guide to ornamentation, while Livre II has instruction on continuo playing, including a couple of pieces with sample realisations.

André Campra *Cantate Enée & Didon* (extraite du Second livre de cantates, 1714). Fuzeau (5883), 2004. €18.48

This cantata is presumably issued separately with some education function. There is a useful introduction on details of notation and performance. The last of the six contained in Book II, it is for soprano and bass with continuo and is highly dramatic. If you want somewhere from where to explore the French cantata, this is an excellent place, though tricky if you want to perform rather than study it.

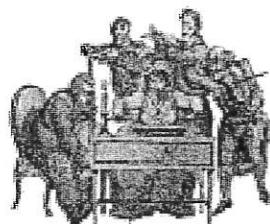
Christian Gottlob Neefe *Zwölf Klavier-sonaten* 1773. Fuzeau (Nr. 5880), 2004. €26.54

Neefe was born in Chemnitz in 1748, studied law in Leipzig and then music with Hiller. These sonatas have a dedicatory letter to C.P.E.Bach (translated into French and English in the introduction by Pascal Duc) which appears to state (in the translated version) that they are intended for the clavichord. The German is perhaps ambiguous,

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depending on what Klavier meant in Leipzig in 1773. Apart from their intrinsic interest, they are likely to be studied chiefly for any possible effect on Beethoven, since he moved to Bonn in 1780 (or 1779, depending on whether you believe p. iii or vi) and became his teacher: no doubt these sonatas supplemented Beethoven's study of the '48' and CPE Bach. The main reading problem is the use of C-clef for the right hand.

Padre Antonio Soler 6 Quintetos con violines, viola, violoncelo y órgano ó clave óbligado Obra 1º (1776). Fuzeau (5679), 2004. 6 vols. €77.73

The source is MS, in different hands; it is legible enough to play from, though the keyboard player will need a page-turner. This isn't like some of the earlier English concertos where the keyboard part is self sufficient. The two scribes of the part share used different systems: in the first three quintets, there are often bars rest that are amalgamated, as is usual in part, whereas in the last two the cello part is given – though not specifically marked as cue. There is no sign that the player is expected to supply a continuo realisation. The sixth volume is an introduction, with a more extensive chronological table than usual. I can see no reference to a modern score, which players might like to have around in case of problems. The edition I know is that of Roberto Gerhard of 1933 – there's probably something more recent.

Ignace Pleyel Trois sonates pour clavecin ou forte-piano avec accompagnement de flûte (ou violon) et violoncelle [op. 14] (1788). Fuzeau (Nr 5887), 2004. €22.75.

These date from the time that Pleyel, a pupil of Haydn, was assistant to F-X Richter at Strasbourg Cathedral. The introduction has been complied by a group of students, who have done a good job except that I see no mention of the number of the trios in Rita Benton's thematic catalogue, which is 431-3, the first three of a set of six published by André in 1788 and dedicated to the Queen of England. The edition reproduced is one pirated by Seiber, who successfully defended his legal claim to the work against Pleyel. The set was immensely popular: Benton listed 80 early editions of the work in its original form, apart from various arrangements. There are no legibility problems.

#### MODERN LUTE

Guy Morançon Fantaisie sur un Thème de Heinrich Schütz pour luth à 8 choeurs. Les Editions du Chant du Monde (LU 4383). (No price or date)

This 17-minute fantasy consists of 11 variations based on a chorale by Heinrich Schütz. It was composed for Jean-Pierre Fréché, who describes the piece in a brief introduction. Each of the variations is a small character piece: gently flowing quavers, frantic arpeggiated demi-semiquavers, grandiose rolled chords, percussive unrolled chords, and so on. Apart from the initial statement of the chorale, the harmony is in a modern idiom, often quite

dissonant, for example this passage from Variation 3: The first bar is marked  $3/4$  (change of time signature). The first chord contains F natural, g#, d'#, and b'. The semi-quavers have natural signs for d', f, g' and d''. The final chord has f, g'#, and e''. Both chords are marked with accents above and below, and with squiggly vertical lines to show that they should be arpeggiated. The second chord is marked "ff" and "ten." [=tenuto]. There is a crescendo hairpin under the semiquavers.

The music is notated in staff notation (short score), not lute tablature. Although this might inconvenience some lutenists, there is really no alternative, such is the proliferation of signs for expression and for technique. The directions are strangely macaronic. For example, in bar 8 of Variation 6 we are told to 'presser un peu', 'con delicatezza'; it is marked "p", and there is a footnote 'utiliser les barrés au maximum'.

Although the music is playable on the lute, it is difficult. Unfamiliar chords, complex rhythms, frequent changes of time signature, no tablature, are the sort of things which may appeal to classical guitarists, but are likely to deter lutenists. Yet it is an interesting piece, and its historical link via Schütz might tempt some players to dabble with its contemporary idiom. Stewart McCoy.

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- Carlo Gesualdo, *Selected Madrigals* (VCO50), arranged for five viols, with text underlay. Score + five (viol or vocal clef) parts, \$28; Score + eight (viol and vocal clef) parts, \$35.
- C. Hacquart, *Harmonia Parnassia Sonatarum*, 10 sonatas for three and four instruments. Vol. I (B034), for two violins, bass viol, continuo. Score and parts, \$37. Vol. II (B035), for violins, viola/tenor viol, bass viol, continuo. Details t/b/a.
- F.X. Hammer, *Sonatas for Viola da Gamba, Cello or Bass & Harpsichord* (CLO08). Score and parts, \$35.
- John Hingeston, *Fantasia-Suites for Violin, Bass Viol & Organ* (VCO47). Score and parts, \$47.
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## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett

## HARVARD DICTIONARY

*The Harvard Dictionary of Music*. Fourth Edition. Edited by Don Michael Randel. Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2003. xxvii + 978pp, £25.95. ISBN 0 674 01163 5

It must be nearly 45 years ago when I bought the original edition by Willi Apel. The fact that I don't even know where to look for that copy now suggests that I haven't consulted it for some years. The third edition (by the same editor) completely changed the book, and this is a revision of that. It takes five pages to list the contributors and there is an editorial board of the great and good. And this bevy of talent has produced an extremely reliable reference work. It is an American dictionary, but at least the article on education is entitled **Education in the United States**: one can imagine dictionaries where such an article might just be called **Education**. English education has two paragraphs under **England**, covering only conservatories and universities. It is difficult to weigh up such a work on only a few weeks' browsing (though I can tell you its weight, since the despatch note gives it as 1.738 kg). Most of what I've read is concise and accurate. Finding the gaps is, of course, something that comes from use.

A distinctive feature taken over from the first edition is that there are no composer entries and individual pieces of music are only mentioned if they have a proper name. This is carried so far that the only entry under **Ninth** is 'See Interval, Chord', though the word is used, at least colloquially, as a self-sufficient title without Beethoven or symphony attached. There is a similar entry for **Fifth**, but not for **Fifths** as a Haydn quartet. The entry for **Dumbarton Oaks** is a bit snooty about the title being the 'popular name for a concerto for 15 instruments by Stravinsky' (without giving the key), when the two words are prominent on the cover, titlepage and first page of the score, if only as the place of the first performance.

I was intrigued by the idea under **Nationalism** that the twelve-tone system (usually described as Viennese) might be a sign of German musical superiority. There are entries for **England**, **Scotland**, **Wales** and **Ireland** (north and south optimistically united) but not **Great Britain** or **United Kingdom**. 'More recent' composers in Scotland include none born after 1942, and the best-known composer resident in Scotland, the English Peter Maxwell Davies, isn't mentioned. **England** has a paragraph on early music, mentioning specifically Dolmetsch, the Deller Consort, Munrow and his Early Music Consort, and the AAM. I wonder what 'consorts of viols or fretted instruments' refers to. The youngest composer mentioned was born in 1954.

I checked several words relevant to reviews in this issue. There is nothing under **ripieno** that helps with the controversy on Bach's chorus, despite, or because of, a

distinguished Bach scholar's presence on the editorial board (Christoph Wolff). No mention of **Bumper** for the extra horn in an orchestra (Andrew Benson-Wilson was very annoyed that I put a word he didn't know into his mouth in a review last month): perhaps it isn't the American term, but how do I find what is? The practice is mentioned under **Orchestra**, but with no name. No cross references between **Divisions** and **Diminutions**. Neither the article on **Editions** or **Publishing** mention the effect of photocopier and computer. The **Rumba** as described has little relationship to the versions currently displayed on Saturday nights in the TV *Come Dancing* competition.

I could go on. What I haven't mentioned are all the cases when the article I checked told me what I wanted, or at least as much as one could expect from a single-volume dictionary. Substantial articles have bibliographies. I've forgotten what article I noticed with something like three entries covering over a century, all deserving mention. I suppose most of this information can be downloaded, but it is comforting to know that what you are consulting is accurate, as it almost invariably is here.

## INTERPRETING MACHAUT

*Machaut's Music: New Interpretations*. Edited by Elizabeth Eva Leach. (*Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music*, 1) The Boydell Press, 2003. xviii + 296pp, £65.00. ISSN 1479-9294

I received this last December: my apologies for spending so long with it before reviewing it. For most of our readers, 'interpreting' is what a performer does (or, if you believe Stravinsky or some of the more extreme early-music fans, shouldn't do). There's little on how to perform Machaut here, but a lot about what there is in his music that the performer may wish to use his interpretative skills to present to an audience. I sense through the book, however, that the audience for the music that is imagined is often that of an individual studying the it on the page. Machaut's music exists as written documents in a far richer way than that of any other medieval composer, with a series of virtual 'collected works' copied under his instruction. One problem for the reader is that the authors continually expect us to think in terms of the original notation (writing of longs, breves etc) when the available editions (and most of those created for the book) use different note values and translate them into modern terms. We need a new way of editing 14th-century music. Modern clefs are fine, and bar lines marking the tactus: but much of the rhythmic notation can be preserved, as in the recent editions of *Early English Church Music*. Easy access to the sources is also required: would good reproduction all fit on one CD? Is it possible to study Machaut in the detail exhibited here without seeing the notations?

I was hoping to combine this with a review of the Hilliard Ensemble's recent Machaut CD. I thought I had received a copy, but can't find it. I was going to buy it, but was offered another copy at the Prom launch party, which hasn't come. Many of the contributions relate to what the listener heard and make us wonder what we should keep our ears attuned for. Did he (or in at least one fictional situation, she) follow a tenor line and tot up how it was put together, or was that something appreciated by studying it on paper? Were they aware of tension between modal expectation and unexpected divergence? Why were the harmonic relationships between three parts carefully defined but ignored between the top two parts in four-part pieces? Perhaps they were never sung together.

The book derives from a conference in Oxford in 2001, with contributions by 18 scholars, mostly concerned with individual pieces. I haven't written about them in detail. Those involved in Machaut research or teaching will have copies for themselves or their libraries already; those outside this circle will find it very hard going. I remember walking out of a conference paper on Machaut with Christopher Page some years ago: he was angry that music he loved could be the subject of academic dissection. Here I think the authors' hearts are in the right place, but expression is difficult. Perhaps scholars should be considering other ways of communicating their thoughts. A multimedia publication, with vision and sound as well as hard text, would be the only way to present many of the ideas here in a manner that could entice the non-professional Machaut enthusiast.

#### BACH: THE OBITUARY

Peter Williams *The Life of Bach*. Cambridge UP, 2004.  
viii + 219pp. hb ISBN 0 421 82636 5 £40.00  
pb ISBN 0 4521 53374 0 £14.99

The earliest life of Bach is the obituary, probably written in the months after Bach's death and published in 1754. It can be read as a whole in *The Bach Reader*. What Peter Williams does here is to split it up into small sections and treat it as a text as the basis for a sophisticated commentary. Its origin in Biblical, classical or medieval text exegesis would have been even clearer if CUP had used a little more typographical imagination in distinguishing text from commentary. Williams is concerned in what lies behind the biographical statements made by C. P. E. Bach and J. F. Agricola: why they were chosen, how did they fit into the conventions of such biographies, how did the authors acquire the information of Bach's earlier days and did they fully understand it, what image were they trying to create. The story is less simple than that of Davitt Moroney's short and excellent *Bach: an extraordinary life* (ABRSM), more focussed than Christoph Wolff's expansive *Johann Sebastian Bach, the Learned Musician* (OUP). The occasionally perverse but always stimulating approach is apparent even before you open the book: what other life of Bach has a view of Dresden on the cover? There is an element of debunking: you may well feel you know less about Bach's life after reading it than you did before. But

the tone is not cynical or destructive. One doesn't often see the word 'fun' in connection with Bach's music (p. 57) or 'sensual' (p. 58). Comparison and contrast with Handel is frequent: was he really as significant a figure in Germany as the book implies? We are told several times that the aspect of Bach's music that distinguishes him from his contemporaries and imitators is his control of harmonic shape and tension. A couple of specific points. Wolff's plausible suggestion that the brother of Bach's *Capriccio* was a fellow-student, not a relative, is ignored (p. 16), while the idea that the harpsichords in St Thomas's were the equivalent of rehearsal pianos in a choir vestry shows either an old-fashioned attitude to their use in church music or else a new viewpoint which needs substantiation. The most speculative idea is relegated to an appendix: a suggestion that Bach's relationship to his eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann was particularly close. Despite the need for economy of space, the indexing of works just by BWV numbers implies a market far more limited than this stimulating book deserves.

As an appendix to this review, I must draw attention to a stimulating article in the latest issue of the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (vol. 57/1) by Daniel R. Melamed on 'The Double Chorus in J. S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* BWV 244' – as opposed to a Matthew Passion with any other BWV number? Accepting the Rifkin/Parrott demonstration that Bach thinks of a chorus as a group of solo voices, and that if you have enough voices for two to a part, to paraphrase Praetorius, you copy out another set of parts and treat them as a separate group, he suggests that Choir II of the Passion is a ripieno group that has to some extent developed a life of its own but which still retains much of its original function. The 'double choir' develops out of the presence of ripienists in the *St John Passion*. I hope our Bach conductors will read it and respond.

#### ANNALS OF MUSIC IN FRANCE 1643-1715

Marcelle Benoit *Les événements musicaux sous le règne de Louis XIV: Chronologie. (La vie musicale en France sous les rois Bourbons, 33)* Picard, 2004. ISBN 2 7084 0712 0

This is a marvellous book to dip into. It takes each year from 1643 to 1715 and lists the events, musical and others, in a standard series of headings. There's rather more text than historical reference chronologies that I've seen, and the musical events are collocated with other happenings of the year. Each year begins with births and deaths, followed by music, then other events. A particularly nice touch is that each year ends with some readable documents: poems, diary entries, a contemporary list of organs built by Jacques Carouge, Perrault on Lully, etc. It is excellent for browsing: possible uses are reading during TV adverts and keeping in the loo), and will be an invaluable source of padding for writers of programme notes about music of the period that they know nothing about! My only criticism is that there should be an index of works, not just of names.

## FASCH CONFERENCE

The theme of the 2003 Fasch-festtage in Zerbst was 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und der italienische Stil' ('JFF and the Italian style'). The conference report (*Fasch-Studien IX*, Anhalt-Edition Dessau ISBN 3-936383-08-1) has just been published. The original 13 papers are supplemented by a transcript of a talk on the final day by the Italian bassoonist, Sergio Azzolini, and an exhaustive index. The subjects discussed ranged from the general 'what is the Italian style?' to the specifics, such as Samantha Owens' extremely interesting exploration of the material held in the Württemberg court collection (including my first acquaintance with Sr. Brescianello, see below on page 28), Michael Talbot's discussion of Vivaldi's relations with Wenzel von Morzin (one of JFF's early employers), and Elena Sawtschenko's introduction to the two JFF pieces that have been returned to Germany as part of the Singakademie Library (apparently she was not given access to the third!) Konstanze Musketa tried (as best as possible) to identify all the Italian music in the Zerbster Concert-Stube (an inventory dated 1743), Janice Stockigt took a fresh look at JFF's Vespers – seeing them from the Dresden perspective of her previous (and on-going) studies of Zelenka – and Barbara Reul examined JFF's use of thematic motifs as a means of building larger shapes within and between movements of his bigger cantatas. In his paper, Brian Clark tried to show that at least some of JFF's music was written with Telemann's music ringing in his ear; going further, he went a little further and said that he appeared to have had some sort of obsessive character defect, and pointed out chords, and rhythmic patterns that pervade eight to twelve movements of an orchestral suite. Azzolini tried to argue that the C minor concerto for 'Basso Concertato' survives only as a set of transposed parts, and that the original was for cello and in D minor. I am not persuaded by his arguments: the copyist was also responsible for several other faulty sets, and the music sounds like bassoon music – and the bottom B flats surely prove it? Trying to argue that it was for bass violin didn't make a lot of sense – why would you then transpose it up a tone to play? Whatever his point of view, he is clearly an advocate of JFF's music that all Faschists will welcome (see the CD review on page 28).

## MUSIC IN RHEIMS

Anything connected with Rheims must be fated! Having been so slow with the Machaut essays (see p. 11), I see that I have also neglected to welcome the first volume of a new journal *Cahiers Rémois de Musicologie*, edited by Jean-Luc Gester (brother of Martin and like him a subscriber to *EMR*) and Marc Rigaudière, and published by the Département de Musicologie of the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne (details from [crm@univ-reims.fr](mailto:crm@univ-reims.fr)). Numéro 1 (Dec. 2003) begins with a survey of local musical sources by Françoise-Pierre Goy; its only other article relating to early music is by Jean-Luc Gester on a *Stabat Mater* by the local composer Henri Hardouin and its relationship to that of Haydn, together with a less close

connection with Pergolesi. The price is €12.00, quite cheap for an academic journal of 134 pages.

## CHORAL PROMS

*The BBC Proms Guide to Great Choral Works*, edited by Nicholas Kenyon. Faber and Faber, 2004. xv + 313pp, £8.99 pb. ISBN 0 571 22096 7

To some extent, the concept of 'great' works is alien to the early-music philosophy that there is such a vast quantity of music to enjoy that having a handful of 'great' ones, performed regularly (as, for instance, the Beethoven nine symphonies used to be at the Proms) obscures a much wider and more varied range of equally good music. Having spent a day singing Dufay's *Missa Ave regina caelorum* recently (a fact I have mentioned at least three times this issue it made a great impression on me, and not only because it's the first time I've sung anything for ages), I'm not prepared to accept that any of the works here have more claim to greatness than that, much as I love the *Glagolitic Mass*, *Les Noces* and *The Dream of Gerontius*. The contributions originated as Prom programmes. Most are, as is now fashionable, quite general: no movement-by-movement guide to how the music is organised or what to listen for. Some go just a bit too far in that direction and keep their distance from the music. An essential feature of the original programmes – the texts and translations – are omitted: fine if you have an extensive CD collection, though frustrating for those who don't. But that would have at least doubled the price of the book. The most interesting writing is the editor's short introduction, which shows an awareness of performance-practice matters that the notes themselves avoid. Having just recently read a highly-critical review of Daniel Leech-Wilkinson's *The Modern Invention of Medieval Music*, I'm glad that Kenyon goes out of his way to mention it and call it 'important'. There's one mistake in my contribution on Monteverdi's Vespers: a subeditor failed to notice that the comment on the alternative Roman and Protestant numbers printed against the psalm titles was irrelevant, since both sets of numbers were cut. And there's one sentence in the introduction to Monteverdi which I hope no-one quotes as mine: it isn't made clear that it (and presumably all the other introductions) are editorial.

Interestingly, the Proms this year include quite a lot of early music, yet it has not been particularly featured in the publicity. One can worry that early music is no longer a selling feature or rejoice that it has been accepted and doesn't need special treatment now. Machaut is mixed with Birtwistle, and is played by the OAE (are there seven suitable harps available?): the other three operas will follow over the next seasons. Apart from *Das Rheingold* (on 19 August) the early-music Proms are listed in the Concert Diary on page 23. We are about to get to work on editing Biber's 'Brussels' Mass for the Prom on 10 August: it is only half the size, vertically, of the 'Salzburg' Mass, but musically superior, so the conductor Paul Goodwin avers.

## MUSIC IN LONDON

Andrew Benson-Wilson

## PAUL O'DETTE'S GOLDEN AGE

A letter writer in the May *EMR* asked why I had a bee in my bonnet about rubato, seemingly suggesting that I might somehow be against it. In fact, I usually write in favour of the use of rubato in performance, only criticising un-stylistically over-romanticised applications. The writer was correct in pointing to Frescobaldi as one example of a composer encouraging the use of a flexible pulse, although I would be very wary of applying his views to other, non-related, musical period and styles. Indeed, Frescobaldi only suggests its use in fairly clearly defined occasions within his own pieces, and an entire Toccata played with the sort of flexibility that he suggests for the opening few bars would sound very strange indeed. An excellent example of a performer who, in my mind, uses a rubato-like fluidity of pulse to great musical affect was Paul O'Dette, in his Purcell Room recital (5 April) 'The Golden Age of English Lute Music'. His gentle easing of the pulse at structural moments was combined with an overall sense of relaxation and fluidity that made absolute musical sense. In Mr Ascue's *Robin Hood*, for example, his gentle lingering on the first note of the bar was delightfully subtle, avoiding the mannered over-punchy articulation that some players seem to favour, but nonetheless also steering clear of the mechanical sameness that can affect other performances. A related point was that at no time did he make a point of the rhythmic complexity or virtuosic nature of some of the pieces, always allowing the music to flow in a relaxed and flowing way. This delicacy of approach also extended to his use of ornamentation, in the opening bars of Johnson's *A Pavan to Delight*, for example. O'Dette's mastery of tone colour is outstanding, as is his control of volume – some of the quieter pieces ended on notes that were almost imperceptible, pulling the audience into the music in a way that excessive volume can never achieve. If his speed of playing occasionally meant that some notes never quite made it, in a performance like this when the musicianship is so high, note accuracy becomes relatively unimportant.

## HILLIARDS AT THIRTY

The most recent anniversary celebration was that of The Hilliard Ensemble (their 30<sup>th</sup>). Like all good parties, theirs extended over two days (Wigmore Hall 30 April and 1 May). The first evening consisted of two concerts reflecting, to an extent, the Hilliards of old, starting with one of their typical programmes combining old and new music, sung by the group's current four core members – David James (who doesn't look old enough to be the only one to have survived for the whole 30-year period), Rogers Covey-Crump, Steven Harrold and Gordon Jones. Alongside contemporary works written for them, they

sang pieces by Fayrfax, Cornysh, Machaut and Sheryngham. Their late night concert was of Gesualdo's *Tenebrae* responsories for Good Friday, and included an additional countertenor and bass to the line-up. It was in the first concert that the unique Hilliard sound was most in evidence – a solid, dependably bass as the bedrock above which are two elegantly lyrical tenors, one with a relatively clean and pure timbre, the other with a more mature and vibrant voice, the whole topped with a distinctive countertenor voice, rich in opening transients and with a distinctly edgy tone. Rather like a broken consort, their individual voices are contrasted rather than coherent, and they produce an instrumental, rather than a strictly vocal sound. Although they include a number of things that HIP purists might not approve of (occasional swoops up to notes, fairly strong vibrato, for example), they have succeeded in producing a sound that is cohesive, exciting and musically telling. They combine this with an unerring ability to capture the soul of the music, both ancient and modern. This came out particularly strongly in their singing of four Machaut motets. The final concert was of music by the composer most associated with the group, Arvo Pärt, together with Bach motets. With the addition of four extra singers, the sound world was a different one, but nonetheless fascinating. Their willingness to break the HIP rules extended to using two sopranos who, to varying degrees, produced a considerable amount of fairly deep vibrato. The higher of these two voices took on a very prominent role, her voice always strongly audible over the other singers – an interesting vocal style for a group that has always prided itself on its cohesion. They included *Ich lasse dich nicht* – an appealing work with the dramatic repetition of the title words appearing throughout the piece. It has wandered in and out of the Bach canon over the last century and a half and is at present in. The vibrato of the sopranos was particularly in evidence during the chorale in the second section, producing a curiously unsettling timbre. It is perhaps invidious to pick out single singers from the group, but two highlights for me were Steven Harrold's excellent phrasing and articulation during his high gamba-like bass line in the 'Gute Nacht' section of *Jesu, meine Freude*, and Gordon Jones's lengthy solos during the Machaut Mass.

## BEZNOSIUK'S MYSTERIES

Although Pavlo Beznosiuk has performed the complete Biber Mystery (Rosary) Sonatas on a number of occasions, the first chance I have had to hear them was at St John's, Smith Square (4 May). Described by one of his fellow performers as 'Parsifal for the baroque violin', this was an extraordinary performance, not least for its length – it started at 6.30 and ended about 10.45, but with lengthy intervals during which six violins were retuned into the

various scordatura tunings. Considering the use that Biber made of the symbols of the Sun and the Moon in his dedication, it was singularly appropriate that this concert should take place during a total lunar eclipse, turning the moon a deep blood red during the second interval. The hall for which these pieces were originally written (the Aula Academica in Salzburg's Benedictine University) was roughly the same shape and size as St John's, Smith Square. We also were aided in our understanding of the force of the original relevant to each piece, with their detailed descriptions of the tiniest detail of the event being depicted. Although there were occasionally some percussive attacks to individual notes, the overall mood of Pavlo Beznosiuk's playing was one of meditatively mellow restraint that, despite the flourishes and the more up-beat mood, he successfully carried over to the *Passaglia* that comes after the final Mystery Sonata. Despite many possibilities for the more aggressive style of violin playing that is often heard these days, I was impressed with this degree of restraint. The 'Scourging at the Pillar' Sonata, for example, gained emotional depth by the avoidance of too literal a description of the event – an interpretation that I detect in Biber's relatively relaxed writing in any case. In this, as in the other Sonata's, Beznosiuk demonstrated a beautiful flexibility of pulse and momentum in his eloquently relaxed playing (dare I call this rubato?) The varied instrumentation and realisations of the continuo group (chitarrone/archlute, viola da gamba and harpsichord/organ) were also particularly effective and sensitive

#### SEASONAL FROLICS

I approached the lunchtime concert by Red Priest (Banqueting House, 10 May) as a fly might be attracted to one of those bluish zapping machines, as the naughty boys and girls of the early music world dragged *The Four Seasons* kicking and screaming out of the lift to give it a good going over. This was certainly Vivaldi, but not as most *EMR* readers would know it. Although Vivaldi must have realised that his 'barking dog' (to take just one example) would sound more doggy if the violin bow was slowly scraped across the strings (and that dogs do not bark in strict time), he was probably never tempted to wander round the audience, barking at the audience before eventually ending up lying on the stage with his legs in the air. And although his Pastoral Dance is lively enough, Vivaldi's score neglects to indicate the interspersed 'whoops' or the slow slither up to the opening phrase. But Red Priest have delved into the world of what Vivaldi might have done if he thought he could get away with it. Of course they can play straight if they wanted to (and they nearly did, once or twice), but so can a lot of other performers. But very few other musicians would have the imagination, guts or rehearsal time to come up with such an exciting piece of performance theatre. This wasn't just playing in an exaggerated style – it was a complete reinvention of Vivaldi's music, with extraordinary sound affects coming from the recorders, violin, cello and harpsichord – and from the performers themselves. For example, the cello was bowed and fingered beyond the bridge, and the

harpsichord included one moment of playing, Praetorius-like, with the nose. All the players (Piers Adams, recorders, Julia Bishop, violin, Angela East, cello, and Howard Beech, harpsichord) displayed astonishing virtuosity. For sheer professionalism and pizzazz, Red Priest are unbeatable. I defy anybody not to find them hugely entertaining.

#### MICHAEL HAYDN

The King's Consort are not the only period group who have been stretching their wings and moving into repertoire that they have not formerly been associated with. In their case, this brought them into the world of 1771 Salzburg, with a well chosen programme of Michael Haydn and the young Mozart, together with a later example of Haydn's work (10 May, Queen Elizabeth Hall). The concert opened with Haydn's large-scale *Missa in Honorem Sanctae Ursulae*, written in 1793 for the Bavarian convent of Frauenwörth, and concluded with his 1771 *Requiem* in C minor, written shortly after the death of his infant daughter and the Archbishop of Salzburg, his patron, and reflecting an intense personal grief. Both works use an orchestra with trumpets, timpani and trombones (doubling the three lower vocal parts) but without violas, and both use an impressive range of orchestral and vocal colour – and deserve to be heard more often. The Gloria of the Ursula Mass has a particularly telling moment during the 'Qui tollis peccata mundi' where the mood shifts to sweepingly lyrical muted strings over a plucked bass with tenor and bass soloists (James Gilchrist and Peter Harvey – both on excellent form). A similar 'slow movement' occurs in the Credo at 'Et incarnatus est', again with muted strings. The held solo cello note at the end of the 'Crucifixus' is magical, as is the mellow 'Amen' of the Gloria, which almost dissolving into nothingness before an *mf* conclusion – these dynamics were particularly well controlled by Robert King. The 'Benedictus' of the same mass, set for soprano soloist, has a melody largely based on arpeggio figures over a simple harmonic structure. Carolyn Sampson was the soloist in this and in an outstanding performance of Mozart's *Regina Coeli*. Mozart gives the five lines of the text distinct interpretations, interspersing almost operatic solo flourishes amongst interjections from the chorus and concluding with a soaring cadenza before the final Alleluia. Carolyn Sampson's produces a vocal tone that reaches the parts untouched by most sopranos, although I do wonder if she will need to pay rather more attention to her vibrato than she has needed to do in the past. Although her very successful transfer to the operatic stage is to be applauded, there were moments in this performance which her vibrato (although it is still has a relatively shallow, and not unpleasant pulse) became just a bit too insistent, and was beginning to affect her normal spectacular intonation, vocal timbre and clarity of ornamentation. She certainly has the ability to sing powerfully without the use of vibrato as a volume turbo-boost.

The Haydn *Requiem* is a powerful work, the depth of emotion being more pronounced by being set with some

relatively lighter textures, notably the blazing major key conclusion to the Kyrie, the trumpets emphasising the major third. I did wonder if the central section of the 'Introit' was a trifle too measured in the pulse of the lower strings (they are set against swirling upper strings), but in general felt that the more relaxed conducting style during this piece (a slow 4 in a bar) produced a more coherent sound from the band and chorus. Robert King's rhythmically strong direction produces an impressively consistent pulse, but can very occasionally lead to the loss of some of the subtlety and attention to detail that works of this classical period tend to demand. There was some excellent choir singing and instrumental playing (including some very well behaved brass), and it was good to have a continuo organ that was audible.

### THREE NUNS

The three sopranos of Concerto delle Donne (Donna Dean, Faye Newton and Gill Ross) translated themselves to a Parisian convent (smuggling in Alistair Ross as organist) for a concert of music by Charpentier, Lully and Couperin (St John's, Smith Square, 20 May). Here, at last, was a vocal concert where vibrato was not an issue. All three singers feature that clear and focussed tone that many of us, rightly or wrongly, have come to think of as the 'early music voice'. Singing in unison, they form a wonderful blend of tone, the subtle difference in tone (and in whatever vibrato they did each possess) giving a sense of depth and life to the unified tone, although there was occasional straining for the highest notes. They demonstrated a good sense of the subtleties of *notes inégale*, although there was some disagreement as to the performance of individual ornaments, some of which came over as being 'applied' to the musical line, rather than forming a coherent and integral part of the flow of the music. As with my last review of this group, I am afraid that I am going to pick out the youngest member for specific comment. Faye Newton continues to be one of my favourite 'early music' singers, and the minor points that I raised above did not really apply to her. She is gaining a much greater stage confidence and a more expressive edge to her voice, whilst retaining her distinctive vocal timbre. Alistair Ross is an inspired continuo player, his unobtrusively simple chordal realisations making the occasional melodic flourish all the more telling and appropriate. He made a brave attempt at playing Couperin's *Offertoire sur les Grands Jeux* from the *Messe pour les Paroisses* (but why not a piece from the Mass for the Convents, to suit the programme?) on the St John's organ but, realising that a the distinctive reed-based *Grands Jeux* could not be produced on this (supposedly eclectic) instrument, played it more or less as a *Plein Jeu*.

### WINCHESTER EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL (20-22 May)

Under the title of 'Early Music Now', a weekend of three concerts formed a tiny early music festival in Winchester, starting in the Cathedral with Compline for the Feast of

the Ascension sung in the 1570 Tridentine Rite. On the following evening, also in the Cathedral, the 'Golden Age of Spain' was explored in a concert given by Ensemble Plus Ultra, the Schola Antiqua of Madrid and His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts, directed by Michael Noone, and reflecting an example of some of the music that might have been heard during a Lady Mass in Toledo Cathedral (then the main church of the Spanish Court) at the start of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Although the programme was supposed to reflect a service from the youth of Philip II, many of the composers heard were dead before he was born and were from a period before the normally accepted 'Golden Age'. The concert reconstruction was based largely on plain-song recently recovered from the vaults of Toledo Cathedral and polyphonic works by Juan de Anchieta (1462-1523) from a manuscript currently at Tarazona Cathedral, together with works by Pedro de Escobar, Pierre de la Rue, Francisco de Peñalosa, Francisco de la Torre and Josquin. The Toledan plainsong was melodic in style, and was sung with a convincing rhythmic structure and an appropriate, and pleasant, lack of professional polish by the (presumably) amateur singers of the Schola Antiqua of Madrid. The works of Anchieta (who had worked at the courts of Isabella and Fernando until he was pensioned off by Charles V) were fascinating, combining polyphony with more chordal writing and making much use of duo textures. The polyphonic works were very well sung by Ensemble Plus Ultra, an eight-strong *a capella* group that included some familiar faces from the London choral scene. Particularly effective was the joint alto line of Clare Wilkinson and Mark Chambers, and the solid bass of Robert MacDonald. A fascinating evening, although I would have liked more information about the evidence for the instrumental and choral forces used in the reconstruction. I also wondered about the lack of an organ – although before the period of Cabezón, Bermudo and de Paiva, I would have imagined that the organ would have played some part in a service of this splendour.

The final concert was in complete contrast to the first two – a full-length version of the Red Priest concert reviewed above. They added other works related to each of the four seasons, including Corelli's Christmas Concerto, played with breathtaking panache, a commendably unslushy Pastorale, and Biber's Crucifixion Sonata from the Rosary/Mystery Sonatas. The later work was played in a very powerful, but fairly straight, way, with a magical ending where the violin and cello strings were only just sounding. But I do wonder if their use of three handclaps to represent the driving of the nails went just a little but too far – not for any religious reasons, but that I felt it didn't work musically in the context of how they had played the rest of the piece.

### LONDON HANDEL FESTIVAL (14 March – 16 May)

This year's London Handel Festival, the 27<sup>th</sup>, featured *Sosarme*, *redi Media* and *Hercules* as the flagship productions, alongside a wide variety of instrumental and vocal concerts, many presented in conjunction with the Royal College of Music

and the Royal Academy of Music. Their annual fully-staged opera was the first London performance in modern times of *Sosarme* and once again took place in the splendid Britten Theatre at the Royal College of Music (I was at the 29 March performance). I won't begin to explain the plot, except to say that it originated in Salvi's account of goings on the late-13<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese royal family in Coimbra, was transferred by Handel to the 7<sup>th</sup> century Lydian royals in Sardes in Turkey, could also reflect similar antics in the Court of George II and also, in this staging, alluded to the more recent Queen Mary. Handel's opera is a lengthy affair, with a seemingly endless sequence of long and rather static arias that, I fear, caused my attention to wander. There is little real momentum to the plot, and what there is grinds to a halt during these arias. The seemingly irrelevant staged events during these arias (which included the lengthy setting up, devouring and putting away of a picnic) only served to accent the paucity of ideas and the lack of dramatic development. The cliché-ridden translation of the text didn't help, and was strangely out of kilter with the period style of the costumes. The soloists and chorus were from the Benjamin Britten International Opera School and the players were, as usual, the London Handel Orchestra directed by Laurence Cummings. The chorus demonstrated very clear diction with well-enunciated consonants, and the band was also impressive, despite a few slips as the evening progressed. Although the soloists were undoubtedly talented, there was far too much of a 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century operatic feel to their vocal production to suit my tastes and, I suggest, Handel's music – this seems to be pretty much a given nowadays but it is a shame that even in the leading London conservatories more effort is being made to train young singers in period singing techniques.

The same thoughts arose from the concert of Handel's nine German Arias (St George's, Hanover Square, 15 April), with the winner of last year's Handel Singing Competition, run by the Festival. Elizabeth Atherton is a fine soprano, with an engaging stage presence and an excellent interaction with the audience – her face is naturally expressive, rather than the off-putting face that some singers apply as a mask. She has a clear, bright voice with a fine sense of projection and a solid grasp of intonation. But if you are Elizabeth Atherton than I wouldn't read any further, because the following comments are not directed at you, but at the judges and organizers of the Handel Singing Competition, and sundry singing teachers. And the main point is that I really do not see the hapless Miss Atherton as a Handelian singer – and I have felt the same about other competition finalists and winners. In fact, there are very few singers appearing in Handel nowadays that I would consider had the sort of voice to project the intimate vocal lines of Handel and similar composers. Notwithstanding all the fine points of her voice, the persistent pulsations of pitch and volume are enormously distracting and adversely affect some of her strongest qualities – intonation being one of them. It was particularly telling in 'Süsse Stille, sanfte Quelle', where Rachel Brown's obbligato flute managed to sound

extremely expressive despite a far narrower dynamic range and far less use of vibrato than the singer. In the intimate setting of a smallish Georgian church, and with music of this intimacy, the singing style was inappropriately operatic. The da capo ornamentation (which was also clouded by the vibrato) and occasional detours on the way to notes was similarly out of keeping with what I would think of as Handelian style, owing more to the style of a later period. In case singers reading this think I am out to get just them, I could make similar points about the cello player in the small group of instrumentalists – in fact, I will. She consistently played too loudly, with a far too romantic use of phrasing and dynamics and an insistent accenting of the first note of each bar that was in sharp contrast to the sensitive and fluid playing of the other musicians. There were also several occasions when she pointedly failed to match the articulation of a phrase that had already been set by the treble instruments. In contrast, the playing of Rachel Brown, flute, Adrian Butterfield, violin and Laurence Cummings on harpsichord, were all excellent – as was the amusing and erudite pre-concert talk by Katie Hawks on Handel's Women. By the way, if you are Elizabeth Atherton, and if you did read this far, then I wish you all the best – I am sure that you will have a glittering career and will make far more money on the operatic stage than as an 'early music' specialist.

Adrian Butterfield is the Associate Director of the London Handel Festival, and leader of the various instrumental groups that come under the 'London Handel' umbrella, but he is not heard so often as a violin soloist. He made up for that with a concert of Schmelzer, Biber, Muffat, Handel, Bach (JS and CPE) and Mozart, with Laurence Cummings (the Musical Director of the LHF) playing the organ, two different harpsichords and a fortepiano (St George's, Hanover Square, 31 March). CPE Bach is a composer whose rise in popularity has been long awaited. His Sonata in C minor (H514) was one of the highlights of the evening. The gorgeously sensuous central *Adagio ma non troppo*, starts with a wide ranging piano melody against long-held violin notes and continuous with some particularly eloquent writing for the piano before the whirligig finale, with its curious central hiatus. Mozart's Sonata in G (K379) included similarly emotive writing for the piano. Adrian Butterfield gave an extremely impressive performance, producing a beautifully warm, mellow and singing tone, which he matched with a sensitively restrained performing style that allowed to music to shine through. For example, in the earlier works, he eased into changes of mood, rather than adopting the abrupt shock tactics of some performers. An excellent concert.

The final concert in the Festival was a concert performance of Handel's 'Musical Drama', *Hercules* (Royal Academy of Music, 11 May). And, at last, I discovered a true Handelian singer. The young Croatian, Renata Pokupic, completely stole the show in the demanding role of Hercules' wife, Dejanira, who gives him hell after he unwisely, brings an attractive young woman home with

him. Although billed as a soprano, and with a range to match, she has a warm and rich mezzo colouring to her voice, Her enunciation and intonation are absolutely perfect, and she can cope with the most demanding of Handel's florid vocal lines and ornaments with remarkable control of articulation and breath. Although she has a degree of vibrato (as most singers do), hers is perfectly acceptable, principally because of its relatively shallow depth, modest speed and well-controlled application. As if her vocal quality wasn't enough, she also has an extremely appealing stage presence. She engages the audience into her musical world, using gently persuasive hand actions and body movements that accurately reflect the music, without giving the appearance of being applied as an afterthought. This, combined with the sheer quality of her voice, gives her an almost unbelievable ability to express the widely varying moods of her role. She has a very special talent. No other singer got near her, either in vocal quality or in sheer stage presence. Michael George's breathy vibrato and frequent dips in volume made much of his vocal lines indistinct – on some of the lower passages his voice almost wasted away. Daniel Taylor's clean countertenor voice was very effective as the herald, Lichus. Two RAM students joined the professional singers – although Edward Lyon (Hyllus) proved agile in the runs, he lacked their power and had a rather intrusive vibrato, as did Lucy Crowe (as Princess Iôle, the cause of Dejanira's worries). She also tended to skim over runs rather than fully engaging with the notes, and also frequently swooped between widely spaced notes. But despite that, I think she has some promise, as shown by her engaging singing of her aria, 'My breast with tender pity swells'. Although there were a number of audible slips in the London Handel Orchestra and Choir (which also included more than their share of wobblers), they were effective overall and were well directed by Laurence Cummings, bringing the pace and momentum needed to keep this lengthy work moving.

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#### PARLEY OF INSTRUMENTS AT 25

##### CONCERT & CD

*Orpheus with his lute Music for Shakespeare from Purcell to Arne* Catherine Bott S, Rachel Brown fl, The Parley of Instruments, Peter Holman dir. 66' 27"

Hyperion CDA67450

Arne, Chilcot, Clarke, Eccles, de Fesch, Greene, Leveridge, Purcell, Smith, Weldon, Woodcock

This issue of the 50th volume of the English Orpheus series, Peter and the Parley's survey of the high a byways of English music, coincides with the 25th anniversary of The Parley of Instruments. Elaine and I attended the middle of the three commemorative concerts (23 April – St George's Day). It must be a decade since I visited the Wigmore Hall in a critic's capacity: I assumed that the refit and change of manager might have produced an

improvement in the location of the critical seats, but we were allocated the far corner of the back row as used to be the case: Elaine likes quiet sounds, but I would have preferred to have been nearer the front.

I'm not in fact going to write a review: it's hardly likely to be unbiased with all those present on the stage being *EMR* subscribers or have family members who are. (In fact, two of our single four-subscription family were on stage.) I enjoyed the concert more than the CD, chiefly because there were fewer songs at a stretch: the CD has an overture and a concerto, but the concert had an additional suite and an interval – perhaps CDs should be planned with an interval too. The live show had the advantage of the visual play from Catherine Bott, which pointed the interaction between her and Rachel Brown. Exchanging notes at the interval, both Elaine and I found that we had focussed our attention on the marvellous continuo playing of Mark Caudle: without it obtruding on us, somehow our eyes as well as ears were held by his sensitive and supporting playing.

This is the 50th disc in the Parley's series with Hyperion 'The English Orpheus', a fascinating collection in which Peter Holman shares his love of English music. Much of it was unknown. Of this disc, Arne's Shakespeare songs of quite often heard, but hardly any of the equally good (perhaps better) ones by Chilcott or J. C. Smith. However, times are getting hard, and Hyperion can no longer back it without help. So a trust has been established and a subscription scheme will be announced to ensure that Peter Holman's trails through the sources can continue – he probably has enough ideas for another 50 discs already.

Two songs from *The Tempest* (Weldon and Purcell) reminded me of a more distant anniversary. Ten years before the foundation of The Parley, Peter had assembled a group of his contacts and mine for a group which, after the first couple of concerts was called Ars Nova. Coincidentally, I came across a box of old programmes, which included one from 1970 for a performance of *The Tempest* mixed with music by Rosenmüller. Not many of the participants are still in the early-music world, but the two lutes were Tricia Homan and Tim Crawford, and the bass viol was Elizabeth Dodd. In those days, when money wasn't involved, two lutes and two keyboards were almost invariable. Standards rose enormously between 1969 and 1979, and a change of name was probably beneficial: it also linked Peter with Roy Goodman, who was one of the best leaders around till he took up conducting.

The audience at the Wigmore Hall showed, though, that interesting programming doesn't necessarily bring in the public. There were hardly more there than turn up for virtually any programme in the Suffolk Villages Festival. Audiences need careful nurturing, and it is difficult to get the enthusiasm in London that some ensembles have managed to instil elsewhere. Programmes like this will not fill the QEH, or St John's Smith Square, and would not suit it anyway (even with a large band). But it would be sad if smaller-scale and non-main-stream concerts vanished from the metropolis.

CB

## G. F. Handel: Non ha più che temere [Giulio Cesare]

23

si sa-rà be-a-ta, com-min-ciò a re-spi-rar,  
or-

si sa-rà be-a-ta, com-min-ciò a re-spi-rar, com-min-ciò a re-spi-rar.

Or vo' tut-to in go-de-re si can-gi il mio tor-men-to, ch'è va-no o-gni la-men-to, se il Ciel mi fà spe-rar, se il Ciel mi fà spe-rar.

men-to, ch'è va-no o-gni la-men-to, se il Ciel mi fà spe-rar, se il Ciel mi fà spe-rar.

ch'è va-no o-gni la-men-to, se il Ciel mi fà spe-rar.

Dal Segno  
[Bar 9]

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## HANDEL ARIAS

We were asked back in April if we could provide the orchestral material for the baroque arias required for the final stages of the Belgian Queen Elisabeth Competition for singers. This happens every four years, and a unique feature is that the singers have to sing with a modern orchestra and also a baroque one – the Academy of Ancient Music. The problem is that there is very little warning of exactly what music will be required. With Verdi and Puccini, you can just phone Ricordi and (at a price) they parts can be couriered from Milan. But not all Handel operas are available so readily, certainly not in editions of the quality the AAM expects. So we were asked if we could provide the music. The draft list of possibles didn't look too difficult: mostly from operas we had complete. But when the final list came, the proportions changed, and Brian Clark and I had a very busy May Day weekend editing and typesetting nine arias, as well as running off ten more that we had already. In most cases, we have the major source (the autograph) on microfilm, as well as a selection of other material that helps see behind the Chrysander scores. We hoped that Paul Goodwin would write for *EMR* about the competition from the conductor's viewpoint, but he ran out of time: perhaps he will produce something for the next issue. If you need Handel arias, come to us – we've just done a couple more for Andreas Scholl.

As a sample, we give a short aria on pp. 18-19. It can be played just with violin, cello and harpsichord, but Handel will have expected all the violins, cellos and double basses, and several oboes and bassoons, with reduced forces (the oboes probably tacet) in the piano sections.



## RAVENS VIEW

Simon Ravens

One by-product of running a 'specialist' music shop has been an exposure to jazz. Five years ago I knew precisely nothing about the subject, but now I have only one question remaining, and it's this: why?

Jazz and I don't get on. I mean, I can listen to Keith Jarrett's improvisations with something just the far side of passing interest, and Bix Beiderbecke can provide a good soundtrack for a meal in a buzzing cafe. But as for actually listening to real jazz in a vaguely engaged way, I'm afraid that I'm no closer to that state of grace than the day someone sat me down with Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*, told me that this was probably the greatest jazz album ever, and promptly watched me fall asleep. Well, with Miles Davis I'm quite prepared to accept that the fault lies with my musical circuitry and not his: too many people whose judgement I respect really do value his music for me to dismiss it. But I feel differently about the average trio playing 'standards', replete with those tedious little solo riffs which people actually *applaud*. At the risk of repeating myself, why?

And you might be wondering what relevance this little rant has to early music? Well, one of the chief ways of making Baroque music sound trendy is to liken it to jazz...

Those who sing and play well have to give time to one another, and they have to sport with gracefulness of imitations rather than with too subtle artifices of counterpoints. They will show their art in knowing how to repeat well and promptly what another player has done before. This is done nowadays not only by the most excellent, but also by the ordinary players.

...No, that's not me being quaintly opinionated about jazz. It's Pietro della Valle stating the obvious about the music of his own time – back in 1640. But whether applied to Rome in the time of Frescobaldi, or New Orleans in the time of Sidney Bechet, I suspect those words have a fairly common currency.

I first heard the jazz-Baroque analogy when I was at school in the late seventies. In those days I didn't use 'jazz' as a pejorative term, so straight away the analogy struck me as fairly sound. Or at least, it struck me as sound in theory. All that business about the Baroque score offering the performer a framework for extemporisation and improvisation had an obvious parallel in jazz. There was even talk about how Baroque music and jazz both offered performers the chance to listen and respond to each other's departures: again, to impressionable ears that sounded highly plausible. The trouble was, back then, that this nice theory really didn't tally with the Baroque music I was actually hearing. An early John Eliot Gardiner recording of a Handel oratorio, for instance – where

precisely was I supposed to find the jazz in that? Even within a Kuijken recording of a Corelli sonata – a form that lends itself less to militaristic control – I could hear freedom, but no evidence that the performers were offering dares to each other.

Dares. Whether or not I warm to the end result, I think that 'dares' are fundamental to the way that the best jazz groups have always operated. And nowadays, I think I can make the same claim for Baroque ensembles, even – and this is where Pietro della Valle's words really strike home – amongst ordinary players.

Of course, a dare – even a successful one – is not an end in itself. It can as easily indicate boredom as inspiration. A Sunday biker overtaking at 90 mph on a snaking road may find his exploits reported in Monday's paper, but unlike the winning rider at Brand's Hatch, only if his dare fails. Whereas the racer stands to achieve money, fame and, in all probability, the girl, I can't see what the amateur hopes to gain apart from an escape (temporary or permanent) from a bored life. (As I write this I'm anticipating vitriolic responses to this column – from all jazz-loving superbiking readers of *EMR*.)

The acid test for a musical dare is less black and white. The test itself may be fairly objective – if it intensifies the essence of the music it is successful – but assessing the result is ridiculously subjective. Who can say what the essence is, and without that knowledge, who can say whether it is being intensified?

Which brings me back to personal taste. I like Baroque music and I don't like jazz. Or is it quite so personal? One curiosity I have noticed, and one which chimes with my own prejudices, is that remarkably few customers in Grove Music buy jazz and Baroque music. There are as many differences as similarities between the two (show me the B Minor Mass of jazz, or come to that the *Bitches Brew* of the Baroque) but I suspect that the greatest gulf between the two is simply the clothes they appear in: to those from either background who aren't familiar with the other culture, the graceful attire of the Baroque, and the smoke-infused garb of jazz probably only serve to obscure similar beings.

For me, I think I will stick to the Baroque. So many Baroque performers now seem to embody the principles outlined by Pietro della Valle and his ilk, it seems invidious to identify individuals and recordings, but in subtly different ways, Hesperion XXI's *Ostinato* (AV9820), the *Ciaconna* recording of Buxtehude by Stylus Phantasticus (Alpha 047) or Andrew Manze and Richard Egarr's Corelli (HMU907298/9) all make me wonder whether at last I am listening to the true spirit of jazz and, (shock, horror), enjoying it.

## CD REVIEWS

## 15th CENTURY

Dufay *Missa Se la face ay pale* Diabolus in Musica, Antoine Guerber dir 67' 05" Alpha Productions Alpha 051

Having spent a day singing a Dufay mass recently, I was eager to hear another. The ordinary is set among the propers for Trinity Sunday, probably also by Dufay. The ensemble comprises two voices a part, which the director argues was the norm but goes against David Fallows' conclusion that there were usually more voices on the top line – perhaps that is only if they were boys. The performance is good in that the individual parts are clear without any artificial attempt to differentiate them. The mellifluous lines are fine, but the little tensions between the parts are underplayed: the music sounds more uneventful than it is. Perhaps the style and tempo are calculated for sounding throughout a large cathedral rather than for a chapel within it. But certainly worth acquiring. CB

## 16TH CENTURY

Byrd *Music for a Hidden Chapel* Chanticleer 51' 58" Harmonia mundi Classical Express HCX 3955182 £ Ave Regina coelorum, Regina caeli, Salve Regina, Propers as for Paschal Time and the Assumption

It's no crime to reissue a 1987 release in 2004, but giving it not only a new cover design but also a new album title savours just a little of sharp practice. To be sure, calling the original HMC 905182 *Missa in tempore paschali* was plain wrong (the programme comprises a dozen pieces from the two sets of *Gradualia*, among which only five are proper to the Paschal season); the new title lies somewhere between allusive and meaningless, which is probably an improvement. As for the performances themselves, the phrases are shaped intelligibly and not over-dramatised. The prevailing texture is two or three voices to a part, with a few short passages assigned to solo voices for contrast. It may be instructive to hear the falsetto sopranos (and altos) who give Chanticleer its claim to distinctiveness: do they perhaps give a clue to how 16th-century Spanish 'sopranists' might have sounded? But over a whole CD the sonority becomes monotonous and rather wearing, and the intonation is sometimes shaky – note that I say that as one who's not famously fastidious about tuning. At

all events, the music is always worth hearing. The booklet retains Philip Brett's useful notes but omits the sung texts, a loss for which the names of the 12 singers, omitted last time, are inadequate compensation. Erik Van Tassel

Byrd *Consort Songs* Robin Blaze cT, Concordia 67' 21" Hyperion CDA67397

Long-time readers may recall my complaining that the falsetto alto has, of its essence, too narrow an expressive range to do justice to various repertoires. The consort song is a supreme exception: nature has armoured the best falsettists against any tendency to emote with the voice in a manner appropriate to Italian madrigals or their operatic and monodic successors. Robin Blaze does just what this music requires. He has a sweet voice and moulds a melodic line gracefully; most important, he declaims the words simply and clearly. On the rare occasions when he does overact a bit, it's usually in the second or subsequent stanza of a strophic song (such as *All as a sea*). There are quite a few strophic songs here, incidentally, and the stanzas aren't short-changed (as too often happens). But when he rephrases or ornaments his line on later stanzas, it may imply a misplaced fear that the listener will be bored. Our ancestors seem to have tolerated a lot of repetition, and we should try to match that mindset more often. This CD comprises 13 songs, of which only a few can reasonably be called familiar favourites (*Ye sacred muses; Lullaby my sweet little baby*). In three songs, the polyphonic accompaniments are reduced for the lute: though this seldom sounds really convincing, Elizabeth Kenny does her elegant best with the task. But I can't hear any merit in having her play along with the viols in one song. I wish Concordia would let more air and silence into their phrasing, but at least they do listen attentively to the singer and to each other. All in all, a welcome addition to the inadequate consort-song discography. Eric Van Tassel

Henestrosa *El arte de fantasia* Andrew Lawrence-King. The Harp Consort Harmonia Mundi HMU 907316 68' 42" Music by Cabezón, Crequillon, Josquin, Mudarra, Narváez, etc., transcribed by Luis Venegas de Henestrosa

Luis Venegas de Henestrosa published his *Libro de cifra nueva para tecla, arpa & vihuela* in 1557. It contains 138 intabulations, notated as for keyboard but intended also

for harp and vihuela, of a wide range of music, mostly Spanish (especially Cabezón) but also including international hits. The embellishment involved in the process of intabulation is used here as a guide and starting-point for the free improvisation that is at the centre of the style of The Harp Consort. They may sometimes exaggerate, but their performances are brimming with life and one can sense what a group of renaissance Spanish musicians might get up to when playing with the freedom and imagination that was expected of them. I haven't checked the extent to which what they play corresponds with what Henestrosa printed – that would be contrary to the spirit of the disc. But it carries this listener at least along with it, and it is mostly convincing enough for me not to care. The tour de force is the inventive and well-shaped ten-minute improvisation on *Conde claros* (the three-chord Bergamask). Those who like curiosities will find the 40-part *Unum colle Deum* here, though don't expect anything to match Striggio or Tallis. Some pieces that are not improvisation do stand out: I first played the disc before checking titles and a couple of pieces that turned out to be by Cabezón were clearly in a different league, though I was less impressed by the group of his *Ave maris stella* settings. Do buy it – not just to enjoy but to be inspired to play with less regard to what is written. CB

Lassus *Il Canzoniere di Messer Francesco Petrarca* Huelgas-Ensemble, Paul Van Nevel 51' 39" Harmonia mundi HMC 901828

It is unbelievably arrogant for a director to issue a disc of madrigals with no performers named. That, however is the only criticism of this disc of ten of the 60 settings of texts Petrarch texts that Lassus made. The disc is also a demonstration of many ways in which music that was (and is) published as if for voices only can be scored. Instrumental participation works particularly well with Lassus, since he retained a contrapuntal approach, while as the century progressed, native Italian madrigalists grew more concerned with a word-based kaleidoscope of textures (more important than the 'melodic line decorated with virtuoso flourishes' which the booklet note mentions). Is it imagination that makes me feel that the performances feel a little too directed rather than internally generated? That apart, this is a very fine recording. CB

Malvezzi *Madrigali a 5 e 6 voci* Musica Figurata 55' 56"  
Tactus TC 541301

Since no record label explores the madrigal repertoire with the zeal that CPO brings to the German *Kleinmeister*, any CD devoted to an otherwise unfamiliar madrigalist deserves a welcome. Most of us know Cristofano Malvezzi (1543–1599) only as a major contributor to the 1589 Florentine *intermedi*. In this selection from his two surviving books of madrigals – *I a5* of 1583, *I a6* of 1584 – Malvezzi accepts some of the opportunities for word-painting or affective writing offered by the poetry of Petrarch or Sannazaro, but he seldom does so as eagerly or vividly as Marenzio or Wert would do. Basically this is competent, rather conservative polyphony, still suitable for amateur performers despite the late date. The most satisfying tracks on the CD are the five pieces *a5* performed by voices alone. Three madrigals *a6* are sung by two voices with recorder, three trombones and organ: they might as well have been performed – as two others from that book are – just with instruments, for it's both difficult and unrewarding to try to follow the words and appreciate what Malvezzi makes of them. Less frustrating are three madrigals *a5* given to the full vocal complement with instruments *colla parte*, but to my ears the instruments add nothing to make up for the loss of clarity they impose. Three pieces from the 1589 *intermedi*, here sung by the soprano with harpsichord alone, seem disappointingly short-winded shorn of their original grandiose context. Nor do I think the three short keyboard pieces add much to the programme. The five singers, whose names are all new to me, show that the essential idea of consort singing is no longer a great rarity among younger Italians. I'd like to hear more polyphonic madrigals from these singers, without instrumental sidemen – perhaps the Gabrielis, or the unjustly neglected Gagliano.

Eric Van Tassel

Merulo *O Virgo Justa – Motetti e musica strumentale* Laura Antonaz S, Pietri Pasquini org, Quoniam 56' 37"  
Tactus TC 533802

Had I been asked in abstract whether there was any future for a renaissance-bassoon quintet, I would have said 'no' without much thought, and would have been wrong. This disc includes nine of his motets, along with ensemble canzonas and organ pieces. As the booklet says, the motet settings are closely responsive to the meanings of the texts, and the use of a single voice with sympathetic accom-

paniment is as good a way of expressing this, as we know from many performances with solo voice and viol consort. An advantage is that the speeds relate more closely to speech than in normal choral counterpoint. I wasn't quite as convinced by the singer as by the *fagotti*, chiefly because her vibrato seemed to come with the voice rather than be something used for specific expressive purposes. The organist hasn't completely surmounted the usual problem with the solo repertoire of the period of relating the runs to their harmonic basis: is the best practice technique to get the chords sounding right (particularly their ends) before adding them? There is a bit of a buzz to the sound, but pleasing rather than irritating. Don't hesitate to sample this intriguing ensemble, an inspiration to all curtal players. CB

*I look forward to the chance to get the curtals at the Beauchamp Summer School next month to experiment with the Venetian motets that Alan Lumsden is busy typesetting for us.*

Victoria *Missa pro Victoria* Le Parlement de Musique, Martin Gester dir. 66' 22"  
Accord 465 411-2 (rec. 1998)  
Also music by du Caurroy, de Heredia, Nanino & Sweelinck

Noel O'Regan reviewed this (under its previous number 206782) five years ago in *EMR* 51. He found the programme, for the 400th anniversary of the Peace of Vervins between Henry IV and Philip II, intriguing, despite being conjectural, and concluded: 'singing and playing are sensitive to stylistic differences, ornamentation is sensibly applied, and the result is a disc which allows interesting comparison of five contemporary composers working in different parts of Europe.' CB

*Ancient Airs and Dances* Paul O'Dette Hyperion Helios CDH 55146 ££ (rec 1986)

This is a truly excellent recording. Paul O'Dette has taken the music used by Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936) for his orchestral suites *Ancient Airs and Dances* and returned them to the lute. How refreshing at last to hear dance music played on a lute as if for dancing, not turned into an excuse for yet another introverted rambling ricercar. O'Dette combines foot-tapping rhythms with the charm and grace we expect of the lute. He gets it just right.

The CD opens with Molinaro's gentle *Ballo Il Conte Orlando*, followed by an invigorating saltarello. There are battle effects in *Mascherada*, a clean, crisp ostinato in *Italiana*, and sad, nostalgic moments in *Campanae Parisiensis*. O'Dette is joined by John Holloway's violin for Caroso's lively

*Laura soave*; Nigel North adds a bass lute for a haunting *Branles de village*; and Rogers Covey-Crump sings seven contrasting airs de cour including a charming *Divine Amaryllis*. For Gianoncelli's *Tasteggiata* and *Bergamasca* O'Dette switches to an archlute, necessary for an extraordinary combination of treble notes high up the neck, supported by deep growling diapasons. The CD ends quietly with a reflective *passacaglia* by Roncalli played on baroque guitar. Stewart McCoy

*The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* Byron Schenkman hpscd, Maxine Eilander harp Centaur CRC 2638  
Anon, Bull, Byrd, Farnaby, Edward Johnson, Morley, Philips, Picchi, Sweelinck, Tomkins, Warrock

The two paperback volumes of Fuller Maitland and Barclay Squire's edition of the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* in the Dover paperback reprint were my first introduction to Elizabethan and Jacobean music, as I suspect they were for many others; I still have my well-thumbed copies, acquired as a schoolboy in 1964. At that time there were virtually no critical editions of the works of English Renaissance keyboard composers, so it was more common than it is today to base concerts and recordings on particular manuscripts such as the FWVB. In recent years we have become aware that the musical texts in the FWVB are of variable quality, that Francis Tregian (he is still the most likely candidate as copyist, despite recent claims to the contrary) used some odd notational conventions, that the manuscript has a number of misattributions, and that Fuller Maitland and Barclay Squire were non too accurate in their editing. None the less, as this anthology of 22 pieces demonstrates, the FWVB contains a fascinating cross-section of the virginal repertory, ranging from the simple (anonymous settings of *Barafostus' Dream* and *Packington's Pound*) and the banal (the pavan and galliard by Thomas Warrock or Warwick) to the sublime (Byrd's settings of *O mistress mine* and Dowland's *Lachrimae*).

Byron Schenkman is one of the most prominent American harpsichordists of the younger generation, and has earned a reputation as a gifted and thoughtful player, so it is disappointing that this recording does not really live up to expectations. There are some good things about it. The harpsichord, a copy of the 1693 Giusti in the Smithsonian, sounds wonderfully sonorous in its quarter-comma mean-tone tuning, and Schenkman clearly has a formidable technique, dispatching some of the more brilliant passages of divisions

with aplomb. He also captures the mood of some of the simpler pieces effectively, such as Farnaby's fine setting of the corant-like *Old Spagnoletta* and Peter Philips's *Galliard* in G (no. 87). However, too often I found his tempos too slow. The pavans are particularly painful: the beautiful *Lachrimae*-inspired A minor pavan by Thomas Morley (no. 153) and the Byrd setting of *Lachrimae* are played at about the half the speed that a consort would play them, and Tregian's *Heaven and Earth* (an odd setting of a mid sixteenth-century pavan that became associated with Wyatt's poem) must be about quarter speed. Part of the problem seems to be that Schenkman tends to assume that the pulse is always in crotchets, whereas it often should be in minimi. This is particularly evident in Philips's setting of Caccini's *Amarilli, mia bella*, where a glance at the polyphonic original (printed in the recent *Musical Britannica* edition of Philips's keyboard music) shows that Schenkman is much too slow; what should be brilliant divisions merely sound whimsical. Also, in some of the triple-time pieces, such as Byrd's settings of *O mistress mine* and *Callino casturame*, the tempo is too slow and the playing too lumpy for the lilting quality of the tunes to come through. At the end of the CD Schenkman plays two pieces, Picchi's strange toccata and Farnaby's 'For Two Virginals', with the harpist Maxine Eilander. While the Farnaby, a 'master and pupil' piece, is quite effective on harpsichord and harp, the added harp continuo only muddies the texture of the Picchi, and provides a few uneasy moments when its tuning does not match that of the harpsichord. *Peter Holman*

*Il liuto a Venezia* Massimo Lonardi 54' 29"  
Nalessi Records N. R. 020  
Music by Abondante, Barbetta, Bianchini, Borrono, Capirola, Crema, Dalza, Francesco da Milano, Galilei, Gorzanis, Spinacino

Massimo Lonardi presents a balanced anthology of renaissance lute music from manuscripts and printed books from Venice: lively dances, dreamy recercars, ground-based pass'e mezzos, and a florid intabulation of Claudio de Sermisy's evergreen *Tant que vivray*. The internationally eclectic character of the city port of Venice is well represented in these pieces, which include an exciting, almost flamenco-like Moresca *Le Canarie*, a bouncy *La Volta* from France, and *L'Orso* from Russia ending where the CD began with a succession of bare fifths on C.

Lonardi is an erstwhile student of Hopkinson Smith, and has developed an impressive technique. He produces a consistent tone colour, which is soft, rounded, precise, and very expressive. The overall effect is very pleasant on the

ear. How these pieces are performed is, of course, a personal matter, yet for my taste there is sometimes a little too much rubato and rolling of chords, particularly in some (but not all) of the dance pieces. Capirola's *Padoana* is over-rolled and loses its pulse, whereas Dalza's *Calata* rattles along nicely with a few strums thrown in for good measure, and a long fade-out ending sounding as if the needle is stuck. Least satisfactory is Abondante's *Gagliarda Venetiana*, which is at times quite arhythmic. The recercars of Spinacino and Milano invite a certain amount of freedom where the player appears to be seeking something as he explores the music, and here Lonardi is at his most expressive, creating a variety of moods and effects. Milano's Ricercar 33, with its succession of calm well-shaped phrases interspersed with sudden flurries of extremely fast notes is particularly memorable.

*Stewart McCoy*

**The Sienna Lute Book** Jacob Heringman  
Avie AV0036 72' 06"  
Francesco da Milano etc.

The Siena Lute Book (The Hague, Gemeentemuseum, MS 28.B.39) is an important collection of over 150 pieces for the lute, mostly fantasies and ricercars. It was compiled in Siena c. 1590, but much of the repertory is retrospective, going back to the early part of the 16th century. Composers include Francesco da Milano, Fabrizio Dentice and Perino Fiorentino.

Jacob Heringman's thoughtful interpretation invites the concentrated listening needed to appreciate these extraordinarily beautiful miniatures. Never hurried, he invites us into a world of sophisticated melancholy. Yet the music is not static. There is flowing lyricism in the anonymous *Passemezo del giorgio*, and carefully stated points of imitation grow into scurrying bursts in Francesco da Milano's *Ricercata*. Heringman's ability to sustain the intensity of these pieces is shown in his restrained, well-poised performance of the two virtuosic fantasias (tracks 10 and 12) by Fabrizio Dentice. The last track, also by Dentice is particularly lovely. The opening *Fantasia* by Francesco da Parigi contains some surprising dissonances. The false relation at 45" is bad enough, but the one at 2' 29" is utterly painful. Ouch!

For two anonymous settings of *La Spagna detta Lamire*, Heringman is joined by *tenorista* Lynda Sayce, whose chords provide the tenor, while he explores the full range of the lute with bustling, yet graceful single-line divisions. Heringman's reconstruction of the *Lute 2 part* has the *Spagna* tenor in the bass throughout – unlike Francesco da Milano's lute duet setting, but with the precedent of Diego Ortiz.

Not all the music is from the Siena manuscript. Tracks 7-9 are from the Medici Lute Book (Haslemere, Dolmetsch Library, MS II C23), believed to have been copied by the scribe of the Siena Lute Book. Lutenists will perhaps be interested to hear the anonymous *Balletto*, which has remarkable similarities with John Dowland's *Lady Hunsden's Puffe*. Who was copying whom?

According to the CD cover, three bonus tracks may be downloaded via the internet from [www.magnatune.com](http://www.magnatune.com).

*Stewart McCoy*

**War and Faith** Il Terzo Suono, Dalcanto, Chorus Beatorum, La Fenice, Il Suonar Parlante, Gian Paolo Fagotto dir. 65' 10"

Music by Gabrieli, Mainerio, Merulo, Werrecore + chant & organ music

Jannequin's iconic battle madrigal for the French victory at Marignano is coupled with the lesser known piece on the same model by Werrecore, celebrating the later Milanese victory. Around these are some of the myriad battle-inspired pieces, from intonazioni by Gabrieli to Mass movements by Mainerio. The Mainerio was the real discovery, since he is mostly known for less substantial dance pieces. There are some really surprising moments and a tenderness in places – despite the battle model, and despite the all too ubiquitous addition of percussion in incongruous contexts. The battle pieces themselves have no percussion. In the Werrecore the rendition is in character for battles, if not over the top, especially since it sounds as if the performers themselves feel uncertain how to deal with their newly granted freedom. The Jannequin is performed instrumentally, and although excellently played by La Fenice, should surely have been sung, as the pivot point for the whole idea.

*Stephen Cassidy*

## 17th CENTURY

**Cataldo Amodei** Emma Kirkby, Jakob Lindberg, Lars Ulrik Mortensen 78' 37"  
BIS BIS-CD-1415  
B. Storace *Passagagli sopra Alamire* (hpscd)  
Giovanni Zamboni *Sonata in c archlute*

Why have I not previously heard a note of Amodei (1649-93)? He was a Sicilian who spent his working life in Naples, where his reputation was high. He wasn't a prolific composer, but judging from this disc, he deserves to be widely performed. Of course, he couldn't have better advocates. The chamber cantata is a difficult medium: the music is often as dramatic as opera, yet to get the right ambience, it must sound smaller-scale without feeling restrained.

Emma Kirkby has the power when needed (the *Va'* that begins the third cantata is quite devastating if you've turned the volume up for the preceding archlute sonata), but throughout she avoids the hard edge that some singers give to their voices when being dramatic: she always sounds pleasing, drawing you into the music and what it represents. She sings with the utmost confidence, with a subtle freedom that interacts with the brilliant accompaniment. She really is at the top of her form here (and it is characteristic that it is in such obscure music). The harpsichord realisation is quite elaborate, but convincing, and the sections just with archlute or theorbo don't sound weak in comparison. There is no cello or bass viol, nor is there any audible or theoretic need for one. If you want to sample one piece, take the last. One quibble with the booklet: each piece is described as 'for voice and harpsichord' or whatever: it is easy to read 'for' as implying 'composed for': it is helpful for booklets to give the accompaniment, but please distinguish between original scorings and modern choices. (I presume that Amodei just provided bass lines I haven't seen any scores.) I've been very enthusiastic about several discs this month, but if you can only buy one, make it this for its marvellous singing, brilliant accompaniment and an amazing 'new' composer.

CB

**Biber** *The Rosary Sonatas* Pavlo Beznosiuk *violins*, Paula Chateauneuf *theorbo & archlute*, David Roblou *hpscd & org*, Richard Tunnicliffe *gamba & violone*, Timothy West *reader*  
Avie AV 0038

These CDs were released shortly after the performers gave a concert of them on the anniversary of Biber's death (see review on p 13). The line-up is something of a dream team, and their interpretations are bound to be welcomed by Biber enthusiasts around the world. The length of the set is something of a problem: either you short-change the customer by giving them two hardly full CDs, or you find some way of padding them out. Here, the second option is taken, and readings from contemporary Rosary books precede each of the sonatas. When we were talking about his, CB made a very valid point: they are OK *per se*, but it's unlikely that you would want to listen to them as often as you might wish to hear the music. Of course one can programme the player to omit the tracks (and in saying this, I mean no disrespect to Timothy West, who does a splendid job of bringing the texts to life, although I could do without being told how many *Aves* and *Pater nosters* I have to say in the course of the event!) but I did

find them slightly distracting. Again, it's something that might work better live. The playing is, as one would expect, of the very highest order. I listened to it first just as a performance, and then with the score. The former was slightly more successful, as following the notes merely confirmed what I'd thought about the liberties taken with them. I know that they are merely a guide, and I know also the Pavlo and his team are such virtuosi that technical challenges are few and far between, so they can do things with the music; I also know that we all write dynamics and accentuations into our parts to remind us to do a particular thing in performance. I'm just not sure that some of the things I heard were what I want to hear – even if they are representative of the nails going into the cross, or whatever. If you don't know the sonatas, you'll possibly be very excited by these performances and wonder what on earth I'm going on about. Unfortunately, I do know them quite well, and I will still take the Walter Reiter recording off the shelf before anyone else's, I'm afraid.

BC

**Colombini** *Concerti ecclesiastici – Motetti concertati* Modo Antiquo, Bettina Hoffmann dir. 67' 06"

Tactus TC 585301

This recording has a great deal to recommend it. The music is inventive and unpredictable, though firmly based in the style of its time (1628-38), when Colombini was organist in Massa (on the Italian coast between Genoa and Pisa) under the patronage of Prince Carlo Cybo Malaspina. Colombini's sacred works for two, three, four and five solo voices were popular in his own time, and should become so now, if this recording achieves the wide audience it deserves. The disc also includes a group of instrumental dances from the Foà MSS in Turin, in a very different but quite delightful style: it has been suggested that these are actually by Francesco Colombaro, but in any case they make a pleasant interlude in this collection of vocal music, and are beautifully played, especially by the sensitive organist Giulia Nuti.

The singers are excellent advocates for Colombini as a predominantly ecclesiastical composer who was evidently somewhat tempted towards the secular. Their interpretations are led by the words, and rarely have I heard such clear enunciation: it is a pleasure for the listener to be freed from the booklet texts (which in this case could much more usefully have given translations). These singers have got right inside the music too, and understand just what the composer intended by his madrigalian effects.

'Estote fortes in bello' (be strong in war) is sung pugnaciously, with great energy, in contrast to the lovely quiet, passionate singing of words from the Song of Songs, e.g. in *Sonet vox tua*, or the sensual, amorous rendering of *Dulcis amor Iesu* – scarcely this side of the sacred/secular border! The three men are well matched; the women blend less well, but all have distinctive, individual voices, and are impressively accomplished in delivery and ornamentation. Word-endings are sometimes heavy, but there is little to fault in this highly enjoyable disc.

Selene Mills

**Corelli** *Sonates op. 5/7-12* Musica Antiqua 52' 20"

Integral Classique INT 221.130 (rec. 1997)

This CD is altogether more successful than its predecessor. It has a lot to do, I think, with the nature of the music. Where the first six sonatas are *da chiesa* in style and involve such violinistic things as double and triple stopping, these six are *da camera* and are full of dances, which transfer to the wind instrument without the inevitable loss of idiom. The players also seem more relaxed than before – again, this may just be because the music fits the instruments better, and the disc is a far more pleasant experience. At the end of the day, though, I prefer my Corelli on the violin and I doubt if the recorder player who can convince me otherwise actually exists.

BC

**Frescobaldi** *Canzoni* Bruno Cocset, Les Basses Réunies 64' 51"

Alpha Productions Alpha 053

Composers who fail to specify the instrumentation for their music do rather lay themselves open to the unexpected. Frescobaldi's *Canzoni*, published in parts for one to four instruments and continuo and in *partitura* in 1628, and re-issued with many significant differences and additional pieces in 1634 are a case in point. Some parts do have the suggestion of *violino over cornetto* and *basso ad organo*, but I wonder what the composer would have made of a canzona for two trebles and two basses performed by a pair of 'tenor violins' (mini cellos tuned an octave below the violin) playing the top parts down an octave, two 'bass violins' in B flat and a continuo section of double bass (down the octave again), theorbo, harp, harpsichord and organ! This makes for a colourful but very bottom-heavy sound, some over-exposed high-lying organ realisations, and in this resonant recording acoustic tends to make the players of the higher parts over-articulate. The result is an unduly aggressive approach to the faster sections of these

quixotic pieces. Nevertheless this recording does give an excellently chosen cross-section of Frescobaldi's canzonas, expressively chromatic and brilliantly virtuosic by turns, ranging in style from noble polyphony in four parts to flamboyant solos for a bass instrument, here taken by Cocco on a bass violin in C. His addition of bastarda-type divisions and a fast *flattement* help to elucidate Frescobaldi's historical position between renaissance and baroque approaches to performance, but I do wish he would not land with quite such a thud on so many cadences. It is a shame that William Dongrois' fluid cornet playing is limited to just four of the 21 tracks, but I guess a real soprano instrument is out of place in an ensemble whose unique selling point seems to be its profundity of pitch. *John Bryan*

Mayone *Primo libro di diversi Capricci per sonare* (Napoli 1603) Francesco Tasini *hpsc'd 79' 09'*

Tactus TC 571301

Mayone's (usual spelling) keyboard music was first brought to public attention by Christopher Stembidge, who has edited and recorded this and the second book (both on DHM 05472 77247-2). It is thus odd that the CD under review here is labelled 'world premiere recording' – unless it refers to the very fine-sounding anonymous 18th-century Ferrarese harpsichord. This is recorded quite closely and with lots of resonance which allows Tasini to play the music rather slowly. This works best in the contrapuntal Ricercars and Canzonas; in the toccatas, madrigal intabulation and variations I find the playing overly reflective and lacking the element of virtuoso showmanship which must have been part of its original attraction. Tasini tends to take Mayone's written-out ornamentations rather too literally and at a slow face value, adding his own ornamentation on top, rather than letting Mayone's rip, especially in the volume's tour-de-force, the Rogiero variations. Still, it's good to have a second opinion on this music and, while I prefer Stembidge's approach, Tasini's thoughtful renditions do have new insights to communicate. *Noel O'Regan*

Monteverdi *The Sacred Music* – 2 The King's Consort, Robert King 67' 24" Hyperion SACDA67438

The second volume of The King's Consort's Monteverdi Sacred Music series focuses on pieces from the posthumous 1650 publication, together with solo and duet motets that were collected in other anthologies during his lifetime. These include the ever-fresh *Currite populi*, sung

here in a slightly hectoring tone by James Gilchrist, and rather more suave contributions from Charles Daniels and the two sopranos. Carolyn Sampson generally sounds more at ease than Rebecca Outram, but their rather different vocal colours do help to differentiate the intertwining parts of *O beatae viae*. Peter Harvey tackles the highly-ornamented version of the solo *Laudate Dominum* with aplomb, and it is good to hear Rogers Covey-Crump's apparently effortless high tenor floating through the texture of *Exultent caeli*. This is the only piece on the disc to use the two violins and three sackbuts of the King's Consort (and then for only just over a minute): the rest of the programme eschews these colours in favour of an organ and chitarrone continuo which allows the vocal lines to predominate. The main course here is the four-part mass of 1650, performed by an excellently blended choir with a couple of falsettists joining sopranos on the low-lying top part. The music is a curious mixture of utilitarian economy and moments of deep expressivity. There might well have been more opportunities for the latter if King had allowed the contrapuntal phrases to rise and fall a little more gracefully, and at a more thoughtful pace: at times it feels as though he is over anxious to reach the next cadence. No such worries trouble Monteverdi's beautifully understated *Litany of the Blessed Virgin*: the performance here warms to the composer's passing dissonances and judicious chromaticisms with heart-felt sensitivity. Forget all the florid decorations of the solo music, however brilliantly despatched: this is a real case of 'less is more'. *John Bryan*

Monteverdi *Quarto Libro di Madrigale* La Venexiana, Claudio Cavina 61' 10" Glossa GCD 920924

Great pains have been taken over this heartfelt rendition of some of the best-known of Monteverdi's five-part madrigals. For some, it will seem over-worked and over-dramatic, but it presents a distinctive and committed interpretation which cannot fail to impress. As usual with La Venexiana, enormous liberties are taken with timing: rapid or gradual accelerandi and ritardandi are widely used, together with equally dramatic contrasts of volume. The silence after the first iteration of *Si, ch'io vorrei morire* is particularly effective, even at its repeat. On the other hand, I see no point in slowing down so much after 'Quell'augellin che canta' for 'si dolcemente' – but Cavina obviously thought it made sense. I do enjoy the freedom given to individual parts, as the singers use natural word-lengths and

stresses, or overlap phrases, such as 'sfavilli e splenda' in *Longe da te*.

The voices are rich and relish the harmonies and textures of this wonderfully complex music. False relations are enjoyed, as are the strange harmonic shifts which sound totally discordant until they are eventually resolved. I dislike the over-use of vibrato in general, but some of the vibrated chords create marvellously fury effects, contrasted with clean, short notes in other parts: this is impressionistic performance, intelligently applied. The stylishly-designed booklet contains texts, translations into four languages (shouldn't it be twenty now?) and a fascinating essay on the relationship between the music and architectural planes: I wish I had thought of the prism simile before Stefano Russomanno did. *Selene Mills*

Le sieur de Sainte-Colombe *Suites pour viole seule, Concerts à deux violes esgales* Jonathan Dunford, Sylvia Abramowicz 77' Accord 465 582-2 (rec. 1995)  
*Saint-Colombe le fils Tombeau pour Mr de Sainte-Colombe le père* Jonathan Dunford 74' 15" Accord 465 581-2 (rec. 1997)

*To be reviewed by Robert Oliver in the next issue: although email gets his reviews back to us quickly, it doesn't help in sending them out to New Zealand.*

A. Scarlatti *Colpa, Pentimento e Grazia* Orquesta Barroca de Sevilla/Banzo 83' HMI 987045 46 (2 discs)

This is a fine performance of a fine piece, which is in a sense the warm-up act for Handel's *La Resurrezione*, premiered a week later in the same place. It can fairly be claimed, however, that this is scarcely an inferior work. From relatively modest forces, Scarlatti conjures a wide variety of textures and timbres and the libretto helps by providing well placed duets and trios so that we are spared the rather formulaic succession of arias that can blight this genre. The recording has been compiled from three live performances though does offer studio standards and only (pointless) token applause at the end of each part. Sadly, its omission would still not have squeezed the music onto one disc. The hard-working trio of soloists are technically very good though the soprano's sound is sometimes a little harsh. I really enjoyed the counter-tenor, however – full in tone and with a hint of the Bowman 'heroic' in his timbre. The orchestral playing is richly detailed and dramatic continuity is well-maintained through the forty relatively short movements. Finally, it is a pleasure to record – after several disasters that I have recently seen – that the artists are well-

supported by the booklet which offers an enthusiastic, helpful essay translated into excellent English and the full libretto.

David Hansell

Scheidemann *Organ Works Vol 4*. Julia Brown (1976 Brombaugh organ, Eugene, Oregon)  
Naxos 8.555876 £

Using the same player and organ as Volume 3, the Naxos Scheidemann series continues to explore the works of this important and fascinating composer. Although tuned in Kellner's 'Bach' temperament, rather than the meantone that Scheidemann really deserves, the organ is an impressive vehicle for interpreting this music, set in a helpful acoustic and with a fine array of solo stops, well registered by Julia Brown. A pupil of Wolfgang Rübsam (who is the CD's producer), Julia Brown has managed to avoid her teacher's rather esoteric and mannered performing style, and gives intelligent and musically sensitive performances of the music. As with Scheidemann's teacher, Sweelinck, this is not showy or extravagant music, but encompasses a religious intensity deserving of a measured and restrained approach. Brown demonstrates an exquisite sense of rhythmic fluidity (or rubato, if you prefer) to runs of individual notes, giving life and structural integrity to passagework whilst broadly retaining the sanctity of the pulse. Her articulation of individual notes is exemplary – another essential in the musical interpretation of music of this genre. As with other CDs in the impressive Naxos series, the programmes are well chosen to represent different pieces, in this case including examples of the intabulations of motets (both by Lassus, on this CD) that Hamburg organists were expected to play when the choir was not present to sing the real thing. Thoroughly recommended – and at less than a fiver, buy several for your friends.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Stradella *La Susanna* Emanuela Galli, Barbara Zanichelli, Roberto Balconi, Luca Dordolo, Matteo Bellotto *SScTTB*, Ensemble Aurora, Enrico Gatti 99'43" Glossa GCD 921201 (2 CDs in box)

Having recently listened to a recording of Flotow's opera *Alessandro Stradella*, I welcome the chance to get to know an oratorio by the man himself. *La Susanna* (1681) tells the familiar story of the virtuous young married woman surprised in the act of an innocent skinny dip by a couple of DOMs. The tale is told here in a series of brief, lightly-scored and attractively tuneful arias and small ensembles,

with Roberto Balconi's neat countertenor acting as narrator in linking recitatives. There is considerable variety in mood, from the contemplative to the lusting, and the music is likewise rich in contrasts, though austere scored – it is realized by four strings (no viola, but a double bass), harp, harpsichord and organ. Enrico Gatti, who directs from the violin, secures a lively, well-balanced but bottom-heavy performance. All five singers do well, though Daniel has little to do – his role is that of *deus ex machina*.

The recording is close but clear and well balanced, and the two insert booklets include an introductory essay, the original Italian sung text, and translations into English, French, Spanish and German. A very interesting issue, and a valuable addition to the currently thin Stradella discography.

Peter Branscombe

*Per il Santissimo Natale (L'héritage de Monteverdi)* Maria Cristina Kiehr S, Kathelijne van Laetham mS, John Elwes T, La Fenice, Jean Tubéry dir Ricercar RIC 237 (rec 1998) 69' 05" Banchieri, Cazzati, Cifra, Donati, Fiamengo, Merula, Monteverdi, Picchi, Rigatti, Scarani, Storace, Tarditi & anon

This is a beautiful recording: there's so much good music around that is known only to specialists, and recordings by such a fine group as this should encourage listeners who also perform to emulate them – though finding the music is always a problem. Much of the success must go to Jean Tubéry, not just for his brilliant cornetting but for his choice of material. There's a fine trio of singers, the other players are brilliant: what more can you want? My only disappointment is that Merula's marvellous rocking two-note-ground cradle song didn't work: the usually admirable Maria Cristina Kiehr, sounds too arty. But you will probably enjoy it.

CB

\* That could be because I don't think anyone could match the effect of the concert performance I heard by Mutsumi Hatano

#### LATE BAROQUE

Bach *Cantatas from Leipzig 1724*. (Vol. 22; Nos. 7, 20, 94) Yukari Nonoshita, Robin Blaze, Jan Kobow, Peter Kooij SATB, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki BIS-CD 1321 73' 17"

Even seasoned performers of Bach's choral music often leave the chorales till last and put most of their energies into the 'harder' music. In the case of Bach's second cycle of cantatas, based as it is directly on the multiple verses of Lutheran chorales, attention to the simple

settings that end each work is particularly crucial, since this can influence the pacing and shaping of the entire cantata. This level of attention is one of the striking features of this latest recording from the Bach Collegium Japan, where Masaaki Suzuki manages to achieve his customary variety and colour together with an overall projection of each cantata drawn from the character of each chorale. We hear, for instance, the stern rhetoric of *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort* throughout cantata 20, the modal inflection and sense of tradition in *Christ unser Herr* (cantata 7) and a more modern, galant, idiom in *Was frag ich nach der Welt* (cantata 94). The playing is as ever excellent, from the charming oboe trio in cantata 20, the string concertato playing in cantata 7 and the flute obbligato of cantata 94. Excellent too are the singers, particularly Robin Blaze, who has perhaps the broadest range of styles, from lyrical to coloratura. It is difficult to find fault with Suzuki's ideas, the only obvious candidate here being the insidious English cadences in the realisation of the harpsichord part in the first aria of cantata 7.

John Butt

Bach *St Matthew Passion* Karl Erb Evangelist, Willem Ravelli Christus, Jo Vincent, Ilona Durigo, Louis van Tulder, Herman Schey SATB, Amsterdam Toonkunst Choir, 'Zanglust' Boys' Choir, Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Willem Mengelberg dir (Historical Recordings 1929-1939) 207' 26" Naxos 8.110880-82 £ (3 CDs in box)  
Also includes *Orchestral suites* (BWV 1067, excerpts from 1068) & *Con certo in d for 2 violins* BWV 1043

This abbreviated account of Bach's *St Matthew* is indirectly derived from a live radio broadcast on Palm Sunday (2 April) 1939. The third disc adds transfers of various alternative recordings of Mengelberg, possibly the last authoritative conductor of a 'Romantic' tradition. Full details are absent; it is my belief that the musical solo flautist in a complete account of the Second Ouverture/Suite with strings in B minor, recorded on 2 June 1931, was none other than the French Canadian Matthew Moyse, playing here with a small group from the Concertgebouw, but I have no idea of the identity of the two violinists who recorded double concerto in New York on 24 June 1935. These complete orchestral works open and close disc 3; as we might expect, all but the most assertively positive playing in the tutti sections sounds tasteful by today's standards and all three instrumental soloists play rather well.

The continuous account of the Passion also commands attentive listening, although if this has much to teach today's

hearers about true authenticity, we must remind ourselves that from 2004 back to 1939 is already 75 years; back to 1727 (the date of origin of Bach's *St Matthew*) is 277 years, a far larger gap. In the German tenor Karl Erb, Mengelberg found a lyrically persuasive Evangelist; as his Christus, Willem Ravelli was an established singer of that role. The orchestral contributions are well controlled in something of a symphonic way; the balances and choral speeds work quite well, and apart from the exaggerated dynamics of the various chorale stanzas, chosen according to text, only the regularly insistant ritardandi seem to me to interrupt the flow. At the lowish cost, this is an interpretation that is certainly worth considerate hearing.

Stephen Daw

*The Secret Bach* Christopher Hogwood clavichord

Metronome MET CD 1056  
BWV 767, 836, 841, 843, 903a, 968, 1000, 1004

Many may have forgotten that Christopher Hogwood was a superb keyboard player before his profile as a conductor became so dominant, and he is not customarily associated with Bach. When he has performed him, as in his Brandenburg Concertos recording, he has tended to go for early, non-standard versions, in the belief (as articulated in the notes for the present recording) that no one version should be 'preferred to another'. One senses that he shies from the qualities of Bach that tend to join him with the 'masters' of the classic and romantic period and prefers a Bach that comes closer to Handel in his wet-inkiest of moods. Whatever one may think of Hogwood's attitude to Bach, there's everything to commend this recording of works that Bach might have played in private or prepared for his family's use: an early version of the Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, arrangements from the solo violin sonatas and partitas, lighter dances from the W.F. Bach music book, and a choral partita. Hogwood shows tremendous facility on the three clavichords (two original, one a copy; two fretted, one unfretted), a wonderful sense of local, intimate expression and the ability to shape the longer phrases and sections of each piece (that conducting career has obviously paid off). If his written notes suggest a prim attitude to interpretation (he quotes Griepenkerl's 1819 comment 'Any sentimentality and affectedness is banned from the[ir] performance, as is everything which is fashionable, subjective and individual'), the playing shows a natural flair and virtuosity that renders Hogwood one of the most persuasive advocates of the clavichord. Only the

strictest of enthusiasts for the instrument will gripe at the fact that the majority of the recording is done on the unfretted instrument.

John Butt

J S Bach *Flute Sonatas, vol. 2* Janet See fl, Davitt Moroney hpscd 57' 15" (rec 1991)  
Harmonia mundi Classical Express  
HCX3957025 £

All three of the soloists play responsively and warmly; the gambist only plays in the first, accompanied, version on the C major Sonata; the second account of this features Janet See as an impressive soloist, a fitting companion to her rendering of the unaccompanied Partita BWV1013 in A minor, which is one of the very best. If you didn't snap this and vol. 1 originally, now's the time to take the plunge. Incidentally, Moroney's notes on the music are among the best anywhere. Stephen Daw

J S Bach *The Complete Orchestral Suites*  
Boston Baroque, Martin Pearlman dir  
Telarc CD-80619 73' 32"

It may well be that there are still listeners who turn to historically informed performances to avoid the sense of 'interpretation' and human agency that the mainstream is rumoured to support – in other words, to hear just the music that the composer wrote and not much more. This recording from Boston Baroque may just fit the bill. All the players are clearly experienced and they lend their parts occasional nuance, but I'm not certain whether they have any particular opinion of the music or are ever surprised by it (the first bass dissonance in the opening suite, no. 4 in D, bar 4, comes and goes, just like every other moment). There's a hint of human presence in Marc Schachman's oboe playing and Christopher Krueger gives a faultless performance of the flute suite in B minor. If you think that performances of the Badinerie have recently become too breakneck and daredevil, then this is exactly the recording for you.

John Butt

*Brescianello Concerti, Sinfonie, Ouverture*  
La Cetra Barockorchester Basel, David Plantier & Vaclav Luks dir 64' 33"  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 905262

Until the Fasch Conference last year (see p. 12 above), Brescianello was nothing more than a name to me. Even after the conference, although I was interested in the composer (and his possible influence on Fasch's output as a Vivaldian composer working, playing and composing at a court with firm connections to Zerbst), I have had no time to look for any of his music, so this

CD was doubly welcome. The three concertos, two symphonies and a 'bleeding chunk' chaconne are impressively played by La Cetra, a period band built around the staff and graduates of Schola Cantorum Basiliensis but independent of the institution. The symphonies feature some catchy tunes and would be perfect for chamber orchestras as an introduction to the baroque symphony. The concertos (one for violin, one for oboe and violin and the third for violin and bassoon!) are slightly more striking in their originality, and give some indication of how good a fiddler Brescianello must have been (assuming that the violin parts were for himself). The booklet, I think, overdoes the gratitude the world should feel to someone for 'discovering' Brescianello – readers of EMR will certainly be grateful for the CD, though!

BC

Duphly *Pièces de clavecin Deuxième Livre* 1748 Jean-Patrice Brosse hpscd  
Pierre Verany PV704023 63' 59"

Duphly *Pièces de clavecin Troisième et Quatrième Livre* 1756 & 1768 Jean-Patrice Brosse hpscd 76' 15"  
Pierre Verany PV704031

Two more substantial and demanding issues from the prolific fingers of Jean-Patrice Brosse – one is tempted to ask if this man ever sleeps. Both he and Duphly come into their own here with the composer at the height of his powers (notwithstanding a few flirtations with the relatively decadent *style galant* at the end of Bk 3) and J-PB matching him step for step. Much of the playing has a quasi-Leonhardt magisterial quality with only a few untidy releases of large chords (scarcely noticeable at normal volumes) that jar in any way. As I have remarked before, this player's choice of basic tempo is a strength – fast enough to reveal the virtuosity but allowing space for the grandeur of the designs to stand out. These are not miniatures. Several pieces last for more than six minutes and plenty more exceed four with the huge *Chaconne* at the centre of Bk 3's opening triptych a monumental 7'26". I was gripped and truly moved by much of these recitals, which are enhanced by excellent notes. I hope I can look forward to hearing the ensemble music published in Bk 3 but omitted here.

David Hansell

Fasch *Overture – Concertos* La Stravaganza Köln 71' 30"  
cpo 777 015-2  
TWV L: A3, C2, cr/dr, c2, Es1, G16

I am enjoying a second wave of CDs devoted to one of my favourite composers. La Stravaganza Köln have avoided too

much duplication of previously recorded material, and the pieces that are not new to disc were chosen on account of their fine soloist, the Italian bassoonist, Sergio Azzolini. He is far more lively *in vivo* than on disc, which I suppose is to be expected, but he is quite exceptional in the way he makes the bassoon sing. On this recording he performs Fasch's concerto *per Basso concertato* on bassoon but in D minor (the source material is written in C minor), while he performed it at the Zerbst Fasch Conference the following April as a cello concerto with the bassoon playing the continuo line. I am not sure I understand the logic of that, but the piece itself is thoroughly enjoyable as a bassoon concerto, and I would have liked to have heard the bottom B flats. Veronika Skuplik is an outstanding soloist in the A major violin concerto. The longest piece on the disc is a fine six-movement orchestral suite in G. The programme ends with a concerto in E flat for two oboes, bassoon and strings, of which only one of the fast movements survives. A very welcome addition to the catalogue. BC

**Handel Siroe, re di Persia** Ann Hallenberg *Siroe*, Johanna Stojkovic *Emira*, Sunhae Im *Laodice*, Gunther Schmid *Medarse*, Sebastian Noack *Cosroe*, Timm de Jong *Arasse*, Cappella Coloniensis, Andreas Spering 155' 05" (2 CDs)  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 90 1826/7

Handel's *Siroe* was first performed in 1728 in the final season of the Royal Academy of Music. It was one of the operas in which more-or-less equal parts had to be provided for the 'rival queens' – the sopranos Cuzzoni and Faustina – and was also Handel's first setting of a libretto by Metastasio. The latter's blatantly contrived story-line, where the plot is advanced by two of the characters telling outright lies to undermine the rather pompous hero, has kept the opera from popularity, as has the lack of duets or other ensembles, yet the level of musical invention is consistently high. Another factor inhibiting modern revivals is the length of the recitatives, though Metastasio's originals were substantially pruned for London and Handel set what remained quite carefully. The earlier recording of *Siroe* under Rudolf Palmer (Newport Classic NCD 60125, released in 1991) made further cuts in recitative and omitted two arias (including the last in Act 1), despite being spread over three CDs. In this new version all the arias and orchestral items are present, but the recitatives are curtailed even more drastically to allow the opera to fit on to two CDs, a policy which many will applaud. While there must be some regret that a truly complete *Siroe* is

now unlikely to appear for many years, Spering's generally vivacious account is very welcome, and outpoints Palmer's in most respects. In the roles written for the rival sopranos, the brighter tone of Sunhae Im's Laodice (originally Cuzzoni) contrasts nicely with Stojkovic's richer Emira (Faustina), and both meet the technical demands fearlessly. Hallenberg's feisty Siroe makes the role almost sympathetic but in the role of Medarse, Siroe's treacherous brother, Schmid's countertenor brings less contrast than expected, with a voice of feminine quality. Sebastian Noack, has authority without sententiousness, unlike John Ostendorf, his equivalent on the older recording and its main vocal liability. Regrettably Spering sometimes retouches Handel's modest woodwind scoring (an unneeded recorder appears in 'Non vi piacque') and in a few numbers it is Palmer who sets the more judicious tempo (Spering's 'Sgombra dell'anima', for example, seems absurdly hectic). Overall, however, it is Spering's approach that will win friends for this comparatively disregarded opera. Anthony Hicks

**Pergolesi Salve Regina, Stabat mater**  
Mieke van der Sluis S, Gérard Lesne cT,  
Clemencic Consort 53' 41" (rec. 1997)  
Accord 464 236-2  
With complete Accord catalogue

This is a re-release and CB had told me just to write a few lines, but I feel inclined to put on record the fact that I really enjoyed listening to it. The Clemencic Consort for this recording of Pergolesi's two lollipops consists of single strings, led by a very well-behaved Fabio Biondi – indeed, the beautiful sound of the one-to-a-part band is one of the joys of the disc. The singing is also first-rate, so if you do not have a set with these two (I didn't, for example), this is definitely worth having. BC

**Rameau Platée** Paul Agnew *Platée*, Mireille Delunsch *La Folie & Thalie*, Yann Beuron *Thespis & Mercure*, Vincent Le Texier *Jupiter*, Doris Lamprecht *Junon*, Laurent Naouri *Cithéron & a Satyr*, Valérie Gabail *L'Amour & Clarine*, Franck Leguerinel *Momus*, Orchestra and Chorus of Les Musiciens du Louvre – Grenoble, Marc Minkowski dir  
TDK DVD Video DV-OPPLT (2 discs)

I initially thought this was a DVD version of a Minkowski production of *Platée* that I already have on disc, so I knew I would enjoy the performance. Although I was wrong, and the cast is completely different, my enjoyment of the piece was even greater than I had expected, with some superb contributions, especially from Paul Agnew in the title role (revealing

himself to be as much an excellent actor as he is a fantastic singer) and Mireille Delunsch (as Folly, in particular). At the outset, I thought Minkowski over-conducted, with flourishes of the baton for each of the notes of the demisemi-quaver upbeat tirades, but as the show progressed (and it is very much a show, with a frog wandering around the theatre as well as the set – maybe he ends up with Platée at the end; we'll never know...) I realised that he does not take himself too seriously. He even indulged in a mimed dialogue with the frog at one point. And he did not push the tempi too hard, as he is often thought to do. The other soloists are also excellent, with Mercury, Juno and Jupiter perhaps taking the honours. Pride of place, though, must go to Paul Agnew, who is absolutely captivating in his portrayal of the poor frog, and whose voice is so suited to Rameau's high tenor part. There was some very energetic (though not even remotely 18th-century) dance – I didn't enjoy it, but I must acknowledge the fact that the Paris audience gave the dancers enormous approval. As entertainment, Rameau at his best really is very difficult to better. BC

**Rameau Régne Amour** Love songs from the operas Carolyn Sampson S, Ex Cathedra, Jeffrey Skidmore dir. 64' 54"  
Hyperion CDA67447

This is a stunning CD. Never before have I heard such fantastic performances of Rameau from an English group. The undoubtedly star of the show is former choirboy-soundalike Carlyn Sampson, whose voice has (seemingly) been gradually developing velvety tones over the past year or so, and here is showcased in all its spectacular radiance in selections from seven of Rameau's stage works. Rameau was, like Handel, acutely observant of the personalities and mood swings of his characters, and wrote the most glorious music to portray them. Sampson surmounts the technical challenges (of which there are more than a few) with ease, and is given the most stylish orchestral backdrop upon which to play. The choir is also in good voice, with the men perhaps slightly taking the honours. I hope this (to me) new departure for both Jeffrey Skidmore and Hyperion will not be a one-off: now that England has Ramistes of this calibre, I say let's have the church music (in the previously under-recorded versions with horns, if they need an angle), and some more of Rameau's extraordinarily colourful stage music. Don't miss this! BC

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

Rameau *Les Boréades* Barbara Bonney *Alphise*, Paul Agnew *Abaris*, Toby Spence *Calysis*, Stéphane Degout *Borlée*, Laurent Naouri *Borée*, Nicolas Rivenq *Adamas & Apollon*, Anna-Maria Panzarella *Sémire*, Jaël Azzaretti *Une nymphe*, Opéra Nationale de Paris, Les Arts Florissants, William Christie *dir* La La La Human Steps Dance Company (218') Opus Arte OA 0899 D DVD

My third helping (of outstanding performances of Rameau's wonderful opera output) was in the form of another DVD, this time William Christie's production of *Les Boréades*. Dramatic lighting and spectacular use of colour make this as much a feast for the eyes as it is for the ears – the scene where the followers of Borée pick all the beautiful flowers to reveal a bare grey stage, that suits their clothing, is very powerful. The singers – once again featuring the exceptional Paul Agnew – are terrific: all of the name roles are given powerful, stylish readings, and the choir is (mostly) a joy to behold and to hear (given the enormous stage, it's a wonder they hold their ensemble as well as they do!) The orchestra is not featured on the DVD as it is in other productions, but their contribution is clearly essential, and their familiarity with Rameau's music, and their superb reading of it is unrivalled. I must confess that I had reservations about the dancing: the professional group take a decidedly 20th-century approach to the music (as, of course, does the entire project), but somehow what they did was not what I had imagined when I'd only heard the music before – it was (to my tastes) too fussy, and too energetic: even if the music is moving quickly, I think I'd always imagined Rameau's ballet troupes to have stately airs and graces. Whatever one thinks of the dancing, though, this is the only available recording of the opera and one which I should never wish to be without – it is certainly more powerful dramatically than *Platée*, and the production underlines that. I was struck by one ensemble at the end of Act III that reminded me of the composer's church music – clearly, I need to listen to even more Rameau... BC

D Scarlatti *Stabat mater* Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, Francis Greer *dir*. 53' 05"

Hyperion Helios CDH55172 (rec. 1985) £ Also Six sonatas for organ (K 254, 255, 287, 288 & 328) & *Salve Regina* for SA org.

Domenico Scarlatti's ten-voice *Stabat mater* is difficult to perform. It is more generally believed now than twenty years ago that it must be for 10 soloists, but how easy is it to assemble ten soloistic singers who

can form a well-tuned and like-minded ensemble on one or two rehearsals? I was happier with this choral version than I expected, perhaps because the Christ Church choir of the time sounded less Anglican than most. The organ sonatas are enjoyable – the consecutively numbered pieces are not played as pairs. The boy treble in the intimate *Salve regina*, Charles Harris, pairs well with Nicholas Clapton, who sings with an appropriate restraint. Clapton also wrote the excellent booklet note. It's a pity there is nothing about the performers: one wonders what the adult Charles Harris is doing. BC

Stölzel *German Chamber Cantatas* Vol. 2 Dorothee Mields S, Jan Kobow T, Les Amis de Philippe, Ludger Rémy *dir*. 65' 40" cpo 999 910-2

I am a real fan of Stölzel's music, even though his church cantatas are sometimes a little short-winded. While I was slightly relieved not to have to review the previous volume of this set, I am glad that I listened to this one. The cantatas are preserved in a single source and notated as if for soprano and continuo. Ludger Rémy has divided them equally between two excellent singers in the soprano Dorothee Mields (her opening 'Zorn'ge Sterne!' is exceptional) and Jan Kobow, tenor, and the final two cantatas on this disc are turned into some sort of dialogue. There is strong continuo team of cello, chamber organ, harpsichord and theorbo. The singing, as I say, is excellent, with my favourite Ms. Mields giving such rich colouring to every line that I was reminded that I once heard her sing in a Rameau opera, and what a pleasure that was! I hope that the completion of the set means Rémy and co. will not now leave Stölzel and look elsewhere – while I am more than confident that they will do justice to whatever they turn their hands to, I would like to hear some more Stölzel church cantatas first, please! BC

Vivaldi *Six Violin Sonatas* Op. 2 Nos. 1-6 Elizabeth Wallfisch, Richard Tunnicliffe, Malcolm Proud 59' 05" Hyperion CDA67467

These sonatas sell particularly well at King's Music, and with performances like these, it's not difficult to see their appeal. Five of them have four movements, while the last has just three. In this performance, Chédeville's *Pastorale* is added to the end of the second sonata. Elizabeth Wallfisch is absolutely faultless on this excellent CD. Her continuo team of Malcolm Proud and Richard Tunnicliffe (who accompanies chordally in the third

sonata, which is played without harpsichord, as Michael Talbot notes was possibly the intended version of the pieces) is as strong as ever, supporting, accompanying, or duetting as required. Mrs. Wallfisch's decorated repeats should be compulsory listening for aspiring baroque violinists. Tunnicliffe also takes advantage of his liberty in the third sonata to improvise along similar lines, and ought to be heard by every continuo cellist in the land! All in all, an exemplary performance of one of the standard sets of Baroque violin sonatas. BC

Vivaldi *Cantatas* New Chamber Opera, The Band of Instruments 63' 21" Gaudeamus CD GAU 339 RV. 651, 674, 677, 678, 680

Vivaldi's chamber cantatas never have been my favourite pieces: mini-operas they may well be, but – especially via a recorded, non-visual medium – they rarely satisfy as entertainment, particularly the continuo cantatas. Instrumental participation certainly helped here, with Caroline Balding's fine contribution in the first cantata (*Lunghi dal vago volto*) and Christine Garratt's delicate flute in *All' ombra di sospetto*. The strong continuo line-up (as one would expect from Gary Cooper and David Watkins) sets the mood of the performances, perhaps to a greater extent than the singers. Personally, I find Mary Nelson's voice just too big for most of the music, although repeated listening did temper my opinion slightly – the first aria of the last cantata was charming. Charles Humphries sometimes sounds like James Bowman, and projects strongly, but I find myself unable to take a man venting anger (or any strong emotion, actually) in such high voices. Maybe that's a failing in me. BC

Vivaldi *Concerti per archi* Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini *dir*. 65' 49" OPUS III OP30377 RV 115, 120-1, 123, 129, 141, 143, 153-4, 156, 158-9

There are 12 concertos on this fine CD which quite clearly refutes any notion that Vivaldi wrote the same piece x number of times: they are each quite different from the others, even though all but one of them are in the three-movement *da camera* form. I have known all of them for years, and I have very enjoyable recordings of them by Simon Standage and Collegium Musicum 90. I will now never be quite sure which CD I will choose to listen to: both versions have strong interpretations, and the playing of both bands is super-stylish. As usual with this series, I wonder if we really need three introductory essays to the music, a two-page

history of the group and the conductor, and another essay devoted to the 'Vivaldi Edition': maybe paper and chemical consumption is not a serious issue? BC

*Vivaldi's Cello* Yo-Yo Ma, The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Ton Koopman 6' 12" Sony SK 90916 RV401, 423, 531, 540 + arrangements from vocal works and *Winter's* slow movement

My comments on this CD are more about the presentation than the music, which is a pity, as Yo-Yo Ma and his colleagues really do fantastic service to Vivaldi, albeit (in my opinion) in a slightly misguided way. The marketing – from the tacky sticker on the cover to the sycophantic notes in the booklet – just goes too far. When we are told how many concertos Vivaldi actually wrote for cello, why do we need transcriptions of other pieces? Of course, as Ton Koopman concedes, the composer's contemporaries would not have worried about such things and, as he also states, it is hardly a new idea (Pieter Wispelwey and Florilegium also transcribed opera arias on their Vivaldi concertos disc). What we get, then, are two real Vivaldi cello concertos (RV 401 & 423), the ever-popular concerto for two cellos (RV 531 with Jonathan Mason as the other soloist), and a mish-mash of anything from the slow movement of *Winter* to the 'Laudamus te' from the famous *Gloria*. Two things bothered me: some of the arrangements didn't actually work – such as a vocal quartet given here on violin, oboe, bassoon and cello; and there is too much involvement at the keyboard: one can imagine Bach or some other north-European harpsichordist improvising countermelodies that sometimes divert interest away from the soloist (it's not that difficult if the latter is playing in the middle of his cello range); but is there any evidence for such practice in Italy? Even if there is, if microphones had been invented then, would the harpsichord have been miked into the foreground of the sound picture? In any case, Yo-Yo Ma (and everyone else on the CD) is a fantastic musician, and his performances on baroque cello are to be taken very seriously, indeed. Let's shake off the marketing man, though, and let the music do the talking. BC

*Maria, Madre di Dio* Agnès Mellon s, Matthew White ct, Arion, Monica Huggett dir 6' 03" early-music.com EMCCD-7757

Handel: *Ah! che troppo ineguali* (HWV 230); Vivaldi: *Stabat mater* (RV 621); A. Scarlatti: *Salve regina*; Ferrandini (attrib. Handel): *Il pianto di Maria* (HWV 234) Music associated with 'Mary, Mother of

God' can reflect joy as well as sorrow, but it is the latter mood that dominates here, all four pieces being pleas or laments. G. B. Ferrandini's *Il pianto di Maria* has the same dramatic context as the *Stabat mater* – Mary weeping for Jesus at the foot of the Cross – and is an impressive late baroque equivalent of a 17th-century *sepolcro*, one of its movements being a repeated cavatina in which the voice intones the plainchant of the Magnificat as a cantus firmus. The attribution of the piece to Handel in several MS sources was never convincing, but it was only in 1994 that a team of scholars including Carlo Vitali established its true authorship. No doubt the misattribution has been helpful in bringing it to attention, and this is its second complete recording, following that of Anne Sophie von Otter under Reinhard Goebel on Archiv 439 866-2. (An earlier lack-lustre attempt, made in 1989 and issued on Bongiovanni GB 2100-2, had an orchestrated keyboard prelude added at the start but lacked the final accompanied recitative.) Mellon's interpretation does not have the raw (to my mind, over-the-top) emotion that von Otter and Goebel bring to the piece, yet is still deeply expressive. She is also sensitive in the genuinely Handelian cantata fragment *Ah! che troppo ineguali*, and Huggett's spirited direction enlivens both pieces. The contributions from Matthew White (solo in the Vivaldi and in duet with Mellon in the Scarlatti) I found less appealing, the voice having power but little variety of tone. Nevertheless, this is a commendable exploration of a particular repertory. Anthony Hicks

*Orpheus with his lute* Music for Shakespeare from Purcell to Arne Catherine Bott S, The Parley of Instruments, Peter Holman dir. 66' 27" Hyperion CDA67450

Arne, Chilcot, Clarke, Eccles, de Fesch, Greene, Leveridge, Purcell, Smith, Weldon, Woodcock see page 17

## CLASSICAL

Grétry *Airs and ballets from Céphale et Procris, Les deux Avares, Anacréon chez Polycrate and La Caravane du Caire* Sophie Karthäuser soprano, Les Agrémens, Guy Van Waas 64' 23" Ricercar RIC 234

Here is an attractive selection from four stage works by Grétry. There are eleven excerpts from *Céphale et Procris* (1773), three each from *Les deux avares* (1770) and *Anacréon chez Polyeucte* (1797), and two from *La caravane du Caire* (1783). Instrumental movements, mainly dances, are interspersed with airs sung with style

and some affection by Sophie Karthäuser; she has the brilliance, too, for the big Italian aria from *La caravane* that brings the CD to a stirring close. Grétry is generally under-appreciated (says one whose PhD thesis aeons ago made much use of *Zémire et Azor*), and this nicely played and well recorded CD should win new friends for the composer. What is lacking in the performances is the sheer elegance of phrasing that Beecham could lavish on apparently plain lines and textures. There are useful notes; sung texts in French, English and German would be even more useful if printed in facing columns. Peter Branscombe

Haydn, arr. anon. *The Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on the Cross* Ronald Brautigam, fortepiano 66' 22" BIS CD-1325

It's rather an odd idea to include an anonymous piano arrangement of Haydn's orchestral pieces in a complete recording of his solo keyboard music, despite the fact that Haydn himself is said to have corrected the proofs and praised the arrangement as 'very good and made with special diligence'. One must agree that it's skilfully done, although the piano texture sounds more like Beethoven's than Haydn's own. Brautigam turns in a well characterized performance, but to my taste his playing is rather 'modern' in style. There are some beautifully articulated staccato quavers in 'I thirst', but on the whole he makes too much use of the sustaining lever to smooth out repeated-quaver accompaniment figures, Alberti basses and the like. This is surely not how Haydn or his arranger would have played the music in 1787, when many (all?) Viennese fortepianos had only hand-levers to raise the dampers. An interesting disc, all the same. Richard Maunder

Lidarti *Esther* Anne Lise Sollied Esther S, Ulrike Helzel *Donna Israelita* mS, Donald Litaker *Ahasveros* T, Mario Zeffiri *Mordocai* T, Laurent Naouri *Haman Bar*, Orchestre National de Montpellier, Chœur de la Radio Lettone (Lithuanian Radio Chorus), Friedemann Layer dir 119' 7" (2CDs in box) Accord 476 1255

It's not every day one is asked to review a Hebrew oratorio from the latter half of the 18th century, but perhaps even more curious is the fact that I already knew it, having looked at the manuscript several times in Cambridge University Library when I worked there. For anyone unfamiliar with Lidarti's music, there could possibly be no better introduction, and the language problems are minimal (the

libretto is printed in Hebrew, transliterated Hebrew, French and English). The action proceeds, as one would expect, in a series of recitatives and arias, occasionally interspersed with choruses. The orchestra has flutes, oboes, bassoons and horns, with organ and harpsichord continuo. The five soloists and the choir sing very well. Overall, despite being on modern instruments, this is a set I would recommend to our readers: the piece was written for the Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam and reveals Lidarti to be a gifted composer, setting a text that is a translation of Handel's *Esther*. BC

**Rosetti Five Wind Partitas** Consortium  
Classicum 72' 11"  
cpo 999 961-2

Antonio Rosetti (c.1750-1792), aka Rösler, is best remembered for the music he wrote during his years spent in the service of the Öttingen-Wallerstein court. Though the current CD catalogue lists many concertos and symphonies by him, very little of his extensive output for chamber ensemble is available, so this new disc duplicates only the Partita no 15 in F in the Kaul listing, generously scored for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, three horns and double bass. Most of the pieces here are octets and in D major – and very attractive they are, with many unexpected touches of scoring and phrasing, and delightful structural variety. Dieter Klöcker's Consortium Classicum are at their best, with warm, flexible playing (on modern instruments). The recording is resonant and clear, the introductory note in stilted English.

Peter Branscombe

**Kemp English at the Fortepiano** 75' 50"  
Manu plus MANU 5001  
Beethoven, Dussek, Haydn, Mozart  
Beethoven Sonata op.13; Dussek Sonata op.9/1;  
Haydn Sonata Hob. XVI/40; Mozart Fantasia  
K.475; Sonata K.330

English is a capable and imaginative player, and his instrument is a fine copy by Thomas and Barbara Wolf of a Walter of c.1800. The Beethoven is suitably exciting, if not quite as electrifying as the performance by Ella Sevskaya I reviewed a couple of years ago – and I raised my eyebrows at the repeat of the opening *Grave* as well as the first half of the *Allegro di molto*. The Dussek sonata, even if written for an English grand, comes off very well, and it's always good to hear music by this unjustly neglected composer.

But I have some reservations about the Mozart Fantasia. English uses the moderator knee-lever in ways that Mozart himself couldn't have in 1785 (his moderator was

operated by a hand-stop), to shade off a decrescendo, for an immediate repeat of a short phrase, or sometimes even for a longer passage marked simply piano. There are times, too, when the sustaining lever seems to be over-used. It's true that C.P.E.Bach recommended 'the undamped register' for fantasias, but we don't know for certain whether Mozart had anything but hand-levers for this purpose, and therefore whether he could have produced some of English's rather modern-sounding effects. Another quibble: he seems to be using an unreliable edition, for the accents in bars 174 and 177 should be off the beat, not on the beat as he plays them.

The Haydn and Mozart sonatas, on the other hand, are clearly articulated, although the result in the first movement of the Haydn is a rather wooden performance with too many accents per bar. Perhaps this sonata would work better on a clavichord? There's some nice ornamentation on the repeats.

A rather mixed recital, then, but worth buying for the good bits! Richard Maunder

#### VARIOUS

*Saben todos que muero* Music of peasants and courtiers in the viceroyalty of Peru, 17th-18th centuries Música Ficta 63' 19"  
From the artistes MF-003  
Caballiles, Cascante, Durón, Falconieri, de Herrera, Marin, Sanz, de Veanas & anon

I am not quite sure what to make of this recording. I do not wish to be rude about the performances, which have a clear enthusiasm for the music, and generally capture well its spirit. The keyboardist is especially idiomatic – and particularly well recorded – and the pieces on plucked instruments are also very enjoyable. The gaita (which I thought were bagpipes) seem to be flutes of some sort. Some of the tracks (possibly intended as scene-setters) are a bit cross-over-like, while others are clearly more classical. I wonder if the singer is trying to appear naive in the same vein, both in terms of his range (especially the higher notes) and of the actual sound. The viceroyalty of Peru covers a much larger area than the present-day country of that name, and it is interesting to hear the sort of art music that was popular at court during the 17th and 18th centuries. BC

P.D.Q. Bach Classical wtwp talkity-talk radio Peter Schickele etc 61' 37"  
Teklar CD-80295 (rec 1991)

Humour is a funny thing: what can send one person into screams of laughter can have no effect at all on another. To some extent, the differences are national: the

USA and Britain are divided not only by the not-quite-common language but by incompatible senses of humour. Listening to local radio stations while driving round rural America is a depressing experience. Apart from pop music and right wing political pundits who make Bush seem a moderate, there is occasionally some dire comedy (the exception is Garrison Keillor's *Lake Woebegone* stories, which are far more effective heard than in print). PDQ Bach is a promising concept, and setting the disk in the studio of a down-at-heel classical music station devoted to the complete works of Pachelbel could lead to intelligent comedy. Sadly, the humour in the actual music doesn't go beyond 'let's play something on odd instruments'. Most of PDQ's output suffers from an acute failure to engage with any precision with the music parodied and the style into which it is transformed. There may be local references that I don't get: does the *Safe Sextet* quotes tunes from American condom adverts? The parodies of early baroque canzonas aren't close enough to amuse: to hear what can be done – merging two incompatible styles with accuracy and wit – listen to Peter Maxwell Davies's Purcell Pavan/foxtrots in the Proms this year. I think I asked for a copy because the publicity suggested some relevance to early music: I can imagine a phone-in on the authenticity of early conductors using a plastic baton being a vehicle for pointed parody (even replacing plastic with rubber would give a thematic link), but not here. There's about enough material for a single half-hour radio show with US-length adverts, but not enough to want to hear it twice – at least, not for English listener. CB

I should add that BC and Lindum Records are PDQ fans. I wonder if this disc will cure them!

We invited our reviewers to write a short piece about themselves. Some did, some didn't; [additions in brackets are mine.] It is only through alphabetical accident that I come first. Our team of reviewers has varied over the ten years. We were sorry to lose Robin Bigwood, Kah-Ming Ng, Marie Ritter, Lynda Sayce and Brian Robins, who have become too busy with other activities, and Michael Thomas died. We have tried to assemble a mixture of scholars, performers and knowledgeable amateurs. We are lucky in that John Butt and Peter Holman fall into two categories, and all of us play or sing to some extent. I've been involved in some sort of music-making with most of them. We are varied in age, the most senior being Peter Branscombe, who had left Dulwich College before I went there. The short-term links of John Butt and Stephen Rose with my Cambridge College are entirely fortuitous, and I only found out recently that I shared a kitchen and bathroom for a year with Stephen Daw's brother there. Some are friends, others I hardly know. I'm grateful for the speed at which they (mostly) return their reviews so quickly. There are no guidelines to establish a common view-point; if there seems to be a 'party line', it is accidental. CB

## OUR REVIEWERS

Clifford Bartlett had an old-fashioned classical education (hence his preference for *fora*), took a degree in English, worked as a librarian, and listened to vast quantities of music from Perotin to Maxwell Davies. He became involved with performing when he met Peter Holman (see page 21) in 1969, and was in a position to support the fledgling Early Music movement through the 1970s from his position at the BBC Music Library. He founded King's Music in 1984 and is kept very (too) busy with that and *EMR* to play much, apart from his week at the Beauchamp Summer School. His wife Elaine studied biology and taught for ten years before becoming a mother and then half of King's Music.

Andrew Benson-Wilson is an organ recitalist specialising in the performance of early music. He also leads workshops and has recorded the complete organ works of Tallis for Signum (Vols 5 and 9). As well as reviews and articles for the musical press, Andrew has also written a short book, *The Performance of Early Organ Music*.

Peter Branscombe is Emeritus Professor of Austrian Studies at the University of St Andrews, where he spent most of his career teaching German. He is an editor of the new Complete Edition of the works of the Viennese satirist Johann Nestroy, and is currently working on Nestroy's adaptation of the first version of Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers* for a supplementary volume. He has broadcast numerous talks for the Third Programme/Radio Three, is the author and/or editor of books on Mozart and Schubert, and has contributed well over one hundred articles for *New Grove* and *Opera Grove*.

Tony Brett is a computer programmer by profession, living in the Midlands. He had had no formal musical training and 'discovered' early music about fifteen years ago with the help of the free front-cover discs on music magazines. He soon started attending workshops held by the Early Music Fora and then discovered an interest in Chant around ten years ago when attending two concerts by Ensemble Organum at the York Early Music Festival. This led to several short periods of study with Malcolm Bothwell discovering the varied styles and notations used. He attends music workshops regularly, particularly of early Renaissance composers, and is a member of the amateur ensemble 'Musica in Ecclesia' directed by Fred Averis which sings chant monthly in the churches of Worcestershire, Shropshire and Herefordshire.

John Bryan is Principal Lecturer and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Music Department at the University of Huddersfield. He first started playing renaissance and baroque instruments seriously as a student at York University, and has developed a joint career as player and teacher, performing internationally and recording regularly with ensembles such as the Rose

Consort of Viols, Musica Antiqua of London and the Consort of Musicke. He has been an artistic adviser to York Early Music Festival since its inception in 1977, founded the North East Early Music Forum, and is much in demand as a tutor on early music summer schools and courses. In addition to his interest in early music, as conductor of York Chamber Orchestra John has performed in every style from Handel and Bach to Stravinsky and Gorecki. He has also conducted performances of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Britten's *Albert Herring* for York Opera, and Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* with the University of Huddersfield Opera Group.

John Butt is a distinguished musicologist and also a skilled organist, with several *Harmonia Mundi* CDs to his credit. He has taught at Berkeley and Cambridge and is now professor at Glasgow. His wife Sally is a baroque violinist, and they are awaiting the birth of their fifth child.]

Stephen Cassidy graduated in physics and works in research, but has always enjoyed music as well. His formal training was on clarinet and whilst at school played in a jazz band with friends in local clubs, and also appeared as incidental music in TV shows in this capacity. At college he played in the Oxford University Wind Orchestra, and sang in the college choir (as well as rowing for the college!) Now he plays early wind instruments in a number of groups including his own Ravenscroft Consort and depping at Shakespeare's Globe, as well as maintaining the clarinet and saxophone in a flourishing jazz band. He has provided reviews, articles and programme notes for a number of august publications. [His wife Jennie, who supplies our annual Christmas recipe, was away singing in Italy when Stephen sent the above. She too has a scientific background, but now spends much of her time, when not looking after baby Martine, as mezzo or voice, perhaps even vocals, depending on repertoire.]

Brian Clark, originally from Dundee and educated in St Andrews, now lives in Cambridgeshire, where he helps out at King's Music and finds as much time as possible to add titles to the new *Prima la musical* catalogue. He is particularly interested in 17th-century church music: Venice (especially Rovetta, Rigatti and Legrenzi) and Vienna (primarily Bertali and Schmelzer) being of particular relevance to most of his work, 18th-century German music (with Fasch his speciality, Stölzel and Johann Gottlieb Graun coming a close second) and, incredibly, the life and works of John More Smieton, a Dundee-born composer who died in 1904. Current projects include Muffat, Biber and Charpentier for the 300th birthday parties, and Smieton's youthful String Quartet, which will be premiered in September of this year. Away from music, Brian used to enjoy volleyball and squash, but now prefers reading (better late than never)

and foreign films at the Cambridge Arts Cinema. Nice food is also a regular attraction.

[Stephen Daw studied at Oxford and the Royal Academy of Music and taught for most of his career at the Birmingham Conservatoire (as it is now called). He is now connected with the University of Durham. He is well known as a Bach scholar.]

David Hansell leads an eventful life as Director of Music at Putney High School, conductor of St Albans Chamber Choir and The Ripieno Choir (Esher based), continuo player and editor of/cheer leader for Marc-Antoine Charpentier. He remains profoundly grateful to the teachers (who included Donald Burrows) who gave him early opportunities to discover and develop his interests and endeavours to do the same for his own pupils. His family (two teenagers and a soprano) is remarkably tolerant.

[David Hill, our cartoonist, was once a countertenor and lutenist, but now earns his living making reproduction ancient Roman glass — so realistic that he has to mark it to show that it is not genuine, a level of authenticity that early musicians could not hope for.]

Peter Holman is Reader in Musicology at the University of Leeds, Director of The Parley of Instruments, Musical Director of Opera Restor'd and Artistic Director of the Suffolk Villages Festival. He has written books on the violin at the English court, Purcell and Dowland's *Lachrimae*, and is at present working on a study of the viola da gamba in 18th-century Britain.

Richard Maunder is author of *Mozart's Requiem: On Preparing a New Edition* (OUP, 1988), *Keyboard Instruments in Eighteenth-Century Vienna* (OUP, 1998), *The Scoring of Baroque Concertos* (Boydell & Brewer, in press) and many articles in musical journals. He has edited much 17th- and 18th-century music, including 13 volumes of J.C. Bach's

*Collected Works* (New York: Garland, 1984-90) and radical new versions of Mozart's *Requiem* K.626 (OUP, 1988) and *C minor Mass* K.427 (OUP, 1990). He was formerly director of the Cambridge Classical Orchestra and is a performer on baroque/classical viola, bass viol and violone. He is an occasional maker of harpsichords and fortepianos. [He is Emeritus Fellow of Christ's College Cambridge, and a check of the web under C. R. F. Maunder shows that currently his most popular book is *Algebraic Topology*.]

Stewart McCoy has a Masters degree (with distinction) in Historical Musicology at King's College, London, and an ARCM in lute teaching. As a lutenist he has performed in Russia, the Baltic States, Czech Republic, Austria, Australia, and the USA. For a season he was on stage as lutenist for the Royal Shakespeare Company, and he has recorded Christmas music with Emma Kirkby. He is a regular tutor at Norvis, and on courses run by the Lute Society. He has contributed articles to *Early Music* and *The Lute*, and has edited music for the Viola da Gamba Society, the Lute Society, and Fretwork Editions.

Selene Mills created Cambridge Early Music Summer Schools for the benefit of amateur and professional musicians in 1992, and has organized the courses annually ever since, offering tuition from The Parley of Instruments, Musica Antiqua of London, Sirinu and The Hilliard Ensemble. Her administrative job for the Chapel and Choir at Trinity College, Cambridge, helpfully provides her with enough annual leave to work on the summer schools. She sings with Psalmody (Peter Holman), Cappella Antiqua (Philip Thorby) and in various ad hoc groups, and alternates playing classical violin and viola in string quartets and quintets with Baroque string playing in groups including Belsize Baroque.

[Robert Oliver plays the viol and sings tenor, sometimes simultaneously. He lives in Wellington, New Zealand, but was in England in the early 1970s (when Peter Holman

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and I played with him) and had several recent visits touring school programmes with his wife Andrea.]

Noel O'Regan is senior lecturer and currently head of the music department at the University of Edinburgh. His research interests centre on 16th and 17th-century Italy, particularly on Rome. He conducts the Edinburgh University Renaissance Singers who do regular concerts of Renaissance and Baroque music in Edinburgh and on an annual tour around Europe. He also plays harpsichord occasionally, with a particular interest in Italian and Spanish keyboard music.

Stephen Rose is Research Fellow in Music at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he works mainly on the German Baroque. He is also an organist and harpsichordist, and has recently become Reviews Editor (Books & Music) at *Early Music*. In October his research fellowship finishes and he will then be freelancing around East Anglia as a performer, teacher and jobbing musicologist. [Any offers?]

James Ross is based in Inverness. He is founder/director of the early instrument consort Coronach, which for over twenty years has specialised in performances of the instrumental music of Renaissance Scotland and Europe, and he also directs the early music choir, Musick Fyne, who perform choral music from the Renaissance. He has written extensively about music in Renaissance Scotland, as well as regularly reviewing concerts and CDs for a number of publications. In addition to early wind instruments, he plays clarinet in a semi-professional capacity, both as a solo artist and orchestrally in the Inverness Sinfonia and Highland Chamber Orchestra. As an actor he has appeared for many years with the Clifton Players in Nairn and has directed his own drama ensemble, The King's Players, who specialise in Scottish Renaissance Drama performed in authentic costume and in Renaissance Scots with music supplied by Coronach.

[Eric Van Tassel was born and educated in the USA. He has worked chiefly in book publishing and is now a freelance writer and editor. I first met him at his party when he left Cambridge UP to work for Princeton UP. He was one of the victims of the unannounced visits we make when abroad but is now more accessible in Cambridgeshire.]

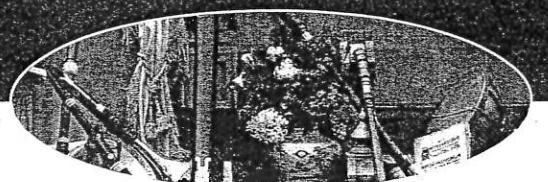
There are several other less regular reviewers who haven't written lately: they should not feel scorned — they are not forgotten.

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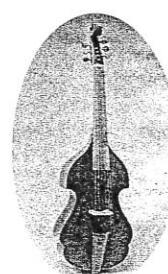
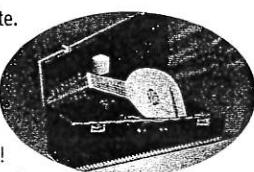
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