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You have probably read more about clef-codes and transposition in *EMR* than in any other magazine. It is a topic that relates to the notational conventions and performance of polyphonic repertoire in the half-century around 1600, and perhaps earlier, though has been discussed most vociferously and publicly in relationship to Monteverdi's *Vespers*. An article in the current issue of *Early Music* returns to the subject, and strengthens the argument by providing a theory of how the practice arose. As I suspected, it has to do with modal practice earlier in the 16th century. An interesting point is that high clefs were often used for music that was, even after transposition, at a lower pitch than non-transposed music.

I was surprised to find recently that I hadn't read the article in an earlier issue, August 2005, in which Rob Wegman deals with the change among composers from a gift to a market economy in the 16th century. He leads into his subject by pointing to traits of the gift economy still present in the academic world – though one wonders how long it will last. As salaries fall, so other earnings become more important, most notably royalties. Not much musical research has commercial value, but there is some in newly-discovered works by famous musicians, and then the full force of the copyright laws, conveniently (and probably accidentally) strengthened in the European Union a decade or so ago, are called into play. There are aspects even in the more commercial musical world where the transformation has not completely happened. Do players always ask 'How much?' when offered a gig? If I want to book someone to take an Eastern Early Music Forum, I might discuss whether he was free and what we would like to study, but it is quite possible that if money is mentioned at all, it would be in quite general terms. Often the financial aspect is handled by someone else. If an opera house wants to use our edition of *Orfeo*, I discuss musical issues but pass on discussion of fees to our rights manager. The obvious explanation is that talking money is thought vulgar; but it may also be a vestigial remain of the idea that music is a gift of God (many will have sung Lassus's motet *Musica donum Dei*) and that, while reward is essential for the well-being of musicians, musical worth is not defined by commercial value. But this only works if the value of the gift is recognised, and that's not always the case. CB

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

SWEELINCK POLYPHONIC WORKS

Sweelinck Complete Organ and Keyboard Works: Polyphonic Works (Part 1) II.1. edited by Siegbert Rampe. Bärenreiter (BA 8475) 2005. xxx + 101pp, £28.00

There are new editions appearing of Sweelinck's keyboard music from both Bärenreiter and Breitkopf. The former is in four volumes subdivided into seven, the latter in four volumes. The former is in the conventional organist's landscape format, the latter in a more neutral portrait form. I wrote about the two previous Bärenreiter volumes (I i & ii) in *EMR* 103 p. 4, about Breitkopf vol 1 in *EMR* 107 p. 4 and vol. 4 in *EMR* 106, p. 2. I will avoid repeating the comments I have made already. One point in the extensive introduction (much of which is repeated from the previous volumes) which I passed over previously is the discussion on the instrument for which Sweelinck was writing. The terminology is a little confusing: to make it easier for the reader, I've italicised the instrument names. On p. xxv we read 'Since the 19th century it has been assumed that his works were intended for *organ* or *clavier*. In 1997, Pieter Dircksen advanced the hypothesis that most of these compositions, and especially the toccatas, were designed for *harpsichord*.' We know what an *organ* is, we know what a *harpsichord* is, but what is a *clavier*? (The terms in the German text are *Orgel*, *Clavier* and *Cembalo*.) The German title of the volume uses *Orgel* and *Clavier*. Does *Clavier* in German exclude *organ*?* In English, I would use *keyboard* to cover *organ*, *harpsichord* and *clavichord*. Here the editor is throwing up an ambiguity which leads later to the suggestion that the only instrument which fits the compass of 'most of Sweelinck's toccatas and many of his fantasias' [correcting the misprint 'myna'] is the *clavichord*: no such instruments survive but they can be seen on paintings. Furthermore, neither *organ* at Amsterdam's Oude Kerk has the required range and 'rapid passages in one hand... against a chord in the other would have been virtually unintelligible on renaissance organs in the Dutch style with their lead pipework and soft response.' It is odd that the account of Sweelinck's daily recitals there (pp. xviii-xix) makes no mention of the apparent fact that he would not have played there most of his surviving music. If the compass is so important (which it is, irrelevant of this particular argument), surely, as editors of vocal music give the range of each part, so editors of keyboard music should state the compass and comment on the type of short octave required. But I'm a little suspicious of the passage, since it derives from vol. I, an edition of the toccatas, and I wonder how carefully it has been checked for relevance to the other forms. Breitkopf is more generous in its provision of original incipits in that it includes them for tablature sources.

My general impression of the volume is that it is extremely informative but can be a bit fussy to play from when too much source information is given on the page; the first piece is a good (or rather bad) example. And having got used to numbers indicating footnotes, the [3]s for editorial triplets on p. 31 look very confusing: are they necessary for players with the sophistication to use this edition anyway, or do they represent some sort of colouration in the source? I wondered in a previous review whether the two publishers (or editors) should have got together and decided that one edition should give the maximum information, the other concentrate more on a playable text. I can only guess what the Breitkopf equivalent of this volume will look like, but on previous form, I think that, were I a serious keyboard soloist, I would use the Bärenreiter score for study but play from Breitkopf. That is not to deny that this is a tremendous piece of work, and the existence of the two editions is fully justified. There is an unintended convenience that critical commentary inserted loose as a correction to the version printed in the volume, which makes it very convenient for consultation, though I suppose that I cannot recommend the practice, since it is quite likely to get lost.

* I invited comment from John Butt on this matter. His reply: 'Yes, there is a sort of ambiguity here, not least since *Clavier* is often used to mean *pianoforte* in more recent German. Even more confusing is the (now less common) American tendency to call the WTC the *Well-tempered clavichord*. To cut a very long story short, *clavier* can be used in German baroque sources to refer to the general keyboard world; unhelpfully, if a distinction is to be made between *organ* and other keyboards, as it so often is, *clavier* generally refers to the non-*organ* keyboards (the latter can be equally *harpsichord* or *clavichord*, but occasionally it might specifically mean the latter, particularly in a pedagogic context). In general, then, *clavier* is not used for *organ*, but sometimes it can be.... So the volume is perhaps partly right in assuming that *clavier* excludes *organ*, since it corresponds to a particular usage that has a long history.'

The issue of whether Sweelinck's toccatas were ever played on the *organ* is an interesting one – my guess is that they were notated for specific pedagogic reasons, and that what he himself played was largely improvised (doubtlessly often in the same idiom as existing toccatas).'

ORIANA MUSIC

Pavin and Galliard of Albarti from the Arundel Part Books (ca. 1560) (€6.00) Quite nostalgic this: I dabbled in Royal Appendix 74-6 back in the 1960s, though only produced MS editions. I also (on the strength of an evening in my flat discussing the MSS) established a distant link with Judy Blezzard which resulted in her family Christmas card being the first we received most years – ours follows much later. I find these two pieces hauntingly effective, but

separate publication is perhaps a bit of a luxury. You get five scores for your money, set out alternatively in TrAAAB and Tr⁸ x4 + B clefs.

Alfonso Ferrabosco I *Fantasy a 6 No. 2 'di Sei Bassi'* (€8.00). It's a pity that this clashes with the PRB edition reviewed in the last issue, which has the advantage of including Daman's six-treble piece. Like PRB, this also has the music transcribed for six tenors: in fact, the parts have the work both up a fourth and up an octave. No reason to prefer one edition rather than the other unless you want the Lupo, though I marginally prefer Oriana's more compact score on three rather than five pages.

Weelkes *Madrigales of 6. parts... 1600* (€20.00) The Ferrabosco is conventionally barred, but here we encounter Oriana's more distinctive style, with barless score (as mentioned below (p.4), the score copied by or for Tregian at about this time is systematically barred) and parts, with ample rehearsal numbers. This contains a pair of surprisingly rarely-sung madrigals a6, *What have the Gods/ Mee thinks I heare*. Both score and parts replace the original clefs (G₂G₂C₂C₂C₃F₃) by G₂G₂C₃C₃C₃F₄), but there is another set of parts avoiding C clefs. Each part gives the music at pitch and down a tone. The parts are quite wide-ranging for vocal music (mostly a twelfth) and transposition down a tone rather than fourth or fifth doesn't help altos or tenors, though the theoretical transposition would give the bass bottom Ds. I don't understand the comment in the introduction that 'low-clef' pieces (by which is meant the standard C₁C₃C₄F₄) are performed at a high pitch and high clef pieces lower, both clef configurations being described as a pitch standard. It is confusing to discuss clef-codes in terms of absolute pitch. Anyway, what we have here are a pair of fine pieces, which come with enough parts to allow a variety of singers and players in a way that could be very useful to experiment with at courses.

Lessons for the Lyra Viol from 'The Ballet Lutebook' vols 2 & 3 (each €13.00; all 3 vols €35.00) contain 24 and 16 pieces respectively in modern typesetting with introduction and commentary. The clarity compared with using a facsimile is appreciable. Vol. 3 has a table listing each piece in the MS, its volume and number in this edition, concordances in 25 sources, composer and VdGSoc number – a labour of love! Scholars may want to buy it just for that!

Boismortier *Petite sonates suivies d'une Chaconne Pour deux Bassons, Violoncelles, ou Violes, Op. 66* (1737). (€30.00). We jump a century from the previous titles. Boismortier published half a dozen sets for two basses of various sorts, available in facsimile from King's Music at £6 each – it would be sensible for players to buy two copies, but they never do. Oriana's price does include two, one with a cover, the other without. The original is somewhat squashed on the page, so players may well prefer this more spacious and clear typesetting; the one impossible turn is avoided by printing a part for the Chaconne at the end of each score. The music is for 'melody' and bass, though the accompanist has enough to keep him busy.

GAMBA SOCIETY

I was a bit harsh on the last batch of Gamba Society issues, and received a reprimand from one of our CD reviewers, John Bryan. I am, however, unrepentant: in my defence, I would argue that I was merely demanding the same standards as I would have expected when I was on the society's committee. But fewer problems this time, except that there is a feeling that the Society is now merely sweeping up the fragments that remain unavailable. I won't bother to list individual prices, but these six items ordered by members on subscription come to a total of £12.25. They appear below in numerical order.

ME 204. John Milton (father of the poet) was an amateur composer of sufficient status for Morley to include in *The Triumphs of Oriana*. He contributed two settings to William Leighton's *The Teares or Lamentacions of a Sorrowful Soule* (1614), one of which, 'If that a sinner's sighs' a5, is included by Virginia Brookes along with another setting a6: you have to think quite hard about the critical commentary to realise that they are not both from Leighton's publication. The A5 setting is fully texted, and is printed thus both in score and parts, though it is in high clefs with uncomfortable vocal tessituras. Curiously, the edition in EECM 11 puts it down by only a tone; it was also published a century ago by Arkwright (Old English Edition 22). The six-voice setting is a consort song, with an alto voice and TrTrTBB viols. The latter seems to be the better piece.

ME 206: *In Nomine a5* by George Gill for TrTrTTB, edited by Rita Moray. Gill is an obscure figure, known just for this and an *In nomine* a6, and was described as an instrument maker in 1641. Apart from the 2nd treble, which as usual has the chant, the parts are wide-ranging. There's quite a lot of rhythmic activity: I'm not sure by looking at it whether it would sound coherent, so try it and see.

ME207. John Browne: *In nomine fantasy and ayre a5*. Browne is much better known, both as 'civil servant' (to use an anachronistic term) and amateur player and copyist. These pieces are probably not a pair, since they appear in reverse order in the MS ChCh 473-8). Both are for TrTrTBB, with the chant in the tenor and even wider ranges in the other parts than Gill's piece. Browne knew the best composers and music of the time, and is certainly ambitious. The editor, Virginia Brookes again, points to the diminished octave leap in bar 13, but that is more logical than the seventh four bars later, which could easily be a misprint, though not a MS miscopying. Browne has certainly picked up some of the mannerisms of the masters, and it looks as if it will work.

ME 208. John Holmes *Lift up your eyes* & Anon consort a5 edited by Ian Payne. 'Lift your eyes' is a short piece with a repeated first section of 3 four-beat bars, a repeated five-bar 2nd section plus a petite reprise of three bars and an upbeat. There is, however, a problem with the petite reprise since the final cadence, like the cadence that ends

the first section, is on the fourth beat, whereas petite reprise begins on the fourth beat: presumably the cadence needs to be adjusted. Neither Craig Monson, in his *Voices and Viols in England*, nor the editor can trace a text; there is no part that looks as if it needs one, and treating it as a full anthem brings difficulties with phrases ending with a minim in one part, two crotchets in another. The anon consort, like 'Lift up your eyes' for TrTrTTB, is more modestly ranged than the pieces in ME206 & 207. It's earlier than the Holmes (John Holmes died in 1629) and was included in miscellaneous MS probably written by an amateur (BL Add. 4900). It's an outgoing piece, with homophonic sections that would make it a good concert item for wind ensembles and, while not being too difficult, is an excellent test for viol ensemble-playing.

ME 209 Erik Hermansson *Fantasy No. 5 as 'How do you do Mr Jenkins'*. The obvious Jenkins reference is the enharmonic modulation in bars 9–12: Eb, C, E a D B e. It's a wide range pieces for TrTrTTB. It doesn't look too difficult (though tests intonation); less experienced players will be tempted to take the 'brisk' section more moderately.

ME 210 Ruggiero Giovannelli *Three Pieces as* edited by Virginia Brookes. Two of these come from that great compendium of European madrigals etc, Tregian's anthology (BL Egerton 3665). I don't understand the editor's comment that the first piece, *Ut re mi fa sol la*, 'starts the section taken from *La rise a vincenda*', a madrigal publication published by Vincenti in Venice, 1598. I read that as implying that it is followed by a group of other pieces from the same 1598 set, but it isn't: there is an anon item [in fact Palestrina], three by Lassus, two by Monteverdi, one (in two sections) by Tregian himself and seven more by Monteverdi, none of which feature in the 1598 edition. Strangely, the MS has no words until the third Lassus piece. *Ut re me...* has in 1598 a second part *Son le risa* (several pieces in the anthology have allusions to the title), so one wonders whether the original might have been texted. Anyone with time on their hands in Ferrara might like to look at it. It is in high clefs, so vocally at least it should go down a fourth, but as notated it is allocated to TrTrTTB, though would be playable by Tr and four tenors. There are also two five-part settings of an English text 'For verie grief' which begin identically but diverge at bar ten. Again they are in high clefs, but set out as the hexachord piece. The original Italian text was *Morirò di dolor*, but we are given the English text of the second version from Morley's *Madrigals to five voyces. Celected out of the best approved Italian Authors*, 1598. Someone editing from Egerton 3665 encounters a strange situation: a source that is fully barred – with two minims per bar, not the four minims that the viol world favours: surely the editor should say that the barring ignores that of the source? (Other early scores favour short bars as well.) It's nice music. The hexachord is integrated, not treated as a cantus firmus, and players can amuse themselves working out which of the two *griefs* is the more effective. The voice parts for the two parts in C clefs could have been given on the blank pages in G clefs as well.

FUZEAU FACSIMILES

Benigne de Bacilly III. *Livre de Chansons et pour Boire 1665*. Présentation: Département de music ancienne du Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris. Fuzeau (5940), 2005. xviii + [80] pp, €33.50.

This is a collection of 35 songs printed with melody and verses but no bass: non-dancers (and perhaps dancers too) will be disappointed that only three of them are for drinking. The introduction gives no musical information, but suggests choreography for two songs. It would be nice to know if other editions include basses. Were basses busked, or were the songs unaccompanied? Surely even dancers need to know?

Montéclair *Cantates à voix seule et avec symphonie. Premier livre, Après 1709*. Présentation par Bertrand Porot. Fuzeau (5947), 2005. x + 97pp, €35.00.

The original title page draws attention to the presence of six French cantatas and two Italian ones: neither the original edition nor Fuzeau give an index to the contents. The most striking is the last, *Le Retour de la Paix*, which is headed 'avec deux dessus de violin' but later requires trumpets and musettes and looks like a cut-down version of a piece for orchestra. The opening is in the battle style and would sound a bit thin just with two violins and bass. The introduction is devoted to the poetic form; no objection as far as that goes, but the user of the volume might welcome something on other aspects of the content and on the composer.

André Campra *Cantates françaises... Livre Second 1714*. Présentation par Bertrand Porot. Fuzeau (No. 5039), 2006. xvi + 152pp, €47.50.

This contains six cantatas, three with instruments three with continuo; three for soprano, one for haute-contre, one for bass and a duet for soprano and bass (*Enée & Didon*). The introduction is rather more rounded than that of the Montéclair. I wonder if the distinction between 'violon' and 'violons' in *Silene* is significant – there is only ever one treble line. Some of the music is extremely outgoing, such as the air 'Terminez des disputes vaines' in *La dispute de l'Amour, et de l'Hymen*. This movement must be for violin, but a flute (recorder) appears in quieter sections and in unison with the violin in the final ariette. Some of these cantatas would work in domestic surroundings, but others need space into which their dramatic power can expand.

Louis de Caix d'Hervelois *Second Livre de Pièces de Viole avec la basse continue, 1719*. Présentation par Jean Saint-Arroman. Fuzeau (N. 5968), 2006. 2 vols, €61.00.

This needs substantial music stands: 131 heavy pages of solo part and 79 of figured bass. The user will look in vain for advice on whether the continuo part requires a second viol as well as keyboard, since the separate editorial

booklet deals only with the significance of the names of the pieces. This is an important set, and needs to be in any solo gambist's library.

Jean-Jacques Beauvarlet-Charpentier *Premier livre de pièces de clavecin, oeuvre I...* Présentation par Jean Saint-Arroman. Fuzeau (N. 5869), 2006. €36.00.

This comprises a folder in portrait format containing four separate landscape facsimiles along with Saint-Arroman's separate upright introduction. The one listed in the title is a set of virtuosic pieces from c.1770, harmonically quite static but with plenty of surface activity, presumably still primarily for harpsichord; the publication is composed of separate pieces, not sonatas. By contrast, there are three parts from Charpentier's *Journal d'orgue* from the 1780s. Nos 6 (a mass) and 9 (2 magnificats) have appeared already as Fuzeau No. 3723. The new set has No. 3 (two more sets of Magnificat versets), 7 (four hymns) and 12 (three further hymns), the last of these intended for major festivals, with a march 'pour les rentrées de processions'. The music looks rather simple on the page, but an instrument with '4 grand choeurs' would no doubt sound more impressive. Charpentier, incidentally, seems to avoid the presumably embarrassing first half of his surname.

Ivan Evstafievitch Handoschkine *Chansons russes variées pour deux violons, opus 2, 1796.* Présentation par Pavel Serbin. Fuzeau (No. 5926), 2006. €17.00

Fuzeau have already issued three posthumous sonatas for unaccompanied violin. Opus 2 contains variations of Russian melodies, and perhaps gains over the sonatas from its lack of pretentiousness. The introductory booklet traces most of the songs in collections of the period. Perhaps Khandoschkin's time has come: he is mentioned again on p. 15 below we are promised a Russian facsimile to review in the next issue.

MANCHESTER SONATAS

Vivaldi Suonate à Violino solo, e Basso per il Cembalo (le sonate 'di Manchester') Manoscritto Manchester, Henry Watson Music Library MS 624.1 Vw 81. Florence: SPES (Vivaldiana 3), 2004. €50.00

The striking folder (one of SPES's most richly-coloured marbled designs) includes two volumes. One of 78 pages in portrait format contains the basic set of 12 sonatas (and they really are a set), written in what Vivaldi scholars call hand 4. This is as near as one can get without having an autograph, since hand 4 can almost almost certainly be identified with Vivaldi's father, a very accurate and legible copyist. The other volume, in the far more usual landscape shape, has seven concordances from other sources, preceded by a long introduction in Italian and English. Strangely, the author is only formally named at its end on p. 55, though there are a lot of 'I's on the first page, in which he describes the excitement of his discovery of the sonatas; his identity is implied in footnote 4:

Michael Talbot. I enthuse about his new book on Vivaldi's cantatas elsewhere in this issue (p. 21). This introduction is just as good, with not only the expected scholarly information but an account of each sonata as well. As with the cantatas, players should bear in mind the possibility of performance just with violin and cello. This is very good value: 12 sonatas otherwise available more expensively, together with the other sources commentary.

QUEEN CAROLINE'S FUNERAL MUSIC

Handel Anthem for the Funeral of Queen Caroline HWV 264 Edited by Annette Landgraf. Score. Bärenreiter BA (4267), 2005. vii + 88pp, £26.50. Vocal score. Bärenreiter BA (4267a), 2005. viii + 87pp, £12.00.

These derivatives of the HHA III/12 are most welcome. I've loved the Funeral Anthem since I sung it under Charles Mackerras at the Dartington Summer School in the late 1960s. I can recommend it to early music fora courses, since it needs no soloists and only a standard baroque orchestra of strings, oboes and ad lib. bassoons.



KING'S MUSIC

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And it is one Handel work which can be performed with comparatively large forces: according to Donald Burrows (*Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, p. 389) the voices numbered 22 + 9 + 11 + 10, the strings 16, 16, 10, 8, 4 (virtually the size of a modern symphony orchestra) with 8 oboes, 8 bassoons, 2 trumpets, 2 horns, timps and organ.

Novello's edition by Watkins Shaw has been the only one current in the UK since 1979, with the usual problem that you can't see the full score without hiring it. As a conductor, rather than risking a pig in a poke, I'd assume that it was worth getting the choir to spend the extra £1.05 on the Bärenreiter vocal scores. They have an advantage in that it shortens fewer of the upbeats: much better to tell the choir to add than to cross out printed indications, even if clearly editorial. Back in the 1970s, editors were much more certain than they are now. One such point is 'The fatherless'; some may find a logical reason for Handel's semiquaver and quaver notation of *the*, but if you can't, you still need to decide if Handel might have wanted something between the two, and detailed notation isn't the solution. The Bärenreiter version avoids cluttering the page with semiquaver editorial stems. It does, however, clutter the underlay with the Italian text which Handel later added but never performed. This is of some academic interest, and Italian choirs might have welcomed it if it had been complete, but it is a distraction. German choirs, however, might have appreciated a translation. One is included in the vocal score of the minimally different version used as Part I of *Israel in Egypt* (BA 4063a): is that going to be reprinted separately for the German market?

I wondered why the editor is so certain that the organ should be tacet in the Symphony: Handel tends to give explicit instructions for the rare occasions when he wants chordal instruments not to play. If she is worried about its inability to play the tremolo/vibrato or whatever the wavy lines in bars 1 & 2 mean, surely it can play the minim short or use a tremulant stop. The mention of an archlute in parallel with a harpsichord is to give the former more credibility than it needs here. It is a pity that the introduction doesn't list Handel's borrowings from the German liturgical tradition. The most striking is the sequence of ten-beat phrases at *but their name liveth ever more*, which comes from Gallus's Funeral/Passion motet *Ecce quomodo*, which I mentioned recently in a Bachian context and has been used in some recent Passion performances.

I haven't seen the orchestral material, but it is available at £5.00 per string part, £10.50 for a wind set (check when ordering if it includes a bassoon as well as two oboes) and for those who need it, an organ part at £9.50. I recommend it.

HANDEL SAMSON

Handel *Samson*... Edited by Donald Burrows. Vocal score. Novello (NOV 090926), 2005. xxi + 300pp, £18.95.

Novello has dominated the British Handel market for over 150 years. Sadly, for the last 40 of those, their name has been a byword for sluggishness in renewing their invest-

ment. The success of Watkins Shaw's *Messiah* was musically (though not economically) their downfall. As an edition which set out to tell performers how the work should go, it had a useful shelf-life of a decade or two. But when styles changed, and what was needed was good Urtext editions, they carried on spoon-feeding musicians in such a way as their reputation as a publisher in touch with current taste dwindled. Their other failure was their refusal to publish full scores. I don't understand how any serious conductor can rehearse a work with his choir without having a full score at hand. I've seen performances in which the conductor, although on top of the choral aspect, is obviously unfamiliar with the full score. These days, a computer-set full score must exist, and reproducing it isn't too expensive. Are people really going to scan it and produce their own parts? It's not too difficult to check concert diaries and investigate unauthorised performances anyway.

So Donald Burrows' labours on *Samson* come to light in a critical vocal score. At least the reduction gives ample indications of instrumentation. This is, needless to say, as excellent and informative as we can expect from any vocal score. *Samson* is a massive piece. Of the score's 300 pages, only 20 are alternative versions. Perhaps I review scores by weight too often, but I have taken seriously Emma Kirkby's complaint that my OUP *Messiah* vocal score was too heavy for a singer to hold. That is 750g, the new *Samson* is 850g. But my c.1850 Vincent Novello vocal score, with a cheap board cover, weighs only 520g, and unlike the intervening Novello vocal scores, is complete. I'm not sure how it gets all the music onto 219 pages. The print is smaller, but both scores have five systems on a page for arias. The new edition, however, is very spacious in recits. So singers will need music stands.

Since it is a long piece, the editor assists the inevitable process of cutting by giving full details of a shorter version performed by the composer; this is set out on page vii and cued in the score. It has the economic as well as temporal advantage of needing only four soloists.

It is a delight to have so fine an edition available. The introduction is a masterpiece of concise but clear information. Some of the detail will be beyond the concern of the average choral-society member and other publishers would have confined them to the full score, but it is good that it is available here. There is a page on 'editorial practice'. Most of the points are uncontroversial. However, I find it odd that the original slurs to indicate underlay are omitted as well as 'modernising' the beaming. I would have thought that, when 'instrumental' beaming is used, it was even more important to retain slurs to show underlay. I am old-fashioned and find recitative much easier to read with separate stems: beams suggest an inappropriate fixity of rhythm and stress especially the frequent streams of paired quavers. But there are oddities in arias too, such as four quavers being underlaid as 3+1 but beamed in two pairs. I suspect that one reason that the score is so spacious is to make sure that underlay is unambiguous without slurs. I am not too unhappy that in the vocal score simile slurs and staccatos are not shown as editorial; it is nice to be

told that they are properly indicated in the full score, but nothing is said about the parts, and I've been hearing lately that publishers who should know better are still concealing the editorial nature of such marks in parts. Hemiola patterns are marked, a practice that I've abandoned myself because of the likelihood of encouraging over-rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 patterns.

There are two pages of 'practical considerations'. Double dotting is much more restrained than it would have been a few decades ago: it is, anyway, a matter for the performer. Incidentally, one reason why a conductor needs to study the score in advance is that he needs to make decisions for both choir and orchestra long before he has the latter to rehearse with. It is interesting that in two recits Handel indicates some sections to be *staccato* and others *sostenuto*. I have vacillated over the years on what octave violas should play when the are col basso, but have now come to the view that they play an octave higher throughout. They may go above the violins, but the effect is that of a 4' stop on an organ (balancing the 16' of the basses), and doesn't obtrude.

I've never had to do any work on the sources of *Samson*, so I cannot discuss details of editorial activity. One obvious change is that we have bright *seraphims* with an English plural: Handel wrote that twice and *seraphim* once, but the libretti have *seraphims*, which was once a common usage. Burrows does not suggest the air's separate performance as a DC aria, though I must confess that it does not offend me in a soprano/trumpet programme without chorus. The old Novello printed *angel-trumpets blow*, following the 1743 libretto. Burrows omits the hyphen, though its presence helps make sense of the awkward noun-as-adjective *angel*. I suppose it is omitted as part of the general modernisation of orthography. I have some doubts over that, but Novello is perhaps not the house to pioneer the preservation of archaic features of the text.

I hope this will encourage more performances: it is one of Handel's finest works and seems to have been neglected of late, perhaps through the absence of any commercially-available edition.

HANDEL KEYBOARD

Handel Klavierwerke I-IV. Kritischer Bericht von Terence Best. (Hallische Händel-Ausgabe IV, 7) Bärenreiter (BA 4067) 2000. 146pp, £80.50.

I mentioned in my review of the reprint of the revised *Klavierwerke II* last month that I couldn't find the critical commentary to all four keyboard volumes in Bärenreiter's catalogue. In response, the editor has kindly sent me a copy. I am very grateful, but it is difficult to know what to write about it. Some of my reviews get bogged down in unreadable detail, and any review of a critical commentary is likely to have a readership countable on the fingers of a pair of hands. Also, although I know some Handel sources well, they are not the keyboard ones. However, it is

gratifying that this information is so thoroughly available to be consulted at need, especially as autograph sources are by no means as ubiquitous as for the operas and oratorios. The information here is impressive, and should answer any questions that occur to the conscientious or worried performer. One editor in a different field wrote that his labours were intense, but no-one else need undergo the same effort again. I'm not sure that current scholarship would accept that attitude, but from my sampling of this volume, I reckon that it will be a long time before anyone needs to go over this ground again. It would have been useful to have had an index of titles and HWV numbers to the four volumes which this accompanies; trying to check details of the items on Christopher Hogwood's Handel clavichord (reviewed on p. 32) made the need very clear.

Terence Best has pointed out a mistake in my review of Christopher Hogwood's Cambridge handbook on the Water and Fireworks Music (see last issue, p. 32). In fact, in the revised HHA edition the *Water Music* will be edited by Best, the *Fireworks* by Hogwood. I happened to kill a few hours at Christopher Hogwood's house while a car was being serviced in Cambridge proof-reading the December *Early Music Review*. I didn't, however, have much success, since apart from a long phone conversation with John Eliot Gardiner about his Gabrieli prom, I was fascinated by a conversation between Best & Hogwood in the adjoining room as they went in detail through proofs of the new edition. I deduced that Hogwood was the editor and Best was commenting as supervising editor for the HHA, but was mistaken.

NEW BÄRENREITER

First, another Handel issue: the Alleluia movement that can end the organ concerto op. 4/4. The separate edition includes the whole fourth movement, and comprises a score (BA 8348; £8.50), vocal score (£4.50) and parts (quite expensive at £3.00 for each string, £7.00 for a wind set, £6.50 for organ and £5.00 for realised harpsichord). It does seem very odd to publish them separately, since the expense of adding them to the standard op. 4/4 would surely have been minimal, and all a chorus needs is an initial cue and the vocal lines, which would fit on a four-page sheet – the instrumental reduction doesn't really add anything helpful. This isn't going to encourage anyone to add it to a performance of the concerto in a concert with a choir, and really is overkill for something so small (sledgehammer and nut!) If anyone wants to do it, we can supply typeset parts for £1.00 each and photocopies of the vocal score from *The Crystal Palace Sunday School Choir Festival* of 1926; a full score isn't really necessary.

More valuable is a vocal score of Mozart's *Die Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebots*, K. 35, the first section of an oratorio performed at Salzburg on 12 March 1767. The other two sections, which haven't survived, were by Michael Haydn and Adlgasser; they were intended for performance on separate nights, so Mozart's work is free-standing. There will probably be a few performances this year: it may be

immature Mozart, but had he died at the age of 11 rather than 36, it would probably be hailed as a masterpiece (BA 3513a; £13.00. The full score is BA 4513; £71.50, parts are on hire.)

DUPORT EXERCISES

Duport 21 *Etudes for Violoncello with an accompaniment of a second Violoncello (ad libitum)*... Edited by Martin Rummel. Bärenreiter (BA 6980), 2005. vi + 55p + part & separate text volume, £13.50.

Bärenreiter have produced some fine editions for cellists of late: Gabrielli, Vivaldi, Bach, Beethoven. This separate edition of the 21 *Exercises* (not *Etüden* or *Etudes*, as they are called here) in Jean Louis Duport's substantial (267 large pages) *Essai* may seem to follow in the same line. But for the sort of cellist who is reading this, there is a problem: it is not Urtext. That is these days a naive term, but this edition does not represent what we expect from an Urtext – whatever text the editor decides to print from his study of the sources, it should not be contaminated by updatings of substance to suit modern players. There is, of course, no objection to the editor suggesting metronome marks in his commentary – even separate ones for practice and performance (though is this really performance music?) But taking the *Deuxième exercice* as an example (not because it is particularly notable but because there isn't room on my desk to open No. 1's otherwise-sensible

three-page spread at the same time as the facsimile) there are differences in fingering (and this from a book specifically about fingering) in the very first bar. There are 9 triplet quavers:

Duport fingers them 4 2 x x 4 3 4 3 1,
Rummel has 4 3 x x 3/4 x x 3 x

(x = a note without fingering, 3/4 indicates alternatives). The commentary is about dynamic structure, and doesn't mention 'corrections'. Later in the piece, Duport spells out the obvious in indicating string and position, but these are omitted. There is, indeed, some ambiguity over Duport's notation of fingering: the 3/4 shown above is sensible, with Duport's fingering below and what the editor thinks he means above. But once you start interpreting, the value of the edition as a landmark in the development of cello technique diminishes. So useful though this may be to the modern player, those concerned with technique two centuries ago will need the facsimile, £40.00 from King's. (I thought I had seen it in one of Fuzeau's *Méthodes & Traités* series, but can't find it.)

LAURENTIUS

Laurentius-Musikverlag is a firm new to me. It comes from Dr Wolfram Hader, Leverkuser Strasse 21, D-Frankfurt-Höchst, Germany, but is also available from Prima la Musica. Its repertoire is based around the middle of the 18th century. I've seen three scores. Galuppi is worth investigating in his own right, not just in the hope of discovering unidentified Vivaldi. His *Alma redemptoris mater* in C minor for alto and strings survives, as do the other pieces reviewed here, in Dresden. The music is strong, if a bit over-stretched, with a vocal tessitura concentrating on the tenth from the B flat below middle C. It is worth performing, but does seem expensive with the score at £23.00 for 45 rather spacious pages.

Naumann's *Desiderium animae ejus* is better value at £13 for 40pp, but rather less in duration since it is more substantially scored with only one system per page. Naumann was a Dresden man, born there in 1741 and dying there in 1801. This *Offertorium* is for SATB with some not-too-difficult sections for solo soprano, strings, two oboes and two horns (and presumably bassoon). Not that one would perform this for the benefit of the chorus: it only sings in about a quarter of the work's 120 bars. It's a nice piece, but not many churches have an orchestra at hand for every service, and it probably wouldn't hold attention at concert. BC, however, found the music more interesting than I did.

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Hasse's *Libera me* (£20.00) is more usable and musically at a higher level. It sets *Libera me*, *Tremens factus sum*, *Quando caeli* and *Requiem aeternam* as separate movements, mostly for choir but with SA soli in *Tremens factus sum* (though that could be done by SA tutti, as the last movement is for TB tutti). The make-up of the surviving performing material is interesting: one solo and one tutti part for each of the four voices, strings 3.3.2.2.1, theorbo, organ, oboe I & II (doubling the violin parts) and two bassoons. Definitely something to revive.

ANOTHER NINTH

Beethoven Symphony No. 9 in D minor, op. 125, edited by Peter Hauschild. Breitkopf & Härtel (PB 5239), 2005. vi + 274pp, £78.00. (Strings £6.00 each, wind £98, VSc £8.00, ChSc £2.50)

This completes Breitkopf's new edition of Beethoven's symphonies, so there are now two thorough critical editions of the work, both with full performance material. Breitkopf is marginally cheaper than Bärenreiter. Both firms are quick and reliable in fulfilling orders.

One might expect that, with the autograph and first edition (score and parts) surviving, producing an edition should be straightforward. But not with Beethoven! Take, for example, bar 330 in the finale, the climax 'steht vor Gott', where the dominant A chord is followed by a tutti F major before the Turkish March in B flat. In those sources, the dynamic is *ff*. But some parts with corrections in Beethoven's hand from the first performance (and others copied from them) have diminuendos down to *p* at the end of the bar. Jonathan Del Mar (for Bärenreiter) produces a hypothesis that these are the result of advice received at rehearsal and gets the impression of Beethoven 'writing it in as few parts as he thought he could get away with'. Whether that is fanciful or not, it may (perhaps) be significant that the adjustment did not find its way into the first edition. Breitkopf, however, prints the diminuendo and *p* in all parts, backing its decision with reference to both an article and a recording by Kurt Masur – I think this is the first time I've seen a critical commentary point to a recording so that one can hear the effect of the editor's choice of reading. Del Mar quotes Masur, but finds his argument for the effect of the diminuendo too fanciful and uncharacteristic of Beethoven. In the end, the choice falls back on the plausibility of the decrescendo, not any objective study of the sources – Beethoven's copy-preparation and proof-reading were not reliable enough to give the first edition full authority. Breitkopf's score alerts the user (here and at other significant places with variants) with a footnote to the commentary, while the user of the Bärenreiter score has no such warning, and since the commentary is in a separate volume, may not even have access to the information – though I do hope that conductors and orchestras who have invested in the edition have bought the commentaries too.

Breitkopf has a thorough critical commentary appended. It is not as detailed as Bärenreiter, which is thorough, not only in recording and evaluating the early sources, but in noting readings in the standard later editions. I'm sure that, had the new Breitkopf edition been available, its readings would have been noted. Breitkopf, however, ignores the Bärenreiter completely, which seems a bit head-in-sand unless most of the editorial work was finished a decade ago.

I'm puzzled that Breitkopf bothers to save space by squashing two systems on a page for parts of the middle

movements; I suspect that is a false economy. It runs to 259 pages, whereas Bärenreiter has 329 with one system per page throughout. I wonder whether the absence of abbreviated instrument names on each page of the latter might annoy in the heat of the moment, but probably not at a professional level. I can't compare legibility directly, since I only have the Bärenreiter study score, but both seem excellent.

I've also been sent the Breitkopf vocal and choral scores. The latter has cues comprising only a few single lines, usually a vocal solo, but in one instance a flute part that would be far more helpful down an octave. This would be fine for singers who knew the music, but a bit scary to use on one rehearsal (the only circumstance in which I've sung it). So it's probably better to be extravagant and equip your choir with vocal scores – though in my singing days (when my eyes were better as well as my voice) I'd have sung from a study score.

This new edition is a fine achievement. I have checked more points than I will bore you with. I sometimes wonder whether editors deliberately aim to differ from predecessors and rivals. Unless your German is absolutely fluent, you will need Del Mar's commentary anyway, and even if you are German, it has additional information and a different viewpoint. If you have Bärenreiter, keep it; but it's worth checking at least the items footnoted in the Breitkopf score and making up your own mind. <http://www.rscm.com/assets/publications/>

COMPLINE

Compline: An Order for Night Prayer in Traditional Language The Royal School of Church Music for The Plainsong and Medieval Music Society, 2005. 19pp, £2.95, ISBN 0 85402 119 1

In our roughly chronological arrangement of reviews, one might expect a chant publication to be first. But the words of this are a modern liturgical invention, updating the original PMMS Compline which was based on the unauthorised Anglican Prayer Book of 1928. It was, at least in the period when King's Music held their stock, by far the PMMS's best seller. Refurbishment was needed, and that has now taken place. The two-colour printing of the original edition has been restored. Since with respect to the words this is a new publication, if you your choir has suddenly enlarged, buying just enough extra copies won't help.

Nearly 100 million Americans listen to early music, according to a study by *Early Music America*. 30% of classical music broadcast is pre-1800, and 40% of that is on period instruments. The 32-page report is available at www.earlymusic.org. I would guess that the broadcasting proportions in the UK are now lower than that, both at Classic FM and Radio 3, but are there figures available? We may be flattered that 'the field of early music is a highly educated one'.

BERTALI IN YALE

Brian Clark

It was something of an honour for me to be invited to Yale last winter by Simon Carrington to hear him conduct his Yale Schola Cantorum chamber choir and graduate soloists in my new edition of Antonio Bertali's *Missa Resurrectionis* – was this the *only* anniversary celebration of his life and works, apart from Selene Mills's excellent Cambridge Early Music Summer School (at which I was also present!) I had only previously been to the US once before (Clifford kindly took me along to the Boston Early Music Festival to enjoy the fruits of our joint labours on Luigi Rossi's splendid *Orfeo* – I wish we could get more jobs like that!), and I was slightly cautious about what I'd find when I arrived.

In fact, I was met at New Haven by the lovely Jenna-Claire Kemper, who showed me around the town and then treated me to a delicious meal in a deli-cum-coffee shop, whose shelves I promised myself to raid before I came home, but I never managed (one *more* reason to have to go back!)

Jenna-Claire is one of the dynamos of Yale's Institute of Sacred Music, a set-up independent of the music department and the music school (the difference was explained, but I'm afraid the mists of time have blurred the distinction – I think one is for theorists, or musicologists, for want of a better word, while the other is for musicians, but please don't quote me on that!), where all aspects of the subject are taught, from singing to choral conducting to composition, to liturgy. You name it, they study it – and, what's more, they put on regular events to share their expertise with a broad local audience.

Over the next few days, apart from spending lots of time with Simon and his charming wife, Hilary, and their gorgeous dog, Poppy, I attended rehearsals, concerts, services, I visited the music library (and spent a very unlikely hour for me looking at the manuscripts of Aaron Copland's motets – those of Corelli (according to the cardex, anyway!) not having been found by the librarian – and I led a seminar on the evaluation of musical sources, which I found a little easier than I'd imagined it would be, and it certainly lasted longer than I'd expected. It was gratifying that the students oo'd and ah'd at the right times!

The main business of the trip, however, was to be on hand to help with any issues arising from my edition of the *Missa Resurrectionis*. Copied in 1666, this is a typically large-scale Easter mass scored for eight soloists with ripieno singers, and a band that varies from movement to movement but is basically five-part strings and six-part brass. It is written in the usual patchwork style with solos and duets, with and without instrumental accompaniment, alternating with homophonic or fugal tutti. I had

been unable to extract the appropriate Proper from the library at Kromeriz, so I substituted sonatas by Bertali and two small Easter motets by Christian Geist. (At the time, there seemed to be no connection between the two, but only last week I discovered that at least two of the Bertali sonatas in the Düben Collection were, in fact, copied by Geist!) The ISM (Institute of Sacred Music) runs a graduate singers programme (Simon's idea), which now has eight soloists – young, but all with fantastic voices: they show great promise as singers of this repertoire. The ripieno consists of other students from the university (there seemed to be a large number of budding composers in their number, at least according to the conversations I overheard on the bus on the way into New York). The band consisted of a student string group inspired and led by the masterly Robert Mealy, and a wind band with which he occasionally performs in New York, The Spiritus Collective, led by husband and wife team, Kris and Greg Ingles.

Giving the pre-concert talks was another daunting experience for me – especially in New York, where I had to wear a microphone and where I was being recorded! It was difficult to decide how to pitch an introduction to such an obscure piece. But on both evenings the people who had come early enough to hear me asked interesting questions, and seemed mostly satisfied by my answers. Phew!

The concerts themselves were thoroughly enjoyable, and both audiences lingered and lingered in their applause and in their post-concert enthusiasm to talk to the performers. I was particularly interested, after the New Haven concert, to listen to the Institute's Prof. Markus Rathey talking about how well Bertali had paced the movements in terms of the delivery of the text: he described the *Agnus Dei* as being a 'most religious setting', which I thought was a lovely way to describe the movement – the first passage alternates a homophonic phrase with vocal duets, while the second (*dona nobis pacem*) winds itself up in a *tutti*, triple time frenzy, only to leave the penultimate word to two solo trumpets (whose first glorious appearance at *Et resurrexit* is surely why Bertali chose the title), then a bar's rest and finally a quiet plagal cadence. It is very moving.

Simon Carrington is a very well-known name in choral circles, and his projects with this choir have been spectacularly successful without exception. It's a difficult job he has, not only constantly being on top of the music, but also inspiring his students to engage and to commit to everything they do. They do not restrict themselves to early music, but I'll say one thing: they certainly know how to deliver it, and I'm immensely proud to have been part of that, albeit for only a short time!

Insula Magica, Novosibirsk

Christopher Stembidge

I have now completed my fourth visit to Novosibirsk in just under 18 months. The early music ensemble *Insula Magica* is about to celebrate its first 15 years of existence. The Russian system of State Philharmonic Societies which exist in all sizeable cities has fortunately survived so far. These act as umbrella organisations for various activities which in Novosibirsk include a chamber orchestra, chamber choir, string quartet, folk music, as well as *IM*. Musicians receive a (very) basic salary and the ensemble has to perform some 30 concerts a year in Novosibirsk (pop. 2 million) and the surrounding area which includes the university city Akademgorodok. In addition their manager organises further activities including trips abroad. For some concerts they can hire other – usually local – singers and instrumentalists. Flexibility and last minute decisions are of the essence (see my December letter re baroque violinists). Only one singer, Yana Mamonova, is with them for their current visit to Spain.

Its founder and director, Arkady Burhanov, is a lutenist who also plays various renaissance wind instruments. He teaches guitar at the Novosibirsk Conservatory. He started his early music activities against heavy odds during soviet times. The ensemble consists of seven members: apart from Arkady there are two other instrumentalists (viola and harpsichord) and four singers. Most of the singers are also employed by the opera theatre and the ensemble provided the basic continuo group as well as minor soloists for the Opera Theatre's performance of *Dido and Aeneas* in London last November.

While I have worked with them on baroque music from Carissimi to Bach, much of their bread and butter comes from performing renaissance music in very attractive renaissance dresses. Arkady has an engaging way of explaining and introducing the music to the audience. Recently we went to Kemerovo together, five hours travelling East from Novosibirsk – just a 'small town', they said (in fact 600,000). Unlike the Novosibirsk Philharmonic, the Kemerovo Philharmonic boasts an organ (Sauer 1983) in a strange-looking hall with a fabulous acoustic. The first part of the programme was a short organ recital. My collaboration with *IM* consisted of accompanying Ekaterina Kuzminykh performing the Bach G major Viola da gamba sonata. The second half was *IM*'s renaissance programme in dress. The audience (full hall – 400 seats) enjoyed a remarkable spectrum of music that night (including Widor and Messiaen).

Some days earlier they produced a programme of English music in Akademgorodok and Novosibirsk. This featured a Locke suite and some consort songs that in fact marked

the debut of a viol consort in Novosibirsk – 3 viols (a fourth instrument should arrive this year). I accompanied them and contributed some keyboard music. In the second half the singers and Arkady (lute), in period dress, sat round a table and recreated a wonderful atmosphere for madrigals and lute songs. (The singers' theatrical experience came out in the subtle glances between them when a colleague was performing.)

One hopes the present state support will survive the general trend of privatisation which is making life in Russia horrendously expensive. Conservatory salaries are a maximum of \$100 p.c.m. The system whereby musicians are paid badly for teaching is actually sensible if work as a performer is guaranteed. It means that good musicians find work as performers and that anyone who wants to teach in addition must have a calling to do so. In Italy the boot is on the other foot: less and less public money is available for concert activity while well-paid conservatory teachers, working (for 2 days a week) in a system in which nothing – not even exam syllabi – has changed since Mussolini's time, are not necessarily practising musicians.

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RAVENS VIEW

Simon Ravens

Musical anniversaries are all around us this year. With the shelves in Grove Music groaning under the weight of new Mozart and Shostakovich releases, I would like to make my own little contribution with a column devoted to Bach. It may only be an excuse for indolence, but I always prefer giving gifts without the peg of a birthday or Christmas. It shows that the gift-giving is motivated by itself, rather than dictated by the calendar. Or so I tell myself. Not surprisingly, then, I applauded the apparent arbitrariness of Radio 3's decision to devote a week to Bach last year, as well as their curmudgeonly refusal to bestow the same treatment to Mozart this.

Whatever its motivation, the Bach week struck me as an extraordinary triumph. I have certainly never known any Radio 3 event fire the enthusiasm of listeners to such an extent, or have such a direct influence on CD sales. At times during the week before Christmas I felt like the fireman on a steam train as I shoveled discs into the void of 'b's. In part, I wonder whether the success of the Bach week can be traced to a lack of funds. Had Radio 3 limitless resources, I suspect the temptation might have been to commission new, musicologically state-of-the-art performances of everything it could. As it was, the schedule was highly eclectic. I may have had to turn my radio off when Koussevitsky came on to conduct an orchestral suite, but at the same time I was glad he was given the platform. The public were assumed the intelligence to make their own judgments. Almost Reithian, one might say.

A similarly broad church for Bach seems to be being constructed in Paris by Jean-Paul Combet's Alpha label. Although the label's inclinations have thus far been towards hip Bach, Alpha's most recent release has been the Russian pianist Andrei Vieru playing Book 1 of the 48. Last summer, when I was in Arques for Alpha's festival, I noticed that Vieru was scheduled to play Bach on – according to the programme – something called a 'piano'. I should say here that I don't have a problem with Bach on the piano (I play him on one myself). But, knowing what I did of Alpha's catalogue, I could hardly believe me eyes when I saw that word 'piano', and asked Combet if this was true. 'Absolutely... he plays Bach like... Rachmaninov, no, like... I can't describe it'. Intriguing. Cut to the end of the concert the following night when, trying to sneak out without being noticed after some of the most interminably ponderous Bach I had ever heard, I bumped into Combet. Thinking of another Russian keyboard titan who might have inspired this misplaced gravitas, all I said was 'Sokolov?', to which Combet replied 'ah, but Vieru is a chess player'. Well, at the time I thought that if Vieru was a pianistic Boris Spasky, I needed the attentions of his hypnotist.

Having now had my suspicions confirmed by Vieru's Bach on CD, all I can suggest is that the man tries his hand at speed chess. To me, it is as simple as this. In Book I of the 48, Bach uses no less than eleven different time-signatures. He does so not to show that he could have passed Grade 5 theory, but to indicate different tempi and characters (some of which are fast and virile) to the performer. Vieru irons this great multi-coloured patchwork into a starched sheet of Cistercian white. If there were to be a sub-title to any Bach/Vieru programme, it would be 'Bach the Mystic'. Now, I would agree that Bach is indeed the great mystic, but his greatness comes from his ability to let mysticism speak with a human voice, with all the variety of address which that implies. To play him with the agenda of Vieru is to reduce Bach to the status of a musical John Tavener. Not good.

Recordings of the 48 are so plentiful that Vieru's may well vanish like a drop in the ocean. Thankfully, in an area of Bach's work where there is still plenty of room for new voices, we have a new one of real distinction. Phillip Pierlot's Ricercar Ensemble have recorded three cantatas, including the *Actus Tragicus*, for another superb French label, Mirare. One interesting feature of one-voice-to-a-part Bach is that, to my ears at least, its chief exponents, from Joshua Rifkin onwards, have exercised too much emotional restraint. One might have thought that individual voices, powered by the egos of soloists, would have grabbed Bach's vocal lines and forced them through the emotional wringer, but in my experience this has rarely been the case. I was slightly disappointed, for instance, by Cantus Cölln's B Minor Mass recording a couple of years ago. Corporate entities can have great merits, but it is nice to be occasionally reminded that they are staffed by individuals. Oddly enough, this is never a complaint I would offer about Cantus Cölln's Schütz and Buxtehude, which sound to me powered by individual as well as corporate dynamism.

There are no absolutes here, but for my money the Ricercar Ensemble has achieved a near-perfect balance for Bach. Of course, with voices as wonderfully distinctive as Katharine Fuge's and Carlos Mena's, individuality is never likely to be absent, and their solo contributions are far from retiring. But in ensemble the sense of humility is never far away from Pierlot's singers. There is, for instance, an effortless eloquence to the way they deliver the closing chorale of BWV18 – *Gleichwie der Regen*. Not so much ensemble as communion. Sublime.

Thank you for taking up my non-review of Vieru's CD in the last issue and giving some specific reasons why I thought it best to avoid writing about it. CB

MUSIC IN LONDON

Andrew Benson-Wilson

It is not often that I get invited to film premieres, but the start of Mozart year provided that opportunity at The Barbican (4 Jan) with Phil Grabsky's documentary film on the life of Mozart, *In Search of Mozart*, since broadcast on Channel 5 and readily available on CD. The title is apposite, as Grabsky readily admitted that he knew little about classical music, and even less about Mozart, at the start of this project. The exploratory nature of his quest is manifest in the style of the film, with its steady sequence of vignettes dipping into various aspects of Mozart's life, running in more or less chronological order, and bringing in comments from a series of 70 or more experts and musicians and films of performances (many of Eastern European origin and of varying quality) to illuminate his search. Period instrument performances were slow in appearing (Mozart's first known piece played on a concert grand was an inauspicious start) but took steadier hold for the latter part of the film. It was fun trying to identify the setting for the performances from minimal information – for example, the Rector's Palace in Dubrovnik from the balustrade to the staircase in the central courtyard.

Every now and again events conspire to translate a concert into a totally different emotional league. One such was the Gabrieli Consort and Player's performance of Schubert's fourth symphony and Haydn's Harmonie Mass at Christchurch Spitalfields (19 Jan). Although the two men were born 65 years apart, these two works were only separated by 14 years. Those people who assume that the Harmonie Mass is so named because of its inventive use of harmonies can be forgiven, because that is one of its most striking features. But, particularly with period instrument performance of a standard as high as this, it is the true definition (Wind Band Mass) that comes to the fore, notably in such movements as the plangent opening and the dramatic *Dona nobis pacem* of the *Agnus Dei*. The 19-year-old Schubert shows his mastery of the late works of Haydn and Mozart in his tightly wrought symphony, which was given an particularly intense reading by Paul McCreesh, the bustling turbulent and stirring finale being particularly noteworthy. The emotional depth of this opening work (that Schubert later nickname *Tragic*) took on a special poignancy in this performance for those that became aware that the orchestra had only just heard of the dreadful personal tragedy that had befallen one of their members. Indeed, it says much for the outstanding professionalism of every performer that this concert took place at all – quite how they did it, I don't know. A very special mention must go to bassoonist Zoë Shevlin, leader Catherine Martin, Paul McCreesh – and Sally Jackson.

A 10th anniversary fund-raising concert at St George's, Hanover Square (20 Jan) gave the opportunity to show

how important the annual Croatian *Æstas Musica* International Summer School has been in developing young musicians, not least those from less musically developed parts of Europe. The line up for this concert included ex-students from Austria, Britain, Croatia, German, Hungary, Norway, Spain and Ukraine, as well as many of the summer school tutors, in a mixed programme of Bach, Handel, Purcell, Upster and Vivaldi. Indeed, it says something for the standard of many young performers that, in many cases, their performances were of a noticeably higher standard than that of their tutors, some of whom were really not on form. Amongst the individual musicians who impressed were cellist Kinga Gaborjani, countertenor Momir Pjevac, oboist Andreas Helm, mezzo Kora Pavelić and violinists Huw Daniel and Katherina Bengston in their concluding performance of Bach's double violin concerto. But the evening was stolen, predictably, by Croatian mezzo Renata Pokupić – a singer I have raved about on a number of occasions. In two Handel arias from *Rinaldo*, she yet again showed her enormous emotional range and her ability to delve into the heart of the most dramatic moments. She combines impressive technical skill, including clean and well-defined runs, with clear articulation and a very musical use of the natural inflexions in her voice. She deserves to be far better known in Western Europe.

The end of January saw the Mozart anniversary celebrations hitting their peak, with Mozart weekends at the Barbican (BBC) and St John's, Smith Square (London Mozart Players). I cheated, and saw a sizeable chunk of the London Mozart Players series at The Anvil in Basingstoke (22 Jan) starting with a children's concert 'Wake up Mr Mozart' – a really rather amateurish and patronising affair that certainly didn't impress the 12 year old daughter of a friend who I borrowed for the occasion – but perhaps she might have enjoyed it when she was much younger. This was followed by a performance of the Clarinet Quintet in A (K581) with soloists from the London Mozart Players, the use of modern instruments being particularly noticeable when the melodies were passed from clarinet to violin. The Tallis Chamber Choir then gave a very curious performance of some of Mozart's sacred works, accompanied on a Steinway grand. Sophie Bevan was the impressive soprano soloist. The evening concert was of meatier, and far more interesting, stuff, not least in the first live performance that I have heard of the Incidental music to *Thamos, King of Egypt* (K.345) given by the London Mozart Players and the Tallis Chamber Choir, under Andrew Parrott. With an actor outlining as much of the plot as my brain could cope with, the music was set into some sort of context, although most of it was capable of standing on its own. A series of often majestic choruses, interspersed with smaller choirs of priests,

maidens and priests and maidens and instrumental works of almost symphonic proportions, makes for a most impressive work. This was preceded by more popular fare, the Symphony 25 and the Clarinet Concerto, with Michael Collins as the impressive soloist. I was surprised, given the conductor, at the amount of violin vibrato used by this modern instrument orchestra – indeed it is quite an anomaly to find a group specialising in Mozart that has not yet converted to more suitable instrumentation. The Barbican Mozart events (27 Jan) included a piano recital, the Jupiter Symphony and Mass in C minor given by the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and a late night concert of Serenades, including the *Gran Partita*, all sounding very brash on modern instruments and with no sign of any influence from the historically inspired movement.

Another singularly inappropriate use of modern instruments occurred in the production of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, presented as a showcase for around 13 young singers under the banner of *Il Corpo Cantante* at London's Dutch Church (29 Jan). The singers themselves were impressive though. Lucy Page and Revital Raviv were a well matched duo as Fortuna and Virtu in the prologue, and later in their independent roles as Calleto and Drusilla respectively – the former with a focussed and bright tone and the latter with a warm and, when necessary, sensuous timbre and both displaying good acting ability. Daniel Keating-Roberts was clearly enjoying himself in a knockabout role as Amor, although his strong voice did occasionally sound forced in the very generous acoustics. Thomas Herford projected a clear and lyrical voice as Liberto and Soldato Uno. Calvin Wells (Nerone) approached a male soprano timbre, and his nicely unaffected voice worked well in this high register – he was also a sensitive actor. Charlotte Tetley (Ottavia) produced a strongly focussed tone, but not devoid of warmth. Helen Court (Poppea) potentially had a fine voice but on this occasion her rapid vibrato and slightly pinched tone produced an edgy quality. Tim Dickinson was billed as a bass-baritone, but managed to produce a completely different tone in each register – which he occasionally combined with a third voice in the tenor register – but his bass was particularly good for the role of Seneca. James Armitage nicely avoided over playing the pantomime Dame as Arnalta. The whole was directed successfully with no props, although the singers could have done with more appropriate instrumentation.

The Royal Opera House celebrated Mozart year with a new production of *Figaro* from director David McVicar and conductor Antonio Pappano (31 Jan). McVicar shifted the action forward a few decades from Austria at the time of the French Revolution to later 1830 French revolution, with regime change in the offing. In his introductory notes, McVicar mentions the awkward translation into English as the 'Marriage' of *Figaro*, and in his production stressed the more literal 'Wedding' of *Figaro*, the contract scenes being particularly relevant. The overly bustling opening sequence and the concluding front-stage sing-along were misjudged, but overall the production was

extremely well paced and set, even if at times the scale seemed a little overpowering for the more domestic scenes – but the below stairs contrast was well projected, and the acting was excellent throughout. The singing was amongst the best I have heard at Covent Garden and came from a very strong cast, led by the outstanding young singers Erwin Schrott and Miah Persson as an energetic and handsome Figaro and a gorgeously sensual Susanna (her *Deh vieni* was ravishing). Rinat Shaham was a sparkly Cherubino and Gerald Finlay's Count Almaviva was suitably bullish. Ana James, a member of the Young Artists Programme, was also most impressive as Barbarina. Antonio Pappano pushed Mozart's score to the limit in a style that could hardly be called authentic (this was Covent Garden, after all) but was certainly punchy.

Alan Curtis's youthful Italian group, *Il Complesso Barocco*, made a rare visit to London to present a concert performance of Handel's *Rodelinda* (Barbican, 1 Feb). The overture was so full of awkwardly mannered articulation and phrasing (including almost grinding to a halt at the end of sections, notably in the first motif and gavotte) that I wondered if I would survive much beyond the first act. But as soon as the singing started, this suddenly seemed to be a lot less important, even though it continued throughout. Emma Bell has been hitting the headlines recently, and her performance in the title role showed why – she creates power without wreaking havoc to the more subtle aspects of her voice and the emotions expressed. The young Italian alto Sonia Prina (Bertarido) is a real find – her beautiful voice includes an extremely attractive, gentle and well controlled vibrato and she produces a rich, dark tone. She also has some very effective dramatisations, notably in *Dove sei*, which also featured some fine ornamentation (although the violin's embellishments sounded rather French at times). Romina Basso's Eduige was extraordinarily dramatic, her versatile voice being particularly clear in her runs. Vito Priante sang the strident and angular baddy, Garibaldo, with a strong voice, but rather too many swoops for my liking. Hilary Summers' gorgeous voice (unusually, a true alto) was well suited to her portrayal of Unulfo. The cast had gone through several pre-performance changes, including the last minute stand in by Filippo Adami, whose lyrical tenor voice sounded a bit underpowered and rather strained in the higher registers. Despite reservations about many aspects of Curtis's direction (were the frequently wild cadenzas his idea?), he kept the pace going and bought to the stage some fine singers and instrumentalists.

Combining Sir Roger Norrington and Robert Levin in one concert (Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 1 Feb) might have led to a battle of the showmen, had not the former taken his knightly courtesies seriously and, during Mozart's Piano Concerto in C (491), sat himself to one side on a stool, in line with, and just beyond the front desks of the first violins, and conducted from there. A rather curious-looking arrangement (despite the matching black and white pyjama tops), but one that allowed the shy and retiring Levin to, as

usual, place himself centre stage, facing towards the audience, and in pole position to gleefully peer round the audience and band (or leer over his shoulder, in the case of some of the more attractive woodwind line-up). In his pre-concert talk, he had modestly announced that it was 'only as a result of years of public acclaim and pressure from leading musical figures from around the world that finally persuaded him to attempt a completion of Mozart's *Requiem*', something that he, of course, had not really wanted to do. How tiresome of the public and leading musical figures! I would find these sorts of things even more irritating than I do if the bouncy little chap didn't play quite so well. Levin was reduced to a team player in Mozart's *Piano and Wind Quintet in E flat* (452) – indeed that particular show was quite rightly stolen by oboist Katharina Spreckelsen, called in at about 90 minutes notice. Norrington's reading of the *Prague Symphony* was one of the most impressive I have heard – indeed, it even seemed to surprise him, judging by his own gleeful grin towards the audience towards the end. The opening movement in particular carried amazing power, vigour, musical integrity and emotional depth.

On occasion I check out modern instrument orchestras playing early repertoire to see how engrained the stylist implications have become. That, a love of Shostakovich, and another chance to see the exciting young conductor, Vladimir Jurowski, lead me to the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Queen Elizabeth Hall concert of Mozart and Shostakovich. (15 Feb). The Shostakovich was brilliant, particularly the Ten Songs of the Fool from *King Lear* and the orchestral suite *Hypothetically Murdered*. The Mozart contributions were, sadly, rather disappointing from the instrumental point of view. The programme concentrated on the use of humour in music, and Shostakovich came out streets ahead when compared with Mozart's tedious 'Musical Joke', particularly in this lumpen and clod-hopping reading – not the easiest work to carry off at the best of times, but surely deserving of rather more light and air. But at least there was little string vibrato, apart from one rather elderly cellist. The Russian bass Alexander Vinogradov was impressively expressive and demonstrative in three Mozart bass arias.

I wasn't able to get to the launch concert of Concerto delle Donne's new CD (16 Feb, St John's, Smith Square) – 'Music for the Virgin Mary: Celebrating 300 years of Charpentier' but have since enjoyed listening to the CD. This saves me making an obvious comment about using a chamber organ in the concert version to reflect the huge range of colours of the Classical French Organ (which even the large multi-purpose Smith Square organ would have had difficulty in emulating), something that the CD goes some way towards remedying through the use of an authentic instrument.

The Catherine the Great Orchestra was created in 2001 by the Russian Early Music Foundation as Russia's first professional baroque orchestra. It is led by violinist Andrey Reshetin, a former member of an apparently

legendary Russian rock band who has since been found delving in the archives to reveal such obscure delights as a composer called Anton Ferdinand Titz, and he bought some of the results to the Wigmore Hall (19 Feb), packed with members of the Russian ex-pat community. The particular Titz displayed during this concert could be said to be in fairly early stages of development, in European musical terms, the String Quintet in D minor being little more than a pleasant enough essay in the late classical style with just a hint of *Sturm und Drang*. An extract from Francesco Araja's opera *Tsefal & Prokris* had the historic benefit of coming from the first opera ever written in Russian, although the European links were all too apparent, notably to Handel's Italianate arcadian works. The soloist was, I assume, something of a rarity – a Russian (or, at least, a Ukrainian) countertenor, and the very high one at that, almost into a soprano register. He also impressed in Sesto's aria from Handel's *Julius Caesar*. The prettiest of the obscure works was a little duet (Sonata) for two violins by Ivan Khandoshkin, played with aplomb by Reshetin and Maria Krestinskaya – but it didn't sound very Russian which, perhaps, was the idea. The best instrumental playing came from Alexander Listratov's lyrical account of CPE Bach's Concerto for Cello and Strings. This was by no means a hitch-free concert and not up to the usual Wigmore Hall standards; but this band deserves more exposure to the musical world outside Russia.

Da Camera (Emma Murphy, recorders, Susanna Pell, viola da gamba, and Steven Devine, harpsichord) bought their programme 'Celtic Celebration' to St Martin's in the Fields (28 Feb), with music by James Oswald, Turlough Carolan, Simon Eccles, Playford and Davis Mell reflecting the influence of Irish and Scottish folk music in the 17th and 18th centuries. This was a most impressive performance, covering a wide range of music and well targeted to the large lunchtime audience. Emma Murphy demonstrated a superb control of tone, intonation and breathing, notably with the voice flute in Carolan's 'When She Cam Ben' and the evocative Fairy Queen. Susanna Pell produced a wide range of tones and textures from her gamba, both in accompanying and in solo pieces – and an even more-than-usually bouncy Steven Devine introduced several of the works, and included the interesting suggestion that John Blow's 'Mortlack's Ground' was the origin of Rhythm and Blues!

'Towards Classicism' was the theme of the Academy of Ancient Music's concert at St John's, Smith Square (28 Feb) with works by CPE Bach, Franz Benda, Haydn and Mozart directed by violinist Pavlo Beznosiuk. In his introductory talk, Pavlo Beznosiuk described the musical conditions at the Prussian Court at the time of Benda and Bach, noting the much greater status, and salary, that Franz Benda attracted at the time. Indeed, the Court seems to have been musically dominated by Bendas, with Franz working alongside two of his brothers, three of his sons, his son-in-law and two nephews. His Violin Concerto in D minor started with frenetic Vivaldian energy until interrupted by a cantabile melody from the

solo violin which was further interrupted by the bustle, and so on. The Adagio was a expansive and lyrical essay that proved itself inventive, imaginative and rather frequently quirky, as did the final Presto, which sort of just stopped! The two CPE Bach String Symphonies (1/4) were on more familiar ground, although they are still relatively unexplored in concert. The AAM players showed themselves well up to the enormous technical difficulties that these works include. A change of bow for Beznosiuk (but not the rest of the violinists) prefaced the Haydn and Mozart works, starting with the *Adagio and Fugue* in C minor, a complete contrast to the bustling excitement of the first half – the AAM caught the mood of this disturbing work beautifully. Haydn's Violin Concerto in C (VIIa:1) is one of his most baroque creations, and a challenging work for the soloist – although you wouldn't think it from Beznosiuk's relaxed demeanour and extraordinary command of the notes. This excellent and well-planned concert finished on well-known territory, with Mozart's Divertimento in D (K.136).

Musica Britannica Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition for keyboard players at the Dukes Hall, Royal Academy of Music, Monday 10 April, 11.00 am – 5.30 pm. Admission free. More information in our Diary. Judges: Trevor Pinnock, Julian Rushton, Alan Brown, Peter Holman. Contact: louise.jameson@ntlworld.com

ARNE

A Song from Shakespeare's Cymbeline

Facsimile from *The Second Volume of Lyric Harmony | Consisting of Eighteen entire new | Songs and Ballads | The words collected from the best Poets, ancient and modern | With Damon and Cloe in Score | as perform'd at Vaux-Hall Gardens | by M^r. Arne, M^r. Lowe & Mr. Rheinhold | Compos'd by Thomas Augustine Arne | Opera quinta.*

Like Chilcot's *A Collection of English Songs*, published two years earlier in 1744, Arne's set is notable for the literary respectability of the texts. The title of this song is carefully worded: it may have been from the play as performed at the time (a version by Colley Cibber was staged at the Haymarket in November 1744), but the words are not by Shakespeare. Their author was William Collins (1721-79), who first published them in the second edition of his *An Epistle: address to Sir Thomas Hanmer, on his Edition of Shakespear's Works*, 1744. That edition differs from Arne's text in verse 2 (shepherd for shepherd's) and verse 3 (pearly, not early).

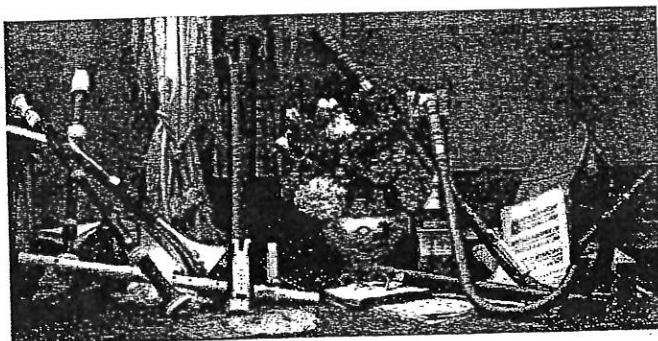
An edition in score and parts is available from King's Music (£10.00 a set), as is a facsimile of Chilcot's collection at £10.00.

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A SONG from Shakespear's CYMBELINE.

7

To fair FIDELLE'S graffsy Tomb Soft Maids and
 Village Hinds shall bring Each op'ning Sweet of earliest Bloom, And rifle all the
 breathing Spring.

2
 No wailing Ghosts shall dare appear,
 To vex with Shrieks this quiet Grove;
 But Shepherd's Lads assemble here,
 And melting Virgins own their Love.

3
 No wither'd Witch shall here be seen,
 No Goblins lead their nightly Crew,
 The Female Fays shall haunt the Green
 And dress thy Grave with early Dew.

6
 Each lonely Scene shall Thee restore,
 For Thee the Tear be duly shed;
 Belov'd, till Life cou'd Charm no more,
 And mourn'd till Pity's self be Dead.

4
 The Redbreast oft' at Ev'ning Hours
 Shall kindly lend his little aid,
 With hoary Moss and gather'd Flow'rs
 To deck the Ground where thou art laid.

5
 When howling Winds and beating Rain
 In Tempest shake the Sylvan Cell,
 Or mid' the Chace on ev'ry Plain
 The Tender Thought on Thee shall dwell.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett

TROUVÈRE SONGS

Mary O'Neill *Courtly Love Songs of Medieval France: Transmission and Style in the Trouvère Repertoire* Oxford UP, 2006. xv + 225pp, £55.00

This is a fine introduction to the 1500 songs with melodies that survive from medieval northern France. The emphasis is on the music, counterbalancing the larger number of literary studies. After an introductory chapter focussing on one sample song, Brûlé's *N'est pas a soi*, there follows a survey of the MS tradition. This is not something that non-scholars can skip, since it is important for understanding how the songs survive and what the MSS tell us. Singers are now likely to inspect facsimiles of the sources, if not work directly from them, so the detailed account of the notation should be studied. It is evident fairly early that the author can find no evidence for explicit rhythms, though the patterns of neums may have some significance, and the next chapter makes it pretty clear that earlier attempts to impose regular rhythms were barking up the wrong tree. The trap of assuming that the MSS were the main means of transmission at the time is avoided, and the balance between oral performance and written preservation is kept firmly to the fore. The detailed awareness of the MSS colours the rest of the book, and although bits of it are heavy going, this is a more approachable book than one has any right to expect. Anyone singing this music (and there are enough songs given in full to start at once) should read it. The final words, remind us that even in 1286, there was a decline in taste:

*e so c'om sol repenre e blamer
mantenir et aug per tot lauzar.*

(and what used to be reprimanded and blamed I now see upheld and praised everywhere.)

PRINTING AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Stanley Boorman *Studies in the Printing, Publishing and Performance of Music in the 16th Century* Ashgate Variorum, 2005. xii + 362pp, £57.50. ISBN 0 86078 970 5

Stanley Boorman is best known for his work on Petrucci: his *Ottaviano Petrucci: catalogue raisonné* was published by Oxford UP at the end of last year (I haven't had a review copy, but at a price of \$250 perhaps that isn't surprising). Boorman argues that scholars have not applied to prints the close study that MSS regularly receive. Those working on MS sources are expected to identify different scribes, their working practice enabling editors to allow for their idiosyncrasies and spot the sort of mistakes each is likely to make, but this is rarely extended to typesetters. Similarly, the sources from which the printer worked need

to be traced. One of the studies reproduced here cleared up some conflicting attributions: if a composer's name is given only on the heading to a page and there are two pieces on the page, how do you know to which piece it refers? Boorman explains. He is also concerned with the relationship between sources and performance practice. Two very practical issues are discussed: cadential false relations and whether some decisions on that and other matters varied according to the house style of individual choirs. The final paper speculates whether some notational features of MSS for the Sistine Chapel are intended to help performance without rehearsal. (I wonder how many choirs have absorbed that the most famous choir in the catholic world only rehearsed in Holy Week: presumably choirs need a style, not specific rehearsal on individual pieces.) Many of the articles reprinted here are technical, but they impinge more than one might expect on the activities of practical musicians in the 16th and 21st centuries.

CAMBRIDGE HISTORY

The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music edited by Tim Carter and John Butt Cambridge UP, 2005. xxvii + 591pp, £100.00. ISBN 0 521 79273 8

My experience of Cambridge histories in general has been unfortunate. At school in 1956, the *Cambridge Ancient History* was itself too ancient to provide help on the political biases of the sources on the Athenian Constitution (my A-level special subject), and at the end of the 1950s the *Cambridge History of English Literature* was irrelevant for understanding courtly love or practical criticism. (Not that older books are necessarily outmoded: the first chapter of Mary O'Neill's book reviewed above begins 'C. S. Lewis described...' with a reference to *The Allegory of Love*, 1936 – the first book I bought on arrival at Cambridge.) Up till now, Cambridge has left the history of music to Oxford; apart from Richard Crocker's new vol. 2 of the *New Oxford History of Music*, I have not found that series particularly useful or stimulating. Now Cambridge enters the field.

I am in two minds about it. The 14 chapters are of two types: general themes like Music in the market-place (Stephen Rose), Music in the arts (Barbara Russo Hanning), Music and the sciences (Penelope Gouk) and the Search for musical meaning (Tim Carter), and on the repertoire divided by performance category: Opera (Lois Rosow and Tim Carter) church music (Noel O'Regan), non-ecclesiastical sacred music (Robert Kendrick), secular song (Margaret Murata), the solo instrumentalist (Alexander Silbiger), and other instrumental music (Gregory Barnett). These are fine in themselves, but there are a few in the former category that I haven't listed which are problematic.

I don't see why Tim Carter needs to make so much fuss of whether the 17th century is a viable musical period, since the plan of the series (at least from 1600) demands it willy-nilly. He has already published a history which questions the 1600 as a significant date. He is less concerned with the other limit, 1700. While it is not as obvious as 1600, the idea of a 'baroque period' from 1600-1750 or thereabouts (something that is too fixed in the usage to abandon easily) did for many years mislead musicians, even those who should have known better, into thinking of a single baroque style. Take the Purcell celebrations of 1695: how many performances were given with the conventions appropriate for Bach and Handel applied to Purcell? But there are stylistic aspects which do hold 'the baroque' together: not just figured bass, but the polarity between treble and bass, with the bass moving rather changing every bar or half-bar, as happens later in the 18th century. This is, of course, a gross over-simplification – but it is easy to expand that from half a sentence to a fully-developed argument which would allow for the exceptions and embrace the simultaneous use and development of the *stile antico*.

The book begins with the more general chapters because the editors seem to want musicologists to be speaking a similar language to their academic colleagues in other disciplines. The '-ology' is important, one wonders sometimes whether more than the 'music'. Sadly, there doesn't seem to be a single word that embraces performers (whether professional or amateurs), listeners and musicologists: surely this book should be aimed at all of them? There may be a practical reason for the lack of music examples – they do take up an enormous amount of space (as the *Stylus Phantasticus* book reviewed below exemplifies). But what suffers is the absence of any detail on how the music works. The editors write 'There is a sense in which a historian of music can be a "critic" in much the same way as an "art critic" might relate to painting or sculpture, as someone who does not necessarily have any expertise in the actual execution of the art' (pp. xviii-xix). There obviously are critics who can write about art from the outside; but that is perhaps a problem, and it is good that most musicologists that I know keep their fingers or tongues musically active. In the art world, I'm sure that the success of Rolf Harris's much reviled art programmes on TV comes from the viewers' interest in the technical insight on how an artist might have produced a painting: if he isn't very good at it, let someone else do it better.

This seems a very old-fashioned book for the 21st century in that no attempt is made to harness the available technology. In that connection, I wish I had pressed Oxford UP harder to send us a review copy of Richard Taruskin's *History of Western Music*. The 'Music and the arts' chapter begins (p. 111) with a note: 'All of the paintings mentioned... may be seen in full colour via one or more of the virtual art galleries on the world-wide web'. But where is the musical equivalent? I was intrigued by a reference at the end of Alexander Silbiger's blog to the *Web Library of Seventeenth-Century Music* at www.sscm-wlscm.org, but

was disappointed to find that it had only six titles and was last updated in May 2005. The Cambridge volume, while meticulously giving references to books and articles, rarely refers to editions and never to CDs. There are a variety of ways of understanding music, but I'm not sure what sort of understanding you can get just by reading words: is it really more important to look at writings about a piece than to see a score? Hearing is even better. There must be a vast amount of computer-set music that could be made available online (under suitable restrictions) in a form that could be read and played back – one could write a representative history of music of the period based round the King's Music files; and a deal with a record company might have been negotiable. I'm not one of those who think that books are outmoded: but music is about sound, which a book cannot yet give.

There is obviously an advantage in splitting music up into different repertoires. But the consequence is the shortage of discussion of the musical languages of the period. How, if I switch on the radio, can I tell that I am hearing something from the period even before I apply my mind to identifying composer or genre? Each genre has certain demands on musical style, but styles also cross from one function to another. Recitative, for instance, is relevant to all sorts of vocal music, not just opera, and ground basses are ubiquitous.

A curiosity of the 17th century is that, although 16th and 18th century music was revived long ago, its music was mostly neglected or failed to arouse non-specialist interest. Schütz may have been an exception in Germany, but in England he and even Purcell were reckoned to be bad for the box office as late as the 1960s. One can (or at least could) enjoy Byrd and Palestrina, Bach and Handel sung by massive choirs; but that didn't work with 17th-century music, and with a few exceptions, revival had to wait for skilled players on early instruments and vocal styles that matched – though we still often meet mismatches: Monteverdi's *Vespers* with single strings, cornetts and sackbuts accompanying a choir of 150, for instance. (Not that I object too much: I am all in favour of as many as possible having the experience of singing it, and the Bach Passions too, even though it would have surprised Bach. And the Monteverdi does work better with single strings, irrespective of the number of voices.) One only has to glance at the proportions of our CD review pages to see that 17th-century music is widely available: it may not be as popular as Bach and Mozart, but there is a wealth of performers evidently making a living from it.

Most chapters are fine, even if other emphases are possible. But Victor Coelho's 'Music in new worlds' does not fulfil its opening promises and is incoherent and disappointing. John Butt's 'The seventeenth-century musical work' is stimulating but seems to me to be more suited to independent publication in a musicological journal or given as a paper at a conference where it can be argued over in the bar afterwards. One paragraph on p. 189 on the topic is probably as much as is needed here.

It is a pity that the book wasn't vetted for non-academic comprehensibility. A glossary of words that are part of normal academese as well as technical musical terms would have been useful (cf Talbot's Vivaldi book reviewed below). It should have been read more carefully to avoid academic jargon, and the scarcity of musical technical terms makes their occasional appearance obtrusive (e.g. 'C3 clef' on p. 255 and a whole paragraph on p. 359). I didn't note them as I found them (most of the time, I was reading without a pencil at hand) but no doubt there are the usual verb for noun ('construct') and adjective for noun ('other'), and 'discourse' used in non-Descartian contexts. What are 'subaltern others' (p. 90)? It is noteworthy that the book's designer has no truck with the fashionable chapter headings, with vague abstractions before the specific topics: 'Devotion, piety and commemoration: sacred songs and oratorios', for instance, becomes 'Sacred songs and oratorios', which is a perfectly adequate title anyway.

Here are a few of the specific points that I noted:

p. xxiii. The first publications of Buxtehude's organ music date well before 1903: Spitta's vol. I (the 'free' works) was published in 1875 and, as I've probably mentioned before, a teenage London organist named H. J. Wood acquired a copy in 1886 and was probably using it for voluntaries in a London church.

27+ Terminology of 'piece' and 'work' (in John Butt's chapter on the 17th-century musical work). In common parlance, 'piece' would seem to imply something less substantial than 'work', either in length or value; but composers I have heard tend to favour 'piece', perhaps not just out of modesty. Both somehow seem wrong for the period, in which 'opus', when used, refers to a set of independent sonatas or whatever.

167 I don't know what 'rhetoric is inherently transgressive' means. Since rhetoric is generally used by scholars to refer to a system of rules, it needs greater explication to mean 'rhetoric breaks the rules', and the use of the 'transience' in the previous sentence makes me wonder whether it is a mistake for a synonym of that to avoid repetition.

298. Monteverdi's *Missa In illa tempore* is not just an attempt at historicism and at demonstrating Monteverdi's abilities in 16th-century techniques: it also demonstrates (like much else in the 1610 publication) his ability to combine the old with the new. Try playing continuo, and you realise the clarity of its harmony.

301. It would have been worth noting that Bodenschatz and Schadeus's publications were used right through the century and beyond; also that Praetorius's collection of chorales were drawn from both protestant and catholic traditions. Praetorius's own music is passed over: a pity, since his ability to derive extensive and powerful works from chorales is impressive – try his *Vater unser*, a massive setting of Luther's versification of the Lord's Prayer for double choir + instruments and ripieni, or *Ach mein Herre straf mich* with its marvellous trio for three sopranos and ATB instruments – playing the latter was the most exciting sight-reading I can remember since first playing the former!

304. I am puzzled by the description of Schütz's 1619 Psalms being 'largely for two choirs, one of solo favoriti, the other a cappella on the north Italian model'. I don't think that the Viadana example mentioned previously on the page of five solo

voices and a choir of 16 singers was necessarily standard, and most of the 1619 pieces seem to me to be essentially for two choirs of favoriti, sometimes with additional instruments/voices. Readers continually need reminding that 'choir' may only mean '4 voices', maybe with organ.

305. The Graz group of MSS also includes ten parts of G. Gabrieli's lost *Magnificat* a33 (related to the 1615 setting a17). Gabrieli is strangely ignored in the book. There is such a jump in style between his 1597 and posthumous 1615 publications that much of the latter must come from after 1600. The combination of voices, cornets and sackbuts in late Gabrieli is early-17th-century music at its richest.

310. Rigatti's *Nisi Dominus* a3 has enjoyed wider fame than being noted by Jerome Roche: it even featured on Classic FM's Saturday morning top-of-the-classic-charts programme a few years ago.

I've mostly been critical, but despite its limitations, this is certainly the best survey of the period available. Perhaps it's just not the book I would want if I had been editor: but I expect John and Tim's hands were tied, and within what one might imagine to be the constraints, they have done a good job. I'll end with a few positive 'soundbites'.

The seventeenth century provides a particularly fascinating lesson in revealing how the development of later concepts was not necessarily achieved in a straight line; the necessary conditions obviously had to occur (and endure) at one stage or another, but they almost always originated in entirely different purposes. (John Butt, p. 39)

Musicologists normally direct their findings to 'competent' readers well enough informed, able and willing to acknowledge the import of the various issues under discussion. Whether such competence is a historical given, rather than just a self-projecting fantasy, is another matter altogether. (Tim Carter, p. 161)

The sheer joy of song for song's sake in the seventeenth century is perhaps the period's most lasting contribution to the Western art tradition. (Tim Carter, p. 194)

STYLUS PHANTASTICUS

Paul Collins *The Stylus Phantasticus and Free Keyboard Music of the North German Baroque* Ashgate, 2005. xv + 229pp. £45.00. ISBN 0 7546 3416 7

The term *Stylus Phantasticus* appears most often in *EMR* in reviews by Andrew Benson-Wilson, not surprisingly, since he reviews the repertoire in which it is most often used, that which is the subject of this book. If I used it myself, I would more likely be thinking of the violin sonatas of Dario Castello and the like. This study begins with a thorough survey of the writings of the period, then applies it to Buxtehude in particular along with the works of other North-German organists. The two main writers who deal with the term, Kircher and Mattheson, give it different meanings. For the former, the basis is the free fantasy, i.e. a contrapuntal piece that is not based on a cantus firmus, which 'was instituted to display genius and to teach the hidden design of harmony and the ingenious

composition of harmonic phrases and fugues: it is divided into those [pieces] that are commonly called fantasies, ricercatas, toccatas, sonatas' (Kircher *Musurgia universalis* p. 585, quoted p. 29). Those with traditional music training should not treat 'harmony' in this context as the opposite of 'counterpoint'. Kircher is concerned with beauty and skill of composition, and his ideal might (had he known them) been the more imaginative of the English viol fantasies. Matheson is more concerned with brilliance, virtuosity and performance. Collins argues that the two meanings come together in the music he is studying, especially in the *Praeludia* of Buxtehude. He makes a good case, though I would have welcomed some investigation of whether musicians not interested in theory used the terms with any degree of precision – or, indeed, at all. Did Buxtehude really sit down to exploit the two different meanings of *Stylus Phantasticus* or was he intent in writing a coherent piece in the most expressive styles available to him? Ultimately, it doesn't matter, but in terms of the book it does. I find the Kircher definition less useful: is the difference between counterpoint based on a pre-existing theme and one that is free really significant? Are fantasies and *In nomines* really different creatures? But the brilliant, improvisatory style certainly becomes more structured through the 17th century, and the combination of strands is a good way of thinking about the German *Praeludium*.

BALLET DE COUR

Marie-Françoise Christout *Le ballet de cour de Louis XIV 1643-1672: Mises en scène*. Préface d'André Chastel. Nouvelle édition. (*La vie musicale en France sous les rois Bourbons*, 34) Picard, 2005. 292pp + 31 plates, €38.00. ISBN 2 7084 0742 2

First published in 1967, this well deserves its revised reprint. It is so easy to think of French scholarship as represented by conceptual activity that to an English mind sometimes seems to bear little relevance to reality. (I wonder how difficult it is to make English books readable in French?) But there is also a strong line of very specific and systematic research. This book is documentation with a human face, systematic but readable, though with the information on sources separated in an appendix. Its core is a year-by-year account of thirty years of French court ballets, each described and given a context. It begins with 56 illustrations, 17 in colour, of stagings and costumes. There is an introduction, and the chronological survey is followed by chapters on theories and theoreticians and the constituent elements of the ballet. New to this edition are tables of the performers (from the King downwards) in seven ballets. The book ends with transcriptions of some 'librettos' and other documents, an updated bibliography, and indexes of names and dancers, but not of the titles of the ballets. Musically, it is easy to pass over the ballet de cour and press on the Lully's operas. But one couldn't have happened without the other. This is a vademecum rather than an exhaustive last word, but it will be useful to all interested in the culture of the first decades of Louis XIV's reign.

VIVALDI'S CHAMBER CANTATAS

Michael Talbot *The Chamber Cantatas of Antonio Vivaldi* The Boydell Press, 2006. xiv + 234pp, £45.00 ISBN 1 84383 201 1

As one has come to expect from Michael Talbot, this is a brilliant book. It makes a marvellous contrast with Ellen Harris's study of Handel's cantatas. That tried so hard to be clever but is so obviously built round a dubious argument, which she wasn't suspicious enough of because it fitted with fashionable academic attitudes. Talbot concentrates on describing what is there in the clearest possible language. With all the facts apparently at his fingertips and all the music in his head, he succeeds in placing where Vivaldi stood in the development of the form and the extent to which his cantatas follow the existing cantata conventions but relate to his music in other forms. And throughout we are led into the music, with little jargon except the technical terms necessary for description (which are defined in a glossary). Anyone interested in late baroque music will benefit from reading the first 88 pages. The rest is devoted to a cantata-by-cantata description, possibly *de trop* to the general reader but worth dipping into to get the flavour and reading if you sing, play or hear the individual pieces. Talbot argues strongly that the ideal accompaniment is the cello, without harpsichord. Music examples are plentiful. The index of music quoted is far-reaching. There is a good survey of the modern editions and recordings on pp. 22-24.

Only in the concluding chapter do I find points of disagreement. On p. 193, he re-asserts the idea prominent in our youth that Baroque music was flexible and could be performed by all sorts of forces. The one-to-a-part Bach is casually knocked: the knowing reader will realise that the alternative – with ripieni – only involves another four singers; but the argument is not whether you add such a ripieno group to the basic four singers but whether you use soloists and choir in the normal modern way. I don't think that anyone who knows the sources argues for the latter as a widespread early-18th-century practice. Richard Maunder, rightly or wrongly, is arguing chiefly from the implication of the editions of Vivaldi etc as published, so is concerned with what appears to be the expectation of performance by the composer or publisher, not specifically the circumstances of the first performance.

I noted a few passing points of interest. Page 21, note 56, for instance, draws mentions that a good edition has less chance of earning royalties than a 'licentious arrangement', and that avoidance of playing a realised harpsichord part may be for musical reasons, but is often to avoid the performance being traceable to a particular edition. (Is the moral that editors should insert a recognisable but plausible wrong note in the main parts?) In discussing Ellen Harris's homoerotic agenda, he writes (p. 42) 'One always has to beware of reading too much into texts and music that were intended first and foremost as entertainment, not as a manifesto.' There is a rare misprint in line 5 of p. 48 (bar 4, not bar 3), but the page is redeemed

by footnote 44, quoting Winton Dean's 1977 article on truncated cadences and adding: 'No article more influential for performance practice can ever have appeared', though the extent of truncation is now being questioned. On the next page we are warned about taking German rhetoricians too seriously: 'Italian composers worked from experience (or imitation of precedent) and instinct rather than from a prescriptive rule-book. In this light, the modern scholar should always beware of too readily carrying over the full weight of German literary theory (grammatical, rhetorical, aesthetic) to a coeval Italian context.' And a final soundbite, in the context of assimilating vocal and instrumental rhythms or not (p. 198): 'But perhaps there is a better case for allowing the two parts to follow their separate paths. This kind of rhythmic heterophony is well known from Lieder. It is a strange fact that whenever a voice combines with an instrument, each preserves its separate aural space. This allows rhythmic discrepancies to occur that would be intolerable between two instruments or between two voices.' I would add that it also applies when two voices or instruments are overlapping with utterly different phrases.

Irrespective of whether they are interested in Vivaldi, this book should be presented to postgraduate students as a model of how to write about music in a way that ALL the potential audiences can read and understand. If the editors of the *Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Music* have any sense, they will start by commissioning an article from Talbot and insist that other contributions are rejected if they are not within reach of his wisdom, clarity and practical good sense.

See also a review on p. 5 of SPES's facsimile of Vivaldi's *Manchester violin sonatas with an introduction by Talbot*.

HOGARTH & MUSIC

Jeremy Barlow *The Enraged Musician: Hogarth's Musical Imagery*. Ashgate, 2005. xix + 367pp, £65.00. ISBN 1-84014-615-X

I am embarrassed about this book. I read it just too late to review in the December issue, put it aside, and have only found it at the final stage of preparing this issue. Furthermore, the page of comments that I usually make when reading to review has vanished, nor did I rehearse in my mind comments on the book, which is what I usually do immediately after reading whether I write anything at once or not. So I will just describe it. The eight chapters are devoted to Hogarth and the musical scene, music in his scenes, rough music, burlesque music, solo fiddlers, ballad singers & ballads, *The Beggar's Opera* and Italian opera, and *The Enraged Musician*. Those who know Hogarth and the musical scene of the time can perhaps make a guess at the direction the book might take, but not the richness of argument that it follows. Nearly 50 pages are devoted to an annotated index of instruments and scores that appear in Hogarth's pictures. Another 50 pages adds further fascinating ancillary matter. Then there are

bibliographies and a thorough index. Barlow is familiar with the worlds of the musicologist (and musician), the historian and the art historian and draws on them with aplomb and skill.

SADIE'S MOZART

Stanley Sadie *Mozart: the Early Years, 1756-1781* Oxford UP, 2006. xxv + 644pp, £25.00. ISBN 0 19 816529 3

It's bound to be with very mixed feelings that reviewer or reader picks up this book. Stanley Sadie died before he could see it published, and as its subtitle poignantly illustrates, it represents only the first half of the author's immense project. We can be deeply grateful for what we do have: an eminently readable, perceptive, well-planned and thorough progression from an outline history of the Mozart family and its physical and social background on to the achievement of *Idomeneo*, followed by the composer's arrival in Vienna a couple of months later. Sadie's approach is based on profound knowledge of the scores, alert reading of the Mozart family's voluminous correspondence, and careful selection of often colourful detail backed by discriminating use of other contemporary sources.

Sadie is scrupulous in separating fact from legend, even where that means scrapping familiar and plausible anecdotes, or putting them more soberly into context (e.g. the memorizing and writing-out of the Allegri *Miserere*). Where there is insufficient evidence for a firm decision, he leaves the matter open. Far from leading to a dry narrative, this method increases the reader's sense of being brought closer and more confidently to the phenomenon that was Mozart. One example of many may be cited: the depiction of Prince-Archbishop Hieronymus Colloredo, shown not as the bogeyman of many Mozart books, but as an enlightened reformist churchman who, though understandably unpopular not only in the Mozart circle, was the inheritor of a see then in financial straits; he brought about many necessary improvements in education and social and economic welfare, and had sensible ideas for the reform of his music establishment.

When Sadie does allow himself a supposition, it is based on the best surviving evidence, and is clearly signalled as such. Without being harsh on the fancies of predecessors, he warns the reader against accepting the idea that Mozart and his cousin (the 'Bäslé') were lovers, pointing to contemporary and not just familiar scatological and prurient talk. He does not scruple to observe how devious Mozart could be, how arrogant, how unfeeling in the face of his father's expectations and concerns, many of them entirely reasonable. Thus, in the context of Mozart's sudden reluctance (having fallen for the charms of Aloisia Weber) to leave Mannheim, Sadie writes: 'Mozart's insensitivity in the treatment of his father, and his inability to handle the situation with even a moderate degree of tact, seems extraordinary.' Far from belittling Mozart with critical comments, Sadie actually increases the knowledgeable reader's respect for a genius that set its own standards —

the 'warts and all' treatment (such as Sir John Barbirolli demanded from an artist commissioned to paint his portrait) makes for a fuller, more rounded (if ultimately no less bewildering) picture of Wolfgang Amadè as man and artist. For this is not Mozart explained, but Mozart more deeply and intelligently comprehended than in any comparable study I can think of.

The documentation is detailed and helpfully laid out: there are nearly forty pages of notes – how much better it would have been to have them in their proper place, as footnotes! The bibliography is a tribute to Sadie's determination to keep up to date with the latest research. There are two worklists: an index of Mozart's compositions classified by category, and one by consecutive Köchel numbering. There is also a valuable general index, with helpful subheadings for the most important persons and topics. One small disappointment is the quality of many of the 35 halftone illustrations; they have been carefully selected, but often appear dark and fuzzy. The occasional repetition might have been removed had the author lived to complete work on the proofs. Misprints are very few and far between; I noted the correct spelling of Josef Mysliveček's name (with the Czech *hacek*) in the index, but not in the main text, where it is replaced by a curious running-together of *c* and *e*.

The book is equally well suited to consecutive reading and rapid search for a particular piece of information. I found the chapters covering the three Italian journeys especially rewarding, with shrewd examination of the operas commissioned, and evocative description of the people and places that Mozart and his father encountered, with the emphasis on helpful detail. But wherever one looks – the London Sketchbook early on, with its foreshadowings, the violin concertos, the unfinished German stage works of the middle years – one finds well-informed, thoughtful comment that as often as not takes one back to the works themselves.

It would not have been quite such a heavy volume had OUP opted for more lines to the page. As it is, reading in bed is only for the strong in arm and shoulder. But don't be put off by that. It is an outstanding study, which achieves a rare balance between meticulous scholarship and a moving story captivatingly told. Above all, its treatment of the music is perceptive without being over-technical, and rich in affectionate yet sober detail.

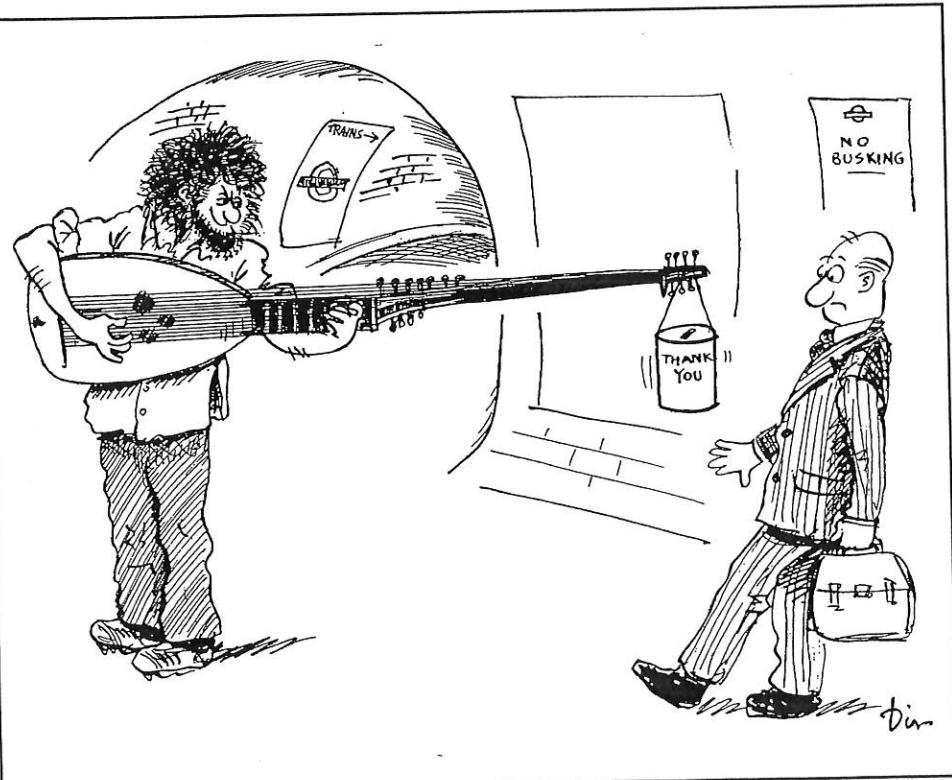
Peter Branscombe

LA MUSICA

Alberto Ausoni *La Musica* Mondadori Electa, 2005. 384pp, €19.00 ISBN 88 370 2802 4

I came across this attractive little book (roughly miniature score page-size, though thick enough to be a complete opera) in Venice recently, and dipped into it on our longer vaporetto rides. It is part of a series *I Dizionari dell' Arte* and provides pictures (in a complete chronological mix) grouped by theme: symbol and allegory, classical mythology, religious subjects, music and performance, and musical instruments. The reproductions are small but well printed, mix the familiar with the lesser known, and have helpful commentaries. I wish that as a matter of course any identifiable pieces of music were named: the original could well be clearer than the reproduction. The more modern pictures are not, of course, useful for instrument-makers intent on models for reconstruction, but their inclusion encourages one to look at the pictures in themselves, rather than try to read details in an inappropriate way. Worth buying if you see it, and I hope the series will appear in English.

As readers will have seen, I did after all choose the 17th-century history rather than Sadie/Mozart to read in Venice. Both were of equal weight, but the history had more reading matter and Peter is a Mozart expert. We fortunately had long nights – the children enjoyably tired themselves out in the bright if cold days and we went to bed three hours earlier than usual. So I woke very early, and spent hours each morning having the same difficulty as Peter in reading in bed. I'm not sure whether my criticism was the result of waking up earlier than I wanted or if the delight of being in Venice again mitigated an even tougher review. I have been told that Cambridge UP thinks I am hypercritical: but I try to react as I read. I wish academics would more often think of players, singers and listeners as potential readers.



CD REVIEWS

MEDIEVAL

Tristan & Yseut Alla Francesca 60' 46"
Zig Zag Territoires ZZTo51002

This is a collection of individual songs, not an attempt at a narrative of any version of the myth. The singers are Brigitte Lesne and Emmanuel Vistorky, with co-director Pierre Hamon and five other players – it surprises me that there is such an agreement among ensembles that refined performances of lais like these need such large backing groups. If you are happy with the drone/heterophony style of accompaniment, this is a good example, presenting a dozen poems from what the disc just calls 'the Vienna anthology', i.e. A-Wn 2542. Much of it sounds very beautiful, in a rather languorous, pre-Raphaelite way. CB

16th CENTURY

Farnaby Complete Fantasias for Harpsichord Glen Wilson 58' 30"
Naxos 8.570025 £

When this arrived, I was puzzled at the separation of the fantasias from the more familiar shorter pieces. But the disc soon shows that the fantasias are worth singling out and that Wilson knows how to make the most of them, even if the first section of the opening piece seems a bit deliberate – persist! I don't know why I didn't play these pieces back in the exciting days of 1963 when Dover reprinted the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book and it had a permanent place on my piano – maybe because Farnaby is all in vol. 2, and I didn't get that far. I like the comment in Wilson's booklet notes that Fantasia 4 'has an opening theme later used by Richard Strauss but developed by him with less ingenuity'. I suppose the only excuse for the player's own solo version of Farnaby's madrigal 'Witness, ye heavens' (I think it's the only eight-voice example in the English repertoire) is that no-one ever sings it. Buy this, then play the music. CB

Hassler Ich gieng einmal spatieren Léon Berber hpsc'd 79' 37"
Ramée RAM 0501
Hans Leo Hassler Variations on *Ich gieng einmal spatieren*; Jacob Hassler: 6 pieces

I usually place Hans Leo Hassler in the 17th century, but his connection, along with that of his brother, with the Fuggers in Augsburg dates from the 1580s and 1590s, and that is where they would have

played the instrument used for this recording, a 1561 harpsichord made by Franciscus Patavinus. The chief item here is Hans Leo's massive set of 30 variations on a theme better known as *La Monica*; it must be the longest set of variations before Bach's set of 30 on another simple theme. It seems at first that the player starts with the tempo of the semiquavers to come forty minutes later in mind, but my mind soon relaxed into the long haul. I wonder how audiences react without a timing or score to give any idea of the length: would one hear it in a different way? I don't imagine that I will sit down and listen to it with the score again (it is included among the organ works in the Collected Works: that would keep the blowers busy!) But it is fine music to have around, and is very nicely played. CB

Josquin [Masses, etc] The Tallis Scholars 149' 32" (2 CDs)
Gimell CDGIM 206 ££ (rec 1986/89/94)
Masses *La sol fa re mi*; *L'homme armé super voces musicales* & VI toni; *Motets* *Ave Maria* a4, *Praeter rerum seriem*

This is another of the Tallis Scholars' two-discs-for-the-price-of-one reissues. The experienced Josquinite may find various points about which to quibble, but the music is strongly presented, well sung and makes an excellent introduction to his masses. A priori, I would have expected the recent Gombert from the Hilliards to be more to my taste, but in fact that seemed a bit stolid and inexpressive (though I gather that the review in the next issue will be enthusiastic), while these performances had more vitality and light, even though my usual comments about tactus and imposed expression would still apply. CB

Lassus Penitential Psalms Henry's Eight, Jonathan Brown dir 142' 29" (2 CDs)
Hyperion CCD22056 ££ (rec 1997)

Eric Van Tassel reviewed this on its first appearance (EMR 40, p. 18). He thought that two hours of penitential polyphony seemed to promise heavy going, so 'despite their expressive and textural variety these pieces are best taken in small doses. So over the period of leading up to Holy Week, I have been listening to them at intervals, one motet at a sitting: I hear more in them each time, in these lucid, unemphatic but expressive performances.' My first experience of singing Lassus was a couple of these psalms, and I found them a bit forbidding. This recording is approachable, perhaps trying a little too

hard to be so. But it's a good way into this marvellous music if you can't sing it. CB

Piccinini Chiaccona: Musik für Laute und Chitarrone Axel Wolf, United Continuo Ensemble 72' 11"
Raum Klang RK 2406

Recently received again, but reviewed by Stuart McCoy a year ago (EMR 106 p. 26).

Dance Music of the High Renaissance Vol. 2. Music of the Waits/Don Smithers (1970) & Musica Aurea/Jean Woltéche (1972)
Boston Skyline BSD 138 76' 11"

This is a sandwich assembled from two discs. The 'bread' is from Argo LP ZRG 646, with a renaissance band that included David Munrow, Bernard Thomas, Michael Morrow, Alan Lumsden, a couple of Skeapings, Jane Ryan and James Tyler. Most of the music is from Adson's *Courtly Masquing Ayres*. The filling is a selection of dances from Susato and Phalèse by Musica Aurea, unnamed players directed by Jean Woltéche. Some of the loud wind playing is a bit rustic in its tuning – perhaps it was ever so. Not the best of the discs that Boston Skyline has recycled, but quite nostalgic! CB

Love Bade Me Welcome songs and poetry from the renaissance James Bowman, Daniel Taylor cT, Frances Kelly harp, Elizabeth Kenny lute, Mark Levy gamba, Ralph Fiennes recitation 75' 51"
BIS-CD-1446

Music by Dowland, R. Jones & R. Johnson

Poems, songs and instrumental pieces from Shakespearean England are a commonplace theme for recordings, but this one is different, and well worth having. For one thing, there is plenty of music by Robert Jones. He often plays the jester in concert programmes, with his witty, sometimes coarse, but very appealing songs. There are indeed a couple of those here (*Sweet Kate*, *Hark, wot ye What?*), but there are also a good number of his very beautiful, expressive and Italianate songs and duets which are much less recorded. For another, James Bowman sings several solo songs, including *Flow my tears*, and he brings so much artistry to this, with far more emphasis on the words and the idea of the song than any other countertenor. And a third reason is that Elizabeth Kenny, Frances Kelly and Mark Levy are accompanying, and also contribute a couple of lively duets for lute and harp. Having the extra power of the harp gives the lute more opportunity to bring out aspects of its accompaniment

which can be lost in Dowland particularly, especially when the bass viol is also playing. The result is marvellous. Then there is Daniel Taylor who joins Bowman in several of Jones' duets and contributes 3 solos of his own. I've written about him previously, and my impressions aren't changed here. He shapes the line musically rather than to the words. He does this beautifully, and although I prefer the more verbal approach of James Bowman, I do enjoy Daniel Taylor's singing. In the duets, their combined flair and expressiveness, not to mention that their tones complement each very well and blend beautifully, and their tuning is spot-on, make this very enjoyable, at times, ravishing. But finally, what sets this recording apart is the declamation of poetry by Ralph Fiennes. This could put some off, and it means that you listen to the whole recording (75 minutes) rather than dip into it, but they have chosen some wonderful verse: Shakespeare of course, but also Raleigh, Jonson, Herbert, Francis Quarles and a couple by Campion, one of which he actually set himself, but read here and beautifully. Fiennes' gentle, resonant speaking voice is a perfect contrast to the clear brightness of the two counter-tenors, and he reads so musically, that it all works marvellously. *Robert Oliver*

Pescodd Time: Byrd, Bull and Philips
Bertrand Cuiller, *hpscd, virginals* 59'
Alpha 086.

The beautiful sound of Martin Skowroneck's muselaar virginals is the first thing to impress about this CD. Used for most of the Byrd pieces (two fantasias, a ground, three French corantos, *Pescodd Time* and some pavans and galliards) it offers just the right mixture of resonance and clarity. Bertrand Cuillier has a real affinity for English music which he also shows in Bull (an *In Nomine* and *The King's Hunt*) and Philips (the *Pavana & Galliarda Dolorosa*). These last are played on a Philippe Humeau copy of a transposing Andreas Ruckers, at a pitch a fourth (plus a semitone) below A440; this gives a wonderfully deep sonority to these two pieces. The Bull and some of the Byrd are also played on this equally fine instrument, at A455. There is a delightfully cheeky four-foot encore tacked onto the final track (without mention in the booklet and after a 30 second delay – but maybe I shouldn't have given the game away!) The booklet does have some irritating things, saying that Elizabeth I succeeded Mary Stuart and that Byrd died in 1523. But the playing is deeply thought-out and exciting and forms an excellent introduction to the English virginalists. *Noel O'Regan*

Philip & Mary: A Marriage of England & Spain The Sixteen, Harry Christophers
Coro COR16037 75' 03"
Guerrero *Ave Maria, Ave virgo sanctissima, Pastores loquebantur; Manchicourt Jubilate Deo, Reges terrae; Sheppard Libera nos, Reges Tharsis; Tallis Missa Puer natus, Suscipe quae*

This has a vigorous opening in Manchicourt's *Jubilate Deo*, though even in that I detect a couple of signs of the ambiguity of the role of a conductor in music that was designed to work without one: the tempo sounds pushed from outside as do some of the dynamics. I wonder whether the place of the conductor of a chamber choir at a recording should be in the box rather than waving his arms around. (It is ironic that David Skinner, under whose direction I spent a weekend singing virtually conductorless Tallis a few months ago, supplies the booklet note.)

This is an interesting Anglo-Hispanic programme, not going too far in trying to reconstruct the joint Christmas service in 1554 with Tallis's *Missa Puer natus est nobis* possibly alluding to the anticipated fruit of the marriage. The main works are that Mass and the related *Suscipe quae*. The booklet states that these were not composed for soaring English trebles, but they are nevertheless transposed up a minor third (a theory whose credibility has been undermined), giving top Fs which may not perhaps be soaring but are higher than the men of Philip's Capilla Flamenca would have found comfortable. Unfortunately, the style feels too post-Victorian Anglican to grab me. Still, it does fill cathedrals for their concerts, so others must like it. *CB*

Sacred and Secular Music from Renaissance Germany Ciaramella Instrumental and Vocal Ensemble, Adam & Rotem
Gilberts dirs 65' 34"
Naxos 8.557627 £

This young (formed 2004) alta capella group plays early renaissance sacred and secular music. The playing is fresh and neat and done with imagination. *Se la face ay pale*, for example, appears in two organ tabulations, sandwiching the alta capella version – which develops from Dufay's 3 parts as it accretes more parts and more 'infill'. This gives a feeling of direction to the performance. There are a couple of songs – first in unison voices, then with the outer parts. These use female voices for a very male text, but the actual approach to the singing and ensemble seems very convincing: a fairly naive vocal rendition with the shaping left to the ensemble. The bassa capella makes an appearance too, in the form of a recorder ensemble. This is very good

playing as well, but doesn't really have the focus of the alta – possibly because the mike-ing is more distant than many groups choose for recorders. This works better for the low recorder consort. There's good variety here, and very fine performances which I hope will reach a wide audience through Naxos' special marketing. *Stephen Cassidy*

Wenn Engel Muzizieren: Musikinstrumente von 1594 im Freiberger Dom Musica Freybergensis, Roland Wilson 138' 28" (2 CDs)
Raum Klang RK 2404/5
Music by Franck, Hassler, Lassus, Pinello di Ghirardi, Scandello & anon

In the cathedral of Freiberg in Saxony (SW of Dresden) there is a burial chapel with angel musicians dating from the 1590s. Many of the instruments are real ones of the period. These were closely studied in 2002 and the replicas produced are played on these two excellent discs. What we are presented with, though, is not a series of demonstration tracks but coherent programmes of sacred and secular music known in Dresden at the time. So there is a complete mass by Scandello in honour of Elector Moritz in 1562; sadly, there are no 1590s voices extant, but instruments join the singers. As one would expect, the pitch is the cornett-based *choron*, A=465. The instruments are more individually audible on disc 2. Had I not opened the booklet, I would still have enjoyed this as an anthology; the authenticity of the instruments is, in one sense, a bonus. *CB*

17th CENTURY

G.F.Anerio Requiem (1614); F. Anerio Six Motets Choir of Westminster Cathedral, James O'Donnell 72' 23"
Hyperion CDH55213

Nice to have this disc recirculated. The Requiem was quite popular in the late 1960s, thanks to Tony Pett's 1966 edition for Chester, with its striking black cover. Otherwise the brothers are (indiscriminately) best known for a simple (and probably 19th-century) *Christus factus est*, included on track 14. Post-Palestrinan Roman music is still scarce on disc, so try it if you didn't get it first time. *CB*

Buxtehude Membra Jesu nostri Cantus Cölln, Konrad Junghänel 74' 06"
Harmonia Mundi HMC 901912

This is, as regular readers will know, one of my favourite pieces. I was fortunate enough to do a one-to-a-part workshop with Philip Thorby in Cambridge last year that brought new insight (although

I've known the piece for over 20 years – gosh, that makes me feel *really* old!. This new recording does likewise – not so much for the singing, I have to say somewhat surprisingly, but in terms of the instrumental contributions which are, I think, possibly the most thoroughly considered of all the versions I have on my shelves. The last time I reviewed a solo line-up, I was disappointed as the balance was never quite right. Here that's definitely not a problem, with the combination of voices managed beautifully. But it's the shape and inner reflection that's given to the short sonatas and ritornelli that set this recording apart. Initially I was worried that it was over fussy, but I'm more than satisfied now that it makes sense. I'll still go to Suzuki by choice, though.

BC

Corelli *Sonates opus V, 7-12* Ensemble Fitzwilliam (Jean-Pierre Nicolas *rec*, Michèle Dévérité *kbd*, Bruno Cocset *vlc etc*, Yasunori Imamura *theorbo/guitar*) 58' 21" Zig Zag Territoires ZZT050903

These sonatas were first published for violin and continuo in Rome in 1700. Although Walsh published a recorder version in 1702, Jean Pierre Nicolas has chosen to perform from the original violin edition where possible, using the voice flute in sonatas 9 and 10 to avoid the octave transpositions which would be needed on a treble recorder. It was only for the first six of the opus 5 sonatas that Roger's 1710 edition provided ornamented slow movements supposedly by Corelli himself, so for these second six Nicolas supplies his own, based on the Roger examples. For the first movement of sonata 9 he uses ornamented repeats by Geminiani, who is said to have been a pupil of Corelli.

The playing on this recording from both soloist and continuo group is poised and expressive, and the balance and ensemble is excellent. I enjoyed the imaginative and lyrical ornamentation of the slow movements and wondered why Nicolas chose to leave the sarabanda of sonata 10 plain. The continuo is always effective and supportive, using a variety of instruments to add quite subtle changes of character and tone colour. The *La Folia* variations, with guitar added to the continuo group, make an exciting climax to the recording, with opportunities for display for everyone.

The booklet notes are very comprehensive, with information on the composer, the music itself and the performance decisions taken by the players. They end with a thought-provoking quotation from Charles Burney (1774): 'Corelli is so plain and so simple that he can always be made modern.'

Victoria Helby

Finger *Sonatae, Balletti scordati, Aria et variations* Petr Wagner *gamba*, Ensemble Tourbillon 54'02" ARTA FI 0137 (2hp@arta.cz)

I must confess that, when CB asked if I'd listen to a disc of Finger's viol music 'as it seems a shame to let it hang over for another two months', I only reluctantly said 'yes'. I'm not a great fan of the composer, and I'm not exactly an authority on the viol or its music. Still, I'm very glad I did agree to his request, as this has been one of the highlights of this issue's batch. The first thing that deserves notice is the excellent sound quality – I don't have fancy equipment (most things are either played by the computer or by an even less likely ghetto-blaster), but I really felt like I was there, so true were the acoustics. The second compliment is for the playing: the soloist is outstanding, but he's only as good in this repertoire as his continuo team, and they oblige splendidly. Thirdly, and without any reticence at all, the music is well worth hearing – in fact, I've heard it through several times now, and there's such a variety and pleasantness of melody that it's really very easy to enjoy. I hope their proposed Poglietti recording materialises next year!

BC

Ennemond & Denis Gaultier *Livre de luth de Perrine 1680* Louis Pernot 71' 32" AD HOC 11

French baroque lute music is the musical expression of *préciosité*: effete, subtle, understated, highly decorative, and utterly esoteric. It is impossible to be sure quite how this music was played. Interpretation is so much a question of taste. Mary Burwell's description of various French lutenists' performing styles shows that they all had their own way of doing things (*The Burwell Lute Tutor*, ff. 5v-6r).

Louis Pernot plays on a gut-strung lute by Jacob van de Geest, which gives a clarity of tone without excessive resonance in the bass, and some sweet high notes. The music, by two members of the Gaultier family, Ennemond (Le Vieux) and his cousin Denis (Le Jeune), is taken from a late source, Perrine's *Livre de Luth* (1680). On first listening I found Pernot's interpretation too much 'in your face'. His *Courante* (5) and *Canon* (20) have an excessively jaunty *inégalité*, his *Canaris* (7) lacks rhythmic swing, and the *Sarabande* (18) is too slow for my taste. The *Tombeau de Mezangeau* (2) begins so aggressively, one is left wondering if Gaultier was perhaps pleased to get his master (that old *****?) out of the way, with audible sniffs from Pernot. On second listening, however, I found the CD far more

appealing. It is splendid music, played cleanly, thoughtfully, and with nice contrasts. There is a gentle lilt to *La Poste* (9), some nifty ornaments in *Gigue* (8), nicely shaped phrases in *Courante* (17), and tenderness in a *Gigue* (14). After 21 tracks of D minor, though, it was a relief to move on to nine tracks in A minor, which end with a rather staid *Petite Bergère*. The CD finishes with a couple of sad pieces in C minor.

Stewart McCoy

Un voyage au cœur des opéras de Jean-Baptiste Lully Barbara Kusa, Jean-François Lombard, Marc Mauillon, Edwin Crossley-Mercer SATB, Les Pages, les Chantres et les Symphonistes du Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, Musica Florea, Olivier Schneebeli dir 75' 30" K617 K617176

Mostly from *Isis*, with excerpts also from *Amadis, Armide & Persée*

This is a live recording (token applause at end just to prove it) of a concert given at Versailles in May 2005. For the programme Schneebeli created, in more or less his own words, a new opera compiled from *divertissements* in order to provide a showcase for the choir and orchestra. The music is all splendid and as a programme it works well even if it does give a rather odd impression of what a Lullian *opéra* is really like, and for anyone allergic to recitative it is a perfect sample of the composer's elevated style. Schneebeli has a good feel for the pacing and shape of these extended scenes and there is a good sense of the necessary teamwork. Perhaps because of the live recording, the sound is not always ideal, with the soloists at a varying distance and the choir sometimes rather unfocused – though this also reflects occasional less-than-perfect ensemble especially on entries. The booklet gives full information about the programme and performers in both English and French, though the sung texts appear only in French, a regrettable slip in the presentation.

David Hansell

Purcell *Music for Queen Mary* Kate Royal, David Hansen, Tim Mead, Andrew Staples, Jacques Imbrailo SAATB, Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Academy of Ancient Music, Stephen Cleobury 70' 03" EMI Classics 0946 3 44438 2 1

Come ye sons of art, Funeral Sentences, Funeral Anthem, Love's goddess sure, Praise God O Jerusalem,

I generally mop up recordings that arrive too late to send out to other reviewers. But I was a bit diffident about this one, since I didn't want to be in the position of writing 'nice editions (mine) but unstylish performance'. Fortunately I enjoyed it

very much. Normally, Purcell's odes and church music are recorded separately; originally, there would have been a significant difference in acoustic, but the performers were more-or-less the same. Here, the King's College spaciousness doesn't obtrude in the two birthday odes and gives the coronation and funeral anthems some bloom. The early set of funeral sentences are included, the booklet accepting that 'there is no evidence to suggest that they were performed at the funeral' but not mentioning the idea that the new 'Thou knowest Lord' was intended to fit into Morley's funeral music. Nevertheless, the sequence of March – Canzona – March introducing Funeral Sentences with the two 'Thou knowest Lord's consecutively makes a good closing sequence for the disc, and gives the choir (with its own soloists, not the outsiders listed above) a chance to shine. The slide trumpets joining the 1695 setting curb any temptation to an excess of expression spoiling the simple music. In the odes, I was struck by the charm of the music. So often, the gritty harmonies are dwelt on, here they lightly spice the texture. I don't think that it is understating the music: other performances almost caricature this aspect of Purcell's language. The idea of bringing together music for Queen Mary was a good one. The name of King's will no doubt sell the CD anyway, but it is a fine programme, well performed, which can be recommended even to those who are resistant to the sound of collegiate choirs. CB

Sacco Missa 1607 *Templum Musicae*, Francesco Di Lernia org, Vincenzo Di Donato 58' 05"
Carus 83.191
Dialogo BVM, *Gaudemus omnes*, *Litaniae Lauretanae*, *Veni sponsa Christi*
Quagliatti *Canzona 2*, *Toccata VIII tuono*

This is perhaps a little earlier than the sort of music I would normally listen to, but it's not an unfamiliar style, even if the composer's name is not exactly engraved in my mind. Salvatore Sacco's mass was published in 1607 along with motets, a litany, and various two-choir works by his 'Roman' contemporaries (many of them pupils of Palestrina). Eight singers carry the eight parts very well, supported by continuo – in this case, harp, theorbo, gamba, violone and organ! I thoroughly enjoyed the entire disc, which also includes two organ pieces and three plainsong interludes for the Proper of the mass, and four other two-choir works by Sacco. BC

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)

££ = mid price

other discs full price (as far as we know)

Schütz *Musikalische Exequien* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 50' 51"
Coro COR16036
+ *Deutsches Magnificat*, Herr nun lässt SWV352a, 432, 433, *Vater unser* SWV411

First released in 1998, this recording emphasises the sonority of Schütz's choral writing. It was made in the spacious acoustic of St Augustine's Kilburn, and the performers delight in the contrast between solo voices and tutti choir in the *Musikalische Exequien*, and the enveloping effect of the choral chords at the start of the six-voice *Nunc dimittis* (SWV 432). These enticing sonorities, however, are at the expense of vivid projection of the words. The singers could go much further in using the text and its accentuation to animate their lines. This is particularly apparent when the recording is compared to those of Weser-Renaissance or Cantus Cölln, whose performances gain their rhythmic impetus from the words. Hence The Sixteen's account is ethereal rather than muscular, offering a very British performance of Schütz; but I still hope that this re-issue will attract listeners. As Harry Christophers says in the liner-note, if you 'enjoy the music of Schütz...please spread the word'. Stephen Rose

Arp-Schnitger-Orgel Norden Thiemo Janssen, Agnes Luchterhandt 72' 08"
Musikproduktion Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 906 1363-6 (SACD/CD)
Music by Böhm, Buxtehude, Byrd, Correa de Arauxo, Scheidt, Schlick, Weckmann

This husband and wife team have the lucky job of sharing the post of organist of one of Arp Schnitger's most famous surviving instruments, the 1566/1616/1686 de Mare/Evers/Schnitger organ at Lüderikirche, Norden, in north Germany. Schnitger treated early pipework with great respect during his re-buildings, so the principal chorus of his organs often speak with the voice of the 16th, rather than late-17th century – a point well demonstrated by some of the earlier works on this very impressive CD. As is often the case with continental organists, the registrations for the Byrd piece are very far from authentic, but the other works are played with musical conviction and integrity, including a Spanish work with the correct registration. Why is English organ music so little understood outside (and, occasionally, inside) our own borders? An interesting inclusion is Scheidt's monumental *Echo ad manuale duplex forte*. There is no more appropriate organ upon which to perform this work, the four acoustically very separate divisions allowing for a wide variety of registrations which bring life to a work that can, frankly, sound rather tedious at

times. Both players perform with musical conviction and integrity. Recommended.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The Medici Harpsichord Book Aapo Häkkinen hpsc'd 75'
Deux-Elles DXL 1083
Music by Ferdinando de' Medici, Lambardi, de Macque, de Nebra, GB Martini, L. Rossi *Passacaille*, Soler *Fandango*

The book in the title is a manuscript in Florence Conservatory (Ms. D. 2358) with the Medici crest and containing fifteen keyboard pieces. Häkkinen, who is editing it for publication, conjectures that the music might have been composed by Prince Ferdinando Medici (1673-1723) who died before succeeding as duke and who is known to have had composition lessons. Whoever the composer, these short pieces work very well despite relying a bit on formulaic writing. They have a persuasive advocate in Häkkinen who plays with sympathy and taste. The rest of the CD contains an eclectic mix: Giovanni de Macque, Francesco Lambardi, Luigi Rossi, Giovanni Battista Martini, Manuel Blasco de Nebra and Antonio Soler's extended fandango. The performer's chosen pieces are played with a good sense of their different styles, helped by the mellow sound of the anonymous Italian instrument from Christopher Hogwood's collection. This sounds like a fine player in his element. Noel O'Regan

Fiesta Española: El encuentro entre el Flamenco y las Canciones y Danzas en los siglos XVI y XVII Mercedes Hernández S, Elva La Guardia voice etc, United Continuo Ensemble 56' 47"
Raum Klang RK 2408
Music by Arañés, Enzina, Marin, Ortiz, Pisador, etc

This belongs next to the two discs reviewed below, since it too gives prominence to a vigorous and untrammelled continuo ensemble, with flamenco guitars as modern intrusions. It is a more specific cross-over, with its explicit flamenco material. Has popular Spanish music really retained such a similarity over 500 years? The carry-over of styles seems to work here, and there is some fine singing, as well as clapping – as music, not applause. CB

Nuove musiche adapted and arr. by Rolf Lislevand + Arianna Savall, Pedro Esteven, Bjorn Kjellemyr, Guido Morini, Marco Ambrosini, Thor-Harald Johnsen 52' 17"
ECM New Series 476 3049
based on Frescobaldi, Gianoncelli, Kapsberger, Narváez, Pellegrini, Piccinini

We are used to medieval ensembles virtually inventing the music they play:

I'm suspicious of that, chiefly because it is presented as medieval music. Performers steeped in the 17th century, however, have a much surer basis upon which to weave their fantasies, and the line between 'authentic' and more fundamental re-creation and imagination is clearer. The appearance of this at the same time as the disc reviewed below is convenient, not because one is better than the other, but because they are testing the acceptable in different ways. This sounds a little less self-indulgent than some of the Teatro Lirico's grounds, but goes further from 17th-century style. Both groups are based on continuo players taking the foreground: I'm all in favour! CB

Teatro Lirico: Sonatas and dances from 17th-century Italy and Slovakia Milos Valent, Maxine Eilander, Erin Headley, Stephen Stubbs dir. 74' 20"

ECM New Series 476 3101

Music by Caccini, Cazzati, Corelli, Farina, Foscarini, Granata, Horn, Stubbs

Much of this disc is devoted to improvisations on *La Folia*; it begins with an elaboration of a slow section of Corelli's op. 5/12, and subsequent returns to take up the theme the same manner, which is sonorous and laid back, beautiful but self-indulgent; there is little of the contrast that Corelli's set of variations provides. I like the idea of players improvising on the standard basses, but have doubts about recording them – far better to leave them as concert encores, where there is an audience to react to and, maybe, jokes to be made – I remember a marvellous concert including a couple of these players at the 1997 Boston Festival with Steve Player as a visual intermediary between the musicians and the audience. The performers are subtle, and play with the listener's expectations. The Slovakian pieces, though, outstay their welcome. CB

LATE BAROQUE

Avison Six Concertos op. 3, Eight Concertos op. 4 The Avison Ensemble, Pavlo Beznosiuk 131' 17" (2 CDs) Naxos 8.557905-06 £

Charles Avison really was a very good composer and it's gratifying to see that the Avison Ensemble continues to promote his output in conjunction with Naxos – it's re-assuring in these days of uncertainty to know that the pioneer budget label continues to promote what is still essentially slightly obscure repertoire. Here the Avison Ensemble present two of the composer's printed sets. I've commented elsewhere about the logic or otherwise of re-ordering the contents of a printed set: we can all programme our

CD players to do that for us if we're upset by the juxtaposition of the keys of Op. 3 – not that there are any real howlers! That aside, I have nothing but praise for the recording: the sound is good, the music thoroughly enjoyable, and the performances never over-stated. I look forward to the next instalment. BC

Bach Weinen, Klagen... Cantatas 12, 38, 75
Carolyn Sampson, Daniel Taylor, Mark Padmore, Peter Kooij SATB, Collegium Vocale Gent, Philippe Herreweghe 69' 09" Harmonia Mundi HMC 901843

The title of this disc suggests that it contains exclusively penitential cantatas, but in fact the programme juxtaposes the lamenting tone of BWV 12 and 38 with BWV 75, the substantial cantata that Bach wrote for his first Sunday at Leipzig. Here the theme is the contrast between earthly vanity and divine providence, and there is less opportunity for intense plaints. Herreweghe's forces always perform with poise and technical command, and these qualities ensure a highly effective performance of BWV 75. Particularly enjoyable are the four arias in this cantata, each differently characterised but always with a buoyant pulse and beautifully shaped melodies. The choral movements on this disc have a homogenous, polished sound that is delightful in many ways, yet can weaken Bach's dramatic intent. In the opening chorus of BWV 38, I wanted a rawer sound, to reflect the charged poetic and musical language; and in the passacaglia of BWV 12, Herreweghe's performance lacks the drama and urgency of John Eliot Gardiner's live account from his cantata pilgrimage. Herreweghe offers beautiful performances, but this beauty sometimes minimises the grit and grain of Bach's rhetoric. Stephen Rose

Bach Cantatas 30, 7, 167 Susie LeBlanc, Daniel Taylor, Charles Daniels, Stephen MacLeod SATB, Montréal Baroque, Eric Milnes 73' 35" Atma Baroque SACD2 2400

Festivals throughout the world form orchestras for a few weeks in the summer in order to present an adoring local public with a sense of cultural riches that are usually temporary at best. This appears not to be the case with Montréal Baroque, directed by Eric Milnes, and founded only in 2003 for regular June Baroque Festivals. The vocal quartet (constituting the choir as well as soloists) is generally excellent and the band quite often outstanding. This volume of cantatas for the feast of St John the Baptist (not surprisingly, a June feast) shows off a variety of styles, not least a light mannered galant idiom

for Cantata 30, such as in the alto aria 'Kommt, ihr angefochtenen Sünder' and the remarkably accurate upper string playing in the soprano aria 'Eilt, ihr Stunden'. Susie Napper (the artistic director of the festival) gives a captivating, idiosyncratic performance of the continuo line of the bass aria, 'Merkt und hört' from Cantata 7, almost turning it into a cello suite movement. Suzie LeBlanc and Daniel Taylor are relatively gentle in the role of soprano and alto, LeBlanc shining in the high coloratura writing of Cantata 30 and Taylor in movements requiring a sweet, almost ethereal tone. The two blend well for the duet in Cantata 167. Stephan MacLeod, bass, is also relatively understated, but projects the text expressively. Only Charles Daniels performs with the full rhetorical power that this music most consistently seems to demand, but all four singers make an incisive chorus. In all, a very promising start for a talented, well-directed group. John Butt

Critical readers will notice our inconsistency in spelling MacLeod's first name. We are in good company: the biog on atma's web site has Stephen in the heading and Stephan in the text, and similar inconsistencies were scattered around the www, including one Stephan MacLoud (or was that a critical comment?) CB

Bach Mass in B minor Suzanne Danco, Kathleen Ferrier, Peter Pears, Bruce Boyce, Norman Walkes SATBarB, BBC Chorus, Boyd Neel Orchestra, George Enescu cond 147' 57" (rec 1951) Ariadne 5000-2

+ BWV 11/4 (Ferrier & and Jacques, 1949) & 244/39 Ferrier & Sargent, 1946

This old BBC plus Decca LP recording is by no means the only one to survive from its period. 'historically' as we in the recording business are accustomed to say of even the period around 1950; there is even a complete Matthew Passion under Vaughan Williams from 1958 featuring the late bass singer Gordon Clinton in his comparative youth [Pearl 0079; reviewed by CB in *EMR* 59, p. 24]. There is indeed little to accord with what is today seen as appropriate baroque style or instrumentation in these interesting views into the recent past, but they often have things that may still teach us.

There is one important omission: the repeat of the choral 'Osanna' which should strictly follow the 'Benedictus' is omitted inexplicably whilst the two bonus items are actually sung rather well by Ferrier in English, but not in the listed order. It is a pity that, after so much careful attention had been given to this really historic production, these flaws, which would have infuriated the performers, have been allowed to sour the overall results. Stephen Daw

Text & translation on web site.

Bach St Matthew Passion Nico van der Meel Evangelist, Raimund Nolte Jesus, Claudia Couwenbergh, Marianne Beate Kielland, Markus Schäfer, Hanno Müller-Brachmann SATB, Dresden Chamber Choir, Cologne Cathedral Boys' Choir, Cologne Chamber Orchestra, Helmut Müller-Brühl 161' 07" (3 CDs in box) Naxos 8.557617-19 £

The fact that this (admittedly bargain) reading of one of early music's indisputed classics is here performed thoroughly – even though rather stylishly – on modern instruments might have precluded admission for review here in these pages, and for all its distinguishing characteristics, it will be given rather curtailed treatment here. First the tempo is mostly driven rather unusually fast, and although this is not done at any real expense to the depth of the work's religious message. I remain unconvinced that this is truly authentic a version of Bach. Second, the musical balances are quite seriously adjusted, for example with a far weaker emphasis on the larger oboes, then a real local speciality in Leipzig, than we gain from Paul McCreesh's reading of the last quarter or so of the composition. It would be unfair to give no mention of the outstandingly expressive alto soloist: Marianne Beate Kielland is noble even in her demanding part, and the Evangelist, Nico van de Meel, makes even his conductor's speeds fluently reasonable. There are many other effective details throughout, so that I have to admit that actually this really is in its own way rather a good performance. But it certainly doesn't strike me as quite right overall. *Stephen Daw*

Bach St John Passion Midori Suzuki, Robin Blaze, Gerd Türk, Chiyuki Urano, Stephan MacLeod SATBarB, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki (rec Suntory Hall, 28 July 2000) 117' Euroarts 2050396 DVD

I've been a great fan of the Bach Collegium Japan since I first heard them perform on the radio, but this is the first time I've seen them. I have subscribed to the Complete Cantatas series, but have missed out on the Passions and some of the instrumental releases, so it was doubly nice to be offered this opportunity. The music comes across as I now expect – carefully paced, beautifully sung and played, and with Suzuki's steady guiding hand (which also joins the continuo team for recitatives). The visual aspect of the recording did not really enhance my experience of the piece, though – only the Evangelist was placed

at the front of the ensemble, so the 'exchange' between Pilate and Jesus is a slightly odd affair of two singers standing side-by-side in the choir, singing to the conductor (and, of course, beyond him, to the audience). Surely they should have been singing to one another? Even if there is a narrator, the characters can be allowed to interact. I was more impressed that I've ever been by Robin Blaze – his solos were marvellously taken. All in all, though, I think I'll stick to listening to Suzuki and Co., although I'd never seen a baroque double bassoon before, so there was one visual treat! *BC*

Bach Organ Chorales from the Leipzig MS Vol 1. Andrew Arthur (1987 Reiger organ, St Marylebone, London).

Priory PRCD 820
BWV 537, 543, 572, 651-3, 658-661, 663, 667

Imports of organs by continental builders are not always the most musical successful additions to English parish churches, but this CD gives a very complimentary account of the 1987 Reiger organ in St Marylebone. Built (as most instruments still are in the UK) in an eclectic style deemed to be capable of playing all the repertoire, this will not be the most obvious organ of choice for most *EMR* readers wanting to hear Bach. But Andrew Arthur gives a pretty impressive reading of the chorales and additional free works. He has developed a pleasantly musical rhetorical style of playing that avoids all excesses. He plays with a clear articulation and a good sense of phrasing, although there is an occasional tendency to lean on the first beat of the bar which can add a slight hiccup to the flow. His choice of registrations is sound, given the nature of the instrument, as is his use of ornaments. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach Goldberg-Variationen; Italienisches Konzert Trevor Pinnock (Ruckers/Taskin hpscd) 74' 34"

Archiv 00289 477 5902 (rec 1980, 1979) £

This is one of a series of reissues from Archiv which are collectively termed 'the Originals'; the recording was made in Paris in 1979-1980 (the Concerto before the Variations) and the full originals have more recently been remastered. Trevor Pinnock deserves full credit for having by this time developed both the necessary technique to play Bach so well on an antique Franco-Dutch instrument of the highest pedigree. The diverse character of each work is ably communicated, and generally all goes well. For my personal taste Pinnock's Bach is rather unplastic and inflexible. However, he and others who prefer this comparative strictness

may claim all kinds of justifications and my views are maybe too romantic and even over-expressive. *Stephen Daw*

Bach Sei Solo a Violino senza Basso accompagnato – II [BWV 103, 105, 106] Hélène Schmitt 67' 56"
Alpha 090

This second instalment of Hélène Schmitt's unaccompanied Bach is every bit as impressive as the last. She manages to find new nuances in music that I thought I knew very well, and is especially impressive in the slow movements, where the melody/accompaniment is something she does with remarkable facility. I did wonder about some things – like the fly-aways (if that's what they are?) in the Preludio of the E major Partita, but overall she held me captivated for the duration. This is one set that will be revisiting my CD player a lot in the weeks to come! *BC*

Bach Sonatas & Chorales Palladian Ensemble (Pamela Thorby, Rodolfo Richter vlns, Susanne Heinrich gamba, William Carter gtr, archlute) 58' 27"
Linn CKD 275 (SACD/CD)

BWV 526, 528, 614, 645, 650, 653, 664, 1021, 10395

Before I listened to it, I wasn't sure that I was going to like this recording, which is of mainly well-known music by Bach transcribed and arranged by the Ensemble themselves for the 'wrong' instruments, but I was totally convinced by the lovely performances on this CD. Of course Bach himself frequently reworked his own material and the trio sonata for two flutes which starts the programme later became a gamba sonata, while the Schübler chorales are themselves transcriptions for organ from the Leipzig cantatas.

It's difficult to pick out any particular performance as they are all so attractive but I particularly enjoyed the violin sonata, the only work which is played on the type of instrument for which it was composed, and the Leipzig chorale *Allein Gott* arranged as a recorder and violin trio sonata. The organ sonatas, transposed from their original keys, make excellent trio sonatas, and in fact the first movement of BWV528 was arranged by Bach from a trio sonata movement for oboe d'amore, gamba and continuo in Cantata 76. One small quibble – *Trio super Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend* is actually BWV 655 not 653. The performers make a lovely sound, and the use of archlute or baroque guitar as continuo instrument makes it easy to hear them all.

The order of the tracks on the CD has obviously been thought about very

carefully, so that there are no uncomfortable key changes and a reasonable silence is left between one piece and the next. The booklet notes give some information about the music, though I would have liked more. The recording itself is exceptionally clear and well balanced. This is a Super Audio CD which can store six times more data than a normal CD and means that those who have the right equipment can hear the sound in more detail, but even on a normal CD player the sound seems extremely good, with each instrument clearly heard to the best effect. Perfect music for Easter, or indeed any other time.

Victoria Helby

Bach 2xBach: Sonatas for viola da gamba & harpsichord Veli-Markus Tapio, Elina Mustonen 61'02" Alba ABCD 217 JSB BWV 1028-9; CPEB H502, 558

In his excellent insert essay, Finnish gambist Veli-Markus Tapio argues eloquently for the modernity of JSB's gamba sonatas, especially the G minor BWV 1029 with its fashionable concerto-like quality and its slow central cantilena in the 'sensitive' style of the *Empfindsamkeit*. Yet the contrast between the father's music and that of son CPE is made starkly apparent here by placing the two side by side: the essentially contrapuntal idiom of the old Bach imbues his music with a richness of texture that makes the son's elegant galanteries often seem vapid in comparison. The transcription of CPE's violin sonata H502 works effectively, and concludes with some graceful minuets. Tapio plays with a pure, refined sound, but is too often over-powered by the rather closely recorded harpsichord. The tonal picture is not helped by an over-resonant church acoustic, and the close miking picks up a constant sound of the performers' breathing and other surface noises, which once you've noticed it becomes quite distracting. There is a good sense of ensemble between the players, with Elina Mustonen contributing refined and articulate partnership for the viol. However the rhythmic momentum is too often undermined by a surfeit of 'micro-phrasing', resulting in fluctuations of tempo at many a cadence.

John Bryan

Bach Sonatas pour viole de gambe et clavecin Juan Manuel Quintana gamba, Céline Frisch hpscd 57'27" (rec 2000) Harmonia Mundi Musique d'abord HMA 1951712 BWV 1019, 1027-29

Clarity of recording and careful balance between the partners provide an excellent

platform for these articulate and sensitive performances of JSB's gamba sonatas. Brazilian gambist Quintana and French harpsichordist Frisch have no difficulty in communicating their ideas to each other, bringing a youthful, buoyant drive to all the faster movements. One might wish for more space to ruminate on the harmonic tensions in some of the slower movements, and just occasionally the viol loses the focus of its tone with a rather wide vibrato, but the overall impression is of a lively interplay between the players. And when Frisch adds extra ornaments to those marked in the surviving sources, the result is always felicitously expressive. In addition to the three *echt* gamba sonatas, Quintana and Frisch offer a completely convincing transcription of the G major violin and harpsichord sonata BWV 1019. With its unusual structure of five movements, this piece was itself probably assembled from a number of different sources, so there's nothing sacrosanct about it as a violin piece. Indeed the opening allegro bears a very close family resemblance to the last movement of the G major gamba sonata, and the expansive cantabile middle movement lends itself perfectly to the plaintive singing tone of Quintana's viol.

John Bryan

Bach Ouvertures: the Four Orchestral Suites Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki 99'45" (2 CDs) BIS SACD-1431

Lest there be any doubt that the Bach Collegium of Japan is only at home in texted music, here is an excellent account of the four *Ouvertüren*. It displays exactly the same qualities as are evident in their vocal performances: total commitment to the character, shape and momentum of the music; excellent details and a sense of spontaneity, particularly in the dance movements. Especially striking are the dynamic contours of the string lines, such as the interjections in the fast section of the overture of the first suite. Suzuki risks our dwindling attention by repeating the longer, fast sections of overtures, but generally it is well worth hearing this music twice. The second suite is perhaps not as breakneck as it can sound in many contemporary performances – but it is by no means over-careful and greatly profits from the opportunities for more detailed shaping and articulation of some very familiar movements. Only the opening, dotted, sections of overtures may sometimes lack real energy, but this is a small price to pay for such an outstanding, integrated set of suites that is likely to prove durable for many years to come.

John Butt

Caix d'Hervelois Pièces de viole Jay Bernfeld gamba, Fuoco e Cenere (Ariane Maurette gamba, André Henrich theorbo, Hélène Clerk hpscd) 65'04" Arion ARN 68694

Louis de Caix d'Hervelois published five books of *Pièces de Viole*, and is the most prolific French composer for the instrument after Marais, yet he is recorded and performed much less. This is no great surprise, but his neglect is a pity, as he is quite different from the older man, supposedly his teacher, and his music has great appeal. This is amply demonstrated on this recording, in which Jay Bernfeld, plays two different instruments according to the demands of the suite. In the Suite in E from Book V he uses a 6-stringed, brighter-toned instrument with a pleasingly astringent sound and capable of plenty of dynamic contrast. The Suite in D from Book II is much better known because it's been readily available in facsimile for many years. He then compiles groups of pieces in the same key, taken from various suites and indeed various books. It makes very enjoyable listening, as the music, full of contrast, is brilliantly played. He displays great freedom, with an ability to suggest rubato while maintaining a sense of pulse. He takes risks, sometimes choosing very exciting breakneck speeds, almost (but not) going off the rails. Where the music demands it, he can push the tone to its limits, risking roughness – for example the E minor suite's Gigue *Cor de chasse*, which springs to life with the vigorous playing. But he also makes a lovely warm tone, particularly where he changes to his 7-string, such as in the suite in A. Caix d'Hervelois's harmonic vocabulary and range of moods are smaller than Marais, but within these limits he displays great variety of invention, beguiling and engaging melodies. One characteristic that endears him to players is the importance of the 2nd bass. Many of his movements are really duets, and the very good accompanying team on this recording has a major role in its success. The sound is glorious the music a succession of delights – highly recommended.

Robert Oliver

Couperin Concerts Royaux & Les Goûts réunis Stradivaria (David Cuiller vln, Gérard Scharapan fl, Jocelyne Cuiller hpscd, Benjamin Perrot theorbo) 55'30" Mirare MIR 005
Concerts 1, 2, 7 & 14; *L'art de toucher le clavecin* Préludes 2-4, 7

Though published in keyboard format, Couperin's *concerts* from *Les Goûts Réunis* and *Concerts Royaux* were performed for

Louis XIV by the leading instrumentalists of his court, on flutes, violins, and a variety of continuo instruments. Stradivaria's performances ring the changes by making judicious choices from their instrumentarium, providing a variety of textures that serve the nature of the different movements rather than creating kaleidoscopic changes for their own sake. Flute and violin sometimes double the melody, not always perfectly unanimously, but other movements present the dark-hued gamba as the solo voice, or leave it all to the harpsichord. The players respond intuitively to Couperin's intermingling of national tastes, bring a grace and intimacy to the more obviously French movements, and relish the energy and brilliance of the more Italianate ones. There's a solid sense of teamwork in this ensemble, but the tone of Daniel Cuiller's violin is too often hard-pressed and over dominant in the blend. Each ensemble suite is preceded by one of Couperin's solo harpsichord preludes, played with sensitivity on an instrument with a rich bass and at times disturbingly acerbic inequality of tuning. The disc is sumptuously packaged and provides a fine introduction to the world of lazy afternoons at Versailles. *John Bryan*

Handel Messiah Christine Schäfer, Anna Larsson, Michael Schade, Gerald Finley SATB, Arnold Schoenberg Chor, Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt 140' 57"

DHM 82876 64070 2

From live performances in Musikvereinsaal, Vienna, 17-21 December 2004

Harnoncourt's second recording of *Messiah* was heralded in Norman Lebrecht's weekly feature article in the London *Evening Standard* of 9 November last, with some surprising quotes from the maestro. For example: 'I have seen every pencil stroke of Handel in *Messiah*, and I found very interesting things that were generally overlooked'. (No enlightenment as to the nature of the 'things' was offered; the only pencil markings in the main sources are singer's names.) Handel's irregular use of bar lines was mentioned, as in Harnoncourt's notes for both this and his earlier recording of 1983, with the implication that it has some relevance to performance, but since the copyists who prepared the material for Handel's own performances always barred the music regularly, it clearly doesn't. The note for the new recording additionally states that 'in the autograph score, Handel indicates large- and small-scale string ensemble,

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)

££ = mid price

other discs full price (as far as we know)

and in some cases even passages that should be played with solo strings'. Two untruths there: the 'con rip.' and 'senza rip.' markings (which are presumably what Harnoncourt is referring to) were added in the conducting score, not the autograph, and there are no markings for 'solo strings'. (The 'rip.' markings date from 1749 and are not part of Handel's original conception.) A comment by Lebrecht that Harnoncourt employed a graphologist to study the pressure of the master's hand as it raced across the paper explains the rambling six-page article by Sabine Gruber in the booklet for the new recording. She implies that graphology might provide insights into Handel's character, but offers nothing new or interesting by way of analysis and ends with a complaint that few of Handel's letters have been reproduced in facsimile. She is apparently unaware that the sale catalogue of the letters to Jennens illustrates several of them.

All this brings the expectation of a performance blighted by bizarre and uncoordinated ideas, and so it proves. Beginning the Hallelujah chorus at a lazy mezzo-piano, as if the performers were just waking from slumber, is not a revelation but merely an attention-grabbing repudiation of tradition and good sense. 'For unto us' likewise should have a sense of elation throughout, though here it barely achieves it even in the 'Wonderful! Counsellor!' outbursts. Organ continuo is used almost throughout, the harpsichord adding a touch of colour only now and again. Cadences are invariably delayed, killing the effect of Handel's own delayed cadence at 'from shame and spitting', and recitatives are broken up by unnecessary silent pauses. Rubato is applied in various odd ways, none more so than in 'Thus saith the Lord', where the dotted figure is always taken faster than the main tempo, making the penultimate bar very weird. Not everything is bad: Harnoncourt brings power to the darker choruses ('He trusted in God', 'Let us break') and I liked the strong dots in 'Behold the Lamb of God' (though not in 'Worthy is the Lamb'), but such moments are too rare.

The soloists also provide occasional pleasures, including Gerald Finley's powerful 'Why do the nations' and an affecting first section of 'He was despised' from Anna Larsson, unfortunately let down by an over-embellished da capo. One wonders whether their less successful ideas – notably some wild distortions of the vocal line by tenor Michael Schade – are their own or Harnoncourt's. (Did he or Finley demand the 40-bar cut in the da capo of 'The trumpet shall sound'?) In sum, an unnecessary and regrettable

addition to the catalogue. *Anthony Hicks Handel Messiah* Arleen Auger, Anne Sofie von Otter, Michael Chance, Howard Crook, John Tomlinson SACTTB, The English Concert Choir, The English Concert, Trevor Pinnock 149' 06" Archiv 00289 477 5904 (rec 1988) £

It must be said from the start that the sound quality of this re-issue of the 1988 recording, for all DG's technical mastery, seems to lack the clarity of more recent recordings. That said, this is a period performance that, of its time, is of some interest. The orchestra, as in Handel's time, almost outnumbers the choir, the English Concert employing 6.6.4.4.2 strings, with doubling horns in some trumpet choruses. The performance is the conventional 1754 version, complete with all the expected numbers. If your choice is for a reflective *Messiah*, this is one to consider. If you prefer a more dramatic, oratorical approach with brisk tempi, then there are several other more appealing recordings. The overture seems somewhat ponderous by today's period orchestra standards, and many of the arias are a little on the slow side for my taste. Even many of the choruses seem to amble amiably along. Interestingly the slow tempo of 'Behold the Lamb of God' emphasises Pinnock's decision to perform this as written, with no alterations of note lengths. The soloists are all excellent, and the division of the alto numbers between contralto and counter-tenor makes for textural variety. As this is a cut-price offering, it is therefore good value for someone looking for a conventional period-instrument recording of *Messiah*.

Ian Graham-Jones

Handel Agrippina Günter von Kannen *Claudia*, Barbara Daniels *Agrippina*, David Kuebler *Nerone*, Janica Hall *Poppea*, Claudio Nicolai *Ottone*, Ulrich Hielscher *Pallante*, Eberhard Katz *Narciso*, Carlos Fler *Lesbos*, London Baroque Players, Arnold Östman *dir*, Michael Hampe *stage dir* 154' (rec 1985) Euroarts 2054538 DVD

One wonders sometimes if DVDs are issued merely because old tapes exist. The one strong point about this one is the orchestra, with many players from the London scene recognisable. But the singing isn't stylish – not helped by voices at the wrong octave – and the staging doesn't add much to the experience. Nor is there any point in the opera finishing on the Rhine – a strange distortion for which we produced an edition for a later revival at Karlsruhe; this one is from the Rokokotheater, Schwetzingen. Why cannot stage directors understand that Handel's operas

are revived primarily for the music. CB Handel *Rinaldo* Marion Newman *Goffredo*, Laura Whalen *Almirena*, Kimberly Barber *Rinaldo*, Jennifer Enns *Mondolo Eustazio*, Sean Watson *Argante*, Barbara Hannigan *Armida*, Giles Tomkins *Mago Cristiano*, Opera in Concert, Aradia Ensemble, Kevin Mallon 179' 46" (3 CDs) Naxos 8660165-67 £

Previous recordings of large-scale works by Handel on Naxos label have been confined to the choral works and have been patchy affairs, taken mainly from live concerts in Germany under the enterprising but wayward Joachim Carlos Martini with his Junge Kantorei chorus. The first appearance of a Handel opera on the label marks a step-change in quality, being a studio recording (made after live concert performances) by an impressive Canadian period-instrument group under their Irish director Kevin Mallon. I wonder if *Rinaldo* was the ideal choice for this venture: it might be thought that the opera had already had its due on record, given the existence of three other commercial recordings on period instruments with a wide range of approaches (Jean-Claude Malgoire's pioneering effort of 1977 is still around at mid-price), and another under Nicholas McGegan available to members of the Göttingen Handel Society. However, the new version certainly offers value for money, and if you have an aversion to counter-tenors, it is the only choice, since all the leading high-voice male roles are taken by women and the small alto part of the *Mago Cristiano* is sung by a bass. Apart from a curious restructuring of 'Lascia ch'io pianga' (ending with a repeat of the first vocal statement), Mallon presents the full 1711 score as shown in the main text of the Halle edition (i.e. without the two extra arias included by Christopher Hogwood), but happily avoids the trap of the regrettable *flauto piccolo* part in the overture (as does Hogwood, but not René Jacobs and McGegan). It's pleasant to observe that, though Mallon has played violin for Les Arts Florissants, he produces a performance here with barely a trace of the mannerisms, tempo exaggerations and scorings affected by high-profile continental European groups. His soloists are generally very acceptable, with the contralto tone of Marion Newman as *Goffredo* contrasting nicely with the brighter mezzos of Kimberly Barber as *Rinaldo* and Jennifer Enns Modolo as *Eustazio*, and Sean Watson makes a very agreeable *Argante*. The overall impression is that the more poignant moments come off well – Barber delivers a very fine 'Cara sposa' – but there is some lack of excitement in the livelier music. In Act 3,

for instance, it seems to me that Hogwood gives a more spirited reading of all the battle music, and his 'Bel piacere', with Cecilia Bartoli as *Almirena*, has a lively charm that eludes Laura Whalen and Mallon. A technical feature also militating against vivacity is that most arias and set-pieces are followed by pauses a few seconds too long, dissolving dramatic tension. Hogwood therefore remains the recommendation for me on performance (and you get a full libretto and translation with his set, whereas Naxos supply just a synopsis in their booklet and the libretto in Italian only on their website), but Mallon nevertheless gives a fair view of the work at bargain price. I hope that he and Naxos will get sufficient encouragement to turn their attentions to the immediate successors of *Rinaldo*, the original *Il pastor fido* of 1712 and *Teseo*, good complete versions of which are notably lacking from the catalogue.

Anthony Hicks

Handel Portraits of mezzo-soprano heroines
Maria Ricarda Wesseling, Lautten Compagney, Wolfgang Katschner cond 68' 39" Claves 50.2504
Medea from *Teseo*, Dejanira from *Hercules*, Zenobia from *Radamisto*

As recital/calling-card discs go, this is an unusually thoughtful production in which the Swiss mezzo-soprano Maria Ricarda Wesseling sings a selection of arias (three with their introductory recitatives) from roles in three of Handel musical dramas: Medea in *Teseo*, Dejanira in *Hercules* and Zenobia in *Radamisto*. She provides an unpretentious note in the booklet explaining her fascination with Handel's treatment of these characters. Her voice is fresh, lighter than one might expect in a mezzo. My preference (though this may be merely romantic prejudice) would be for a darker, edgier sound in the Medea and Dejanira roles, though Wesseling is excellent in the slower and more expressive arias that she sensibly includes, especially in the arias for Zenobia. One does not want over-the-top shrieking, but there should be a sense of frenzy in Medea's 'Sibilando, ululando' and of course in Dejanira's 'mad scene', a quality I found lacking despite the assured vocal virtuosity. Also absent is the sarcasm that lies behind Dejanira's 'When beauty sorrow's livery wears' and 'Resign thy club', perhaps difficult to convey when the arias are separated from their dramatic context. The slim forces of Katschner's Lautten Compagney contribute somewhat to the lightweight impression, the *Teseo* and *Hercules* overtures being dispatched with fashionable briskness, though they support Wesseling well in her soulful moods.

Minor textual oddities include a shortened *da capo* in 'Resign thy club' and some rescored of the two dances from *Radamisto* (first version). The arias from the latter are drawn from both first and second versions of the opera, with 'Troppo sofferse' in a compromise version derived from both. On the whole this is a likeable disc that may well encourage interest in the works represented, and is therefore welcome.

Anthony Hicks

The Secret Handel: works for clavichord
Christopher Hogwood 98' 43" (2 CDs) Metronome MET CD 1060
HWV 428, 430/44, 435 446, 464, 469, 479, 480, 487, 489, 545-7, 610 + Krieger Aria in Bb, Zachow Sarabande & Gigue in b

Despite the story of the child Handel secretly playing the clavichord while his family was asleep, we tend not to associate the instrument with the grown man. This pair of discs goes a long way to convince that it is players who have neglected the instrument rather than the composer. Strangely, it is the simple minuets and the like, which may well have been standard fodder when the instrument was used for teaching, that come over less well: the harpsichord fills the empty texture with rather more resonance than the clavichord. In more substantial pieces, when there is a middle texture, it tends to be a bit lumpy, and I think that is inherent in the instruments rather than defective playing. But 'flashy' music like the varied aria in the third Suite of 1720 comes over extremely well. The suite, incidentally, is played in an elaboration by Muffat (1736), whose imminent publication I look forward to. Krieger and Zachow make brief appearances on the strength of their presence in the lost MS of pieces Handel learnt as a boy: amazing how little and how much Handel changed Krieger's aria 50+ years later. Three instruments are used: Haas 1761, Bodechtel c.1790 and Gräbner, 1761, the last being a travelling instrument tuned up a fifth (or fourth, depending on your pitch-standard). CB

Hasse Missa ultima in g Sächsisches Vocalensemble, Virtuosi Saxonie, Ludwig Gütter dir 63' 30" Carus 83.240 + motet *Ad te levavi*

This is a live recording from the newly re-consecrated Frauenkirche in Dresden, which now rises above the city skyline as it should. There is little in the way of distractive audience participation and both the music and the performance are very good. I was slightly disappointed that a period instrument orchestra was not used, but it seems only fair that

Ludwig Gütter should be at the helm of such a momentous event, having (it seems from the booklet notes) steered the entire re-building project to its most glorious realisation. Hasse may have been in his 80s when he wrote this 'final' mass, but you would never guess – it's full of vitality and sparkle and clearly, again as the notes point out, he must have had fond memories of Dresden. I cannot honestly say that this is the best performance you'll ever hear (the instrumentalists still have a way to go before they are truly in the world of HIP), but as a historical document, it is well worth having. BC

J. C. Hertel 6 Sonaten für Violine und Bc 1727 Cachel Harris vln, Andrea C. Baur lutes, Melanie Beck vlc, Jennifer Harris hpscd Cornetto COR10026 70' 30"

I have done a fair bit of work on Johann Wilhelm Hertel and his music, but this is my first encounter with his father's music, and a very pleasant one it was, too. Although most people know of his reputation as a gambist, he was also a renowned violinist and these sonatas, which are beautifully played by Rachel Harris and her fine continuo team, confirm that he must have been impressive indeed. I hope this little group will tackle some other baroque sonatas – they might actually turn their hands to some very interesting pieces by Johann Wilhelm, including a sonata in the delightful key of B flat minor. A facsimile of the present set is available from the publisher behind this CD, Cornetto-Verlag of Stuttgart. BC

Leo The 6 Cello Concertos Josephine Knight, English Chamber Orchestra 85' 35" (2 CDs) ASV CD DCA 1169 ££

When I received this disc for review, my instant reaction was 'Why?' I enjoy Leo's music, and there's no denying that he writes well for the cello, but is there any need for a recording on modern instruments of his concertos? The light textures don't really give the fine English Chamber Orchestra much to get their teeth into. Josephine Knight is without doubt an excellent soloist but there's something – especially in the slow movements – that bothers me about her compulsion to make something of the music that it just isn't. BC

Locatelli 10 Sonatas Op. 8 The Locatelli Trio (Elizabeth Wallfisch vln, Richard Tunnicliffe vlc, Paul Nicholson hpscd) + Rachel Isserlis vln in nos 7-10 115' 35" Hyperion CDD22057 (rec 1994) 2 CDs ££

A welcome reissue of a book of violin

sonatas that expands into trios for the final four. Libby Wallfisch has shown her sympathy with and insight into Locatelli over the years, and the eponymous ensemble provides an excellent introduction to his music. CB

A Basket of Wild Strawberries: A Selection of Keyboard Jewels by Jean-Philippe Rameau

Tzimon Barto piano 75' 57"

Ondine ODE 1967-2

Rameau Nouvelles Suites Calefax Reed Quintet 70' 21"

Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 619 1374-2

I'm not sure that either of these discs of Rameau arrangements quite belongs in these pages but I must say that one of them has given me much perhaps slightly illicit (in HIP terms) pleasure. However, almost everything about the first disc is rather bizarre, starting with the title and its contradictory subtitle *A Selection of Keyboard Jewels*. As CB's note to me put it, 'since when have strawberries been jewels?' Perhaps the basket should have been full of rubies or the keyboard works plums. But, less flippantly, much though I envy the player's control I cannot warm to the interpretations at all, even laying aside the fact that the music just sounds wrong on the piano. There are, to my ears, too many moments when the articulation, phrasing and dynamics feel wilfully imposed from the outside just for the sake of variety and I shall be staying with Pinnock, Rousset et al for my Rameau insights – except for those moments when I feel like a bit of pure escapist fun, when the formidable individual techniques, brilliant collective ensemble and witty arrangements of the Calefax Quintet will come to mind. The only thing that lets them down is the note, which does not need the attempts to justify their approach: a line such as 'wind players are simply better at touching the soul of their listener than a harpsichordist' does nothing to advance their cause. In any case, for me their playing is its own justification, unlike that of Tzimon Barto. DH

G. B. Sammartini Six Symphonies (1730-1750) Aradia Ensemble, Kevin Mallon Naxos 8.557298 £
A (J-C 62), c (J-C 9), D (J-C 16), F (J-C 36), d (J-C 23), C (J-C 4).

The period instrument Toronto-based Aradia Ensemble here gives a spirited performance of early symphonies by the Milanese Sammartini, recorded in a resonant acoustic. Sammartini, perhaps the true 'father of the symphony', having composed some 67 extant works in the genre, many dating from the time when Haydn was barely out his cradle, is a

composer who should not be neglected. While two of the symphonies on this disc, one (in C) with horns, the other (in A) unusually with just trumpets and strings, date from c. 1750, the remaining four, for strings only, were probably written in the very earliest period, from the later 1720s to 1738. The works presented here are mainly three-movement symphonies, concluding with the typical 3/8 finale, though one is in four movements, with a concluding minuet. Two minor works add variety to the selection, the C Minor symphony being of particular interest. There are some spirited and inventive movements in this collection, which should be of interest especially to those delving into the early history of the genre. The performances are stylistically excellent, though the keen listener may perhaps detect occasional slight blemishes of intonation in the violin section.

Ian Graham-Jones

Scarlatti Scarlattiana: 15 Sonatas for Harpsichord Elina Mustonen 78' 09"

Alba ABCD 216

K 30, 87, 115-6, 119, 175, 183-4, 380-1, 460-1, 513, 544-5

Mustonen is a formidable player who provides technically very assured and exciting performances. She was a pupil of Ton Koopman and brings much of his energy and impulsive playing which works very well in her choice of sonatas, including a fine performance of the 'Cat's' fugue. She uses a Couchet copy by Willem Kroesbergen – an instrument with a big sound recorded in a very resonant acoustic. Comparison can be made with the recent Scarlatti CD by Pierre Hantaï (reviewed in *EMR* III, p. 42). Both bring tremendous commitment and technical brilliance and a strong sense of style. For me Hantaï has a slight edge, with a bit more poise on an Italian instrument which is mellower and more intimate. But Mustonen's more public-oriented performances are also highly convincing and well worth having. Noel O'Regan

Telemann Stradivaria, Daniel Cuiller vln, dir 71' 01"

Mirare MIR 011

Suites Die Dirne in G {TWV?}, Tafel Musik 1 (TWV 55:et)

Concertos ob & vln in c TWV 52:cr; vln & tpt in D {TWV ??}

I enjoyed this disc a lot – the music is off the beaten Telemann track (some might think a little too much so!), and the performers clearly enjoy the task at hand. I'm not entirely up to date with developments in the re-discovery of Telemannia, but the notes say nothing of the sources for the oboe and violin concerto, or the trumpet and violin

concerto, other than to say that they were previously something else: not very helpful! But there is no doubting the charm of the music and the skill of the performers.

BC

Telemann Blockflöten-Suites & Concerto for recorder and orchestra Maurice Steger rec, Akademie für Alte Musik, Berlin 69' 46" Hamonia Mundi HMC 901917
Concerto TWV 51:Cr; Ouverture Hamburger Ebb und Flut TWV 55:C3; Suite TWV 55:a2

Another Telemann recorder disc? I wouldn't have so much of a problem with the idea if the pieces were newly re-discovered among the Berlin Sing-Akademie collection, or in a Hamburg attic, but instead we have two warhorses and a concerto that gets more than an occasional outing. Combine that with some mannered playing (from both the soloist and the accompanying group) and you'll expect me not to be recommending this one – and you'd be right. Of course, these things are absolutely personal taste and there are, no doubt, avid fans of Steger and of the Berlin ensemble who will wonder what on earth I'm on about, but I know what I like – and, more importantly, what I don't.

BC

Vivaldi Gloria; Bach Magnificat Boston Baroque Martin Pearlman dir 53' 19" Telarc CD-80651

As so often with these pieces, the choir and orchestra make extremely enjoyable contributions to a crisp and clear recording (very occasionally too clear for the 'unison' violins when one wears headphones – and the person who got to the second bar of Vivaldi's *Gratias agimus tibi* before everyone else should be shot!) But the soloists, whose job it is to have bigger and better voices, don't exactly spoil things, but (for me, at least) they certainly make concentrating a lot more difficult. I'm not as fussy as some critics about vibrato, but ensemble in duets is so difficult if the notes are not precisely focussed. With my hand on my heart, I cannot really recommend this one, I'm afraid.

BC

Vivaldi Motezuma Vito Priante Motezuma, Marijana Mijanovic Motrena, Roberta Invernizzi Teutile, Maite Beaumont Fernando, Romina Basso Ramiro, Inga Kalna Asprano, Il Complesso Barocco, Alan Curtis 194' 48" (3 CDs) Archiv 00289 477 5996

The recent series of 'The Vivaldi Edition' releases has drawn far wider attention to the composer's operatic output, and there have been many freshly discovered gems.

Although the libretto for this piece was known, the score spent some time 'in exile' as the booklet notes put it here as part of the Berlin Sing-Akademie library. The mention of Russian musicians having consulted it during its Ukrainian period and deciding that it was neither worth publishing or performing is (a) the first time I've ever heard that anyone knew about the music archive before Christoph Wolff and (b) ties in with what we've known from the ex-Communist states and their attitudes to aristocratic diversion. Apart from that, of course, the manuscript is hardly in any shape to be performed – not only recitatives but complete arias have been written for this 'world premiere' recording. I have no quibbles with either the idea of supplying pastiche (some of it based on genuine fragments, other passages more under the composer's influence, as it were) or doing what Vivaldi, among others, often did himself, i.e. re-worked earlier pieces (or, in this case, re-used some of the best bits for later operas). The whole enterprise also confirms how handy it is to have friends who are friends of the director of the Sing-Akademie. The singers are, of their kind, very good indeed. They capture the character of the many arias very well, and they are uniformly excellent in their ability to ornament lines. They are excellently supported by a group of first-rate players. There is a particularly striking aria with obbligato trumpet. When the curtain fell, though, I was left slightly uninspired – perhaps it's a colourful tableau that needs to be seen to be fully appreciated, but I wonder when the opportunity for that luxury will ever present itself. As for half-hearted attempts to convince us that Vivaldi does have a sense of dramatic pace, I think that's best left unspoken and the listeners be allowed to enjoy the music for what it is. In fact, I wonder if the entire project would have been better restricted to two discs of just Vivaldi's surviving music. BC

It strikes me as odd that, long before all the extant Vivaldi operas are recorded, an incomplete one appears on CD, perhaps just because it is easier to promote (there's a sort of Prodigal Son parallel) or because it is in Berlin rather than Turin.

CB

Zelenka Il serpente di bronzo Hana Blazikova, Alex Potter, Petra Noskaiova, Jaroslav Brezina, Peter Kooij SAATB, Ensemble Inégal, Adam Viktora 67' 20" Nibiru 0146-2211

This is a very fine recording of a wonderful piece. Zelenka, for all his quirkiness and slight limitedness (once one is immersed in his output there's a fairly

regular sensation of *déjà vu*), can still construct large structures in a most original way, using complex counterpoint and pushing baroque harmonic patterns to new extremes, always in the service of the words or sentiments he is intent on conveying. Here, the singing (both solo and choral) is excellent and the instrumental playing is first rate – I hope it will not be long until we hear more from Ensemble Inégal and Adam Viktora. BC

Bach, Handel, Scarlatti Jill Crossland (1824 Jirokiwsky fp) 57' 40" Divine Art DD 25036

Bach English Suite 3, Fantasia in C BWV 906, The 48 I in c, D, d; II d Handel Chaconne in G HWV 435 Scarlatti Sonata in E Kk 380

The obvious question 'why a fortepiano?' is answered at some length in the booklet – the unsigned note is not by the player but is credited to 'Ying Chang Design TopinoDesign'. The idea of presenting the music as it might have been heard around the time of Mendelssohn's revival of the St Matthew Passion is interesting. The sound and ethos of this 'missing link' seem much closer to that of the harpsichord and clavichord than to the fully-developed Steinway, but that may be because Jill Crossland seems to be naturally a neat rather than sprawling sort of player. The Handel Chaconne (also on Hogwood's clavichord disc) is played more freely than the Bach, but somehow the fact that the string is hit rather than plucked makes less difference than the ability to quieten the accompaniment, which isn't entirely desirable in a ground: this particular piece does need the rich chords of a harpsichord. The performance is less 'respectful' than the Bach and in its own terms it works. I'm all in favour of discs like this that set the listener thinking.

CB

Don Quichotte in Hamburg Elbipolis Barockorchester Hamburg 63' 55" Raum Klang RK 2502

Conti Ouverture in C Don Chisciotte in Sierra Morena Mattheson Ouverture in F Die geheimen Beggebenheit Henrico IV König van Castilién und Leon Telemann Ouverture in G Burlesque de Quixotte

This is the latest disc to explore the repertoire of the Hamburg theatres and attempts a double tie-in but narrowly misses, in the UK at least, the Cervantes anniversary. Be that as it may, this is a recording that demands notice – the Elbipolis Barockorchester Hamburg is, in fact, a one-to-a-part ensemble (if you count cello and bass as separate, and allow for two continuo players), but they manage to convey the sound of a much larger group. The recital consists of two

Telemann suites (no further comment required!), one by Mattheson (pleasant, if slightly uninspired at the end of the day) and something much more lively and interesting, *Don Chisciotte in Sierra Morena* by Francesco Conti. This is full of colourful, entertaining music, including a Follia and, of course, a Chaconne. This is both an interesting and a very well performed CD. Let's hope for more from Elbipolis! BC

CLASSICAL

Arnold Overtures, Op. 8; Incidental Music to Macbeth Toronto Chamber Orchestra, Kevin Mallon 76' 27" Naxos 8.557484 £

This recording contains all the surviving orchestral music of this London operatic composer [and publisher of Handel's Collected Works]. The six three-movement overtures (or symphonies) are undeniably English in style, though the influence of J. C. Bach and Abel is undeniable. Arnold jointly owned the Marylebone Gardens in the 1770s and the music therefore reflects the tastes of the time. The symphonies are attractive melodically, all giving considerable prominence to the wind (usually the standard oboes and horns) in the outer movements, though often having the trademark repeated bass notes in many passages. The incidental music to *Macbeth* is typically Scottish in flavour, with attractive marches, airs and dances, some with added trumpets and timpani, none of which touch on the tragic element of Shakespeare. The overture *Polly* is essentially a pot-pourri of tunes from *The Beggar's Opera* cleverly woven into a loose sonata-form structure. Although the ensemble uses modern instruments, they perform this attractive music with style and verve. A useful addition to our expanding knowledge of 18th-century English music.

Ian Graham-Jones

Clementi on Clementi Peter Katin (1832 Clementi square piano) 74' 35" (rec 1993) Athene 24113 ££ op. 7/3, 13/6, 24/2, 25.5 & 6

A welcome reissue of Clementi sonatas played on a Clementi square of 1832, the year of the composer's death. One might quibble that the pianos for which he wrote these sonatas many years earlier would have been rather different, but this square is a very nice instrument and Katin plays it with great sensitivity.

Richard Maunder

Mozart La clemenza di Tito Rainer Trost Tito Vespasiano, Magdalena Kozena Sesto, Hillevi Martinpelto Vitellia, Lisa Milne Servilia, Christine Rice Annio, John Relyea

Publio, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Charles Mackerras 127' 31" (2 CDs) DG 00289 477 5792

This set completes Mackerras' cycle of recordings of the seven major Mozart operas with the SCO, several of them deriving from concert performances at the Edinburgh Festival. From being the ugly duckling of the seven, *La clemenza* has become quite a favourite, with at least seven versions currently available. Sir Charles has assembled a uniformly excellent cast, with the leading roles finely taken by Rainer Trost as a gravely imposing, eloquent emperor (though taxed by the runs), Magdalena Kozena touching and passionate in Sesto's temptation and subsequent anguish, and Hillevi Martinpelto fiery and even-voiced throughout Vitellia's exacting vocal and expressive range. The orchestra is in top form, with exquisite obbligati, and the chorus is sonorous in its few appearances. As always, Mackerras gives an inspiring account of the opera, sure-paced, revelatory, vocal lines often lightly decorated, with finely controlled tension that is maintained through what can often seem acres of dry recitative (here judiciously, in places even cavalierly, pruned). The booklet contains all one could ask for, and the recording is immediate in impact. Peter Branscombe

Mozart Exsultate Jubilate Carolyn Sampson S, Choir of... and The King's Consort, Robert King cond 65' 39" Hyperion CDA67560

+ *Agnus Dei* K317, *Laudate Dominum* K321 & K339, *Regina coeli* K109 & 127, *Sancta Maria mater Dei* K273, *Sub tuum praesidium* K198,

There's real enchantment here, both in the music chosen and the performances. Carolyn Sampson goes from strength to strength, with beautifully controlled and expressive singing, and thanks to the wonders of modern technology she even duets with herself in the Offertory motet *Sub tuum praesidium*. The title work is, of course, very well known, though the revised score (publ. by Carus) preferred here has strikingly different sonorities, with flutes replacing oboes. Five of the eight works included are independent compositions; the *Laudate Dominum* settings come from the two Vespers sequences, and the 'Agnus Dei' is the one from the 'Coronation' Mass. The booklet contains full details of each piece, sung texts, and an introductory essay, all in four languages. The choral singing, like the orchestral playing, is alert, clearcut and expressive, nowhere more so than in the *Sancta Maria*, the choir's only solo contribution (as it were). Delights galore, and many of them. Peter Branscombe

Mozart Church Sonatas Martin Haselböck org/dir Wiener Akademie 61' 37" Capriccio SACD 71 064

Here are all 17 of Mozart's church sonatas, performed on the bright-toned organ of the Hofmusikkapelle in Vienna in June 2005. The Wiener Akademie is a vigorous and perceptive period-instrument ensemble (here numbering 16 players) founded by Martin Haselböck over twenty years ago. They impress in this little-known repertoire, though only a fanatic (or reviewer, which may not be quite the same thing) would play the disc straight through; they are set out so that the three richly-scored pieces are separated from the ones that are accompanied only by strings, with or without the (here very well played) two solo violins. There is an informative booklet essay, but it would have been useful to have a note about the organ. Also, it may easily slip the reader's attention that the soloist in the three orchestrally accompanied Sonatas is István Mátyás, leaving Haselböck to direct proceedings.

Peter Branscombe

Mozart Requiem Hjordis Thébault, Gemma Coma-Alabert, Simon Edwards, Alain Buet SmSTB, Kantorei Saarlouis, La Grand Écurie et la Chambre du Roy, Jean-Claude Malgoire 52' 04" K617 K617180" + Neukomm *Libera me*

The main item of note on this CD is a setting of 'Libera me' composed by the Haydn brothers' pupil Sigismund von Neukomm (1778-1858) for a performance of the Requiem in Rio de Janeiro in about 1820. Perhaps 'compiled' would be a better word than 'composed', since the piece is assembled from parts of Mozart's Dies irae and Introit, with an introduction and coda based loosely on the Agnus Dei. It's an interesting curiosity, but the new bits are rather turgid, and it doesn't seem very appropriate to end the work with Neukomm instead of Mozart (or at least Süssmayr's repeat of Mozart's Kyrie). Otherwise, despite the use of period instruments this is a pretty run-of-the-mill performance of the Süssmayr version, by a large choir of 34 and an orchestra to match. The soloists, especially the women, use too much vibrato for my taste, the Latin is of the standard modern 'Italian' variety, and I didn't much care for the sound of the solo trombone in the 'Tuba mirum'. The recording was made at a public performance, and there are times when the ensemble isn't quite as good as one would expect from a cleaned-up studio recording. This can be forgiven, but why are we subjected to over a minute's worth of applause at the end?

Richard Maunder

Mozart *The six Piano Trios* Haydn Trio Eisenstadt 125' 18"
Capriccio 71 065 (2 CDs)

Capriccio is producing a mixed bag of reissues for the Mozart Year, some of them interesting if very old performances, other offerings are, like this volume, quite new – these trios were recorded at Eisenstadt (Haydnseal) in August 2005, and very impressive they are, in performances that are both lively and spacious, and also clearly recorded and nicely presented. Readers may need reminding that the Haydn Trio Eisenstadt are the players involved in the promising new series of Haydn's Scottish song settings. There are not so many CD versions of the six trios as to flood the market; even if there were, this issue would demand serious consideration.

Peter Branscombe

Mozart *Gran Partita* K 361 The Sixth Floor Orchestra, Jukka Rautasalo cond 48' 37"
Alba ABCD 219

The name comes from the floor in the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki where the ensemble first rehearsed back in 1989; it has now become a successful period band. I don't think I've heard a performance of this marvellous piece that hasn't been successful, and this is no exception. There's a lot to be said for music that appears to be unpretentious but is nevertheless far deeper. As in *Cosi fan tutte*, the serenade style can be deceptive, and the players here capture both its entertaining and its moving aspects. CB

Mozart *Complete Clavier Works* vol. 3
Siegbert Rampe fp 76' 35"
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 341 1303-2
Adagio in C K 356; *Sonatas* in C K 309, in D 311, *Variations* K 139 & 354

Rampe plays the two sonatas Mozart wrote in Mannheim in 1777, and the late *Adagio* for glass armonica, on a copy of a Stein fortepiano of 1788. I have to say that the performances seem a bit tame after the excitement of Beghin's recording on an instrument set up as Mozart may have had it. Rampe is a first-rate player and, like Beghin, adds some nice ornamentation on the repeats, but the instrument itself sounds rather bland. *Pace* Rampe's programme note, it is unlikely that Stein had developed his distinctive *Prellmechanik* action by the time Mozart visited his workshop in 1777, and in any case the fortepianos he made before the mid-1780s have a different design of hammer-head, and a brighter though less powerful sound.

Despite my reservations about the Stein copy, however, I greatly enjoyed the two

variation sets, and it's always good to be reminded that Mozart played (and composed for) other keyboard instruments than the fortepiano. The 'Fischer' variations, K. 179, are brilliantly and convincingly played on a clavichord, as Mozart himself did on one occasion during his visit to Augsburg in 1777. And K. 354, the set that Mozart wrote in Paris in 1778, sounds very impressive on a big French-style two-manual harpsichord. Richard Maunder

Mozart *Sonatas...* Tom Beghin fp 73' 00"
Klara Et cetera KTC 4015
Adagio in b K 540, *Fantasia* in d K 397, *Sonata* in a *Alla Turca* K 331, in B flat K 570

Thanks to the work of Michael Latcham and Alfons Huber, it's now known that the action of Mozart's Walter fortepiano was completely rebuilt in Walter's workshop, after the composer's death. So we don't know what sort of action it had when it was first made in about 1780, or (perhaps a different question) what it was like when Mozart acquired it a few years later and used it as his concert instrument. It almost certainly started life with some form of *Stoßmechanik* action (where the hammers are mounted on fixed pivots), but it is hard to tell whether the present *Prellmechanik* action (with the hammers pivoted in brass *Kapsels* mounted on the key-levers) represents the first major conversion, or whether there might have been an intermediate stage, perhaps requested by Mozart himself, when Walter installed an earlier version of *Prellmechanik* with wooden *Kapsels*, as made from about 1780 by Stein of Augsburg and by Gottfried Mallek (a close neighbour of Walter's in the Laimgrube district of Vienna) on a surviving fortepiano dated 1787. Another complication is that the dampers were originally raised only by hand-levers, and someone later added knee-levers for this purpose. Since the workmanship doesn't appear to be up to Walter's usual standard, this may have happened at a different time from the alteration(s) to the main action. But when? There has been much debate in *Early Music* and elsewhere about whether Mozart himself had the knee-levers fitted, some maintaining that it is inconceivable that he could have done without them, but others pointing out that there isn't enough evidence to give a definite answer and that, when the instrument was combined with a pedal-piano (as Mozart did on many occasions), hand-levers would actually have been *more* convenient than knee-levers.

For this recording the enterprising Tom Beghin uses a copy by Chris Maene of Mozart's Walter, with two interchangeable actions: the *Prellmechanik* as installed after Mozart's death, and the type of

Stoßmechanik it may have had when Walter first built it. It is particularly interesting to hear the D minor Fantasia played on both versions. The earlier action clearly feels different to the player and affects his approach to the music, but to the listener the most obvious differences are the brighter sound with only one layer of leather on the hammer-heads, and the use only of hand-levers to raise the dampers – so the opening paragraph, for example, is very convincingly played on what C. P. E. Bach called 'the undamped register', with the dampers lifted throughout. Beghin uses the same set-up for the A major Sonata, K. 331, making imaginative use of the hand-levers and 'moderator' stop, and adding some very convincing ornamentation on the repeats. By contrast (strictly speaking, anachronistically) he plays the B-flat sonata, K. 570, on the later action, with its softer hammers. The result is more like what we are accustomed to from other fortepianists – though it's not often we hear such tastefully added ornamentation in all three movements, or such restrained use of the knee-levers, so as never to blur Mozart's precisely notated articulation. For the B minor Adagio, K. 540, Beghin returns to the earlier action and the hand-levers, to superb dramatic effect.

This is an absolutely fascinating recording: congratulations to both maker and player on a fine achievement.

Richard Maunder

Richter *Quatuors opus 5* Rincontro 71' 29"
Alpha 089

This was the most unexpected jewel. Richter is a name that has always attracted – for heaven only knows what reason – and I've enjoyed previous discs which CB has sent for my delectation, but none as much as this set of string quartets, which is interspersed with movements from Bach's *Art of Fugue*. From the very opening, I was enthralled. There's something about Richter's melodic writing, and (most interestingly of all) the fact that he shares out the interest much more than perhaps any other composer of the period – early viola players will just love these pieces! The quartet of performers are every bit as impressive as the music. I very much hope that there will be more Franz Xavier Richter on the menu at harmonia mundi soon! BC

Soler *Sonatas for Harpsichord* Vol. 11
Gilbert Rowland 78' 14"
Naxos 8.557640 £
Nos 22-3, 45, 51, 62 65, 127-8 & in C (not in Rubio catalogue)

The opening C major sonata immediately grabs the listener with its virtuosity and

panache, as well as some stomach-churning syncopation. The rest of this latest CD in Rowland's complete Soler project shows the performer completely at home in the variety of styles and technical demands required. His Flemish harpsichord from the Paris Workshop provides excellent clarity and is very well recorded here. Use of a second contrasting instrument might have helped relieve a certain sameness of much of the writing. That said there is fine contrapuntal ingenuity in the finale of the three-movement Sonata 65 and some very spirited dances in the four-movement Sonata 62. Scarlatti's influence is never far away and is well brought out in Rowland's committed performances.

Noel O'Regan

VARIOUS

Instruments from the Raymond Russell Collection Vol. 2 John Kitchen 77' 22"
Delphian DCD34039
Music by J.C.F. Bach, A-L Couperin, C. Graupner, Handel, F.X. Mozart, Purcell, M-A Rossi, Tomkins

I seem to have written about rather more keyboard discs than usual this month: this is the outstanding one, with a varied selection of music stylishly played on a selection of appropriate instruments. The two (adjacent) tracks which I enjoyed most were the notorious Rossi chromatic Toccata 7 played quite sedately, and all the better for it – I've often heard the final chromatic section treated as a race to the final chord – on a split-key Italian virginal and Tomkins's *Sad pavan for these distracted times* on a c.1620 English chamber organ. Nine instruments are featured, the most recent being an 1815 Scottish square piano, matched with a pair of Melancholy Polonaises by F. X. Mozart. All have pictures and brief descriptions.

CB

CENTURY

This is a 20-set history of music in sound compiled from the rich catalogue of Harmonia Mundi, with support from radioclassique. I mentioned one disc in the last issue. I'm still puzzled about the series title, and have used a different one this time. The 20 discs are available separately or in two 10-disc boxes. I've used them chiefly as background music, though their prime function is more ambitious: 'to tell the thrilling story' (or grande aventure) of Western music. Box I goes up to about 1600, which gives much greater weight to the earlier history than most anthologies. The discs are satisfying, mostly with good music and performances; the only serious weakness is the absence of texts and translations.

I'll use disc 12 as an example: Baroque England. It starts firmly in the Collegiate tradition (Magdalen) with Gibbons' 'Almighty and everlasting God', and later has Humfrey's 'Hear, O Heav'ns' from that fine Nic McGegan/Clare College disc (sadly it didn't sell well enough to justify a vol. 2). I'm put off by the detached bass of Herreweghe's *Bell Anthem*. Purcell's *Evening Hymn* is a characteristic performance by Deller, with an overstated gamba from Wieland Kuijken and distant harpsichord from William Christie, who directs a bustling Hallelujah Chorus to end the disc. There is excellent instrumental music from London Baroque: a Lawes Fantasia, Purcell's *Chacony* and a movement of Handel op. 2/3, which starts a sequence of excerpts – *Venus*, *Dido*, *Fairy Queen*, *Acis* (hardly 'Italian Opera in London'), *Giulio Cesare* and *Serse*. The booklet is organised as answers to a series of questions, which works well in conveying some relevant information in a series of discrete chunks – better than a more general essay. I can't think of another anthology that covers this ground so well and with performances of such quality. Coincidentally, music for 21 of the 23 tracks is available from King's Music!

CB

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5 – 8 September 2007

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Proposals should be addressed to the ICCS Committee no later than 15 January 2007.

Proposals for performances should include a programme of twenty minutes of music.

Proposals for exhibition of instruments should include all pertinent information about the original or copy to be displayed.

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BIBER IN BELFAST

Richard Carter

Amongst my late father's effects was found a newspaper cutting from his student days at Queen's Belfast, which has some bearing on comments in your review of the Biber *Mystery Sonatas* (*EMR* 109, p. 4) as well as being of interest in its own right. My father sang bass with the Aeolian Singers, a student chamber choir specialising in early music, and made some lifelong friends amongst the members. Fellow student Rhona Shaw went on to become a producer for BBC Radio 3. She had preserved another review of the concert and its typescript programme.

After sending this to *EMR*, I have had a response from Rhona Shaw about the Belfast concert. Neither she nor the two other choir members with whom she is still in contact remembered the concert at all, but delving into a scrap book produced the programme and another review.

She wrote of the performers:

'Dr. Stoneley was a violin teacher & leader of the Belfast Philharmonic Orchestra. Frederick Haughton was probably a piano teacher, Evan John was lecturer in Music at Queens University (he also played the French Horn) & Harford Robb was an Economics student who was a good cellist but went on to become an accountant.'

Our Music Professor at the time, Ivor Keys, had been to Christ Church Oxford and was immersed in early choral music & he would probably have arranged the concert.' [He made quite an impression on me in a TV series on Bach in the early 1960s. CB]

Most of us think of Eduard Melkus as the first player to record the Rosary Sonatas, but there is an earlier version by Suzanne Lautenbacher (VoxBox CDX 5171) from 1962. Melkus followed in 1968. [He gave a Queen Elizabeth Hall concert around the time: I went with Peter Holman, who introduced me to Biber's music, and we were surprised that he played the whole set on one fiddle, retuning for each piece, rather than having several instruments at hand. CB]

Maybe this information will provoke others to reminisce about the history of the revival of early music.

PS. One thing I know about the old DTÖ edition of the Rosary Sonatas is that they did not twig the crossed string scordatura for no. XI, and after recomposing it (with endless parallel 6ths) and devoting a page in the introduction to speculating on whether Biber had forgotten what tuning he was writing for, subsequently issued a rather red-faced supplement when the gaffe was revealed. I take great heart from that cautionary tale, when I consider what minor gaffes I may be committing!

Richard Carter

A CONCERT OF PRE-BACH MUSIC

Concert at Queen's University

(By our Music Critic)

The Queen's University Music Society met last night in the Sir William Whitla Hall, and the artists who contributed to an unusual programme were: Evan John (organ), Ernest Stoneley (violin) with Harvard Robb ('cello), Frederick Haughton (organ and piano), and the Aeolian Singers (conductor Rhona Shaw).

The Aeolian Singers sang Palestrina's *Missa Brevis* with a style appropriate to the music and with clear tone and part-singing, and, as usual, unaccompanied. The two blots in the performance were very slight, in comparison with the intelligent and delightful singing throughout. The two sonatas for violin and organ by Biber were played by Dr. Stoneley and Mr. Haughton, and were in short movements which we associate with the suites of his successors. Their interest today is probably more academic than musical.

Buxtehude is one of my great favourites, and if the *Trio Sonata* for violin, 'cello and piano did not come up to expectations, the *Organ Fugue* in Mr. Evan John's second group of organ solos did. There were other very attractive organ items – the Weelkes Voluntarie, Purcell's *Preludium*, Pachelbel's *Choral Prelude*, and some Couperin. There was rather a small audience. The many other musical events going on at present must be the reason for this.

From an unknown Belfast newspaper, March 1953

Another Belfast paper commented on the Biber:

Considerable interest was attached to the first Irish performance of two sonatas by Biber, arranged by Frederick Haughton, who also played the organ part discreetly, while Dr E. S. Stoneley handled the violin part with authority.

Perhaps surprisingly, the cellist who played in the Buxtehude was not enlisted for the Biber cello with everything may be a slightly later fad. Younger readers may not have realised how early Buxtehude's music was established. The programme states that the Biber and other chamber works were from 'manuscripts transcribed from the original edition by Frederick Haughton'. The Buxtehude could have come from the 17th-century edition, but it seems more likely that the source for that was the DDT edition and that the Biber came from DTÖ. There is no mention of scordatura: we wonder if what Frederick Haughton did was to transcribe the Biber for normal tuning? No. 9, The Carrying of the Cross, is one of the fairly extreme re-tunings (ceae), though no 4, The Presentation in the Temple (adad) is simpler.

RC & CB

LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

In your review on pp 4-5 of *EMR* III you raise the subject of Charpentier's flutes. This is a topic I raised in *EMR* 99 p 15. My views and the general situation have not changed. My personal practical solution is to use *traversières* as I can never find two available voice flutes on the day and at the pitch I want them and I prefer a pair of identical instruments playing in what is for them an effective tessitura.

David Hansell

*In his previous letter, David hoped there might be someone in *EMR*-Land who might really know: no-one came forward. This letter was intended for our last issue, but we didn't have space for a letters page. CB*

Dear Clifford,

As everyone reaches for their copy of Geminiani's violin treatise to check whether the thumb moves first or second, I thought it important for readers to understand the nature of the 'posture master' mentioned in 'sudden Shifts of the Hand from one Extremity of the Finger-board to the other, accompanied with Contortions of the Head and Body, and all other such Trick', which 'rather belong to the Professors of Legerdemain and Posture-masters than to the Art of Musick' (Preface).



Having attempted a brief historical survey of various ways of holding the violin myself (*Baroque String Playing* pp. 64-67) Dr. Nobes would do us all a valuable service by taking up her own gauntlet and compiling something more comprehensive.

I read Libby's treatise before publication and immediately appreciated that such a personal document wouldn't lend itself to the customary critical peer review. However, I recommend it to pupils because I learned some valuable new technical tricks, laughed a lot and have been practising Sevcik ever since.

Judy Tarling

An article by Judy is forthcoming from the Violin Society of America.

Dear Clifford,

Please thank Polly for her thoughts and dedication to the cause, whatever that may be. Any dialogue is good, for the furtherance of our learning, and the opening of our minds in this imperfect world of 'early' music. However, she totally has missed the point, and the humour, and the personal aspects of my funny little book. There is much to be learned from it, as those who have opened it and worked with it will testify. Many of those fiddlers who do have dreadful physical problems have gained some measure of help from it. And even more importantly, a method of some kind has been laid out that is accessible to the students of today, who are truly floundering in the quagmire of confusion about 'chin-off' playing. Many teachers insist their students play 'chin-off' but do not teach any sort of 'how', and thus those benighted young people never get to feeling any sort of confidence, never find the freedom in the right hand that mastery of playing without the grip can bring- live in terror of dropping the violin. And their playing shrinks onto a shadow of fear, timidity and tiny tone.

So with tongue in cheek, violin on collar bone, I put my neck on the line. I am a teacher of the violin. Never an academic. I make a statement to that end. I practise what I preach and took the dangerous step of writing down what helped others. Of course my offering does slip into the crevasse as Polly rightly pointed out of being neither one thing-purely promoting the good practices of Baroque performance practice-or a violin technical manual.

But then so do we all, in our 'profession'. Every single one of us has learned much of our 'performance practices' by rumour... admit it. The more curious, and brave amongst us dive deeper. However can it ever be deep enough. I am glad to say the sea of knowledge and discovery has no bottom, and I live in the most delightful state of curiosity on a daily basis.

Thank you Polly.

Elizabeth Wallfisch

Dear Clifford,

Thanks for your kind (and speedy!) reviews of my first batch of publications. It's possibly too late now as the review has already appeared — I'm not used to such efficiency! Anyway retail price for the Morley in the UK is dependent on individual sellers, but is likely to be about £24.00. It can also be ordered direct via my Ebay store for US\$30 plus postage, which will likely also work out about £24 in total. I am able to supply unbound and unperforated sheets for the same price if anyone wants the book in this format. The CD-ROM is still in the works, but is not likely to appear for a while. I haven't made much headway on transcribing the book into modern type or typesetting the music examples and unfortunately can't give up my day job!

Vince Kelly

A moan about the way emails seem to disappear in transit and a conjecture that there might be some indecent object called a Clifford that was censored produced the following response:

Advances in Applied Clifford Algebras (AACA) publishes high-quality peer-reviewed research papers as well as expository and survey articles in the area of Clifford algebras and their applications to other branches of mathematics, physics, engineering, and related fields. The journal ensures rapid publication 'Online First' and is organized in six sections: Analysis, Differential Geometry and Dirac Operators, Mathematical Structures, Theoretical and Mathematical Physics, Applications, and Book Reviews.

BACH LOCATIONS

I've just made a webpage with photos of Bach sites which I thought might be of interest:

http://keithbriggs.info/bach_photos.html

Sometimes new ones are not taken quite from the same angle, as the old so you have to use your imagination to line them up.

Keith Briggs

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITY BANS ORGAN PIPES

It seems that an European Community regulation will ban the use of lead in the manufacture of organ pipes from 2008. This seems to be the result of lack of awareness rather than a deliberate attack on the historical traditions of organ-building, an example of the dangers of passing laws and regulations without the widest publicity before promulgation in case they have unintended consequences. It seems to be very difficult to persuade legislators to change their minds to correct such errors once the decrees are 'set in stone' (though the difficulty in correcting an inscription no longer applies, so they should be able to correct their mistakes easily and quickly). Musicians are asked to send their objections in any way they can to the legislators and raise the issue in the media (perhaps especially on occasions when politicians attend state weddings, funerals and memorial services which feature pipe organs). For further information, see <http://www.pipes4organs.org/> Perhaps the petition could be treated as a memorial to the late Edward Heath, former Prime Minister, organist and enthusiast for the European Community.

We didn't, as threatened in the last issue, celebrate EB's 80th birthday in any way that would have delayed this one: if it is late, it is because she caught one of the current long-running 'colds' and has been coughing, wheezing and speaking with difficulty since we came back from Venice on 8 February: her GP said it was the worst case of its type he had seen this winter. CB got it less badly a couple of weeks ago. We found it very difficult to get through all the King's Music orders, and CB started writing his reviews far too late. So a few are delayed till the next issue, as are a couple by our most speedy reviewer, who also was ill.

Meanwhile, we are still hoping to plan some sort of long-haul trip this year: no distant subscriber or customer is safe from a surprise visit. CB/EB

RETHINKING GUT STRINGS

Oliver Webber

THE CLAVICHORD

Neil Coleman

We were hoping that both of these publications, announced by articles in our last issue, would now be available. Alas, they were hit by the problems mentioned in the box above. We hope they will be ready in the next few weeks.

Also, apologies to Neil, whose name was mis-spelt in the article, though not in the contents list.