

# Early Music

## REVIEW

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Andrew Parrott recently phoned to talk about the 60th birthday symposium he is organising in April and I wondered whether my role should be to make us uneasy about the fairly loose group of orthodoxies that underlie *EMR* and the type of performances that our customers and friends believe in by looking back to see how HIP ideas have worn over the past half-century. Thurston Dart was the leading UK scholar/performer then, and author of the brilliant *The Interpretation of Music* (1954); I devoured it eagerly a few years later, after my enthusiasm had already been inspired by his continuo playing and direction of the Philomusica of London. My admiration is not diminished by the fact that, in retrospect, his ideas have not worn well.

The reduction in note values of his anthology of English viol music (*Musica Britannica*, 9; 1955) was rejected by players, probably immediately, certainly by the time I encountered the viol world a decade later. Dart's conviction that notation had to be modernised extended even to proposing doubling note values in some Beethoven. Would he have conceived that players now wanted note-lengths preserved – that, in this respect, the original notation was of the essence of the music and that something was lost by changing it? We are, however, still happy to have music transcribed into 'modern' (treble and bass) clefs, reserving C clefs only for a few instruments. Some singers can cope with facsimiles of renaissance sources, which requires the ability to read a variety of clefs in a melodic line; but few are happy with the need to read old-clef scores vertically. Will that change over the next half-century?

The idea that facsimiles would be used by performers, not just scholars, would have surprised Dart in the 1950s. Lutenists started the change, but in the 1980s it became normal for baroque orchestras to play from 18th-century parts – though I gather that there is a bit of a backslide. In the 1950s, harpsichord continuo parts were written out; even if a few players could manage without, they expected to use a score, not just a bass part. But if 18th-century players could manage from a part, we can as well. Fifty years hence, will we have moved on to accept that, for most music before about 1820, scores were not available for conductors who, in the modern sense, didn't exist?    CB

## REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## AMHERST EARLY MUSIC

*Harmonice Musices Odhecaton... A Quincentenary Performing Edition* General Editor David Fallows. Second Edition. Amherst Early Music, 2005. xiv + 190pp, \$45.00

*Music for the Duke of Lerma: Canciones and Motets of Four, Five and Six Voices. The Music of Archivo de San Pedro de Lerma ms. Mus. 1* Transcribed and edited by Douglas Kirk. Revised edition. Amherst Early Music, 2006. xxx + 231pp, £49.00

Two marvellous and highly-welcome editions. I'm sure I'm not the only person who has photocopied Helen Hewitt's 1942 edition of Petrucci's *Odhecaton* and will be relieved to find the music now available in such a convenient transcription. A feature is the large format (a bit narrower than the European B4 size), which enables even the longest piece to fit onto an opening, so the score can be used for performance, and it's much easier to grasp a piece as a whole if all of it is visible at once. It was produced, for a five-hundredth anniversary *Odhecaton* at the 2001 Amherst Festival, in a remarkably quick time by a team of scholars scattered round America with a General Editor in Manchester and Ross Duffin (who also features on p. xx of this issue) co-ordinating the Finale files. David supplies a succinct introduction. There is no critical commentary, but information on ascriptions is appended to each score. Transcriptions are in original note values but modern clefs. Don't throw Hewitt away – there is a vast amount of information in her edition, and if you want texts underlaid, you will need to use her it. But it is now assumed that Italians would not have been interested in the words, so they appear just as incipits, as in the original. The modern equivalent of a flowery renaissance dedication in honour of the patron is a nice touch.

The Lerma MS of music for the church band reached the awareness of non-specialists with the two recordings by Paul McCreesh (Archiv 449 143 & 471 694). It contains 90 pieces, mostly of vocal origin but without texts, that a wind player brought to Lerma around 1608 and is still there. (Other MSS were stolen a century ago, but Kirk has located some of them.) Lerma is well worth a visit; the church was inaccessible when we were there, though we did stay in the Ducal Palace (now a Parador). With a doctoral thesis to fall back on, the editor has a vast amount to distil into his introduction, which is full of information as to how the music was used. He suggests, for instance, that having wind instruments doubling the singers might be a Southern Spanish practice not adopted in the north. I haven't met the idea before that the odd

verses of psalms were performed polyphonically at First, the even ones at Second Vespers. Was that a local or a universal practice? The suggestion that players would have specialised by clef rather than instrument is plausible – not that they only read one clef, since they would have been able to deal with *chiavette*, but that each person played either treble, alto, tenor or bass. The concordance list and notes are just a bit too skimpy on information: I was, for instance, intrigued by the title *Justempus* and wondered if the punning literal translation 'right time' was plausible: apart from flippancy, it would be useful to have the standardised titles to interpret some of the weirder spellings.

I'd seen mention of these editions and was delighted to see them at the London Early Music Exhibition last November. Anyone who plays renaissance instrumental music should buy them both: at around £25, they are excellent value.

## TALLIS'S HYMNS

*The whole Psalter translated into English Metre... 8 psalms set by Thos. Tallis.* Park Lane Publications [2006]. 20pp, £2.00 (from +44 (0)1522 527 530 or peter@aldhund.demon.co.uk)

There is no problem in finding the music Tallis supplied to Archbishop Parker's 1567 *Psalter*, with versions on the www as well as a variety of scholarly and practical editions. But the essence of a metrical psalm or hymn is a multiplicity of verses, and normally only one is printed. So this little publication is useful for the inclusion of all verses of the psalms underlaid in the original edition. They can, of course, be set to other verses in the same meter – but try the Third Tune (of *Fantasia* fame) to 'O little town of Bethlehem' and it will show that as well as meter, some consideration needs to be given to the list of 'The nature of the eyght tunes': 'The third doth rage: and roughly brayth'. The edition here sets the parts out in modern clefs for SATB, though they seem to have been intended for male voices in mS A T B clefs: only nos. 5 & 8 have a C1 clef on top and rise to the D a ninth above middle C. The editors (the preface is signed by Kathleen Berg, but I expect it is a family product) argue that the music works with instruments as well. The barring is irregular to show the rhythm. My own preference would be for that of the original, which is by line or half-line: when reading un-underlaid verses, the most important visual signal is when each line begins – stress comes from the words irrespective of the placing of the bar line. But a useful edition, and far more convenient than downloading the free versions on the net.

*We print a facsimile of the Third Tune on p. 15*

## VOICES &amp; VIOLS

Although this section is devoted to four publications of the Viola da Gamba Society, I've put voices first in the heading because of an extremely useful anthology of Six Motets a5 by Tallis (ME 205; £8.50), edited by Peter Syrus. It may not seem much of a bargain, until you realise that it is self-sufficient for performance, since the score is accompanied by five underlaid parts. Admittedly, the three middle parts are in alto clef (though in treble or octave-treble in the score), but this is an excellent way for singers to take the first step towards singing from facsimile by negotiating parts and clefs but with bar lines and modern typesetting. The next stage is to move onto the source of the motets here, the facsimile of the Tallis-Byrd *Cantiones Sacrae*, whose accessibility compensates for the absence of any editorial commentary – the 1575 edition is very accurate, anyway. The original clef-combinations vary slightly, so although the set can be performed by the same selection of viols, a group of five voices will need some adaptability. I welcome this user-friendly edition and commend it to singers and players, separately or mixed. I list the six motets below with their original clefs (to indicate compass).

*Absterge Domine* (C2C3C3C4F4)

*In manus tuas* (G2C2C3C4F4)

*O sacrum convivium* (C1C3C3C4F4) transposed up a tone

*Salvator mundi I* (G2C3C3C4F4)

*Salvator mundi II* (C2C3C4F5F4)

*O nata lux* (G2C2C3C4F4)

Turning back to the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Philip Thorby has edited *Plusieurs regretz & Apres regretz*, two pieces a4 from 'Album of Margaret of Austria' (ME 213; £4.20). The two anonymous chansons have in common a low pitch (C2 F4 F4 lowG2 & C1 C3 F4 F5). In the case of *Plusieurs regretz*, this might be symbolic, but transposing *Apres regretz* up a fourth gives an implausible top part with many top Gs and As. (But perhaps that is not implausible on the early-style viols Philip's group now plays.) The edition gives original notation and up a fourth, both in score and parts. All parts are underlaid, though that shouldn't inhibit viol-only performance: in Italy at least, this repertoire was closely linked with the cultivation of the viol and would have been played rather than sung. I like the editor's comment on an inflationary spiral of regret chansons, through *Plusieurs* to *Mille*, *Cent mille* and *Regretz sans fin*. I hope the VdG Society will continue to exploit music of c.1500 – and viol players who don't know it should read the *Odhecaton* review as well.

The other two 'recent' issues (in fact, they were sent out to subscribers of the series in October) are more central to the expectations of the consort player: *In Nomines* a5 by Simon Ives and Edward Gibbons (ME 211; £4.30) and a *Fantasia* a4 and *In Nomine* a5 by John Withy (ME 212; £3.70). Both Ives and E. Gibbons place the cantus firmus in G rather than D, which pushes Simon Ives's first treble part to the top of its range (but with only one high B flat). Gibbons's treble I crosses the cantus firmus (in both cases

in the traditional treble II) rather more and the music depends less on frenetic activity than Ives's. The Withy pieces are from Christ Church 473-8. Both have wide ranges (bass bottom D to treble above the frets), the *Fantasia* having two treble and two bass parts, the *In nomine* two trebles, tenor and two basses. The latter has the cantus firmus even higher than the Ives and Gibbons in A, and the usual breves stand out against a consistent pattern of quaver and semiquaver figuration. It should work as a concert piece for non-initiates rather more effectively than most *In Nomines*.

## EDITION BAROQUE

I was pleased to encounter Edition Baroque at the Early Music Exhibition last November and to receive a sample of their publications. Their Autumn 2006 catalogue has about 70 titles; the ones I have seen are A4 format, nicely computer-set, with coloured covers, thin enough to be stapled, and with the requisite parts. Some have optional continuo realisations. The short introductions are in German only and sometimes need more precise editorial information. Contacts:

www.edition-baroque.de mail@edition-baroque.de

I'll start with a work that really needs a good, affordable edition: Cavalli: *Missa pro defunctis* (eba6057). The composer wrote it towards the end of his life for an annual performance at San Marco in his memory – this should not be confused with a larger Mass for the Dead that he wished to be played at his funeral in San Lorenzo, for which a dozen or so instruments plus three organs and two theorbos were required. He died on 17 January 1676. No early source survives; the most authoritative (according to Francesco Bussi, whose tercentenary edition of the work has a thorough introduction) is Dresden Mus 1702/D/1, dated 1748, from which the other MSS derive. The new edition, by Jörg Jacobi, is from Münster Santini MS 1024, copied by Kiesewetter in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The work is for two SATB choirs; the figured organ part in two of the MSS is by Kiesewetter, but it is likely that Cavalli expected the presence of one, or more likely two organs, and Cavalli's will also requests a bass string instrument. The music isn't quite so austere as the double-choir psalms of Cavalli's 1675 publication. It is good to have a work that is explicitly intended for many voices (all the Canons and Chapel Singers of San Marco), since so much 17<sup>th</sup>-century music that might appear to be choral may well be intended for soloists; this isn't a concertato piece. The edition looks fine, and it is nice to see 'redundant' accidentals preserved. The *Libera me* for SATTB is included; since the vocal line-up differs, the original clefs should have been given. Its convenient availability should make performances of the Requiem more likely.

The other sacred volume in this batch is *Autori Diversi: Laudate Dominum Psalm 150* (eba3008; €15.90). This contains five settings for soprano or alto and continuo by Caccini, Riccio, Kapsberger, Monteverdi and Rigatti. The customer gets for his money two copies with realised



continuo and a bass part with some vocal cues. This seems to me to imply the requirement of a string instrument: a theorist or organist would prefer the voice part throughout. I'd be happy playing the Monteverdi setting from the Bc copy (I've played it often, usually with Jennie Cassidy), and there is some merit in not having the awkward page-turn that is in my two-stave edition; but for the other pieces, I would have to choose between playing blind or having to unread the realisation – though that is better than most. Original beaming is preserved, which sometimes is more musical than modern standardisation. Apart from the Riccio, all the pieces have some tricky florid passages. A useful collection, highly recommended to those who can manage the semiquavers.

Melchior Schildt *Paduana Lagrima* (eb2218; €12.50) is taken from organ tablature, hence the lack of clarity over what instruments are needed: the score has two treble and two bass clefs, but the parts have Tr, Tr/A, A/B and B. The original keyboard version is also given, making the score virtually unnecessary. The setting is interesting, with some embellishment of the first statement of each section with rather more for the repeats. Apart from the second part, the ranges are quite wide for consort music, with the treble going from open G to top C. Players will be challenged by the need to maintain the lachrymose mood yet master the elaborations.

Corbett *Sonata prima* (eb2105; €9.00) is also an arrangement, transposed for viols from a trio sonata for two recorders and bass (Roger, 1701, repr. Walsh 1705). The score uses octave treble clef for the 'viol' parts; the separate parts are in treble or alto clefs, for treble or bass viols; a continuo part enables the piece to be performed without keyboard – which would work better in the two-bass-viol option. This sonata is in G; sonata 2 in D is also available (eb2106; €9.00), or the two sonatas together (eb2107; €14.90).

Johann Sigismund Weiss's recorder sonatas jumped from obscurity when Brussels Conservatoire MS 15.115 hit the awareness of sonata-players in the 1970s. The striking open-string theme of Handel's violin sonata in D (D A #C E) which seemed so obviously to imply violin open strings turned out to be prefigured in a sonata by Weiss for traversa. That is the second of the two sonatas in eb21152 (€13.90), here with the conventional transposition of a minor third (from D to F) for recorder, which happens to be the key of Handel's version of the finale. The other sonata is raised from B to D minor. While not quite of Handelian quality, they are pleasant pieces well deserving this fine edition. The remaining two sonatas from the MS by Weiss are announced as eb21153. Those who want the pieces untransposed can find them in the very readable facsimile published by Editions Culture et Civilisation, Brussels, 1979.

*Labyrinthe: Drei Werke für Clavier* (eba4008; €11.90) has three oddities from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. B. Marcello's *Laberinto musicale* was originally notated on one stave; the

edition prints it in that form but also expands it onto two to help the performer, though for most of players the difficulty of the original is not so much the compression onto one stave as the frequent change of clefs. Then follows an enharmonic sonata by Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel and a *Toccata per omnem Circulum 24 Modorum furs Clavier* by Georg Andreas Sorge: interesting pieces for trying to find appropriate non-equal temperaments that will work (cf p. 30).

Francesco Bartolomeo Conti (1681-1732), a theorbo player at the Habsburg court, wrote his tragicomedy *Don Chisciotte in Sierra Morena* for Carnival in 1719; it was the basis of a Hamburg version in 1722. The suite here contains 17 short movements – none but the Overture runs to much more than a page of score – in four parts, obviously for strings at least. That the *Tutti* that heads the opening implies oboes can be deduced from the *marking Violini soli* when the violin I part goes below oboe range. Since the source is a score, the indication could refer to violin II as well, but (as seems to be normal in Handel's music of this period) all the oboes may play the violin I part. *Violini Soli*, incidentally, doesn't mean 'solo violin I & II' but 'violins without oboes'. In one place the bass is marked *Senza Contrabassi, e Fagotti*, which implies their presence elsewhere. Only the Overture is tricky, so this would be comfortable and flexible fodder for an Early Music Forum course.

#### BUXTEHUDE OPERA PRIMA

Buxtehude VII. *Suonate à doi, Violonino & Violadagamba, con Cembalo, Opera prima, Hamburg – 1664...* Introduction by Thomas Fritzsche, Realisation of figured bass by Angela Koppenwallner, Edited by Günter and Leonore von Zadow. Edition Güntersberg (G091-7), 2006. 7 vols (score & parts), each €18.50. (All seven for €111.00)

Buxtehude's ensemble music was published in score a century ago (DDT II, 1903), but without parts, and anyone wishing to perform it had to do a lot of part-writing. The facsimiles of op. 1 & 2 from STIMU (1991) were a help: although the parts were all bound together, they could be torn out easily and the glue still held. But the original layout did not manage to avoid page-turns and the appearance was a bit daunting to players accustomed to the greater clarity of 18th-century engraved parts. A new edition in score appeared in Vol. 14 of the *Collected Works* (Broude, 1994; \$215.00), and an alternative facsimile from Fuzeau (op. 1: 5011; €29.00; op. 2: 5876 €37.50) But now a good modern edition is available of op. 1, with op. 2 to follow soon, along with the gamba sonata in D BuxWV 268 (G065; €14.00) and *Jubilate Deo* for alto, gamba and Bc (G099; €16.00).

I've had op. 1/2 for review. The introductory material (in German and English) is common to each sonata (except, presumably, for the excerpts of facsimile). It places the music in the context of the composer's life and contem-



porary chamber music. Various suggestions are given for the unusual choice of seven sonatas per set, with no particular favourite singled out. The edition preserves original accidentals (a commendable trend that should be observed more widely). There are some minor changes of clef: in the gamba part, tenor is replaced by alto and barring is standardised in the places where there are long note-values and fewer barlines in the original – sensible modernisations. Page-turns in the parts are avoided by the 2-3/4-5 format, with all parts turning together once at the end of a section where the two lower parts continue with a rest. The cembalo is given a separate figured part; the introduction mentions an additional realised part which isn't included with the set at hand. The edition gives the musician what he needs without being self-conscious about it. Anyone who has heard the CDs will know that the music is absolutely top-rate; now it can be played with no notational hindrances, though it is by no means easy. The picture of the Marienkirche in Lübeck on the cover is a reminder (reinforced in the foreword) that the music is suitable for church as well as secular use.

Incidentally, Güntersberg's string quartet version of Mozart's Requiem that I reviewed in issue 113 is recorded by StringFizz on OREF-CD 473

#### BREITKOPF B-MINOR MASS

Bach *Messe h-Moll. Mass in B minor BWV 232... edited by Joshua Rifkin* Breitkopf & Härtel (PB 5363), 2006. xviii + 273pp, €74.00. Piano Vocal Score by Alfred Dürr (EB 8700). 228pp, €11.50, strings parts €7.50 each, wind set €70.00, organ part €26.00 (OB 5363); chorus score €7.50 (ChB 5300).

Why a new edition is needed is explained concisely in the last two paragraphs of the first section of Rifkin's introduction. BG (*Bach Gesellschaft*) suffered from problems of access to the autograph, while NBA (*Neue Bach-Ausgabe*) failed to distinguish JS and CPE's hand and between markings taken from the score and parts. Christoph Wolff's failure in the 1997 Peters edition is written off in a sentence in note 17 for combining readings from different sources with no persuasive rationale, does not distinguish between original 'entries' [odd word] and editorial additions, and lacks commentary. There is a serious problem in deciding what attention to pay to the *Missa* (using the Latin term to refer to the first version of the Kyrie and Gloria sent to Dresden as a set of 21 mostly-autograph parts in 1733) when editing the much later creation (largely from pre-existing works) of the complete Mass. One's instinct when faced with an autograph score and authoritative parts prepared by or for the composer is to assume that the parts amplify, and may even correct the score, so readings from them should supplement or replace those of the score, on the grounds that they show what the composer expected to be played or sung. Here, though, there is a gap of 15 years between the sources, and even if there were no basic revisions, it is possible that Bach's ideas on performance practice (dynamics, slurring, etc) might have changed. A clearly-apparent difference

appears in bar 1: BG & Peters print *Adagio*, Peters adding a footnote that the cello part has *molt' adagio*. NBA and Rifkin have no tempo mark, since it derives from the 1733 parts, not the autograph score. Did Bach change his mind over the tempo, think that Dresden performers might not understand the music without it (in which case it's inclusion might help modern performers even more remote from Bach), or change his idea of the tempo? Or they could have been added by Bach just to the parts and not to his original score (now lost): as Rifkin reminds us, the parts were in Dresden when Bach assembled the Mass, so he may have forgotten that he added *adagio*. A modern conductor may well wish to consider the significance of the omission, and were I editing the work, whatever decision I made about including *adagio* or not, I would have footnoted the problem – but Rifkin doesn't even mention it in his commentary.

One could argue in similar terms about any of the Dresden-only markings. Ideally, the conscientious conductor needs a copy of the facsimile of the parts; the alternative would have been the use of colour printing. My copy of the NBA received two types of markings on the page about 25 years ago: the outsides were stained when our dog cocked his leg on it, while the *Missa* was decorated by green pen-marks which I added while preparing a similar one for Andrew Parrott. These were copied from a score lent to him by Joshua Rifkin which showed the differences of the 1733 parts, with other editorial slurs in pencil. None of these are incorporated in the new score. Now that colour printing is so common in book-publishing in general, perhaps music publishers need to take advantage of it. The example of the opening *Adagio* may be insignificant – the tempo options are constrained by the music itself, not the tempo mark; but there are many articulation possibilities that appear in green in my score which should be available for consideration by performers. What we have here is a very careful edition that deliberately excludes information that is peripheral to the 'final' version but may still be relevant. This is fine as far as it goes, but needs to be complemented by a critical edition of the *Missa*.

By following one point, I don't want to undermine the quality of this edition. Rifkin's caution in diluting the basic text with anything that may not be authentic is salutary, especially since previous editions are less careful, especially in distinguishing markings added by CPE. His introduction is rich with information, and users should not ignore the critical commentary – though since it was presumably written in English, it's a pity that it could not be published thus, or at least made downloadable. It needs to be available separately from the end of the volume anyway, and its print is very small for constant study. The score looks good; it seems more spacious than NBA, despite having fewer pages. I haven't seen the parts, but judging from recent Breitkopf issues, they are likely to be user-friendly. I am, though, worried by a remark in the preface that 'the performing material incorporates the additions to the score without special indication' which

would seem to imply that editorial slurs are indistinguishable from those in the sources. I hope not: conductors can look foolish if they say 'ignore the editorial slur in bar 93' when the part has a normal slur, and leaders bowing parts don't always have the score at hand.

While perhaps being too blinkered with regard to ancillary sources, this is a fine edition – the best available at the moment. The vocal score is also well-produced, good value and with a sensible piano part.

#### LOCATELLI FOR CELLO

Locatelli *Sonata VI in D plus supplement: Adagio from Sonata XII for Cello & Piano* (Elke Hager). Doblinger (33 706), 2005. £12.95 (score & parts)

Apparently, Legrenzi's violin sonata op. 6/6 exists in the modern cello repertoire in a version by Piatti. Elke Hager came across the original in the Collected Works and felt compelled to offer a more authentic version. Apart from other changes, Piatti omitted the first two movements and added an *Adagio* from Sonata XII between the remaining two movements. Hager includes that movement, but rather than as an appendix places it between Locatelli's movements three and four, which may encourage performance thus – it should be headed 'Only perform this movement if movements 1 & 2 are omitted' or some such wording, especially since the heading (*Andante*) of the second movement is likely to be played too slowly by non-specialists. The D-minor *Adagio* does, however, feel like a first movement, which is what it is. Baroque cellists should stick to the original op. 6. The edition claims to be based on the Collected Works, not the original (which is easily available). I haven't, however, noted any significant differences. It is odd that the antepenultimate and penultimate bars of the third movement have the notes expanded without comments from the notation of the previous bar, but that the slur attached to them is treated as editorial. The parts include a separate continuo part – the part is figured, so could save a harpsichordist page turns, or the sonata can be played just with two cellos. I remember when, in the late 1960s, I sat on a British Standards Institution committee on music publishing that we recommended that single loose sheets should not be included in parts since they can so easily fall onto the floor during performance or get lost: here, both parts have them, so watch out!

#### MUSICI SEGRETI

*Kamera Musika XVIII Beka...* Moscow 2006. 64pp + parts.

It is nearly ten years since we encountered Ivan Shumilov in Stockholm. We met in a flat that he was vacating next morning, and were overwhelmed by his enthusiasm, but found it difficult to talk about practical matters like editing, the source of his materials, editing quality and distribution. We recently received an anthology of six trio-sonatas from him. The title is in Russian, but the contents list is headed in English:

The International Music Association Friends of Roman<sup>1</sup>  
presents

Antologies of chambermusic for flute and  
recorder from 18<sup>th</sup> century.

New partitions of duos trios & quartors  
in handwritten baroque style  
with voices<sup>2</sup> in facsimile.

To be played with true baroque joy in homes, castles and churches,  
I invite all interested publishers to help me publish and spread this  
treasure.

All with great love assembled by Mr Ivan Shumilov.

(1. The Swedish composer 2. i.e. parts)

This heads three pages listing a couple of hundred works, mostly individual items from sets, not all precisely enough identified; adverts fill every available space elsewhere. The volume reproduces his scores of half a dozen trios accompanied by three facsimile parts, making a practical sampler and advert of his wares – though it would have been useful if a few inches had been spared to list the contents. The trios – Abel op. 3/2, Bezzossi op. 7/3, Boismortier op. 78/2, Braun op. 3/12, Cheron op. 2/7 and Festing op. 2/5 – are not all quite as explicitly for flute and recorder as the series title suggests; some parts are headed 'violin' and you need to check whether recorder or traverso are needed. There certainly is a market for scores with facsimile parts, though I suspect that among amateur and non-specialist professional performers the demand for keyboard realisations is greater. Unfortunately, those who can play from the bass generally have better things to do than write down what they play. Shumilov's handwriting is clear, but the reproduction of the facsimiles is variable – some pages may well be copies of copies of copies. I can't see a price for this volume, but individual duo and trio items are about €10, quartors (he is consistent in his spelling!) €15 and concertos €20. His extensive catalogues can be found by googling Musici Segreti. Don't have too high expectations of presentation, but there is a lot of useful material listed.

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#### WILHELMINE von BAYREUTH

Wilhelmine von Bayreuth *Sonata per Flauto traverso e Basso continuo... a-minor* Edited by Adelheid Krause-Pichler & Irene Hegen. Furore Verlag (fue 4680), 2006. 16pp + 2 parts, €12.00.

This is an edition of a newly-discovered autograph of the eldest sister of Frederick the Great (1709-58). She could play the harpsichord when she was six, and later learnt the lute from Weiss. From 1731 as wife of the Margrave of Bayreuth she acted as promoter of extensive musical activities at court. The sonata was probably written around 1730, possible for her brother or her prospective husband, both flautists. The editor says that the instrumentation of the bass (i.e. whether it needs both cello and harpsichord or just the latter) is uncertain,

though I would have thought that the designation 'Basso con Cembalo' implies both. It's a strong slow-quick-quick piece, which has only one (omissible) note below the treble recorder's bottom F. The *Furore* catalogue of music by or for women is substantial. Recent early pieces of interest include a selection of motets for bass by Isabella Leonora, a motet for soprano and strings by Anna Bon and Jaquet de la Guerre's cantata *Le Sommeil d'Ulysse*.

#### KELLY – BARSANTI – MAHON

No-one knows the music of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Edinburgh better than David Johnson or is more enthusiastic in promoting it. I suspect that dearest to his heart, with good cause, is the Early of Kelly, who studied with the major force for change in the mid-century, Johann Stamitz, and had the ability to produce distinctive music in the new style. David's latest venture is a series 'Enlightenment Edinburgh Series of chamber and orchestral music', which has moved on from his previous hand-written editions and is excellently computer-set. Of the three Kelly works at hand, the Quartet in C minor (score & parts £16) stands out for its striking unison opening. The Andante is in G minor, and the finale returns to C minor, avoiding the expected major. It is a powerful piece, and deserves playing irrespective of any curiosity in Scottish music. As the editor says, Kelly's op. 1 was the first Mannheim-style set published in Britain (first in Edinburgh then in London). Some of the introduction seems special pleading. Does ten-year-old Kelly's subscription to a publication of McGibbon necessarily imply that he was his pupil? Johann Stamitz's dedication of his Orchestral Trios op. 1 to Kelly is likely to be because a Scottish Lord looked impressive on the title page, especially if he paid for the privilege. Similarly, did Bremner take a risk with Kelly's Symphonies or did the composer underwrite the project? I have seen symphonies 1 in D and 2 in C (scores each £14.00; string parts £2.00 each, wind £1.25). No. 1 survives in a presumably earlier MS version scored with a pair of flutes instead of oboes and with a timp part. The edition allows for both, with a few alternative passages for flutes. I don't think you should trouble your conscience about including timps if you have them and oboes available. These are fine examples of the new style, if not as distinctive as the quartet.

Two of Barsanti's Concerti Grossi op. 3 were published as early as the 1930s. David has issued No 2 in F (for 2 horns, timps & strings; score £10, string £2 each, wind £1.25) and 9 in D (for 2 oboes, trumpet, timps & strings; similar prices). It is neat how no. 9 starts with trumpet-like music but without the trumpet appearing until bar 7. The editorial instruction (used in other pieces as well) '[overall dynamic mf]' is singularly inappropriate here: either it starts soft with a crescendo or it starts loud with the contrast in dynamics coming from the entry of oboes, trumpet and bass. The same music at the end probably needs a diminuendo. I don't see why the following contrapuntal movement should be overall *f*. I can see no point in these 'overall' markings. But both this and No. 2 (with an F-minor contrapuntal slow movement) are excellent pieces, in an older-fashioned style than Kelly.

Moving on to later in the century, John Mahon's Clarinet Concerto in F had its first known performance in London in 1775. Mahon didn't visit Edinburgh until 1786, so it warrants inclusion in the series only on the strength of the slow movement, which sandwiches the Scots air *Roslin Castle* as trio between two statements of *The Birks of Endermay*. The finale, too, has a borrowed theme, from Arne's *Comus*. Its publication in a careful new edition is welcome: it is a good piece and has been recorded (by Colin Lawson and The Parley of Instruments: Hyperion CDA 66897). Since then, the missing horn parts of the London edition of c.1786 have been found in Vienna. Peter Holman made a good job of writing parts for the recording, but it is good to have the originals. The scoring is otherwise just for strings. There is, though, some choice over soloist: the original title-page gives oboe, flute and violin as alternatives, so it is an adaptable work, well worth having at hand in an orchestral library. I must congratulate the editor on making this pioneering work available. from david @djmusiceditions.freemove.co.uk

#### SINFONIA CONCERTANTE

Mozart *Sinfonia concertante ... for Violin, Viola and Orchestra.. KV 364 (320d)...* edited by Wolf-Dieter Seiffert. Breitkopf & Härtel (PB 15102), 2006. 80pp, €33.00.

Although I don't edit music as late as this, I'm generally aware when works have editorial problems, so was surprised to find that this was one. There is no autograph (apart from tiny fragments), and the editor claims that this is the first time that the relationship of the sources has been established. The consequence is a large number of detailed changes which may take us a little nearer to what Mozart wrote. This is a co-production with Henle-Verlag, who publish the version for violin, viola and piano (though it can be obtained from Breitkopf: HN 798/EB 10798). That includes alternative E flat and D parts for viola. The score retains the original notation of the viola part a semitone lower, which is generally supposed to be a device to give the viola the brighter sound of D major to contrast with the mellower E flat of the violin, the viola's brightness being enhanced by being tuned up a semitone. It's a bit confusing transposing a part a semitone when reading the score until realise that you think of the viola part as if in the bass clef but an octave higher. The parts include the viola in both D and E flat.

#### MORE CONCERTOS FROM BREITKOPF

Ton Koopman's edition of Handel's *organ concertos* concludes with 'No. 16', HWV 305a, a version of the *Concerto a due cori* in F, alias the *Concerto in the Oratorio of Judas Maccabaeus*, HWV 334. Four movements have Handel's authority, while the earliest source to include the other three is Arnold's edition of 1797. Koopman includes the 'complete' work of eight movements, one of which is an organ improvisation. The organ part includes an editorial *siciliano* that sounds Handelian, though I would have thought it more likely that the composer would have produced something more virtuosic and individual. The



introduction is mostly a general one for each concerto in the set and contains some doubtful statements. The idea that Handel cut out ripieno strings from accompanying sections in oratorio arias is only established for a short period, and do we really 'know little about the organ in England' at the relevant period (which is hardly 'the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century')? It is, however, good to have a separate edition. (Score PB 5253, €19.00; organ part OB 5253, €13.00).

One might complain that C. P. E. Bach's *Cello Concerto* in B flat, Wq 171, is sufficiently well known not to need another edition. The one I know is the Eulenburg miniature score with accompanying parts, which tries to cover the versions with harpsichord and with flute solo as well, with some confusion for the reader and player. There is no autograph, but the main source is a copy by Bach's reliable copyist Johann Heinrich Michael. There seem to be no editorial problems. The work (in one or other of its forms) is well known, so it needs no recommendation. I haven't seen the string parts (OB 5509) or the flute-piano version (EB 8783), but the score (PB 5509; €30.00) is visually a marked improvement on the Eulenburg. The same editor, Ulrich Leisinger, has also edited the *Concerto in A minor* Wq 166, which similarly exists in three versions (Breitkopf/Musica Rara MR 2195B; .€40.00 for score & set of parts; MR 2195A for flute & piano €17.00). In this case, the autograph of the cello version survives, with parts of the flute version by J. H. Michael again.

Haydn's *Violin Concerto in C* Hob VIIa: 1 is edited by Frank Reinisch: I've seen the full score (PB 5297; €16.00) and violin/piano reduction (EB 8634; €9.50); orchestral parts are also available. This concerto has a long link with Breitkopf: it was included in their thematic catalogue in 1769, only a few years after composition, and was published by the firm in 1909. The MS on which that was based (surmised to be the one catalogued in 1769) was destroyed in the Second World War, so this edition is based on that and secondary early sources. New cadenzas by Thomas Zehetmair have been included in the solo part, but not the score – I suppose it keeps the conductor alert. If the c.1765 date is right, it seems a bit easy going compared with some symphonies of the period, but is an agreeable work.

#### HENLE MOZART STRING QUINTETS

These are issued in parts and with a separately available study score (HN 778 & 9778 respectively, prices being €29.00 and €15.00). Players are not going to need a large score, and the study score is legible and compact (with four systems per page). There are three works: K. 515 in C, 516 in G minor and 406/516b in C minor. All three survive in autograph score, parts with corrections by the composer for K. 515 & 516, and an authorised print which includes most of these corrections. Differences between the autograph and first edition, which previously were disregarded, are now shown to be reliable (a point which may increase the authority of printed sources where there

is no intermediate source). The introduction and thorough critical commentary (in English as well as German) in the score is also included in the Violin I part. We have also received the soli/piano version of the *Sinfonia Concertante* mentioned on p. 7 above and the third volume of Haydn's string trios (study score HN 9628; €9.00).

#### DRAGONETTI QUINTET

*Dragonetti Quintett in B-Dur [B flat] für Solo-Kontrabass (Solo-Violine), Violine, 2 Violon und Basso Erstdruck* (Nanna Kock) Doblinger (DM 1364). 24pp, £12.95. (Parts £12.95)

This is a substantial work, surviving in BL Add. 17726 and edited in conjunction with the editor's thesis on the six double bass/violin quintets it contains in the composer's hand. This is a substantial piece of five movements. I don't remember seeing a piece with so many repeated eight-bar sections, so it is going to need a soloist's verve to avoid monotony, and it is more likely to work with the novelty value of a double bass rather than the alternative solo violin. The too-brief introduction doesn't make clear how the problem of the inconsistent notation of the solo part two octaves too high is solved: one wonders if that is a matter for the player rather than editor anyway. Do Dragonetti scholars have any idea when the work was written?

Jan Evangelista Kypka (1813-1868) *Four Organ Books*  
Editor: Tomas Thon Oppava: Artthton, 2005.  
(Artthton@hotmail.com)

I found this at the back of my review pile, though it reached my about a year ago: my apologies to the editor. The period is a bit modern for us, but that does mean that the music is written in treble and bass clefs, so there is no great problem for any organist to read the four MSS reproduced here. The music itself (copied soon after 1850) probably needs the sound of an organ of the period – or rather of the previous period, since it is quite old-fashioned – for its full effect. It is on two staves and will work on piano. Of interest beyond enthusiasts for Czech organ music is the technical process used in the reproduction. The clarity of the notation depends on the cleaning of scanned images, probably to a greater extent than the touching up of full-size negatives on which I spent so long when we published our set of six trio-sonatas when we started King's Music – subsequently I didn't bother, allowing the user to see the marks on the paper, show-through etc as it was. How successful Artthton's process was would require close comparison with the MSS themselves, which I am unable to do. The notes look plausible, but the paper colour is a strange grey.

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Awaiting review in the next issue are *Early English Church Music* vol. 47: 15th-century Liturgical Music V – settings of the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, a new edition of Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri* and a *Passion Cantata* by Homilius

## SIMON RAVENS

## Ravens View

When I was young and impressionable I once came across a singer – a good pro who had performed and recorded with every early music choir under the sun – who referred to any form of practice as ‘cheating’. At the time I thought it may have been bravado. After all, few people manage to rise high in any profession without putting in the hard yards at some stage. In the case of this singer, though, I was to find out that his hatred of adequate preparation was evidently genuine. More of his antics later.

I was reminded of him over the last week when I have finally got around to viewing the ‘extras’ DVDs on two recordings – Poeme Harmonique’s staged *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* and L’Arpeggiata’s *Los Impossibles*. Both DVDs offer behind-the-scenes glimpses of the preparation for the productions. To an English musician, bred up on the virtues of winging it on minimal rehearsal, these make for jaw-dropping viewing.

It is not simply the time Poeme Harmonique spent on *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* which interests me, so much as the way it was spent. Received wisdom suggests that if a production with singers, dancers, actors and a sizeable orchestra is to have any cogency, it requires a strong director. This documentary, though, reveals only a huge ‘troupe’ of young artists directed not by an individual, but by the shared aim of informed exploration. The intensive rehearsals for the production took place at the Cistercian abbey of Royaumont in the summer of 2004, and the camera is forever dropping in on small groups in corridors, or in the gardens, quietly experimenting with odd corners of the play. Singers, actors and dancers freely tread on each others’ ground, without once being reined in by a ‘director’. Of course, this could all be a careful piece of editing, with the tantrums and strong arm tactics left on the cutting room. But after each moment we see being worked on democratically in rehearsal, we see the same moment in the finished production, and the two bear uncanny similarities.

When a CD sleeve-note from a large-scale British recording uses the phrase ‘we decided’, or ‘we felt’ with relation to an artistic decision, my cynical antennae start twitching. More often than not, that will be the director writing, remembering the nodding heads of freelance musicians as he handed a subtly-couched directive down to them. Well, any director who interprets those nodding heads as democracy at work, rather than feudalism in practice, perhaps needs to take a reality check.

The DVD of L’Arpeggiata’s *Los Impossibles* is different to that of *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, since most of the filming was done during the recording sessions. It is also different because here there is very definitely a director – Christina

Pluhar. Her direction, though, could hardly be more generous towards her performers. In a nutshell, her approach is that having come up with an ‘idea’ for a musical experiment, she gathers around her the most disparate talents imaginable, lights the touchpaper and stands back to enjoy the spectacle. What this light hand on the tiller betrays, though, is the vast amount of time the core of L’Arpeggiata must spend together to gain this collective confidence in each other.

We tend to forget that for most professional musicians in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, their circle of fellow performers, and repertoire, would have been minimal. Or, to put it in a more positive light, their stylistic immersion would have been total. L’Arpeggiata and Poeme Harmonique, with their specialisation and full diaries, come close to this most vital aspect of period practice, and it shows.

In the professional world time is, of course, money, and there is no hiding from the fact that both the groups in these DVDs enjoy enviable commercial and public sponsorship. When I think of this in terms of my own dormant group, Musica Contexta, it is easy to imagine that the one thing which would rouse me into activity would be funding to allow us to operate on a level playing field with the continental groups. But would funding be enough? I have my doubts. Culture changes don’t happen overnight. Remember John Major, whose efforts in forming the classless society were about as effective as altering the course of a supertanker by blowing hard on one end? Every director worth listening to would welcome a better preparation culture, but would those singers or players whose most bankable facility is an ability to read anything at sight? It might just leave the deeper musical attributes of some performers cruelly exposed.

Paradoxically, perhaps the culture needs to change before we are in a position to chase funding. Easier said than done, maybe; but if any other aspiring musician is made to feel like a girly-swot for ‘cheating’, I hope they have the moral-majority confidence to answer back. The singer who made me feel like that, I came across ten years later. He was purple-faced with embarrassment as, in front of a large audience, he failed to negotiate the page-turns in a da capo aria. Right then, he probably wished that he had made a practice of cheating.

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Mozart’s complete works are now available on line, through an initiative from the International Mozarteum Foundation. Check <http://dme.mozarteum.at>. Critical commentaries are included as well as scores.

## BACH : SIX TRIOS BWV 1014-1019 FOR KEYBOARD WITH VIOLIN

Martin Gester

The title might appear unusual, yet that is what is inscribed by the composer's son-in-law and student, Johann Philipp Altnickol, on the oldest existing copy (from the 1740s) of Johann Sebastian Bach's six sonatas dubbed 'for violin and harpsichord'. A later manuscript designates them by the title of *Sei Sonate a Cembalo certato e Violino solo col Basso per Viola da Gamba accompagnata se place* (sic). It is therefore a question of interpretation, the gamba part not existing per se and necessitating, in order to be played, a few transpositions from the bass of the keyboard. Henceforth, and for quite some time thereafter, these works were classified in the more familiar genre of violin sonatas with accompaniment (J.N. Forkel, in his first biography of J.S. Bach, Leipzig, 1802; and as recently even as Alberto Basso in his excellent *J.S. Bach*, EDT, Turin, 1979). To then mention that this accompaniment is *obligato* throughout and to insist on the elaboration of the keyboard part only partially re-establishes the perspective.

To better define J.S. Bach's argument, it is interesting to once again make the distinction between the two positions concerning the role of the keyboard in the 18th century. On the one hand, it represents the most practical means for restoring a musical structure that might just as well be performed by a consort, an orchestra or a choir. It is thus that one may understand a large portion of the repertoire for solo keyboard and a part of the repertoire of music for several instruments in which the keyboard is in the middle when it is not solely indispensable. So it is in *trios for keyboard with one instrument or sonatas for keyboard and diverse instruments*, or even *concerti for keyboard with instruments ad lib.* by J.S. Bach and his entourage (C.P.E. Bach, Telemann), by Rameau (*Pieces de clavecin en concert*) up to Schobert and the early works of Mozart and Haydn, whose trios are called *Sonatas for harpsichord/pianoforte with the accompaniment of violin and cello* (sometimes *ad libitum*).

The other role of the keyboard is accompaniment: the doubling or complementing of the voices in the polyphony, or basso continuo: rendering or the bass line and an improvised fleshing out of the harmony (sometimes written down, as in Bach's *Sonata for keyboard and flute in B Minor*), and more or less subject to ornamentation. In this role, the keyboard instrument takes on a varying importance, depending on the place of performance, the other instruments deployed, etc. It may recede into the background or be replaced by a viol or a theorbo.

Violin sonatas by Corelli and Handel use the keyboard as a continuo instrument. J.S. Bach, on the other hand, first conceived the BWV 1014-1019 Sonatas according to the

first type of works, those which organise the musical discourse around the keyboard instrument to which a supplementary instrument (in this case, a violin) adds a polyphonic complement as well as heightened expressive richness. But the violin is also regularly treated as an accompanied soloist, particularly in certain slow movements (the first movements of BWV 1016 and 1017). In each case, it constitutes an essential element of the discourse. In this sense, the six sonatas cannot be reduced to any existing model, but stand at the confluence of a number of related styles. More precisely, these are:

- the *trio sonata* (particularly in its *da chiesa* version for the structural outline), in which one of the treble voices is taken by the violin, the other by the keyboard. This style became one of the most popular and, next to the fugue, one of the most characteristic of learned composing in J.S. Bach's entourage (cf. the work of C.P.E. and W.F. Bach, Johann Ludwig Krebs, et al. for all manner of instrumental combinations ranging from organ *a due clavieri e pedale* to the instrumental trio with continuo). Most fast movements are conceived according to this procedure. As usual, J.S. Bach rarely skirts the obligation to rigorously preserve the number of voices, regardless of the ease of transgression afforded by the keyboard. A unique example of dispensation is to be found in the sonata in A major, this being justified by the stylistic reference to the *concertante* style.

- the *concerto solo* in which the violin is the soloist, accompanied by a keyboard providing an elaborate accompaniment which is limited to the reduction of an orchestral framework (BWV 1016, 1<sup>st</sup> movement: the harpsichord is treated in four strict parts, including the 16' bass, as the reduction of the orchestral part of a violin concerto; also, BWV 1017, movements 2 and 3); double concerto BWV 1016, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, in which we find two soloists (violin and right hand, the *quasi ostinato* bass (in crochets/quarter-notes) and the beat of the string orchestra (in quavers/eighth-notes).

- the *allegro* of the Vivaldian concerto with its *unissoni*, dynamic levels, virtuoso passages, riot of colours and a fermata on a long pedal of the dominant (BWV 1015, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement).

- the *soloist sonata* wherein the violin is accompanied by continuo (BWV 1019 2<sup>nd</sup> version, 5<sup>th</sup> movement: violin solo with continuo; *ibid.* - 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> versions: different solos for the keyboard).

- the *cantata solo* in which a vocal line unfolds above or within a polyphonic fabric woven by the other voices: BWV 1018, 1<sup>st</sup> movement; 1019, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> versions, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement: in the first instance, there is a *lamento* (the word is attested by one of the copies) 'sung' by the violin in the viola's tessitura, the keyboard weaving a rigorous 4-



part texture around it, in the style of a consort of viols; in the second case, it is the adaptation of an aria from a cantata (BWV 120 *Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille*) in which the keyboard must simultaneously take on the bass part, the realisation of the basso continuo and the singing part, whereas the violin draws decorative volutes symbolising the wishes for happiness expressed in the aria's text.

– canonic meticulousness following an inspiration similar to the Canonic Variations in the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement of *A Musical Offering* BWV 1015.

Beyond these characteristic examples, certain movements proceed by a desire to intertwine the two instruments as tightly as possible in order to constitute a homogeneous framework in which neither dominates, or else in which one and the other emerge in turn: BWV 1014, 1<sup>st</sup> movement; in 1018, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, the whole discourse becomes logical through the progression of harmony, registers and an interior polyphony which is both full of implicit meaning and suggestive, the violin here being invited to play the role, by itself, of a string orchestra serving as the basis for the ostinato harmonic dottings in the style of a harp (which, in addition, brings to mind the *accompaniati* of the *St Matthew Passion*).

As we can see, Bach does much more than subscribe to an existing genre. Nor does he try to invent another. As he does in every development of a cycle of works (*Partitas, Clavierübung, Inventionen, The Well-Tempered Clavier...*), he follows an imperious need to dissolve the diverse parts into a whole, to assume the diversity of styles, genres and forms in order to reunite them in a work as vast and varied as it is coherent, organic and non redundant, through a constant instrumental medium.

The case of the Sonata in G Major is symbolic: in it, we can distinguish three stages of evolution (our recording adopted the first). Initially, Bach – and this is relatively rare – uses the first movement (itself in *da capo* form) as the last movement of the sonata. Two slow trio movements (quite different in style but of an equivalent expressive density) frame a movement which is taken directly from a cantata (Cantata 120 is supposed to be posterior, but it is too obvious that it is the vocal version which served as the model for the instrumental version). Secondly, Bach extends the sonata, bringing the number of movements to six, adding (in positions 3 and 5), two instrumental solos, that of the harpsichord (no. 3) later becoming the corant for the *Partita in E Minor*, that of the violin (no. 5, in G Minor with basso continuo) becoming, transposed to E, the gavotte of the same partita. Finally, in the last stage, he returns to five movements, but recomposes the second slow movement (no. 4) in proportions identical to the other (21 bars) and closer in style (that of the *Empfindsamkeit*). He does away with the two solos and composes a new solo for keyboard in binary section (which contrasts with the ternary of the second movement). Finally, he writes a fifth movement in the style of a trio jig, with proportions suitable to balance the first movement. Beyond the constant concern for maintaining a strict symmetry between movements, one

notices an obvious preoccupation with avoiding redundancy (repeat of the first movement), removing whatever might be heterogeneous (the violin solo with basso continuo, the slow movement which was too short and archaic in the first two versions and, above all, the cantata movement revealing too clearly its origins and not fully appropriate for a harpsichord transcription: the melody recedes too readily into the background, while the decorative violin dominates). The final result is a sonata with a more rigorously polyphonic discourse, less attentive to the pure pleasure of the instrument. In the fourth movement of BWV 1019 notably – and this is only one example amongst many –, we come to the limits of instrumental preoccupation: there is no suggestion in the score of the slightest attention to a precise timbre – no more so than in the canons of the *Musical Offering*, and no more so than in the numerous fugues of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* or *The Art of the Fugue*. The discourse goes beyond the instrument which is considered more as a medium to transcend through act, effect and thought.

#### You said 'Keyboard'?

Much importance has been attached to the use of Baroque period instruments in general, and in the music of Johann Sebastian Bach in particular. There remain many topics for discussion.

Symptomatically, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* is generally considered a work for harpsichord which pianists occasionally incorporate into their repertoire as do – but much more rarely – organists. This idea does not stand up to a more in-depth contact with the practices and mentality of the time.

First of all, the term 'clavier' groups, in Baroque Germany, all keyboard instruments without distinction. For Bach in particular, it is opposed, in this sense, to the terms organo, clavicymbel, clavichord, Lautenwerk, etc., but rather encompasses them all. Furthermore, cembalo is the term generally used for domestic keyboard instruments (such as the virginal for the English), as opposed to the public or religious instrument, which is the organ.

We could cite a number of collections announcing the harpsichord (literal translation of *cembalo* or *Flügel*, the term used by C.P.E. Bach in 1748; Johann Quantz even wrote in 1752, 'Of all the harpsichords, the one we call the pianoforte is the most appropriate for accompaniment'), and applying to the organ or clavichord as much as what today we call the 'harpsichord'. As an example of the diversity which reigns in these matters, we have the precedents or models for *The Well-Tempered Clavier*: works by Andreas Werckmeister (1645-1706), Pachelbel (the cover of his *Hexachordium Apollinis* is illustrated with drawings of an organ and a virginal), J.C.F. Fischer, Johann Mattheson (1681-1764; *Exemplarisch Organisten-Probe*, 1719, in all keys) all concerning, in an acknowledged manner, both the organ and plucked string instruments. On the original edition of the collection of C.P.E. Bach's *Sonatas with varied repeats*, supposedly for harpsichord, the unique

illustration shows an organist playing an instrument with pipes, two keyboards and pedals. If only Parts II and IV of the *Clavierübung* indicate that they are specifically intended for the harpsichord ('für das clavicymbel mit 2 manualen'), the Part I integrates also the clavichord (although the ambitus is wide, a second keyboard is never required). As for *The Art of the Fugue*, which some consider – with reason – a Part V to the *Clavierübung* (which we will not go into here), it is simply conceived to be able to be performed on the keyboard, a practical if not ideal medium, in the sense that Mattheson intended when he stated that 'the keyboard is a precious support for the imagination, even when the sound of it is physically absent': both pragmatism and an invitation to a flight of fancy. It is, therefore, also a starting point for the instrumentations and readings, shedding light on the work from various angles. But to conclude, on that basis, that it is a work for harpsichord is to impose a choice where the work remains open.

#### ABOUT 'DEFINITIVE' VERSIONS

As with every period, ours tends to read the past through its own categories. The habit – and necessity – for musicians to specialise in the rereading of the abundant repertoire for a single instrument (but what has become of improvisation?) leads to delimiting spheres, attributing to such and such instrument and becoming attached to the 'definitive version', to the letter, to the *Urtext*. Our era has a fondness for THE reference. There is a discrepancy. (Significant is the propensity for complete recordings. In the 18th century, only the composer constituted a sum, a *totalitas* including the diversity of a knowledge. The musician went on his merry way amongst works, selecting his perspectives according to available instruments and circumstances. Today, it is the artist who claims the merit of the whole, with the recording industry encouraging his building a monument.) The historical perspective tends towards classification: it sets off, establishes and frames in order to better dominate and therefore ultimately to congeal that which was much more fluid and vulnerable to contingencies. The spirit and Baroque practice are dynamic and in expansion: the period was curious about new sonorities, inventing and crossbreeding instruments (various harpsichords, virginals, spinets, *Lautenwercken*, claviorganum, organs of all sizes, to mention only keyboards; Bach, at his death, owned no less than seven domestic keyboard instruments!) Starting from usages, conventions and stylistic habits knowingly assumed, and reposing on them, the artist experiments, tending to expression through the multiple transgressions, breaks and dissymetries applied to various degrees, and defying, at this stage, rational analysis, as does the actor with a verse, the musician of the tactus, the keyboard player of the range of instruments, the composer from the choice of genres, forms and instrumentations in current use.

Baroque creativity is, starting from an idea, a question of adapting to means, places and audiences. For Johann Sebastian Bach, as we have seen, musical thought pre-exists in its sound incarnation; it can just as well take another form. To whomever knows the Sinfonia from the

Cantata 29, it must seem obvious it is not the version for solo violin (Prelude of the *Partita in E Major* BWV 1006), reputed to be earlier, which is the transcribed original, transformed for a new use. If the opposite is not true, then there are rather two highly different emanations of the same thought that they invite to meet.

As with the continuo, the use of such and such instrument depends on the occasion as much as on general usage. The harpsichord and clavichord at home, the organ in the church. At the opera, the harpsichord is the continuo instrument, whereas only in the home is it a soloist. When Bach conceived a concertante work, he might just as well write it for violin and orchestra, harpsichord with string quintet or, if meant to be performed in public, for organ with string orchestra doubled by winds (oboe da caccia, bassoon) in all the parts (cf., for example, the concerto BWV 1052 and Cantata BWV 146). Today, on the contrary, recordings, while allowing all balances, tend to make one believe in definitive solutions and to elevate an ephemeral experiment into an unchanging monument.

Setting aside certain works which integrate in a highly specific way the exploitation of an instrument's limits (*pedaliter* works, the *Goldberg Variations*, the *Italian Concerto*, the *Canonic Variations*), a large number of works are written 'for the keyboard'. Their application to a specific keyboard is as much dependant on contingencies as on belonging to a given genre or their style. Whether the works are sacred or secular, *galant* or stern, polyphonic or *Doppelschlag*, they circulated freely from one instrument to another. This perpetual adaptation creates a freedom of articulation between thought and its characteristic of the creative method of the period – of J. S. Bach in particular – and which is unfamiliar for the categories of today's musician. One of the consequences is that all the genres can be found to be stylised for a rhetorical, decorative or pedagogical purpose at any moment. Various instrumental readings provide many angles from which an original can be viewed. To perform the entire work on the harpsichord would not render every aspect, but be only a reflection. It is the diversity of the angles which will have the greatest chance of reconstructing the musical thought.

#### THE SIX TRIOS BWV 1014-1019 FOR ORGAN WITH VIOLIN

It is based on these considerations that we have come to propose this version of the six *Trios for keyboard with violin*. Our reading is therefore a complementary one to those which exist already: it fits in with various uses of which these are the primary:

– the performance of trios *a 2 clavieri e pedale* of which the *Six Trio Sonatas* BWV 525-530 (certain movements also existing in cantatas or concerti) written for W. F. Bach are the most famous examples. According to Forkel, these were written to be performed on the pedal harpsichord – there is a highly restrictive performance of the truth of usages – these works are never as appealing as on the organ, and it is thus that they are almost always performed.

– the proximity with a cultivated genre in the Bach circle (Johann Ludwig Krebs [c.1713-1780], Johann Bernhard Bach [1700-1743], Gottfried August Homilius [1714-1785]: the fantasies and chorales for organ with 2 keyboards and pedals with oboe – or flute – obbligato, in which the organ plays three voices of the quartet while the oboe, playing the fourth part, ‘must sound like an organ stop’. Furthermore, this interesting repertoire gives us valuable indications regarding the ways of registering 3- or 4-part polyphony played in this way (cf. our recording on the Ahrend organ in Porrentruy, ADDA, 1990 – reissue Accord).

– the occasional performance of cantata arias (such as the third movement of BWV 1019 – 1<sup>st</sup> version) in which the organ obbligato and violin are equal partners or replace one another (cf., for example, Cantatas 47, 170).

– the systematic substitution of the organ for the harpsichord in a public performance as one sees concerning the keyboard concerti (BWV 146, 1052...)

As we see, the processes are attested to, and the sound association is part of the *Klangvorstellungen* (sound world) of the time. The resulting image brings with it numerous different illuminations which are interesting and even fascinating as regards a performance on the harpsichord.

– There is a greater characterisation and wider variety of timbres.

– The rule imposed by habit which requires three different planes for all the organ pieces written in trio (*Trio a 2 clavieri e pedale*, as is always indicated) here is systematically applied. To this is added – as compared to the organ trios – the expressive complementarity of the violin.

– The problem of balancing three voices which surfaces in concert (the violin being much more ‘legible’, from a distance, than the harpsichord which invariably falls into the role of accompanist, making a number of trio movements incomprehensible) can always be resolved with a medium-sized organ. All the voices remain distinct, even in a larger venue.

– Certain movements in particular take on a more obvious meaning: in the 1<sup>st</sup> movement of BWV 1016, we better grasp the 4-part texture of the ‘string orchestra’; the help of the pedals (a bit like that of the viola da gamba with harpsichord) permits the prolongation of the continuo in the left hand in 1016, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, and 1019 1<sup>st</sup> version, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement, in which the song regains its original function; 1015, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement: the pedal of the dominant – a very long tenuto E – is in greater relief. The consort effect in the *lamento* of 1018, 1<sup>st</sup> movement, is even more gripping played on the principal.

For our recording, a small organ loft was placed above the *Rückpositiv*, in front of the great organ, to permit the violinist to play ‘in the organ’ (*in die Orgel singen/spielen*, as it used to be said in the old texts) and according to the conception of the Fantasies for organ with oboe (or flute – see above). The listener will, perhaps be surprised, at times, not to hear the violin clearly in the foreground, as a concerto soloist: this is neither our intention nor, as we have seen, that of the work. In our opinion, this is not the

least interesting aspect of this recording. It behoves the listener to appreciate this different approach.

translated by John Tyler Tuttle

My thanks to Martin Gester for taking up the suggestion in my review of some Accord reissues in *EMR* 116 that we publish his booklet note separately. The two-disc set that it accompanies is Accord 476 9486.

CB

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## CORRECTIONS TO ISSUE 116

pp. 2-3: I intended to give Oriana's email address: johanna.richard@utanet.at

Richard Carter sent a letter about the transposition issue, which I showed to Hugh Keyte, who as usual spent Christmas with us. He began a reply, but it became more and more complicated – we hope it will eventually achieve publication.

p. 9. Neil Coleman's name is correct on page 1, wrong here.

p. 29. Thanks to Paul Willenbrock for pointing out that logically verses 3 & 4 of *Joseph est bien marié* should be reversed.

p. 41: the label is omitted from the first CD on the page, *J. S. Bachs Früheste Notenhandschriften*: it is Carus 83.197

p. 53 top of column 2: the name of the letter-writer was omitted, making little sense of the letter and comment unless readers realised that Eric + Jane = Van Tassel.

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## CLASSIFIED INFORMATION?

### Some problems and solutions regarding the classification of *Die Fortsetzung des harmonischen Gottesdienstes*

David Bellinger

When wishing to tackle seriously, better understand, or refer with handy access to the plenitude of Telemann's cantatas, the initially bewildering and even daunting number of works can at first sight seem almost impossible to take in or negotiate with any ease; thankfully, we are not left without any 'Maps & Compasses' in the form of useful reference material with which to navigate through the numerous vocal works. Equally, as many of the cantatas fall neatly into specifically conceived cycles (or *Jahrgänge*) each assigned particular traits, aesthetic, musical and spiritual ideals while aiming for befitting expression, depictions and effective delivery of the cantata's message, certain identifying features emerge. Some cantata cycles were known and unified in their time under such collective headings as 'French cycle', 'Sicilian cycle', 'Zellischer cycle' or the 'Cycle without recitative', to name just a few.

To be able to clearly identify works from the vast array of Telemann's cantatas, we don't just have the titles to go by, but TWV (or perhaps more correctly TVWV) numbers. Volumes 1 and 2 of Werner Menke's *Thematische Verzeichnis* appeared in the mid-1980s, the first dealing with church cantatas. One has to salute the mammoth undertaking to catalogue and establish a good, if not perfect map around Telemann's vocal works. It is particularly interesting to glance at details of when the cantatas were performed in Hamburg, especially the very early cycles, as these came from previous cycles, notably of Frankfurt provenance.

In some regards, the popularity of the sparkling little gemstones of spiritual music that make up the 72 cantatas of the *Harmonischer Gottesdienst* reflect the general yet gradual acceptance of Telemann's cantatas into wider spheres of musical activity and interest, being not unlike the slow acknowledgement of the instrumental music through just a handful of suites and sonatas in the early history of Telemann awareness.

The 1725-6 cycle of the *Harmonischer Gottesdienst* contains many hidden delights and surprises for solo voice, one instrument and Bc. Following in the wake of what must have been a publishing success came *Die Fortsetzung* [The continuation of] *des harmonischen Gottesdienstes* of 1731-2. These works do, indeed, feel like a progression, and enhanced extension of the 1725-6 set, and one senses an intensification in the overall musical expression and scope which can go from the deeply harrowing to liltingly sublime. [We have reviewed the modern edition from PRB as it has progressed. CB]

Using an adaptation (a slight reversal) of the oft-quoted arborial analogy, the 'small acorns' of the *Fortsetzung's* reduced chamber cantatas (for voice, two melody instruments and Basso continuo) actually come from much taller oaks. Full-scale cantatas, in fact: the latter apparently formed the Hamburg church cycle of 1732. This, of course, implies two linked cantatas – a mother work and its offspring. On closer examination, we encounter a few odd and intriguing snags, which without care and attention could lead to confusion and mistaken identity of cantatas.

Starting off (with TVWV 1:1), *Abscheuliche Tiefe* from the *Fortsetzung*, there are in fact two distinct works behind the single reference number, both with the same title. One is the chamber cantata (voice, flute, bassoon or violette and basso continuo) in the standard format of two arias separated by secco recitative. The other is scored for SATB, two flutes, strings and Bc and consists of nine movements: Aria, Recitative, Dictum, Recitative, Dictum, Aria, Recitative, Aria and Chorale, the first and last arias having been recast and restaged for the smaller version. This process of reworking, transposing and reducing finally produced the cantatas of the published cycle we know as the *Fortsetzung*. About 57 of the larger cantatas, mined for material for the 1732 print, were performed in Hamburg in that year and in Frankfurt in 1741-2.

Going back to the classification of TVWV 1:1, it is important to notice that in some listings the two obviously different cantatas seem to share identical TVWV numbers. These problems appear to be further compounded as another 14 works from the *Fortsetzung* share titles with the larger versions, so, for example, *Es fährt Jesus auf mit Jauchzen* (TVWV 1:489) is both a three movement work for voice, trumpet or oboe, violin and Bc and a cantata of eight movements for SATB, two oboes, three trumpets, strings and Bc. Thus in 15 cases, two very different works will be indistinguishable from one another.

To date only one such pair has appeared on CD: *Göttlich's Kind* (Capriccio 10741 and Carus 83.180) where it is numbered TVWV 1:1020a, and the larger scale *Kündlich gross ist das gottselige Geheimnis* TVWV 1:1020 (cpo 999 515-2). This addition of an 'a' to the *Fortsetzung* version seems very sensible. Thus we could have TVWV 1:1 for the large cantata *Abscheuliche Tiefe* and TVWV 1:1a for its *Fortsetzung* counterpart.

From the perspective of the Frankfurt sources of the 1741-2 cycle (originally Hamburg 1732), we can readily see in Eric

Fiedler's splendid *Frankfurter Konkordanz* (2<sup>nd</sup> print of this work currently in progress) from Habsburger-Verlag these works with their specific Ms.Ff.mus library reference numbers; the subsequent indications of the reduced *Fortsetzung* cantatas are given as titles from the 1731-2 print. Unfortunately, Menke's *Fortsetzung* listings confuse the chamber settings' titles with the full-scale works' TVWV numbers. The alert, wider Telemann community (and some music publishers) are aware of the excellent editorial undertaking by PRB Productions, the fruits of Jeanne Swack's considerable and meticulous labour, to present the chamber settings in seven hard-bound volumes, but might not realise that Menke's numberings have been used throughout. The apparent clash of references would come to a head if one were to order TVWV 1:1 from Frankfurt and PRB Productions – two rather different results would ensue!

In the present situation, one thing is clear: with the ever-increasing numbers of cantatas being published and recorded, a convenient method of identifying and distinguishing between the two settings must, at some stage, be decided upon. Simply adding an 'a' to Menke's full-scale settings number seems sensible enough.

I think I would actually argue even further – that ALL the *Fortsetzung* cantatas based on larger cantatas (at least, I suppose all 72 originally were, but the other 15 have gone missing over the course of time) should have their individual numbers revoked and replaced with an 'a' version of the large-scale cantata's number.

BC

## BACH CANTATAS

Barenreiter will be publishing in the spring paperback study scores of the complete cantatas from the Neue Bach Ausgabe, Series I.

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#### Psalm 2. The third Tune.

#### Meane.

W By sumeth in light: the Gentils spyght: in fury raging thou.

Why taketh in hand: the people fond: bayne thinges to byng about,

The byngs arise: the Lordes denie: in counsailes met thereto,

Agaynst the Lord: wryth fals accorde: agaynst hys Chyld they go.

#### Contra tenor.

W By sumeth in light: the Gentils spyght: in fury raging thou,

Why taketh in hand: the people fond: bayne thinges to byng about,

The byngs arise: the Lordes denie: in counsailes met thereto,

Agaynst the Lord: wryth fals accorde: agaynst hys Chyld they go.

#### The third Tune.

#### Tenor.

W By sumeth in light: the Gentils spyght: in fury raging thou,

Why taketh in hand: the people fond: bayne thinges to byng about,

The byngs arise: the Lordes denie: in counsailes met thereto,

Agaynst the Lord: wryth fals accorde: agaynst hys Chyld they go.

#### Bass.

W By sumeth in light: the Gentils spyght: in fury raging thou,

Why taketh in hand: the people fond: bayne thinges to byng about,

The byngs arise: the Lordes denie: in counsailes met thereto,

Agaynst the Lord: wryth fals accorde: agaynst hys Chyld they go.

XX.ij. g. T. 1711

## FREE MUSIC DOWNLOADS

Beresford King-Smith

Clifford asked me to provide some information for *EMR* readers about the range of early music scores currently available as free downloads from the Internet. I make no claim whatever to be an expert in this field, but as one who conducts a chamber-choir and tutors occasional workshops for the Midlands Early Music Forum, there are clearly substantial advantages in being able to access a wide range of free scores, print master-copies on my home computer, and then run off as many photocopies as I need (though not to sell on, of course). I have every sympathy with those legitimate publishers who feel that their sales are being undermined by the growing use of free downloads, but market forces are undeniably at work here. Clifford will doubtless want to add his own slant on this! I can only say, in my defence, that I *do* buy published music in addition to downloading – including some from him!

If you're new to this game, try putting Werner Icking Music Archive into Google (or whichever search engine you use) and click on the sub-heading marked Other Free Sheet Music Archives. You are, I fancy, about to be gob-smacked! You are now faced with a list of over 60 websites, from each of which you can download sheet-music for free! Not all are early music sites, and several are highly specialised (including some living composers' own sites) but many are of great potential interest to *EMR* readers. Recorder-players might like, for example, to sample Andrea Bornstein's [www.flauto-dolce.it](http://www.flauto-dolce.it) site, which includes scores in .pdf format (NB: for virtually all these websites you will need to download an Acrobat Reader, if you haven't already got one, in order to download the music). Like many other sites, you can also click on MIDI or mp3 audio files to hear what the music sounds like (though it's often in rather tinny synthesised keyboard sounds).

Here are three websites which I have found especially useful for downloads of my special interest, choral music.

Werner Icking Music Archive (already referred to, above) – hosted by The Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus, Denmark. This site covers choral and instrumental music by a wide range of composers, with (as one might expect) European names featuring more strongly than British ones. As a sample, go to the 'Composers' list, click on Jakob (or Jacob) Handl (who is also listed under Gallus). There are two biographies listed, on which you can click for further information about the composer, and three double-choir works available (including an interesting *Laudate Dominum* for two 8-part choirs). You can download the scores, but all the individual parts are also available – far cheaper (if your singers are sufficiently confident to count empty bars and pick up their lines without cues). Audio files are also available.

Choral Public Domain Library ([www.cpdll.org](http://www.cpdll.org)) – the CPDL (or Choral Wiki) website offers over 8,000 free choral downloads and is in my opinion the most useful all-round freebie resource for choral conductors. The editions used are submitted to the site by many different people, whose musical and technical competence may well vary considerably, so it's always a question of *caveat emptor*. 8,000 downloads does not imply 8,000 separate works, of course – some works are available in as many as five or six separate editions, and it's always worth looking at each one before deciding which version to download and print. Using Jakob Handl as our sample, again, CPDL offers some 50 separate choral works by him, several in two or three different editions. Tiresomely, the main listing doesn't state the number or breakdown of voices in each piece, so you always have to open up the .pdf file to check this, but this is a minor drawback. Again, audio files are nearly always available.

Finally, here's a useful website which isn't, strictly speaking, a freebie at all. Handlo Music ([www.handlo-music.com](http://www.handlo-music.com)), founded ten years ago this year, is run very efficiently from Bath by Keith Hudson. Like CPDL, it specialises in choral music, offering over 4,600 scores, plus a further 1,750 'on request'. The difference is that Handlo *does* make a charge for its downloads, but you then receive permission to make the number of photocopies that you require (you stipulate the quantity when ordering). Using Jakob Handl as our yardstick once again, a wide selection of his pieces is on offer, but the Handlo style is to offer choir directors a choice – versions are available *with* or *without* a rehearsal accompaniment, and sometimes in alternative versions in Latin or English, or in different keys. The first page of each piece is available for free inspection (overprinted 'Specimen'). The cost of downloading a single motet is, typically, around £10.00, which seems reasonable enough. When you place your order, you receive first an acknowledgment and then, shortly afterwards, the complete download you have ordered. I have had one or two minor problems with Handlo downloads – in one case, a serious musical problem which had to be corrected – but on the whole, I have found them very helpful and reliable.

Other readers will doubtless have their own favourite websites – Christopher Baker's 'An Online Christmas Songbook' is well worth a glance. Happy surfing!

*It would be helpful if readers would send information about other music sites that they find useful – or warnings of apparently useful sites whose editions are often faulty (or pirated: one reader told us of an extensive work from King's Music used without permission – you can spot them by the deliberate mistakes!)*

CB



## LONDON MUSIC

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The last couple of months of 2006 bought the final Mozart year flurry, including Florilegium's Wigmore Hall programme, 'Mozart and his Rivals' (30 Nov). This could have supplied rather more of the latter to have offered any real insight into the music of Mozart's musical rivals, although Antonio Salieri, Baldassare Galuppi and J. C. Bach each had a chance to show their wares. Not surprisingly for a group directed by a flautist, it was the flute repertoire that dominated (in a line up of flute and string quartet), with two Mozart Flute Quartets (285 & 285b), Salieri's Concerto for Flute and Strings in G and an arrangement for flute, violin and cello of arias from *Die Zauberflöte* published in the 1820s. Galuppi's attractive and well-crafted *Concerto a Quattro* in G minor grabbed the attention rather more than did Mozart's rather slight opening Flute Quartet in D, although Mozart certainly took the honours in the elegance and easy charm stakes. The highlight was a powerful performance of Mozart's Adagio and Fugue in C minor (546) by the string quartet.

One benefit that has come from the current closure for restoration of the Royal Festival Hall has been an increased interest in the organ in the Queen Elizabeth Hall (or, more accurately, about the only interest shown in the last 20 years or so). The first of this season's mini-series of three concerts (27 Nov) saw Catherine Ennis give a performance of Bach's *Musical Offering* using, slightly perversely, Jean Guillou's arrangement for a full-blown French eclectic organ rather than the QEHL's tiny little Germanic neo-baroque instrument. There is no agreed order for this work, but starting and finishing with the 3-part and 6-part Ricercars and playing the 10 canons before the Sonata made good sense. In a programme that must have been as demanding for the performer as it was for the audience, Catherine Ennis made very effective use of the limited tonal resources of the organ and overcame the many technical difficulties extremely well. She has a very solid sense of pulse and momentum, but I did wonder about her very distinctive and rather mannered articulation of the main theme – on several occasions, including during the introductory talk, she gave a very large separation to the two notes of the diminished 7<sup>th</sup> drop and then gave a very strong pairing of notes to the chromatic section. A bit of a throwback to the 1960s neo-baroque style – to match the organ, perhaps?

In a bid to give a rounded view of the musical results of Mozart year, I timidly put on a disguise and ventured round the corner to a Raymond Gubbay promotion at Basingstoke's Anvil concert hall (3 Dec) for a concert by the Mozart Festival Orchestra – 'a superb evening of perfect classics performed in an evocative candle-lit style setting' as the blurb would have it. The addition of the

word 'style' to the description should have alerted me to an evening when things were never quite what they seemed – starting with the fact that the 'candles' were all electric. The programme, 'Mozart 250 – 250 years of sheer genius' included the Overture to the Marriage of Figaro, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, a couple of concertos and Symphony No. 40. The whole bewigged orchestra were clad in the most elaborate period dress, revealing several well-turned calves, not least from conductor Steven Devine, who was also given the privilege of some rather fetching high heels to enhance muscle tone, in return for which he made some very elegant, and presumably period-style, low bows to the audience. Even his stool was given an elaborate covering. The audience entered into the spirit of the occasion by applauding enthusiastically after each and every movement. Despite the effort that had gone into the period dress, my hope for period instruments was dashed, but Steven Devine is well versed in period technique and did his best to impart this to the orchestra, even if the length of phrases was sometimes over-stretched. As soloist in the Piano Concerto 21, he produced some delightfully delicate moments, notably in the reprise of the slow movement. Mark van de Wiel was a very effective soloist in the Clarinet Concerto. I will confess that it wasn't as bad as I feared it might be, and it did pack in a sizeable audience. It was probably the only classical music concert that I can think of where there was a much higher proportion of white hair on stage than in the audience.

On more traditional ground, the Academy of Ancient Music, with their Associate Conductor, Paul Goodwin, contrasted Mozart with a Mozart-inspired new work commissioned from Thea Musgrave (Wigmore Hall, 11 Dec). They started with two early symphonies in F and G (19a & 129). The little F major work (lost until 1981) dates from 1763 when Mozart was 9 and touring Europe with his father. Assessing these kiddie works is always tricky, and I am certainly not going to criticize a 9-year old child for finding it hard to break out of the I-V harmonic cycle. The G major symphony is more assured. Although written in Salzburg (aged 16, and his first symphony in that city), it reflects the 'English' style of J. C. Bach. The concert closed with his last Salzburg symphony, No 33 in B flat major, reflecting his father's suggestion to write in a lighter style. In between came a staggering performance (and I mean that the 'exceptionally good' rather than 'tired and emotional' sense) of the operatic motet *Exsultate jubilate*, with the outstanding soprano Carolyn Sampson deservedly winning huge applause and 'bravas' from the audience. Her beautifully floated cadenza was a magical moment. Joseph Crouch did his best to overcome the lack of an organ by providing cello chords. Thea Musgrave's

impressive *Journey into Light* was commissioned by the AAM as a companion piece to *Exsultate jubilate*. Using early 16th-century texts, including two by the Scottish poet William Dunbar (c.1460–c.1513), that ‘describe the promise of salvation after life’s dark struggle’, this provided a contrast to the mood of the Mozart piece and demonstrated the musical versatility of Carolyn Sampson’s voice. Another fine example of the way that many period performers have welcomed modern composers into their sound world.

The Spitalfields Christmas Festival, now firmly settled back into the restored Christ Church, included amongst its eclectic musical mix a return of the European Union Baroque Orchestra – the orchestra for Europe-wide young postgraduate musicians that normally re-forms each year, and then tours in three or four groupings under leading musical directors. However, during the past year, and along with many other cultural groups that rely on EU funding, the EUBO seems to have fallen into an awkward one-year gap between the end of one 5-year funding plan and the start of the next cultural programme. The consequent reduction in their grant has meant that they have needed to call on players from previous years rather than run their normal annual auditions. It is to the credit of the organisation that these former players had been so willing to give up their time to support this enterprise, which so obviously needs to keep in the public eye with regular concerts. Indeed, I wish they would give more UK concerts – promoters take note. In the event, their Spitalfields programme (12 Dec) was unaccountably, and unacceptably, curtailed by the Festival to a mere hour-long taster of their normal programme. Nonetheless, these exceptionally talented young players showed their usual outstanding professionalism and musicality and, yet again, showed just how encouraging is the future of period performance, even if it is likely to be dominated by women performers – only two of this line-up of 18 were male.

Their challenging programme was Handel (the Passacaglia and Gigue from *Radamisto* and the Concerto Grosso op. 6/10) and Rameau’s Ballet Suite from *Acante et Céphise*, the last being a particularly spectacular performance. One of the features of the various musical directors that have guided EUBO orchestras over the years is their personal enthusiasm – Andrew Manze being one prime example. The director on this occasion (the harpsichordist, Lars Ulrik Mortensen) certainly followed the example of his predecessors. However, in this case, personal enthusiasm gave way to sheer eccentricity in a very theatrical, but ultimately far too distracting, display of flamboyant arm, head and body gestures, facial contortions, leaps from the harpsichord stool and some rather slinky and unattractive, if not downright sleazy, dance-like movements, notably at the end of the Concerto Grosso. I even feared for the safety of some of the players sitting close to him, particularly after he nearly punched the lights out of an innocent nearby cellist. I don’t know whether this extraordinary display was a factor in the very evident enjoyment amongst the players, but I would like to think it was their

engagement with the music. I know some people are irritated by smiles from the performing platform, but I found knowing looks and grins between players most appealing. For me, engaging with each other is part of engaging with the music. Notable in this context were the two cellists (Gyöngy Erödi and Lucy Scotchmer) and the back row of the second violins Siv Thomassen and Barbara Barros (who, incidentally, both tie their violins on with neck scarves).

## OPERA

Following on from the Royal Opera House’s new production of *Figaro* earlier this year, the English National Opera managed to sneak in towards the end of Mozart year their own new *Figaro*, which opened at the Coliseum on 2 November. Director Olivia Fuchs, in her ENO debut, has set this production in a 1930s’ Upstairs-Downstairs country house, with the inevitable addition of the Freudian/Daliesque surrealists elements that most opera directors and designers hurl at us nowadays. The contrast between the two sides of the country house divide was starkly evident from the start, with gardeners watering plastic flowers (which reappear in a giant and spiked form at the end) and an army of goose-pluckers plucking geese beneath a bevy of bell pulls. The bed-measuring first scene took place in a tiny box-room, isolated half way up the otherwise blacked-out proscenium, giving a sense of isolation. Some characterisations seemed a little unrealistic, not least the key Figaro/Susanna and the Count/Countess pairings. As is so often the case, the role of Cherubino became an impressive cameo role for a young singer, in this case Victoria Simmonds. Others who particularly impressed me were Jonathan Veira as Doctor Bartolo and Jonathan Lemalu as Figaro. Both Susanna and the Countess suffered from excess vibrato, even by ENO standards. Conductor Roland Böer struggled to maintain control over his forces, with some timing mishaps twixt stage and pit and several moments when his pace was too far from the speed limit. His fortepiano continuo playing was inventive (drawing on several other recognisable Mozart works) but the figuration was too fussy for my tastes. This rather bland production failed to expose the humour and sexuality of the work, as well as Mozart’s musical insight and punch – in this head-to-head with the Royal Opera House, the honours go to the senior house.

Pergolesi’s tiny intermezzo *La serva padrona* is famous in musical history, but rarely performed, not least because it lasts for less than an hour. But it is an attractive work and with only two singers and one silent performer, it should be eminently economic to stage. The bolshie young maid-servant (Serpina) first dominates her elderly master (Uberto) and then tricks him into marrying her by a ruse via the silent Vespone. The Royal Opera House Young Artists Programme (Lindbury Studio, 3 Nov) including no information about the work or its interpretation in the sparse programme notes, but it would appear that director Harry Fehr took considerable liberties with the scant plot, not least, as far as I could make out, in presenting Serpina

and Uberto as a couple who enjoyed a bit of dressing up (as maidservant and schoolboy), spanking and, nearly, a threesome with the silent Vespone (who, for no apparent reason, was replaced during the entire first half by a clothes stand). This direction really made nonsense of the entire plot, as did the pantomime antics of the performers, the silly English translation and, I am afraid, singing that was far from my impression of what Pergolesi might have expected. The over-complex staging, only part of which was visible to the whole audience, was, I presume, intended to be set in the 1920s but had rather too many overtones of the 1950s. The acting and singing didn't suit the small space, and the use of modern instruments was unfortunate, as was the conducting in its failure to keep the intensity going.

A few days after a poor performance courtesy of one of the world's greatest opera houses came an outstanding one by one of the youngest opera companies around. The rather awkwardly planned Lilian Baylis Theatre, tagged onto Sadler's Wells, was the venue for Handel's *Orlando*, given by 'Independent Opera at Sadler's Wells', a new project started in 2005 to 'serve as a London platform for talented young directors, designers, singers, dancers and others involved in the staging and production of opera'. *Orlando* is not the easiest of operas for any company to perform, so the artistic excellence of this production is the more remarkable – it was only the second production the company have done. Not knowing the Baylis Theatre, it took me a while to work out the stage layout – the overture had the small group of (period) instrumentalists sheltering in what I first assumed was some sort of cave. Only when the full lights came up did it become obvious that they were in the oval centre of a tilted elliptical walkway spreading across the width of the wide but shallow stage. This was a very clever staging device. Not only did it place the musicians centre stage, but it gave a multi-dimensional feel to the production. As well as the full 360 degrees of the walkway, performers used the sides, back and centre of the staging, with the central oval as entry and exit points. The front of the walkway was tucked right up to the front of the audience, giving an immediacy that is often missing in traditional staging with orchestra pits. The staging (directed by Alessandro Talevi) also made extremely effective use of lighting, video projection, silhouettes, shadow puppets and two fetchingly lithe dancers. Set-pieces like Dorinda's garden were very cleverly staged with a selection of 'plants on a stick', and Zoroastro's evocation of the heavens was stylishly accompanied by a space view of the earth. William Towers was a most impressive Orlando, combining outstanding singing with a sensitive appraisal of Orlando's confusing state of mind, including, of course, the mad scene – for this I would forgive him any amount of vibrato, even when substituted for trills. Christopher Ainslie (Medora) was a gentler singer in volume and in use of vibrato, and contrasting his more sensitive role well against the knightly splendour of Orlando – a very clever pairing of singers. His moments with Angelica (Rebecca Ryan) were very convincing. The impressive Joana Seara caught the

mood of Dorinda's character beautifully, with some expressive acting and a fine range of vocal timbre – a young singer to watch out for. Nicholas Warden's Zoroastro was suitably powerful, although I do wonder whether his vocal style is more suitable for a later repertoire. Gary Cooper's direction of the small band was authoritatively sensitive and musical. It was a joy and a privilege to witness these young(ish) artists making sense of this complicated work with such accomplishment. Although they are not dedicated to period opera, I hope they make frequent returns to the early repertoire.

As with the above two reviews, these two following reviews will contrast the sublime with the ridiculous, starting with the latter – Welsh National Opera's touring performance of Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses*, which I saw at The Mayflower Theatre, Southampton (28 Nov). This work is performed rarely enough, so I was hoping that it would allow the audience an insight into Monteverdi's musical world. However, as so often happens with opera performance nowadays, the director, David Alden, battered us with his own bizarre fantasy interpretation of the work, which failed to impress me – and most of the audience, judging by overheard comments. Although the Southampton audience didn't come up with the booing that the Welsh managed at the production's premiere, I think many of them were left thoroughly bemused. I do wonder what is in the minds of opera directors that leads them to feel the need to impose so totally their own interpretations on such a glorious score as this. If you really don't like the opera, why direct it? If you do, why do so much to destroy or divert it? I won't bother to try and describe all the oddities that we were presented with, but they left the singers and conductor, the eminent period interpreter Rinaldo Alessandrini (directing a mixed period/modern instrument band), in the invidious position of having to compromise their own artistry in order to project the director's vision. Ulysses is a dishevelled old tramp in a wheelchair, Neptune was a frogman, Iro fries cats and Minerva transforms herself from a fighter pilot to a little-girl fairy godmother outfit with Prom Queen sash (in Greek – why?) In the circumstances, all the cast deserve an honourable mention, but this is not perhaps the moment for any real critical analysis of their individual performances. So hats off to Sara Fulgoni, Paul Nilon, Ed Lyon, Elizabeth Vaughan, Elizabeth Atherton, Neil Jenkins, Sarah Tynan, Andrew Tortise, Charlotte Ellett, Iestyn Davies, Geoffery Dolton, Clive Bayley and Andrew Mackenzie-Wicks. And to the Welsh National Opera for their enterprise for actually staging and touring this little-performed work – I hope they learn lessons from this experience.

Within a week of returning from a visit to the amazingly preserved so-called Villa of Poppea just outside Pompeii (which also contains the remains of houses belonging to her family) came one of the musical treatments of her life, Monteverdi's *Poppea*, performed at the delightful Britten Theatre at the Royal College of Music (20 years old this year) by the Benjamin Britten International Opera School



and the Royal College of Music Opera Orchestra (using period instruments) under Michael Rosewell (1 Dec). One of the many things that aspiring young opera singers have to cope with nowadays is stripping off and simulating sexual acts that would make their rather dubious uncles blush, so I suppose it was appropriate that the opening scene featured the naked Nero and Poppea, both making a pretty good, if not entirely successful job, of maintaining some degree of modesty – an art that, I guess, will come from more opera experience. But this is not going to be another rant at opera directors – indeed, Paul Curran's direction was one of the best I have seen of this work, exploring its subtleties and showing appropriate deference to the musical message that Monteverdi had provided. The inventive staging from designer Paul Edwards set the piece in an elegant and colourful 1930s setting, with Nerone in plus-fours and a cloth cap. The young singers rose to meet this high standard. With double-cast productions like this, I usually avoid mentioning individuals on the basis that it might be seen as rather unfair to the performers on the night that I wasn't there; but on this occasion I will note very promising performances in by Vuyani Mlinde as a very impressive Seneca, Vojtech Šafárik, Sigríður Ósk Kristjánsdóttir, Sophie Bevan, Nathan Vale, Ben Johnson, Kim Sheehan, Rita Therese Ziem, Ida Falk Winland and Eliana Pretorian.

[Note that both the 'sublime' performances had modern, not historic, staging. The crucial difference is whether the production comes from understanding of both libretto and music or is imposed. I don't know what the formal pecking order is in professional opera houses, but I reckon that it is the music that is the main justification for reviving an old opera ('old' in the sense of the 'ancient music' definition of more than 20 years old), so therefore the conductor should be in charge: if the production distorts the music – either by distorting the plot or making singers perform in impossible postures – than he should demand change or walk out. CB]

#### DON'T THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS?

I usually avoid concerts that end up with carol singing, but one or two of this year's Christmas programmes seemed perversely unwilling to acknowledge the festive season at all, notably the Tallis Scholars in their contribution (21 Dec) to the latest incarnation of the St John's, Smith Square Christmas Festival, now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year. The musical brilliance of Tallis's opening *Loquebantur variis linguis* (for Whitsun), with its toe-curling false relations and distinctive cadential colour, should have set a pattern for the evening, but didn't. I am afraid that the rest of the programme left me feeling flat and yearning for a burst of 'The Holly and the Ivy'. With one possible exception (Philippe de Monte's *O suavis et dulcedo*), not one work bore any relation to Christmas. The mood was all rather intense, academic and penitential – if not totally soporific. It failed to raise any real emotional response in me, my companion and, judging from overheard comments, from many in the audience. The sopranos were strained,

particularly in their upper registers, and there were frequent moments when the choir as a whole were not in clean consort, including *O suavis et dulcedo*, where the male alto voice dominated throughout. Christopher Tye's 'Western Wind' Mass was the key work and seemed to go down well with those members of the audience who applauded after every movement. With plenty of two-part writing across all voices, this allowed the quality of the individual voices to be heard, the stars being alto Caroline Trevor, tenor Andrew Carwood and bass Robert (or 'Rob', as the programme named him) Macdonald. The concluding *Mater Christi* by Taverner was a notch above the other works in vocal quality, with some very testing high soprano lines to negotiate. The acoustic of St John's is not generous enough to give the necessary blend and bloom to a repertoire and a vocal style like this – it is far better suited to the baroque repertoire.

The St John's acoustic issue also affected The Cardinal's Musick exploration of works by Tallis and Byrd (18 Dec), as, to a much lesser extent, did the relevance to Christmas issue. Their programme '*Salve intemerata virgo* – a Tudor celebration of Christmas' compared Tallis with Byrd. The Tallis first half involved the fascinating insertion of pairs of the 'Eight Tunes for Archbishop Parker's Psalter' into the *Missa Salve intemerata virgo* – liturgically nonsense, of course, but a wonderful reflection of the religious turmoil that was so central to Tallis's life. I wondered about the decrescendo at the end of Psalm Tune IV, to the words 'Out psalms and hymns let us pronounce', but it made a good introduction to the *Gloria*. And Psalm Tune VIII ('God grant us grace'), formed a delightfully gentle Benediction, or *Ita missa est*, to conclude the Mass. As with the Tallis Scholars, the alto line was occasionally rather too prominent, largely because of an edgy tone rather than sheer volume, but otherwise this was a very fine performance. The Byrd-focussed second half reflected the change in tastes as regards choir pitch, with the altos generally taking the upper line. It was centred around his propers for Christmas Day, described as 'witty' in the programme note; and concluded with his powerful and ebullient *Tribue, Domine*. Fine singing and a fascinating programme.

The baroque got its chance to demonstrate the St John's acoustics in the other two Festival concerts, firstly with the 12 singers of I Fagiolini and the orchestra of the Academy of Ancient Music, directed by Robert Hollingworth (20 Dec), with two of Bach's Christmas cantatas (BWV 63 and 65), his Lutheran Mass in F (233) and the London premiere of a work commissioned by I Fagiolini from Adrian Williams, *Winter Chorale*. The concert opened, as would Bach's own services in Leipzig, with a motet by a work from an earlier composer, very often one of Bach's own family from his own *Altbachishes Archiv*. Johann Christoph Bach (1642-1703) was JSB's uncle, and his motet *Lieber Herr Gott, wecke uns auf*, was reworked by JSB in 1749, with added string and wind parts doubling the voice. However, on this occasion, the unaccompanied version was performed, most effectively, from the aisle at the centre of the church. The two cantatas were both

performed during Bach's inaugural year in Leipzig, although the *Christen ätzt diesen Tag* had been composed around 10 years earlier in Weimar. This joyous and celebratory work (with four trumpets) was the more impressive for the contrast of the slow and meditative reading of the first recit – *O selger Tag!* – by William Purefoy. However, I could have done without the intrusive counting of money from the programme sales desk during the second recitative. The final chorus (*Höchster, shau in Gnaden an*) was a delight. The cantata *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen* shows Bach the orchestral colourist at his best, with a line up of horns, recorders and oboes da caccia to reflect the 'magnificence and exoticism of the Magi', starting with their slow processional chorus as several solo voices gradually coerce into an ecstatic final proclamation. Nicholas Mulroy was particularly impressive in the last recit and aria, with its agile vocal lines, as were oboists Frank de Bruine and Lar Henriksson, and the horn-playing of Robert Ashworth and David Bentley was outstanding. Another avoidable distraction was the inconsistently timed gaps between sections when soloists made their way down from the choir to the front of the stage. The final Mass was given an enlightened reading, with notable solo contributions from Giles Underwood, Carys Lane and Clare Wilkinson.

The conclusion of the St John's, Smith Square Festival was the annual sell-out *Messiah* given by the outstanding choir, Polyphony, with the Academy of Ancient Music (23 Dec) – an absolute must on the London music scene, alongside their Easter Bach Passions. However many times I hear these annual Polyphony *Messiahs*, they always sound fresh and invigorating, and there is always something new in Stephen Layton's interpretations. Polyphony goes from strength to strength, with excellent consort singing and not a hint of a wobble or a dominant voice. Although not a specialist choir, they project an insight into the Handelian sound world that is rare even among the specialists. Stephen Layton seems to get beneath the surface of the music and the text, exposing its emotional intensity and depth. I don't know if he is a believer in the story *Messiah* tells, but I get the impression that he feels this music from his soul – the last line of the chorus 'Surely he has borne our griefs' seemed to me to be an intensely emotional personal response to the words '...the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all'. In opposing mood, he had the chorus punch out the words '...if He delight in Him'. His conducting is relatively restrained in comparison with many in today's conducting community, but even though he must have conducted this work hundreds of times, he seems to inspire and invigorate the performers. Iestyn Davies and James Rutherford returned from last year's performance, as did Emma Kirkby (who had been indisposed in 2005 and replaced at short notice by Carolyn Sampson). Similarly, this year Andrew Kennedy replaced John Mark Ainsley, and proved to be a most effective opening comforter, smiling benevolently upon us all like a kindly young curate eager to please his new congregation. Iestyn Davies is an increasingly impressive countertenor – he made some very attractive additions to the vocal line in

'O thou that tellest' and showed his ability to hold a long vibrato-free note. His own vibrato, when it happens, is very fast, almost integrating into the overall tone. I particularly liked James Rutherford's 'For behold, darkness shall cover the earth' – he avoided depicting the usual mysterious darkness but conjured up a dramatic black and rather scary scene. Emma Kirkby was on particularly good form, with some delightful inflexions to her voice in 'Come unto him'. Having whinged about it for years, I do now find myself looking forward to Stephen Layton's annual bit of naughtiness, as he sends his continuo organist out into the cold to wind himself up the stairs and along the gallery to the huge liturgically 'west end' organ (actually at the east end) which enters quietly during the final Amen and builds to such a huge crescendo that it totally dominates the choir and orchestra and sends the heads of the audience spinning round to find where the sound is coming from. Not very HIP, but a wonderful send off into the Christmas season.

A week or so earlier came another highlight of London's 2006 musical Christmas – Les Arts Florissants under William Christie with a performance of Bach's complete Christmas Oratorio (Barbican, 15 Dec). Although intended to be heard as six separate cantatas over the whole Christmas season, Christie managed to make the entire work coalesce into a magnificent, if rather lengthy, whole, not least by using the device of moving quite quickly from one cantata to the other. However, a 7pm start caught a sizeable chunk of the audience out, so there was a hiatus before the second cantata to allow them in. Also, as in the I Fagiolini Bach reviewed above, there was rather a lot of movement of soloists around the stage. Even with a sizeable choir (25), the Barbican is a bit too large for period performances to fill the acoustic with sound, so there is usually a period of adjustment required for the ear to get use to the volume. But Christie's direction, with its attention to detail and his dance-like approach to the music, immediately draws the listener in and his brisk speeds keeps up the momentum well. Christie is a great supporter of young performers, and he fielded a youthful, and impressive line-up of soloists – Marie Arnet (soprano), Tim Mead (counter-tenor), Nicholas Watts, (tenor, Evangelist), Marcel Beekman, (tenor) and Markus Werba (bass).

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ALLEGRETTO

Who is it that rides thro' the for-est so fast. Whilst  
 Who is it that rides thro' the for-est so fast. Whilst  
 Who is it that rides thro' the for-est so fast. Whilst

night glooms around him, Whilst chill roars the blast; The Fa-ther who holds his young  
 night glooms around him, Whilst chill roars the blast; The Fa-ther who holds his young  
 night glooms around him, Whilst chill roars the blast; The Fa-ther who holds his young

Son in his arm, And close in his man-tle has wrapt him up warm.  
 Son in his arm, And close in his man-tle has wrapt him up warm. Why  
 Son in his arm, And close in his man-tle has wrapt him up warm.

3

My Fa-ther my Fa-ther the Erl King is  
 trembles my darling, why shrinks he with fear.

near, The Erl King with his Crown, and his beard long and white, My Child you're de-  
 My Child you're de-  
 My Child you're de-

ceiv'd by the vapours of night, My Child you're deceiv'd by the vapours of night.  
 ceiv'd by the vapours of night, My Child you're deceiv'd by the vapours of night.  
 ceiv'd by the vapours of night, My Child you're deceiv'd by the vapours of night.



4

4

If thou wilt dear Ba-by with me go a-way, I'll give thee fine garments, we'll  
play a fine play; Fine flowers are growing white scar-let and blue, On the  
My Fa-ther my Fa-ther and  
banks of yon ri-ver, and all are for you.

This system contains the first four staves of the musical score. The first two staves are for the vocal line, and the next two are for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the notes.

dost thou not hear. What words the Erl King whispers soft in my ear. Oh  
Oh  
Oh

This system contains the next three staves of the musical score. The lyrics continue below the notes.

hush thee my Child, set thy bo-som at ease, Thou hear'st but the willows when  
hush thee my Child, set thy bo-som at ease, Thou hear'st but the willows when  
hush thee my Child, set thy bo-som at ease, Thou hear'st but the willows when  
murmurs the breeze, Thou hear'st but the willows when murmurs the breeze.  
murmurs the breeze, Thou hear'st but the willows when murmurs the breeze.  
murmurs the breeze, Thou hear'st but the willows when murmurs the breeze.

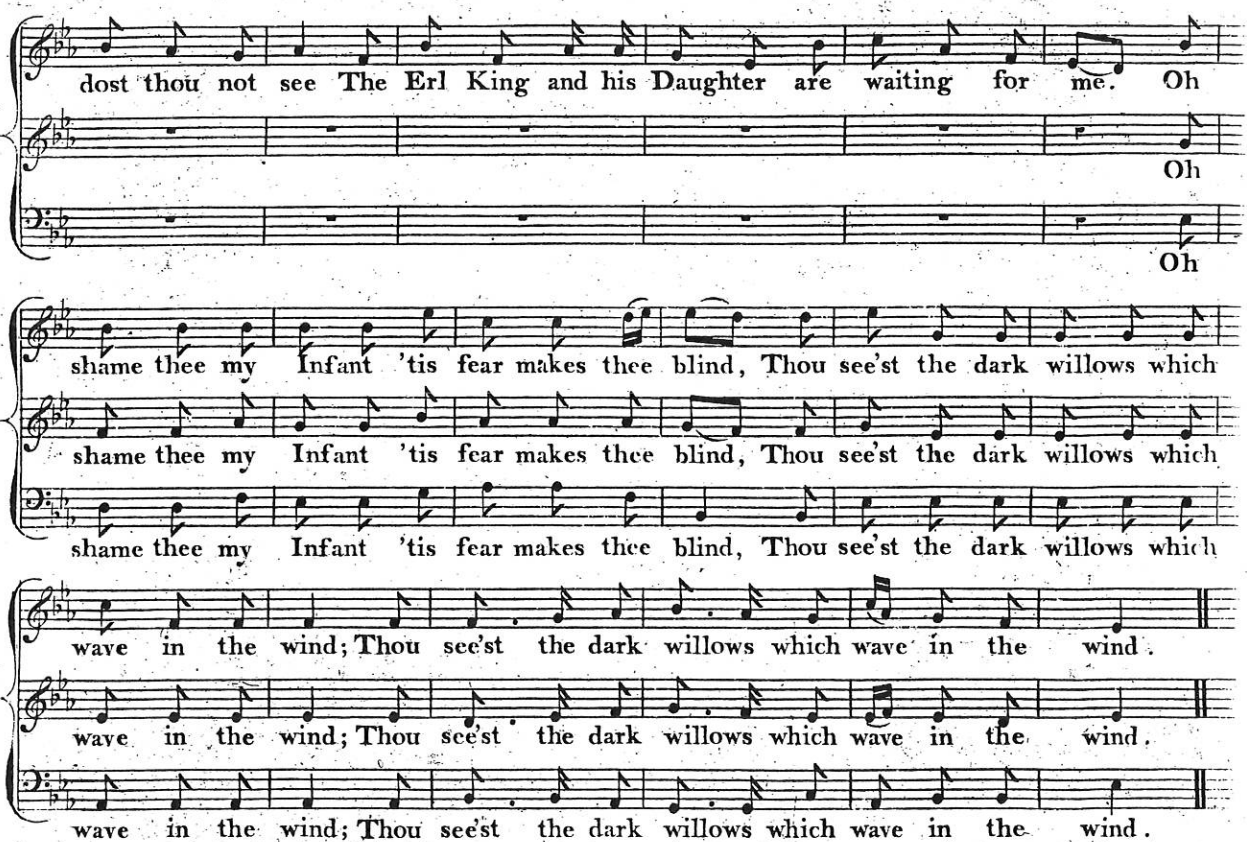
This system contains the final six staves of the musical score. The lyrics continue below the notes.

6



If thou wilt dear Ba-by with me go a-way, My Daughter shall nurse thee so  
fair and so gay; My Daughter in pur-ple and gold who is drest, Shall  
My Fa-ther my Fa-ther and  
love thee and kiss thee, and sing thee to rest.

7



dost thou not see The Erl King and his Daughter are waiting for me. Oh  
Oh  
Oh  
shame thee my Infant 'tis fear makes thee blind, Thou see'st the dark willows which  
shame thee my Infant 'tis fear makes thee blind, Thou see'st the dark willows which  
shame thee my Infant 'tis fear makes thee blind, Thou see'st the dark willows which  
wave in the wind; Thou see'st the dark willows which wave in the wind.  
wave in the wind; Thou see'st the dark willows which wave in the wind.  
wave in the wind; Thou see'st the dark willows which wave in the wind.

8

I love thee, I doat on thy features so fine I must and will have thee, and  
My Fa-ther my Fa-ther oh hold me now fast, He  
force makes thee mine.  
pulls me, he hurts me he'll have me at last. The Fa-ther he trembled, he  
The Fa-ther he trembled, he  
The Fa-ther he trembled, he

*ALLEGRISSIMO*

9

doubled his speed, O'er hills and through forests he spurr'd his black steed; But  
doubled his speed, O'er hills and through forests he spurr'd his black steed; But  
doubled his speed, O'er hills and through forests he spurr'd his black steed; But  
when he arriv'd at his own Castle door, Life throb'd in the poor Baby's  
when he arriv'd at his own Castle door, Life throb'd in the poor Baby's  
when he arriv'd at his own Castle door, Life throb'd in the poor Baby's  
bo-som no more; Life throb'd in the poor Ba-by's bo-som no more.  
bo-som no more; Life throb'd in the poor Ba-by's bo-som no more.  
bo-som no more; Life throb'd in the poor Ba-by's bo-som no more.

*Largo*



## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett

## RENAISSANCE FLORENCE

Frank A. D'Accone *Music in Renaissance Florence: Studies and Documents* Ashgate Variorum, 2006. xiv + 330pp, £57.50. ISBN 10 0 7546 5900 3

Frank D'Accone is now most visibly represented on library shelves by his monumental study of music in Sienna. This represents his other geographic specialisation, Florence, and Sienna has no place in the index of this collection of articles. It is unusual among the Variorum Collected Studies Series that I have reviewed, in that I only have one of the articles in its original format (with perhaps a couple more in photocopies). So although I am familiar with some of the work D'Accone has done, there is quite a lot here that is new to me, though much of it has permeated into my general awareness. There are three items from the 1960s, three from the early 1970s, with the remaining three from 1984, 1994 and 2001. I presume that most of his Florentine archival work was done in the earlier stage of his career, before he moved on to Sienna. The most approachable article for the performer of Florentine music, 'Lorenzo the Magnificent and Music' (1994) lacks the feel of being based on fresh material, though is perhaps even more valuable for the non-specialist, but 'Sacred Music in Savonarola's Time' (2001), also very readable, is followed by 19 pages of transcribed documents. One of the earliest items is 'Heinrich Isaac in Florence' (1963); the updating comments refer to recent research by Zanovelli and Blake Wilson (the latter in JAMS 59/1, 2006). This is a useful collection of articles which gives insight into the musical world of a city better known for its visual arts, and as a demonstration of the value of careful archival work.

## BRETT ON BYRD

Philip Brett *William Byrd and His Contemporaries: Essays and a Monograph...* Edited by Joseph Kerman and Davitt Moroney University of California Press, 2007. xiii + 252pp, £26.95. ISBN 0 520 24758 2

The bibliography of Brett's publications on Elizabethan and Jacobean Music lists no books, just editions, articles, reviews and liner notes. This book remedies that lack. Maybe it gives him a status in this particular field that he lacks, particularly since the credit due to editors seems now less than it used to be in the academic world. The editor's introduction states that Brett's research on the *Gradualia* did not reach the circulation it deserved because it was presented as introductions to his editions. But surely the appropriate place for it is with the music. As I'm sure I have written before, current musicology is too

concerned with word (logos) rather than music. The current *Music and Letters* has 85 pages devoted to reviews of books, none to reviews of music. (While I have doubts that a musicological journal should review new compositions, it should certainly be reviewing new editions.)

It would be easy to pigeon-hole Brett as primarily an editor. His work on Britten obviously belies that (his essays on the composer have also been collected in another California UP volume), and his concern for the music shines through. His review of Hugh Keyte's edition of Striggio's *Ecce beatam lucem* criticises both musicologists and performers for their lack of intelligent understanding. (p. 29). (Hugh has subsequently rethought his suggestion for the allocation of the instruments.) The judgment of the piece itself, however, while probably fundamentally right (it isn't as good as *Spem in alium*), suffers from not taking his description of it as 'epigrammatic and miniaturist' (p. 25) further. In my experience, the music only comes to life if it is treated as a madrigal rather than a motet. (Brett should, incidentally, have come clean about his revision of the Oxford UP *Spem in alium*, for which he was only allowed to make minimal changes to the TCM edition.)

Personally, I'd rather this volume had contained all of Brett's articles and omitted the *Gradualia* prefaces: the one on 'Pitch and transposition in the Paston Manuscripts' would have been particularly useful, since it is in a Festschrift rather than a journal, so less accessible. But many libraries don't let 'collected works' out of the room in which they are kept, so it is useful that they are more accessible. The article on the word setting of Byrd's consort songs is a reminder of a still-neglected aspect of his work. His consort music is ignored here, and the keyboard music is barely mentioned, though there is a perceptive comment on p. 126 (not picked up under 'keyboard music' in the index): 'Just as the keyboard pavan-galliard pair flowered because of their strophic limitations, and his grounds and other variations could build to expressive heights because of the constraints of expressive underpinnings, so in his vocal music Byrd also needed some real constraint in order to reach an even deeper level.'

I only met Brett once: he had chosen to open the first Berkeley Early Music Festival in 1980 with Monteverdi Vespers from my edition. I arrived a couple of days too late for the concert, but we had a meal together one night and I found him charming. I expected to hear him chair a discussion on Byrd's keyboard music at the Boston EM Festival a few years later, but instead found myself taking his place, since Brett preferred to attend a meeting on gay rights elsewhere. That aspect of Brett's work doesn't

impinge here, except in as far as Byrd suffered from his minority belief. (A news story current as I write this suggests that Catholics are now more outsiders than homosexuals.) This book shows Brett as a fine musician (the cover pictures him baton in hand) with a mastery of scholarship and an ability to express himself clearly.

#### EUROPEAN POLYCHORALITY

Antonio Carlini, Danilo Curti-Feininger, Siegfried Gmeinwieser (ed.) *La policoralità in Europa al tempo di Paris Lodron / 'Missa Salisburgensis': Biber contra Benevoli. (Atti del Convento internazionale di studi 'Paris Lodron e la musica di son tempo')* Provincia autonoma di Trento, Soprintendenza per i Beni librari e archivistici & Biblioteca musicale Laurence K. G. Feininger, 2006. 182pp. ISBN 88-7702-148-9.

This attractively-produced paperback book will be of considerable interest to anyone concerned with the polychoral repertory in general and with Biber's *Missa Salisburgensis* in particular. Its eleven essays (all in Italian, and with Italian resumes) present the proceedings of a one-day conference held at Rovereto, Province of Trento, on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2003, as part of the *Festival Musica Sacra di Bolzano e Trento*. The conference marked the 350th anniversary of the death of a leading North-Italian ecclesiastic and patron of the arts, Paris Lodron (1586-1653). As Prince-Bishop of Salzburg, he encouraged performance of large-scale polychoral music and consecrated the rebuilt cathedral in 1628 – the occasion for which it was formerly believed that the great Roman polychoralist Orazio Benevoli (then aged 23) composed the gargantuan ('53-part') *Missa Salisburgensis* and associated hymn for the same forces, *Plaudite tympana*, which honours St. Rupert, first bishop of Salzburg. Heinrich Biber is now credited with the composition of mass and hymn for the 1682 celebrations of the 1100th anniversary of St. Rupert's establishment of the diocese.

The book's subtitle 'Biber contra Benevoli' is something of a sales gimmick, perhaps, since Biber's authorship has been generally accepted since the 1628 date was demolished by Ernst Hintermaier thirty years ago, and only three contributions concern the Salzburg Mass. Two of these are of considerable interest, however. Hintermaier explains how the misconstruing of the composer's initials (H[orazio] B[enevoli] for H[einrich] B[iber]) by a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Salzburg-Cathedral archivist led to the initial misattribution, and he retraces the detective work behind his reattribution in fascinating detail. Salvatore De Salvo Fattor complements this with what amounts to a comprehensive reception history, from the rediscovery of the principal score in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (when it was within a whisker of being destroyed), via the misattribution, Hintermaier's correction, and the slow process of its acceptance – this with copious quotations from a range of commentators on the works and a useful bibliography. Less gripping is the contribution by Sergio Balestracci that first caught my attention, 'Una nuova partitura della *Missa*

*Salisburgensis*'. This deals, not with a newly-discovered source, as one might expect, but with his own new edition of the work. He does not speculate on the original placing of the various choirs (a vital aspect of polychoral performance to which the music can often provide clues). Nor does the photograph of Sr. Balestracci's first Italian performance of the works inspire much confidence, with all the performers lumped together in the sanctuary of a modest-sized Salzburg church.\*

Other essays concern Stefano Bernardi, the true composer of the (unidentified and probably lost) multichoir mass of the 1628 consecration; the polychoral music of Pietro Lappi, Salzburg Kappelmeister in Bishop Lodron's time; and some more general considerations of large-scale polychorality of the period – in Milan (with some mouth-watering musical extracts), in South Germany and Italy, and in early-seicento Roman oratorios. The book is a welcome addition to the burgeoning study of the once neglected field of multi-choir music.

Co-producing the conference (and presumably financing the book) is the Biblioteca Musicale Laurence K. G. Feininger in Trento, which preserves the huge MS and print collection of Feininger, a musicological *unicò*: an Eric Morecambe look-alike of genial personality and ample private means, a young emigrant to the States from Nazi Germany, a convert from Judaism to Catholicism who eventually became a priest. He divided his time between the study of Du Fay and the publication of his own excellent (though original-clef) editions of vast amounts of Roman 17<sup>th</sup>-century liturgical music. For the latter enterprise Feininger set up the grandly-named *Società Universalis Sanctae Ceciliae*, whose various series of publications (the complete works of Benevoli among them) ceased abruptly with his tragic death in a car crash in 1973. The library continues to flourish, but does the society still exist, I wonder? Is there no chance of the completion of his projects? It was set fair to do for the Roman seicento pretty much what the *Monumenta Mensurabilis Musicae* series is doing, on a much larger scale, for renaissance sacred polyphony.

Hugh Keyte

*This lack of polychoral experience explains Balestracci's objection to the three additional parts added in the King's Music edition to supply basses to choirs 2, 3 and 6. If you place the choirs in different locations, their need is obvious, and any competent musician could have copied them from the continuo parts in the score.*

CB

#### HANDEL'S LATER OPERAS

Winton Dean *Handel's Operas 1726-1741*. Boydell Press, 2006. xx + 565pp, £49.95. ISBN 10: 1 84383 268 2

If I was a delegate of Oxford University Press, I would want to know why they had let another publisher issue the second volume (though it isn't actually called vol. 2) of such an outstanding publication. Much musicology has a very short shelf-life, but this will be essential reading for decades. I bought Winton Dean's *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* in 1960 (the year after its publication). It

provided musicological backing for my enthusiasm caught from the early Handel Opera Society productions and it has become one of my most-used books, not just because it is the most thorough and readable book on its subject – and there is little comparison for any other composer save perhaps Julian Budden on Verdi's operas – but also because it is an invaluable reference work, as is *Handel's Operas 1704-1726* (1987).

In all three books, the method is the same. The chapter on each work begins with the story, its sources and the libretto. Then each singer's role is discussed in detail. There follow sections on history and text, the autograph, librettos, and copies and editions. The range of documentary sources called upon is wide, and there is considerable information about the circumstances of the composition and original performances. What is missing is an account of how each opera develops in sequence as the listener hears it. Admittedly, the intervening recitative between arias would prevent most of the audience noticing if an aria in E flat was followed by one in E, though significant scenes are treated as a whole. But when watching an opera, one reacts to events as they are presented. Here, the dramatic progress of the action is discussed chiefly in terms of the libretto rather than the score.

General remarks on Handelian opera are not repeated from the previous volume. There are extensive appendices, including early performances, borrowings, and modern stagings – the last not entirely exhaustive: performances for which we have supplied the music are missing, and the column for editor/translator lists editors who rewrote the music rather than those who tried to present accurate representations of the sources (so I can find neither my name nor King's Music attached to performances listed that used my *Alcina*, for instance). I'm not complaining of not being named, but at the heading of the column.

The book is, however, such a cornucopia that I'm not going to complain. Winton Dean's understanding of Handel is profound, and is based on a long lifetime (90 years) of work, understanding, wisdom and experience. I was surprised that, in his preface, he feels he has to justify the sections on source materials – why? It is an important and unusual feature of all three books, invaluable for an editor, and still useful even if HHA is getting on quite quickly with the operas – music enthusiasts or students who want to buy a score are more likely to buy a reprinted Chrysander for £20 than a Bärenreiter score for getting on to ten times that amount. It is definitely worth investing £50 on this volume. Epilogue 2 on modern stagings needs to be read by directors who think they can do what they like. From the strength of his awareness (obvious throughout the book) of the intensely dramatic nature of Handel's work, Winton Dean justly concludes: 'The musical realisation of Handel's art goes from strength to strength as more and more conductors, singers and instrumentalists become familiar with his style, whereas too many stage directors could be likened to footballers who, after working their way skilfully through the opposition defence till

the goal is a their mercy, blast the ball high over the bar into the crowd' – though if I was to use a football metaphor, I'd choose scoring own goals. All of us should be extremely grateful that Winton Dean has been able to complete his magnum opus at the age of ninety: perhaps he could spend his retirement treating the non-dramatic oratorios with the skill he devoted to the dramatic ones.

#### CATCHES & GLEES

Brian Robins *Catch and Glee Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* The Boydell Press, 2006. ix + 178pp, £45.00. ISBN 1 84383 212 7

Singing catches and glees was, in the period covered, an exercise indulged by the cultured classes, but spreading during the century. The clubs in which the singing took place were formal institutions with specific (and often similar) rules, which were taken far more seriously than the constitutions current amateur organisations may have to satisfy the requirements of the Charity Commission. The catch element, with its 'rugby song' element and naive delight in the unsubtle innuendo of textual overlaps (as in *My man John*) became more respectable with the greater emphasis on glees (simple part-songs, often for male voices, but sometimes requiring boys) and the occasional presence of ladies.

The history of the clubs is traced in detail, with quotations from participants; Brian Robins' other subject of research, John Marsh, is frequently called as evidence. It would have been interesting to learn more about how the musical organisations compared with those devoted to other interests, a subject briefly mentioned on p. 17. Less is said about the music itself, though there is a chapter on 'aesthetics, form and poetry'. At first there was a retrospective element in the repertoire, but in 1762 the Catch Club established a competition for new catches and glees. The Club had been formed the previous year with nine members, the best known being John Montague, fourth Earl of Sandwich, the original consumer of the eponymous fast food; his ancestral seat, Hinchinbrook, is just outside Huntingdon and is now a school. The musical impetus, however, came from Edmund Thomas Warren, whose 32 *Collections of catches, canons and glees* (1763-94) from the Club's MS collection maps the repertoire during the period of its heyday. I can find no entry for this in the bibliography except for the facsimile. Another omission is Jon Gillaspie's *The Catalogue of Music in the Bath Reference Library to 1985* (vol. 1, 1986): the introduction has four large pages devoted to catch clubs. The general impression given is that the music was sung one-to-a-part, though at times all present joined in: the topic might have been covered specifically rather than by casual references. It is clear that, to quote a report of a lecture given by Walter Parratt in the Sheldonian Theatre on 8 March 1910, 'they were originally written for men's voices only, were never intended to be sung by more than one voice a part, and they should be unaccompanied'. Boy trebles, however, were used right from the inauguration of the Catch Club.



The catch and glee declined as forms and gradually lost their social function in the 19th century, though the Catch Club still survives and the introduction to *The Aldrich Book of Catches* (Novello, 1989), itself full of historical information, includes guidance to forming a catch club. It also includes 224 catches. It happens to sit on my shelves next to *Novello's Standard Glee Book... revised by J. Barnby [c.1865]*, which gives piano accompaniment throughout (sometimes more than just a reduction) and mixes pieces for male voices with those needing trebles. I was puzzled as a boy by adverts on the back of current Novello scores for a series called 'The Glee Hive', having no idea what a glee was. Brian Robins has given an excellent history of the forms and their cultivation in their heyday. The glee is mostly neglected now, and those wanting risqué rounds turn to Purcell and earlier. There are a few pieces worth rescuing by professional men's ensembles or male voice choir, but now most singers probably prefer mixed company.

This is a fine account of a uniquely British repertoire, sometime humorous, sometimes sentimental; one with limited aims but which circulated quite widely, the glee gradually turning into the part-song.

We reproduce at half-size on pp. 22-25 one of Callcutt's glees: my copy has no title page (page 2 is preceded by a blank side) but it is probably the original edition of 1798

## JACKDAWS

Andrew Wall *Let the Music Speak: Jackdaws and Maureen Lehane Wishart* Hardington Press, 2006. 84pp, £5.00. ISBN 0 95543 00090 7 (from [andrew@wall36.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:andrew@wall36.fsnet.co.uk))

I remember Maureen Lehane as an impressive singer of Handel in particular in the 1960s and 1970s. Perhaps it is as well that her Handel operatic career was in the days before singers were required to perform the antics that modern directors expect. I have no visual image of her whatsoever; my particular memory is not of her singing Handel, but a 1967 BBC broadcast of Vaughan Williams' sparse *Riders to the Sea*: her singing of the mother's stoical 'They are all gone now' after the death of the last of her six sons still haunts my mind. Her husband Peter Wishart, professor of music at Reading, died suddenly in 1984. Since then, she has found a new purpose in life, running a whole range of educational activities under the name 'Jackdaws Educational Music Trust'. This book describes both aspects of her career. Apart from those touched in any way by Jackdaws, this will mainly interest Handelians. It surprised me that she performed in nine operas and three staged oratorios in about 20 years: how many current singers, now that Handel is so popular, have achieved that? It is well written and produced, though my copy had some blank pages.



## TEMPERAMENT FOR DUFFERS

Ross W. Duffin *How Equal Temperament Ruined Harmony (and Why You Should Care)* Norton, 2007. 196pp, £17.99. ISBN 10: 0 393 06227 9

If you have hitherto found matters of tuning and temperament recondite, incomprehensible or irrelevant, this is for you. First, it is readable – not only in having no more maths than necessary but because it avoids musicologese and is at time quite colloquial. It also has cartoons. Then its approach is basically musical. The expected theorists do, of course, appear, but the author's concern is primarily about how musicians in practice dealt with the problem that if the octave is divided into twelve equal parts, chords will be out of tune – and not just chords: if you sing or play on a violin *Ba ba black sheep* or *Wachet auf* unaccompanied, you may well produce more perfect intervals than equal temperament affords. Most discussion on the subject has concentrated on the keyboard: Duffin places more emphasis on strings, especially on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century rules for the division of the tone into ninths, with e.g. A flat being 5/9ths above G but G sharp being a ninth below that. This relationship (if not necessarily the exact proportions) is indicated for the violin by Prellleur (1731-31) and for singers by Tosi (1723) and seems to have been normal till the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century at least, perhaps until 1917. (Incidentally, that is also the date at which wire generally replaced gut E strings in England, according to a recent article in *Early Music Performer*, and I wonder if there is also a link with the expectation of continuous vibrato.) There is a polemic element in the book: that violins should tune neither to perfect nor equal-tempered fifths. That accords with the practice among amateur baroque bands of tuning to the keyboard chords of D, G and C.

The book begins with an anecdote identifying a problem with equal temperament for a modern orchestra. In Beethoven's ninth symphony, the long opening passage in D minor is followed by a B flat chord. The latter doesn't work, because the common notes D and F are not identical in the two chords. Another story involves George Bernard Shaw's reaction to Joachim. In 1890, he couldn't stand his tuning. 'The notes which were musical enough to have any discernable pitch at all were mostly out of tune. It was horrible – damnable.' (28 Feb 1890). But by 29 March 1893 he realised that Joachim was using a different concept of tuning, and surmised that if a machine could be made to measure pitch accurately, Joachim, Sarasate, Ysaye and Reményi would be found to have different tunings. Duffin has his favourite tuning, which he recommends for the whole 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (and beyond): 'for string players to narrow the open strings a little more than they narrow them for equal temperament. Then aim to play the major thirds fairly narrow and minor thirds a little wide.' He does give a table in cents, but his suggestion is given in approximate and musical terms.

Even modern pianists might need to think about how their Steinways are tuned if Bach, Mozart, Beethoven,

Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms and Liszt probably all used non-equal temperaments. Duffin very neatly prints a diagram of an irregularly-tempered circle of fifths on page 37 and only tells us on p. 148 that it is the one Bach sketched on the title page of *Das wohltemperirte Clavier* – 'well' doesn't mean 'equal'. This is highly recommended to all musicians, not just 'early' ones.

*The Nut*

G	D	A	E	Open Notes
g*	d*	a*	e*	
a <sup>b</sup>	e <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	F	
A	E	B	F*	1 <sup>st</sup> Finger
a*	e*	B*	f**	
B <sup>b</sup>	F	C	G	2 <sup>nd</sup> Finger or half shift
B	f*	c*	g*	
c <sup>b</sup>	g <sup>b</sup>	d <sup>b</sup>	a <sup>b</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Finger whole shift
C	G	D	A	
c*	g*	d*	a*	4 <sup>th</sup> Finger
d <sup>b</sup>	a <sup>b</sup>	e <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	
D	A	E	B	
d*	a*	e*	B*	
e <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	F	C	
E	B	f*	c*	
f <sup>b</sup>	e <sup>b</sup>	g <sup>b</sup>	d <sup>b</sup>	
e*	B*	f**	c**	
F	C	G	D	Double shift
f*	c*	g*	d*	
g <sup>b</sup>	d <sup>b</sup>	a <sup>b</sup>	e <sup>b</sup>	
G	D	A	E	Last shift
g*	d*	a*	e*	
a <sup>b</sup>	e <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	F	
A	E	B	f*	
*e	*B	*f		
B <sup>b</sup>	F	C	G	
B	f*	c*	g*	
b	g <sup>b</sup>	d <sup>b</sup>	a <sup>b</sup>	
C	G	D	A	

*The Art of Playing on the Violin, with A New Scale shewing how to stop every NOTE, Flat or Sharp, exactly in Tune, and where the SHIFTS of the Hand should be made. [Peter Prellleur, c.1730]*

## CD REVIEWS

## CHANT

*Le Chant des templier: MS du Saint Sépulcre de Jérusalem XIIe siècle* Ensemble Organum, Marcel Pérès 74' 23"  
Ambrosie AM9997

What leads to acquisition of such a CD? Is it a visit to the Holy Land or a tourist shop at a French abbey, religious devotion, a pilgrimage to Rome, an interest in music history or simply a respect for Marcel Pérès? On opening the CD cover with its picture of dramatic red light cast on a stone floor, does one first read the booklet? If so, what guidance will it give to the listener? The notes clearly outline an introduction to the Knights Templar, mention the provenance of the music manuscript and sketch in the religious significance of each item in the recording. They also leave questions in the mind, and here, though it is not Pérès's style, one might consider the tall Ensemble Al Kindi CD with booklet, 'Les Croisades sous le regard de l'Orient' less for its poetic passages and depiction of Jerusalem than for the space such presentation would allow Ambrosie to include samples of the 'square notation' showing 'all the vocal subtleties of the chant', to say more about 'the art of marking rhythm' and the name 'tripudium' in religious chant, to give further details of out of doors religious celebration and tented chapels, and to amplify the bibliographical reference to Christina Dondi's recent book on the Liturgy of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

And so with such thoughts in mind one listens to the chant. No, one will not get caught up in music analysis, but how one would appreciate those samples of notation to follow the ornaments, and further explanation of movement while chanting to illuminate the strong rhythmic patterns, not to mention a few cross-cultural references! So one is left with the chanting itself, and that is executed with precision, benefiting from the varying textural qualities and tonal range of the male singers and fine diction of Latin. Religious contemplation, spirited rendering during long vigils, fervent maintenance of Christian doctrine under the threat of surrounding Muslims – and how short a time it was to be before all this rich and heady defiance was swept away in that hotly disputed city!

Diana Maynard

## MEDIEVAL

Otfried von Weissenburg *Liber Evangeliorum* Ensemble Officium, Wilfried Rombach 73' 34"  
Christophorus CHR 77279

Otfried (c.800-870) spent most of his life at the monastery of Saints Peter and Paul at Weissenburg/Wissembourg, (in Alsace, about 30 miles north of Strasbourg). His *Liber Evangeliorum* is one of many attempts through the centuries to harmonise the Gospels into a single narrative, the particularly distinctive feature of his version being that it is in the vernacular – 7,104 lines of verse, the earliest substantial text in Old High German, and an early move in the direction of rhyming verse. Some sections survive with neums in the St Gallen style and, with imagination, can be tentatively transcribed. Here Otfried's work is set among chant from Hartker's Antiphonal to present the Christmas story through the night office. This is a significant disc for those interested in early German poetry and chant; others will probably find it difficult to sustain their interest, especially if their German isn't fluent – the booklet has only the original texts and a German translation, though the excellent note is translated. The singing is excellent. CB

*Kvasirs Blod – The Blood of Kvasir: Viking Verse and Saga Sounds* Esk (Miriam Andersén, Poul Høxbro) 54' 53"  
Classico ClassCd 670  
(from www.classicorecords.dk)

This makes a bold contrast with the refinement of the Otfried disc. But both are attempts to realise music for which the evidence is minimal – though in the case of Viking music, the minimal is even less, since there is no continuing tradition of Viking song as there is with catholic liturgy and chant. The booklet concentrates on the instruments, rather less on the poems and the tunes. The music is, however, enjoyable, and the listener must just trust the two musician's musico-logical as well as performing skill. There are enough different ideas of how to perform early song repertoires for which we have much more information (such as those in the following disc) to make any certainty that this is right or wrong. Let's hope that these musicians are among those who received Kvasir's blood. CB

*El viaje del navegante: songs and dances from the middle ages* Locus Musicus (Elena Gómez voice, Carlos Zumajo fl, Laureano Estepa vihuela de arco, Eduardo Moreno perc) 60' 28"  
Verso VRS 2031

This anthology is constructed round the theme of travel – through the world and through life; it does, however, make an enjoyable programme of music centered round songs of Martin Codax without reference to the wider theme, which is as well, since the booklet prints the original texts with only Spanish translations, so it is likely to be listened to for the music rather than the texts. The disc stands or falls – fortunately the former – on the singing of Elena Gómez, with mostly-gentle instrumental backing. A pleasing disc. CB

## 15th CENTURY

*Dufay Triste plaisir: Guillaume Du Fay and the music of Burgundy* Lena Susanne Norin A, Randall Cook viola d'arco, fiddle, Susanne Ansorg fiddle, rebec 71' 54"  
Raum Klang RK 2208  
+ Binchois, Grenon, Vide

This delightful CD of secular music by Guillaume Dufay simply does what it says on the tin – with an emphasis on songs of melancholy and farewell, it presents uncomplicated but extremely eloquent readings on two bowed instruments and voice of a selection of Du Fay's courtly chansons. The key to the success of this programme is the lovely and highly appropriate singing of Lena Susanne Norin, more than a little reminiscent of the voice of Andrea von Ramm, and indeed the transparency of the textures and integrity of the readings recalls the pioneering 1970s work of the Studio der frühen Musik of Munich directed by Thomas Binkley. As it happens the programme note recalls the 1970s, quoting Marvin Gaye, drawing parallels between the current Gulf war and Vietnam, and describing the present CD as an 'instant transport to a better place'. If this is slightly to airbrush away the aggressive militarism of 15th-century Burgundy, the sentiment certainly succeeds in invoking a very creative frame of mind in the performers. The uniformity of texture, alternating the bowed strings with or without voice, means that this is a collection to dip into rather than to



consume in its entirety, but it is certainly a lovely aural evocation of the Court of Burgundy.  
D. James Ross

*Ma fin est mon commencement... Polyphonies des XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles : Machaut, Dufay, Josquin: transcriptions pour orgue* Louis Thiry 52' 47"  
Editions Hortus Hortus 035

'This recording is the anachronistic result of the conjunction of three factors... a 21st century organist plays 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century music on a 17<sup>th</sup> century organ.' The practice of arranging ensemble music for organ does, of course, go back to the period of this music, with the Robertsbridge pieces, the Faenza codex and Buxheim Organ Book. The problem with this disc is that the music is treated far too literally, with none of the verve of the better early arrangements – nor, for that matter, the modernisation that Birtwistle gave to Machaut. The other problem is that the originals are essentially small-scale pieces heard close to the performers whereas a three manual + pedal organ is too remote. Fine for giving organ buffs a chance to hear the stops of the 1732 Lefebvre organ at the Chapelle de l'hôpital Charles-Nicolas de Rouen, but not letting the organ play music that suits it or providing an appropriate sound for the notes. My ears became attuned after a bit, but for the songs that I knew, I missed the words; and as a way of conveying the notes pure and simple, I prefer the plain output of my old Acorn computer (though not the pseudo-musicality of Sibelius). Interesting chiefly for organ enthusiasts.  
CB

#### 16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

A. Gabrieli *Missa Pater peccavi etc* His Majestys Consort of Voices, His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts, Timothy Roberts dir 66' 22" ££ (rec 1999)  
Hyperion Helios CDH55265  
+ Ricercars & motets *De profundis & O sacrum convivium*

We hear far too little music by Giovanni's uncle, so this reissue is most welcome. The mass is spread through the programme, mixed with ensemble ricercars and organ intabulations. The mass is for six voices, and the performing forces match with six voices and six cornetts and sackbuts, supplemented by viola, dulcian and organ/director. Occasionally the performers try a bit too hard to inject rhythmic impetus as if compensating for the absence of a conductor, but in most respects this is a fine performance, with voices and instruments making fine music on an equal basis.  
CB

Gesualdo *Madrigali Libro III* (1596) The Kassiopeia Quintet 48' 33"  
Globe GLO 5223

Gesualdo's third published book of madrigals (1595, not 1596 as stated on the CD cover) marks something of a turning point in the composer's output, as it contains the first fruits of his interaction with the extraordinary musical culture of the d'Este court at Ferrara into which he had just married. At Ferrara Gesualdo encountered the virtuosic performances of the celebrated *concerto della donna*, the micro-tonal keyboard invented by Vincentino, and the music composed for them by the adventurous Luzzaschi. So it is a pity that the Kassiopeia Quintet, a multi-national vocal ensemble based in The Hague, do not respond to Gesualdo's madrigals with a more dramatic rhetorical impulse. Their performances are finely crafted, with some sensitivity to the ever-changing moods of the music, but often seem determined to iron out the occasional quirkiness of the sometimes angular melodic lines and resulting dissonant harmonies. It is unfortunate that not one of these pieces actually matches the Quintet's SSATB line up, and one senses some uncomfortable alignment of voices with parts, especially in the quite dry acoustic of the recording. For instance, the very opening of the first track has two tenor lines in imitation at the unison, sung here by countertenor and tenor. The isolated soprano sometimes sounds too high to be able to give much inflection to her part. All tracks bar one are performed at modern pitch, whatever Gesualdo's various clefs might indicate, leading to some strain at the extremes of vocal range. That said, Kassiopeia do bring some subtle responses to individual phrases, and a gentle flexibility of tempo that suits the swiftly varying sensations so effectively captured by Gesualdo's high-flown musical style.  
John Bryan

Francisco Guerrero, *Canciones y Villanescas Espirituales* La Trulla de Bozes, Carlos Saundúa 65' 17"  
Almaviva DS 0143

There are eighteen of the 1589 spiritual songs here, beautifully sung by this new young Spanish group of five singers with organ, harp and bajón. Many are contrafacta, having originated as secular pieces, given sacred words for publication. They are in villancico form with a refrain and couplets. Many of those included here have texts related to Christmas. The singers are completely at home in the repertoire, tuning and blend are excellent and the instruments are always supportive without being too prominent. It is a pity that

the words are only given in Spanish in the booklet. That aside this can be highly recommended and would make a great Christmas present for anyone with a love of Iberian music.  
Noel O'Regan

Poor email transmission prevented this being published before Christmas.  
CB

Alonso Lobo *Missa Simile est regnum, Missa Petre ego pro te rogavi* Musica Ficta, Raul Mallavibarrena 56' 02"  
Enchiriadis EN 2016  
+ source motets & *Vivo ego dicit Dominus*

This is one of the most enjoyable recordings of sacred music I have come across in a long time. It contains two masses together with the Guerrero motets on which they are based. It is pleasing to see that one of the bass singers is named Héctor Guerrero! The recording ends with Lobo's own motet *Vivo ego, dicit Dominus*. The single voices on each part are well matched, both in timbre and in approach. The music is well characterized and never boring, but varying between sublime beauty and sheer excitement, such as in the *Osanna* of the first Mass, with its cross-rhythms breathlessly overlapping as the angels elbow each other out of the way to sing their praises. Unusually, the top voice of the ensemble (Eva Juárez) is a total joy to listen to, with no hint of shrillness. There are touches of flatness, mainly in the female voices, perhaps indicating a shortness of time for the recording; but the tuning rarely distracts from the overall delivery of the music. In the full sections the voices are supported with a tasteful and appropriate *bajón* bass line. Mallavibarrena has a good sense of style and timing, and uses dynamics well. There are times when the line is too chopped, or endings are snatched, revealing that these are not top-flight singers – but this recording is much more enjoyable than some by better-known groups, and the singers never fail to communicate a reverence both for their compatriot Lobo and for the subject about which they sing.  
Selene Mills

Peter Philips *Harpsichord Works* Elizabeth Farr 78' 04"  
Naxos 8.557864 £

This has 16 of Philips' keyboard works, including all the well-known intabulations, two fantasies and the Paget and Passamezzo Pavan/Galliard pairs. Farr's playing is clean and stylish, a little understated perhaps, but always letting the music speak for itself. In this she is very much helped by the Zenti harpsichord of 1658, restored by Keith Hill. It has a beautifully rich and clear sound, rather like a virginals, which really suits

this music. It is closely recorded with just the right amount of resonance. Informative notes make this a very valuable recording of an important and still under-recorded repertoire.

Noel O'Regan

*Psalms from Geneva: organ works by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck* Masaaki Suzuki (2002 Marc Garnier organ, Shinko-Kyokai, Kobe, Japan) 69' 28"  
BIS CD-1614

The 100 year old Reformed Church of Japan (Shinko-Kyokai) bases its worship on the 1562 Geneva Psalter, so it was appropriate that they based their new organ on the instruments of the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century Netherlands, a time when the use of the organ during (or, probably more accurately, before and after) was generally limited to settings of the psalms, hymns and other specifically liturgical works. It is unlikely that the organs were ever used to accompany the congregation, and secular music was performed only on entirely secular occasions – the monumental 'west-end' organs in many Dutch churches were usually owned by the city council and the organist was their employee, rather than being a church appointment. The tradition continues to this day, where there is often a city as well as a church organist [just as Great St Mary's, Cambridge, has a church organ and organist at the east end and a university organ and organist under the tower CB]. Many of Sweelinck's organ works reflect this practice, and Masaaki Suzuki's programme includes four psalm settings and two chorales, contrasted with some free works, including the monumental and musically staggering *Fantasia Chromatica*. The organ produces a sparkling sound in the moderate acoustic, although the *Mixtur* sounds a trifle shrill on this recording. The meantone temperament and split semitones are essential for this music. The playing is extremely accomplished, with a clear and bright touch and impeccable articulation and a very sound interpretational sense. These are works that unwind over time and a broad architectural view is required. Although he has enviable virtuosic dexterity, Suzuki wisely avoids any excesses beyond the technical complexities that Sweelinck himself offers, notably towards the end of the *Fantasia Chromatica* and Psalm 140. My own quibble is that it is unlikely that Sweelinck's Amsterdam organ had a 16' reed on the pedal, although it only makes a very brief appearance. Recommended.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

40 *Voices* Huelgas-Ensemble, Paul Van Nevel 62' 02"  
Harmonia Mundi HMC 801954

Ceuleers *Nomen mortis infame* a35; Gabrieli *Exaudi me Domine* a16; Josquin *Qui habitat* a24; Maessins *En venant de Lyon* a16; Rebelo *Lauda Jerusalem* a16; Striggio *Ecce beatam lucem* a40; Tallis *Spem in alium* a40; Wylkynson *Jesus Autem/Credo* a13

This fine disc celebrates 35 years of Van Nevel's Huelgas Ensemble – will he find enough forty-part pieces for 2011? The opening item is modern, starting in antique mode but gradually insinuating a more contemporary presence. Of the biggies, the Tallis works better than the Striggio – the latter gets very congested, partly perhaps because Striggio isn't such a good composer (it is much harder to make music of it), but also because the frequent top Gs hide the texture below. Comparison with the Gabrieli is interesting. It is the only large-scale motet by him that I can think of with a scoring that would seem to imply (or at least permit) completely vocal performance (the clefs are C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>4</sub> x2 & C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>4</sub> x2). The trebles have E as ceiling, so don't dominate the music as in the Striggio. This is a stunning setting, with dramatic hocketing on 'quando caeli movendi sunt et terra', which isn't helped by added fluctuations in tempo. But the disc is worth buying even if you are well-stocked with Spem & Ecce. It won praise from our Christmas guest, the first editor of the Striggio.

CB

*Music for Compline: Tallis, Byrd, Sheppard* Stile Antico 74' 34"  
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907419

Stile Antico won the audience prize at the 2005 Early Music Network competition, and were spotted by Harmonia Mundi USA: this is their first disc. Their promotional leaflet states they comprise 12 singers, but 13 are listed (three of them named Ashby). They are unconduted, which is mostly to the good, though the ends of movements need to be tightened and they strive a little too hard to present beautiful sounds to the listener rather than sing the music as embedding the text as part of the daily liturgy. Their biog states that they aim for 'direct, expressive performances' – but expressing what? They have the ability to develop, and this is a magnificent first recording. The title gives no clue that the disc ends with Hugh Aston's marvellous quarter-hour *Gaude virgo mater*.

CB

Release date Feb 4. My apologies for missing the launch concert, but a trip to Dulwich would have severely diminished the chance of this issue appearing on time.

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)  
££ = mid price  
other discs full price (as far as we know)

## 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

Bertali *Coronatio solemnissima* see page 35

Bertali *Missa Resurrectionis* Yale Schola Cantorum, Spiritus Collective, Ilya Poletaev org, Simon Carrington 54' 03"  
ReZound RZCD 5013 (from www.loft.cd)  
+ pieces by Froberger, Geist & Vejvanovsky

Two Bertali masses this month, the other reviewed enthusiastically by BC below. I could hardly let him review this disc, since he edited the music, and no doubt offered ideas to the conductor when he went to stay with him in Yale at the time of the performances on which this CD is based; he might have been too embarrassed to offer the praise it deserves. (It is, incidentally, nice that the editor's biog is printed along with the performers' in the booklet.) For a festive mass, the opening is rather jaunty, and the performers keep the sound light, despite the large scale: eight soloists, two ripieno choirs and instruments, performed by 24 singers and two ensembles. The mass is interspersed by instrumental pieces, not in a strict liturgical reconstruction but making a plausible sequence. Vejvanovsky comes over as a much better composer than I remembered, a tribute to the Yale players. The singers are good too, especially the two soprano soloists. The mass is an interesting work, with different scorings between the movements, which may suggest a compilation. Simon Carrington is clearly doing an excellent job at Yale. CB

The score of the mass costs £20 from BC

Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostri* Capella Angelica, Lautten Compagny, Wolfgang Katschner 64' 01"  
Raum Klang RK 2403

This is a big year for Buxtehude – already the celebrations have started throughout Germany and Denmark – and this disc adds an unfamiliar take on what (for me at least) is one of his greatest works, a cycle of seven settings of medieval poetry inspired by various parts of Christ's body. The CD is filled out with two nice cantatas that are rarely heard. Lautten Compagny diverge from today's normal practice by adding gamba parts to six of the cantatas for which Buxtehude does not stipulate them. This, of course, is not a major problem (and, indeed, seems to have been common enough practice in the church where the work's dedicatee, Gustav Düben, was the organist), but it does alter the impact made by the most beautiful cantata, *Ad Cor*, where the violins are silent and a gamba consort takes their place. That said, this is a

beautifully paced performance using five soloists and five ripieno singers, and a continuo of two violones, two theorbos and organ. Not quite my favourite set, but close enough! BC

A new edition (score, vocal score and parts) has just appeared from Carus, which we will review in our next issue. Carus also has produced a booklet listing with sample pages and facsimiles of the Buxtehude that they publish. Carus publications may be ordered from King's Music.

Cavalli *Gli amori d'Apollo e di Dafne*  
Martio Zeffiri *Apollo/Titone*, Marianna Pizzoloto *Dafne*, etc, Orquesta Joven de la Sinfonjice de Galicia, Alberto Zedda 144' 48" (2 CDs)  
Naxos 8.660187-88 £

In addition to HIP we may soon need HUP (under-informed or unreconstructed) or even HOP (over-informed or over-assumed or over-indulged). This edition and performance is at various times a bit of all three. Yes, Cavalli's skeletal scores (this was his second opera) do need augmenting at times to represent his genuine intentions; but no, this shouldn't be assumed to mean that you can do what you like and score for full modern symphony orchestra, assigning some recitative accompaniment to a combination of oboes and harp. Though it is splendid that the seventeenth century opera repertoire is being explored *EMR* readers are not likely to feel that this live and not blemish-free recording is the way to do it: unlikely modern sonorities and vibrato-laden voices fight the music all the way, sadly. David Hansell

Dowland *Dowland's Tears: Lute Music 2*  
Nigel North 66' 03"  
Naxos 8.557862 £

Programme framed by *Lachrimae Pavan* and *Semper Dowland semper dolens*

This begins with Dowland's evergreen *Lachrimae Pavan*. The piece gets off to a good start with an ear-catching 6-note chord of G minor, complete with an ornament at the 3<sup>rd</sup> course. Thereafter, I'm afraid I was disappointed, because this lovely pavan is simply not played in time. The essence of tragedy is inevitability, which the slow, persistent pulse of a pavan intensifies. If you play a pavan like some kind of rhapsodic prelude, it may sound wonderful to a self-indulgent player, but that essential rhythmic element, the thing which gives the piece its character, is lost. The mistake, I think, is to regard certain pieces as great compositions, which need a special reverential interpretation, and

try too hard to squeeze every ounce of expression from them. Yet if a composition really is especially fine, it doesn't need dollops of rubato to make it sound any good. It's alright as it is.

Fortunately not all the other pieces on the CD are played in quite such an affected way. The *Earl of Essex Galliard* and *Giles Hobie's Galliard* rattle along nicely with exciting divisions, but are ever graceful. *Pavan* (Poulton 18) is one of Dowland's less familiar pieces, but is nevertheless a fine pavan. Most welcome is North's own intabulation of Dowland's *I saw my lady weep*. It is a beautiful song, with its anguished shifts of harmony, and is particularly effective played as a solo. *Langton's Galliard* is fun, with a chunk from the *King of Denmark's Galliard* inserted half-way through, and divisions which take the player up to the p fret, assuming he has one. Stewart McCoy

J. C. F. Fischer *Musica Sacra* Rastatter Hofkapelle, Jüurgen Ochs 64' 36"  
Carus 83.172

*Concertus de Sancta Cruce, Lytaniae Lauretanae VI, Missa Sancti Dominici 4, Regina coeli, Vesperae* (Sonntag),

This enjoyable disc is yet another fruit of that European phenomenon: local people promoting the music of their forebears with support from the town and beyond. Fischer was *Hofkapellmeister* in Rastatt from 1715 to 1746 and during that time supplied both the court and the chapel with music. The programme consists of a mass, a set of Vespers, a Litany, a setting of *Regina coeli* and a motet. The performances are light and possibly reflect well the original performances. The music is extremely pleasant and one can imagine than Sunday services would have been lightened by Fischer's contribution! BC

H & W Lawes *Songs* Robin Blaze cT & Elizabeth Kenny lutes + Rebecca Outram S, Robert Macdonald B, William Carter lutes, Frances Kelly harp 73' 05"  
Hyperion CDA7589

I find it impossible to imagine better exponents of this idiomatic music than Robin Blaze and Elizabeth Kenny. Blaze has many gifts: not only a perfectly-tuned and controlled voice, but one that is intrinsically beautiful, and an unsurpassed vehicle for English words. His dramatic sense is keen, and underlaid by a good sense of irony, which is evident in *No Reprieve*, in which he passionately states that he is dead, no fewer than four times. Every word is given full dramatic value, and this painting of scenes creates sensational mini-operas of songs which might seem quirky or ill-constructed in

other hands. Kenny backs him up perfectly, providing a great deal more than simply accompaniment; like Blaze, she can paint every note in a different colour, contributing enormously to the story-telling and to the beauty of these performances. The dark tones of her theorbo are a wonderful support to his voice. She also contributes scholarly and fascinating programme notes.

The only way in which Robin Blaze fails to please is with his Italian, which sounds unconvincing – and plain wrong in places. There is only one piece in Italian in this selection, so that is not a major problem, and should not deter anyone from buying this disc. Similarly, the first piece, the well-known *Gather your rosebuds*, is not typical of the disc in that it is sung by three singers. Rebecca Outram and Robert MacDonald sing excellently, but cannot match Blaze in their delivery of texts. In contrast, where Liz Kenny is joined by William Carter (on guitar and lute) and Frances Kelly (harp), the richness is delightful not only for the layers of harmony and melody, but also for the slightly chaotic way in which these three highly experienced performers extemporize together: their broken chords are expressively splashy, contributing yet another dimension to the drama. The selection includes lute solos and duets by Cuthbert Hely and William Lawes, and a Corant from the Royal Consort for the three instrumentalists. It is particularly fascinating to hear settings of words set by other composers, such as *Sweet, stay awhile* by Donne, and *Oh, sweet woods* by Philip Sidney. Selene Mills

Valls *Que estruendo* A Corte Musical, Rogério Gonçalves, Corien de Jong organ  
Symphonia SY 05215 67' 03"

+ organ pieces by Bruna, Cabanilles & anon

This CD includes seven *tonos* by Valls, including that used for its title. They are for 1, 3 or 4 solo voices and are like small-scale villancicos with the same alternation of *estribillo* and *coplas*. Their religious texts are beautifully sung, with lively accompaniment by two violins, theorbos, guitars and occasional percussion. Valls worked in Barcelona after Felipe V Bourbon took on the Spanish throne and married Elisabetta Farnese, opening up Spanish music to the Italian influences which are obvious here. There is good attention to the words, unfortunately not translated in the booklet, and these are highly convincing performances of some very rewarding music. Three organ pieces by Cabanilles and Bruna are well played on a Lausanne copy of an Aragonese organ by Richard Freytag and there is a final lively anonymous instrumental *Pasacalles*. An excellent



recording opening up an unjustly neglected repertoire. Noel O'Regan

*Amorous in music: William Cavendish in Antwerp* Angharad Gruffydd Jones, Concordia, Mark Levy cond 66' 35"

Et'Cetera KTC 4019

Music by A Kempis, Dowland, L. Duarte, Gibbons, Jenkins, Lanier, Locke, Phillips, Sabbatini & anon

I'm likely to be well disposed to any disc beginning with *Fair Daphne*, and when that is followed by Dowland's *Taffelconsort* Pavan I'm won over. As with the Lawes above, Liz Kenny is a great strength, and her partnership with the singer in Sabbatini's *Congregavit* is ideal. There's also some lively harpsichord accompaniment from Gary Cooper. I won't carry on piece by piece – though can't resist mentioning the curious final cadence to the à Kempis (track 4). I did miss violins in the Dowland, and wonder whether a viol consort was quite the right ensemble for some of this music. But the two treble viols almost convince! The programme ties in well with the life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, a keen musician. Jenkins' *Newark Siege*, for instance, is appropriate since Cavendish was responsible for placing a garrison there. He spent the Commonwealth in exile in Holland – a song by Huygens might have been appropriate. One oddity in the excellent notes: Lynn Hulse presumably quoting Diana Poulton, calls the text of Dowland's *Lamentatio Henrici Noel* a canticle; it certainly isn't a psalm, nor does it fit the usual usage of canticle (though it was included in musical supplements to the Prayer Book) and by the 18th century it was called a hymn. A well designed and satisfying programme with performances that do it justice. CB

*Canta Venetia! Arie a voce sola, con l'Alfabetto per la Citarra alla Spagnuola* Maria-Luz Alvarez S, Lex Eisenhardt gtr Et'Cetera KTC 1316 56'00"

Music by Obizzi, Foscari, Berti, Corbetta, Pesenti, and Landi.

Many of the collections of songs printed in Italy in the first half of the 17th century specify the guitar as a suitable accompanying instrument. A chord chart is usually provided, and strummed chords are shown as capital letters (*alfabeto*) scattered amongst the music.

The songs work well with just the guitar. Although the bass line is not much in evidence, as it would be if the accompaniment were played by a theorbo, the guitar provides all the harmony and injects a lot of rhythmical energy. Lex Eisenhardt uses two guitars, the *chitarra spagnuola* (or familiar baroque guitar)

with gut strings, and a *chitarra battente* with metal strings. But the instrument he is seen holding in the booklet looks like a vihuela.

Maria-Luz Alvarez has a clear, bright voice, without vibrato, restrained, and well in tune. It is a pleasure to listen to her. Her vocal agility is evident in Domenico Obizzi's *Aura che qui d'intorno*. Obizzi's output is unfortunately not large, since he died, probably of the plague, at the age of eighteen.

All the song composers represented on the CD have connections with Venice: Obizzi and Pietro Berti both sang at St Mark's, blind Martino Pesenti lived in Venice, and some of Stefano Landi's music was published there.

Amongst the songs Eisenhardt intersperses some guitar solos. Foscari's music consists of a mixture of strummed chords and plucked passages, many of the chords with surprising harmonies. A suite of three short pieces by Foscari (nos 13-15) is particularly attractive. Other solos are by Francesca Corbetta. He is credited with establishing the French school of guitar playing, but he was Italian, born in Pavia. The music in his early books is strummier than the more melodic French style of his later publications. His *Spagnoletto sopra l'O* lasts a mere 33 seconds. The O, of course, is *alfabeto* O, a chord of G minor. The CD ends with a guitar suite by Foscari, consisting of a brief Toccata, a frisky Corrente, and a sombre Sarabanda.

Stewart McCoy

*Coronatio solemnissima: the Coronation of Emperor Leopold I (1658)* Johann Rosenmüller Ensemble, Arno Paduch 73' 54"

Christophorus CHR 77283 (SACD)

Music by Bertali (incl. *Missa Sancti Spiritus*), Caldara, Ebner, Schmelzer

Delighted as I was to have Simon Carlington's *Missa Resurrectionis* to listen to purely for pleasure (see p. 33), you can imagine my joy at also receiving Arno Paduch's latest 17th-century offering, an (of necessity, given the paucity of source material) spurious reconstruction of Leopold I's coronation in 1658. The centrepiece is Bertali's magnificent *Missa Sancte Spiritus*, written for a slightly smaller but certainly no less impressive line-up of singers and instruments. Paduch pads out the proceedings with more music by Bertali (the proper Introit for the mass and a charming motet), Schmelzer (rather incongruously, selections from the equestrian ballet that featured as part of the festivities and two rather more suitable sonatas), an organ piece Wolfgang Ebner as well as some Gregorian chant, and rounds the pro-

gramme off with Caldara's impressive *Te Deum* (which was performed at another coronation in 1745, by which time the composer was long deceased, but from which the CD booklet illustration is also taken). This is a fabulous performance of sumptuous music. The singing and the playing are first rate, and this will be in and out of my music box quite regularly for months to come (alternating with the *Missa Resurrectionis*!) BC

*In Lamentatione Jubilatio Dei: Praise and Lamentation in Baroque Compositions* Gotthold Schwartz Bar, Siegfried Pank gamba, Hans Christoph Becker-Foss kbd 79' 40"

Raum Klang RK2504

Music by Bach, Böhm, Buxtehude, Franck, Rosenmüller, Telemann, Zelenka

This disc offers a selection of devotional pieces from the German Baroque, generally modest in scoring but often with heartfelt words. Most of the tracks comprise devotional songs for voice and continuo by Georg Böhm: some are tuneful strophic arias, others are affective through-composed settings. The disc also features a short cantata by Telemann, extracts from Lamentations by Zelenka and Rosenmüller, and instrumental solos (including the fastest performance I've ever heard of Bach's organ chorale *Erbarm dich mein, O Herre Gott* BWV721; it is surprisingly effective at this pace). Most of the performances are elegant, with the exception of the extract from Bach's Cantata 82, the aria 'Schlummert ein', which is energetic rather than soporific. The words of the Böhm arias could be enunciated more clearly; it is a shame that they are not included in the booklet. Despite the simplicity of some of the pieces, there is enough variety on this disc to sustain interest, and even to encourage further exploration of the devotional repertoire.

Stephen Rose

*Italian Baroque Copenhagen Saxophone Quartet* 55' 05"

Classico CLASSCD 687

Corelli op. 6/8; Pergolesi *Orfeo*, *Salve regina*; A Scarlatti *Concerto grosso* 1 & 11

I hadn't expected that this would be appropriate for review, especially since there was nothing on the outside to imply that there was a singer for the Pergolesi unless the name Mathias Hedegaard was familiar. But this is interesting for the extremely stylish way the music is played. The problem is that saxophonists want to extend their range so that they can play anything, while for the rest of us the instrument has a variety of specific contexts for which it feels right and we

would prefer it to retain those associations rather than lose them. It's a bit like treating the recorder as an all-purpose baroque orchestral instrument rather than keeping it for specific (usually symbolic) effects. The arrangements are brilliant, the playing stylish. As background music, it will make you listen. But this really is string music. CB

*Musik an Hofe derer von Bünau II*  
Ensemble Alte Musik Dresden, Norbert Schuster 61' 08"

Raum Klang RK9902

Music by Avenarius, Groh, Hammerschmidt, Hickmann, Otto, Seidel, Selichius

This is the sort of disc which is quite difficult to review because enthusiasm about little-known composers can often smack of special pleading – trust me, I specialise in little-known composers, and there's an art to selling their genuine musical gifts! This gem of a disc features tremendous settings by Samuel Seidel, Daniel Selichius and Esajas Hickmann (I wonder if he was an ancestor of my former Professor of Ancient History at St Andrews), alongside fine instrumental and vocal works by Hammerschmidt, who really ought to be performed more, and two pieces by Thomas Avenarius, including a *Phantasia ridiculosa* – which features the most unexpected octave chanting that I've ever heard. Very *ridiculosa*! For a varied and completely enthralling evening's entertainment (albeit on some none too happy texts!), this is just the ticket. BC

*Paradizo: Consort Music & Airs for the Flute* Julien Martin *rec*, Capriccio Stravagante, Skip Sempé 76' 00"

Paradizo PA0001

Music by Brade, Dowland, van Eyck, Holborne, Hume, Morley, Purcell, Scheidt

The title of this CD is rather deceptive. Although the recorder does have a number of solos with gamba and keyboard accompaniment, most of the music is played on a mixed consort of violins and low viols, sometimes with added violone, harp, harpsichord, virginal or organ. The instruments are combined in a variety of ways, but always with a lovely rich sound. Sometimes a low recorder is blended in, and on some tracks a high recorder adds sparkling divisions on the top. The van Eyck pieces from *Der Fluyten Lust-hof* are unaccompanied in the original, but here the recorder is supported by gamba and harpsichord. I like the way Julien Martin has combined van Eyck's own variations to make ornamented repeats, and this is particularly effective in the variations on *Now, O now I needs must part* which are grouped together with the Dowland

version of the song and Morley's *Frog Galliard*. Careful thought has obviously gone into the programme planning of this generously long and very enjoyable recording. It's just a pity that no information about the music or players is given in the booklet, only a quite interesting conversation between Skip Sempé and an anonymous interviewer. Victoria Helby

#### LATE BAROQUE

Bach: *Cantatas* vol. 33: 41, 92, 130 *Jesu, nun sei gepreiset* Yukari Nonoshita, Robin Blaze, Jan Kobow, Dominik Wörner SATB, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki 74' 12"

BIS-SACD-1541

Suzuki's latest instalment contains three cantatas that are relatively little performed. Cantatas 41 and 92 are unusually long works, both lasting about half-an-hour and both with substantial opening movements. The first chorus of Cantata 41 is so extensive that Bach includes sections of contrasting tempo and metre, with a slow evocation of 'Stille' (peace) similar to the 'Et in terra pax' of the B minor Mass. Otherwise this chorus is festive in scoring and tempo, and here Suzuki achieves just the right balance between resonant grandeur and rhythmic clarity. In the arias there are some excellent instrumental contributions: Hidemi Suzuki offers an eloquent obbligato on the violoncello piccolo in Cantata 41, and the flautist Liliko Maeda minces through the gavotte rhythms in the last aria of Cantata 130. There is also a good sense of instrumental ensemble, including a well-blended oboe trio in the first aria of Cantata 41, and in Cantata 130 a vigorous trumpet trio evokes the struggle between St Michael and the Devil. Such fine instrumental playing complements the vocal soloists and also reinforces the religious imagery of the libretti. Another rewarding release. Stephen Rose

Bach *Cantatas* Vol. 22 Sandrine Piau, Joannette Zomer, Bogna Bartosz, Nathalie Stutzmann, Jörg Förfmüller, James Gilchrist, Christoph Prégardien, Klaus Martens SSAATTTB, The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir, Ton Koopman 200' 59" (3 CDs in box)

Antoine Marchand CC72222 ££

Cantatas 30, 30a, 80, 233-4, Mass in G BWV 235, WFB *Gaudete omnes populi*

This final instalment of Koopman's cantata cycle includes various loose ends from Bach's vocal output of the late 1730s. Cantata 80 receives a sinewy performance, with a rhythmic strictness that emphasises the hierarchical relationship

between harmonic rhythm, florid vocal lines and the chorale tune. By contrast, Koopman's forces luxuriate in the melodious (almost galant) tone of Cantata 30, heard on this disc in both its secular and sacred incarnations. There are also good performances of the four Lutheran Masses; in the last aria of BWV 236, the oboe obbligato is played with a rhythmic flexibility not found in the rendition of Cantata 80. As in almost all his other discs of Bach cantatas, Koopman regularly includes the lute in the continuo ensemble; following Peter Holman's scepticism about such a practice (see *Early Music* 34 (2006), 520), I particularly wondered whether Bach would have used the lute regularly in church performances of the late 1730s. Such questions aside, it is excellent to see that Koopman has finally completed his cycle; his athletic and dance-like performances have given numerous new insights into Bach's vocal works. Stephen Rose

Bach *Messe in h-Moll* Mechthild Bach, Daniel Taylor, Marcus Ullmann, Raimund Nolte SATB, Kammerchor & Barockorchester Stuttgart, Frieder Bernius 101' 28" Carus 83.211 (2 CDs)

These newish Stuttgart ensembles have a cosmopolitan aspect: the distinguished Canadian countertenor Daniel Taylor sings as alto soloist and Jed Wentz of the U.S.A. plays first flute and the rather English-sounding trumpet group gives the whole effort a really international character. Oddly the name of the second Soprano soloist is not stated, though the first has a memorable surname. Generally the performance goes well, with the occasional exaggeration of speed contrast: for example, a commendably secure *Quoniam* is followed by possibly the fastest *Cum Sancto Spiritu* in any recording I have ever heard. Wentz accompanies the lyrical tenor Marcus Ullmann nimbly and expressively in the *Benedictus*. Daniel Taylor is only just loud enough to penetrate the unison strings of the *Agnus Dei*. But generally this account has much to commend it, sounding at once dignified, carefully rehearsed and sincere. Stephen Daw

Bach *Mass in B-minor* Marlis Petersen, Stella Doufexis, Anke Vandung, Lothar Odinius, Christian Gerhaher, Franz-Joseph Selig SSAATBB, Gächinger Kantorei & Bach Collegium Stuttgart, Helmuth Rilling 106' 44" (2 CDs) Hänssler SACD 98.274

This is a fine, very attentively prepared, rehearsed and executed recording of the work which seems to me to lack one essential ingredient: hardly any attention

at all has been given to what is actually now known (not simply supposed) to have been Bach's expectations regarding his own music, whether to be performed with his direct involvement or not. Helmuth Rilling is indeed one of our better Bach conductor/scholars and many detailed aspects – speeds, balances and little imaginative touches like a special first trumpet embellishment added during the last chorus – a very good idea. However, after a dozen years reviewing Bach performances for *EMR* I have found this utterly worthy account just a little too predictable. I prefer the real challenges in Bach to be addressed. *Stephen Daw*

**Bach Rustic Revelry: Peasant Cantata & duets by Purcell** Pepe Becker, David Morris SB, The Baroque Players 56' 50" Atoll ACD 506 (from [www.atolld.com](http://www.atolld.com))

This live recording of a concert in New Zealand couples Bach's Peasant Cantata with duets from Henry Purcell's stage works. The tempi are well-chosen and the instrumental playing is supple, with a lovely flute obbligato by Penelope Evison in the Peasant Cantata. As for the singing, a little more contrast of dynamics and articulation would have further enlivened the melodic lines on the disc. Likewise the characterisation could be stronger, because listeners to the disc do not benefit from the costumes and gestures of the concert performance. But this is an imaginative programme, with an enjoyable contrast of English and German views of the divide between town and country. *Stephen Rose*

**Bach Organ Works Vol. 18: works of doubtful authenticity** Gerhard Weinberger (1722/3 Hildebrandt organ, Störmthal and 1744/6 Scheibe organ, Zschortau, Sachsen) cpo 777 135-2 ££ 73' 56" BWV 571, 591, 758, Anh II 42 etc.

'Works of Doubtful Authenticity I' is the rather un-sexy subtitle of this CD, the 18<sup>th</sup> in Weinberger's complete Bach series. All but three of the works are chorale based, and draw on a range of MSS, including the Berliner Sammelhandschrift Mus.ms.Bach.P285, the Rudorff-Sammlung Leipzig MS.R24, and Yale LM4843. This will have obvious appeal to those anoraks who just must have a recording of every work associated with Bach, but it is also an interesting programme in its own right. Most of the works are attractive little essays in the musical forms that dominated the baroque, whether or not they are by Bach. I particularly liked the jovial *Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele*, the shudderingly gloomy *Fuga sopra Durch Adams Fall* and the fascinating harmonisations of

*Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt*. The history of the pieces is well explored in the notes. The two organs are small one-manual instruments by builders well-known to Bach. He tested the Störmthal organ and wrote and performed a cantata for its opening – and Johann Scheibe maintained all the organs in Leipzig and built several new ones there during Bach's days, although Zschortau is his only surviving instrument. The playing is musical and the registrations chosen are, by and large, appropriate. For those who have never quite accepted the mechanical noise emanating from some historic instruments (and I bet you would produce some mechanical noise at the age of some of them), there is a health warning in that the pedal action can sometimes be heard, notably on track 12. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

**Bach Sonates pour violon & clavecin** Stefano Montanari vln, Christophe Rousset hpscd 95' 00" (2 CDs) Ambrosie AM 109

I recall from the mists of my student days my excitement at hearing Monica Huggett and Ton Koopman playing these marvellous sonatas, and more recently, I was enthralled by Rachel Podger and Trevor Pinnock. This set is very good, but falls short of its predecessors mainly because the price of the bigger sound and more dramatic performance is an edginess (and sometimes untidiness) of sound quality – Montanari is an exceptional violinist but here (as in some other recordings I know) he just pushes his instrument too hard. This is a great pity, as these are performances that promise great passion, and Rousset is absolutely brilliant in his part. Heavens, I even approve of his rubato! As this is such a matter of personal taste, clearly anyone interested in the repertoire must hear this version themselves. *BC*

**Bach Violin Concertos** Richard Tognetti, Australian Chamber Orchestra 57' 58" ABC 476 5691 BWV 1041-3, 1060 (with Diana Doherty)

Having lauded Richard Tognetti's unaccompanied Bach to the stars recently, I find myself in the slightly embarrassing situation of having to cough up my sleeve and concede that I don't really like his Bach violin concertos. Perhaps it's because there's a chamber orchestra driving him along – don't get me wrong, the ACO plays brilliantly within their style, and they *do* make some concessions to HIP – but there's just something about the artificiality of the whole thing that I don't like. For all its bouncy energy and drive, I'm afraid this is something of a kickback to the Oistrakhs,

albeit slightly minimalised and toned down. Doubtless Tognetti's version will find many fans, but I shan't be among their number. *BC*

**Bach Suites pour Orchestre 1 & 4** Le Concert Français, Pierre Hantaï + Amandine Beyer vln, Alfredo Bernardini ob 69' Mirare MIR 017 vln sonata BWV 1017, Sinfonia from Cantata 21

This is an interesting programme – rather than give us all four suites, Hantaï prefers two suites (the first and the last), the Sinfonia from *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* and the C minor violin and harpsichord sonata. In fact, the sonata recording was made separately, but I'm still a little puzzled. It's of little consequence, of course, especially given such fantastic music-making as this. Le Concert Français is not a band I have heard before, but I hope to have the opportunity of hearing more of them very soon. As I listened to the opening track (the beginning of the D major suite), I was immediately struck by the facility with which modern baroque players can negotiate such trials and tribulations where, only 20 years, this music was thought well-nigh impossible at these speeds. The remainder of the disc is no less exciting or high quality. In short, this is Bach played as well as you are likely to hear it. *BC*

**Couperin Les Nations** The Kuijken Ensemble 100' 56" (2 CDs) Accent ACC 9285/86 (rec 1992) ££

An ensemble of superstars even 15 years ago, the Kuijkens' performance of this wonderful chamber music will disappoint few. Using pairs of violins or flutes (or occasionally one of each), they step into Couperin's elevated world as if it were their own and make their every gesture musically authoritative. If I have one small carp, it is that I wish they would play every movement with just one sonority, though at least they are happy to leave the continuo to just harpsichord and gamba, a comparative rarity these days, though perfectly satisfying. *David Hansell*

**Ferrandini Cantate per passione** Elisabeth Scholl, Echo du Danube 73' 38" Accent ACC 24181 *Ecco quel tronco, Liebste Mutter, O spettacolo + Concerto in F, quartet in g*

This isn't quite so one-woman an effort as the Scholl disc I reviewed last August, and despite the interesting scoring, the music isn't quite so good as Alessandro Scarlatti. That doesn't mean that it isn't worthy of attention, and I found track 6 particularly



moving. The Schenkian name of the ensemble suggests some contribution by viols, and *Liebste Mutter*, the opening 'sacred arietta', is accompanied by flute, 2 oboi da silva, 2 viole d'amore, 2 violette con sordini, gamba, lute and double bass. *O spettacolo* has two gambas, lute and organ (you can buy it from Edition Wanhall) and the flute and two violins of *Ecco quel tronco* are given a four-instrument continuo backing. The flute concerto and string quartet are more classical in orientation than the vocal pieces. Ferrandini (1710-91) spent much of his life at Munich, retiring to Padua in 1754. CB

**Handel Arias** Angelika Kirchschrager, Kammerorchester Basel, Laurence Cummings 67' 41"  
Sony 82876889522

The Austrian mezzo Angelika Kirchschrager is not a baroque specialist, but made a fine impression as Sesto in David McVicar's frivolous production of *Giulio Cesare* at Glyndebourne in 2005 and is due to sing the title role in *Ariodante* this year in Paris. Here she sings well-known arias from both roles, originally composed for the mezzo Margherita Durastanti and the castrato Giovanni Carestini, and unexpectedly complements them with arias written for the same singers in the much less familiar *Arianna in Creta*, giving special distinction to the recital. The *Ariodante* pieces testify to a supple, velvety voice, technically equal to the virtuosity of 'Con l'ali di speranza' and 'Dopo notte' as to the sustained legato of 'Scherza infida'. But Kirchschrager will surely bring more emotional engagement to these pieces when she sings them in context: 'Scherza' sounds merely droopy, lacking the bitterness and anger that the music also suggests. In the *Giulio Cesare* excerpts, words are projected with more confidence, and Laurence Cummings seems to generate more energy in the orchestral accompaniment. This is also the case in the *Arianna* selection, which includes the vigorous Durastanti aria 'Qual leon', with horns (does the first horn miss his entry just before the end of the da capo?), as well as Teseo's combat with the Minotaur. The booklet notes, divided between two authors, make some valid general points about the Handelian aria, but give little information about the music recorded; some explanation of the dramatic contexts would have been especially helpful for the *Arianna* items. And the anonymous translations leave much to be desired: 'Scherza infida in grembo al drudo' ('The faithless woman plays in her lover's lap') is rendered as 'Treacherous joke in my lover's womb'. Nevertheless, a recital disc more desirable than most. Anthony Hicks

**Handel Fedel e Costante Italian cantatas.** Elin Manahan Thomas S, Principals from The Symphony of Harmony and Invention 65' 10"

Coro Live COR 16045

Dunque sarà pur vero (*Agrippina condotta a morire*) HWV 110; Nel dolce dell'oblio (*Pensieri notturni di Filli*) HWV 134; Tu fedel? tu costante? HWV 171; Dietro l'orme fuggaci (*Armida abbandonata*) HWV 105

This recording of four of Handel's instrumentally accompanied cantatas is taken from a live concert (with a remarkably disciplined audience) at last year's Handel in Oxford Festival, recently established as an annual week-end event by Harry Christophers and The Sixteen. It comes on The Sixteen's own Coro label with a commendation by Christophers of the singer, the young Welsh soprano Elin Manahan Thomas, and its issue is amply justified. The cantatas, all from Handel's early Italian period, depict women in various states of distraction: the ill-fated Agrippina, condemned to death by Nero, her own son; Armida, abandoned by Rinaldo; the feisty anonymous lover of the fickle Fileno; and the fanciful Filli. Thomas, fresh-voiced but adding a darker edge when appropriate, gives them distinctive characters and vividly reveals their feelings without exaggerated histrionic effects. She is especially successful in the sprawling Agrippina cantata, skilfully managing the frequent transitions between recitative and aria, and giving the piece a coherence that can easily be dissipated. The short cantata with recorder, *Nel dolce dell'oblio*, is rather bland; perhaps the intention was to suggest the girl's dreamy state, but a more sprightly approach usually seems to work better. In *Tu fedel* Thomas returns to form: her tender treatment of the main section of the aria 'Se non ti piace amarmi' unexpectedly suggests that the woman has not lost all feeling for the lover she is casting aside. Rapidly changing emotions are again expressed convincingly in *Armida*. Thomas has wonderfully co-operative support throughout from the six instrumentalists, with exceptionally sensitive playing from the violins in the aria 'Se infelice' in *Agrippina*. Given the one-to-a-part strings, the theorbo on the continuo line in addition to harpsichord is a shade burdensome, but on the whole the continuo sound is prominent without being obtrusive (and happily organ-free). Texts and translations (the latter by Thomas herself) are provided, but as is often the case the texts are marred by a failure to present them in correct poetic form (recitatives are always written in lines of seven and eleven syllables, intermittently rhymed, and should be so printed). There are also a few misreadings derived from Chrysander's

edition: *Prema l'ingrato figlio / di plaustron trionfal sponde gemmate* ('Let my ungrateful son lean on the jewelled rims of his triumphal chariot') loses all sense when 'Prema' and 'plaustron' become 'Trema' and 'plauso'. Such cosmetic quibbles should not deter anyone from buying this excellent disc.

Anthony Hicks

**Rameau Keyboard Suites** Angela Hewitt pf 78' 18"

Hyperion CDA67597

Suite in e (1724/31), g & a (1729/30)

I have always felt that French music above all needs the colours for which the composer wrote (think of the harps in the Norrington recording of the *Symphonie Fantastique*) and I am afraid that not even the nimble and distinguished fingers of Miss Hewitt or the coy title of this disc can persuade me that these *pièces* are for anything other than harpsichord. Perhaps the 19<sup>th</sup> century editors of Rameau showed good judgement when, feeling that they were unsuitable for the assumed piano performance, they omitted many ornaments – these do sometimes sound intrusive here. Elsewhere, chords that are grand and sonorous on the harpsichord sound quite harsh and violent and the sustaining power of the instrument is such that the right hand theme completely overwhelms the left hand semiquavers in the finale of the famous *Gavotte*. Without doubt there is also much remarkable pianism here, but I have to say that, in my view at least, it is misdirected. David Hansell

**Sammartini Gerusalemme** etc Silvia Mapelli, Miroslava Yordanova, Giorgio Tiboni S mS T, Symphonica Ensemble, Daniele Ferrari dir 58' 12"

Naxos 8.570253 £

*Confitebor, Gerusalemme sconoscente ingrata*, Symphonies in Eb (J-C 25) & g (J-C 56)

'Jerusalem, disowning and ungrateful' is the title of this impressive cantata by G.B. Sammartini, one of eight surviving examples written for Milan in the 1750s. A sinfonia leads into a series of four recitatives, three arias and a final trio in which three Marys (sung by soprano, mezzo and tenor) learn of, and comment on, the fate of Christ in Holy Week. The arias are extended and very impressive, especially the one for Mary Salome, in which Stefano Lo Re distinguishes himself with brilliant violin obbligatos. All the singers are very good, though I could wish for smoother legato from Giorgio Tiboni in the *Confitebor*. The programme concludes with a polished pair of Sinfonias (there would have been space for at least two more on the disc), neatly dispatched by the little band under

the lively direction of Daniele Ferrari.

Peter Branscombe

**Scarlatti Complete Sonatas vol. 8:**  
*Essercizi per gravicembalo parte prima*  
Ottavio Dantone *hpsc* 58' 44"

Stradivarius STR 33655

K 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 20-23, 26, 28-30

2007 marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Scarlatti's death so this is a timely issue of fifteen sonatas from the *Essercizi* (Emilia Fadini will record the other fifteen for a later volume). They are played on a harpsichord by Andrea Restelli, copy of a Christian Zell of 1737. Dantone has a very fine technique and is probably the best equipped of all players on CD to cope with the technical demands of Scarlatti's sonatas and these in particular. It is highly energised playing with an excellent sense of timing, which occasionally ends in a bit of a headlong rush. He has made his own choice of sonatas, including many of the most exciting; the lack of occasional contrasting slow sonatas is an inevitable consequence of choosing only from the *Essercizi*. While on the fast side, his interpretations are very convincing, very well recorded and can be highly recommended indeed.

Noel O'Regan

**Schaffrath Trios & Sonatas Epoca Barocca**  
cpo 777 116-2 69' 49"

Duetto in C *vl*, *hpsc*; Sonata in d *ob*, *bc*;  
Sonata in G *gamba*, *hpsc*; Trio in g *vl*, *ob*, *bc*  
Trio *vl*, *bsn*, *bc*

This CD comprises recordings made in 2003 and 2005. Each sonata is for a different combination, ranging from a Trio in G minor for violin, oboe and continuo (as one might expect of a baroque composer) to something a little more exotic, such as a Duetto for Cello and harpsichord! There are also solo sonatas for oboe with continuo, and gamba with harpsichord, and a trio sonata for violin, bassoon and continuo. Schaffrath inhabits the same world as the Graun and Benda dynasties, and will remind anyone who hears it of C. P. E. Bach and Janitsch – in short, it is melodious, harmonious and euphonious. I'm afraid it's all a little too sickly sweet for me, but the performances are enjoyable and this disc would be ideal background musak for a dinner party. Just make sure I'm on the invitation list! BC

**Telemann Der Tod Jesu TWV 5: 6** Greetje Anthoni, Yves Saelens, Stefan Geyer STB, Ex TEMPORE, Le Mercure Galant, Florian Heyerick 69' 46"

Et'Cetera KTC 1289

This re-release leaves a bitter taste in the mouth of some Telemann cognoscenti. They had hoped that the dramatic

introduction – with such ear-catching sounds as muted horn – might have been tagged on to the front, but unfortunately this is not the case. What remains, however, is a thoroughly enjoyable performance and recording of one of Telemann's many outstanding church works which ought to be far better known. Soloists, choir and band are uniformly excellent. If you did not hear this first time around, this is an excellent opportunity to rectify the situation. BC

**Vivaldi The Purcell Quartet** (Catherine Mackintosh, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Richard Boothby, Robert Woolley) 52' 18"

Hyperion *Helios* CDH55231 (rec 1985)

Trio Sonatas RV 60, 63 (*La Folia*), 74; Sonatas RV 754, 758

This re-release includes three trio sonatas (including a thrilling account of *La Folia*) and two solo sonatas (RV 754 and 758, both played by Catherine Mackintosh). The Purcell Quartet's other violinist at the time the recording was made was Elizabeth Wallfisch, and the music-making is of the very highest order. BC

**Vivaldi Heroes: opera arias** Philippe Jaroussky *ct*, Ensemble Matheus, Jean-Christophe Sponosi *vl*/dir 63' 15"

Virgin Classics 00946 363414 2 2

The idea of a male soprano hero is something that modern audiences find difficult. The photos used for the booklet will do nothing to enhance Jaroussky's macho credentials, but the performances are undeniably exciting. He possesses an extremely well-developed upper register (which he uses to varying success), and he has obviously done a lot of preparation work on the 15 arias from Vivaldi's operas. Ensemble Matheus accompanies brilliantly, though Spinosi's solo sounded just a little weak. My main problem with the whole enterprise is the excessive use of *rubato* and other tempo changes – these might well work in the opera house (though I somehow doubt it), but they have no place on a CD where repeated hearing is guaranteed to make it seem even more tiresome. BC

**Weiss Lute Sonatas, vol. 8** Robert Barto  
Naxos 8.570109 £ 63' 19"

Sonatas 19, 34, 36

Robert Barto continues his project of recording all Weiss's solo music for lute. Volume 8 has a unity of key, with the first and third sonatas both in D minor, separated by a sonata in F, the relative major. Sonata No. 36 in D minor begins with a beautiful, slow *Allemande*, with sumptuous chords and well-arched

melodies. It is followed by a flowing *moto perpetuo* Courante, a cheeky Bourrée, an exquisitely static Sarabande in F major, and a lively Menuet. The Sonata finishes with a brisk allegro, more classical in feel than baroque. Barto's playing is fluent, with a clear tone and subtle phrasing. Never hurried, he lets the music sing, creating a variety of contrasting moods.

Sonata No. 19 in F major is one of five sonatas published by the Lute Society. The lowest two courses of a 13-course lute are not required, so the music may be played on an 11-course lute. The Prelude is played with (to my taste) too much rhythmic flexibility, but any restlessness is soon quelled by a slow, soporific *Allemande*, which lasts for a full six and a half minutes. As with other movements, Barto adds in a few extra notes here and there for the repeats, but never excessively. His divisions at the end of the Sarabande are surprising, but nevertheless tasteful. For the repeats of the Menuet he adds in some nice broken chords. The Gigue is a tour de force, with notes so fast in the bass they become a blur.

Sonata no. 34 in D minor is also in the Lute Society publication. According to Tim Crawford's booklet notes, this sonata is associated with teaching, and has been popular in recent years with guitar players. There is a note in the manuscript: 'This is the first I studied with Mr Weiss'. Barto's interpretation is very convincing.

Stewart McCoy

**German Lute Music of the XVIII Century**  
Alberto Crugnola 69' 31"

Symphonia SY 05217

Durant *Sonata in A*, Falckenhagen *Fuga in A*, Kleinknecht *Sonata in Bb*, Weiss *Sonata 30 in g*

Little is known of Paul Charles Durant. He was appointed lutenist at the court of Bayreuth in 1754 on the death of Falckenhagen, and stayed there until 1769. His music has an early classical feel. It is pleasant enough, but lacks the emotional intensity of Weiss or Bach. The separation of treble and bass is very marked, and there is much repetition. His Sonata in A minor consists of *Fantasie*, *Fuga*, *Spiritoso*, *Vivace*, *Gavotte*, *Liura* and *Allegro*. No doubt Princess Friedericke Sophie Wilhelmine, sister of Friedrich II, and herself a competent lutenist, would have enjoyed listening to him at Bayreuth.

Similar in style is the sonata by Jakob Friedrich Kleinknecht. The *Allegro moderato e gratoso* is characterised by ornamented descending scales. Various compositional devices are employed, including passages where beats are divided now into three, now into four. In the *Andante ma gratosamente* and *Tempo giusto* there seems to be a bird chirping in the background.

More familiar is the lute music of Silvius Leopold Weiss. I enjoyed listening to Crugnola's interpretation of his Sonata 30. Without exaggerating any particular element, he lets the music speak for itself, with well shaped phrases and a sweet singing tone. There could perhaps be more difference in character between each of the various movements, in particular with regard to speed. In his booklet notes Franco Pavan suggests that Princess Wilhelmine may have taken lute lessons from Weiss. In her memoirs she wrote: 'one of the greatest lutenists of all time; he plays the lute so well that there will never be another like him and those who come after him will have only the glory of being able to imitate him.'

One lutenist who does come after him is Falckenhagen, whose Fuga in A major finishes the CD. There is a short prelude-like introduction, with a succession of slow-moving harmonies, some quite surprising, and then the fugue begins. Falckenhagen introduces different effects, including tremolo passages, and ends the with a grand gesture: a perfect cadence consisting of very fast arpeggios over a long held dominant pedal, leading to an arpeggiated tonic chord, finishing with a low A on the 13<sup>th</sup> course. Stewart McCoy

*Out of Italy: Baroque music with Italian flavours* Duo al Dente (Kirsten Lund Johnson rec, Per Weile Bak lutes 62' 01" Lion Valley Music LIVACD 603 Barsanti Sonata 2, Corelli op. 5/8, Geminiani op. 5/3, Vivaldi RV 443 + Carolan, Handel & Zamboni

*Out of Italy Duo al Dente* (Kirsten Lund Jensen rec, Per Weile Bak archlute & theorbo) 62' 01" Lion Valley Music LIVACD 603 O'Carolan, Corelli, Zamboni, Handel, Barsanti, Geminiani, Vivaldi

Listening to this CD is rather like sitting in the front row of a live concert: you can hear the recorder player's breaths and some finger movement on the archlute, but there is something rather charming about the immediacy of these performances. There are recorder sonatas by Corelli, Barsanti and Geminiani, Vivaldi's Concerto for flautino RV443, and an arrangement of Handel's *Lascia ch'io pianga* with a nicely florid *da capo*. Four movements of an archlute sonata by the Roman lutenist Zamboni are split into pairs, separating the disc into three sections, and the whole is sandwiched by a selection of arrangements of pieces by the Irish harpist Turlough O'Carolan. I'm not totally convinced that these have a place on a CD entitled 'Out of Italy', but I enjoyed listening to them anyway.

Victoria Helby

*Sanssouci – Versailles: virtuoso music for flute and harpsichord* Ensemble Obligat (Imme-Jeanne Klett, Anke Dennert) 71' 12" Genuin GEN 86070

Music by CPE Bach (Wq 13), Boismortier, Couperin (*Concert 3*), Debussy, Donjon, CH Graun, Mützel, Rameau

This is a recording for those who prefer to hear Baroque music played on the modern flute. There is some sensitive and stylish playing and the instruments are well balanced. Most of the programme consists of music written by composers at the court of Louis XIV at Versailles and Frederick the Great at Sanssouci, hence the title, but for some reason the players have chosen to add two pieces from quite different periods, *Rossignolet* by Donjon (1839-1912) and Debussy's *Syrinx* for solo flute. While the Donjon fits in well with the theme of the middle section of the CD, between Couperin's *Le Rossignol en Amour* and Rameau's *Le Rappel des Oiseaux*, I can't but feel that it would have been better to have saved both it and *Syrinx* for another disc. *Syrinx* in particular doesn't sound right here, but you can always skip over it.

Victoria Helby

#### CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *The Sonatas for flute & b.c.* Barthold Kuijken, Ewald Demeyere 104' 56" (2 CDs) Accent ACC 24171

This double CD contains all CPE Bach's surviving eleven sonatas for flute and continuo. These are elegant and poised performances, full of delicate changes of mood and understated virtuosity. While in the introduction to the second part of his *Versuch*, Bach wrote that the best accompaniment is a keyboard instrument and a cello, Kuijken and Demeyere have chosen here to use keyboard continuo alone. Kuijken explains in his useful notes that this is in order to emphasize the intimate nature of the music, but although Demeyere's realisation of the continuo is both sensitive and imaginative, I would at times have appreciated the greater depth which a cello could have added. The last sonata on each CD is played on a copy of a 1746 Silbermann fortepiano originally in the collection of Frederick the Great, which has a much bigger sound. Its use in the D major sonata of 1747 comes as something of a shock after the delicacy of the harpsichord in the preceding sonatas on the first disc, but perhaps not surprisingly sounds like the right instrument for the very late Hamburg sonata of 1786, which brings the second CD to a sparkling conclusion.

Victoria Helby

Beck *Symphonies op. 4/1-3* La Stagione Frankfurt, Michael Schneider 65' 43" cpo 777 033-2 (SACD) *Symphonies op. 4, 1-3, Overture to L' Ile déserte*

Listening to the D-major opening movement of Franz Ignaz Beck's op. 4 no 1, it's hard to credit that the set was published in the year of Mozart's tenth birthday, so assured and 'advanced' is it in melodic, harmonic and dramatic terms. If thereafter these four-movements symphonies can hardly provoke the same delighted surprise, there is abundant musical pleasure to be derived from their contrasted scoring and invention, superbly brought out by La Stagione's expertly played period instruments. As in previous issues, Michael Schneider directs with confidence and an appropriate touch of swagger. He also provides a helpful introductory note. The recording is fresh and neatly balanced. A winner all round.

Peter Branscombe

Galuppi *Concerti a Quattro* Ensemble Il Falcone 58' 01" Dynamic CDS 519

I feel rather guilty not giving this release a better review, as Dynamic as a label does a fantastic service to the world of early music with their constant stream of new releases of neglected repertoire. Here we have Ensemble Il Falcone playing a set of seven Concerti a quattro, all of which are well worth performing (and recording). They make pleasant listening, but I'm afraid these performances just are not quite polished enough. There are two main problems. Firstly, I don't think the ensemble gains from the presence of cello and bass, it just makes the whole thing a little too heavy. Secondly, in trying to make more of the music than what it is – essentially nice entertainment but not too deep and cerebral – there are too many overdone details and the melodic lines sometimes suffer the consequences of going for an orchestral sound with just one player per part. Sorry, Dyanamic! Please don't be put off!

BC

Haydn *Cello Concertos in C & D, Symphony 60* Il distratto Quirine Viersen vlc, Combattimento Consort, Jan Willem de Vriend 75' 38" Et'Cetera KTC 5251

A scintillating performance of the symphony associated with contemporary performances at Eszterházy of a play by Regnard divides readings of the first and second Cello Concertos. Quirine Viersen is a cellist of growing and very justifiable renown. She has a beautiful instrument, warmly responsive throughout a wide dynamic and expressive range; she phrases



sensitively and has a strong sense of style. The booklet contains lengthy notes in English, French and German about the music and the performers. Viersen is revealing in her comments about her approach to these works; some listeners may find her cadenzas over-long, eloquently though they are played. These are superb performances, neatly accompanied by the expert little Combattimento Consort, and clearly recorded. *Peter Branscombe*

**M. Haydn *Andromeda und Perseus*** Heike Porstein *Andromeda*, Christine Wolff *Perseus*, Max Ciolek *Phineas*, Raimund Nolte *Kepheus*, Vokal Ensemble Köln, Saarbrücken RSO, Reinhard Goebel 105' 36" (2 CDs) Oehms OC 911

Neither Haydn brother is usually thought of as a composer for the stage, though thanks to the grand Philips undertaking, Joseph's operas are worthily represented in the record catalogue. Michael, less productive, has also been less fortunate in this respect: a scattering of recordings of his German singspiels has been available, but until now neither of his big Italian operas. Joy at the issue of this impressive performance of a festive work written for the Prince-Archbishop's birthday in 1787 is lessened by the fact that it is sung in a (contemporary) German translation rather than the original Italian, with spoken narrative rather than the linking simple recitatives. The familiar story is complicated by the fact that the captive Andromeda is, for dynastic reasons, betrothed to Phineas, her uncle (whose own timid attempt to free her from the sea monster has failed). Of course she prefers the dashing Perseus, and in due course all ends happily.

There is warm, expressive (and over-resonantly recorded) playing from the Saarbrücken Radio Orchestra; Reinhard Goebel controls the performance magisterially, leaving one only to regret that it is just a partial realization of the complete *opera seria*. He is alert to the often taxing demands of the writing for the two main characters, who dispatch their coloratura and legato passages with considerable skill – though, it must be said, Christine Wolff, who takes the castrato role of Perseus, is very obviously a woman. The two minor roles and the choral writing are in secure hands. There are rather stilted introductory essays as well as the sung text and English translation. This is an interesting and important issue. *Peter Branscombe*

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)  
 ££ = mid price  
 other discs full price (as far as we know)

**Mozart *The Impresario*; Mozart's Circle *The Beneficent Dervish*** Cyndia Sieden, Sharon Baker, Deanne Meek, John Aler, Kevin Deas, Alan Ewing Boston Baroque, Martin Pearlman 66' 14" Telarc CD-80573 (rec 2001)

I'm not sure why this has been sent again: Peter Branscombe reviewed it in issue 80, p. 22. The novelty is *Der wohlthätige Derwisch*, a production by Schikeneder's company, now believed to date from March 1791 instead of 1793, so of considerable interest for its relationship to *The Magic Flute*, even though there is no indication that Mozart was involved. Peter's review concluded: 'no one interested in the Viennese Volkstheater and operatic byways should miss the chance to acquire this very pleasing issue'. If you did miss it, here's another chance. *CB*

**The Unbelievable Mozart** Consortium Classicum 428' 08" (7 CDs in box) Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 301 1399-2 ££ (rec 1994-2001)

I find the title puzzling: you have to have had your head in the sands for the last few decades not to be aware of the penumbra of Mozartian compositions this contains: music that survives under Mozart's name but whose plausibility is dubious or which are other composers' arrangements of genuine Mozart pieces for more accessible ensembles. We've commented on most of the discs as they appeared, and the cheaper reissue (with full booklet) is welcome. Any Mozart-lover will enjoy hearing some pieces from a different angle and discovering (and testing his own stylistic awareness on) the questionable items. *CB*

**Mozart *Chamber Music*** Smithsonian String Quartet etc 350' 75 (5 CDs in box) Virgin 00946 372338 2 9 (rec 1989-90) Divertimento K. 463; Oboe quartet (with Michel Piguet); 'Haydn' qtuets; quintets K174 & 516 (with Lisa Rautenberg)

This compilation brings together recordings that were made in France, Germany and London in 1989 and 1990. The performances are mainly elegant, generous in respect of repeats, and with considerably chosen tempos and nice balance; they are also very well recorded – but only occasionally of riveting nature (as, a notable example, in the *Adagio* of the Bb Quintet). The wonderful six-movement Divertimento disappoints a little with moments of awkward ensemble in its opening *Allegro*, but generally this rather disparate grouping of elderly recordings will give considerable pleasure. Not so the absurdly careless

listing of movements and timings in the booklet, which makes a mess of the tempo indications and even the order of the works on the third CD. That criticism should not be allowed to put any prospective purchaser off acquiring this neat re-issue of nine of Mozart's string masterpieces, along with Michel Piguet's dry yet lively account of the Oboe Quartet.

*Peter Branscombe*

**Mozart *Complete Clavier Works* 5** Siegbert Rampe *kbd* 76' 55" Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 341 1305-2 K 310, 330 & early pieces

The A minor sonata, K. 310, sounds impressive on a big French-style two-manual harpsichord, but I'm not persuaded that it was the instrument Mozart had chiefly in mind, for his unusually detailed dynamic markings, especially in the slow movement, surely presuppose a touch-sensitive instrument. I agree that the sonata is unlikely to have been conceived for a clavichord or a square piano, but Rampe is too quick to dismiss the possibility that full-sized fortepianos were available in Paris in 1778. Daquin is known to have had one (by J. H. Silbermann) as early as 1769, and Backers had been making 'English grands' since about 1770: it would be surprising if none of them had reached Paris by the time of Mozart's visit. Their five-octave keyboards omitted bottom F#, a note that is never used in K. 310.

By contrast, the K. 264 variations have almost no dynamic markings and use bottom F# twice: the set suits the harpsichord very well and Rampe's brilliant performance is totally convincing. He plays the later K. 330 sonata on a copy of a 1788 Stein fortepiano, which I'm afraid sounds a bit wooden in contrast to the original, played by Schornsheim on her concertos recording. But Rampe's sense of style is impeccable: Mozart's articulation markings are scrupulously observed (with no abuse of the knee-levers), and there is some quite elaborate ornamentation and variation in the repeats. It all sounds plausibly Mozartean, but I'm not sure that it would bear repeated hearing: always a problem with recorded improvisations.

Rampe also includes some juvenilia, played appropriately enough on a clavichord (though I could wish he didn't hit the keys so hard that they make an irritatingly audible knocking noise), and the K. 6 sonata – to which Mozart subsequently added a violin part – on a Shudi harpsichord of 1771, making effective use of contrasting lute and buff registers in the second movement.

*Richard Maunday*

Myslivecek *Symphonies* Concerto Köln,  
Werner Erhardt 67' 17"  
Archiv 477 6418

I haven't heard Concerto Köln for a few years now, so it was an especial pleasure to receive this disc for review – they're every bit as exciting in these seven works by Myslivecek as I remember them when they released a programme of his Bohemian contemporary, Vanhal. Where the latter uses the wind instruments as harmonic filling, though, *il divino boemo* (the sub-title of the disc) exploits their individual colours and melodic range. This is nowhere more keenly observed than in the final work of the recording, a Concertino in E flat for pairs of horns, flutes and clarinets with bassoon and strings. It's a great shame that these works are not better known, and even more so that his carefree lifestyle cost musical history a great deal! If you're unfamiliar with Myslivecek's music, I cannot imagine a more exciting way to gain his acquaintance. BC

Pichl *Symphonies* Toronto Chamber Orchestra, Kevin Mallon 73' 02"  
Naxos 8.557761 £  
*Calliope, Clio, Diana, Melpomene*

Wenzel Pichl, born near Tábor in 1741, after an unusually broad education spent most of his career as violinist, composer and teacher in the provinces, including a lengthy spell as music director to the Archduke Ferdinand in Milan, before finally settling in Vienna, where he died in 1805 while playing a violin concerto in the Lobkowitz Palace. His career was furthered by his friendship with Dittersdorf, whose achievements encouraged and inspired him. The symphonies here are based on sources in the Biblioteca Estense, Modena; they are striking four-movement compositions, though one searches in vain for the significance of the Classical titles Pichl gave them – even the one named *Diana* is not the one of these four to display solo horn-writing to exciting effect. The playing of the Toronto CO under Kevin Mallon is excellent, the recording of the same class.

Peter Branscombe

Berliner Schloss-Musiken – Music from Berlin Castles various performers 308' 00" (5 CDs)

Capriccio 49 503 ££ (rec 1990-93)  
1. *Sanscouci* August Wilhelm, CPE Bach, F. Benda, Frederick II, Janitsch, Quantz,  
2. *Schloss Rheinsberg* Czarth, JG Graun, Schaffrath  
3. *Charlottenburg* Ariosti, Bononcini, Corelli, Steffani, Torelli  
4. *Märsche und Blasmusik aus der Könlichen Hausbibliothek des Berliner Schlosses*

5. *Schauspielmusiken für Potsdam* Mendelssohn excerpts from op. 55, 61, 93

These five re-released discs cover a very wide range of music, from elegant chamber music by C P E Bach, Franz Benda and Quantz to Mendelssohn's *Ein Sommernachtstraum*, from cantatas by Ariosti to military band polkas and marches. They also exemplify the Capriccio principle of including music by lesser-known composers, so there are flute sonatas by Georg Czarth and an overture by Gottlieb Graun. The performances, by a variety of performers on early and modern instruments, are never any less than stylish. BC

Cembalo & Hammerflügel Konzerte Christine Schoornsheim 152' 57" (3 CDs)  
Capriccio 49 541 (rec 1998-2002)  
CD1 CPE Bach in E Wq 14; JC Bach in f, WF Bach in D (rec 1995)  
CD2 Kimberger in c, Mützel in G, Nichelmann in E (rec 1997)  
CD3 Naumann in Bb, Rosetti in G, Wolf No. 1 in G (rec 2000)

These are welcome reissues of nine highly interesting and varied German keyboard concertos, dating from roughly 1740 to 1790. Very appropriately, Schoornsheim plays the earlier ones on a French-style harpsichord and the last three on a beautiful (and original) Stein fortepiano of 1788. I am less keen on the Heilmann copy used for the Mützel piece, which is rather anachronistic for a concerto that sounds as if it was written in the 1760s; but Schoornsheim plays all three instruments with great authority. Three cheers, too, for the one-to-a-part strings in all but the Rosetti and Naumann concertos, where the line-up is 3/3/2/1/1 plus woodwind and horns. The ensemble is excellent and the playing spirited and sensitive; my only reservation is that the routine addition of a double bass throughout makes for a heavy and aggressive bass-line at times, especially in the Wolf piece. It's worth remembering that, when J. S. Bach (later) added a 'violone' to his harpsichord concerto in A, BWV 1055, it played only in the tutti sections – and it may have played at 8' rather than 16' pitch. Despite my quibble, though, I have no hesitation in giving this top marks – and I remain a big fan of Schoornsheim! Richard Maunder

Missa Russica (1): *Le concert à l'église au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* Choeur orthodoxe russe de Riga, Johann Shenrock dir 45' 56"  
Hortus 033  
Music by Berezovsky, Bortniansky, Degtiarev, Strokine, Vedel

I'm afraid my sceptical hat went on the moment I put this disc in the player. First

and foremost, though, I must commend the excellence of the Choeur orthodoxe russe de Riga – like many of their eastern European counterparts, they produce a beautiful clear sound with effortless dynamic transitions and dramatic interpretations (without the slightest hint of it being too Romantic). The music would have made excellent listening material when I was reading Marina Ritzarev's book last time around (perhaps Ashgate would be interested in striking a deal with Editions Hortus to sell them as a package?), but I remain unconvinced that the music as it is preserved (and as it is brilliantly performed here) is 18th century. I doubt if we'll ever get any closer, though. BC

## VARIOUS

Cruit go nÓr – *Harp of gold* Ann Heymann *clairseach*, Ron McFarlane *lute*, Julie Elhard *vielle, gamba*, Laura MacKenzie *fl*  
CMCD 0706 60' 24"

This CD is very much a journey of exploration involving many speculations, some of which work better than others. In her booklet note Ann Heymann confirms that she has been largely led by her harp, and a magnificent full-voiced instrument it is too, a replica of the Trinity College harp strung with wires of gold, silver and brass. Through my work with the early harp and clarsach expert Bill Taylor, I have become very familiar with much of the repertoire Ann Heymann presents here, and what strikes me is the diversity of interpretation available to performers. For the opening selection of chants associated with St Brigid, Heymann presents the music instrumentally and in a regular rhythm rather than in the freer style normally associated with chant. Coincidentally a contrasting style is available for comparison on a recently released CD of St Brigid material by Bill Taylor with the Scottish group Cauty (CD GAU 354). The Kaniad San Silin from the Welsh Robert ap Huw manuscript is also presented in a rhythmically regularised style and in an abridged version – a contrasting and fuller version performed by Bill Taylor on the bray harp is on the Two Worlds of the Welsh Harp on Dorian (BoooooJC82). Also explored is the role of the clarsach in introducing and accompanying bardic poetry. Heymann makes a very compelling case for the enigmatic 'ports' preserved in a number of Scottish lute MSS being introductions to performances of bardic verse, and she and her husband Charlie Heymann present Port Robart and Airrgeann Mór in this manner. The other main element in this thought-provoking selection is music from 17<sup>th</sup>-

century Ireland and Scotland, where we hear the voice of a dying Gaelic culture through a charmingly Baroque veneer – the use of the full range of the clarsach and the inventive instrumentation are both pleasing. There is much to enjoy in Heymann's beautiful tone and her creative interaction with a number of instrumentalists, including the Baltimore Consort's lutenist Ronn McFarlane and early flautist Laura MacKenzie.

D. James Ross

From [www.clairseach.com](http://www.clairseach.com) or  
[heymanm@clairseach.com](mailto:heymanm@clairseach.com)

**Hear the Voice Ensemble** Amarcord 58' 04"  
 Raum Klang RK ap 10201 (rec 1998-99)  
 Byrd *Ave verum corpus*, Josquin *Magnus es tu*;  
 La Rue *O salutaris hostia*, Tallis *Hear the voice*,  
*If ye love me* + Cornelius, Ludwig, Mauers-  
 berger, Milhaud, Orff, Poulenc

It was the 20th-century pieces that interested me most. The early ones are not very adventurous, though well enough sung, but the Cornelius, Poulenc, Mauersberger and Orff were a delightful surprise. So I can recommend this heartily, but not for early-music reasons.

CB

**René Jacobs... by himself** 255' (2 CDs with  
 32 tracks) + 59' 30" DVD  
 Harmonia Mundi HMX 2908214-16

Harmonia Mundi has really pushed the boat out to mark its 30 year association with Jacobs. This issue consists of a robust box containing two audio CDs, a DVD, a thick booklet and a separate discography. The CDs basically incorporate one track from each year of Jacobs' career and thus chart his transition from solo and consort singer to conductor, mainly of opera. The DVD is a blend of biography and documentary (though with a clear editorial slant) in which Jacobs takes the opportunity to defend himself against the 'purists', among whom he singles out his English 'fans', who criticise his style and interpretations. There are no extended or meaningful musical extracts to be seen on the DVD. The booklet does include full texts and translations of the audio tracks. Personally, I find René Jacobs's performances wonderful and irritating in almost equal measure but I do admire his continuing to revive early operas against virtually all financial practicalities. And I suppose that this issue emphasises that he has been, and continues to be, difficult to ignore.

David Hansell

#### DVD

**Monteverdi Pierre Audi's Monteverdi Cycle**  
 O A0972B D 750'

This contains Monteverdi's three operatic masterpieces in performances directed at the Amsterdam Muziektheater by Pierre

Audi. *L'Orfeo* has Stephen Stubbs directing the music, with John Mark Ainsley, Michael Chance and David Cordier among the cast. *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* features Anthony Rolfe Johnson and Graciela Araya with Glen Wilson in charge. Christophe Rousset directs *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Les Talens Lyriques and a cast including Brigitte Balley, Cynthia Haymon, Claron McFadden and Dominique Visse. As a bonus, there is a previously unreleased *Combattimento* with Lorna Anderson and Maarten Koningberger and the ASKO Ensemble led by David Porcelijn.

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**Handel Agrippina** Günter von Kannen  
*Claudio*, Barbara Daniels *Agrippina*, David  
 Kuebler *Nerone*, Janice Hall *Poppea*,  
 Claudio Nicolai *Ottone*, Ulrich Hielscher  
*Pallante*, Eberhard Katz *Narciso*, Carlos  
 Feller *Lesbo*, London Baroque Players,  
 Arnold Östman *cond*, Michael Hampe *dir*  
 EuroArts 2054548 DVD 154'  
 rec Rokokotheater Schwetzingen, May 1985

**Handel Agrippina** Annemarie Kremer  
*Agrippina*, Renate Arends *Poppea*, Michael  
 Hart-David *Nerone*, Quirijn de Lang  
 Ottone, Piotr Micinski *Claudius*, Clint van  
 der Linde *Pallante*, Jan Alofs *Lesbo*,  
 Combattimento Consort Amsterdam, Jan  
 Willem de Vriend *cond*, Eva Buchmann  
*dir* 173' (including extras)  
 Challenge Classics CCDVD 72143 DVD  
 rec National Slovak Theatre, Bratislava, 2004

**Handel Giulio Cesare** Graham Pushee  
*Giulio Cesare*, Richard Alexander *Curio*,  
 Rosemary Gunn *Cornelia*, Elizabeth Camp-  
 bell *Sesto*, Yvonne Kenny *Cleopatra*,  
 Andrew Dalton *Tolomeo*, Stephen Bennett  
*Achilla*, Rodney Gilchrist *Nireno*, Australian  
 Opera and Ballet Orchestra, Richard  
 Hickox *cond*, Francisco Negrin *dir* 209'  
 EuroArts 2053599 208'  
 rec Sydney Opera House, June 1994

**Handel Giulio Cesare** Sarah Connolly  
*Giulio Cesare*, Angelika Kirchschlager *Sesto*,  
 Danielle de Niese *Cleopatra*, Patricia Bardon  
*Cornelia*, Christopher Maltman *Achilla*,  
 Christophe Dumaux *Tolomeo*, Rachid ben  
 Abdeslam *Nireno*, Alexander Ashworth  
*Curio*, OAE, William Christie *cond*, David  
 McVicar *dir* 305'  
 Opus Arte OA 0950 D DVD (3 discs)  
 rec Glyndebourne 2005

Since Clare and John so enjoyed our Red Sea cruise in November, we took advantage of another favourable offer to repeat it at the beginning of January, this time ignoring the tempting but exhausting excursions and having an easy time on board. I determined to spend some of it catching up on the backlog of DVDs sent for review, so took a portable player with me. Unfortunately, in the rush of trying to pack at the last minute so that it would be

a surprise for the children, we left behind the controls, so I couldn't skip tracks or resume from where I stopped for a break, and the only socket in the cabin that had room for a three-pin adaptor was in the shower room. So my viewing was not very successful and comment is limited to the space left on this page.

All these are live staged performances (though the only information on the Combattimento recording is on screen). They are not prepared like most responsible CDs, with the opera uncut (and even occasionally appendices of alternatives), and even less than CDs can they be taken as authoritative versions: perhaps they should have a self-erase device so that they can only be seen once. There may be retakes from other performances in the run, but these are essentially live events, with all the virtues and handicaps that entails. Spread over 20 years, they have in common stylish, informed orchestral playing on modern, baroque or (Combattimento's compromise) 19th-century instruments. But none show any serious attempt to stage the works according to the principles of Handel's time – which is a bit odd. We expect TV Jane Austen and Dickens at least to look the right period: why should opera be different. A consequence is that the stage buzzes with activity, most of which is irrelevant, and much of which is gratuitous comedy. I'm not saying that there shouldn't be humour: London theatre audiences did not have the seriousness of perfect Wagnerites, though they did have a sense of public decorum. In very few arias is the singer communicating with someone on stage; they usually let the character express the emotion that is within him/herself to the audience, not to bystanders. Directors have too little confidence in the power of the music and apply anachronistic dramatic conventions which undermine the music and, ironically, stress its repetitiveness. Would they liven up Samuel Beckett in such a way?

The best of the bunch is the Glyndebourne *Giulio Cesare* (though the Sydney/Hickox version isn't far behind), partly because of the title role. Sarah Connolly has the technique and looks convincing – her smooth, bright cheeks echo a type of male face, such as the TV Dalziel's colleague Pascoe, so one is less aware of cross-dressing than usual; and she sounds absolutely on top of the role – the part really is too much for a falsettist, well though Graham Pushee manages it. If the aria with obbligato violin must be a joke, the Sydney version works better. There is less to choose between the Agrippinas; unless Hampe's ending on the Rhine offends you, I'd go for Östmann's. I'm sure our readers will be deterred by the Combattimento cover with bra and socks on a washing line.

CB



## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

By happy coincidence, the December issue of *EMR* with your commentary on the English Touring Opera's four baroque operas (pp. 15-18) arrived at the same time as the Winter 2006 issue of *Early Music America*, mainly devoted to 'Staging Baroque Opera'. The five directors of baroque operas who contributed to this came from different backgrounds. James Middleton is a theatre designer with a special interest in 'the fantastic world of illusionistic stagecraft' required by baroque opera. Catherine Turocy, who founded the New York Baroque Dance Company in 1976, soon moved into producing opera, and Jennifer Griesback is a specialist in baroque gesture; (the others were Marshall Pyntowski of Opera Atelier, and Drew Minter). Their comments, and the striking illustrations of their productions, suggest that they are likely to have shared your reservations about the 'updated' productions we both saw in Cambridge.

I also share your views. Like Robert Donington in his book *Opera and its Symbols* (Yale University, 1990), I believe that taking any opera far out of the cultural and behavioural contexts within which it was conceived can compromise its meaning, and, for me, enjoyment of the production. A modern-day Violetta would not accede to the demands of her partner's father and cause the tragedy of *La Traviata*, and a New York barman would surely not see himself as being the same person as a jester in the employment of a great Duke. Modernising is even more damaging to baroque opera. But overlooking his *Rigoletto*, it was Jonathan Miller who created the wonderful Kent Opera *Orfeo* – the last occasion I had seen it at the Arts Theatre. In the ETO's production, the pastoral settings of the first two acts were almost as unsunny as hell itself. In all four operas the staging gimmicks were inappropriate, perplexing, and sometimes precarious. A touring opera company on a low budget may not offer us baroque splendour, an uncluttered simple staging can suffice if the costumes are even a little resplendent. Wearing the right clothes can help the cast to sing in the right spirit; you cannot slouch in period dress. And with only some baroque gestures and dance movements (rather than just wandering around), one could hope that there would also be an overall improvement in diction and immediacy of communication.

Nevertheless, one should commend ETO on their enterprise and courage, particularly in putting on Cavalli's *Erismena* (would that Cambridge opera-goers had filled all the seats for this production). As the least serious of their offerings, this was less affected by production quirks than the others – it was rather fun and the music was excellent. And it was an inspired idea to use a 1712 English translation. With a relatively inexperienced company, one can tolerate some musical lapses, even too much vibrato, in recompense for sprightly orchestral playing under young conductors, and in quite a few of the parts enthusiastic acting and singing. (The singing was occasionally very good indeed, as in the lament of the daughter in a staging of Carissimi's *Jephtha* (although Purcell's Dido was truly lamentable, a miscasting).

The composers represented in ETO's Spring 2007 tour are Mozart, Tchaikovsky and Johann Strauss, which should help fill the coffers. But I hope ETO will take a risk again in the future, though next time allowing baroque opera to speak for itself on its own terms. Anthony Rowland-Jones

I also received a letter from the director of the ETO's productions – not, I think, for publication, and not complaining of my comments on his own work. One of the conductors pointed out the challenge of singing four different works on consecutive nights requiring very different styles at different pitches and temperaments. One might argue that this problem should have been foreseen. But perhaps the comments of G. B. Shaw concerning Joachim's tuning are relevant (see p. 30). CB

Congratulations to Anthony Rowland-Jones for being awarded the Presidential Special Honor Award by the American Recorder Society, which will be presented during the Boston Early Music Festival in June.

Dear Clifford

In David Hill's excellent review of *Songs from the Labyrinth* in the last issue he mentions, as an aside, that no portrait of Dowland is known to exist. I would like to draw your attention to an article in the *Journal of the Lute Society of America* volume XXX (1997) by Olav Chris Henriksen entitled 'A Possible Likeness of John Dowland'.

The author describes an engraved title page of an anthology of five-part madrigals by Melchior Borchgrevinck published in Denmark in 1605. Borchgrevinck was apparently head of instrumentalists at the Danish court at that time. The engraved plate shows a group of two singers and players of bass viol, bass lute and tenor lute, and without repeating the whole paper here, the viol player was identified as the composer in a paper by Hammerich in 1892. If these musicians are from the court, it leaves the question as to who the other musicians are. Since Dowland was the top lutenist at the court it is postulated that the lute player in the centre of the group, facing the reader, is the master himself, particularly as there is no other reason for a lutenist to be prominent on a publication of madrigals. The book was reprinted in 1606 without the fancy title page, perhaps because Dowland had then been dismissed from his position at court.

If there is a flaw in Henriksen's study I should like to know so that I can remove a copy of the picture from my study wall. Mike Ashley

PS. *EMR* volume 116 was excellent – thank you – 'Semper Dowland, semper download' will live with me for a long time.

We received more compliments than usual for the last two issues, despite them both being produced in rather a rush. This issue too has been under pressure, thanks to the pressure of King's Music work. A few errata in issue 116 are listed on p. 13. CB