

# Early Music

# REVIEW

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You will notice some superficial changes in this issue. Issues 1-83 of *EMR* were produced on an Acorn computer. But after running it in parallel with a PC, we decided that it would be better to be in touch with the rest of the computer world and changed system. I assumed that since it had a programme called 'publisher', that was the one I should use. What I didn't realise was that it operated by coding data in a form that was inaccessible to standard searching systems and that was only readable as an attachment by recipients with the programme. So with a change of machines (that has made emails more reliable), it was time to abandon it. There may be some tweakings for the next issue, but at least from now on I can check what I said about volume one when reviewing volume two of a series.

Changes to the post (beyond the price increase on 2 April) may affect King's Music customers. For the last decade, we have taken our day's mail to the local sorting office, listing it in docket books which record our expenditure and avoid the need to keep a stock of stamps. It used to close at 7.00 pm, then moved forward to 6.00, then to 5.00. From March, it closed at 1.00 pm. The local village post office is open four days a week, but it too is shut on Wednesday afternoon. So we will try to avoid posting on that day. From April, there is a charge per page of the docket books (a recent redesign reduced the number of categories per docket to 7). Furthermore, the minimum charge imposed in April will quadruple in the autumn, so we may wait until the batch is large enough. It would help for us to know how urgent any order is, and we may have to impose an extra charge for dealing with it.

Also, please remember that there are only two of us here, and that if we have a holiday, we both go. We sometimes take a week away at short notice (to take advantage of bargain rates), so you cannot always depend on immediate service – and there are also likely to be delays towards the end of the month as we are preparing *EMR*.

Credit cards: please note that we now require the three-digit security number on the back of the card, the address (with postcode) that matches that used by the card-issuer, and phone number.

CB & EB

## REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## HOLY TRIOS

*Fifteenth-Century Liturgical Music V: Settings of the Sanctus and Agnus dei* transcribed and edited by Peter Wright (Early English Church Music, 47). Stainer & Bell, 2006. xviii + 167pp, £55.00.

This contains 15 Sanctuses, eight Agnuses and five Sanctus/Agnus pairs, mostly from the Aosta and Trent codices, with six from a variety of English sources, all composed from about 1400-1440, but omitting music from the Old Hall MS and by Dunstable, readily available in CMM 46 and MB 8. The composer most represented is Blome/Bloym, probably the Richard Blome who was at Holy Trinity, Arundel, in the 1450s, but that is because all of the paired settings are attributed to him on the strength of an ascription of the first Sanctus. A better-known name is John Benet, and there are also items by Soursby and Neweland. All are for three voices, and most have two-voice sections. It's not a repertoire with which I have much familiarity and I'm rather better off for facsimiles of earlier sources than these – in fact, the commentaries mention very few except the rather poor reproduction of the Trent Codices, which makes it a shame that the volume does not include a few samples. One thing that struck me about the edition, which preserves most features of the original notation, is its spaciousness. One reason I give for the advantages of singing 16<sup>th</sup>-century music from facsimile is the way that the shape of a phrase can be seen so much more easily when the notes are not spread according to the exigencies of typesetting rules or the spacing in other parts. Benet's Sanctus (no. 6) is reproduced in Apel's *Notation* (p. 105), which shows that the top part takes up six and a half lines in the MS but 14 lines in the edition (and this is more compact than some pieces); the other parts occupy six and just over three lines. I wonder if, underlying the setting, is the same attitude to note values and horizontal space that makes most editions of early 17<sup>th</sup>-century music lay out triple sections so lavishly compared with adjacent duple ones. The same facsimile also enables one to check the editorial cop-out on indicating the source underlay with precision, with details not mentioned in the commentary. Admittedly, giving detailed information is impossible; but it should be possible to indicate whether any bit of underlay is as the MS, represents words written there but adjusts their position, or is added by the editor – roman, italic and brackets would be effective, with the possibility of the syllables of one word being indicated differently.

The introduction makes several references to the edition being used by singers. But the comments on pitch seem naïve. 'Performers should not hesitate to transpose a piece by a fairly small interval in order to arrive at more

comfortable voice-ranges' (p. xii). The previous sentence says 'it is all perfectly performable at written pitch', but by what sort of voices? And is there any reason to think that the notation relates to any specific pitch? I've done a quick check. The standard compass is around two octaves, but clusters around two notated ranges, ranging roughly from the F and C below middle C. Those based on F tend to be less than two octaves, those on C sometimes a little more than 15 notes: I don't know if that may be significant. One (no. 21) has a typical modern bass-tenor range of bottom G to the G above middle C. The music can thus be sung without falsettists or high tenors if G is the bottom note, by baritones, tenors and altos based around C and by tenors and high altos if on F, and any setting in the book can be transposed to any of these ranges. As with much later music, listing the clefs in the contents list would have shown the user the pattern: why is that never done? It is, however, excellent that our heritage is made available thus, though I think that a better compromise between scholarship and performance might have been to include facsimiles along with less archaic (and more compact) transcriptions. (I haven't looked back to previous EECM reviews, so I hope I am not repeating myself.)

## JOSQUIN AUGMENTED

*Si placet Parts for Motets by Josquin and His Contemporaries* Edited by Stephanie P. Schlagel (Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance, 146). A-R Editions, 2006. xxxvi + 216pp, \$112.00.

This collection of 13 pieces includes added parts to eight motets by Josquin, Mouton's *Spiritus Domini replevit*, *Illuminare Jerusalem* and *In illo tempore Maria Magdalene* Févin's *Santa Trinitas* and Gascogne's *Bone Jhesu dulcissime*. Some were written while Josquin was still alive, another batch comes from mid-16<sup>th</sup>-century Germany, and others from later in the century. These are not like modern editorial parts designed to replace missing ones, but parts added to complete textures as a sign of homage and skill. They are best enjoyed by those who know the original motets, so can be surprised, amazed or infuriated (especially by the interference with cadences) by what has been added. Some pieces have just one added part, some two, but the tour de force is by Jean Castileti/Guyot de Châtelet, who takes Josquin's six-voice *Benedicta es, caelorum regina* and adds another six. I hope someone makes a recording of both versions for comparison – indeed, the whole volume would make a fascinating CD. The added parts don't match the clefs of the original ones, so you can't record the original then play it back to accompany the same voices singing the added parts. The edition sensibly indicates the added parts by shading them – and in case you wonder, they are still readable when

photocopied. I don't want to bore readers with chiavette (a topic that appears elsewhere in this issue anyway), but the remark that Josquin's *Stabat mater* is rather high (p. xviii) wouldn't have been valid for the time of the added part, when clefs G<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>3</sub> would have implied downwards transposition, despite the anomaly of C<sub>3</sub> for the expected C<sub>2</sub>. This is probably the most exciting of this batch of A-Rs. (I've left Lassus *Motets* vol. 20, 21 and supplement till the next issue.)

#### GAGLIANO MADRIGALS II

*Gagliano Madrigals Part 2: Il secondo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* (Venice, 1604). Edited by Edmond Strainchamps (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 145). A-R Editions, 2006. xxvii + 66pp, \$60.00

This contains 17 madrigals, some for SATTB, others for SSATB. At a glance, it seems odd that the alto is sometimes in treble clef, sometimes in octave-treble. This does not represent a difference in the voices required, but is a consequence of ignoring the clef code. My guess is that modern singers would rather transpose within a clef than have to adjust an octave as well, unless there are too many leger lines, but here C<sub>2</sub> clefs (which only occur in high-clef pieces and should be sung by the same voice as sings the C<sub>3</sub> clef part in low-clef ones) are always in un-octave treble instead of the octave-treble of the C<sub>3</sub> alto clefs that don't need transposing. Although I am suspicious of Jon Banks' suggestion that secular instrumental collections from a century previously allocated the same performer to each part for a whole MS (see p. xx), it is likely that a whole madrigal book might be sung in a single session, with each partbook except the quinto (with two distinct ranges) intended for a single person. The slim book ends with four pieces for the funeral of that figure so important in the development of opera, Jacopo Corsi. Three were sung by five voices and five viols, one by five voices with flute and wooden organ. There is always a clash between representing the notation of the original edition and making it more suited for performers, with the latter generally shortening the edition's shelf-life. But with the easy availability of reproductions of the original for scholars, I think that editions should (without producing utterly inappropriate keys) present a madrigal book in a performable way. That apart, this edition is most welcome. The introduction is easier to use than that of Book I, with each piece having a separate heading. But it is frustrating that its opening is virtually the same as in Book I but there is no quick way of spotting the updates. You can't even check the line beginnings to see when they change, since in the second paragraph in this volume avoids a hyphenation and skews the rest of the paragraph. (To be really pedantic, the change, while avoiding a poorly judged hyphen, gives one line an ugly amount of white space.) As for the music, I'm sure you will have an enjoyable time if you gather five people around you and sing it: you will need more than one copy, but the print is quite large, so you might just manage with two copies if you don't mind a threesome!

#### ROVETTA MASSES

*Rovetta Masses* Edited by Jonathan R. J. Drennan (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 146), A-R Editions, 2006. xix pp, 12 pl + 220pp, \$123.00 (parts \$18.00)

If one hears 17<sup>th</sup>-century Venetian church music, it tends to be music for Vespers. The major published collections often began with a mass (Monteverdi in 1610, 1641 and 1650, Cavalli 1656, Rigatti 1640), but Rovetta seems to have devoted more effort to the form (or has been lucky in the survival of manuscripts). This volume omits the Mass from his 1639 *Messa, e Salmi concertati*, which is available in vol. 109/110 of the same series, but includes a *Missa concertata* a4 (1635) and a *Missa Concertata* for three voices and two violins (1642/3). I assume that *concertata* is both a stylistic and performance indication, implying solo rather than ripieno singers; the editor, though, believes that the difference between *a cappella* and *concertato* depends on the independence of the continuo part (p. xi). Both styles at this period generally have organ parts anyway, and the crucial difference is the style of writing, not the organ *per se*. It does seem odd that, if ripienists were envisaged, *solo* and *tutti* were not included in the printed parts of the a4 mass, and the ATB three-voice and violin texture, and the scoring with two violins and continuo would seem essentially soloistic anyway. Since the violins form the top of the texture, I'd have placed them in the score above the voices, not between them and the continuo. The four-part *concertato* mass is for ATTB, and there are no sections that obviously need larger forces. I'm not too convinced by the editor's suggestion that the violin parts could be played by cornetti: there is only an occasional top B, but the opening of the Kyrie is a bit exposed for the upper part. (Parts are available at \$18.00)

The other four masses survive in quite late MSS. Most interesting is the double-choir *Messa da morto a due chori*, dated 1655 and intended by the composer for his own death. Like Cavalli 20 years later, he left money in his will to cover the cost of two performances a year. It is for C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>4</sub> x2 with continuo. I'd welcome a chance of participating in a performance: it looks more interesting than Cavalli's. (It is a pity that Rovetta's earlier Requiem for Monteverdi is lost.) Rovetta requested that the double-choir motet *Ad Dominum dum tribularer* be sung at his funeral. It doesn't link closely with the Mass, since its tonality is different and it has a different scoring – C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>4</sub> + C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>3</sub>C<sub>4</sub>F<sub>4</sub>. The three other *stile antico* masses are from late sources: like Cavalli's *Missa pro defunctis* (reviewed in the last issue). One specific point in the introduction worried me: what word lies behind the English 'bass viol' mentioned twice in the suggestions for performance on p. xvii? Venetian prints of the period tend to use *viole* for strings other than violins, often as an alternative to *trombones*. But a continuo instrument is likely to be a small violone, playing at 8' pitch but no doubt bending cadences down the octave. It surprises me that none of the editor's thanks are bestowed on anyone who performed the music. Has he not sung it?

## BUXTEHUDE MEMBRA JESU NOSTRI

Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostri* BuxWV 75... herausgegeben von Thomas Schlage. Carus-Verlag (36.013), 2007. xv + 94pp, £35.00; vocal score £17.50.

This new edition of Buxtehude's seven Passontide cantatas is based on the tablature score that the composer sent to his friend, Gustav Düben, who was then employed at the Swedish court in Stockholm. The cycle sets biblical texts (mostly likely selected by Buxtehude himself) and verses from a hymn (the *Rhythmica oratio*) now attributed to Arnulf von Löwen (for a long time it had been thought to be the work of St Bernard of Clairvaux). Thomas Schlage, the editor, suggests that the piece might have been commissioned for the Swedish court but I feel this must be discounted – in such circumstances, would Buxtehude have written the elaborate dedication to Düben on the title-page? The blurb on the back cover describes the piece as 'his largest work in the style of an oratorio' and its form as 'instrumental introduction – choral movement with biblical texts – vocal soli (aria) with a sacred text from the Middle Ages – repetition of the choral movement'. Although this text was perhaps not written by Schlage, it quite clearly gives a distorted view of the piece. In the first place, we do not know in what context the music was performed. Had it already been heard in Lübeck? If not, what relevance does Schlage's comments on 16' violones there have? If the bass is not covered by some sort of contrabass pitch, does the criss-crossing of the vocal bass and the continuo line sound odd? If he has decided to discard Düben's added instrumental parts, why does he use the presence of three ripieno vocal parts (presumably of an original set of five) for only one cantata as supporting evidence for the possibility of choral performance? In that context, both the English and the French prefaces lack the second part of the editor's reasoning on the subject. As an edition, this Carus issue is a practical size with minimal page turns (the music simply will not allow the convenience of each movement ending at the foot of a page), and the typically clean typesetting means that the text and the music are easily read. Given that a consort of viols only appears in the sixth cantata, Carus includes the top two lines in the violin parts so that they can substitute if necessary, and provides a set of five copies of the viol parts in score. Buxtehude's slightly variant text from the *Rhythmica oratio* and the biblical texts are given with a German translation only. While I have no hesitation in recommending the edition, I am skeptical of some of the musicology and reasoning that lies behind it. *Brian Clark*

Buxtehude
<i>Membra Jesu Nostri</i>
Score £24.00
Vocal score £11.50
Set of instrumental parts £16.00
Carus Verlag edition
available from King's Music

## HANDEL CANTATA AUTOGRAPH

Handel *Crudel tiranno Amor...* Facsimile and first Edition Edited by Berthold Over... (Documenta Musicologica II, 34). Bärenreiter (BWK 1915), 2006. £35.50.

I haven't printed formally the full details on the bilingual title page, which are covered within this review. The cantata itself isn't new: it is in Chrysander (HG52A) and the Halle Händel-Ausgabe (V/3) and has an HWV number (97). No autograph survives, so it is of considerable interest that an autograph version turned up in the Bavarian State Library in Munich (Mus.ms. 4468 ff. 49r-54v). It is in a group of independent MSS bound together (the rest not autograph) including eight in the hand of Handel's assistant/amanuensis J. C. Smith snr in about 1738 – the cantata itself probably dates from 1721. It is headed *Cantata con stromenti*, but what we have is a standard 18<sup>th</sup>-century format of two staves with the orchestral part in simplified form in the right hand for the ritornelli, yielding to the voice part elsewhere. It is interesting that the lower stave often has more than just the bass, and this leads me (but not the editor) to suspect that it is in fact written for a singer who is unfamiliar with figured bass or with filling in unfigured chords between the bass and a written-out treble. Any professional male singer would have learnt this as part of his training, but an amateur lady might not have done: I'm not sure whether professional lady singers would have been so skilled. I suggest that the MS was intended for a soprano accompanying herself. This would explain the most significant feature of the MS: the presence of a two-stave realisation of the recitatives – of enormous importance in the hand of Handel himself, and something he would normally have no need to commit to the page. Handel writes thick chords, the bass often in octaves, with little concern for the niceties of the rules of doubling. The editor says: 'it departs in several respects from realisations commonly used today'. In fact, he means 'commonly printed today'; I'm sure I'm not the only person who might *play* something like what is shown here. The chords are notated with the same length as the bass, so there is no clue whether they were sustained or not. One might expect a version written for a singer to show delayed cadence chords if that is how they were played, but it doesn't, so that increases the probability that they weren't.

The MS is notated a tone higher than the original version. This gives quite a high tessitura, but not impossibly so. I don't believe the editor's suggestion that the transposition was to make the music easier for the harpsichordist by avoiding F minor: surely a singer would rather put up with F minor than sing higher than was comfortable. I think it unlikely that it was written as a new version just with keyboard: the title *con stromenti* surely undermines the possibility that it was intended to have an independent existence. Rather, it must be either a copy for rehearsal or something to be sung by a soprano to her friends at home, as she might have sung cut-down versions of Vauxhall songs.

The verbal material accompanying the facsimile is repetitive, with some matters mentioned in the Munich Librarian's preface, the editor's intro- (or rather retro-) duction and the editorial commentary. It would have been nice to have had a complete list of the contents of the source volume, rather than have to chase another publication. It isn't uncommon for Handel to add a letter name to clarify an ambiguous note (p. 10) and I don't believe that the MS was intended for solo keyboard performance (bottom of same page): as footnote 6 states, examples intended thus have no text and avoid recitative. On the next page, surely this is a one-off intended for a specific singer, not 'non-professionals or amateurs' in the plural, and further down the statement that the title is wrong misses the point that this copy doesn't count as a separate work: giving it a separate HWV number exaggerates its status. The detailed differences in notation are useful for showing that Handel may well not have thought of the rhythm of equal or dotted semiquavers as fixed. But I don't think this should be used to emend the *con stromenti* version. Like the Gresham Purcell autograph, this is of interest in itself, not as an alternative source.

The new 'work' is presented in a smart, bound oblong folio volume with 12 pages of colour facsimile and 20 pages of text, the latter including a typeset transcription of the music which is also added as an insert to provide a separate copy for singer and accompanist, thus subverting what I think the function of the MS to be! This isn't quite as important as the discoverers think, except to continuo players, and I'd rather spend £35 on a more significant autograph that has never been lost than a minor one that can easily be circulated without expense to publisher or purchaser. But I'm not going to give my copy away...

#### HANDEL CHANDOS ANTHEMS 7-9

**Handel My song shall be alway HWV 252** Edited by Gerald Hendrie. Bärenreiter (BA 4292), 1987. vi + 58pp, £12.00. Vocal score (BA 4292a), 2006. vii + 53pp, £7.00.

**Handel O come let us sing HWV 253** Edited by Gerald Hendrie. Bärenreiter (BA 4293), 1987. viii + 58pp, £18.00. Vocal score (BA 4293a), 2006. vii + 62pp, £10.50.

**Handel O praise the Lord with one consent HWV 254** Edited by Gerald Hendrie. Bärenreiter (BA 4291), 1987. vi + 70pp, £16.50. Vocal score (BA 4291a) vii + 58pp, £10.50.

These three separate issues of scores from HHA III/6 along with new vocal scores and instrumental material – to call it 'orchestral' falsifies the music's scale – is most welcome. Although the recent publication of performing material should steer choirs towards the more appropriate chapel-royal anthems, *O praise the Lord* in particular has long been a favourite, maybe because the Novello edition has been readily available for a century or more. Its opening chorus was probably the first non-Messianic Handel work I encountered, and its popularity is assisted by four of the eight movements being for chorus. Since there is also a recent edition from Carus-Verlag, I'll concentrate on this rather than the other two anthems.

The Bärenreiter full scores are the same size as the volume from which they are taken, so are more spacious than Carus's A4 pages. Carus is four pages longer because it lays out the music so that each movement starts a new page, which I find more elegant. But it is more expensive (€32.00), though its vocal score (€10.00) is considerably cheaper (unless you buy it from an importer who marks up the price – King's Music doesn't). Carus orchestral parts are cheaper, but probably less spacious (on normal Bärenreiter form, though I haven't seen these particular ones). Both vocal scores are in the same octavo format, but Carus manages to squash three systems onto a choral page, though fitting two languages in the gap between staves in the choruses is rather tight, while Bärenreiter is more spacious with two.

The Carus editor, Christine Martine, makes a point (and illustrates it with a facsimile) that Handel ran what Bärenreiter and HWV treat as the final movement, 'Your voices raise' into the preceding 'Ye boundless realms'. It's not an issue that worries me very much: after all, both movements have the same stave-layout, and a change in time and a repeat of the same time signature seems a clear enough indication of a new movement even without a double bar. If you are mixing editions, you need to be aware of the differing bar numbers in 'Your voices raise'. Bärenreiter begins that movement by editorially silencing the double bass and bassoon; Carus gives no indication here, and is more systematic in silencing them when the continuo line has a C clef (which it doesn't here in the autograph or an early double bass part from Canons). Chrysander heads the bass of the movement 'Organo e Tutti Bassi' – unbracketed, so probably in some reasonably authentic source. Were I preparing the parts for a performance, I'd welcome more information on the authority of the instrumental indications printed throughout the continuo part.

The Bärenreiter edition has no critical commentary (nor does the HHA volume from which it is reprinted), and I, like most people who purchase the score separately, don't have HHA III/7, which has the commentary for all the 'Anthems for Canons'. Carus has a commentary relating to the autograph and the two Canons MS parts (*Violino Primo & Contra Basso*) in the Coke collection, but not to other sources, which seems reasonable to me for an edition that is not part of a Collected Works. The Bärenreiter prefaces are rather like programme notes and don't give enough specific information. One puzzling difference is in movement 4, bar 44, where Carus give oboe I a top B flat (as in the violin 2 part), while Bärenreiter has it playing the violin I's G. The editions have different German translations. The Carus score, like Chrysander, sets out the texts in parallel, making it obvious that the English text is, unusually, from Tate and Brady rather than the Prayer Book version of the Psalms. Bärenreiter doesn't do this, either in the separate editions or the HHA volume. There is presumably some relationship between the use of a common meter text and the St Anne tune borrowed for the opening words.

There is no comparable alternative for the other two anthems. For all three, Handel's vocal parts (original clefs C1 C4 C4 F4) are set out for SATB, as is Carus. An indication of voice ranges would be helpful for allocating voices. In the case for which there is a comparison, either edition will be fine, and it is good that the other two anthems, for which there is no good performance material for sale as far as I know, are now available.

#### FUZEAU FACSIMILES

The latest batch we have received (though an advert for a new series arrived early in March) begins, if I keep to our normal chronological sequence, with *Airs de Monsieur Lambert non imprimez* (c.1692) (6111; £49.00). Two MSS are presented: in large format is Ms 3043 from the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, while its companion, printed with eight rather than two pages per modern page, is Bibliothèque Nationale Rés 584. They seem to be a commercial publication in MS form: the Arsenal MS, which the editor states to be more accurate, bears the name of a publisher on its title page, 'Mr Foucault, rue St. Honore a la regle d'or, A Paria'; both title pages share the information 'Airs de monsieur Lambert | non Imprimés | 75 simples | 50 doubles'. No, these are not dance steps, but songs without and with a second, embellished verse. Irrespective of the attraction of the songs in themselves, the doubles provide excellent models for singers – they should surely not just be sung as written but absorbed so that similar versions can be freely created. The introduction concentrates on ornamentation: I'd have welcomed a little more about manuscript publications and comment on how Lambert's style changed since his first publication of 1660.

There are three issues of music by Rebel, a composer not previously included in Fuzeau's catalogue. These are all introduced by Catherine Cessac, whose book on the composer is due this year. His *Sonates à Violon Seule Livre II* (6159; £28.00) were published in 1713. They follow the Italian convention of division into two books, the first primarily abstract *da chiesa*, the latter suites of dances; they are numbered in one sequence of 12 sonatas and a few dances creep into the first half-dozen. A distinctive feature is inclusion of *plusieurs Recits pour la viole*. This implies that the bass continuo instrument is expected to be a viol rather than a cello (despite the Italian title of sonata), and takes the form of movements in sonatas 4 and 6 on three staves, with a middle part independent of the bass. An incidental feature of the publication is its concern for good page turns. The other two volumes show Rebel as the composer of music for dance – ballet rather than dance music (6190; £23.00) contains *Caprice* (1711) and *Boutade* (1712). Two printed editions are given: the original separate publications of the two pieces and a combined reprint from some years later. The later version seems pointless, since it is mostly cut down to two staves, as is the 1712 *Boutade*. The 1710 *Caprice*, however, is set out in something like full score. There are oddities, though. The short *Gravement* has four staves (G1G1C3F4) but the

fugue has five (G1C1C2F4F4): what does that mean in terms of orchestration. The repeated demi-semiquavers in the G1 part makes oboe doubling unlikely. A set of parts is included as well; with two first violins, two second violins and 3 basses de violon. These seem to relate more to the later edition than to 1712. It is strange that the introduction says nothing about the relationship between the three sources. Another volume (6158; £16.00) contains *Fantaisie* (1729) and *Les plaisirs champêtres* (1734) in a score that is fuller than the later *Caprice/Boutade* but not entirely explicit on the scoring.

Luigi Merci published four sets of wind sonatas in London between 1718 and the 1740s. His *VI Sonate A Fagoto à Violoncello col' Basso Continuo di natione Inglesa* op. 3 (6126; £14.00) date from the 1730s. They are basically Italian, though a couple of movements are marked *alla Scotseza*, which the editor associates with the use of Scotch snaps. These concise pieces are a welcome addition to the bassoon repertoire.

Finally, one of C. P. E. Bach's major sets of sonatas, *Six Sonates Pour le Clavecin à L'usage des Dames*, Wq 54, published by Hummel in 1770 (6048; £19.00). This is a good example for players scared of using facsimiles: it is clearly engraved, has the standard modern treble and bass clefs, and is fine music. Miklos Spanyi's spelling out in his introduction of every little example of notational irregularity is a bit insulting to the player, but otherwise is excellent. If you are playing a harpsichord, you need four different dynamic levels; the music works well enough on piano, but the clavichord is ideal.

#### FRENCH CONTINUO

Fuzeau's *Méthodes & Traités* (France 1600-1800) has a set of six volumes devoted to Basse Continuo (5994-9; £299.00 for the set. Individual volumes vary between £57 & 69). The 17<sup>th</sup> century is covered in vol. 1 (in fact, the earliest item is from 1660). I have volumes 2 and 5 at hand, of which the former is the more interesting – to me, at least. There is, something depressing in seeing the quantity of rules. The treatise which struck me as being particularly aware of the problem of that approach is Delair's *Nouveau Traité d'Acompagnement pour le Theorbe et le Clavessin* (1724). He begins his second paragraph: 'Il est vray, qu'il est difficile de donner des regles fixes pour un art qui n'a pour fondem[en]t que la caprice, ou la volonté de ceux qui composent...' Continuo players need to be able to react instinctively with the hand, so the series of simple bases given with and without figures by Dandrieu (1719) is important. Other authors provide alternative versions of standard patterns. Although the player has to understand what he is doing as well, sheer repetition of patterns so that you don't have to think about every chord is invaluable – you can then think more about playing what is musical, taking for granted that your hands have developed an instinct for being in the right place which the mind can fine-tune. So it is worth persevering through some of these boring exercises.

18<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

J. B. Lully fils *Concert de violons et hautbois...* 1707. Edited by Richard Carter & Johanna Valencia. Oriana Music (OM118), 2007. 25pp + parts. Score €15.00, set of parts €20.00, orchestra set (4.2.2.2.4) €35.00.

The title of Philidor's MS score (Paris BN Ms Rés F.528) states that this was performed at the King's Dinner on 16 Jan 1707 by his majesty's *petits violons et hautbois*. There are 14 movements in a variety of keys, beginning with an Ouverture and ending with a lengthy Passacaille, the intervening movements being shorter dances. The scoring is for five parts – original clefs G1 C1 C2 C3 F4, transcribed as treble, three altos and a bass, though the parts include an alternative of the second part in treble clef. The basic scoring would have been the typical French one of violins and oboes on the top, bass violins and bassoons on the bottom, and three viola parts in the middle. In trios, the top part is divided, and can be played by violins or oboes – one dance specifies oboes. It is an ensemble that makes a very satisfying sound, but the number of viola parts hinders its use in, for instance, school orchestras, where it would otherwise be extremely useful. It would also suit amateur baroque ensembles: the music is attractive, sometimes more, and is not too difficult to play. Jean-Baptiste Lully jr spent much of his long life at court; while not achieving his father's success as a composer, on the strength of this he does not deserve the neglect he has suffered. The edition is careful and commendable.

Bach *Komm, du süsser Todesstunde*, BWV 161... edited by Uwe Wolf... Full score. Carus (31.161), 2006. 39pp, €12.50.

This is a well-known cantata – apart from its own merits, the use of a pair of recorders is an attraction. They play in four of the six movements, the opening movement having a particularly interesting texture of recorders, alto voice, organ right hand and continuo. As always, the pair plays lots of thirds and sixths, but in the final movement they play mostly semiquavers in unison above the chorale, which is tricky to tune. The score does not preserve the original notation in E flat, a minor third above the strings, though the introduction states that the flute parts of the edition are given in both keys. The introduction keeps the word *flute*, only confirming that recorders are intended by a passing remark at the end in connection with a later version with traversi. I can't compare this with the NBA edition (which prints two versions) until the complete study-score version appears next month, since it is not a volume that I have, but I like the feel of it, midway between the two Bärenreiter sizes.

Telemann *Neuen Sonaten für zwei Traversflöten ohne Generalbass...* TWV 40: 141-149. Edited by Ralph-Jürgen Reipsch. Bärenreiter (BA 5888), 2006. 60pp, £18.50.

These are new pieces, previously unknown, from the recently rediscovered Sing-Akademie library. They survive

as parts, but are printed here in score large enough for a single copy to suffice for performance (though not for practice). The MS dates from c.1780. Some passages had been quoted in Quantz's *Solfeggi Pour La Flute Traversiere*, and these are given in an appendix. The sonatas cover a wide range of styles and moods, and should be interesting exercises, though I hope they are not overdone in concerts: it is not a texture that excites many other than flautists. There is a thorough introduction by the editor.

Telemann *Der Gott unsers Herrn Jesu Christi* TVWV 8:4... edited by Günter Graulich. Carus (39.036), 2006. 7pp €2.50.

Telemann *Der Herr ist König* TVWV 8:6... edited by Günter Graulich. Carus (39.037), 2006. 7pp, €2.50.

Each of these single-movement motets is for SATB and continuo. The first is for Whitsun and looks the more difficult to sing, the other is not seasonal. One, we are told, lasts about three minutes; the other is untimed but is on the same scale. Unlike the Bach cantata reviewed above, there is no added English text. I don't know if motets were sung at chamber or church pitch, but they are quite high and would be more comfortable at least at 'baroque pitch', if not lower. They are contrapuntal and lively.

Altnickol *Missa in d...* edited by Clemens Harasim. Full score. Carus (27.068), 2007. 56pp, €22.30.

This is a standard Kyrie-Gloria mass in ten movements on a scale comparable with the Lutheran masses by Bach, the composer's father-in-law. It probably dates from the 1750s, though is quite old-fashioned for that date. Nevertheless, despite being a bit predictable, it looks worth performing. The scoring is for SATB; there are no solo and tutti markings in the source, though the editor assumes that four soloists are needed (or, put another way, perhaps a chorus isn't). The main source has strings and continuo but a lost set of parts of an alternative version of the Kyrie based on an edition of a century ago.

C. F. Abel *Two Berlin Sonatas for violoncello and bass*. Introduction by Michael O'Loghlin, edited by Günter und Leonore von Zadow. Edition Gütersberg (G107), 2007. 18pp + part, €14.80.

Abel is generally remembered as a viol player, but these two sonatas (in G and A, WKO 147-8) are idiomatic for the cello. In the sources, they are written in score, and thus they are here published, but with two copies to avoid eye-strain. To a non-cellist, the music would seem not to be for beginners, but not impossibly difficult. The bass is unfigured, but since the MS is a score, that wouldn't preclude a keyboard accompaniment, but a second cello would seem to me to be most likely: the titles only mention cello, not the accompanying instrument. The introduction defends Abel's galant charm, with considerable justification from these pieces.

In the last issue, I mentioned that the realised part in Güntersberg's edition of Buxtehude op. 1 was missing from my sample. I have now seen a copy. It looks like a standard piano trio score, with the string parts in smaller print above a two-stave keyboard part. I wonder whether the realiser, Angela Koppenwallner, knew where the page turns were going to be: only one of the five have a rest, but the realisations could have been written to leave the right hand free – i.e. write something like what one would play. .

**Leopold Mozart** *Beata es, Virgo Maria: Offertorium de Beata Maria Virgine...* edited by Armin Kircher. Carus (27.289), 2007. 24pp, €8.30, Vsc €2.50; 3 parts €4.20.

This dates from around 1760, and may have been written for the church of Maria Plain, on the northern outskirts of Salzburg, for which his son may (or more probably may not) have written his Coronation Mass in 1779. Leopold paid to have 25 masses said there in the 1760s for safe journeys – a sort of travel insurance. There are three movements, the outer ones for SATB having ad lib trumpets and timps, though without them the music isn't excessively in a C-major extrovert style. The middle movements is an A-minor soprano da capo aria with the strings (2 violins and continuo). The piece concludes with a fugal Alleluia. Both the extant sets of parts have single copies for the voices, so a chorus isn't necessary.

**Mozart Konzert in D für Violine und Orchester KV<sup>2</sup> 271<sup>a</sup> (271<sup>i</sup>)...Piano Reduction.** Bärenreiter (BA 5769a), 2006. vi + 41pp + 3 parts, £12.00. (Also available: full score £20.50, wind £10.00, strings each £4.00) Three parts? Yes, one is Urtext, a second has bowings etc by Martin Wulffhorst, and the third various cadenzas and Eingänge, some from early sources (but printed with bowings, dynamics and

figuring that are presumably editorial) and two by Wulffhorst. The authenticity of the work has been doubted since the first publication in 1907; the editor avoids a firm opinion. The NMA full score is included among the dubious works, so isn't in the complete study-score reprint. BC, when proof-reading (yes, we do read the proofs: most errors are in last-minute additions not read by BC or EB), asked who the editor was. The title page states that the piano reduction is by Martin Schelhaas; the NBA volume from which it is reduced is edited by Christoph-Helmut Mahling. I'd make further comments on the edition were I reviewing the full score, but the original feature of this package is Wulffhorst's contribution, which is unlikely to be relevant to the needs of our violinist readers, though the plain violin part and reduction are fine.

**Mozart Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K550, arranged by Muzio Clementi** edited by Christopher Hogwood. Edition HH 173, 2006. 65pp + parts, £32.00.

This arrangement for piano with flute, violin and cello was published by the arranger's firm c.1824, perhaps inspired by Hummel's version for the same ensemble. Clementi's autograph survives in Naples. This isn't one of those arrangements that throws light on the original performance practice: the 1810 score on which it is based

has no authority, and Clementi's version appeared over 30 years after Mozart's death. But it looks tempting, and I am sure I would enjoy playing it if I had a trio at hand – I'm probably of the last generation that learnt the classical symphonic repertoire from piano duets. As usual with Hogwood as editor, there is a readable introduction and meticulous editorial commentary.

I hadn't intended to mention it, but since HH sent another copy of Eberl's Toccata in c, op. 46 which I reviewed last October, I'll take it as a hint to report Christopher Hogwood's explanation that the oddities I found in the critical commentary were because the earlier source only appeared when the edition was basically complete.



Caro mitis do not presently have a distributor in the UK. Until such time as this is rectified, we have struck a deal whereby we can order batches of 25 and we will take orders from their catalogue from anyone interested. If fewer than that number of readers are interested, we hope to pass their orders on to any distributor who takes on this outstanding catalogue. We will charge £15 per disc, including UK postage

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There are also a number of recordings not within our remit: Britten, Shostakovich, Schnittke and a new recording of Beethoven's complete piano sonatas.

Full listings and some excellent sound samples are available at [www.caromitis.com/catalogue/catalogue.html](http://www.caromitis.com/catalogue/catalogue.html) – just click on the individual titles.

## BITS OF BYRD AT BIRMINGHAM, 1900

Richard Turbet

Some time in the early 1980s I came into possession of a photocopy of the programme for the performance at the 1900 Birmingham Festival of Byrd's Mass for Five Voices, the same Festival at which Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* was given its notorious premiere. In a spirit of evangelism, I wrote a brief article tenuously linking the two events, 'Byrd, Birmingham and Elgar', and this was published, first in the *British Music Society Newsletter* of 1986 (no. 31, p. 1) and in a version with minor revisions, the reasons for which elude me, three years later in the *Elgar Society Journal* (no. 6, pp. 7-8). The point of interest was that the programme had listed the five soloists who had participated in the performance of the Mass. In the original articles I should have referred to them as 'soloists', rather than as 'performers', which gave the erroneous impression that they sang the entire item themselves rather than alternating with the Festival Chorus, which was what actually took place. Recently Suzanne Cole at the University of Melbourne, who is writing articles and a book about the revival of Tallis and Byrd from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, directed me to the review of this concert on page 9 of *The Times* for 6 October 1900. This review, part of a longer piece entitled 'Birmingham Musical Festival' taking in the rest of the concert, has not featured in Byrd literature before. I am indebted to Suzanne for giving me the opportunity to correct in print my misapprehension about the performance. To set the record straight, and to provide an eye-witness account of what was thought to be an appropriate, if not actually an historically informed performance a century ago, if such a concept existed, it is worth quoting all that the anonymous reviewer\* said about the performance, and following the quotation with a few questions and observations.

The second part of the morning concert began with four sections, the Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei, of Byrd's sublime mass in five parts, sung from the admirable edition of Messrs. W.B. Squire and R. Terry. It was a pity that room could not be found for the whole work, as the portions given made a deep impression upon all hearers. The effect of the beginning of the "Credo" was somewhat marred by the absence of any representative of the "intonation," so that the choral entry "Patrem omnipotem" seemed like the opening of the number. The choruses, barring some details which will be reverted to later on, were very carefully sung and with a laudable amount of precision and delicacy. The lapses from pure intonation were unexpectedly few and slight, and were most cleverly concealed by the organist, Mr. C.W. Perkins, who began the short interludes between the unaccompanied numbers so softly that the discrepancy of pitch was scarcely observable by the keenest hearer. The five soloists sang their parts in such a way as to throw into the strongest light the austere sweetness, the far-away, old-world beauty, and the purity of expression that characterize this exquisite masterpiece of the Elizabethan period. After the experience with the choir boys yesterday, it seems a poor compliment to say that Miss [Evangeline] Florence's voice

has much of the boy's quality in it; yet such is the case, and in music of this kind the quality is peculiarly beautiful and appropriate. Miss Ada Crossley's rich voice told splendidly, and her musical ability enabled her to sustain some of the difficult leads with absolute steadiness. Mr W[illiam] Green, who joined the two ladies in the "Qui cum Patre et Filio," sang in admirable style, and the first tenor and bass parts were very well sung by Messrs. Ben Davies and [David] Bispham.

It would be churlish not to compliment the Festival Committee for including Byrd's Mass, albeit in the truncated version which was indeed the decision of that Committee. The edition of Richard Terry and William Barclay Squire differentiates solo and full sections, a style of performance still mystifyingly current (as in my favourite recording of the Mass for Four Voices, by Pro Cantione Antiqua). Most intriguing – even more so than the experience with the choirboys – is the reference to the contribution of Mr Perkins, the organist. I take the reviewer to mean that the singers were unaccompanied throughout, but that between sections, Mr Perkins improvised short instrumental interludes precisely to rectify the anticipated wanderings of the singers' pitch. This obviously worked, in that the reviewer was expecting more lapses, and seems almost peevish that there were too few for him to get his critical teeth into. The combination of five high-powered oratorio-cum-opera soloists and the hefty Festival Chorus kept on track by an intervening organ sounds potentially excruciating. However, before I or anyone else dismiss this as an historically misinformed performance, it is as well to give a moment's thought to what some performances might have sounded like in Byrd's recusant venues. Was there a mobile rent-a-choir who went clandestinely from one secret location to another? (If so, Cecil and Walsingham probably knew perfectly well and were letting them get on with it as long as they remained discreet.) Or at each venue were there 'pick-up' ensembles of whoever volunteered, regardless of vocal quality, requiring some instrumental support, scarcely observable or otherwise? The reason we do not know is precisely because of the need then for discretion (though we do not even know for sure what went on musically in the daily routine of the Chapel Royal). But a squad of five trained singers or on the other hand a helping organ might just possibly be elements common both to Byrd's recusants and three centuries later to the Birmingham Festival – though surely there the resemblance ends.

\* The chief music critic of *The Times* then was J. A. Fuller Maitland, among whose other achievements in early music was being co-editor with his brother-in-law W. Barclay Squire of *The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, published in 1899. To naming of the editors of the mass in a review but not the conductor (Hans Richter) is thus explained. For more on the 1900 Festival, see p. 47. [CB]

## BYRD'S KEYBOARD MUSIC RECORDED

Richard Turbet

The Saul Seminars at the British Library perpetuate the name of Patrick Saul, the founder of what became the British Library National Sound Archive, and are a platform for studies in recorded sound. On 28 November 2006, Christopher Hogwood presented *Sight and Sound: 'My Ladye Nevells Booke'*, celebrating the recent purchase of this important MS for the nation after an admirable and sustained campaign of fund-raising led by the British Library, where it will be housed. The book consists of 42 pieces by Byrd for keyboard, some of them surviving only in this source. It was completed in 1591, by which time Byrd had already established himself as the country's leading musician, Queen Elizabeth's composer of choice, and the progenitor of modern keyboard technique. The scribe was John Baldwin, a singing man at St George's Chapel, Windsor. At the time, Byrd was living in Middlesex with friends and family in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, so contact with Baldwin would not have been too difficult. More to the point, he was an outstanding calligrapher. His manuscript is startlingly handsome. This was all to the good, as it was to be a presentation copy to Lady Elizabeth Nevell, one of the ambitious Byrd's many friends, or at least contacts, in high places. The book left the Nevells quite soon – it may have had a spell in the ownership of Queen Elizabeth – but subsequently the family was able to buy it back, and it was the current generation, in the person of Lord Abergavenny, who decided recently to make it available to the nation. Given the quality of the facilities and curatorship of the British Library, there could be no better home for it. An expansive series of events was planned to celebrate its arrival, of which Christopher Hogwood's seminar was the first.

It took the form of a history of the recordings of Byrd's keyboard music from the earliest – *Rowland* by Violet Gordon Woodhouse, recorded on 26 March of Byrd's tricentenary years, 1923 – to the present, represented by Davitt Moroney's complete recording made during the 1990s. Along the way, we heard the difficulties that earlier recording engineers had in reproducing the sound of the harpsichord and virginals. Often they seemed like pianos, but this was not helped by the fact that most of the players were indeed pianists who played accordingly. We also heard recordings on the piano. Some just sounded pianistic, but some players, notably Glenn Gould, were aware of the need for a different touch in music composed for the harpsichord, and such musicianship was audible. Even when the recording engineers had mastered the harpsichord sound, there were many performances predating the early-music revival of the 1970s which were baroque in attitude, using a range of registration wider than would have been available to Byrd. Harpsichords and virginals were never instruments for public concerts, rather for private enjoyment or entertaining friends. This

was emphasized by a recording of a performance by Mrs Gordon Woodhouse on the clavichord.

Some genial hilarity was generated by the inclusion of a few interviews or introductions captured on recordings of the last century. Sir George Dyson, who displayed an entertaining mixture of establishment and Yorkshire vowels, was down to earth and misguided. On what was originally a radio broadcast, Percy Grainger sounded profound and significant in inverse proportion to the actual content of his introduction (transcribed in *British Music Society News* no. 62, 1994) and then suffered the indignity of the wireless station's announcer providing his own introduction in a strident stage whisper over the opening bars of *The Carman's Whistle*. The interviewer of the ubiquitous Mrs Gordon Woodhouse on the BBC in 1941, clearly scripted by *la grande dame* herself, proved himself a virtuoso in the art of deference.

As many different instruments as possible were illustrated, including organs. Some were anachronistic, like the Goff harpsichord used by Thurston Dart in his famous series *Masters of Early English Keyboard Music* for L'Oiseau Lyre in the 1950s; but even as an unashamed authenticist, I have to say that I found his version of the fifth galliard to be the most moving excerpt of the evening, an example of sheer musicianship overcoming lack of authenticity. Others felt the same about Glenn Gould. We also heard the variety of registrations known to have been available to Byrd, proving that historically informed practice in this respect is no drawback to tonal colour, interest and excitement.

To conclude, Christopher Hogwood noted the only sphere in which music from *My Ladye Nevells Booke* could have been heard publicly: when being used as an organ voluntary in a church or cathedral. So having opened the lecture with a fine version of *My Ladye Nevells Grawnde* from his own celebrated recording of the complete book, he concluded with Davitt Moroney's *A Voluntarie: for my ladye nevell* on an organ in Toulouse selected to replicate the sound of the instrument in Lincoln Cathedral in the 1560s.

Christopher Hogwood was the perfect presenter of this material: knowledgeable, engaging, humorous and brisk. There was an excellent attendance, and after questions (omitting several for want of time) we were able to inspect the exhibits – books, recordings and a harpsichord – which he had laid out. There could not have been a better beginning to the celebrations of the arrival of *My Ladye Nevells Booke* into the ownership of the nation and the care of its national library.

*There is information on the MS at the British Library's web site. See p.45 for the obituary of an outstanding Byrd performer.*

## SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE

Mike Diprose

Welcome back to the adventures of those of us doing derr on the holeless natural trumpet.

*Of course, the aria in BWV 20 without holes! I am very fanatic in that aspect, and convinced that in spite of what has been said and believed for years, it MUST be possible, for the simple evidence that it WAS done! I don't believe that intelligent composers wrote things that were unplayable in a convincing way – even if there is a long way to go now, to find back and to get accustomed to the technique of bending the intonation on some harmonics... The audience, of course, does not realize the problems, and only listens to the result, which makes the whole adventure even more demanding. But the evolution has started, it can't be stopped anymore, I am sure and happy about that. Thanks for helping!*

(Quoted with permission from an email by Sigiswald Kuijken)

Follow that!

Well, Sigiswald and others might be interested to learn about some recent research papers published by German scholars, such as:

Wolfgang Auhagen 'Zur Entstehung der Tonartencharakteristik im 18. Jahrhundert', UNI Köln from 24th. November 2003.  
[www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/muwi/publ/fs\\_fricke/auhagen.html](http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/muwi/publ/fs_fricke/auhagen.html)

zur Nedden, 'Musikalische Temperatur: Stimmungslehre' Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Berlin Sommersemester 2003, Seminar Physik der musikinstrumente: Stimmungslehre

Reinhard Kopiez 'Intonation of Harmonic Intervals: Adaptability of Expert Musicians to Equal Temperament and Just Intonation', Hannover University of Music and Drama, Music Perception Summer 2003, Vol. 20, No 4, 383-410  
[www.musicweb.html-hannover.de/intonation/](http://www.musicweb.html-hannover.de/intonation/)

The upshot of these seems to be that, unsurprisingly, for their music to sound good with natural trumpets, musicians used temperaments which complemented them. Not impossible on infinitely adjustable string instruments and winds using fingering patterns from the time. This even extended in some cases to wider octave spacing...

Enter Nagel, Droeßler and Hainlein trumpets. These 17<sup>th</sup>-century instruments differ from the more standard Ehe and Haas 18<sup>th</sup>-century models with a very slightly larger bore but mainly in bell profile, which has a less dramatic flare. We have had copies of these instruments for some time and were wondering why, until we recently started to use more historically informed and very short mouthpieces. The trade-off for a darker, richer sound is the freedom to place notes almost at will (particularly those 11<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> harmonics, which become quite credible to modern-tempered ears), making sense of the written B

naturals, G sharps and E flats (for trumpet in C) encountered in works by Pezel, Vejvanovsky, Stradella and their peers.

So, we have, in effect, C17 natural trumpets that can be almost equally tempered. What's to stop us conforming to Valotti, or simply equal temperament itself? In a word: resonance.

The harmonic series exists in all sound. It is all around us, from the buzz of a bee to the squeal of a train's brakes. It is part of the universe, of existence, of us. Overtones are what gives different sounds their ... sound. The richness of a tonic major chord sounded with notes tuned to the harmonic series has beauty beyond belief. The notes within it, which are already present as overtones of the bass note, resonate with each other to produce resultant notes (see 'Partial Success', *EMR* Dec 2005). These resultants then resonate further, with themselves and the original chord, creating what could be described as truth or, dare I say it: love – something that we recognise from deep within us – taking wings.

With our ears shackled to temperaments from the classical era and later (which are designed for intellectual pursuits like clever modulation to remote keys at the expense of pure intervals), we are being denied an essence of Baroque music. Composers wrote sparingly for trumpets (whose timbres abound in overtones) to accentuate the triumphant return to a resounding home key. Cynics might suggest that trumpets and tympani were used at climactic moments to wake the audience enough to clap and leave. As the Italians say: 'Bed is the poor man's opera'.

So, conversely, why do we even bother with the heart-breaking practice of learning to bend (or 'place') notes?

It was mentioned earlier that composers often wrote some notes from outside the harmonic series. However, the notes we most commonly adjust are the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> harmonics i.e. G/G# and B (on a trumpet pitched in D), because by doing this, it is possible to play a pure 4<sup>th</sup> between D and G, a pure major 3<sup>rd</sup> between G and B. This enables the subdominant chord of G to ring true. The minor 3<sup>rd</sup> between E and G is an interesting case: if the harmony is the dominant chord of A7, a resultant A can be made; lower the G slightly more, and a resultant C appears. Another aspect of playing with 'just' intonation is to release characteristics of the different modal triads – there were reasons why modes such as Dorian, Lydian etc were selected and used carefully in pre-baroque music, which may also have been influenced by the modes used in eastern music – characteristics which are lost in our blinkered, twelve-tone world. For instance, E minor, as

chord II in D major has a darker, more sombre resonance than its role as a wider-spaced chord III in C major. Both triads, however different in colour, have a resultant E.

In a B minor triad as chord 6 (Aolean) of D major, it is even possible to play the high B too sharp on a nat! The subtlety of such delicate harmonic inflection comes not through wilfully 'bending' notes, but by allowing them to settle in context.

So why play with holes? Well, because innocent audiences expect their trumpets to be loud and, to an extent, like them played like machine guns. When performing against a large choir of a hundred or so singers, one needs volume! Although the historical solution to this is to have a pyramid-shaped sound design, with the power coming from the tympani and principale – the clarini fluttering away above – how authentic do we really need to be anyway? We have a cure for syphilis and tupperware now.

The world has advanced in countless ways. Rather than working for years in the same court with the same people, musicians can flit around the globe playing in a different country with a different group every night. For this to work, there need to be certain standard practices, which, at the moment, include a few little 'cheats' or solutions. To fund my studies, I often have to play the holed nat – always with a slight pang of guilt as I walk on stage with an 'historical instrument' whose design concept is predated by the theramin, synthesizer and electric guitar... baroque and roll indeed!

No mention has yet been made, in these articles, of Edward Tarr, the granddaddy of the Baroque trumpet. Much has been written about Ed, including a recent, mainly biographical piece in the International Trumpet Guild magazine. Suffice it to say that his name is connected with a vast proportion of the Baroque trumpet repertoire as discoverer, editor, academic and/or performer. Ed kindly sat through an interview recently, which with his permission is paraphrased below.

Since coming from the US to Europe in 1959 armed with a home-made natural trumpet, Ed has made probably the greatest overall contribution to the emergence of this once-lost art and most other historic brass practices, such as the cornetto, keyed and 'long F' trumpets, historic cornets etc. His books and editions are essential to any serious trumpeter – modern players included – and his legacy of recordings and renowned pupils, such as Niklas Eklund, Guy Ferber, Gilles Rapin (also a no-holes and *tromba di tirasi* wizard) and Reinhold Friedrich continue to adorn CD racks and concert halls worldwide. Ed was based in Basel for many years; he founded the early brass department and taught at the Schola for 29 years from 1972 to 2001.

Most of Ed's playing on baroque trumpets was with holes, stylistically well informed and beautiful. He also, a few times, fulfilled his ambition (and our *raison d'être*) to play

trumpets straight from the walls of museums without the aid of a hand drill, including a recording of Handel's *Fireworks* music and *Charamela Real* – a collection of Portuguese fanfares and short pieces, which were recorded on twelve original instruments from the National Coach Museum in Lisbon.

As mentioned in a previous *EMR* article 'Partial Success', at the beginning of historically informed performance of baroque music, trumpeters were faced with a particularly grim challenge. At the same time came the emergence of the piccolo trumpet – a valved instrument pitched in high G, A or B flat that enabled clarino parts to be played with relative ease. The challenge, however, was not the range *per se* but the endurance and (relatively quiet) style required both for getting through a piece and making it sound like music.

Ed the musicologist researched and applied the learning to Ed the player to find elegant solutions for piccolo and vented natural trumpets at a time when modern brass playing was generally going in the opposite direction of pure volume (dragged by the development of larger-bore trombones). You will be able to read about these solutions at more length in Ed's forthcoming book *Articulation in Early Wind Music: A Source Book* (by EHT with Bruce Dickey, another renowned ex-pupil of Ed's).

It is inconceivable that, without the invaluable research and practice by Ed and his peers, we would even have attempted to play holeless nats now. Upon retirement from the Schola, Ed had no hesitation in passing his job over to Jean-Francois Madeuf and still shows a keen interest in the trumpet department. Regardless of the instrument on which one performs (and predicting a parallel situation with both types of baroque trumpets being performed on for a while to come) he maintains that the most important thing is 'communication with the audience'. 'I'm extremely thankful that we don't take authenticity as far as learning to play on horseback, go on diplomatic missions to the enemy with our eyes blindfolded, etc.' (EHT)

Coming next: the *Lituus*, an ingenious C19 clarinist and, after all this fuss about vent-holes in natural trumpets, why Bach and Telemann's trumpeters couldn't actually have played trumpets anyway. Confused? Try playing one.

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A simple demonstration of the difference between pure and equally tempered intervals can be found on the information page at <http://www.matthewparkertrumpets.com/>

## MUSIC IN LONDON

Andrew Benson-Wilson

## VIVALDI'S WOMEN

Such is the change in the usage of words in the English language that describing a performance as 'worthy' is the sort of thing that can lead sensitive musicians to hurl themselves to an early death. But, try as I might, I cannot think of a more apt description for the concert given by Schola Pietatis Antonio Vivaldi under the enigmatic title, 'Vivaldi's Women' (Holywell Music Room, Oxford, 5 Jan). This choir is based on the premise of recreating the sort of sound that visitors to the Pietà might have heard in Vivaldi's time. With the exception of the director, Richard Vendome, all the singers (including tenors and basses, both singing at written pitch with no octave transposition) and instrumentalists (string quintet plus oboe, trumpet and organ) were female. Some of them were even given the titles that the Pietà allowed a privileged few to adopt, including *priora*, *maestro di choro*, *maestra* and *figlie in educazione*. The opening *Beatus vir* of 1739 (RV795) was really rather shaky, both in intonation and in the sometimes nervous quality of voices both in consort and solo passages. Only tenor Imogen Carr displayed any real vocal talent in the virtuosic *Peccator videbit*, but even she struggled to project her more tenorish depths of her register against the strings. The basses were audible as such, but only just. They lacked the projection that gender-challenged applicants for the choir might bring. What was fascinating, as mentioned in the introductory talk, was the fact that all the voice types were projected from similar vocal constructions, so to speak – all featured a similar timbre, like a consort of viols rather than the 'mixed consort' sound of female upper voices set against male tenors and basses. The second half demonstrated rather more confidence, with Penelope Martin-Smith's *Nulla in mundo pax sincera* (RV630) and the final *Gloria*, the latter producing some good solo moments from Louise Eekelaar, Emilay Burn, Hannah Nye and Elena Marcus. Musically, the highlight was some very accomplished cello playing by Jennifer Bullock in the Sonata in Bb (although I don't think this had anything to do with the Pietà). But there were still enough choir mishaps to slot this concert firmly in the 'worthy' category. I will, however, give them full credit for singing from memory.

An unfortunate distraction was the frequent coming and going of various singers as they left the stage mid-piece to appear a bit later walking in from the back of the audience to take up their positions for solos. I know the Holywell stage is tight, but this really should have been avoided. The group's own publicity quoted from BBC Four's 'Have your Say' website (which I gather is an open forum for comments from the public): 'when it finished I felt a terrible sense of loss – I wanted it to go on and on'. I am afraid that the chances of a hard-bitten reviewer writing this are slim in the extreme, but it at least suggests

that, whatever reviewers may opine, somebody, somewhere out there, likes you.

## THE MUSICKE COMPANYE

The Musicke Companye, with soprano Philippa Hyde and countertenor Paul Esswood, presented an entertaining concert ('This Fairest Isle') based around the songs and duets of Purcell, and some Clarke, Eccles, Handel and Arne with spoken interludes from contemporary diaries, letters and journals thrown in (11 Jan. Wigmore Hall). This was well presented, with some lively interaction between the two singers, both in song and spoken word, aided by some costumes and a few props. Philippa Hyde has a beautifully clear and focused voice, with perfect intonation and an attractive stage manner. Although Paul Esswood's voice is not quite as tight as it used to be, it has worn very well and his vast opera experience was put to very good use. Given the rather saucy nature of many of the duets, I suppose some might wonder at the apparent age gap between the two protagonists – but as a pair, they managed the thawing mood of 'Oh the sweet delights of love' and the Coridon and Mopsa scene brilliantly.

## GLINKA MENDELSSOHN SCHUMANN

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment appear to be almost unbeatable in their pursuit of outstanding musicianship and fascinating and well presented concerts. In the past few years, the dashing young Russian conductor, Vladimir Jurowski, has been pushing them to even more ecstatic heights of excellence, as witnessed by their latest foray into the early Romantic repertoire with the contrasting of Glinka with Mendelssohn and Schumann (25 Jan. Queen Elizabeth Hall). Of course, compared to what Russian musicians went on to produce, Glinka can appear rather tame, with his clearly audible grounding in Western European musical tastes – indeed, there were moments in his wedding scene *Kamarinskaya* (1848) that reminded me of an English country dance. This was the work that Tchaikovsky described as the acorn from which the oak of Russian music grew, and the glorious sound of the OAE's period instruments was just the vehicle to expose the raw energy and colour of this exciting work. Christian Tetzlaff was a gripping soloist in Mendelssohn's Violin concerto in E minor. At first I thought his rather deep vibrato would begin to grate when set against the vibrato-free orchestral strings, but his irrepressible energy and panache put concerns like that in the shade. The sheer emotional intensity of the vigorous ending of the first movement lived up to its *appassionato* marking, and the gentle shading of the end of the Andante (with much milder vibrato) was beautifully wrought. It was lovely to hear a violinist with a truly original voice, eschewing the

antics on many of his international contemporaries – virtuosic as the best of them, he adds a stunning control of articulation and phrasing that, in some others, can often be subsumed into empty gesture. He takes particular care to project the sound, frequently holding his violin out to one side of his head to directly face the audience. He well deserved the enthusiastic reception, and returned for an encore from Bach's Violin Sonata in C Major. The orchestra was obviously poised for the *Rhenish Symphony* (No 3 in Eb) – their bows were ready poised as Jurowski came on to the platform to whoosh them into the opening flourish well before the applause had begun to subside – a nice move that heralded a spirited and revealing reading of this joyful work. His Scherzo depicted the Rhine, not as a bubbling brook (or frolicking Rhinemaidens), but as an imposing depiction of the sheer power of a grand river in full flood. This was an outstanding performance by an exciting conductor who very obviously engages with and inspires a truly world-class orchestra (which has recently had a noticeable influx of younger players) to produce absolutely top form.

#### THE NIGHT SHIFT

There followed the third of one of the OAE latest ventures, The Night Shift, an informal 10pm concert repeating sections of the earlier performance, but in dress down mode (jackets off), with drinks allowed in the auditorium and the audience almost encouraged to wander in and out at will during the performance (which remarkably few of them actually did). A snazzy website and other marketing was geared towards a much younger audience – including an 'Attitude Bar' in the foyer, linked to a specific student website, with half price tickets and free beer on offer. It was prefaced by a jazz pianist in the foyer, linking the two concerts, and followed by a jazz trio. The foyer bars stayed open until midnight. There were no foyer announcements for the start of the event, so people were still drifting in well after the start time. The stage was bathed in a rather lurid red light and the concert was introduced by a Television Personality who referred to the event as 'classical music without the rules', his point being promptly reinforced by his own mobile phone going off in his pocket. The OAE and Christian Tetzlaff performed the last movement of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto and the whole of the *Rhenish Symphony*, the latter split into three parts by the relaxed chat of the presenter, sitting on the front of the stage. The dividing line between patronising the 'yoof' element and genuinely conversing at their level is a fine one, and I am hardly qualified to judge which side this fell on. The Mendelssohn was introduced as 'a bit of slush', and the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement of the Schumann was said to represent 'a bit of his mad side in the middle'. I did rather feel for the poor trombonist (Sue Addison) when the Personality bounced up the steps to her and asked what it was like to be left out of the action (the trombones don't appear until the fourth movement, introduced as 'Bach on Acid'). This is a very welcome addition to the work that the OAE already do with their Education Programme, and it certainly

pulled in an impressive number of young people (including a rather earnest young lady sitting just behind me who was desperately trying to explain things to her clearly bored boyfriend). For me, (and I would struggle to describe myself as a 'yoof'), the most memorable part of the evening was the gentle coaxing and encouragement from David Blackadder for a young trumpeter who appeared to be on work experience. Very touching.

#### ISSERLIS, LEVIN & BEETHOVEN

It is almost impossible to believe Stephen Isserlis's assertion (in his *Guardian* article, 12 Jan) that he used to be one of the musicians that 'didn't like Beethoven'. His staggering presentation of all of Beethoven's cello works in Wigmore Hall's 'Stephen Isserlis Beethoven Day' (28 Jan) suggests that he and Beethoven have since kissed and made up. In these works, the fortepiano is at very least an equal partner, and actually dominates on many occasions, so I hope for the sake of fairness that the Boston concert in 2004 that initiated Isserlis's partnership with Robert Levin was billed as the 'Robert Levin Beethoven Day'. The day was split into two concerts at 11.30 and 4.00, but I only discovered just before the latter concert that it would include not only a 30 minute interval but also a second hour long 'supper interval', taking it well into the evening. You are pre-warned about things like that at Glyndebourne, but in this case it meant I had to miss the two Op.102 Sonatas, as did with several other reviewers. Although the meat dish was clearly the 5 Cello Sonatas, the morning concert of the three early variation sets (beefed up by a transcription of the Op.17 Horn Sonata in F) showed Beethoven at his mould-breaking best. The *Judas Maccabaeus* variations immediately set the fortepiano centre stage, with the cello frequently in little more than a supporting role, contrasting its lyricism with piano virtuosity. Levin was on masterful form throughout the day, carefully exploring and delineating each note and phrase despite all the efforts of a misbehaving piano to disrupt things. Somebody obviously gave the piano a good talking to during the afternoon, as it behaved rather better in the later concerts, despite some mechanical chunks in the upper registers which just might have been down to Levin's energetic touch.

The first of the three-part afternoon/evening concerts included the two Op.5 Sonatas, the second featuring Isserlis's use of the rubato described in Jean-Louis Duport's 1806 treatise in the rocking arpeggio figuration in the central Rondo. The dark and mysterious opening of Op.5/1 led to an almost symphonic first movement (or even a piano concerto) – Beethoven's concluding double cadenza was a demonstration of outstanding musicianship, from the composer and the afternoon's performers. The second of the Op.5 pair also has a suspense-filled introduction, almost making for a complete movement in itself. Beethoven's dramatic use of silences was very well portrayed by Isserlis and Levin. The work features Beethoven's experimentations in Sonata and Rondo form. After the interval, the Op.69 A major Sonata showed Beethoven at his most creative. The rather obsessive

Scherzo featured some exquisite explorations of technique, not least in the use of Beethoven's own curious change of fingering on piano tied notes. From the Wigmore Hall's press seats at the back I could not detect any audible change in sound or articulation within the ties notes as a result of this, but the front row might have spotted something. An exciting and enterprising day, although the logistical organisation of the various sections could have been better arranged.

#### ENGLISH c16 ORGANS

The latest in the short series of organ concerts in the Queen Elizabeth Hall featured the 2001/2 reconstructions of two early 16<sup>th</sup> century English organs (the 'Wetheringset' and 'Wingfield' organs), both based on fragments found in East Anglia (30 Jan). They have toured around the UK, but this was their first London appearance. Notwithstanding the assumed date of the original instruments upon which the reconstructions are based (around 1525 to 1540), Patrick Russill's programme explored the period from Redford to the end of the century. Eight men of The Sixteen, led by Eamonn Dougan, supported the organ music in *alternatim* hymn versets, antiphons and the Kyrie and Agnus Dei for Byrd's Mass for four voices. They produced a clean sound, with a unified texture and timbre across all voices – I particularly liked the two altos. Patrick Russill's playing was fluid and musically sensitive, with a sure sense of touch, articulation and appropriate ornamentation, culminating in virtuosic performances of two showpiece Byrd fancies.

The two organs are very different in style and size. The smaller, garishly coloured Wingfield organ has wooden pipes producing a very flute tone and a winding system that is extremely sensitive to the small hand-pumped bellows. For some unfathomable reason it is tuned in a modified version of Pythagorean temperament, based on pure fifths. Since the instrument is specifically designed for the English repertoire with its strong use of thirds, this tuning is singularly inappropriate. Several horrible chords proved this point through the concert. The larger Wetheringset organ is visually influenced by the surviving early 16th century organ case at Old Radnor and is a far more impressive beast. The tuning is to Schlick's 1511 modified meantone scheme intended for use throughout the Holy Roman Empire. Although this temperament is more acceptable than the Wingfield one, it is still potentially some way from the likely tuning of English organs of the period and produced a lot of unfortunate beats on cadential chords. There is also an oddity in the specification of the larger organ, in that it includes a Regal stop. Although such stops were certainly known in 16<sup>th</sup> century England, there were (usually/always?) found in tiny organs called Regals rather than a stop on a church organ. Russill's use of this stop in combination with four of the flue stops in Blitheman's *Aeterne rerum Conditor* produced a sound that Blitheman was, I suggest, most unlikely to have heard. The metal flue pipes have a breathy and slightly stringy sound and the winding system, still obviously hand pumped, is much

more stable. Although I have given recitals on both organs, this was the first time that I have heard anybody else play them – they sound very different away from the keyboard. The acoustics of the Queen Elizabeth Hall are very far from the far more generous church acoustics of the original settings or, indeed, of any English organs of the period. For a concert that might have appeared to have a purely minority interest, there was a very impressive audience. It is about time that England started to recognise its historic organ music, and these organs are playing their part.

#### EGARR'S GOLDBERG

Richard Egarr packed the Wigmore Hall for his performance of the Goldberg Variations (1 Feb). Judging by his introductory talk and programme notes, this is a work to which he has given serious thought and he produced a compelling performance, with sensible pulse relationships between the variations and a general sense of a unify pulse across the whole work. The opening Aria was given a tentatively searching, almost improvisatory reading. The first variation was taken at a steady pace compared to many performances, although finger slips became rather too noticeable in this, and in a number of the following variations. Overall the mood of the whole work continued the relaxed and exploratory style of the Aria, notably in the extended 25<sup>th</sup> variation. He clearly enjoyed the *Ouverture* (variation 16), and raised a chuckle from the audience, albeit more in response to his facial expression than anything specifically musical. All the repeats were played, and sometimes given noticeably different readings the second time through. His ornamentation was appropriate, and he made much of the resonance of the instrument and a generally legato playing style to get a sense of the 'cantabile' style that Bach encouraged his students to adopt. I am not sure if this was related, but I did find his reluctance to play any two or more notes the same way was pushed a little too far.

#### THE NEXT GENERATION

One of the aspects of reviewing I enjoy most is seeking out younger groups, whether by looking out for concerts or via the Early Music Network Young Artists Competition or concerts at the London conservatories. The vocal group Stile Antico won the hearts of the audience and me at the 2004 Competition. I gave them an enthusiastic review then, and for their equally short appearance at last year's Brighton Showcase, but their concert at All Saint's, Rosendale Road, West Dulwich was the first time that I have heard them in a full-length concert – and in an acoustic that suits their repertoire. It is a sign of their success that this concert was the launch of their excellent first CD 'Music for Compline', following a signing by Harmonia Mundi. The first half of their programme was based on musical representations of the *Song of Songs*, with works by Clemens non Papa, Ceballos, Lassus, Gombert, Vivanco and Victoria. This was followed by extracts from their Compline CD, featuring

Byrd, Sheppard and Tallis. Stile Antico support the argument that a group of musicians can perform perfectly well, and often better, without the intervention of a conductor or director. In their case, the interaction between the 12 singers not only produces a superb sense of togetherness, but adds visually to the experience for the audience. They start and end each piece imperceptibly, perhaps with a slight incline of the head from one of them, or a breath. They produce a beautifully clean and crystal-clear sound, and are ideally suited to consort singing, with no individual voice dominating and with little or no vibrato or other vocal mannerisms. There were some particularly good high soprano lines, never getting even close to being forced. The only possible weaknesses that I noticed was a crescendo in Byrd's *Nunc dimittis* that started just a little too quietly, making the voices sound a bit hesitant, and a slightly ragged start to one of Sheppard's *Jesu, salvator saeculi* verses. But the final Gloria was nothing short of glorious, with their joyful voices tumbling over each other in praise. They made good use of a variety of vocal groupings on the large chancel/stage area of this rather curiously restored church (a fire damage insurance job), at one point having a semi-choir in the distant Lady Chapel. It is good to know that the English choral singing tradition is alive and well amongst an exciting new generation.

Another young group that I stumbled on almost by accident was Melopoetica, at their lunchtime concert at the church of St Anne & St Agnes in the City of London (12 Feb). It was only when the group walked on that I recognised the two violinists as the same pair that I mentioned in my review of the European Union Baroque Orchestra in the last *EMR* – I was impressed then with their obvious involvement with, and enjoyment of, the music and their interaction with each other (despite lurking in the back row of the 2nd violins), so it was no surprise to find them making a perfect pair in this formation. The title of Melopoetica's programme, *Chiaro e Oscuro* (light and dark), summed up not just the repertoire for this concert, but also the contrasts between the two principal protagonists. One, Bárbara Barros, was born in Portugal and is one of the most physically energetic and extravagant musicians that I have come across. This is something that very few performers could get away with without appearing mannered or just plain silly – but Bárbara is a natural and it is obviously a key part of her musical personality. And, yes, she is dark haired. Siv Thomassen is from Norway (and blonde, of course) and has a rather more reserved stage presence. Their contrasted personal styles make them a fascinating pair, added to by the interesting habit of tying their violins round their neck with scarves. They were extremely well supported by harpsichordist Erik Dippenaar (from South Africa) and cellist Iason Ioannou (from Greece). In a group like this, it is the job of the continuo team not to be unduly noticed. Although they took their chances to shine, these two proved to be exceptionally sensitive to their supporting role. Erik Dippenaar's continuo realisations were particularly effective, as was his solo

performance of Froberger's Toccata I (1649). One of the key aspects of Melopoetica is the way they work together. They all have an excellent sense of rhetoric, particularly noticeable in the opening *stylus phantasticus* works, Bassani's Sonata IV and Rosenmüller's *Sonata Seconda a 2*. Biber's Partita VI for two violins reinforced the collaborative rather than competitive spark between them, notably in the dramatic interchange of arpeggios in the Allegro. However more than a hint of competition emerged with the very apt final piece, CPE Bach's Sonata in C minor, '*Sanguineus und Melancholicus*'. This was an extremely well presented and performed concert by a very professional and talented young group.

#### LUDUS DANIELIS

The closest the early 13<sup>th</sup> century got to opera was probably the Play of Daniel (*Ludus Danielis*) performed during the anarchic New Year Feast of Fools in Beauvais Cathedral. This was recreated by The Harp Consort and director Akemi Horie for a performance that made very effective use of the architecturally appropriate spaces of Southwark Cathedral (18 Jan). The focus (and the only real piece of staging) was an elevated throne at the centre of the crossing. The singers and players were in period dress and all joined in the frequent processions around the cathedral nave. Ian Honeyman was extremely effective as King Darius, as was Peter Harvey as King Belshazzar and Julian Podger as Daniel. The female voices of Clara Sanabras, Nicole Joran and Hanna Järveläinen added a range of different colours to the vocal texture. All that survives of the original is a single musical line. Andrew Lawrence-King's interpretations, aided, I assume, by a lot of improvisation, were most impressive, with a range of moods representing the varied musical styles of the period. All the musicians had to act, and Akemi Horie's direction was strikingly simple. The only aspect that didn't really work (and it rarely does) is the attempt to get the audience to join in at several moments during the action, although the introduction centred around this featured an amusing interplay between the misbehaving Sub-Deacon (Steve Player) and the Cantor (Andrew Lawrence-King). It would have helped if we had been told that the music that we were supposed to be singing was actually printed in the programme, but perhaps I was the only person daft enough not to realise that until the last note was dying away.

#### AGRIPPINA

Although English National Opera bounces from crisis to crisis, they have been staging some masterly productions in the past couple of years or so, the latest of which is a performance of the youthful Handel's *Agrippina*, based on David McVicar's 2000 Brussels production (I went to the first night on 5 Feb). The dramatic focus of McVicar's interpretation is on the comedy aspects of the plot, including a delightful portrayal of Poppea's 'sleep' scene set in a bar, where she slumps over the bar in a drunken stupor; later in the same scene, Stephen Higgins moved

from the pit to the stage for a stunning performance of a lengthy harpsichord solo. As ever with McVicar staging, there are a bucketful of silly moments and Amanda Holden's English translation of the text relishes naughty words and oh-so-predictable and often trite rhymes ('I say Ottone, you say Nerone' for example). We even had the endearing line 'O f\*\*\*, f\*\*\*, f\*\*\*, f\*\*\*ity f\*\*\*' – a line that I seem to recall from a film somewhere. I think these probably become the more irritating the more of McVicar and Holden one hears – for first-timers I would imagine it would all be rather amusing. The setting was the power-political world of the 1980s, with a programme full of female power-brokers. Sarah Connolly's portrayal of the power-dressing and ruthlessly scheming Agrippina was immensely persuasive, finding a gritty edge to her voice in the more edgy moments. Her appalling son, Nerone, was sung by mezzo Christine Rice, kitted out initially in leather and chains. Although her rapid and deep vibrato initially irritated (it interfered particularly with her first phrase, which spans a narrow range of notes all seemingly with the range of her vibrating tone), she quickly won me over with her characterisation of this young idiot. Ottone was sung by the young newcomer Reno Troilus in an impressive debut. But vocally and dramatically the star was undoubtedly Lucy Crowe in the wonderful role of Poppea. Her music covers every possible mood and technical complexity and she managed it all with apparent ease. Her wonderfully clear voice, excellent intonation, clear and precise runs and, joy of joys – a modest vibrato, make her a real discovery as a Handelian soprano. It being the ENO, she managed to shed most of her clothes at frequent intervals – indeed, to cover for the odd moments when she was fully dressed, her key scenes were accompanied by a massive backdrop of the torso of a naked woman – surely one of the largest nudes every created. McVicar suffers from the opera director's malaise of requiring singers to do something as well as sing – in Handel's lengthy *da capo* arias, this can appear contrived. So as well as Poppea stripping down to her undies twice in a matter of minutes, we had watched Narciso being aided towards his higher notes by Agrippina's tweak of his testicles and a great deal of coke sniffing from Nerone during *Come nube che fugge del vento*. Although not without weaknesses, this production should join the increasing number of recent ENO shows that will return again and again. [Was I far too fuddy-duddy in my rejection of a couple of *Agrippina* DVDs in the last issue? CB]

#### ORLANDO

Over at the other place, the Royal Opera House revived Francisco Negrin's 2003 production of Handel's *Orlando*. The original run featured the first appearance of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, a very welcome injection of period instruments into the normally far-from-HIP London opera houses. They returned for this revival, under the direction of the ever sprightly Sir Charles Mackerras. Although a few neo-baroque moments

suggest that this remarkable conductor hasn't quite kept up with all the current thinking about period performance, he still manages to draw inspiring performances out of singers and players. He is a master at musical interpretation – he can bustle along with the best of them but is also able to give the music the space it so often lacks in modern performances. The 2003 staging has had some of its dexterous moments diluted, although we still had the manically revolving roundabout central set providing lots of doors for people to run through. At least it was slightly less creaky than last time, although its deconstruction into a heap on the ground and its eventual removal altogether were not without audible intrusion. I missed the three occasions in 2003 when countertenor Bejun Mehta took over the very testing title role from Alice Coote (it earned him a Laurence Olivier Award nomination), but his performance here was excellent, with some wonderfully florid musical lines and a gripping mad scene that took his voice to the edge. Zoroastro acts as master of ceremonies for the goings on, and bass Kyle Ketelsen was vocally up to the task. Rosemary Joshua had a few uncharacteristic awkward moments, but dominated by her acting ability. Camilla Tilling impresses as Dorinda in 2003, and did so again, both for her singing and acting abilities. I wasn't quite so impressed with Anna Bonitatibus as Medoro, notably for some intonation wobbles. The three figures of Mars, Venus and Eros are on or around the stage most of the time, interacting with the protagonists at key moments. As in 2003, I couldn't help noticing that Venus had, yet again, forgotten to put her bra and blouse on – perhaps her dress was made from the bottom up and money simply ran out. But she has a magnificent chest which deserves to be displayed as often as possible – something for which the London stage will provide plenty of opportunities. But despite such magnificence, Orlando is finally more persuaded by Mars than Venus or the rather irritating Eros and gives up women for war.

#### A NEW LEAF?

I wondered whether I would be embarrassed at meeting the composer after a concert at Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge (4 March) in which all the music was by Christopher Page. He assured me when inviting me that his stuff was nothing like Fabrice Fitch's, so I feared pastiche rather than modernity. What we heard was to some extent based on other styles, but was chiefly indebted to the consort song, moving on from its language just a little, though not enough to offend that traditionally conservative creature, the amateur viol consort player (not that Fretwork could be called that!) But it wasn't the style that mattered: it was the melodic gift, the imagination and the power of the music itself that impressed and moved. A consequence of our historicist culture is that all styles are now available as models and inspiration: post-Byrd is as valid as post-Schoenberg. It's the power to reach out to the listener that matters. If you have a chance to hear or play any of Page's consort songs, take it. CB

## BUXTEHUDE 300

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Buxtehude's death is a good moment to reflect on the pioneering recordings of his organ works made by Harald Vogel between 1987 and 1993, now re-released as a budget box set. As the original CDs (still available singly) missed the launch of EMR I will give them more space than reissues normally warrant. The latest two CDs in the complete Buxtehude series by Bine Bryndorf on the Dacapo label make for an interesting comparison.

Dietrich Buxtehude *Complete organ works* Harald Vogel Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 314 1438-2 (7 CDs)

Vol. 1 1637 Stellwagen organ of St Jakobi, Lubeck and 1692 Arp Schnitger organ of St Ludgeri, Norden.

Vol. 2 1668 Hus/Schnitger organ of St Cosmae, Stade, and 1710 Schnitger organ of Weener.

Vol. 3 1694 Schnitger organ of Grasberg and 1699 Wiese organ of Damp.

Vol. 4 1696 Schnitger organs of Noordbroek and Aa-Kerk, Gronigen (1697).

Vol. 5 1694 Grotian organ at Pilsum; 1681 Richborn organ at Butteforde; 1650 Kroger and Hus organ of Langwarden; 1683 Herbert and Gercke organ of Basedow; and 1723 Hantelmann organ of Gross Eichsen.

Vol. 6 1554/1611/1654 organ of Roskilde Dom, Denmark; 1636 Lorentz organ of St Mariae Kirke, Helsingør; 1641/1662 Lorentz/Frietzsch organ at Torriosa, Sweden, including the surviving parts of Buxtehude's own organ from St Mary's Helsingborg).

Vol. 7 1551-1605/1636/1693 Scherer/Fritzsche/Schnitger organ of St Jakobi, Hamburg.

Since his 1961-1975 Radio Bremen recordings, Harald Vogel has become the acknowledged ambassador and authority on the North German baroque organ repertoire; his ideas and examples have been enormously influential on performance. The 1969 Groningen Schnitger conference and the Norddeutsche Orgelakademie, founded by Vogel in 1972, all helped to raise the profile of this organ tradition. As Organ Advisor for the Reformed Church in North-West Germany, he has been responsible for a major portion of the region's historical organs, and his direct experience of these instruments and their restoration informed his views on performance and interpretation for a repertoire where there are few original sources of performance information. His complete Buxtehude series was as influential on North German performance practice as were the two late 1960's complete Bach organ series by Lionel Rogg on Bach performance.

Although many of Vogel's theories continue to be open to discussion, he provided a foundation for the interpretation of works that to many organists, particularly in the UK, seemed rather impenetrable. Concepts that Vogel

developed include using the same pitch for manuals and pedals (whether 16', 8' or 4'); not assuming the pedal should be used as indicated in modern editions (many sections of Buxtehude works are playable on the manuals alone); and the use of 'consort' registrations, particularly for fugal writing, often using a single stop reflecting the distinctive polyphonic quality of ancient organ stops. His detailed knowledge of historic instruments led to many innovative registrations, including some unlikely looking ones. For example, he would sometimes use a reed stop for the accompanying voices of a chorale prelude (as on CD 1/10) and would also use solo 'gap' registrations formally frowned on by many theorists (for example, 8'+2' flutes on CD 1/5).

The organs for this series of CDs were very well chosen. CDs 1, 6 and 7 feature three of the most important examples of (then) recently restored 17<sup>th</sup> century North German organs – and the first CD includes the only organ remaining in Lübeck that Buxtehude would have known. Many of them contain older pipes that were respected in restorations by Schnitger and others. Their distinctive voicing often has a vocal quality, which Buxtehude clearly reflected in his organ writing. The first piece on the first CD starts with one of Vogel's most distinctive interpretation details – a gradual acceleration of the opening few bars in a *stylus phantasticus* work (a phrase coined by Kircher in 1650 to describe the 'free and unrestrained' style of playing, and described by Mattheson in 1739, as a style of 'hitting first upon one idea and then another' – Buxtehude is one of the principal proponents of this style for the organ). Track 2 of CD1 demonstrates another Vogel speciality: the distinctive articulation (developed from early fingering) of an opening scale passage leading up to start of a chorale melody. I remember a similar passage when I played a 15-minute long Buxtehude chorale fantasia to him during a workshop, after which he spent about half an hour discussing the interpretation of the first 8 notes! CD 2/6 includes the use of the typical North German 2' pedal Cornet stop as a solo, as well as having a Glockenspiel tinkle along with the chorale melody in the second verse. There is also an example (CD2/5) of a chorale prelude played entirely at 16' pitch, melody and accompaniment. Tremulants were frequently found in North German organs, and Vogel includes the neat trick of taking the tremulant off during a long-held final melody note (CD2/14). Vogel also makes one of the most realistic uses of the *Vogelgesang* I have ever heard (CD1/11).

Much work has been done on Buxtehude sources since these recordings, and there have been major new editions published of his organ works. There are no surviving originals, and many of the copies are full of errors, often as a result of transcribing from tablature notation. Vogel

has his own interpretations of many of the more awkward passages, as have many editors since. I am rather glad that he uses the delightfully jaunty 'New Orleans Jazz' rhythm in the first fugue of BuxWV 136 (CD 2/10) – this interpretation has rather gone out of fashion in recent editions. Vogel uses very frequent registration changes in the free works and the chorale fantasias – 31, for example, in the 6 minute Ciaccona in c (CD 3/1). The benefits of flexible winding on historic organs was something that Vogel fully understood – CD 3/10 is a magnificent example of this in practice with a Dulcian reed stop singing along beautifully to the subtle winding irregularities set up by the moving voices of the accompaniment – it can also be heard in a flute registration on CD 5/2. CD 4 includes two of the finest surviving organs of the period, both set in wonderful acoustics, as is Denmark's Roskilde Cathedral on CD 6. The Praeambulum in A minor (BuxWV 158) that opens CD 6, starts and finishes with a solo Principal stop that seems to delight in wandering around the vast building. Incidentally this organ, in an unusual position high up on the south wall towards the rear of the nave, so delighted King Christian IV that he had a special gallery built opposite so that he could appreciate its sounds directly. As well as the established organ works, Vogel also includes a few of the 'harpsichord/clavichord' works on CD6, including the extensive Partite on *La Capricciosa*.

Harald Vogel is at heart a performer rather than a musicologist and his playing is as far from a dry academic exercise as one could get. His use of expressive articulation and touch are key to his interpretations, and he has a very effective grasp of rhetoric, so essential in Buxtehude's free works. No organist should be without this reference set of CDs, although more recent recordings are also essential.

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**Dietrich Buxtehude *Complete works for organ Vol 3*** Bine Bryndorf (2000 Gustavsson organ, St Mary's Helsingborg, Sweden)  
Dacapo 8.226023

Praeludium in C BuxWV 138, Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott BuxWV 184, Es spricht der Unweisen Mund wohl BuxWV 187, Erhalt uns Herr bei deinem Wort BuxWV 185, Praeludium in g BuxWV 163, Toccata in G BuxWV 164, Praeambulum in a BuxWV 158, Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt BuxWV 183, Herr Christ der einig Gottes Sohn BuxWV 191 & 192, Es ist das Heil uns kommen her BuxWV 186, Canzonetta in G BuxWV 172, Canzonetta in a BuxWV 225, Canzona in g BuxWV 173, Praeludium in g BuxWV 150, Kommt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn BuxWV 201, Herr Jesu Christ ich weiß gar wohl BuxWV 193, Vater unser im Himmelreich BuxWV 219, Toccata in F BuxWV 156

This CD was recorded on the 1997 Marcussen reconstruction of the organ in St Mary's, Elsinore, Denmark where Buxtehude presided between 1660 and his move to Lübeck in 1668. Before moving to Elsinore, Buxtehude was organist at St Mary's in Helsingborg from 1657 to

1660, the venue for this CD (Helsingborg is now in Sweden but was Danish in Buxtehude's day). The current Helsingborg organ is a new instrument built in a 1660 style, but with no attempt at copying the original organ. It has only 15 stops, plus the transmission of the Manual 16' Bordun and 8' Trompet onto the pedal, rather than the 24 that Buxtehude would have had at his disposal. This CD completes the recording of Buxtehude's choral preludes.

**Dietrich Buxtehude *Complete works for organ Vol 4*** Bine Bryndorf (2004 Grönlunds organ, St Gertrud German Church, Stockholm, Sweden) SACD  
Dacapo 6.220514

Toccata in F BuxWV 157, Gelobet seist du Jesu Christ à 2 Clav. BuxWV 188, Nun lob mein Seel den Herren BuxWV 212, Praeludium in G BuxWV 147, Canzonetta in C BuxWV 167, Canzonetta in G BuxWV 171, Magnificat I. Toni BuxWV 204, Nun freut euch lieben Christen g'mein à 2 Clav. BuxWV 210, Canzonetta in d BuxWV 168, Praeludium in F BuxWV 144, Ich ruf zu dir Herr Jesu Christ BuxWV 196, Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern BuxWV 223, Toccata in d BuxWV 155.

The instrument is the so called 'Düben' organ in the Stockholm German Church where Buxtehude's 'most noble and honoured friend' Gustav Düben was organist from 1629-1690, succeeding his father Andreas (a pupil of Sweelinck). It is through Düben's manuscripts that we know most of Buxtehude's vocal and instrumental music, although none of Buxtehude's organ music survives in Gustav Düben's collections. The organ reflects a rather odd bit of organ history – the original 1609 organ of the German Church was divided between two churches in Northern Sweden in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1997, a reconstruction of the original organ was then built in another nearby church, and this reconstruction was then copied for the German Church, based on the specification as it was recorded by Gustav Düben in 1684.

I first reviewed Bine Bryndorf back in 1999 when I referred to 'Excellent playing from a talented young player'. I have since given her very complimentary reviews for the first two CDs in this Buxtehude series (*EMR* March/June 2004), commenting that 'Bine Bryndorf has established herself as a leading authority on the performance of early music, and her playing on this CD is exemplary. She eschews hollow mannerisms and empty rhetoric and concentrates on the subtle, but unbelievably musical, delivery of a musical line, helped by her meticulous articulation and superb control of touch.' I stand by this praise. In comparison with Harald Vogel, she generally plays faster, and uses fewer registrations. For example, in the Toccata in F she has 4 changes of registration compared to Vogel's 11. In the large scale chorale fantasia *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ* she uses 6 changes compared to 17 from Vogel, and takes 8'09" compared to Vogel's 9'06". The even larger *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein* takes 12'21 against Vogel's 15'19", with half the number of stop changes. Although she doesn't mention Vogel amongst her teachers, her playing does show some aspects of his influence, but it also

reflects the more fluid playing style and greater use of rhetoric gesture that has developed over the past 20 years or so. Her range of touch and articulation is also wider. Players like Vogel managed to break the overly mannered 'neo-baroque' playing tradition that dominated the 1960s to 1980s (and can still be heard from many British organists) – while players like Bryndorf are nowhere near returning to that awkward and irritating style, they do reflect a more recent willingness to take more risks with personal expression. Unlike the first two CDs of the series and the whole of the Vogel series, these CDs use modern organs. This reflects the more recent trend (less recent in the USA) of constructing scholarly copies of historic instruments, further adding to our knowledge of the period. Of the recent Buxtehude organ recordings that I have reviewed, (including the complete Buxtehude series under way on the Naxos label), this series is by far the leading contender.

**Vincent Lübeck Das Orgelwerk** (Norddeutsche Orgelmeister Vol 1. Joseph Kelemen (Huss/Schnitger organ, SS Cosmae and Damiani, Stade) OEHMS OC 607

Vincent Lübeck (1654-1740), along with Bruhns, is an interesting example of the North German organ school from the generation after Buxtehude. He was organist first at St Cosmae et Damiani, Stade (marrying his

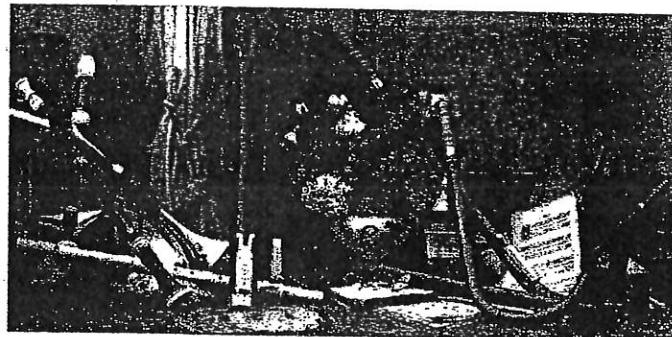
predecessor's daughter in the process) and then, from 1702, at the prestigious Schnitger organ of St Nicholas in Hamburg – considered the finest (and largest) organ in the world at the time. The young Schnitger had worked as a journeyman on the Huss organ at Stade and he became close friends with Lübeck, who tested many of his organs. There is evidence that all of Lübeck's organ works were composed for the Stade organ, pre 1702, although some of his works indicate 18<sup>th</sup> century musical developments. Unfortunately, he is one of a number of organist-composers whose complete surviving works can fit onto a single CD. Kelemen was a pupil of Harald Vogel and uses many of Vogel's distinctive interpretation influences in his playing, notably in his choice of registrations. The manuals and pedals are usually played at the same pitch, often at 16' pitch, even in the chorale fantasia - when the manual is 8' or 4', so is the pedal. Kelemen frequently uses the reeds to replace flue stops, for example using 16' and 8' reeds together with flue upperwork. There are two interesting registrations, one based on the 16' Quintadena, the other using the Cimbel, a very high ranking mixture usually used in a solo capacity but, in this case, giving a bell-like tinkle to passagework. Kelemen's playing is well thought out, but occasionally methodical, particularly in the chorale variations *Nun Lasset uns Gott den Herren* when the solo line could do with a little more fluidity and shaping.

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## HANDEL (RE)CONSTRUCTIONS

Anthony Hicks

HANDEL *Floridante* Marijana Mijanovic (*Floridante*) ms, Joyce DiDonato (*Elmira*) ms, Sharon Rostorf-Zamir (*Rossane*) s, Roberta Invernizzi (*Timante*) s, Vito Priante (*Oronte*) bar, Riccardo Novaro (*Coralbo*) bar, Il Complesso Barocco, Alan Curtis 163' 42" (3 CDs)  
Archiv 477 6566

HANDEL *Fernando, re di Castiglia* [*Sosarme*] Lawrence Zazzo (*Fernando/Sosarme*) ct, Veronica Cangemi (*Elvida/Elmira*) s, Max Emanuel Cencic (*Sancio/Melo*) ct, Marianna Pizzolato (*Isabella/Erenice*) ms, Filippo Adami (*Dionisio/Haliate*) t, Neal Banerjee (*Alfonso/Argone*) t, Antonio Abete (*Altomaro*) b, Il Complesso Barocco, Alan Curtis 149' 19" (2 CDs)  
Virgin Classics 365483-2

The two latest Handel opera recordings by Alan Curtis have similar twists. Neither strictly follows a version of the score that the composer himself performed or ever quite imagined. Instead, both use newly-prepared editions that attempt to reverse, to some extent, revisions made during composition. The treatments are justified by claims that the revisions were forced upon Handel by external circumstances and were artistically damaging. *Floridante* and *Sosarme* are the operas concerned, and their autographs show that in each case Handel started composition on assumptions that had changed before two acts had been completed. He stopped, revised what he had written, and then finished the work on the new assumptions. However, there are important differences between the two cases, and in the treatment they get on the new recordings.

*Floridante* is one of Handel's earlier Royal Academy operas, first performed in December 1721. The libretto, by Rolli, involves the sinister relationship between king Oronte and his supposed daughter Elmira, who loves the prince Floridante. Oronte reveals her to be the daughter of an enemy whom he has killed, and threatens to marry her against her will. Curtis's recording comes with a booklet note by Hans Dieter Clausen, whose edition of the work in the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* was published in 2003. He explains that Handel started composing the opera in October 1720 with the leading female roles of Elmira and Rossane intended respectively for the soprano Margherita Durastanti and the contralto Anastasia Robinson. The leading male roles were intended for castratos: the alto Senesino (*Floridante*) and the soprano Berselli (*Timante*). Durastanti, however, became ill and did not come to London, so Robinson was promoted to sing Elmira and the soprano Maddelena Salvai took over Rossane. Handel accordingly revised what he had written for these singers, up to the Act 2 duet 'Fuor di periglio' for Rossane and Timante, and composed the rest of the opera for the new

cast. Handel's completed version is fully extant, and, though there were further changes for revivals, it would seem to be the obvious version to choose for modern productions, as on Nicholas McGegan's 1991 recording on Hungaroton, taken from live concert performances.

Clausen dutifully presents this version as the main text of his HHA edition, but he is unhappy with it, and takes a view that Curtis also expressed in 1991, when he recorded excerpts from *Floridante* with Tafelmusik on the Canadian CBC label, presenting Elmira's arias in their original keys. In the booklet note, which is entitled 'The Ideal *Floridante*', Clausen argues that Handel's characterisation of Elmira was geared to Durastanti's dramatic soprano voice; that he was reluctant to soften it to suit the less forceful Robinson; and that the versions of her arias written in lower keys (only one was simply transposed) are inferior to the originals. With Clausen's editorial help, Curtis has therefore taken 'the bold decision to perform all the numbers involving Elmira in the form in which they appear in the original score – and where no such version exists, he transposed the numbers accordingly'. (Elmira's unrevised arias are mostly put up a tone, but her last aria is up a fourth, requiring much of the violin line to be put down a fifth.) However, Rossane's role is left in its revised soprano form, as Elmira's role 'was the only one to suffer from the decision to recast the two women's parts'. In sum, the aim is, 'as far as it is in our power to do so, to come as close as possible to the composer's original ideal'.

I may have done Clausen's detailed arguments some injustice in this summary, but the act of summation exposes the creaky logic. One obvious reservation is that the recasting produces a combination of voices that agrees neither with Handel's original intention nor his final decision. Another is that since the unrevised second half of the opera was composed and completed for the voices expected, it is already 'ideal' for them. If Handel had continued with the original voices, he might have written entirely different music. It is true that if the original and revised versions of the music involving Elmira in the first half of the opera are directly compared, the originals may be thought to be musically superior, but only in matters of nuance. Lofty claims of an 'ideal' version are misplaced, and they are additionally blighted here by the omission of the first scene of Act 3, including Timante's aria 'No, non piangete', on the grounds that it did 'not exist in Handel's original score'. Nevertheless, Handel inserted it before performance, presumably because he thought it was needed, so it is hard to see how cutting it helps in the creation of a supposed 'ideal'.

In overall effect the Curtis version is Handel's performing version of *Floridante* with Elmira's music sung in higher

keys, rather like versions of *Giulio Cesare* in which Caesar's arias are transposed up to suit modern mezzos. Little harm is done, and listeners may prefer the extra brightness that the higher keys bring. And ultimately that is the best justification for their use here, with the casting of the vivacious mezzo Joyce DiDonato as Elmira. Her fluency in the upper range perfectly suits Handel's writing for Durastanti, who seems to have been a high mezzo in modern terms. The voice has body without heaviness, though DiDonato can add darkness or power when appropriate. Also outstanding is Roberta Invernizzi's sparky Timante, which makes the loss of her Act 3 aria the more annoying. The whole cast is strong, though I was not entirely comfortable with Marijana Mijanovic's smoky tones in the title role. Curtis's direction is excellent, as perhaps we should expect when there is an element of his own creation in the music. Listeners who want *Floridante* complete and in the form in which Handel presented it to his first audiences still need the McGegan version. The recording quality and the orchestral playing do not match those for Curtis, but the singing is quite acceptable and does not always suffer in comparison to the new version: Drew Minter's accounts of *Floridante*'s faster arias (especially the defiant 'Tacerò') make Mijanovic's sound laboured. But the keen Handelian also needs Curtis's version for its inclusion of several genuine elements of Handel's first draft as well as for the vivid performance. For the more general listener it provides much fine music-making and may well generate new interest in a work that is something of a Cinderella in Handel's output.

Whatever the pros and cons of the new *Floridante*, the actual content of the recording and its relationship to Handel's performing version are correctly described in the booklet. *Fernando*, however, comes with explicit and implied claims that are not true. The title does not appear in Handel work-lists because it derives from the original title of the opera that Handel completed as *Sosarme, re di Media*. He began setting a libretto entitled *Fernando, re di Castiglia*, derived from Salvi's *Dionisio, re di Portogallo* and based on events in Portugal during the last years of the reign of King Dinis I (1279-1325). (He is the Dionisio of Salvi's title, and the other characters also have historical equivalents -- Fernando is Ferdinand IV of Castile -- except for the villainous Altomaro.) Handel had almost reached the end of Act 2 when, for reasons that can now only be conjectured, he decided, or was advised, to change the names of places and characters to create a fictional setting in Asia Minor. He revised what he had written, making substantial cuts and alterations to the recitatives as well as changing the names, and then completed the opera without further verbal changes. No changes of voice type were involved. Thus it is possible to restore the original *Fernando* up to the point where the draft finishes, and then just substitute the original names in the rest of the opera to make a complete version for performance.

That is what the recording, said to be based on a new edition by Curtis available from Novello, might be expected to present. (The edition was originally prepared

for a stage production at Lisbon, for which it was logical to restore the Portuguese setting.) David Vickers' generally excellent booklet note appears to confirm such an expectation. It says that 'Alan Curtis's decision to restore the opera to its original incarnation offers a new perspective'. In particular, 'Handel was arguably too hasty in deciding to abridge Alfonso's meticulously prepared accompanied recitative in the opera's opening scene, and this is restored to its full glory in this recording'. Also, 'important recitative in which Sancio clarifies his contribution to the action has been reinstated, giving him a clear advantage over his reduced counterpart Melo in *Sosarme*'.

In fact the opera is not presented in its 'original incarnation', and the statement concerning the accompanied recitative is false. All that is restored in the recitative is the second and shortest of Handel's three cuts: one line of verse, two bars of music. Yet the whole of the opening scene (in which Handel made a total of five cuts) is well worth recovering, as may be judged from its text alone, appended (with my translation) to this review. The only other restoration in the whole of the opera is a passage of four lines of recitative for Sancio/Melo in Act 2, which is rather outweighed by the cutting of several lines earlier in the scene, obscuring the dramatic context. The 'restorations' thus amount to about 15 seconds of music, whereas about 15 minutes are cut, including about 18 passages of recitative, and internal cuts in five arias and the final duet. Some are so trivial that they must be 'theatre cuts' deriving from the earlier stage production. (The booklet gives no hint that any cuts are made.) Among notable passages in the *Fernando* draft that could have been restored, but are not, are the original version of the first exchange between Altomaro and Sancio, and Dionisio's powerful recitative of self-doubt before his aria 'La turba adulatrice' in Act 2. Instead the later, weaker, revisions are adopted, though they never existed in the Portuguese setting of the opera.

Essentially the new recording presents an abridged version of Handel's 1732 performing version of *Sosarme*, with character and place names changed, but with nearly all other features specific to the *Fernando* draft ignored. Whatever led Curtis to record the opera in this form -- perhaps a commercial imperative not to exceed two CDs, as with his *Lotario* on Deutsche Harmonia Mundi -- there is surely no excuse for it being falsely described. (It seems that Curtis did not make clear to Vickers and the Virgin booklet editor exactly what he had recorded, though the cuts and the minimal nature of the 'restorations' must have been known when the booklet libretto was set up. Vickers has surprisingly reviewed the recording for *Gramophone*, mentioning only 'a few cuts to recitatives' in respect of content. My letter of clarification to the journal will probably not be published, but I have been told that it is the policy of *Gramophone* not to have recordings reviewed by the authors of the accompanying notes, and that the aberration is regretted.)

The misleading description is the more regrettable

because what is recorded gives a much better view of *Sosarme* than either of its two predecessors. Anthony Lewis's pioneer recording of 1955 (originally a L'Oiseau-Lyre issue on LP, and reissued four times on CD) is still valuable for the graceful contributions of Alfred Deller and Helen Watts, but it is much cut and has never been issued with a libretto containing stage directions, without which the story (and especially the final denouement) is incomprehensible. The 1994 Newport Classic version is also cut (though a chorus from *Lotario* is spuriously interpolated), and is in any case excluded from consideration by the leaden insensitivity of Johannes Somary's conducting. Curtis's direction is finely judged in tempo and expression, and his cast are mostly first-rate. Cangemi, the only soprano voice, is limpid in tone, the two countertenors are happily differentiated – Zazzo cool and boyish, Cencic passionate and slightly feminine – and the contralto Pizzolato is intense and tender as the mother figure Isabella/Erenice. The sublime duet 'Per le porte del tormento' shines out, as it should. The two tenor contributions are less happy. Adami as Dionisio/Haliate is shallow and edgy: it is probably not a coincidence that two of his three arias are substantially shortened (the second to A-section only), and as they are important moments, the opera as a whole is weakened. Alfonso/Argone, written for an alto castrato of limited range and ability, is taken by a second tenor, and though there is some logic in this casting, Neal Banerjee shows too many moments of strain to justify it. The set comes with a well-edited libretto including the original stage directions. It remains a pity that a recording offering so much that is worthy comes with claims that it does not fulfil. If Curtis was presented with a choice by EMI/Virgin of having a 2-CD version of something called *Fernando* recorded, or no recording at all, it is understandable that he would opt for the former, but both he and everyone involved in preparing the presentation should have done their utmost to ensure it was accurately and honestly described.

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### ANNEX

Text of Act I, Scene 1 of *Fernando, re di Castiglia*, as first set in Handel's autograph of *Sosarme*, GB-Lbl R.M.20.c.10, f. 5-8. The first page of the autograph is illustrated in Winton Dean's *Handel's Operas 1726-1741* (Woodbridge, 2006), plate 8b. Sections of text deleted by Handel when he revised the opera as *Sosarme* are shown in bold. Only the line 'ricco di vitto e di trofei per noi' is restored on the Curtis recording.

#### Piazza di Coimbra con squadre schierate

A square in Coimbra, with troops in formation.

##### Alfonso

*Di mio padre al furore,  
all'assedio, agli assalti,  
Coimbra, egli è ver, ancor resiste altera.*

##### *Ma che mi giova un si glorioso ardire*

*se un nemico più forte  
apre al reggia le porte?  
anca al popolo il vitto, e già la fame*

*dispiega i suoi trofei.  
Che deggio far? Mi consigliate, o dei!*

##### *Si pensi, si risolva; in si gran uopo*

*altro non so pensar, altro non veggio  
che dar a estremo mal egual remedio.*

*(Si volge verso le squadre.)*

##### Alfonso

*To my father's rage,  
to his siege, to his attacks,  
Coimbra, it is true,  
is still proudly resistant.*

*But what use to me is such glorious  
courage*

*if a more powerful enemy  
opens the gates of the palace?*

*The people lack food, and famine  
already*

*displays its victims.  
What should I do?*

*Guide me, you gods!  
Let me think, let me decide;*

*in such great need*

*I can think of nothing else,  
see no other course,*

*But to find for extreme misery  
a matching remedy.*

*(He turns towards the troops.)*

##### *[Accompagnato]*

*Voi miei fidi compagni,  
valorosi guerrier ch'a mia difesa  
non meno della mano armaste il core,*

*mirate, deh, mirate*

*con dolenti pupille*

*l'orrido mostro della fame: ei viene*

*con fauci spalancate a divorarne;*

*qual riparo opporremo a nostro scampo?*

*You, my faithful companions,  
brave warriors who in my defence  
have armed your hearts no less  
than your hands,*

*see, ah see*

*with sorrowful eyes*

*the dread monster of famine: it comes  
with wide-open jaws to devour us;*

*what protection shall we put up*

*for our defence?*

*Ma con luci serene,*

*mirate poi fuor delle nostre mura*

*un abbondante campo,*

*ricco di vitto e di trofei per noi.*

*Corriamo, o forti eroi,*

*sortiamo armati ad attaccarlo, e pronti*

*But then with bright eyes,  
see beyond our walls*

*a well-stocked camp,*

*rich with food and booty for us.*

*Let us be quick, oh brave heroes,*

*let us go forth fully armed to*

*attack it, and very soon*

*we shall bring destruction, rage,  
grief, surprise, dread,*

*confusion and terror.*

*We shall have food and victory:*

*it will be a double glory;*

*e quando ancor fosser contrari i Dei*

*and if the gods should again be hostile,*

*morirem da guerrieri, e non da rei.*

*we shall die as warriors, not as rebels.*

*(Snuda la spada, le squadre fanno il medesimo.)*

*(He draws his sword, and the troops do likewise.)*

##### Coro militare

*Alla strage, alla morte, alla vittoria!*

*Pronti siam tutti a secondar tua gloria.*

##### Military chorus

*To destruction, to death, to victory!*

*We are all ready to follow you in glory.*

## CARO MITIS

Brian Clark

I periodically surf the net for recordings of early music that we might have missed. Recently, spurred on by Dave Bellinger's enthusiasm for two Telemann CDs on a label that is not readily available in the United Kingdom (he had acquired his copies from the [www.jpc.de](http://www.jpc.de)), I went looking for Caro mitis. What I found was far more exciting than I had hoped for.

They kindly sent me six recordings from their growing catalogue for review and this page reflects my very positive reaction to the performances and the product. It is important to state from the start that the presentation of these high quality SACDs is exceptional: the glossy booklets and the discs themselves are taken from lovely engravings. Something that I cannot personally comment on (as I don't really have an ear for such things) is the exceptional sound quality – the recordings are made in the 5<sup>th</sup> Studio of RTR (The Russian Television and Radio Broadcasting Company) in Moscow by a team that includes several Dutchmen. The results are remarkable, and it seems all the more bizarre that some UK distributor has not leapt at the chance to import the catalogue.

All six programmes involve the absolutely first-class Russian orchestra, Pratum Integrum, whose performances are all the more notable for being unconduted. The repertoire ranges from a violin/cello duet (which would obviously never need a conductor [though see my John Beckett obituary! CB]) to full-scale symphonies. Each of the discs has something in common with the others – at least one work in every programme is a first recording.

Working through the discs chronologically, we start with D. Bortnyansky – The Italian Album (CM 0042003). In a recent issue, I recommended that Ashgate, the publisher of a recent book on 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russian music, might team up with a CD company to co-market the repertoire: I'd just like to make them VERY aware of Caro mitis and Pratum Integrum, because Bortnyansky's music can never have been heard as accomplished as this! The programme includes the sinfonia and a soprano aria from his opera *Il Quinto Fabio*, four motets, a canzonetta and another operatic aria. The motets are sung by three professional singers, two of them with a group consisting of five boys and four men.

The companion Bortnyansky – The Russian Album (CM 0052003) is an instrumental disc, including a march for wind instruments, the Sinfonia concertante of 1790 for pianoforte, harp, two violins, viola da gamba, bassoon and cello (!), three keyboard sonatas, the quintet for pianoforte, harp, violin, viola da gamba and cello (1787) and the first movement of a harpsichord concerto. The first track is a world premiere recording and the rest are the first time these have appeared in the catalogue on period

instruments. Besides the historical interest for such late appearances of the viola da gamba (and in such company), these lively performances really bring Bortnyansky's music to life.

Anton Ferdinand Tietz – Instrumental music (CM 0022004) is a beautiful disc. The five works are all recorded for the first time, and they are exceptionally well-crafted pieces: Sinfonia No. 4 opens, then the sixth string quintet, the afore-mentioned (and of concerto-like proportions) violin/cello duet, the fifth of his Op. 1 quartets and the composer's self-displaying Violin Concerto in E flat. Astonishingly, Tietz gets only very minimal passing references in the above-mentioned book on Russian music – a composer of this standard (and the performer that he must have been to play it) can only have had a very major impact on the development of music in that country and really ought to have been given more in-depth appraisal.

One of the discs that had been drawn to my attention in the first place, Telemann in Minor (CM 0042004), includes the first recording of his Orchestral suite in A minor (TWV 55: a 3) – unlike many other groups, Pratum Integrum are very good at clearly identifying the music they perform by reference to catalogues. Apart from the beloved concerto in E minor for flute, violin and strings (TWV 52: e3), the remainder of the listing is not terribly well-known: another concerto in E minor for two flutes and violin (TWV 53: e1), the F minor sonata for five-part strings and continuo (TWV 44:32), and another work in the same genre but in B flat major (TWV 44: 34), just to vary the modality, I suppose!

The group's next recording was Telemann in Major (CM 0032005) which includes no fewer than four world premiere recordings. The programme includes one concerto each for solo flute (TWV 51: E1) and violin G4), a concerto grosso for two flutes and bassoon with strings (TWV 53: G1), as well as one for strings (TWV 55:B4), a fun orchestral suite in B flat where both the composer and the performers let their hair down, and finally a sonata for five-part strings and continuo (TWV 44:33), that breaks with the CD title and is based in the minor!

The company's latest offering is entitled *Antologia* (CM 0052006, 69' 39") and is devoted to the fine music of Giovanni Benedetto Platì. Of course the recital includes a cello concerto, but it is a first recording, as is the case with the D major harpsichord concerto and the trio sonata in B flat for violin, cello and continuo. The other works on the disc are a G minor oboe concerto (played by no less a virtuoso than Alessandro Bernardini) and an A major violin concerto.

*See advert on page 8*

**Ecce, quomodo moritur iustus**  
*Opus musicum III 1587*

Jakob Handl

Opus musicum III 1587

26

S. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 A. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 T. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 B. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 S. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 A. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 T. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 B. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 S. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 A. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 T. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 B. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 S. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 A. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 T. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 B. In pa - ce fa - cius est lo - cus e - ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c -  
 S. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 A. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 T. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 B. ius, et in Si - on ha - bi - ta - ti - o - c - ius. Et e - rit in pa - ce  
 S. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 A. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 T. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.  
 B. me-mo - ri-a e - ius, et e - rit in pa - ce me - mo - ri-a e - ius.

BP1403c

6 Ec - ce, quo - mo-do mo - ri - tur iu - - -  
 S. sus, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor - de, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor -  
 A. sus, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor - de, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor -  
 T. sus, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor - de, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor -  
 B. sus, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor - de, et ne - mo per - ci-pit cor -  
 S. vi - ri iu - sti tol-lun - tur, et ne - mo con-si - de - rat; a  
 A. vi - ri iu - sti tol-lun - tur, et ne - mo con-si - de - rat; a  
 T. vi - ri iu - sti tol-lun - tur, et ne - mo con-si - de - rat; a  
 B. vi - ri iu - sti tol-lun - tur, et ne - mo con-si - de - rat; a  
 S. de: vi - ri iu - sti tol-lun - tur, et ne - mo con-si - de - rat; a  
 A. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce  
 T. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce  
 B. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce  
 S. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce  
 A. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce  
 T. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce  
 B. fa - ci-e i - ni-qui - ta - tis sub - la - tus est iu - stus: et e - rit in pa - ce

## RUMINATIONS ON CLEFS & TRANSPOSITION

Richard Carter

*This began as a letter intended for the February issue: our Christmas guest was planning to comment on it, but by the time it was clear that his draft on my computer was unfinished, that issue was virtually ready to print. So we continue with Richard's second letter without further comment. This is a significant matter, which crops up elsewhere in this issue, and is of immense practical importance. There is a strong motive for ignoring it, since the chiave naturali don't provide much grateful singing for the modern soprano. But we have, I think, a distorted image of the vocal sound of the renaissance (and perhaps earlier – see p. 2 for early-15th-century ranges), whose tessitura is lower and richer than it sounds with most modern choirs. But that doesn't explain why it is so ignored by musicologists, who also haven't seriously addressed similar issues like the one-to-a-part vocal ensembles required by most concerted music up to and including Bach and the separation of vocal and instrumental performance of much medieval music of Christopher Page's English a capella Heresy.* CB

I am encouraged to offer some rather sprawling ruminations in *EMR* 116 concerning Simon Hill's response to your question about pitch and transposition by clef in English domestic music c.1600, as it is a question which has been central to my editing ventures. Andrew Johnstone's recent article in *Early Music* provides an excellent overview of the background to the *chiave naturali/chiavette* notation system in Italy and, most importantly, details the treatises c.1600 which spell out precisely the transpositions involved. After much re-reading I deduce that *chiavette* developed as an obtuse but elegant solution to the problem of unsightly leger lines when writing for a particular combination of voices in which the upper parts lie somewhat closer to the bass (admittedly Johnstone does not express it quite like this). It then seems to have become a habit, even with secular repertoire later in the 16<sup>th</sup> C. in which the wider voice ranges mean that leger lines are in any case unavoidable, since it is clear that Italian madrigal collections are using transposition by clef. Did this blurring effect of the wider ranges contribute to the 20<sup>th</sup> C. confusion over the downward transposition of *chiavette*, I wonder? It is now all so obvious in the light of Banchieri's treatise – but for England we lack any such clear elucidation, having only Morley's rather ambiguous remarks which have been interpreted as arguing both for and against transposition by clef (see Nicholas Mitchell, 'Choral and Instrumental Pitch in Church Music 1570-1620', *Galpin Society Journal*, March 1995, for the opposite interpretation to Simon Hill's). We are also statistically hampered by the relatively small size of the repertoire, but a detailed study of the English madrigals would be more than welcome.

My feeling is that the various areas of English domestic music set their own notational parameters and need to be interpreted on their own terms, which are genre and perhaps even composer-specific. I certainly believe we should be very careful about waving a clef code at the

four-part lute airs: the argument that the lutenist has one instrument and does not expect to retune without a clear rubric to that effect is very persuasive, and this immediately rules out any systematic transposition by clef. The bass parts are very often simply the bass viol line to the lute song version – almost always notated in F<sub>4</sub> – with the text more or less unceremoniously shoehorned into place, the middle parts are generally extracted from the implied counterpoint in the tablature, and not fundamentally vocal in origin (look for example at Campian's *Author of light*, where the frequently ungainly middle voices have numerous false stresses which contrast sharply with Campian's masterful marrying of music and text in the 'real' voice part). But the wide overall vocal range in the four-part lute airs – despite many being of narrow compass the extremes are D to a" – also needs to be considered. Thomas Ford's *Not full twelve years* seems to exemplify the problem, a voice part written up to a" accompanied by a lute whose (gut) seventh course must be tuned to D apparently sets tight limits on a workable pitch – but if the song were originally conceived for one man and his lute (Ford was after all a singer-lutenist at court) then one can imagine a light tenor voice bringing it off satisfactorily even with the lute's top string wound up as high as possible, and then view the published version as the multipurpose compromise it surely was.

Some madrigal collections present a very different and unsurprisingly, more Italianate appearance. Taking the 5 and 6 part works, where it can be assumed all four voice types are required, *chiave naturali* and *chiavette* are often the predominant, even if not the only combinations employed (see Wilbye and Weelkes). The overall written range is D to a", wider than that of the Italians, who seem hardly ever to write below F for the bass, which argues for a similar convention to narrow the actual range – a high pitch standard and downward transposition of the high clef works. I cannot feel that one pitch can accommodate both the consistently high tessitura of Weelkes' 'Oriana' madrigal *As Vesta was* (for example) with his *Death hath deprived me*. This last, a six-part madrigal subtitled *A remembrance of my friend, M. Thomas Morley*, uses c1c1c3c3c4f4, and sends the voices to the very depths, the Bassus range is D – e. Granted, the use of the very low notes is usually pictorial or symbolic – the low D on the word 'below' in Richard Nicolson's *Sing shepherds all*, in a part which otherwise does not descend below G, for example – but at the same time they should surely be within reach, or the effect is lost.

On the other hand there are collections such as Byrd's *Songs of sundrie natures* of 1589 or Gibbons' *First Set* of 1612 which apparently show little evidence of using two clef combinations related by transposition; Byrd has mainly

low clefs, Gibbons high. But what does Byrd mean when he prints the Superius part of *The greedy Hawke*, with a range of c' – g'', in c1 and not g2, or when the three sections of a triple madrigal are in c1, c1 and g2, when the first two need d' – f'' and perversely the third is the only one to require c' – f'? The mixed and retrospective nature of Byrd's publications may also be relevant.

A detailed range/tessitura analysis might resolve the question, or it may not – it is easy to imagine the English around 1600, with the Italian part books in front of them but without access to the theory, being almost as confused as 20<sup>th</sup> century observers. Might some of these English composers indeed have been imitating the Italian style without having fully absorbed the notation conventions? Was Morley aware of it and trying to forestall attempts to graft it onto the existing conventions, or warn against its inappropriate use? (Theoretical writings usually lagged behind practice.)

Following yet another line of thought, what did Weelkes mean in *Ayeris or Phantasticke Spirits* of 1608 when he set roistering 'man's stuff' texts – which would be inappropriate with either women's or boys' voices – in g2g2c3 or g2g2c2, when Ravenscroft at the same time uses mainly c3, c4 and f4 for similar material in *Pammelia* and *Deuteromelia*? (Plenty for the tenors there!). There seem to be at least four possible reasons why a given top voice part appears in c1 or g2, depending on context:

1. At the whim (error?) of the composer or printer: it has no deeper significance.
2. Simply to avoid leger lines.
3. To indicate different voice types.
4. To indicate transposition by clef.

There are so many clues which ought to help: the presence of viols, necessary in consort songs and verse anthems, implied in 'apt for viols and voices' (what, if anything, can we assume about the amateur gentry's ability to transpose at sight?) or of a lute, or both – but this brings me to another conundrum.

In his *Selva di varia ricreazione* of 1590 Vecchi provides lute tablature for twelve pieces, prefacing the first of them with *Per sonare e cantare insieme*. This too should be a key piece in the great puzzle of pitch and transposition, especially as one piece is untexted and marked *Per Sonare con gli Stromenti da Corde*, but the corollary of accepting the validity of the clef code transposition (and it is pretty clear that Vecchi was using it) means that four different lute tunings are needed, nominally in c'' a' g' and e', despite the absence of visible instructions to that effect. This conclusion perversely contradicts the argument put forward about English lute songs, but all attempts to transpose things around to use even just two lute tunings a fourth apart (there are two styles of intabulation, with the top voice part either included complete at pitch or fragmentarily at the lower octave), let alone one tuning, send the voice ranges to improbable, not to say impossible regions. Has anyone reconciled this problem?

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The delayed publication of the pitch and transposition correspondence gives me the chance to add a little to my previous letter:

**Lute tunings.** Browsing through a recently acquired facsimile of Praetorius' *Syntagma Musicum* I find he names seven sizes of lute with eight tunings (1<sup>st</sup> string d''/c'', b', a', g', e', d' and g) which more than adequately covers the requirements of Vecchi's pieces, though the mind boggles somewhat at a lute tuned the same as a G violone – it brings to mind the Flemish Clackett, which I can remember hearing in that splendid presentation by the Schola Cantorum Neasdeniensis on BBC Radio 3 (or was it still The Third Programme then?) sometime in the late 1960s, although as a ten-year-old I did not then fully appreciate the joke. Lutenists appear to prefer to view this not as seven instruments with eight tunings but four instruments whose tuning does not change, with the in-between tunings being 'nominal' ones requiring the singers to transpose. This seems reasonable, but Praetorius appends a series of tablature examples which, when played in turn in his array of tunings, all come out as a cadence in G, which suggests genuine re-tuning. It is, however, possible to recast Vecchi's 12 pieces to use only two lutes tuned a fourth apart – a tenor nominally in A and a bass in E for example – without doing serious damage to the vocal ranges (this modifies my position a little from the previous letter): the absence of any visible rubric to assist the lutenist in making a choice is nevertheless worrying, and I fail to find a logic behind transpositions which sometimes lead to apparent absurdities such as downward transposition of piece in *chiave naturali*.

**Viol transposition.** Transposition by clef outside a vocal context is not much discussed, but it appears in Part 2 of Ganassi's 1542/3 viol tutor *Regola Rubertina*. He discusses alternative tunings schemes using only 5, 4 or 3 strings (good quality top strings seem to have been a real problem), and after giving the 4-string tuning adds the following instructions for transposition (my loose translation of Hildemarie Peter's 1971 German edition): *Each time you see that the composition is written too high – by which I mean that the bass is in the C-sol-fa-ut clef, the alto and tenor in the C-sol-fa-ut clef, but in the treble register, and the treble in the G-sol-re-ut clef – then you can orient yourself as I have shown you* [he is referring here to the adjacent fingering chart in tablature and staff notation], *to wit, take the F-fa-ut clef in the appropriate position for the bass and the C-sol-fa-ut clef in the appropriate position for the tenor, likewise for the treble...* Ganassi's normal clefs for treble, tenor and bass viol are c2 (sic), c4 and F4: what he is saying here is to transpose a piece written in g2c2c4 down a fifth by simply imagining the normal clefs. This looks very much like guidance for viol consorts as to how to deal with *chiavette*, which would be particularly needed if they were without their top strings!

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett

## HORATIAN MELODY?

Stuart Lyons *Horace's Odes and the Mystery of Do-Re-Mi*  
Oxbow Books, 2007. 244pp, £19.95 pb. ISBN 978 1 847 1 0568 0

The musical aspect of this hit the press a few days before the story of Purcell's *Come ye Sons of Art* surviving only in a mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century orchestration (see p. 47). Lyons argues that the familiar 'Ut queant laxis' melody (which Guido d'Arezzo used as a mnemonic for the notes of the hexachord) derives from a poem of Horace. He avoids stating outright that it must have been the tune Horace knew, while implying to the uncritical reader that it was. The crucial source is Montpellier M25, a 10<sup>th</sup>-century MS of Horace's works which contains heightened neums clearly written above each stanza of the ode 'Est mihi nonum' (*Odes* IV, 11). The first stanza is thus in the MS

*Est michi nonum superantis annum*  
*Plenus albani cadus; est in horto* [=in horto]  
*Phylli nec tendis apium coronis.* [=nectendis]  
*Est heder vis.*

The notation is precise enough to enable identification with the melody of 'Ut queant laxis', and antedates Guido's use of it. Guido (born c.995) took his text from Paulus Diaconus (d. 799), but the melody is unknown before the Horace manuscript. However, there is no need to make any particular association of a melody with a specific poem when it is in a standard meter, in this case Sapphic (11.11.11.5 in modern hymn-book metrical indexes). While not particularly common, there are various other hymns which might have used the melody. My cursory research (a check through the chronological first volume of Dreves and Blume's *Ein Jahrtausand Lateinischer Hymnendichtung*) has found none earlier than Paulus Diaconus but several between him and the mid-10<sup>th</sup>-century, any of which might have been sung to the melody. It is odd that many reputable musicological works assume that Guido invented the tune: I'm sure I hadn't found something new when (probably decades ago) I underlined the mnemonic syllables in my copy of Dreves, which could well have been deliberate, not just an accident to be discovered by Guido. (There is no mnemonic element in Horace's ode.) I can see no reason to imagine that the Montpellier melody was a millennium old. The final short line makes the Sapphic meter quite distinctive even to those not skilled in Latin verse, so there would be nothing surprising in a standard Sapphic tune being fitted to it. But proving the age of any particular melody is difficult; 'Because notation came so late to the hymn repertory it is impossible to know how old many melodies may be' (David Hiley *Western Plainchant* p. 144). The discovery of a poem by Horace

with 10<sup>th</sup>-century musical notation is interesting, but not as significant as this book implies.

Lyons' introduction makes a more general point that Horace's poetry is so imbued with musical references that the conventional assumption that they are metaphoric is unlikely. I have some sympathy with the argument, but he doesn't argue strongly enough against the fact that Latin culture is so imitative of Greek and that Latin poetry is particularly artificial. Its whole basis is on a foreign culture, and one cannot be sure whether the musical terms refer to lyric practice in Lesbos and elsewhere in Greece five centuries earlier, amplified by Roman imagination of that culture. Even the Greek verse forms were foreign: unless opinions have changed since I was at school, Greek verse was based on pitch and quantity, whereas Roman verse was naturally stressed until the Greek idea of quantity was imposed on it by followers of Greek culture. English imitations of Latin verse were generally not sung, so it is equally logical to believe the same about Latin imitations of Greek. Was Latin epic sung ('Arma virumque cano...')? The *Carmen saeculare*, which much of Lyons' argument depends, had a much later setting of that on p. xx.) There is much to be said in favour of Horace as singer, but the argument needs to continue.

There are three errors that I noted: one is irrelevant (p. 24: Greensleaves on p. 24 – it's not related to 'The leaves are green!'), another (p. 35, calling *michi* a transcription error of *mihi*) showing unfamiliarity with medieval Latin orthography, and one fundamental but surely careless rather than ignorant (p. 38, giving the wrong metrical pattern for the Sapphic, beginning long – long – short instead of long – short – long: had he set it out in the usual signs, I'm sure the error wouldn't have survived until publication). I found the discussion of the poem itself more interesting than the musical 'discovery'. I must confess that I never saw the point of Horace when I was at school, and the translations of the complete Odes and *Carmen Saeculare* here (the substance of the book) have not won me over. But the attempt was worth it: Horace has had such an enormous reputation over two millennia that we ought to try periodically to engage with his poetry.

There is also a CD single (Signum Classics SIGCD098, lasting 8' 34") with the Horace poem sung in the original Latin and in Lyons' English translation that bizarrely doubles the length of the last line of each stanza (so undermining the individuality of the Sapphic meter) by Christopher Gabbitas with David Miller on an anachronistic lute. It is sung clearly with no expression, but why in triple time rather than following the long-short pattern of the verse, as in 16th-century settings and imitations of classical verse?

## ENGLISH MUSIC BEFORE 1200

K. D. Hartzell *Catalogue of Manuscripts written or owned in England up to 1200 containing Music* Boydell, 2006. xxvi + 717 pp + vii pl, £90.00. ISBN 1 84383 281 X

This is one of those magnificent pieces of work to which an author has evidently devoted a lifetime (at least 30 years or so) and produced something that would normally take several years negotiating by a committee even before it started and then probably contain less and less reliable information when eventually completed by a team of scholars. 364 MSS are catalogued in considerable detail, followed by a 46-page index of incipits and a 17-page index of subjects. I wondered whether the index might be more useful if it referred to item rather than page: it would diminish the labour necessary for a second edition or a transfer to digital format, though in the latter case texts could be searched without recourse to an index anyway – but some entries are very long! And another indexing quibble before concentrating on praise, there should be some way of easily identifying the few items that are not liturgical. They are such a small proportion of the content that if there were fragments of songs like the neumed items among the 'Cambridge Songs' (UL Ff. 17(1), it would be necessary to look right through the book as it would for a search for polyphony. *Organa* has an index entry, but only to the obvious *Corpus Christi* MS. I checked *Victime paschali laudes* in the text index against Sequences and *Sequentiae* in the subject one: there are four entries under the incipit: of these, one corresponds exactly to the subject entries, one is a page out, and the other two don't match.

My interest is to some extent peripheral, not being in any way a chant scholar (I felt a bit of a fraud being for some years a member of the council of the Plainsong and Medieval Music Society, which is the associate publisher of the catalogue). For this is almost entirely a catalogue of chant sources, listed with extensive detail to the extent of individual chants, except for clearly defined types of source. Information on the MSS is clear and concise, and the style of musical notation is indicated. This is an amazing piece of work and all involved (though primarily, of course, the author) should be congratulated. Inevitably, its very existence will produce additional sources: perhaps they should be systematically reported in the PMMS's journal. If you pass a page of a pre-1200 English music MS framed on the wall of any house you visit or in an exhibition case of an obscure museum, do pass the information on!

## FOR BRYAN GILLINGHAM

*Music in Medieval Europe: Studies in Honour of Bryan Gillingham* Edited by Terence Bailey [and] Alma Santosuosso Ashgate, 2007. xvii + 438, £55.00 ISBN 978 0 7456 5239 7

Until I looked through the list of publications of this volume's honoree I hadn't made the connection between

the Bryan Gillingham who continued the publications of the Institute of Mediaeval Music from Luther Dittmer and the editor of music for viols for DoveHouse Edition. But he is chiefly known for his medieval scholarship – indeed, when this Festschrift arrived, I had on the floor beside my computer his *Secular Medieval Latin Song* in connection with the Horace book reviewed above. What is odd is that, apart from the list of his publications, nothing is written about him in this Festschrift. Is he so famous that we are all supposed to know, or is he a recluse? He is certainly popular enough to have attracted a distinguished set of chant scholars as contributors. Some of the offerings may seem at a glance to be near the train-spotting level of musicology, but there is always some more sophisticated matter lurking within. There are also wider discussions of more interest to the non-specialist. The first article for instance, by László Dobcsay, argues that the differing views on the pre-notational homogeneity of the Western chant are not as far apart as they may seem: 'the scholars who disagree have merely been focusing on different moments in this complexity' (p. 10). John Caldwell argues that the Greek eight-modal theory is probably, if only hypothetically, relevant to non-Frankish repertoires. Those who have followed the increasing presence of Philip the Chancellor as a significant figure in Notre-Dame polyphony will be interested in Thomas B. Payne's discussion of his texts to Perotin's *conductus caudas*.

Singers of medieval music in general will be stimulated by Philip Weller on 'voice and vocality in medieval song'. It doesn't fulfil any expectation of practical advice, but is nevertheless replete with anecdotes that have implications on singing – a lesser-known one by Giraldus Cambrensis, for instance, which may imply that a secular refrain had the same music as a 'Dominus vobiscum' (Weller doesn't push the story that far: how is the vernacular phrase 'Swete lamman dhin are' accented? Could the tunes be the same?) In Italy, the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Franciscan writer Salimbene states that Fra Guidolino sang best in 'canto mediolato, id est canto fracto' rather than chant, because he had a graceful [rather than a powerful] voice. The Latin is not quite as clear as Weller's translation, but it does relate to the idea that crops up a couple of centuries later that church music should be sung at full volume and madrigals more delicately. The chapter moves on to St Augustine and his moral problem of squaring his understanding of the power of music with his theological suspicion of it: frequently-flying but green politicians have a similar crisis of conscience now.

I was particularly interested in Andrew Hughes's 'Patterns and palaeography' on how to present the myriad differences between chant sources in a critical commentary (or manage the data in such a way as the editor can decide what text to print). I wonder whether he is chasing a mirage. He quotes the estimate that, of one particular type of chantbook, the Sarum Antiphonal, that existed at the time of the Reformation, only 0.17% survive.\* Similar books elsewhere would not have met with such deliberate destruction, but over the years virtually all will have worn

out and been replaced, and rarely would more than one generation of books have survived in any institution. Furthermore, even in the later medieval period when one assumes that singers were musically literate, they will have had large swathes of the chant repertoire in their heads; but do we know if they took care to make what they copied correspond with what they sang? Was the written text too holy to be altered, but perhaps preserved as the idea rather than the reality of the chant? Maybe a religious establishment had its own tradition which survived orally despite the official notation? (I can think of a simple example from childhood; one hymn was always sung with a wrong note, discordant if the organist played the written chord. The organist, from outside the tradition, tried to make the congregation sing it right, but eventually grew tired of playing the chord as loudly as possible and merely showed his disapproval by being silent for that beat.) A system such as that proposed here for comparing versions could be useful, but any attempt to produce a stemma should be treated with circumspection. It is perhaps relevant for the repertoire that currently absorbs the author, the rhymed offices, which have a definite composer and were notated precisely from the start: at least there is an original version to aim at beyond the morass of variants. But applying it to choose an Urtext and critical commentary of a Gradual created or formalised by a Roman schola in the 8<sup>th</sup> century is just not feasible. I would have thought that basing the system on the mode of the piece begs the question that the mode might not always be obvious.

There are 20 contributions here, many by distinguished scholars – a tribute to Gillingham's distinction as scholar

and publisher. There's a picture of him – I can imagine him fishing or sitting with a pipe outside a pub: it would be nice to know a bit more about him.

\* That might be thought a generous proportion compared with sources of Classical Greek literature, where (along with Biblical studies) stemmatic theory was developed; but at least there was a text created by a single author lying behind the variants, provided that the textual transmission was via copies of the authors' scripts rather than put together from the memory of actors or even the audience.

#### INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC c. 1500

Jon Banks *The Instrumental Consort Repertory of the Late Fifteenth Century* Ashgate, 2006, 186pp, £45.00. ISBN 9 780754 653400

If you play through Petrucci's *Odhecaton* (and I strongly recommend the edition I reviewed in the last issue), there's a fairly clear distinction between songs that have lost their text, and pieces that are remote from any style that is demonstrably vocal, with various categories in between. Jon Banks has taken those rough classifications further and, by studying the music itself and the sources in which it survives, groups them in a way that has implications on function and performance. Most surprising will be his conclusion that pieces with wide-ranging and quickly-moving parts are likely to be for lute ensemble. The case he makes is a powerful one, especially since some survive in sources that predate the arrival of the viol in Italy in the 1490s. Even if you don't have the time or inclination to read the detailed argument in the rest of the book, do try the opening chapter: 'What instrumental consort repertoire?' 'Performance practice has a much wider scope than the establishment of whether certain pieces should be sung or played... It is the study of music as sound, as a contemporary event, not text, and as such is vital to our understanding of any musical culture.' (p. 8) But I don't go along with the criticism of editions that stress textual accuracy more than instrumentation: I suspect that, however thoroughly and wisely she investigated the subject in the 1940s, anything that Helen Hewitt would have come up with would read very oddly now. And I'm less worried by editors dredging up unnotated texts, at least if the underlaid versions were not readily available and an edition of a source was used as a peg for an edition of the pieces irrespective of the context of the MS at hand.

But I have no desire to carp: Banks makes sense of a range of music that, in his words, has been sidelined because of 'its perceived anomalous status within the mainstream medieval and early renaissance tradition. These... when correctly identified and taken together as a group, add up to a glorious tradition of their own, which happens to contain some of the most fascinating, ambitious and attractive music of the period.' You don't have to be a member of a lute trio to enjoy it! I am, though, worried by his assumption that players would expect to go



through a set of parts playing a single instrument at the notated pitch. The idea of anything approaching a clef code is several times rejected: I would like to have seen a few tables to demonstrate this. Staying with *Odhecaton* as an accessible example, a quick glance shows that in the few cases when there is a G<sub>2</sub> clef at the top, the bottom part has a clef higher than F<sub>4</sub>: there are, indeed, some parts with high ranges, but conclusions drawn from the total range of a particular part throughout a source are shaky. What is not discussed is how the sources were used. Most are in small format with four-part pieces set out with two parts on the left page, two on the right. Was it possible for players to read from them? Our cartoonist offers one possibility: I'd be interested to hear if any ensemble on any instruments of the period has managed a more plausible way. It seems more likely that the MSS (or expensive prints) were intended for libraries: players would have parts copied for them, and these may well have been selected by compass; with every each piece visible at a glance on an opening, it would have been easy for someone looking for repertoire for a particular group to see at a glance what was suitable. Notes above or below the stave would rapidly be assessed by the trained eye. Such parts would probably have been kept by the players, not in a library, and wouldn't have survived. I can't imagine that customers ordered *Odhecaton* in sets of four?

All who enjoy the repertoire will find this book stimulating, and the idea of single-line lute ensemble provocative. Read it and you will emerge at least moderately convinced, though wind players might be disappointed that their repertoire is cut back – but no matter, improvisation is (or should be) your forte.

#### MADRIGALS – FLORENCE c. 1520

Anthony M. Cummings *MS Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. XIX, 164-167* (Royal Musical Association Monographs, 15) Ashgate, 2006, xi + 127pp, £35.00. ISBN 978 0 7546 5529 9

The siglum is so familiar that I was surprised to find how little of the music in the MS was familiar: I expected to find my copy of Becherini's *Catalogo del manoscritti musicali della Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze* (1971) smothered with red-ink references to editions, but realised that it was a fraction later than the repertoire that interested me (such as described in the book reviewed above). Cummings dates the four partbooks to a fairly precise circa 1520, and we are dealing with early madrigals (rather than late frottola) and music closely linked with Florence. The book starts with a detailed discussion of the manuscript as a physical object, then uses study of concordances and broader cultural history to place it in its milieu. It is a model study, old-fashioned codicological work leading out into more fashionable contextual matters. There is a detailed inventory of the 83 + 1 pieces (a later addition is sensibly numbered 45 1/2 to preserve the numbering of the source). I don't see why each entry is headed 'Number in the Cantus partbook': if the pieces were numbered

differently, it would have been sensible to list the number in each part; but since they aren't, such a description is superfluous. It may seem unnecessary too to list the folio of the cantus partbook: surely either all four partbooks or none? But scholars often use the cantus folio to locate concordances, so I suppose it is necessary. It is a pity that tablature concordances are omitted, even if less thorough bibliographic control of them may make them less than complete: such listing may give further understanding of the Florentine milieu and the wider circulation of the repertoire, and also remind us that performance in four discrete parts is by no means the only possible manner. And finally, one would normally expect reference to modern editions to be thorough, so that one can locate editions for performance as well as tomes generally only available in academic libraries. But a good piece of work, which should (but usually won't) be shelved alongside the facsimile.

#### BACH SECOND ORCHESTRAL SUITE

*Bach Perspectives Vol. 6 . J. S. Bach's Concerted Ensemble Music: The Overtures* Edited by Gregory C. Butler. Illinois UP, 2007. xi+ 163pp, \$50.00 ISBN 0 252 03042 0

This has two papers on the B-Minor 'Orchestral Suite' (to use its usual modern title), and a more general one on 'The Ouverture as Theological Signifier' by Jeanne Swack. I find the last of these disappointing. 'Signifier' is one of those words with an apparently obvious meaning which has been given a specific meaning in one discipline and is taken up with more or less relevance and understanding in others. Luckily, its use in the title looks like an afterthought. The article is concerned with possible significance in the text for the use of the overture form in some Telemann cantatas, not just in the first movement (as with BWV 61) but later in the works. Two of the examples are convincing, but I find the third (TWV I: 986) less so: the movement in question, the last, has the rhythmic features of the Ouverture's introduction, but instead of the jagged pattern of notes, the demisemiquavers are repeated. If there is an echo of an overture here, perhaps Telemann was referring to some other work. The text (*Alles was ihr tut*) begins a Buxtehude cantata: that doesn't refer to the overture style, but perhaps someone else's setting did.

The final article, by Steven Zohn, discusses the flute suite in relationship with what is described as the *Concert en ouverture*, an overture which includes some sections for a solo instrument, but not enough for that instrument to dominate the work. For as long as I can remember, it has seemed odd to me that Bach's suite should be presented in concert and on disc as a concerto but have so little solo music. It would make more sense if the solo part was played by the leader or the keyboard player (as in Brandenburg 5) rather than having the flautist standing beside the conductor in front of the orchestra and then mostly doubling the first violins. The *Concert en ouverture* (a title taken from Telemann's Suite for Violin and Strings

in E, TWV 55: E3) was popular in Germany in the years around 1730: Zohn lists 23 of them, 16 by Telemann, another two attributed to him, one by JB Bach, two by JS Bach, one by Doeemming and one by Fasch. Read Zohn's article first before embarking on the opus magnum, Joshua Rifkin's 98-page survey of BWV 1067, 'The "B-Minor Flute Suite" deconstructed'.

Irrespective of ones interest in that particular work, this is a cornucopia of information on Bach's ensemble music. So much is mentioned in passing that throws light on the whole oeuvre. Don't pass over the extensive footnotes: there's enough information to form the framework of a series of separate books. Rifkin argues (objectively on signs in the surviving parts, of which only the flute and viola are in Bach's hand, though it is present in the other parts too) that they were copied from a score or parts in A minor. In that key, it was unsuitable for flute, and violin was the most likely instrument (apart from other reasons, 15 of Zohn's 23 *concerts en ouverture* are probably for violin). Rifkin came to his conclusion before it was pointed out to him that in the heading of the autograph flute part has V as the first letter of the instrument which was later over-written by the T of *Traversiere*. I won't even try to summarise the arguments: I recommend that this should be read as a demonstration of what some might call old-fashioned scholarship at its best. The change from violin in A to flute in B minor may not be of major significance except to flautists (who will continue to play it anyway: the new version is still Bach's), though the violin version enables the work to be played without paying for a separate soloist. This is yet another example of the flexibility of instrumentation in Bach's ensemble music, which is highlighted in the table on pp. 60-65 – Rifkin could well get a research assistant to reformat and expand that into an independent reference booklet. The violin version seems to date from around 1730, the flute version from the late 1730s. Rifkin at first rejects the possible link with Buffardin, while reminding us that Buffardin did visit Bach at Leipzig. He offers an alternative candidate, Mitzler, who asked for a flute concerto from J. G. Walther in 1736. This is an important study, worth reading, and not just by those interested in the specific work, but as a way of catching up on current research on Bach's ensemble music.

*Following on my review of the B-minor Mass in the last issue, I've had some correspondence with Joshua, initially a bit frosty, but ending up affably. He doesn't believe that multi-coloured printing would be helpful, and I certainly agree that it could not present all the differences between the Missa and the Mass. But I wonder whether Bach's approach to bowing changed so much over 15 years that slightly out-dated information from the man himself Bach is likely to be less accurate than 21<sup>st</sup>-century guesses. With reference to my worries about markings in the Breitkopf parts that is not in the score, he assures me that the differences are less serious than I implied: I haven't seen any of the orchestral parts.*

## 18th-CENTURY GERMANY

by Brian Clark

*Oberschwäbische Klostermusik im europäischen Kontext, herausgegeben von Ulrich Siegele. Alexander Sumski zum 70. Geburtstag.* Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften. 186 pp, £26.00. ISBN 978-3-631-51906-6

Apart from a single chapter (Michael Gerhard Kaufmann discussing Sixt Bachmann's op. 3 organ fugues), this book contains papers given at a 2002 symposium to mark the 50th anniversary of the state of Baden-Württemberg. The articles explore many aspects of musical activities within monasteries throughout Europe mainly in the (later) 18th century. These include a network of music exchange between establishments (whether by design as covered by Friedrich W. Riedel, or, as Gabriella Hanke Knaus explains, by one institution acquiring the music library of another), the output of little-known composers (Jolanta Byczowska-Szaba and Danuta Idaszak write about Isfrid Kayser and Wojciech (Adalbert) Donkowski respectively), regional developments (Thierry Favier enlightens the situation in Dijon and the surrounding area, including a discussion of the importance of performing the Te Deum), and there is a tantalising study of an inventory of over a thousand musical works which includes tables of data. When much of the focus of study in this period is on the noble courts, and the great cities and their churches, it should not be forgotten that monasteries were an important home of a living musical tradition. This volume provides valuable information that will help to broaden our understanding of both the tradition and the musical trends of the time.

*Eva Neumayr Die Propriumsvertonungen Johann Ernst Eberlins (1702-1762): Studien zu Quellen, Entwicklung, Komposition und Aufführungspraxis und Alphabetisches Verzeichnis.* Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften. 576pp, £56.30. ISBN 978-3-631-54412-9

Johann Ernst Eberlin was one of the most important musicians and composers in 18th century Salzburg. His music was known intimately by the Mozart family (as is witnessed by the presence in the British Library of a Leopold Mozart manuscript of Salzburg works, including Eberlin) and it is therefore rather surprising that it remains so little known today. Eva Neumayr's study restricts itself to one specific area of his compositional output – settings of mass Propers. After an introductory chapter on the present state of research in the field and a list of all the libraries which the author visited or consulted, there is another on the catalogue that sits at the heart of the book, its problems and the choices the author has had to make about what to include and what to exclude. Section 3 explores the possibilities and means of dating the works, while Section 4 is a broader discussion of the development of Proper settings in Salzburg (from Gregorian chant, through polyphony of the 15th and 16th centuries, and ending with Biber and Caldara, although the footnotes somehow get out of synch). The fifth

section of the book works through Salzburg's liturgical feasts, after which the texts of the Proper are discussed. Sections 7 and 8 look at musical forms; the first concentrates on *stile antico* settings while the second focuses on *concertate* works. The following section explores the difficult issue of performance practice – there are many galleries and many organs in the cathedral and church edicts, eye-witness accounts and iconographic evidence point to various possibilities but I wondered that this was merely padding the book out rather than contributing any substantive evidence to what is already known.

Then, on p. 199, the catalogue finally begins. Arguably this is the most important part of the book; sadly, it does not seem to have been compiled with much care for, although I did notice a few typographical errors in the preceding pages, these were nothing compared to the copious slips in the thematic incipits, such as:

The very first one has one error and one inconsistency of notation.

The second has two movements, the second of which notates the violin part a tone lower than the voice and continuo parts without any explanation – surely the opening phrases of the instrumental and vocal parts of *Afferentur regi* should be the same p. 217, both the voice and the continuo lines are a third too low p. 231, the second half of the first bar of the violin part must be wrong.

p. 270, the same piece is given twice (meaning that readers have no idea what the third movement really should be).

The majority of musical extracts are faulty and while Peter Lang is not a specialist music publisher (they publish science books and, of course, musicology is a science), someone on the editorial team ought to have had some musical experience – and, of course, the author ought to have had some input so there is no excuse. As far as the content of the catalogue goes, there is an enormous amount of information including lists of surviving part-books which can help to give some idea of performance practice in a particular place. I wondered, though, what the rational behind the listing of sources was; why on earth is the autograph of any piece *not* given first? A list of missing pieces follows. In summary, then, this is an informative book which will encourage the exploration of Eberlin's music – but it could have been made a lot better by professional copy-editing and a musically-literate proofreader.

Eugene K. Wolf in collaboration with Jean K. Wolf and Paul Corneilson. *Manuscripts from Mannheim, ca. 1730-1778. A Study in Methodology of Musical Source Research.* (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Mannheimer Hofkapelle 9.) Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften. 410pp, £45.00 ISBN 978-3-631-39726-8 USISBN: 9778-0-8204-6005-5

I cannot recall having seen – let alone read – such a thorough and detailed volume concerned with a single body of source material. The fact that it is not only exhaustive and of vital importance to anyone interested in either the Mannheim court or in the scientific study of

source materials per se, it also remains readable and not overbearing is a tribute to the authors' skills. Using rastrology and watermarks, varying calligraphic styles and an intimate knowledge of copyists' individual quirks, manuscripts are traced from a number of disparate collections back to their Mannheim roots and compiled into a variety of useful sequences. The wealth of source material consulted is beyond the scope of this short review, but suffice it to say that Wolf also includes reproductions of manuscripts and other documents, as well as samples of handwriting which will inevitably make identification of further Mannheim sources much easier in future. How enlightened of a German publisher to issue such a detailed tome in its original language – when was the last time you read a German textbook printed by an English house?

I asked BC if there was anything new on *The Early of Kelly*: answer 'He isn't mentioned at all.' CB

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## CD REVIEWS

## ANCIENT

*The Mystery of Do-Re-Mi* Christopher Gabbitas bar, David Miller lute 8' 34" Signum SIGCD098 see p. 28

## MEDIEVAL

Pérotin and the Ars Antiqua The Hilliard Ensemble 68' 13" Coro COR16046

Leonin *Gloria: redemptori meo; Pérotin Viderunt & Sederunt + anon*

This is a reissue of the first of own-label series of four discs that the Hilliards produced a decade ago and now reissued on The Sixteen's label. I reviewed it in *EMR* 17. I still find the opening applause a bit annoying, but there is little else to show that the recording was live, so I suppose it can be excused. I compared it then with their EMG recording of Perotin, especially for the Perotin, and found this less striking but more musical. This and the other discs (coming soon) are certainly worth buying, and complement the emerging Gothic Voices reissues, which are less mellifluous and more gritty. Each to his taste! CB

*Flame of Ireland: Medieval Irish Plainchant: An Office for St. Brigit* Canty, Rebecca Tavener dir, William Taylor clarsach 76' 32" Gaudeamus CD GAU 354

Between them Cappella Nova and their sister ensemble Canty have built up an enviable and important discography of music associated with the Celtic saints, and for all the obscurity of St Brigit's roots, it seems certain that she belongs to this same assembly. Research by Dr Ann Buckley and Dr Greta-Mary Hair have brought to light some remarkable early chant, and using two 15th-century Manuscripts in Trinity College Dublin, the former has reconstructed an Office for St Brigit as it might have been sung then and indeed for centuries before. The ladies' voices of Canty, singing in a number of combinations with and without the wire-strung clarsach of William Taylor, produce a spell-binding and utterly convincing account of this beautiful chant, while their director Rebecca Tavener contributes seven Lections, legends from the life of the Saint, set to a simple narrative-type chant formula. Such a mode of presentation might be prone to monotony, but her fine sense of drama and subtle use of a variety of vocal tone

colours is ably supported here by a simply brilliant set of supportive improvisations by William Taylor on the clarsach. On *Cruit go nOr - Harp of Gold* by Ann Heymann (reviewed in *EMR* 117 p. 42) we heard one interpretation of the role of the clarsach in the performance of material associated with St Brigit - here we have an alternative, and to my mind infinitely more compelling option. The final jewel in the crown of this continuously engaging project is the translation work of Dr Jamie Reid-Baxter, who picks his way with elegance through the notorious obscurities of these ecclesiastical texts.

D.James Ross

*Felix Femina: Scottish Medieval Polyphony* Canty, Rebecca Tavener dir, William Taylor clarsach & symphonie 78' 01" Gaudeamus CCD GAU 360

While the MS now known in deference to its Scottish provenance as the St Andrews Music Book was traditionally regarded as a seminal source of Continental polyphony in the Notre Dame style, it is now widely accepted that the music in at least one section was probably composed in Scotland, and is therefore of particular interest. A country which once boasted a church music tradition second to none, but which in the mid-sixteenth century suffered a conflagration of choirbooks which left only the tiniest fragments of this magnificent culture extant, should rejoice all the more in these important relics; but until relatively recently little interest was taken in this distinctive body of work. The work of Canty and Cappella Nova in resurrecting the music of Robert Carver and Robert Johnson as well as earlier chant for St Columba and St Kentigern has been complemented by performances of this remarkable indigenous polyphony, and the present reconstruction of Ladymass and a selection of other music from the manuscript is presented with imagination and a high degree of technical competence by the ladies' voices, occasionally accompanied by the clarsach and symphonie of William Taylor, who also takes on the role of instrumental soloist. We know that a number of Scottish religious establishments possessed instruments such as those employed here, and what more natural repertoire for churchmen and women to draw upon than the chant and polyphony they were so familiar with from their daily duties? The singing here is beautifully crafted, and there are ample measures here of the passion so singularly

lacking in the rather nebulously sung Scottish Ladymass by Red Byrd on Hyperion CDA 67299 - incidentally such is the wealth of material in the St Andrews Music Book that there is virtually no duplication between the two versions. In bringing this exceptional early Scottish music to wider attention, Canty also usefully remind us that a substantial percentage of the singers who originally wove it into their elaborate round of services were, of course, women.

D.James Ross

*Libre Vermell* Capella de Ministrers, Cor de la Generalitat Valenciana, Pilar Esteben S, Lambert Climent T, Charles Magraner dir 67' 16" Licanus CDM 0201

Recordings of the little red book written to provide pilgrims to the black Madonna at Montserrat some decent and pious songs are by no means rare, but this one has the best booklet that I can remember (though you may need a magnifying glass to read it and the quinquilingual texts). Rather than making the music sound as folksy as possibly, this pays heed to the instruction to use the songs 'with honesty and restraint', though there are some vulgar low noises on the first track. It sounds a bit like a cathedral choir outing with the bishop joining the party - a welcome change from vulgar rumbustiousness, though probably won't sell as well. CB

*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell: motets and songs from 13th-century France* Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 46' 26" Hyperion Helios CDH55273 ££ (rec 1990)

*The Spirits of England and France: music for court and church from the later Middle Ages* Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 62' 40" Hyperion Helios CDH55281 ££ (rec 1994)

*The Castle of Fair Welcome: courtly songs of the later 15th century* Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 47' 04" Hyperion Helios CDH55274 ££ (rec 1985)

Another three reminders of the Gothic miracle. These are slightly mellower than the three reissues reviewed last October: two are more recent, and the earliest of these recordings has the most modern and mellifluous repertoire. The 15th-century courtly songs, however, don't relapse into relying on beauty more than content as in many more recent recordings: one is more aware of the individuality of the piece rather than just

relaxing into the sound. But I do recommend that these be listened to a few tracks at a time: that will help each piece to have its impact, and however much one enjoys the music, attention does wander. The discs don't contain the jokes with which the director gave the audience breaks! CB

*Trobar: chansons d'amour de la Vierge à la Dame* Beatus, Jean-Paul Rigaud 65' 19" Alpha 522

This contains a mixture of the early polyphony surviving at St Martial de Limoges and chansons by Bernart de Ventadorn from the *Manuscrit du Roy*. In both cases, the notation is considerably later than the composition. 'For this reason we have chosen not to interpret the pieces from these manuscripts in too literal a fashion, but to move closer to the time when works were passed on by oral tradition rather than being written down'. If one were sceptical, one could say that the performers have moved from the partially known to the completely unknown. But the extant notation gives too few parameters to guide a performance anyway, so imagination is needed, and the proof of the pudding is a very satisfying repast. CB

#### 15<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

*Joye: Les plaintes de Gilles Bins dit Binchois (1460)* Graindelavoix, Björn Schmelzer 73' 52" Glossa GCD P32102

It is good to have a disc of Binchois's chansons: we usually hear them in anthologies, less frequently than the familiarity of the name would make us expect. When I first played this, I was more convinced than I am after the reminder of how Gothic Voices performed this sort of music (see previous page). Not that everything is quite as slow as the first track, but there is a leaning towards beautification and not letting the non-melismatic parts of the texts sound at something approaching spoken tempo. Some of the 'orchestrations' are too elaborate for my taste – our regular readers will be aware of my suspicions. But in a very different way from my ideal, this is well done, with some interesting voices. The disc ends with Ockeghem's *Déploration*, the outstanding performance here, with a moving intensity. CB

*The Ockeghem Collection* The Clerks' Group, Edward Wickham 379' (5 CDs) (rec. 1994-1999) Gaudeamus CD GAX 550 £

How the world changes: to think that you can go to a shop (or email your favourite supplier) and order a set of recordings of 11 Ockeghem Masses and a Requiem, along with various motet, on five discs at a cost of a fiver each would have been unbelievable fifty years ago. You could have found scores of the masses in libraries, but any recording you might find would have been pretty painful. These, however, are mellifluous: in fact, a bit too mellifluous if one is feeling critical. It's just a bit too easy to enjoy the sound and ignore the rather more challenging element of the music. If you want a guide to a deeper experience, try Fabrice Fitch's *Johannes Ockeghem: Masses and Models* (Paris, 1997) CB

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

*Allegri Miserere; Palestrina Missa Papae Marcelli* The Tallis Scholars, Peter Phillips 76' 05" Gimell CDGIM 041 + Palestrina *Stabat mater* a8 *Tu es Petrus* a6

This is a new recording of some of the group's most requested works and it bears all their familiar hallmarks of finely blended and committed singing with excellent tuning, measured tempi and a strong sense of tactus. The overall standard here is, if anything, higher than on the earlier recordings which is a tribute to Phillips and his long-standing team. The CD starts with the standard 'English' version of the Allegri and finishes with the same version lightly ornamented by soprano Deborah Roberts who has developed them. There is little difference between the two: the ornamentations are rather tentative, if tasteful, and are confined to the first soprano of the four-voice choir. There is a lost opportunity here for some real *abbellimenti* based on the original Allegri or on some of the surviving 18<sup>th</sup>-century versions of the piece – and not just in the top part; and these don't follow up the work of Hugh Keyte for the Taverner Consort and Westminster Abbey (though the Abbey recording only has the parallel Bai setting). The liner notes do not admit to the dubious provenance of the version of the piece performed here and the issues surrounding the *abbellimenti*. I also find it odd on a recording to have the four-voice choir way off in the distance so one can't hear them properly: in the Cappella Sistina, all the singers would have been together in the *cantoria*. The Palestrina pieces get magisterial performances, especially the *Stabat mater*, which is very beautifully sung indeed. Noel O'Regan

*The Book of Madrigals: Secular vocal music of the European Renaissance by Dowland, Josquin, Banchieri, Senfl etc* Amarcord 64' 52" Raum Klang Edition Apollo RK ap 10106

This is a pleasingly-sung collection of mostly well-known part-songs ('madrigal' is too specific a term, not appropriate for three of the composers named in the title). The 'well-known' is testified by the presence of ten overlaps with my Oxford UP anthology *Madrigals and Partsongs*, and ten (with three overlaps) are also in the *King's Singers' Madrigals* (which I edited but didn't select) – I'm not complaining, just pointing to the existence of a standard modern repertoire. There is an enormous variety – of language, number of voices, mood and style. Our Scottish readers will welcome *Remember me my deir*, and there is more from Spain than such anthologies usually contain – though mostly rather light in tone. An excellent present for friends who don't yet know renaissance part-songs, and good background listening. CB

*Music for the Court of Maximilian II* Cinquecento (Terry Wey, Jakob Huppmann, Tore Tom Denys, Thomas Künne, Tim Scott Whiteley, Ulfried Staber AATBarB) 67' 35" Hyperion CDA67579

*Galli Missa Ascendetis post filium; Lassus Pacis amans; Massens Discessu; Vaet Ascendetis post filium, Conditor alme siderum, Continuo lacrimumans, O quam gloriosum,*

Although I'd read Milton Steinhardt's book on Vaet's motets in the mid-'60s, I only realised the power of his music when we sang a few of them at the Beauchamp summer-school last year; the favourable impression is reinforced by this disk. The most substantial piece is the mass by Antonius Galli, a musician and cleric at Maximilian's court – at his death in 1565 he had just been appointed court preacher. His mass is based on a motet that Vaet wrote in honour of Maximilian, perhaps like the Lassus motet on his coronation as king of Bohemia in 1562. *Continuo lacrimas* is a lament on a Latin elegiac verse text on the death of Clemens non Papa in 1555/6. The six singers (from five countries) are impressive, letting the music speak clearly, though with a chamber rather than ecclesiastical sound. The pace is excellent, tactus-based without expressive interruptions. The music is richer (if the performances were less good one might say thicker) than one often hears in renaissance polyphonic anthologies: that is probably a matter of others favouring textures with trebles, and here the

countertenors are not pushed up too high. This programme of music from the 1550s and 1560s introduces excellent music that is not overshadowed by the presence of Lassus and is enjoyable for the performances as well as introducing us to some unfamiliar composers. CB

*Music from the Sistine Chapel* Allegri, Anerio, Palestrina, Marenzio The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 67' 49" Coro COR16047

F. Anerio *Ave regina a8, Magnificat II toni a8, Regina caeli laetari a8, Stabat mater a12; Allegri Christus resurgens, Missa Che fa oggi il mio solo; Marenzio Che fa oggi...; Palestrina Angelus descendit a5, Ascendit Deus a5, Assumpta est Maria a6, Ave Maria a5*

This is the repertory for the Sixteen's current Choral pilgrimage, from the Sistine Chapel's golden century (mid-16<sup>th</sup> to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century) and its three major composers. It is especially welcome to have Anerio's double-choir *Ave Regina, Regina Coeli* and *Magnificat*, all showing his individual take on that idiom. The triple-choir *Stabat mater* here is assigned to Anerio but is attributed to Palestrina in one of the Altemps partbooks (and by Haberl) and certainly sounds more like the latter here; Proske's attribution to Anerio doesn't seem to have any foundation. It is a very fine performance of that work and of some Palestrina offertory motets. Other highlights are Allegri's *Missa Che fa oggi il mio sole* with its Marenzio model and the same composer's double-choir *Christus resurgens*, both works showing how Allegri continued the choir's tradition forward to the 1640s. The 20 singers (the same number as on the Tallis Scholars' Palestrina/Allegri CD) produce a big exhilarating sound. The Sixteen have been given a more resonant recorded environment than the Tallis Scholars, better echoing that of the Sistine Chapel. Tempi are often fast, especially in tripla, and there is tremendous driving energy in many of the pieces, almost too much to bear at times (the Marenzio would have been better with solo voices). This is a very persuasive recording, and especially welcome for making available some very fine new repertory. Noel O'Regan

*Musique and Sweet Poetrie: Jewels from Europe around 1600* Emma Kirkby S, Jakob Lindberg lute 79' 32" BIS-SACD-1505

Music by Danyel, d'India, Dlugoraj, Dowland, Guédron, Huwet, R. Johnson, Schütz, etc This marvellous programme sets out to take the listener on a brief 'musical journey' of early 17th century Europe. I haven't plotted it out on a map, but one would have needed to put in a lot of

uncomfortable wagon miles to hear all of these pieces back then. The one person known to have attempted such a journey is Dowland himself, and his travelling companion (for part of the way), Gregory Huwet, is represented by a Fantasia included in Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute Lessons* of 1610. (It helps to gain some sense of perspective to remember some of the other music published that same year, including *A Muscial Banquet*).

Each group of songs by English, German, Italian, French and English composers is separated by lute solos, carefully arranged to ease the traveller from one language and musical style to another. This is a proper recital, thoughtfully planned to form a graceful arc (or circle) that one can, and should, listen to as a satisfying whole, rather than just dip into.

I can't list all of these items on this generously-timed disc, but suffice it to say that there is much that is familiar, but always worth hearing again, and some real discoveries, including Georg Schimmpfennig, along with Schütz one of the resident composers of the enlightened Moritz, Landgrave of Hesse. Guédron's *Cessez, mortels de soupirer* really is one of the loveliest songs ever penned; here we are treated to all seven verses, yet it still feels short measure.

The return to England comes with a group headed by Dowland's *Shall I strive with words to move*, and after the extended French group that precedes it, this familiar song really gives one a sense of that comforting feeling we all experience whenever we arrive back home, enriched by what we have just seen and heard abroad. And what a welcome home this great song is, reminding us that Dowland and Danyel really were the equal of (I'm tempted to say 'better than') any contemporary songwriter abroad.

This whole recital is so carefully planned and paced that it's hard to fault it in any way. (The only disappointment is the booklet's terribly unflattering photo of Emma: she really looks as though she's worried that she may have left the gas on, like the lady in the Joyce Grenfell song of blessed memory). It's certainly the best lute song programme I've heard from Emma since 1985's *Time Stands Still*. Yes, the voice has changed, but it's still an experience unlike any other because of her intelligent commitment to each song, and if anything, she takes even more risks than before – and being Emma, gets away with them all, delightfully. All praise, too, for Jakob Lindberg's sensitive accompaniments and solos. He plays his restored c.1590 Rauwolf lute, a truly beautiful instrument, perfectly captured by the almost alarmingly realistic SACD sound.

As CB remarked in his review of

Emma's Dowland disc 'Honey from the Hive' (EMR 113), 'Who sings lute songs better than Emma?' Who indeed? Answers on a postcard, please. David Hill

## 17th CENTURY

*Biber The Mystery Sonatas* Maya Homberger vln, Camerata Kilkenny (Siobhán Armstrong hp, Sarah Cunningham gamba, Brian Feehan theorbo, Malcolm Proud kbd, Barry Guy d.bass) 127' 30" (2 CDs) Maya MCD0603

For this thoroughly excellent version of Biber's landmark set, Maya Homberger uses six violins (including two of Biber's acknowledged favourites by Stainer). For the recordings made over the course of a week in Austria, she is joined by Camerata Kilkenny, consisting of harp, gamba, theorbo, double bass and organ/ harpsichord, and what a delightful consort it is! Anyone who knows the sonatas well will be familiar with the juxtaposition of the scurrying scales and arpeggios of the *stylus phantasticus* with more stately dance movements and their *doubles*. Homberger is at her leisure with both – her virtuosity is beyond question, and she is spell-bindingly graceful in the dances or variation sets. If you don't already have the Mystery Sonatas on your shelves, this will be an excellent introduction that you will savour for years to come. BC

*Buxtehude Das Jüngste Gericht (Opera Omnia II)* Caroline Stam, Orlanda Velez Isidro, Johanenette Zomer, Robin Blake, Andreas Karasiak, Klaus Mertens SSSATB, Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir, Ton Koopman 136' 55" (2 CDs) Antoine Merchant CC72241

This is the first vocal volume in a projected *Opera omnia* which celebrates the fact that Buxtehude died 300 years ago. It is surprising that more of the composer's music is not already available on CD. Though Christoph Wolff doubts the attribution to Buxtehude, Koopman is less sceptical. Personally, my gut feeling is that Koopman is right – who else could have written such music in Lübeck at the time and be so obscure that his (or her) name escapes even contemporary chroniclers. The music sounds very French; there are sequences of neat little airs and ensembles like a Charpentier *pastorale*. The instrumental writing (like the rest of the work, rescued from incomplete sources by Koopman) is very attractive. I'm not a great fan of the regal but understood why it was used to distinguish between characters. The history of the piece remains a mystery, but the music is thoroughly enjoyable. BC

Buxtehude *Vocal Music 1* Emma Kirkby S, John Hollaway, Manfred Kraemer *vlns*, Jaap ter Linden *gamba*, Lars Ulrik Mortensen *kbd* 72' 18" Naxos 8.557251 £ (rec 1996) BuxWV 32, 35, 38, 76, 83, 84, 95, 97, 98, 105

Recorded a decade ago, you only needs to see the names of the performers to realise that, if you don't have it already, you really must spend £5.99 and buy it. Only one of piece runs for more than ten minutes, so there is plenty of contrast in style. The funeral *Klaglied* and its four associated *Contrapunctus* of the *Fried- und freudenreiche Hinfahrt* are spread through the programme: there's a marvellous contrast between the first *Contrapunctus* (on organ) and the almost-insouciant *Was mich auf dieser Welt betrübt*. Later, Emma's so apparently-simple singing of the *Klaglied* is intensely moving without any milking of the emotion. If you have any worries how to celebrate Buxtehude's anniversary, start with this. The only fault is the absence of texts and translations. CB

Lübeck *Das Orgelwerk* (Norddeutsche Orgelmeister Vol 1) Joseph Kelemen (Huss/ Schnitger organ, SS Cosmae and Damiani, Stade, North Germany) OEHMS OC 607

see p. 20

Monteverdi *Flaming Heart* I Fagiolini, Robert Hollingworth 76'01" Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0730

This is a well-planned programme, with a mixture of ensemble madrigals, solos with instruments, and monodies. We have learnt a lot from the way Italians sing Monteverdi, but this shows the merit of some rhythmic restraint: for me, it makes the music is the more powerful. It's odd: Monteverdi gets to the essence of the word, but my first listen to this was on the familiar but frustrating road from Huntingdon to Beccles. Reading the booklet while driving isn't specifically illegal like using one's mobile, but I didn't try it; yet madrigals I did not know were so expressive and were as powerful as those whose text I understood. (My aural Italian is poor). It is also striking how specifically Monteverdi's snatches of instrumental music strike the emotions – the ritornello of *Tempo la cetera* or the six-bar Sinfonia as the Messenger in *Orfeo* creeps away to a cave to grieve. If you want only one disc of secular Monteverdi, this is the one to have; if you have the complete books, still buy this. It shows powerfully what James Weeks calls in his excellent booklet notes 'the unique expressive clarity that sets Monteverdi so far above even the greatest of his contemporaries'. I haven't mentioned the

performers: I might quibble over the odd detail, and individual items may have preferable performances elsewhere; but it's not worth making such comparisons – just enjoy. CB

Vierdanck *Capricci, Canzoni & Sonatas* Parnassi musici 67' 22" cpo 777 205-2

This lovely recording features music from the composer's second published set of instrumental music which, as well as pieces with a pedagogical purpose (duets and trios for violins in this recital), contains more capricious works in the Italian style. Although his teacher Schütz had twice recommended him for a study-visit to Italy to improve his violin and cornetto playing, the Saxon court was unable to afford such luxuries at the time. Vierdanck clearly made the most of having Carlo Farina in Dresden and his music, though perhaps also influenced by the North German/English style of the second third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, is shot through with Italian fire and invention. As usual, Parnassi musici have a ball – they can be serious enough in the more contrapuntal works, but they're certainly not afraid to let their hair down when there's a gypsy stomp in the offing – complete with strummed theorbo and ghostly *sul ponticello*! If Vierdanck is nothing more than a name to you, this will make you wonder why. BC

*Echo de Paris: Parisian Love Songs 1610-1660* Stephan van Dyck T, Private Musicke, Pierre Pitzl 53' 55" Accent ACC 24173 SACD

Music by Ballard, Bartolotti, de Bricena, Cavalli, Corbetta, L. Couperin, Foscarini, Guédron, Lambert, Moulinié, Rossi

Although the subtitle of this recital is 'Parisian Love Songs' only half the items are vocal, the rest being instrumental with ensembles of improvising plucked instruments to the fore. This can either be an effective contrast or an unseemly intrusion into the elevated world of the *air de cour*. I found it the latter and was disappointed not to hear more of Stephan van Dyck who sings the songs rather well with a real feel for both line and phrase. A better complement to his efforts is Louis Couperin's *Symphonie*, sonorous despite being for only three viols. The booklet is also a bit of a let down, the notes being mainly biographical, with few direct comments on the music or the performing style. A better survey of this vocal repertoire, the French equivalent to Dowland, is the disc by King/Heringman/Daniels (CKD 089) which was enthusiastically reviewed in these pages in both its concert and recorded forms. As

well as its musical merits it is also 50% longer than this release. David Hansell

#### LATE BAROQUE

Bach *Cantatas 16, 65, 153-4* *Cantatas for the Complete Liturgical Year*, vol. 4 Elisabeth Hermans, Petra Noskaiová, Jan Kobow, Jan Van der Crabben SATB, La Petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 61' 30" Accent ACC 25304 SACD

Kuijken here offers a group of cantatas for New Year and Epiphany, including Cantata 65 with its evocation of the Magi via a sumptuous scoring for horns, recorders and oboes da caccia plus strings and continuo. Kuijken's approach is characterised by his use of solo voices, giving lucid textures, and his strong sense of dance rhythms and metrical hierarchy. Whereas the debut discs in this series impressed me greatly, I felt there were a few rough edges here; the singers don't always attain the eloquence of Suzuki's forces, particularly in difficult movements such as the storm aria for tenor in Cantata 153 or the sweeping lines of the opening chorus of Cantata 65. Yet there also many moments to relish, notably the instrumental playing in the arias of Cantata 65. With its enquiring spirit, Kuijken's series remains one that makes the listener sit up and think; definitely worth hearing.

Stephen Rose

Bach *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I*. Luc Beauséjour hpsc'd 111' 21" (2 CDs) Naxos 8.557625-26 £

Naxos have previously had a piano '48' available. Now they have added a harpsichord version played by this French-Canadian artist, winner of many awards in his homeland and, on the basis of these discs, deserving every one of them. It is meant to be a compliment when I say that, while listening, I was hardly aware of him but was constantly aware of the rich blend of art and artifice of which this amazing music consists. All the movements are individually characterised with just a little rubato here and there to make a subtle structural point, tempi are sensible (which isn't the same as saying that they are slow), and the part playing is excellent. My first copy of WTC was an edition which clarified the more complex passages of fugues like the B flat minor by printing them in open score. With playing like this as a guide, such a resort is hardly necessary. There are, of course, endless details that might have been done differently (and in nine days of recording they probably were at one time or another) and I would have enjoyed more of the spontaneous unexpected

ornaments; but I cannot imagine any buyer of these discs being disappointed. The booklet note includes a strangely worded paragraph on temperament but does give a sense of the music's context as well as finding space for a brief comment on each piece. *David Hansell*

**Bach** *The Complete Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin Vol. 1 (BWV 101-3)*  
Jacqueline Ross 69' 14"  
Gaudeamus CD GAU 358

This first volume of Jacqueline Ross's impressive take on Bach's music for unaccompanied violin features the first two sonatas (in G minor and A minor respectively) and the first of the partitas (in B minor). Every time a new set arrives for review, one wonders what new things one can say about it that hasn't been said about literally dozens of performances that have gone before. Actually, I enjoy Ross's approach for most of the time. I particularly enjoyed how she sustained the final notes of movements, much in the way that an organist holds on the last note of a piece almost too long – in this case, the chord is long gone, but the most important note hangs delicately in the air. Just occasionally I thought some notes in the B minor *doubles* were snatched, but that is a very, very minor quibble for over and hour of exceptional violin playing. *BC*

**Bach** *Six Solo Cello Suites* David Kennedy 142' 07" (2 CDs)  
Signum Classics SIGCD091

Ordinarily this modern cello recording would not feature in these pages, but there is no denying David Kennedy's intimate understanding of these fantastic pieces and his ability to convey his interpretation of their inner meaning. He plays the sixth suite on a four-string cello with no apparent difficulty (Bach had envisaged the use of the more exotic five-stringed instrument for the piece). Unaffected, honest musicianship at its best. *BC*

**Bach** *Brandenburg Concertos 1-4* I Barocchisti, Diego Fasolis 51' 51"  
Arts 47715-8 SACD  
**Bach** *Brandenburg Concertos 5-6, Triple Concerto BWV 1044* I Barocchisti, Diego Fasolis 54' 28"  
Arts 47716-8 SACD

These are the some of the fastest Brandenburgs I've ever heard. In the fast movements I barocchisti chose such brisk tempi that the solo lines are rendered as shimmering filigree over the underlying harmonies. Some of the solo playing is stunningly fast, such as the violin in the

finale of Brandenburg no. 4 or the harpsichord in the first movement of no. 5. This can lead to a loss of detail – Bach's music becomes sheer exhilaration, with its rich and knotty texture minimised. Yet I barocchisti also find a lovely poise in the dance movements at the end of no. 1. On the whole, though, this set is distinctive for its athletic tempi. *Stephen Rose*

*Stephen sent this covering note with his review: 'Imogen Katherine Rose was born at home (as planned) on 20 Feb weighing 7lb 2oz, and life since has been a rollercoaster, rewarding but exhausting. Brandenburg 3 in the I barocchisti recording calms her effectively, though!'*

**Bach** *Die Kunst der Fuge* Terje Winge (organ in Kongsberg Church, 1765)  
Simax PSC 1243

**Bach** *The Art of Fugue* Sébastien Guillot  
hpscd 68' 33"  
Naxos 8.557796 £

**Bach** *Die Kunst der Fuge* Fugue in C of Dog Aurelia Saxophone, Bach Quartet 123' 39" (2 CDs)  
Challenge CC72148

Those who find Bach a serious composer, obsessed only with contrapuntal intricacy will generally find that *The Art of Fugue* confirms their worst fears. And indeed, it might well be true that this is the least 'listener oriented' music he ever wrote (although it contains many echoes of 'real' live music, strangely transfigured into contrapuntal abstraction) and one may even imagine that it carries on regardless of whether one is present or not. The current selection of recordings give a good range of approaches to suit those who are broadly sympathetic to this side of Bach. Terje Winge's, on the beautiful, if heavily restored, Cloger Organ in Kongsberg, Norway (1765) may well appeal to those who want to hear the notes as resembling the abstraction of the score as closely as possible. The playing is immaculate but devoid of much that is not implied directly by the notation; if this is mechanical, the sound is alluring, as if indeed emanating from some other-worldly realm, with occasional touches of human presence (such as the courtly rhythms in *Contrapunctus VI 'In Stylo Franceso'*). Sébastien Guillot, on harpsichord, could not adopt the same approach ('straight', literal performance on the harpsichord is surely even more deadly than on the organ?), so there is much more local expression in placing notes and creating lines that might evoke singing style. This performance is based on Bach's manuscript version of the collection, so the order is rather different (and some of the details), and perhaps

well suited to keyboard performance. The order is different again (following neither of those from the Bach sources) in the performance by the Aurelia Saxophone Quartet. This obviously gives the greatest range of expression, albeit far removed from historical performance; but the interpretation is unfailingly intelligent, combining both the dead-pan and more gestural approaches of the other recordings. The dynamics, with some strange swells and diminuendos rather resemble the effect of a harmonium (now, that's an idea!). The recording is accompanied by 15 newly commissioned fugues by a very wide range of composers throughout the world. These provide various reactions to Bach's legacy, including ignoring fugue as a discipline and replacing it with the courtship of two dogs (Dimitri Nicolau's 'Fugue in C of Dog'). Most haunting is perhaps Wijnand van Klaveren's fugue which takes the last, unfinished phrase of *Contrapunctus 15*, as Bach seemingly dies in mid-flow, making this together with its evocative silence the theme for a four-minute piece, complete with inversion and augmentation. *John Butt*

**Handel** *Concerti grossi op. 3; Sonata a5* Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr Harmonia Mundi HMU 807415 68' 04"

This is a fine performance, brilliant, yet without the feeling that the musicians are aware of all the other recordings and feel they must outdo them in every respect. Quite relaxed music-making, in fact, which I like. Whether you need to buy it is another matter. Personally, I'd rather hear these concertos scattered in anthologies: op. 3 doesn't have the coherence of a 'work' that justifies treating op. 6 as an entity. It will certainly be an asset when Handel's orchestral music is completed (this is the first disc in the project) and it becomes part of a cheap boxed set. I'd recommend it to someone new to the pieces, but doubt whether the old hand will feel compelled to buy it. I was, however, very pleased with the fill-up, the *Sonata a5*: it was my favourite Handel piece fifty years ago, from a Classics Club 10" LP, and I think that when I checked my edition at the British Library some years ago, it was the last time I handled a Handel MS rather than a microfilm. *CB*

£ = bargain price (up to £6.00)  
££ = mid-price

We assume that other CDs are full price, but this issue was finalised too late to send to Peter Berg to check

*Handel Floridante* Marijana Mijanovic  
*Floridante*, Vito Priante *Oronte*, Joyce  
 DiDonato *Elmira*, Sharon Rostorf-Zamir  
*Rossane*, Roberta Invernizzi *Timante*,  
 Riccardo Novaro *Coralbo* Il Complesso  
 Barocco, Alan Curtis 163' 42"  
 Archiv 477 6566

see p. 21

*Handel Fernando, rè di Castiglia* Law-  
 renze Zazzo *Fernando*, Veronica Cangemi  
*Elvida*, Marianne Pizzolato *Irabella*, Max  
 Emmanuel Cencic *Sancio*, Filippo Adami  
*Dionisio*, Antonio Abete *Altomaro*, Neal  
 Banerjee *Alfonso*, Il Complesso Barocco,  
 Alan Curtis (2 CDs)

Virgin Classics

see p. 21

*Handel arr Gibley: Six Solos for the Recorder transcribed for the Violoncello with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord*  
 Tatty Theo vlc, Carolyn Gibley hpscd  
 Avie AV2118 55' 58

HWV 360, 362, 365, 367a, 369, 377

*EMR* is perhaps not the place one would expect to read a rave review of something as blatantly inauthentic and unoriginal as these transcriptions of Handel's recorder sonatas, but I'm afraid that is just what you are about to do! If I hadn't played all of these pieces in my youth and come to know and love every note, I would have been surprised to learn that they weren't originally written for cello, so convincing are Tatty Theo and Carolyn Gibley's accounts of them. I was particularly impressed that the harpsichord was more than able to compensate for the lack of a stringed bass – the cello being for the most part in its tenor register, the ear somehow makes subconscious amends, and it's all beautifully balanced. I hope this does not mean that we'll have a follow-up version of the Marcello recorder sonatas – on second thoughts, that's definitely another rich source for the Theo/Gibley partnership to mine! In the meantime, please do enjoy this unusual and unexpected delight! BC

*Lotti Vesper Psalms* Barbara Christina Steude, Annekathrin Laabs, David Erler, Tobias Berndt SSAB, Sächsisches Vocalensemble, Batzdorfer Hofkapelle, Matthias Jung 68' 08"  
 cpo 777 180-2

Antonio Lotti will known to most *EMR* readers on account of the various settings of the Crucifixus that periodically feature in choral anthologies and choir recitals. Has anyone ever heard the masses they come from? Be that as it may, Lotti was clearly much more than a one-trick pony, and this fine CD from cpo confirms his great skills as a composer of church music. There are a few problems with the booklet note (the wrong number of singers are

credited with some movements, for example), but that takes nothing away from either the performers or the composer. The 'Donec ponam' from the *Dixit Dominus* setting is scored for three altos, three basses and strings – it is an absolute gem of a movement. Elsewhere there are hints of where Zelenka got some of his ideas, and there are snatches of that Crucifixus; but this is a treat lasting almost 70 minutes, and the disc is among my favourites in this issue. BC

*Marais Suite d'un Goût Etranger* Jordi Savall etc. 104' 38" (2 CDs)  
 Alia Vox AVSA 9851

Fans of Jordi Savall, and I am one, will know to expect a degree of 'gilding the lily', but this surely is the era for which the term must have been coined. The percussion skills of Pedro Estevan may not be called for in the score, but are introduced with discretion that enlivens but does not over-garnish Marais' brilliant ideas. The continuo team: Pierre Hantaï (harpsichord), Philippe Pierlot (bass viol) Rolf Lislevand, Xavier Diaz-Latorre (guitar and theorbo) Andrew Lawrence-King (harp), provides great variety and vigour to the accompaniment. Savall's playing – expressive, impulsive, very beautiful – and his gorgeous sound, make listening to this record a continual pleasure. The music itself is endlessly beautiful and inventive. Savall avoids the (spurious) practice of plucking, and instead seeks the full variety of bow strokes and articulation, even including a brilliant spiccato in *La Sauterelle* ('Grasshopper'). To perform the entire 'Suite' as a unity is an idea I found surprising to contemplate, but completely convincing in performance. The key changes from group to group are mostly 'normal': E major to G to C to a minor &c. Right at the beginning however it is deliberately abrupt. The opening movements in E flat major change without transition to e minor, and it does work, given theatrical impact by the change in continuo for the *Gavotte* in E flat (harpsichord with buff stop) to *subito tutti* (including tambourine) for the *rondo* theme in e minor of *Feste Champêtre*. Throughout, the 'orchestral' continuo supports the musical ideas superbly. A highlight is the performance of *Le Labyrinthe*, the masterpiece of this book, which is performed with great energy and understanding. The key changes here are cunningly contrived, some by the trickery of enharmonic change, others through modulation of key or mode. Its matter-of-fact ut-re-mi theme gives rise to a virtual compendium of style and expression, bow stroke and

mood, including some wonderfully poignant *plainte*-like episodes. It's a very long single movement (11') and its concluding *Chaconne* – one of Marais' most beautiful – is very moving. Of course there is the brilliant rapid playing which takes your breath away, and in *La Fougade* the second viol player has to (and does) match it. Marais warns in his preface that this suite was composed to 'exercise the ability of those who do not like easy pieces', and it does just that. Two discs with a total of 104' of music may make this seem expensive, but it's well worth it.

Robert Oliver

*Marchand Livre de pièces de clavecin*, 1754 Mario Martinoli 54' 55"  
 Olive Music om 008

Louis Marchand published no music composed after 1710 and died in 1732, so how is it that there is a 1754 *livre*? The answer is that the discovery in 2003 and subsequent investigation of a mid-18<sup>th</sup> century manuscript source has revealed a previously unknown suite in C minor that can with reasonable certainty be ascribed to him. The music is certainly of more than passing interest with the quirky *Menuet* and *Badinage en rondeau* being especially engaging and the *Chaconne* impressive. The remainder of the recital is of works for which the manuscript seems to be the only source including music by Daquin and Forqueray. The strengths of Mário Martinoli's playing are his variety of arpeggiation and his interpretation and realisation of the ornaments. Less convincing is some of the *inégalité*, particularly when the tempo is slow, though the tone of the 1769 Taskin copy is ample compensation. The booklet is bedevilled by several oddities in the English translation but does include a full description of the manuscript, its contents and history. This is an interesting and well-presented release. David Hansell

*Mattheson Suites* Cristiano Holtz hpscd  
 Ramée RAM 060574' 35"

A well-known name by virtue of his many writings, here Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) has a chance to shine as a composer. The publication from which this music comes is a collection of 12 suites which appeared in London in 1714. In structure, they follow the usual French suite pattern with the addition of a prelude of some kind and, sometimes, a double to the Allemande and Courante. The recital includes three complete suites and extracts from four others thus giving a varied and rounded impression of their character as well as creating a satisfying programme. Mattheson's keyboard idiom

is a blend of conventional style brisé, rigorous German counterpoint and moments of unpredictable fantasy: the gigue at the end of the D minor suite was the last thing I expected to hear after the previous six movements. Cristiano Holtz's playing is very clean and he allows the music space to breathe. Tempos are sensible if sometimes a little unexciting and he uses the full resources of a double manual instrument to colour the music, though not to excess. This is an interesting exploration of an unfamiliar niche of the repertoire. *David Hansell*

**Tartini Violin Concertos** Ariadne Daskalakis *vln*, Cologne Chamber Orchestra, Helmut Müller-Brühl 73'05  
Naxos 8.570222 £  
D.28, 50, 80, 96, 125

I have written enough reviews of recordings by Helmut Müller-Brühl and the Cologne Chamber Orchestra for regular readers of *EMR* to know that they are among the leading modern chamber orchestras who have embraced the principles of HIP. Here they accompany violinist Ariadne Daskalakis in five Tartini concertos, including two that appear on CD for the first time (D.28 in D and D.50 in E). She produces a beautifully clear tone from her 1769 Guadagnini with a 'Tartini bridge' and a Dodd bow dated c. 1800. Googling 'Tartini bridge' failed to deliver a single hit, so that will have to remain a mystery, as the Daskalakis's own website provides no information. Whatever it is, she negotiates Tartini's most demanding writing with ease – and there's more than enough time for elegance and grace! At this price, it would be wrong to miss this excellent disc. *BC*

**Telemann Alto Cantatas** Marta Infante, Ensemble Fontegara, Raúl Fontegara  
Enchiridion EN 2017 75' 22"  
TWV I: 118, 363, 448, 804b, 1044, 1538, 1584

It is, I think, a measure of the growing confidence of Spanish early musicians that, having for a long time concentrated on presenting the neglected repertoire of their own country (with local government support), they are now branching out to tackle the mainstream – and it would be difficult to choose more broadly appealing music than Telemann's cantatas for voice, melody instrument and continuo, *Der Harmonischer Gottesdienst*. This enjoyable CD presents six of the cantatas with violin (some for the first time on disc, I'm informed) by mezzo Marta Infante and the Ensemble Fontegara, directed from the organ by Raúl Mallavíbarrena. Three of the cantatas are for those random Sundays

after Trinity, but there are also works for Passion Sunday, the third days after Pentecost and for Epiphany. Infante has a nicely full, yet fresh voice, coping well with the often convoluted texts and well matched by Andoni Mercero the violinist and the continuo team of team, archlute and organ. If you associate this set with cantatas for soprano, recorder and continuo, this will make to think again! It's delightful. *BC*

**Telemann Bass Cantatas** Klaus Mertens B (+ Liesbeth Hermans, Marleen Schampaert, Joáí Sebastião SAT), Il Gardellino Accent ACC 24167 68' 59"  
TWV I: 350, 529, 724, 928; trios TWV 42: d4, 42: g5

This is the second CD I have reviewed in the past few years of Telemann's church music featuring the bass-baritone voice. The four cantatas that comprise the first part of the CD consist of two chorales (one at either end) and two recitative-aria pairs. The chorales are performed by a well-balanced solo quartet with doubling instruments. The arias throughout the sequence are melodious and memorable, Telemann's penchant for word-painting never far from the surface. Klaus Mertens excels in this repertoire and he is beautifully supported by Il Gardellino. They round off the CD with two of the composer's wonderful trio sonatas, which are hardly new to the catalogue but which can rarely have been so well performed. Let's hope that we get to hear more Telemann church music from this ensemble. *BC*

**Telemann Ouverture for Recorder** [TWV 55: a2], **Fantasias** [TWV 40: 1, 4, 9], **Concerto for Recorder & Viola da gamba** [TWV 52: a2] Julien Martin, Capriccio Stravagante, Skip Sempé 61' 19"  
Paradiso PA0002

When I found this CD in one of Clifford's packages my heart sank – not another pretty boy recorder player flogging the same old horses... In the event though, I was in for a revelation; while it would, of course, have been far better to have explored less well-known repertoire, there is no mistaking the fact that Julien Martin is an outstanding recorder player and I imagine that, in those dark days when I actually want to listen to the A minor suite or the A minor concerto with obbligato gamba, these will be the performances I will reach for. The three fantasias that are sandwiched between the 'orchestral' works (music played one-to-a-part can be quite difficult to describe) are the real eye-opener; I've played and heard all of these pieces in concerts and on many discs before, but here Martin's

deeply resonant voice-flute and his phrasing are a delight. Just one half star knocked off the rave review for the interview-style booklet note and the lack of TWV numbers. *BC*

**Vivaldi chiuroscuro** Claire Guimond *fl*, Mathieu Lussier *bsn*, Arion 66' 59"  
early-music.com EMCCD-7764  
RV 428, 439, 440, 484, 493, 497, 503

This is one of my discs of the month. While there was nothing wrong with the Naxos recording reviewed below, Mathieu Lussier (and Claire Guimond on flute) really bring a vitality and panache that goes beyond virtuosity. Arion is a very fine early ensemble from Canada and their recent recordings have marked a gradual rise to the absolute heights of period instrument performance. This disc includes four very different bassoon concertos, two works for solo flute and finally a work that combines both of those solo instruments – yet another incarnation of *La notte*. This is Vivaldi on the edge – there's a sense of excitement and raw energy that almost makes one think that this is music you're hearing for the first time. I have no hesitation in recommending this to all our readers. *BC*

**Vivaldi Bassoon Concertos** 4 Tamás Benkócs *bsn*, Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia, Béla Drahos 57' 26"  
Naxos 8.557829 £  
RV 470, 477, 481, 485, 494, 499

This is modern instrument Vivaldi at its best. Tamás Benkócs, the soloist in this fourth volume of the Naxos series, is a breathtaking virtuoso – some of the passagework is so fast, I doubt if I could even keep up on the violin! There are six varied works in the recital and the Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia under Béla Drahos do a typically excellent job of accompanying and supporting Benkócs. If you want to own quality performances of all 39 of Vivaldi's bassoon concertos, start collecting this set. *BC*

**Vivaldi Amor sacro: motetti** Simone Kermes S, Venice Baroque Orchestra, Andrea Marcon 67' 06"  
In furore RV 626, In turbato mare RV 627, Nulla in mundo RV 630, Sum in medio tempestatum RV 632

My first reaction to the performances on this recording was not very good. The faster movements sometimes seemed to rush (more on account of the instrumentalists than the singer) and Simone Hermes seemed more at home in the lyrical passages where her beautiful cantabile style is best displayed, while in those livelier movements, she just didn't

seem completely at ease. To top it all, the frankly tacky marketing on the cover (a garish pink label declaring the recital 'a vocal Four Seasons') struck a tone unbecoming the fine company that is Deutsche Grammophon. I know times change and that the market demands packaging that catches the eye, but I sorely regret this dumbing down of the early music world. With repeated listening I came to appreciate the disc more; however, it will not displace the recent re-release by Susie LeBlanc from the top of this particular pile. BC

Vivaldi *Concerti per piccolo* Jean-Louis Beaumadier *picc, fl* Orchestre national de France, Pierre Rampal 73' 49" Calliope CAL 3630 ££ (rec 1979) + Telemann Fantasies for *fl 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12*

I wondered whether it was appropriate to have included this in Brian's batch: his comment (in red) was: 'I'm not reviewing this – it's awful with a capital S'. BC

Weiss *Sonatas 14 & 20 for Lute & Mandolin; Johann Hoffmann Sonatas in G & d for Mandolin and Archlute* Duo Ahlert & Schwab 65' 55" Naxos 8.557716 £

The CD opens with a sober Prelude by Silvius Leopold Weiss (1687-1750), ably played by Birgit Schwab on baroque lute. For subsequent movements she is joined by Daniel Ahlert on 6-course mandoline. The sound may not have been what Weiss intended, but it works extremely well. In the notes they argue their case that Weiss would have met mandolin players at Dresden. The lute not only provides a full, resonant accompaniment, but also acts as a second treble to the mandolin.

Johann (or Giovanni) Hoffmann (1770-1814) was a virtuoso mandolin player who was one of many composers writing for the 6-course mandolin c.1800 in Vienna. The two sonatas on the CD were written for 'mandolin and bass', perhaps with a cello in mind, but using an archlute for the accompaniment is remarkably effective. The sound is brighter and more cheerful than the darker sound of the baroque lute used to accompany the Weiss pieces, yet still has low rich bass notes available. According to the brief notes, the archlute was specified by Giovanni Francesco Giuliani, a contemporary of Hoffmann, so it was still being played at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Hoffmann's music exploits the full potential of the mandolin, covering a wide compass, fast scalic passages and dazzling arpeggios, mostly single-line melodies, but with occasional chords. A noteworthy

showpiece is the charming *Andante con Variazione* from the Sonata in D minor, played with suitable panache.

The Duo Ahlert & Schwab have been playing together since 1992, which shows in the tightness of their ensemble. The precision of Ahlert's mandolin playing is particularly impressive. Stewart McCoy

#### CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *La Folia and other works* The Purcell Quartet 57' 19" (rec 1986) Hyperion Helios CDH55232

*La Folia* Wq118/9, *Sinfonia* a3 H585, *Trio Sonatas* in Bb Wq 158 & c *Sanguineus & Melancholicus* Wq 161/1, *gamba sonata* in D Wq 137

This is a well-deserved re-issue of a 1998 recording of some interesting and unusual chamber music, all of which (apart from the gamba sonata) was unfamiliar to me. The opening *Sinfonia* is a delightfully attractive three-movement trio sonata. I looked in vain in the notes, written by a certain Clifford Bartlett, for some information on this work.\* These sleeve notes do, however, consist of a lengthy discussion of the unusual central work of the disc, the *trio sonata* in C Minor entitled *Sanguineus & Melancholicus*, an interesting discursive work where the two violins take opposing roles, reuniting in the final *Allegro*. Robert Woolley gives us twelve variations on the *La Folia* theme for solo harpsichord. At first I felt that the performance was over-reliant on changes of registration though, played on a copy of the three-manual Haas instrument, I can see why the need to display as many of its organ-like functions as possible was so tempting! These are an interesting set on the well-known theme, freer in their use of the harmonic pattern than those by earlier composers. Richard Boothby gives a fine account of Bach's only known gamba sonata, and the disc concludes with a genial work, with an expressive, almost Mozartian muted slow movement.

Ian Graham-Jones

\* I filled my allotted space with my account of the programme sonata – at least, that's my excuse. Ian sent the following comment with his review, prefaced 'not for inclusion': I couldn't resist including it. CB

The *Sang & Mel* sonata reminded me of something I picked up when working on the music of Alice Mary Smith (1839-1884): a string quartet in C minor by H. F. Schroeder performed in 1862 entitled *The Life of a Musician*, in which the movements were called 'Perseverance and Progress – Anxiety – Hope – Despair – Success and Thanksgiving'. As the reviewer said: 'these ideas would ever be failures at the hands of the greatest masters ... and are better left alone'.

Ian added the following after I told him I would include his comment.

The quartet in C Minor was performed at the Marylebone Institution at a Musical Society of London trial performance of chamber works on 13 November 1862. No information on H. F. Schroeder (unless he was the violinist Hermann Schroeder (b.1843), but I haven't found any record of his being in London. To have works performed, composers had to be vetted and elected as fellows or associates (in Alice Mary Smith's case she was a 'Lady Associate'). Smith had her first Stringed Quartet in D tried at this concert. 'Her quartet showed a masculine amount of musical learning, with much feminine grace, elegance and feeling.' (The Daily News, 13.11.1862).

Balbastre *Pièces de clavecin en manuscrit* Jean-Patrice Brosse hpscd 58' 06" Pierre Veranay PV 707021

I have been consistently enthusiastic about this artist's recordings of the post-Couperin clavecinistes and am not going to change my mind now. Even if the series is now in the throes of sweeping up the odds and ends, it still offers music of interest and stylistic variety. Two of the pieces even bear the neutral and classical-sounding designation *Andante* and another is a *Romance*. However there is also plenty of descriptive music in the best French tradition with *Canonade* and *Marche guerrière* giving J-PB yet another opportunity to treat his trusty 1774 Kroll instrument anything but delicately. His Robbins Landon-esque knowledge of the music and its context are again in evidence in the booklet which interested readers can supplement either with his book *Le Clavecin des Lumières* or by a visit to [jeanpatrice-brosse.com](http://jeanpatrice-brosse.com). David Hansell

Franz Benda *Violin Sonatas* Anton Steck vln, Christian Rieger hpscd 69' 13" cpo 777 214-2

On previous recordings by Anton Steck, I have had problems more with the provenance of the repertoire than his playing, which has always been virtuosic if slightly stringent in tone. Here he and his colleague Christian Rieger are absolutely at home in six excellent sonatas by Franz Benda. Where many baroque fiddlers might fear to tread (not the Libby Wallfisch, etc., of this world, of course!), Steck goes with effortless ease – I'm convinced that some of the notes he plays (with the mostly devilish rapidity and string crossing) are amongst the highest I have ever heard with such clarity. Benda must have amazed his contemporaries. I look forward to hearing more of this repertoire (perhaps some Gottlieb Graun or Johann Wilhelm Hertel sonatas next?) from Steck and co. BC

**Boccherini Cello Sonatas** Richard Lester, David Watkin vlc, Chi-Chi-Nwanoku d/bass 67'30" (rec 1994) Hyperion Helios CDH55219 G2, 4, 10, 17, 565

Although a re-issue of the recording of 1994, these dazzlingly virtuosic sonatas are five of the very best of Boccherini's 40 or so. Some may be known to cellists who may have been brought up on the old Augener editions of these sonatas, and the B flat sonata is more recognisable in its later reincarnation as the cello concerto in the same key. There is no keyboard accompaniment on this recording, just with a second cello or – in the case of two sonatas – with double bass. With the fuller texture of passages with multiple stopping, the keyboard is not needed, and the clarity of the texture is all the clearer for its absence. The talent of this remarkable cellist composer is captured well in these excellent, stylish performances. *Ian Graham-Jones*

**Dittersdorf Sinfonias A6, D6m Eb 9** Lisbon Metropolitan Orchestra, Alvaro Cassuto 61'56" Naxos 8.570198 £

Here is a welcome addition to the skimpy discography of Carl Ditters: three strongly contrasted sinfonias, played by an orchestra I have not hitherto experienced, under a conductor whom likewise I'm meeting for the first time. If there is no great distinction here, either in the music or the performances, the results are certainly pleasing: there are moments of scratchy ensemble in the *Allegro* of the big Eb piece; elsewhere fresh wind playing and generally precise string playing are predominant. The earliest of these pieces is the one in A major of c1768; easily the grandest is the one in Eb (c1782), though D major one (1788) is quite rich. People who still associate Dittersdorf with a jokey parlour game played by the authors of *The Record Guide* will have their regard for the composer's originality and worth enhanced by this well-recorded issue, which contains a useful note by Allan Badley, whose editions are used.

*Peter Branscombe*

**Joseph Haydn Symphony 76 in Eb; Mozart Flute Concerto K. 313, Symphony 35 K. 385 Haffner Orchestra Libera Classica, Hidemi Suzuki cond, Masahiro Arita fl 74'24"** Arte dell' arco TDK-ADO20

This concert took place in the same location as the all-Mozart birthday concert two days earlier, which is reviewed below. A stolid, workmanlike account of

Haydn's relatively unfamiliar 76<sup>th</sup> symphony introduces the programme, distinguished by sensitive wind playing in the trio, and some welcome fun in the finale. The flute concerto receives a poised, fluent performance from Masahiro Arita, and the 'Haffner' Symphony and the March (labelled as an encore) are strongly characterized. Although this too is a live recording, we hear no applause until the close of the concert. *Peter Branscombe*

**Michael Haydn Vocal & Instrumental Works** Ex Tempore, Florian Heyerick, Academia Palatina, Marcolini Quartett Et'cetera Klara KTC 4020  
*Ave Regina* MH 140, *Missa tempore quadragesimae* MH 553, *Christmas Matins Responsoria* MH639, *Divertimento in A* HMM299, *Sinfonia in Eb* MH 340

Here is a striking disc of unfamiliar works by Michael Haydn which deserves the warmest of welcomes. The well-chosen programme contains a mass setting of 1794 (4-part choir and organ), a symphony of 1783, an *Ave Regina* (1770), a divertimento for string quartet (c1781), and a set of responsaries (1796) that is accompanied by two violins and organ. The performers are absolutely first class and historically aware – no expense evidently spared in the personnel engaged – and the recorded quality is high, with acoustic suited to genre. Above all, the music is charmingly melodious, undemanding and decidedly worth hearing. The CD presentation is poor, both in respect of the English note (the contents of which are however useful) and the label printing: white in tiny print on light brown hardly encourages the prospective purchaser. But persevere! *Peter Branscombe*

**Homilius Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld: Passionskantate** Monika Mauch, Bogna Bartisz, Hans Christoph Begemann SATB, Basler Madrigalisten, Neue Düsseldorfer Hofmusik, Fritz Näf 93'47" (2 SACDs) Carus 83.262

**Homilius Johannes Passion** Jana Reiner, Franz Vitzthum, Jan Kobow, Tiobias Berndt SATB, Dresden Kreuzchor & Barockorchester, Roderich Kreile 119'08" (2 CDs) Carus 83.261

Stephen Rose will contribute a review-article on these Homilius recordings and the new Carus score of the Passion Cantata in the next issue

**Mozart Special Concert celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday** Orchestra Libera Classica, Midori Suzuki S, Natsumi Wakamatysu vln, Hidemi Suzuki cond 79'18" Arte dell' Arco TDK-ADO19

*Marcia in D* K249, *Sinfonia: Il Nozze di Figaro* K492, *Il compleanno di Figaro, Serenade in D* K250 Haffner, *Exultate jubilate* K165

This is a live recording, applause and all, of the concert that was held in the Hamarikyu Asahi Hall, Tokyo, on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mozart's birth – hence the choice of the main work, with its convenient Köchel number, the 'Haffner' Serenade (which is performed in two instalments, with the motet in the middle). The informal tone is set from the opening of the first track, where the talented period instrument orchestra is tuning up. The *compleanno* ('birthday') piece is a grotesque anonymous potpourri of Mozartian tags, leading into the 'happy birthday' tune. The serious works are very decently performed, though there is limited distinction either to Midori Suzuki's violin solos in K250, or to Natsumi Wakamatysu's efficient singing of the motet. The applause indicates the enjoyment of the audience for what must have been a merry event. *Peter Branscombe*

**Mozart/Lichtenthal Requiem in der Fassung für Streichquartett** StringFizz 45'57" ORF CD 473 (from shop.ORF.at)

I was intrigued by the score of this arrangement when I reviewed it briefly last June and I'm grateful to its publisher, Edition Gütersberg, for sending me a copy of the disc. It really does work as a piece – or at least, if you know the work, you mentally add what is missing rather than feel annoyed that it isn't there. If Haydn's 'Seven Last Words' can have an independent existence as a quartet, this certainly can. Excellent playing, and I wasn't worried by a modern quartet in 18th-century repertoire. *CB*

**Philidor Carmen Sæculare** Veronica Cannenmi, Nora Gubisch, Donald Litaker, Antonio Abate SSTB, Coro & Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, Jean-Claude Malgoire 109'58" (2 CDs) Naxos 8.557593-94 £

+Overtures *Le Sorcier* & *Tom Jones* & *Symphonie 27* in G (Prague Chamber Orchestra, Christian Benda)

I was intrigued by Philidor's scores when I came across them, particularly by his setting of a poem intended to be performed once a century: Philidor was several decades out. The librettist Giuseppe Barretti, expanded it with various of Horace's odes; texts are not included, so it's worth getting hold of a bilingual edition of the poems. Barretti was looking for a composer 'able to temper the solemnity of church-music with the brilliance of the theatrical' and thought he found it in Philidor. Despite a powerful performance, it isn't entirely convincing, but it is certainly worth hearing. The orchestral pieces have more

flair. Philidor was a member of a long line of professional Parisian musician, and his first composition was performed at Versailles before his voice broke, and he also became a leading chess-player. I was amused to see that the Philidor Defence was very familiar (though not by name) from my childhood chess-playing, though it is professionally scorned now; a web site had 24 of his games. Since my chess-playing deteriorated from the age of about 10, I won't try to evaluate them, and anyway I don't read the 'new' notation very fluently. If you are a chess player, buy the disc as a souvenir. CB

#### 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

Mendelssohn *Symphonies Italienne* (4) *Réformation* (5) La Chambre Philharmonique, Emmanuel Krivine 54' 13" Naïve V 5069

I was wondering who to send this to when Paul McCreesh phoned and mentioned in passing how marvellous the Reformation symphony was. I can't have heard it for 40 years and all I remembered was the Dresden Amen (which for me has a resonance of church in my teens rather than Wagner) and *Ein' feste Burg*, so I thought I'd better listen to it. I was disappointed. The significance of the middle movements puzzled me, so I was relieved to read in the preface to the Eulenburg score 'only the first and last movements have any relation to the title of the work'. After that (I played them in reverse order), I expected my faith in Mendelssohn would be restored by the *Italian* symphony: at least it's a work of which chunks were fixed in my mind. But that too disappointed, lacking the freshness of the music from his teens, and I only enjoyed the pilgrims' procession. I don't think I was in an unreceptive mood, nor did the period band (new to me) seem to put a foot (or at least arm) wrong. So if anyone wants to express an alternative view, please do. CB

#### VARIOUS

*Shapes of sleep* James Boyd gtr 62' 11" from [www.jamesboyd.co.uk](http://www.jamesboyd.co.uk)  
Britten *Nocturnal* after John Dowland; Dowland *Fantasias*, *Flow my tears*; Tippett *The Blue Guitar*

This is an interesting recording, where music by John Dowland is played alongside music in a modern idiom. The inspiration is the solitary landscape of East Anglia. The opening track is a Fantasia from the Euing Lute Book, a MS where titles and attributions are sadly lacking. The piece is numbered 72 by

Diana Poulton, who considers on stylistic ground that it was probably written by Dowland. It is a pity the modern guitar lacks a seventh string, because some notes have had to have been transposed an octave higher, but nevertheless the piece sounds well on the instrument. James Boyd's interpretation is generally very satisfying, as he sustains the melancholy with long, carefully shaped phrases. His rhythm is at times quite free. For example, the opening notes are not played in strict time, and nor are certain fast notes at cadences, where some notes are slurred rather than plucked. He has a tendency to clip dotted notes. His playing is very clean, with expressive tone colours, and without the loud squeaks from the strings or close-miked gasps one so often hears on modern recordings.

In sharp contrast, and yet surprisingly complementary, is the suite of three pieces by Michael Tippett, *The Blue Guitar*. The second movement, *Juggling*, requires lots of rhythmic tapping on the front of the guitar, and fast notes racing up and down the fingerboard.

There follows another Fantasia, this time definitely by Dowland (Poulton 7), and Boyd's own setting of Dowland's lachrimose *Flow my Tears*. The CD ends with Benjamin Britten's *Nocturnal*, based on Dowland's *Come, heavy sleep*. It is very nicely played, evoking different moods, but with an overriding feeling of melancholy. Stewart McCoy

*I was wondering whether this was relevant to EMR but enjoyed listening to it and sent it to Stewart to see if he thought it worth reviewing: he did.* CB

#### DVD

Gesualdo Death for Five Voices: The Composer Carlo Gesualdo (1560-1613) A film by Werner Herzog Music by Il Complesso Barocco Alan Curtis dir, Gesualdo Consort of London, Gerald Place dir 60' Arthaus 102 055 (1995)

As a TV programme, this would be worth watching, but it would hardly stand a repeat, and it is rather diffuse to use as a teaching aid. There is a narrative based on the familiar Gesualdo story, some bits of a lecture (given in a perhaps-deliberately undemonstrative style) and singing, both by Place's Gesualdo Consort of London and Alan Curtis's Il Complesso Barocco. The visual difference between them is even stronger than the aural one. Place sings and beats with one arm, Curtis sits at a spinet, which he occasionally plays, but mostly waves his arms in a way that must infuriate his singers. He

uses harp and theorbo, which I wouldn't have expected to work but does. I puzzle, though, why an ensemble of five singers needs a conductor. The gap between the beat and the first chord of *Moro lasso* is enormous! The view from castle to countryside in Gesualdo seems much less spectacular than expected – it seemed much more abrupt when we stayed in a hotel just down the road. Worth seeing, but it's fodder for a car boot sale if you attend any with the right sort of clientele. Incidentally, whether or not Breitkopf were happy for their performance fee for the Collected Works, such obvious use of photocopies sets a bad example. CB

#### DOWNLOADS

Frank Nakashima from Toronto writes: 'I would like to bring your attention to my friend, Art Levine, and his website: [www.artlevine.com](http://www.artlevine.com) where, in the "15th & 16th century polyphony" section you will find a huge selection of mostly-free early sacred choral works. A small group of singers meet at Art's place every Tuesday evening and we read through his transcriptions. Although I've only been doing this for a few years, I've now acquired a pile of music exceeding 30 cm. in height. Before you download several complete mass settings by Josquin or the like, I would advise installing a fresh ink cartridge and adding some more paper to your printer. Enjoy.'

*I've just realised (it shows how rarely I consult the free encyclopaedia: am I the last reader to realise?) that Wikipedia composer articles are good sources of information on download scores.* CB

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#### ENGLISH TOURING OPERA

A review of English Touring Opera's *Eugene Onegin* caught my eye (*Sunday Times* 25 March). It had a 'no frills staging... in period costume and a minimalist set' – why couldn't James Conway have done that with the four baroque operas that toured in the autumn (see *EMR* 116)? But perhaps Tchaikovsky was thought not to need any fancy staging to make it more acceptable to the audience.

*Onegin* was, coincidentally, the only opera I had seen at Cambridge Arts Theatre other than the ETO's early quartet (unless one includes Euripides *Bacchae*). That was about 20 years ago, Norrington conducting Kent Opera – an organisation which the Arts Council killed off, despite the excellent work it was doing; perhaps it was thought dull for not imposing irrelevant ideas on its productions!. CB

## JOHN BECKETT

5 February 1927 – 5 February 2007

Clifford Bartlett

Those of us who discovered early music in the late 1960s, remember the Queen Elizabeth Hall concerts of *Musica Reservata* as events of supreme importance. The hall was packed by modern composers as well as early musicians, excited partly by the repertoire, but also by the way it was performed with a gutsy vitality that we had never heard before (and rarely since). The experimental mind and scholarship behind it was Michael Morrow, but the intense musicality came from the conductor, John Beckett. The name most people remember from that period is David Munrow. David and Michael fell out quite quickly and David went his own way, setting up a group that could make a shot at a wide variety of repertoire while being 'right' for very little of it. Michael would not compromise. The performance style of *Reservata* could have sounded impossibly rigid, especially since the idea of keeping to a *tactus* was virtually unknown within the 'classical' music world, let alone most performers of early repertoire. But the factor that brought to life the idea of playing to the beat was the vitality of John's direction.

John was an intensely emotional man. His favourite composers included Purcell and Mahler. I once saw him playing the piano solo part in Webern's Concerto with the LSO under Boulez (he job-shared as their pianist with another harpsichordist, Harry Lester): I couldn't claim to recognise the feeling in the sound, but he looked utterly involved. I first met him around 1965 at the evening class for viols run by Chiswick (later Hounslow) Borough Council – an implausible institution which was later run by Francis Baines. I returned from the first class with an east-European mass-produced treble viol in a bag, and spent the week practicing the first piece in the Hortus Musicus selection of Isaac's instrumental pieces, *Der welt fundt*. (I think I was sufficiently aware to ignore the editorial dynamics!) From there I progressed to the English consort repertoire, John was incredibly patient with us, teaching style chiefly by demonstration.

One incident relating to him around that time must have been told quite widely, since it was related to me fairly recently by someone who would not have known him then. One night John's (first) wife came into a pub and poured a glass of beer over the head of a rival. The real story is slightly better. It took place after one of the Chiswick viol classes; the first glass could, on a charitable interpretation, have been poured as an accident, but the replenishment certainly wasn't. I know, because I bought both pints and the girl was (and is) a friend of mine. John's second wife was less irascible.

In the mid '60s, I conducted a choir of London University

administration and library staff, (the Senate House Singers) and we did an annual early Bach cantatas (4, 106, 131) at lunch-time concerts. John kindly came to play harpsichord continuo for one of them (mobile organs, whether pipe or electronic, were not an option then) on an instrument lent by Michael Morrow, and for another wrote out a realisation in his inimitable handwriting.\* Sadly, I don't know what happened to it. I remember one evening at Chiswick when we spent two hours on Scheidt's marvellous four-part *Paduan* in A minor – the one whose last section is in triple time with sections further divided into triplets: it was probably the first occasion in which I had rehearsed anything in such detail and with such musical insight.

John was marvellous company when we adjourned to the neighbouring pub for the hour and a half between the end of the class and closing time. As well as when working, he seems in hindsight to have been very similar to Philip Thorby. There is the same integrity, deep musical understanding, ability to work with amateurs without condescension, vitality, imagination, broad cultural interest, humour, and a sceptical approach to some aspects of modern life that most of us accept. With both, their presence in a pub is as instructive as at rehearsal.

We have an article on recordings of Byrd's keyboard music in this issue. I have mentioned in *EMR* before that John's playing of Byrd was a model. It was probably the intense emotion confined within strict tempo that was the secret. I've probably still got the reel-to-reel tapes, but they are unlikely to be good enough to reproduce, and I'm not sure if I want to disturb a memory. But if there is any chance of the BBC still having copies lurking anywhere, turning them into a CD should be of the highest priority. (Incidentally, Hugh Keyte, who informed me of John's death, shares my enthusiasm for John's Byrd.)

I saw John occasionally over subsequent years, but our paths rarely crossed, alas. He had a considerable influence in the early music world in his native Ireland. He composed, including music for his cousin Samuel's plays and also for a film of Joyce's *Ulysses* (1967). I suspect that younger readers may not be aware of him, but I was delighted how often his name cropped up at the Irish Recorder and Viol Summer School when I was there last year. According to the obituary by John Calder in *The Guardian* (5 March), he died while listening to music and waiting for a friend to take him to lunch. All who knew him will remember him vividly as a musician and as a man.

\* We reproduce on the following page as an example of John's script the first page of one of John's Purcell song realisations.

MUSIC FOR A WHILE

Henry Purcell



## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

Some of your suggestions concerning Kelly are provocative and you're right to make them. Actually, I doubt if Kelly paid for the privileges. Compare Bremner's energetic entrepreneurial dealings with the Edinburgh resident Nicolò Pasquali in 1757, resulting in the issue of Pasquali's *Thoroughbass made Easy*, 1757, and *The Art of Fingering the Harpsichord*, 1758; Pasquali, a hard-working violinist and teacher, is unlikely to have paid Bremner to publish these, and would rather have needed Bremner to pay him. I'm also fairly sure that Kelly was the best ever of Stamitz's students: I think that Stamitz knew that instinctively. But there are shadowy matters. We could do with more information: account books of Kelly Castle 1740-89 would tell us a lot. (They were probably too disorganised to keep such records in the first place.) What isn't shadowy is the quality of Kelly's music, slowly emerging now as the absolute REAL THING.

David Johnson

*This is a paragraph from a letter. David also sent a longer version of the introduction to his edition of Mahon's clarinet concerto from the September 2006 magazine of the Clarinet & Saxophone Society, which links him quite deeply with Edinburgh from 1786-1808.*

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Dear Lady Singers,

I am inviting you to take part in a simple Female Vocal Range Survey. This data will assist my research into Vivaldi's use of low female voices at the Ospedale della Pietà in 18th century Venice, where illegitimate girls were selected for training as singers and instrumentalists. Both the vocal range and age range of Vivaldi's *coro* was very wide. You can read more at [www.spav.org.uk#women\\_basses](http://www.spav.org.uk#women_basses), where you can also hear an example of an all-female SATB choir. The survey will be of particular interest if you have been put off singing because you think that your voice is 'too low' or 'growly'.

Please download and complete the survey and email the results.

You may wish to forward this email to your friends, including those whose interests are outside the scope of conventional choral music.

Richard Vendome (Schola Pietatis Antonio Vivaldi)

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Clifford,

I'm not sure if anyone has tried it recently, but I believe you can only use the Dowland song books open as a table spread in performance if the soprano is also the lutenist (as she probably would be in a country house, of course), but otherwise, it's a bit cramped around a table. The same must apply to Lachrimae, and I seem to remember a distinguished consort player mentioning that it was virtually impossible to do with viols – have you tried it? It

must be like a rugby scrum. Nowadays lutenists don't sing, which is a shame, because when it's done well it's unbeatable.

David Hill following on from his cartoon (see p. 30)

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*This arrived as a circular email, but is worth passing on.*

I am sure most of you are aware of the budget cuts the government is proposing to impose on the British Library. According to a press release on the BL website, these cuts may force the library to start charging for users to access the collections see: <http://www.bl.uk/spendingreview.html>. If you think that this is a really bad idea, please sign the online petition:

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/library/>

And do ask your colleagues and friends to sign it too.

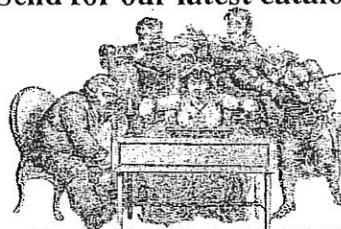
According to their website, the BL is actively campaigning against the proposed cuts and Lynne Brindley has asked those who feel strongly about this issue to contact the library, explain why the British Library is important to you and give permission to use your letter in their campaign. Please e-mail [chief-executive@bl.uk](mailto:chief-executive@bl.uk) with your name, contact number and message, or write to Lynne Brindley, Chief Executive, The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB. So if you have five minutes to spare, do send an e-mail or letter too.

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## CONFUSED SONS OF ART

As mentioned in passing on p. 28, Radio 4's *Today* news programme recently had a spot on the dubious quality of the only complete source of Purcell's *Birthday Song for Queen Mary*, 1694. This is MS 993 in the Royal College of Music, copied by one Peter Pindar in 1765. Editors have long been suspicious of it, particularly of the oboe, trumpet and timp. parts, as well as detailed infelicities. Two lines of research have shown that the source is a very dubious document.

In *Early Music Performer* 12 (Aug. 2003), Clare Brown and Peter Holman reproduced some 'facsimiles' published in Thomas Busby's *Concert Room and Orchestra Anecdotes of Music and Musicians, Ancient and Modern* (1825). The two systems reproduced from *Come ye Sons of Art* suggest that Peter Pindar did more than mix up the trumpet and oboe parts. Whatever the process used and detailed accuracy of the representation of Purcell's handwriting reproduced in Busby's plates, it is striking that the first system of the opening song, which begins with the last two bars of the Symphony, is different from modern editions based on Pindar. They have six staves (two oboes and strings), but the facsimile has three: two trebles (the upper one miscopied) and bass. So the original scoring of that passage may have been just two violins or oboes and bass violin (with continuo). The viola part is presumably by Pindar.

The other line is even more devastating. Rebecca Herissons (see *Music & Letters* 88/1, Feb. 2007, pp. 1-48) has studied the other Purcell pieces in Pindar's MS, which survive in more reliable sources, and analysed his treatment of them. He seems to have interfered extensively. It is possible to make guesses at what sections incorporate his added parts (it helps that he wasn't technically very skilled at, for instance, adding viola parts without consecutives); but that doesn't necessarily help to restore exactly what Purcell wrote. So performers will, when the reconstructors get to work, be left with the choice, as with Mozart's *Requiem*, of performing the work as it has become familiar or trying an attempt to guess what Purcell might have written. I hope Herissons's version gets published quickly. (Rebecca: if you get fed up with big publishers delaying, give me a ring.)

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A review of the English Touring Opera's production of *Eugene Onegin* caught my eye (*Sunday Times* 25 March). It had a 'no frills staging... in period costume and a minimalist set' – any of the baroque operas I reviewed last December would have looked fine, but of course, they are not such masterpieces as the Tchaikovsky, so can be mucked around with. No aspersions on *Onegin*. Curiously, it is the only other opera I've seen at the Cambridge Arts Theatre (unless you count Euripides *Bacchae*), and that was the only time I've seen it: I can't remember the detail, but I was entirely caught up in its music and drama – Kent Opera (later killed off by the Arts Council: is English Touring Opera really better?) conducted by Norrington. And those horns in the letter scene!

## 'Obsessive pursuit of historical correctness'

I was amused by this, from the free emailed *Musical America Weekly Newsletter* 3/2/07 (anglice 2/3/0)

NEW YORK – Newsday's Pulitzer Prize-winning critic Justin Davidson will not be attending any of the Vienna Philharmonic's three concerts at Carnegie Hall this weekend. This orchestra, he says, 'embodies the quintessence of the Western musical tradition', but it also embodies the worst aspect of historic preservation.

A decade after it supposedly committed itself to entering the 21st century, I believe that the Vienna Philharmonic has relinquished its claim to serious consideration as a dynamic cultural organization. Why? No women, for one thing. 'The world's most important orchestra treats the symphonic repertoire the way re-enactment societies treat the Civil War: as terrain for the obsessive pursuit of historical correctness.'

At least the early-music world is not open to that sort of charge (except perhaps for older conductors mostly being male). But 'historical correctness': we expect modern orchestras to play what is written – playing in an early band is more interesting since you need an historical approach to understand what isn't written.

## HARD-WORKING CHORUS

The programme of the Birmingham Triennial Musical Festival 1900 is at [www.bfcs.org.uk/Triennial.htm](http://www.bfcs.org.uk/Triennial.htm) – googling 'Byrd Mass Birmingham 1900' will find it. It took place on Tuesday to Friday October 2-5, with concerts in the morning and evening (so clearly not for the working classes!) At full strength, the Festival Chorus numbered 108 + 80 + 75 + 87. It is not surprising that *Gerontius* was a bit of a flop when the choir also sang during those four days *Elijah*, Parry's *De profundis*, Peter Cornelius's *Der Väter-gruft*, selections from *Israel in Egypt*, Coleridge's Taylor's *Scenes from Hiawatha*, the *St Matthew Passion* and Dvorak's *The Spectre's Bride*, finishing on the Friday with *A German Requiem* and bits of Byrd in the morning, resting through the remainder of the concert – the final scene of *Götterdämmerung* and Glazunov's 6<sup>th</sup> symphony – to maintain energy and voice for *Messiah* in the evening. They don't work amateur choirs so hard now!

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Jakob Handl/Gallus *Ecce quomodo moritur justus* (p. 24) This was one of the best known motets in baroque Germany. It was associated with funerals (hence its quotation in Handel's *Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline*) and in Bach's Leipzig was sung immediately after the *St Matthew Passion*. Bach probably performed it at one of the current pitches (either a tone above or below A=440). But the notation in *chiavette* implies transposition down a fourth or fifth.

My thanks to Alan Lumsden for his edition.

CB

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*By Divine Appointment*

##### Part 1

*A Royal Command Performance*

*Purcell Birthday Song for Queen Mary, 1691*

Welcome, glorious morn

*Blow Coronation Anthem for James II (1685)*

God spake sometime in visions

*Handel Coronation Anthem for George II (1727)*

My heart in inditing

##### Part 2

*Christ's enthronement*

*Bach Ascension Oratorio*

Lobet Gott in seinen Reichen

#### Sunday 6th May

10.30 am *St Cattwg's Church, Llangattock*  
*Morning Communion Service*

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7.30 pm *St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell*

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