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Apologies to readers who expected this right at the beginning of July. We had always intended that this issue should appear late, to allow us time to include a report of the Boston Early Music Festival, but we were left with no space in the last issue to announce this. There will be no August issue.

Seeing Roger Bowers at a concert by The Cardinall's Musick last week, I reflected during the performance on whether he is right to argue that modern boys are more authentic than women for this repertoire. I think I remember the Magdalen College boys joining The Clerkes of Oxenford for early (or at least mid-)Tudor music many years ago, and there is a recent CD of music from the Eton Choirbook by the present Eton College choir (which I have not yet heard). But my attempts to call on memories of treble sounds to imagine the three sopranos replaced by probably a rather larger number of boys did not produce anything as convincing as what I heard.

I was, however, entirely convinced by the small group in attendance at a live BBC3 *Spirit of the Age* programme on the Westminster Cathedral choir. The balance of five boys with three men worked perfectly – coincidentally the sort of figures David Fallows lists for 15th-century polyphony. The boys still have a strong, gutsy sound. I wonder, though, how much their style changes according to what they sing. A few months ago, when delivering *EMR* to our nearest subscriber, I met his son, a chorister at King's College Cambridge. During conversation, he was asked whether they were taught to sing different music in different styles, but he seemed not even to understand the question. Adult singers, however, have to master a variety of styles and can adopt the appropriate one for each concert or even work that they sing. So apart from such reasons as the way the modern treble voice breaks so much earlier and the practical difficulties of getting boys to participate in the modern musician's globe-trotting lifestyle, there does seem good musical reason for the early-music soprano, even if it refreshes to hear a good boys' choir when one can. CB

BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

TUDOR KEYBOARD

Tudor Keyboard Music c.1520-1580, transcribed and edited by John Caldwell (Musica Britannica, LXVI). Stainer & Bell, 1995. xxxix, 199pp. £69.50. ISBN 0 85249 823 3

John Caldwell has brought together a varied assortment of keyboard pieces from the period before 'the golden age', with liturgical music, fantasies, dances and transcriptions of chansons. The main collections – *The Mulliner Book* (MB1), EECM 6 & 10 and the *Dublin Virginal Book* – have not been duplicated, but otherwise this is intended to complete the repertoire of English keyboard music of the period. There are 92 pieces, plus various appendices, some only a few bars long but including the two substantial settings of *Felix namque* by Tallis. (I find it difficult to hear that title without thinking of the two cats named Felix and Nam which stayed with us while we were finishing off *The New Oxford Book of Carols*.) Setting II exists in six sources and presenting the variants is a problem; much is shown on the page, mostly the presence or absence of ornament strokes, but there is also a dense critical commentary. It might have been easier for the player if the main version of the 'intonation' had started on page 15 and run straight on to the main part of the work with the two alternatives separated out on page 14.

I would have been more capable of surveying this in detail 20 or more years ago than I am now; my activities have moved in other directions. Two major sources were not known then, BL Add. 60587 (from Winchester) and York Minster MS 91. Caldwell prints both the chansons and their keyboard versions from the York MS. The quality of the music in the volume is erratic. Some is just didactic, some is barely competent, though there are plenty of pieces worth playing. It will make concocting programmes of mid-century music easier: at present those seeking material for costume concerts and Tudor banquets generally have to concentrate on the beginning or end of the century. The editions seem excellent. An advantage of their not being published 20 years ago is that original note values can now be retained, though I wish MB would dispense with modern time-signatures, which are particularly confusing when there is a time change merely because there are more notes in a bar, with no change in mensuration. Players who don't understand the old signs are unlikely to be so innumerate as not to be able to see how many beats there are in a bar! The whole presentation of the volume is very much a scholarly one, which is entirely justifiable considering the nature of the material. But there is music here that could usefully (and perhaps even profitably) be given wider circulation; perhaps what is needed is not so

much a selection using the notation of the edition, as in older MB offprints, but a couple of anthologies presented in more amateur-friendly notation. Not that there is anything too impenetrable here. John Caldwell is to be congratulated on his editorial expertise.

RIGAN PASSION

I must confess that Paulus Bucenus Philorhodus was an unfamiliar name. He does, though, have an entry in New Grove (under Bucenus) and that includes a second-hand comment on his Matthew Passion, which is, along with Daser's, the last Latin-texted Lutheran motet-passion. An edition of this *Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi* of 1578 by Paul Madgwick has been published by Musica Baltica Ltd, Brivibas 85, Riga LV-1001, Latvia (fax 3712 272259); it is available in the UK from Lilija Zobens, 16 Chase Court Gardens, Enfield, EN2 8DH, tel +44 (0)181 363 4203 for £4.50 + post (£5.95 after 31 December). This is the first of a series published by the Riga Early Music Centre in the run-up to the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the city. In Bucenus's time, it was a self-governing republic; now it is capital of Latvia. The work is for six voices; original clefs are G2G2C3C3C4F3, which is presented untransposed (despite *chiavette*) for SSATTB. This fits the modern choir quite well, despite breaking the usually sound principle that parts in the same clef should have the same voices. The music depends on simple chords and almost homorhythmic declamation of the text; it could be very dramatic, though it also has the potential of being incredibly boring if performed in a heavy and sluggish manner. I hope I have a chance to hear it done well. Congratulations to the Riga Early Music Centre: I hope this sells well and that they continue to publish their heritage.

MADRIGALS & CANZONAS

I have received another mailbag of Garland's *Renaissance Music in Score* series. I will resist commenting again on technical matters: by now, readers must know about their weak layout (not as annoying as usual in this batch) and the absence of editorial accidentals. Of the two volumes in the Madrigal series, 11 (ISBN 0 8240 5511 Z; \$84.00) contains Domenico Ferrabosco's one and only book of madrigals, *Il primo libro de madrigali a quattro voci* (Venice, 1542). Domenico was father and grandfather of the two Alfonsoes and is remembered chiefly for *Io mi son giovinetta*, which is one of a handful of pieces surviving only in anthologies so isn't included here. The 45 items are attractive examples of the early madrigal, but the volume has been overtaken by events. I haven't seen Richard Charteris *Opera omnia* of D. M. Ferrabosco (CMM 102), but that is likely to be well

edited, impeccably proof-read, and have the advantage of containing the other miscellaneous works at probably a fairly comparable price. Vol. 27 has *Il primo libro de madrigali a quattro voci* (Milan, 1555) by Pietro Taglia (ISBN 0 8240 5529 2; \$70.00). Einstein was quite enthusiastic about him, but his music has been little studied since: it looks enterprising and intriguing.

One of the most widely-published sets of canzonas was Maschera's *Libro primo a4*. An edition of 1582 is lost but reprints survive from 1584, 1588, 1593, 1596, 1604, 1607 and 1621; there are also early MS scores. It must have had considerable influence on how the canzona was perceived. Stephen Bonta notes (in the article mentioned below) that 18 pieces are in high clefs, two in G2C2C3F4 and only one in standard clefs. These are listed in Robert Judd's edition along with a concise tabulation of their form; he does not speculate on performance medium. They have been made available before in various ways, but the set is too important not to be in this series (*Italian Instrumental Music* vol. 9, ISBN 0 8240 4508 4; \$75.00). Vol. 12 takes us to Milan again, for Ottavio Bariolla's *Capricci... libro terzo a4* (1594). Only two partbooks are extant, but the Turin MS Foà 1 preserves the set in keyboard tablature, so the missing parts can be completed; it is interesting that they were thought worth copying fifty years later. The editor, James Ladewig, has removed keyboard ornamentation from his reconstruction, though it might have been interesting to have included the keyboard version aligned with the ensemble score. He finds the barer originals are more interesting, claiming that Bariolla's merits were underestimated by reviewers of the embellished keyboard version in CEKM 46. (Vol. 12, ISBN 0 8240 4511 4; \$80.00).

Vol. 18 (ISBN 0 8240 4517 3; \$85.00) contains publications by Banchieri and Mayone. A curious feature of Banchieri's *Fantasia overi Canzoni alla francese... a4* (1603) is that much of the contents reworks music from his 1596 collection (published as vol. 20 of A-R's *Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance* with no reference to the relationship with the 1603 edition). The Mayone is his *Primo Libro di Ricercari a3* (1606), whose different style is evident merely by flicking over the pages and noting the shorter note-values. Nos 14-16 are settings of *La Spagna*. Vol. 27 has *Il primo libro delle musiche* (1618) by Lorenzo Allegri (ISBN 0 8240 4526 2; \$65.00). The 8 *Balli* are cheaply available as LPM EDM18; the Garland volume also includes the opening multi-section vocal item and its *Sinfonia*. The editor, Andrew dell'Antonio, seems to make heavy going of reaching the obvious conclusion that it is a commemorative volume and that the dances were individually choreographed. It is nice to have the whole collection, though a pity the words are not translated. The *Seconda aggiunta alli concerti* compiled by Lucino and Lomazzi in Milan in 1617 is an anthology that ends with 12 canzonas by Ardemario, Bottaccio, Cantone, Casato, A & G. P. Cima, Pellegrini and Rivolta. They have previously been published in transcriptions from a Polish organ tablature. James Ladewig gives useful biographical information about these mostly-obscure

composers. The piece by G. P. Cima is the most interesting formally, and perhaps in other respects. The volume also includes Corradini's *Il primo libro de canzoni francesi a4* (1624). After the all-purpose canzonas that form the bulk of this series it was a relief to turn to the concluding four sonatas. There is one minimal double choir piece (each choir is just treble and bass), one for two trebles and bass, one for treble and bass (probably a melodic instrument as well as continuo) and one specifically for two cornetti *in riposta* with what looks more like a continuo part than a bass. Corradini's canzonas, too, are quite enterprising, and one can feel that the old style is changing (Vol. 29; ISBN 0 8240 4528 9; \$78.00).

RECENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

Following his explication of the rhythmic notation of Monteverdi's 1610 *Vespers* according to the rules of mensural notation Roger Bowers has now turned his attention to *Orfeo* (Music & Letters 76/2, May 1995, pp. 149-167). He concentrates on the awkward passages in Act I and the opening of Act II and his case is strengthened by his valid reasons for why Monteverdi needed to begin Act II with music that is evidently in triple rhythm but is notated in C. The ritornello before *Vi ricordi* has been the subject for much discussion. When preparing my edition (which gives the information about the mensuration though does not express it in the notation) I was puzzled that the lead into it is not in black notation. It makes sense to play the two beats at the old time (but presumably the first time only), though it seems to be notating a suspiciously-modern sort of rhythmic subtlety. Incidentally, those with my computer-set score should note a silly mistake: pages 17 & 24 should have no key signature (the parts are correct).

This issue of *M&L* also contains a long and critical review by Rob Wegman of Christopher Page's *Discarding Images*; there is article by him on another Page controversy in the current *Early Music*. I await the replies with interest.

Recercare is the journal of the Fondazione Italiana per la Musica Antica della Società Italiana del Flauto Dolce (ISSN 1120-5741). It is running a bit late, and vol. 4 for 1992 has recently appeared, available for 35,000 lire from Libreria Musicale Italiana Editrice, in the UK from Rosemary Dooley, Crag House, Witherslack, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 6RW, tel 015395 52286, fax ... 52013. The article that particularly interested me is by Stephen Bonta, pursuing his interest in the bass violin in 17th-century Italy back to the repertoire from c.1600. In 'The use of instruments in the ensemble canzona and sonata' he analyses tessituras and clefs (with some useful tables) and concludes that the use of the G2 clef in instrumental music does not imply transposition as it would for vocal music and that canzonas notated in *chiavette* (G2, C2, C3, F3/C4) fit an instrumental quartet of violin, small and large viola and small bass violin. Canzonas in *chiavi naturali* (C1 C3 C4 F4) mostly fit the same combination, but may need the larger bass violin. A useful table of instrumental ranges of

specifically-scored pieces by Giovanni Gabrieli is mis-headed 'Andrea Gabrieli' (p.30). One of our reviewers, Noel O'Regan, writes on 'Processions and their music in post-Tridentine Rome'; an incidental conclusion is the evidence it gives of the vast numbers of musicians available in Rome in the late 16th century, since on some occasions many churches were involved in processions simultaneously so there was no chance of careful time-tabling to enable for musicians to rush from one to another. Other articles include a study and two new editions of Antonello da Caserta's *Più chiar che 'l sol* by Pedro Memelsdorff, a transcription of a contract between a Roman *ospedale* and Zaccara da Teramo of 1390, and a rejection of the nine *petits motets* attributed to Bernier in Lyons MS Rés. FM 133-971 by Jean-Paul Montagnier.

Having complained at the absence of musicological back-up at the press showing of the British Library Purcell-Draghi MS, it is pleasing to welcome a thorough discussion by Curtis Price in the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 120/1, 1995 which includes the full inventory with concordances that I was then seeking. He does not support the idea in circulation (perhaps made on that occasion) that the music is in order of difficulty. The new pieces by Purcell and Draghi are printed, and some of the Purcell transcriptions are compared with their ensemble versions, the author not always being convinced that the keyboard pieces come second. Further comment must await the forthcoming CUP volume of essays on source materials, and no doubt the preface to the facsimile of the Guildhall song autograph (imminent from Novello) will have something to say about Purcell's way of writing out music for pupils. (While on the subject of facsimiles, it is likely that there will soon be one of the string fantazias.)

This issue of the RMA Journal also contains a lengthy article on the archives of the Order of the Golden Fleece by Barbara Haggh and a study of the implication of two English 18th-century copyright cases. Our CD review section includes a recording of Morales *Missa Mille regretz*; readers may like to read about the network of relationships of the chanson (whose ascription to Josquin is by no means certain) in an article by Owen Rees on 'Mille regretz as model: possible allusions to The Emperor's Song in the chanson repertory'. There are also substantial reviews of Fassler, Strohm, Tomlinson and Holman (those who are interested will be able to guess the titles of the books).

BUXTEHUEDE ORGAN

Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Freien Orgelwerke/New Edition of the Complete Free Organ Works vols. 1 & 2 Herausgegeben von/edited by Christoph Albrecht. Bärenreiter (BA8221-2) 1994. £19.95 each.

When I first became interested in early music, Buxtehude was one of the most prominent figures. A fair number of cantatas were available from Bärenreiter and Hansen, and the Hansen edition of the organ works circulated widely.

But as other composers were discovered, so Buxtehude's status as the most important predecessor to Bach declined and it is primarily his organ music that has stayed in the repertoire. Perhaps the two recent CDs of his cantatas will lead to a revaluation of the cantatas (see reviews on page 17). Meanwhile, there is yet another edition of the organ music. My working copy of this repertoire has hitherto been the Spitta edition of 1875 (a fine piece of scholarship for its date) and I don't have a copy of the Beckmann Breitkopf version. It is his work which has placed our understanding of the sources and transmission of north German organ music at a new level, and Albrecht accepts most of it. Sensibly, he adopts Beckmann's sigla for the sources. This edition has a concise critical commentary with significant variants shown as footnotes on the page. There is a lengthy and sensible preface. On the vexed point of preserving the two-stave notation of the non-tablature sources, I am happy at his arguments for the use of three staves here, since there is little doubt where the pedal would have been used. I am more worried about key signatures; we are now so used to seeing C minor with two flats that, if that was how the music was notated when it was transcribed in earlyish sources, then it can be retained, despite the neutral notation of the tablature. This is an easily-read edition, well set-out. Vol. 1 has pieces in C & D, 2vol. 2 in E F & G; vol. 3 is still to come.

HANDEL CANTATAS & RINALDO

Georg Friedrich Händel *Rinaldo...* HWV 7a. Herausgegeben von David R. B. Kimbell (HHA Serie II: Band 4/1). Bärenreiter (BA 4033), 1993. £176.00

Georg Friedrich Händel *Kantaten mit Instrumenten I* HWV 78, 79, 81, 82, ,83, 89, 92, 96, 97, 98. Herausgegeben von Hans Joachim Marx (HHA Serie V: Band 3). Bärenreiter (BA 4048), 1994. £176.00

Two magnificent new volumes in the Hallische Händel Ausgabe. The volume of cantatas is particularly welcome, since the Chrysander volumes are incomplete. Of the pieces here, *Alla caccia* is new, a welcome addition to the trumpet's chamber repertoire. It begins with a March for trumpet and two violins, then there is a recit & aria with soprano and a short *Coro* for 'tromba in eco', violins in unison, 'soprano del coro' and 'Soprano in eco' (all, of course, with continuo). In the MS, it is followed by a brief binary arietta, also on a hunting theme, and in the same key (D). The absence of trumpet makes it an unlikely conclusion, though the violin 1 part is playable on trumpet. *Alpestre monte* is complete here: Chrysander only printed the beginning and end. *Amarilli vezzosa (Il duello amoroso)*, for two sopranos and two violins, is new, a more extensive piece with a Sonata, four arias and a duet. The version of *Arresta il passo (Aminta e Fillide)* has two more arias than in Chrysander. *Cor fedele (Clori, Tirsi e Fileno)* ends with the trio given only fragmentarily in HG, with HG's closing duet placed in the appendix. These are not all new discoveries, but they have up to now circulated privately and have not been readily available. So this volume does

more than present familiar material in improved editions. The editor is an expert on Handel's Roman period, when most of the cantatas were written: the exceptions here are *Crudel tiranno Amor*, written in London for Durastanti in 1721, and *Cecilia, volgi un sguardo* (1736 for *Alexander's Feast*). His useful preface is printed in English as well as German, and the texts of the cantatas are helpfully printed separately in Italian, German and English. The only disappointment is the deferral of the commentary to the final volume of the cantatas – a shame, since it would be useful to have the material at hand, even if some of the general information on sources would need repeating in each volume. The user is surely entitled to know why the facsimile of No. 10 of *Arresta il passo* is in G, the edition in B flat. One facsimile of particular interest is the non-autograph score of the opening of *Cor fedele*, later used in the G-minor harpsichord Suite and the Overture to *Oreste*, which has the French-overture scales notated with dots beneath long slurs. I wonder whether the facsimile on page xxv really implies that oboes double the violin while the voice is singing for a couple of bars.

There is a considerable amount of information on performing the works, some of which I would question. Marx claims that when there are two violins, there should be at least two players per part. He offers no documentary evidence that this was normal (the Ruspoli documents seem not to imply it, unless the players booked were in addition to others who were members of his household) and the markings *solo* and *tutti* can usually be interpreted as 'accompanying' or 'prominent because other instruments are silent' and 'all instrumental parts are playing here'. He does point to an exception (p. 80, bar 11), but that is in a larger-scale work which is explicitly for string orchestra. Otherwise, I would stick to the principle that if there is no viola, solo strings are more plausible. Handel is, of course, not consistent in his *solo/tutti* marks, and the attempt to expand them sometimes results in oddities, such as the *tutti* in the middle of a semibreve at bar 10 on the first page; bar 40 of the same movement is also odd. There is no problem if the marks are merely intended as cues, but if they are taken to affect the number of players, much is left to the discretion of whoever prepares the parts. The decision whether a chamber ensemble or orchestra is involved also affects the remarks on string bass instruments; presumably only one is needed if there are just two violins. I am surprised to see the theorbo described as a 16' instrument; I have always thought of it as an 8' instrument which puts some notes down an octave; our theorbo-playing reviewer, Lynda Sayce, confirms this. The same applies to the violone in G as well, if that really is the right instrument.

This is an extremely welcome edition: I hope that separate scores and parts of each cantata, with introductions incorporating information from this volume plus useful material from the unpublished critical commentary, will appear as soon as possible. But sadly, I suspect that is unlikely: library subscriptions for collected work scores are predictable, performers' purchases are not.

David Kimbell points out that including an 18th-century opera in such a series 'runs the risk of appearing to offer a single, ideal authentic text', a concept 'profoundly alien to the opera-house of Handel's day'. HHA is issuing two versions of *Rinaldo*. This volume has the material relating to the original composition, the 1711 production and revivals of it, while a subsequent volume will present the 1731 version as a separate entity. In fact, this edition presents virtually the same version as Chrysander's main text (HG58, pp 1-119), except that the small-print aria on HG p. 112 is removed to the HHA appendix. I don't want to bore readers with my obsession about layout; but it is something that, in response to comments from performers, I spend a lot of time on with my own editions (one advantage of acting as editor, typesetter and publisher) and which more traditional publishers ignore. Chrysander gets the work onto 115 pages, this new score takes 188 (excluding additional music). Music copyists are paid by the page, so have developed a spacious hand; publishers too often price music according to the page (that is stated explicitly in some brochures for Collected Works), so it is obviously in the publisher's interest to present a spacious edition. It certainly looks elegant. But is it in the interest of the performer? Where possible, da capo arias should be set out so that there is only one page turn; ideally, the whole A section should be on a single opening and it helps if turns are when the continuo is resting, on a long note or in a tutti so that the harpsichordist can play without fussing about quick turns. It is also easier for the conductor and for other users to see and feel the shape of an aria if a fair amount of it is visible at a glance. These ideals cannot be achieved with long arias, but can generally be applied for the majority in a Handel opera. Because its notation is more compact, HG achieves this far more frequently than HHA, and some might think that its compression is a price worth paying (though personally I would prefer something just a little more spacious).

Since writing last year on the HHA *Flavio*, my views on the HHA treatment of oboe parts have been supported by some conductors. Anyone who looks at Handel's autographs will be aware of how casual references to oboes are. Sometimes they will have a separate line. Sometimes they will only be mentioned if Handel bothers to indicate that they should be *tacet* when the voice enters (more often saying positively *violini* rather than *senza hautboi*). Often *tutti* at the head of a movement can mean that oboes should play, but doesn't necessarily show whether all play the top part or whether violin II is also doubled. (It may not always mean that, though; *Lascia ch'io pianga* is marked *tutti*, but I suspect that most conductors will prefer oboes not to play in it – or does the marking mean: 'oboes play in this movement, but since it is marked *piano* at the opening, they remain silent until the *forte* at the end of the A section?') Later copies do not add further information, and one wonders whether Handel ever intended his score to give precise information on what the oboes played. We don't know what was put on the oboists' stands, since no parts survive from his stage performances. Some conclusions may be drawn from the

sets copied for Jennens now mostly in the Henry Watson Library, Manchester. But they were copied some time later and we do not know if the decisions made by the copyist would have been approved by the composer. Chrysander, in my view sensibly, followed the layout of Handel's score, with cues for the oboes on the violin staves. He was sometimes wrong; but that is no disaster, since all the user has to do is to change the cues.

This edition consistently includes separate staves for the oboes and omits these parts when the voice is singing. I think that the decisions are mostly right, and would not object to having them cued into the violin staves; but it misleads by appearing to offer 'a single, ideal authentic text' when the source information is so sketchy. It also, reverting to my previous point, takes up valuable space and spreads the music more than necessary. The edition does, however, state very clearly in the commentary, which is fortunately included in the volume, the autograph lay-out and stave-headings. (How the oboe parts are prepared is another problem.)

One further technical detail: it is very difficult to find individual arias, since the list of movements is buried between 50 pages of preliminary matter and the beginning of the score: it would be much more accessible at the very end, and with the aria incipits highlighted in some way. No-one is likely to use the index to look for recitatives by text incipit, so they need to be de-emphasised; the aria incipit could then come before the word 'Aria', which need not be emboldened.

Enough grousing. Where I have checked, everything is done well. The volume is self-sufficient, with introduction, (German and English), critical commentary (German only), a facsimile of the bilingual 1711 libretto and a separate modern German translation of it. There are 54 pages of additional music, and in all respects except those I have mentioned (which I am sure are matters of general policy, not decisions by the editor) this is an edition worthy of Handel's first London masterpiece. The HHA seems to be progressing well now, though there is still a demand for decent orchestral sets of many of his major works.

GREENE FACSIMILE

Maurice Greene *Florimel, or Love's Revenge*: British Library, MS R.M. 22 d.14. Introduction by H. Diack Johnstone. (*Music for London Entertainment 1660-1800*, Series C Volume 6). Stainer & Bell, 1995. ISBN 0 85249 809 8. £85.00

The 'dramatic pastoral' *Florimel* was first performed in 1734 and was repeated on several occasions. There are libretti surviving from five performances: the earliest (1734 but probably not for the first performance) is reproduced here. There are six MSS, representing two versions (one for SSSB soloists, the others for SSAB). None are autograph, but the one chosen for this facsimile (of the SSSB version) is in the hand of a pupil and is probably reliable. A critical

commentary is included, a rare bonus for a facsimile edition, but a fortunate consequence of Diack Johnstone's preparation of an edition of the work 25 years ago. This is available for hire from Stainer & Bell. It would probably be exaggerating to call it more than a pleasing work. But it would make an attractive summer-evening's recreation at a country house concert, or perhaps at Philip Pickett's Holland Park series if it flourishes.

RAMEAU & ROUSSEAU

Downing A. *Thomas Music and the origins of languages: theories from the French Enlightenment* Cambridge UP, 1995. xi, 195p. ISBN 0 521 47307 1. £30.00

I don't remember ever taking so long to read such a short book (4,000 miles – and that's after the plane trip – if measured by distance). Every time I picked it up it seemed to be saying the same sort of thing. Part of the problem is that I do not see much to interest a modern reader in the squabble between Rameau and Rousseau. Rameau had a brilliant technical idea about how harmony worked; like many who have good ideas, he pushed it farther than it could go. Rousseau's good idea – an anthropological or sociological rather than a religious approach to the human condition – was in itself revalatory (though a glance at any TV news bulletin or newspaper is likely to make one prefer original sin as an explanation for human behaviour to the idea of the noble savage). But Rousseau's musical ideas got mixed up with his hostility to Rameau, his technical weakness as a composer, and his dislike of everything French. His ideas on the origin of music and language are worth little more than a footnote in a study of music and language? Can anyone seriously discuss the origins of music entirely in terms of melody or harmony and virtually ignore rhythm? I happened to hear a bit of primitive music recently at an Indian pow-wow. It probably wasn't very authentic, but it made the point: the primary interest was rhythmic. The author's interest in the possible meaning of music is far more interesting. He does not mention Deryck Cooke, whose sometimes naive but provocative *The Language of Music* could have been the starting point for the non-18th-century-based study that the author adumbrates initially. That would be a far more fruitful topic for a book than a dead controversy based on Rousseau's hunches and prejudices.

TOSI – AGRICOLA – BAIRD

Introduction to the Art of Singing by Johann Friedrich Agricola Translated and edited by Julianne C. Baird. Cambridge UP, 1995. 298pp. ISBN 0 521 45428 X. £40.00

I found this much more interesting. English readers know Tosi's *Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni* from Galliard's translation, but German readers are more used to the generous expansion by Agricola published in 1757; the facsimile was recently re-issued (see *EMR* 7 p.7). It has now been made available to English readers in a fluent

translation with a substantial introduction summarising Agricola's additions and with annotations. The resulting three-layered work seems quite medieval in conception but works well. A reference to Robert Philip's analysis of the difference between what early 20th century theorists said about rubato and what musicians did might have encouraged caution about Tosi's remarks on the subject (p.32). Agricola is explicit that it doesn't matter if appoggiaturas may create parallel fifths and octaves if they are not audible (p. 109); perhaps it was the exceptional acuteness of Neumann's ears that made him so critical of them. Baird confuses Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with *Aci, Galatea e Polifeme* (p. 263-4, note 50). It is curious to describe the cornett as a soprano member of the serpent family (p. 272, note 13): would you describe an oboe as a small *cor anglais*? As someone who used to take a score along to one of the cheap seats at Covent Garden rigged up with an illuminating music stand to read my score, I was intrigued to see Tosi recommending students taking to a performance a score of the arias sung by the best singers (p. 189). This version is probably even more valuable for singers than the Galliard translation since there is a wider historical perspective; it deserves to be placed with the classic performance-practice works of the 1750s by C. P. E Bach, Quantz and L. Mozart in the library of anyone performing music of the period, not just singers.

FORTEPIANOS

Katalin Kornlós *Fortepianos and their music: Germany, Austria, and England, 1760-1800*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995. 158pp. ISBN 0 19 816426 2. £27.50

There is something delightfully old-fashioned about this book. For a start, I like the title: *Fortepianos*, not the more pretentious *The Fortepiano*. It is short; after every chapter I felt that the author had plenty more to say but that she was conscious of the need to avoid overkill and keep the reader's attention flowing. Those who want more can read her thesis or her seven articles listed in the bibliography. The book is divided into sections on the instruments, the music, and the players, and she charts the effect of the difference between the English and German instruments and the way they generated different styles of playing and composition. She also keeps her eye on the very different North German tradition, where clavichord, rather than harpsichord, gave way to piano quite late. Her chapter on *Kenner und Liebhaber* deftly touches on a complex series of relationships, and her quotations from that most subtle of social observers, Jane Austen, has made me resolve to read *Emma* again as soon as I finish the three further Oxford books waiting to be read for the September issue. The author is a player as well as a musicologist, and that comes through in her remarks about the technical difficulty of the music she discusses, which is not always obvious from the printed page. Mozart players should note that Dussek was the first player to place his instrument sideways on the stage so that he could show his profile to the audience (p. 65). (On Mozart's pedal piano, see the current *Early Music*.)

IN BRIEF

Trumpeters playing church concerts with organists often include a fair amount of baroque music, but generally, even if the solo part was written for trumpet, the accompaniment was intended for ensemble. The two sonatas by Viviani are exceptions. They were published in 1678 at the end of a collection of music for violin and are works of considerable sophistication. There have been several modern editions; I haven't seen them all, but the one I have (Editio Musica/Kunzelmann) has an unidiomatic keyboard part and gives no source information, so the new version by Irmtraud Krüger for McNaughtan is preferable (£8.40 from Richard Schauer). I'm not particularly worried that missing bar-lines are shown dotted, but it shows that this is a conscientious edition and can be recommended. A cello part is provided, though the original title-page calls only for organ or harpsichord.

The latest of Bärenreiter's correction of the pioneering edition of Zelenka's trio sonatas for two oboes and bassoon is No. 4 in g (HM 274; £16.00). 'The source material for Sonata No. 4 is especially complex' the editor tells us, and he has to deal with autograph score and parts which differ in articulation and in the markings for cuts. Wolfgang Reich deals with this sensibly. He prints a long and short version of the first movement and cues a cut in the last. The specification of the continuo part is 'violone ò tiorba'. The editor assumes that 'ò' means 'and'. But in view of Zelenka's desire to have correct Italian (he amended *sonata* to *suonata* in the title) perhaps he really did mean 'or'. But whatever you use, this set is probably the best wind trio music of the period and this sonata is a good one to try if you don't know them.

I was intrigued by the prospect of a volume of organ chorales by Jakob Friedrich Greiss, vol. 4 of Bärenreiter's *Orgelmusik der Klassik und Frühromantic*. Greiss is not in MGG or New Grove. He was court organist at Darmstadt from 1751 to 1769 – this is the earliest organ music from the court to survive – and, on the strength of this collection (from a pair of MSS in Yale), he is a composer who retained much of the baroque style yet was not an out-and-out conservative. The music is certainly worth playing, but the editor has transposed 14 of the 18 settings into the keys in which the tunes generally appear in the modern *Evangeliisches Gesangbuch*. This diminishes their value for those whose interest is in historical performance rather than the current Lutheran liturgy and divorces the music from the key traditions of its time. But I doubt if the market would take two editions, and the Lutheran one is probably larger. (BA 6562; £16.60).

NB Prices of German items quoted here should not be taken too literally, thanks to the poor performance of the pound in relationship with the mark. American readers should note that the dollar has been fairly steady over the last year at between \$1.55 & \$1.60 to the pound. Some publishers, however, fix a dollar price for their books which allows for the cost of transport and, perhaps, gives a margin large enough for bookshops to offer a discounted price.

BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL (June 13-18 1995)

Clifford Bartlett & Rosemary Druce

CB is mostly responsible for the first two pages; the reviews of the concurrent events are by Rosemary Druce.

Like the last BEMF in 1993, this was organised around a major dramatic production, with additional concerts of related music given by groups of performers from the opera, though this time only two major concerts were thus derived: it is asking a lot of musicians to play an opera for five performances and also give other concerts. The convenience of a geographically compact Festival (in 1993 all events took place within a small area at Harvard) was understood and the long walks that characterised my 1991 visit were necessary only to reach fringe ('concurrent' is the local term) events. The choice of church for the main venue, however, was more successful financially (it seated about a thousand) than artistically.

Purcell's *King Arthur* benefitted enormously in comparison with the 1993 *Orfeo* by being given in a proper theatre, so there was more stage room (though not enough). The orchestra was raised to the level of the stalls rather than buried in a pit and sounded well apart from the continuo group. From my seat a few rows back I could see Stephen Stubbs and Paul O'Dette working hard and enthusiastically on lute and guitar but could only hear them when they accompanied solos, though from her seat in the circle RD found them audible; contrariwise, I had no problem with the spoken text while she found hearing it difficult. The work was performed complete: apart from the Prologue and Epilogue (what a pity Roger Savage wasn't commissioned to write topical ones), only a duet for which there is no music and four lines introducing it were cut. Total running time, including one interval, was three and a quarter hours – the Covent Garden four-hour version should not be allowed to perpetuate the myth that semi-operas are impossibly long.

I saw the first night; there had only been one rehearsal in the theatre with full costumes, and I gathered that there were various problems with hats. Despite that, a notable feature of the production was its flow. The plot presents problems for the modern listener, but after a rather slow start, interest was maintained throughout the spoken play as well as the musical interpolations. It is easy to pour scorn on Dryden's magical apparatus, but it is not far away from children's TV SF cartoons, and Americans seem less embarrassed about patriotism than the British; perhaps it is not quite so remote as might be thought. It was the sexual innuendos to which the audience reacted most readily. Dryden takes from *The Tempest* the idea of a woman who has never seen a man, but changes it to one who has been blind but is given her sight. This scene was movingly

played, leaving it to the audience to decide when innocence turned to prurience: Carol Symes as Emmeline was outstanding among a good acting cast. There was a difference in style between actors and singers, since the gestures of the latter were much more in period style. With limited rehearsal time, the stage director, Jack Edwards, left the actors to work within a manner that was familiar, concentrating on getting the singers to move in a Restoration manner. This made visual sense, in that the more static musical sections were more formal.

The performers were mostly American. The bass section of the orchestra had one British (or should one now say Polish) player, Mark Caudle, who has been playing the bass violin longer than most cellists. This was apparently the first time a US orchestra had used the instrument – players needed to use transposed parts – but there was no audible sign of inexperience. The main foreign imports were Jack Edwards and Peter Holman, co-artistic director of the Festival with Paul O'Dette (though one had to turn to page 207 of the programme book to learn that: they should surely be listed with the great and the good, whose functions are not at all clear, near the front of the programme). Peter and Jack have worked together since the early 1970s and have created a series of lively productions, mostly of lighter baroque repertoire, for Opera Restor'd. After my editorial encomium of Peter Holman in our last issue, it is almost embarrassing to have to be equally enthusiastic about his direction. The BEMF Orchestra played in what was for them an unfamiliar style as if they had been playing Purcell together all year. Tempi were right; the movement from one movement to the next was right. The singing was essentially a team effort (so much so that the programme did not indicate who took which part). Occasionally at the beginning of a song I thought 'A pity they are not using more distinguished singers!' but after a few bars I was perfectly content with what I was hearing. The ensembles were marvellously musical, I suspect all the better for being self-generated. For a notable feature of the performance was the absence of conducting. Occasionally it was necessary to co-ordinate activities happening at opposite ends of the orchestra or to effect an efficient transition; but otherwise this flowing, eloquent and moving performance, full of expressive phrasing, was effected with virtually no hand movement. This is not to imply that it was merely a team effort; rather that Peter Holman's directorial activity had taken place in private at rehearsal.

I was less impressed by the sets. On the small stage, anything approaching the perspective design of a baroque stage was impossible, and letting a singer down on a couple

of ropes is hardly a substitute for sumptuous machines. There were also problems with the costumes. I'm no judge of dance, but I gather that this was also a weaker aspect of the production. Nevertheless, Dryden and Purcell's opera made sense in a way I had scarcely imagined when I was preparing the edition. I suspect that some of the BEMF management must have been a little doubtful of entrusting their major event to directors whose reputation had hitherto been for work with a less high profile. But Peter Holman and Jack Edwards fully justified the decision and I hope that we will have further chances to see their collaboration in such substantial projects.

Sadly, I missed the talks and discussions by distinguished Purcellians, which were a notable feature of the Festival.

Two concerts were given by the forces involved in *King Arthur*. The band was brought up onto the stage for a programme of music from the London pleasure gardens. This was not acoustically ideal, but was probably authentic even if some of the sound disappeared up into the flies. The star was Julia Gooding, whose singing was magnificent. It was a highly enjoyable evening for both audience and players: the leader, Elizabeth Blumenstock, who also made a valuable contribution to *King Arthur*, was beaming all evening. It was a typical Holman programme of unfamiliar music which held the attention and sounded well. A late-night concert of Purcell's symphony songs offered a more refined enjoyment. It suffered from the problems of Emmanuel Church and perhaps had one item too many for the time of night (10.45 till around midnight), but produced exquisite singing of glorious music that is virtually unperformed, apart from the recent Hyperion CD.

The convenience of Emmanuel Church must have made it attractive to the organisers, but musically it was a disaster. (I discovered later that it was a late substitute for a more suitable venue.) For the first concert I heard there I was near the front. Paul Nicholson played a delightful programme of English music by Gibbons, Philips, Locke, Purcell and Draghi, culminating in a magnificent performance of Handel's suite in G minor. He seemed to be completely unknown to the American audience (just as the fine resident harpsichordist this festival and last, Elizabeth Wright, is unknown here), but was deservedly well received. The sound seemed a little faint, but I presumed that it carried. I heard Fretwork from near the back. 'Overheard' is a better word; it felt like being in a control room with the sound switched off and the music audible only through the door. It might just have worked with a consort that played in an old-fashioned, stolid way, and with singers to match. But what seemed to be a subtle performance of consort songs didn't reach me, and even the jokes fell flat. I heard mixed reports of other concerts there; sometimes the performers were criticised, but how can one give good performances when there is no relationship between the sound one is producing and the surrounding acoustic? It was not over-resonant: rather the sound was swallowed up by the space and disappeared.

I was near the front again for Anonymous 4. This is the third concert of theirs I have heard within a year. I keep puzzling at my lack of enjoyment and wondering what is wrong with me, but took some comfort in that both RD and my neighbour agreed that the performance was boring and left us cold. The quartet seems to take a positive pleasure in avoiding any opportunities of contrast and variety. Sequences were not sung with different voices for the paired half-verses, the polyphonic hymn was not *alternatim*, and the element of dialogue in *Stand wel moder* was ignored. (I had hoped to include the music as our edition this month, but space is lacking.) The four singers might as well have been in front of a microphone for all the regard they paid to the audience. And the music sounded so gutless. While one does not expect a romantically-anguished interpretation, there is something wrong if a dialogue between Christ on the Cross and his mother sounds merely pretty. How different, an hour later, was Anne Azéma: a personality, a communicator, a singer who expresses herself through the words, yet who also operates within the style demanded by what she is singing. My only regret was that her companion, Andrew Lawrence-King, mis-sensed the feel of the occasion and protracted his interludes without drawing the audience along with him: many left before the end, perhaps disappointed that the singer's role was rather a secondary one.

The exhibition returned to the Castle, a fine venue, with ample space, not over-expensive snacks (food and drink is often a problem for stall-holders at such events) and a steady stream of knowledgeable visitors. Makers expressed some disappointment; we speculated that there may now be so many instruments around that newcomers can find decent second-hand ones. Led by a wandering child, I investigated the upper floors of the tower and was amazed to find four well-shaped rooms, one above the other and fairly soundproof, each capable of holding a couple of hundred people for small-scale concerts. I suspect that there may be problems with safety or access, but if they were solved, virtually all the BEMF, except opera and large-scale concerts, could take place in one building (perhaps performing some concerts twice).

Apart from *King Arthur* (and even that had its amateurish aspects), this Festival did not seem as strong as its reputation demands. Despite my jaundiced view, Anonymous 4 were a great success; but neither Fretwork nor Andrew Lawrence-King seemed at their best (though that may have been the exacerbated by Emmanuel Church). Despite the brilliant solo work (by instrumentalists as well as the singer) of the pleasure gardens concert, that was more a supporting than a major event. So it is almost entirely for *King Arthur* that I will remember BEMF 1995. I hope finances permit a more ambitious 1997. I have heard of one proposal from the 1995 artistic directors which sounds very exciting; I would certainly support that or any other plan that would involve the same team in another operatic venture. Finally, congratulations to Kathy Fay for making everything run so smoothly.

CONCURRENT EVENTS

If you want to learn the geography of Boston, try sampling some of the 92 Concurrent Events in 26 locations listed in the Festival programme. Our survey cannot give more than a cross-section of what was on offer. 'Concurrent' is certainly an accurate description, with up to four events starting at the same time. These concerts included some outstanding performances and their choice of programme tended to echo that of the main festival with works by Purcell and his contemporaries. Most were given by small ensembles, including the obligatory viol and harpsichord. Repertoire stretched from medieval Spanish to rock improvisations on Renaissance music, with the vast majority adhering firmly to the baroque. There were also 8.30 am breakfast discussions with Early Music America.

Faced with choosing between 'Zephyrus plays Vivaldi' (surely hardly correct when *Zephyrus* the group included a singer, not to mention music by other composers) and 'Love, Death and Broccoli', it was not surprising that I favoured the latter. Venues varied from the cavernous (Cathedral Church of St Paul) to the intimate (Boston Conservatory) and the outrageously ornate (white and gold ballroom in the Boston Centre for Adult Education).

Tuesday Phoenix. Renaissance and Contemporary Consort Music and Jazz

King's Chapel (building started in 1747)

Ensemble a five-strong consort using recorder, viols, lute, guitar, oboe and voice

Dress Male: tending towards Poldarkian collarless shirts with black trousers. Female: floral summer dresses or skirts

Atmosphere informal

Audience around 60

At their best in jolly bouncy pieces, it was striking that the most successful item on the programme (too long at an hour and a half, with a brief interval) was Andrew Charleton's *Ayre Conditioned* in trad. jazz style. Also enjoyable was artistic director Jannifer Barron Southcott's Fantasia on the Romanian Folk Song *Joc de Leagne* for four recorders. Some of the singing was stylish, some less so. Final recorder notes regularly displayed a distressing tendency to go out of tune.

Tuesday Kammerton & guests Flourishes, Cantatas & Concerti – Virtuoso Music of the High Baroque

Cathedral Church of Saint Paul: large, lofty and imposing

Ensemble violins, traverso, 'cello, harpsichord, viola, soprano, clarino

Dress tending towards designer black

Atmosphere serious

Because of the length of the previous concert, I missed much of this; but what was left demonstrated stylish and beautiful string playing, and I particularly regret not hearing Alessandro Scarlatti's 'Su le sponde del Tebro'.

Wednesday *Duo Maresienne. Fiori Musicali* (Galilei, Frescobaldi, Dalla Casa, Bassani, Corelli, Kapsberger, Fontanelli)

Boston Conservatory Concert Room: intimate, dark panelled chamber with perfect chamber music acoustic

Ensemble viola da gamba and archlute/theorbo

Dress Olav: darkish jacket, trousers, shirt and tie

Carole: longish black skirt and jade green silk blouse

Atmosphere Initial embarrassment because of the small size of audience (12)

The long trudge to the Boston Conservatory may have deterred an audience, but those who made it were treated to a display of dazzling technical virtuosity and passionate playing of gut-gripping intensity that held the audience frozen still in its seats. The ensemble between Carol Lewis (who really did make the viol sing) and Olav Chris Henriksen was perfect – and had the polish of long practice. Particularly enjoyable was a contemporary transcription of Corelli's Sonata op. 5/3 for viol and archlute.

Wednesday Julie Comparini The Golden Age of Verbal Aggression: Language and Slang in 17th-Century England

Boston Centre for Adult Education: grandish plain wood-panelled drawing room

Atmosphere Relaxed and friendly

Audience c.25

This young (20) and enthusiastic lecturer (BA linguistics UC at Berkeley), perhaps lacking in depth and knowledge from outside her period, gave a well-presented and amusing survey with overheads and CD examples. The emphasis was, as the audience obviously hoped, more on rude words than other slang and covered mostly well-known terms (though 'vice-admiral' is a rarity). The main title was coined by Reinhold Aman of the Maledicta Society.

Wednesday enChanté Saved by Music, Lured by Love

Boston Centre for Adult Education: small but lavish white and gold ballroom with cherubs

Ensemble soprano, viola da gamba, baroque flute and harpsichord

Dress themed in cream or a cream ground

Audience around 25

A French programme of Campra, Bernier (Cantatas) and Leclair (Instrumental) that was difficult to pull off (though in a perfect setting) and appeared insufficiently rehearsed with an ensemble that wasn't always together. Lovely soprano (Shannon Larkin), though could have been much more expressive and variable. Full words and translations provided – most useful.

Wednesday Capilla Flamenco Tallis and Victoria

Church of St John the Evangelist: dark and gothic with excellent choral acoustic

Ensemble 12-strong choir

Dress male: darkish day suits; female: short black dresses

Audience: around 30

Excellent blend of voices with particularly lovely bass and tenor, good treble imitation from the sopranos and beautifully tuned chords for Tallis's *Salve Intermerata* mass and Victoria's *Tantum ergo, Versa est in luctum* and *Magnificat Primi Toni*. Lovely full sound, which at times needed to be more contemplative. If you are going to change your Latin from English soft consonants to Italian hard ones you need to change the 'R's and vowels too. Well directed by Timothy Hagy. Texts and translations supplied.

Thursday *Ex Umbris Melancholy – Down in the Dumps in Elizabethan England*

Boston Centre for Adult Education: white and gold ballroom

Ensemble multi-talented instrumental/vocal ensemble

Dress very black

Audience around 60

Slick, professional, dramatic, unpretentious. *Ex Umbris* are Paul Shipper, Tom Zajac, Karen Hansen and Grant Herreid, with Shannon Anderson as guest. This was a mesmerising performance which left no member of the audience uninvolving, a joyful survey of melancholic music cleverly programmed and held together with well-relished quotes. Particularly unforgettable was *St Bernard's Vision or a Discourse between the Soule and the Body of a damned man newly deceased, laying upon the faults of each other; with a speech of the Divell's in Hell to the tune of Fortune My Foe*. A well-deserved standing ovation ensued. Programme notes were witty and lavish with texts provided.

Thursday Cambridge Bach Ensemble The Singing of the Word: Music from Lutheran Germany

Old West Church: large, light and airy square box

Ensemble 8 voices with viol and organ

Dress black trousers and bright shirts

Audience around 90

Useful texts and translations were provided for what was an ambitious programme of Bach (J. S. and J. Christoph), Schütz and Schein. This is a choir of accomplished soloists, ably conducted by Scott Metcalf. The sound was lucid and the articulation good, though the acoustics of the church were somewhat dry. It was refreshing to see a director who can sit down and let the singers get on with an unaccompanied piece without him, even if Schütz's *Selig sind die Toten* was published with an organ part.

Friday *La Luna Henry Purcell and his French contemporaries*

Meeting Room, Museum of Afro-American History: airy white room with balcony

Ensemble 2 violins, bass viol and harpsichord

Dress black trousers, coloured shirts (viol: cream skirt)

Audience around 60

Superb concert of Purcell (Sonatas 1 & 6, 1683), Marais (Suite 1 in C major), du Mont, Gaultier and Lambert. Considering that this was the group's public debut, the ensemble was unbelievably good, with emotional, expressive playing of the highest quality and every stylish phrase brim full of meaning. Particularly exquisite were the suspensions in du Mont's Pavane in D minor. Harpsichordist Byron Schenkman was extraordinarily good in Gaultier's *Tombeau de Mezangeau*. Violinists Ingrid Matthews and the multi-talented Scott Metcalf were superb as was Emily Walhout on viol.

Friday *Altramar Iberian Garden: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Spain*

Cathedral Church of St Paul

Ensemble 4-strong, instrumental/vocal

Dress male: black trousers and coloured shirts; female: black skirt and jacket/indian trousers & top

Audience initially 100

At two hours (including interval), this was way too long. Presentation inclined towards the po-faced and worthy and tended to lack pace, especially the two estampies, and go on for too long. Programme notes were extensive, but lacked details of sources (particularly important when much of what one is hearing could be construed as spurious) and full translations of the texts. Most successful was *Secretos quero descuvoir*, a beautiful Sephardic song from Turkey of uncertain date.

Saturday *Et Cetera Love, Death & Broccoli*

The French Library: near-black panelled room with painted gold filigree carving as relief

Ensemble 3 sopranos, viol and harpsichord

Dress singers: smart black or white, players: casualish

Audience around 60

Sparkling selection of excellent pieces by Rossi, Marazzoli, Caccini, Luzzachi, Merula and Frescobaldi. Well sung by Shannon Larkin, Susan Harris and Fumi Yamamoto (who had a particularly good presence) with sound instrumental ensemble from Paul Johnson and Ruth McKay. The title was inspired by the content of Merula's amusingly melodramatic love plaint 'Quando gli uccelli portaranno i zoccoli' (When birds wear clogs).

Sunday Old North Singers & Collegium Iosquinum Morning Service in the Old North Church, a stunning Wren-inspired church, full of light

Ensemble church choir with instrumentalists

Since the Festival tradition began in British Cathedrals, perhaps there should be an official BEMF Service (or is that

contrary to the US constitutional separation of church and state, currently topical?) However, it was good to see sacred music in its proper setting and sung from a gallery, even if it inclined towards being opera chorisy. Excellent sermon, great readings, pleasant service.

I also attended a session 'What Makes a Great Brochure?', one of Early Music America's breakfast round tables in a bland room at the Swedenborg Chapel. About 15 attended. It was led by Sheila Beardslee (BEMF Publications and Boston Early Music News) and José Verstappen (Manager, Early Music Vancouver). Amidst the emphasis on type (not using helvetica) and computers, two most important points were missed: (1) triple check to make sure you've included when, where, what and who (2) look at everything from the point-of-view of your target audience, not yourself. Discussion also touched on the increasing difficulty of attracting large live audiences, copyright issues and hotels as dissemination points. Practical experience of one participant's group underlined the influence of the internet for publicising events on musical bulletin boards. Early Music America also wants to set up information on it.

Rosemary's Recipe for a Successful Concurrent Concert

¶ Good titling is essential when there is no major work in the programme. But if you choose a clever title, make sure that your programme backs it up. There is nothing more annoying than feeling you have been lured to a concert on false pretences.

¶ If you're performing in a language foreign to you, it is not enough to get the vague outlines of pronunciation right, the vowel colours and consonants need to sound idiomatic.

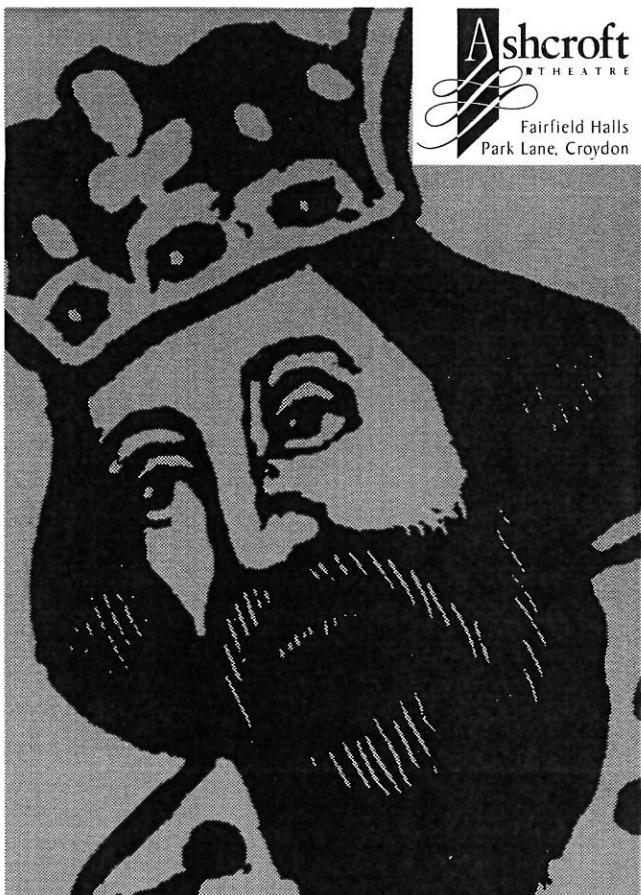
¶ 45-50 minutes is the ideal length. Your audience may well have planned to dash to another concert and will not be amused to miss it as a consequence of your excesses. Also consider their comfort: 45 minutes is quite enough for most church pews. If you have a surfeit of good material, consider doing two events instead of one, even if you have to devise two names for yourselves.

¶ Take the time to rehearse the programme thoroughly enough – especially if you're not used to performing with other members of your ensemble: it always shows if you haven't and you're not.

¶ Investigate the venues and choose the one most suitable to your group, the music that you have chosen and the potential size of the audience.

¶ If you want a good audience, try to book a location that's as near to the main events as possible

Early Music Review - 12 - July 1995



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DIY SPINET

Anthony Miskin

This article outlines some of the joys and pitfalls experienced by a complete amateur in building an English bentside spinet from a kit. The kit has been developed by John Barnes of Edinburgh and is supplied by Woods of Bradford. It is a faithful copy of a spinet built by Stephen Keene in his London workshops around 1715. It makes little compromise to modern methods of construction and copies the original in all major respects including use of the original types of wood.

I have always enjoyed the sound made by early keyboard instruments. The plain plinkety plunk and the logical, almost mathematical music with which they are associated appeals to my scientific and logical mind. My first experience of listening to one was as a boy at a boarding school. The resident music master kept what I now know was a virginal in his room. He always referred to it as a harpsichord, probably because if the adolescent, male pupils had known that what he kept in his room was a virginal it would have caused some risqué humour. Favoured pupils were invited to this room for evening recitals. Although I was not amongst the favoured pupils, having little musical talent, some of my friends were. So I sneaked in with them. Despite this early interest in music I have never progressed beyond the stage of being able to play nursery rhymes or Christmas carols on any musical instrument. However when I recently married for the second time at the age of fifty, as part of her dowry, my wife came complete with a piano and the ability to play it. Even more exciting, her brother in Amsterdam owned a harpsichord, which rekindled some of my early love for the instrument. Our nearest music shop is Woods in Bradford to which regular trips were now made to purchase sheet music. Whilst my wife browsed through the music, I spent the time admiring the various early keyboard instruments, trying to persuade my wife to play a tune for me and collecting price lists. The problems in my mind were that the harpsichords were too expensive for us and the smaller and cheaper instruments did not have quite the punch and sonority that I so admired. We consoled ourselves with the fact that anyway there would hardly be room in our house for a full sized harpsichord as well as the piano.

Early in 1994 we noticed the appearance of a different instrument in Woods. This was an English bentside spinet; a copy of an instrument built in 1715. I had always thought that a spinet was small and rectangular in shape but this one had strings nearly the same length as the harpsichord alongside. It was only single strung but then the two people I know who own harpsichords only ever tune one set of strings, so that did not seem too great a drawback. Its tone sounded as full in the bass and as sustained in the treble as

the harpsichord, which was promising. Because the keyboard is set at about 45° to the strings it is more compact than the harpsichord and would perhaps fit in our house. But the greatest news was the price, which was only a little more than half as much as the harpsichords we had been considering. Several months passed by whilst we wondered how we were going to save the necessary money, then a small legacy came to us and it seemed an ideal purchase to mark the loss of a dear colleague. One day found us in Bradford with some friends, so we arranged to call in at Woods to place an order for the spinet kit, thinking that delivery would take perhaps two or three months. To our amazement we were told that the spinet kits were stock items and we could take one with us now if we wished. A cheque was duly made out and accepted with little credit formality. The back seats of our small family estate car were folded down and with the driver squeezed up against the steering wheel it was just possible to get the packing crate in. Our friends had to sit on top of the crate, but as it was made for export orders and substantially built no damage was done.

And so on to the construction. The two questions I would have liked answered before I purchased were 'How long will it take to build' and 'How difficult is it'. Neither question was answered for me and even now I have completed the building I am unable to give a precise answer. Building the spinet was a hobby so I did not keep any records of how much time I spent working on it. What I can say is that from taking delivery of the box of parts to final completion took seven weeks. I am self employed and by chance there was very little paid employment to do during that time. It almost certainly took more than 250 hours and less than 400 hours. If I was to do it again, with the knowledge I have now gained, I would expect it to take less than three hundred hours. I had no prior experience of instrument building or cabinet work. A look in my toolbox will reveal two blunt chisels for fitting doors into houses, some spanners for plumbing, wire cutters for electrical work, a heavy hammer and assorted screwdrivers. My power tools are a 225mm diameter circular saw, a jigsaw with a broken roller guide and a twenty year old electric drill. I consider myself to be a competent DIY enthusiast around the house. I can put up shelves that do not fall down, plumb in a washing machine or provide a new mains electricity socket. I would not, however, consider it important whether a saw cut was made to the left or the right of a pencil line. In the event, despite the accuracy required in the building of the spinet, everything went together very well. If care and time are taken no previous experience is needed: it will just take a little longer to complete.

The packing of the kit was superb. We prised off the lid of the packing crate to find the large parts inside held in place with mounting blocks and the small parts all packed in polystyrene. The instruction manual was put aside for bedtime reading whilst we admired the beauty of the wood and took in the delightful smell of the cedar. The spinet is a faithful copy of the original instrument and matches the original types of wood. The case is solid walnut, the wrest plank a massive piece of beech, internal linings are cedar, the keyboard lime with ebony key plates, the jacks pear, etc. The parts were ticked off the list and taken into what we rather fancifully call the piano room. It is quite a small multi-purpose room and houses an upright piano, a bed settee for guests, an office desk and a couple of chairs. This was intended to be the home of the completed instrument and moreover the temporary workshop. The empty packing case was nailed together again and set up across the arms of the bed settee as a low-level bench for assembling the bulk of the spinet. The office desk gained a sheet of 25mm blockboard to cover its surface. I also secured the blockboard to the wall to keep it steady. A small engineer's vice that clamped to the bench, a drill stand and a good desk light completed the set-up.

The first instruction in the manual is to read the whole manual. This I did. Most things seemed fairly clear. Some of the terminology and names of parts took a bit of re-reading but otherwise I felt that there was adequate information to explain every step in some detail. It was a bit worrying to discover that amongst the tools required I needed a block plane and a cabinet scraper, neither of which I owned, nor did I know what they were or how to use them. On enquiring the following day at my local village ironmonger it transpired that they did not stock such items but could obtain them within a week. The price of the block plane made me wonder whether I was about to tackle a bigger project than I had at first thought. I was offered 'Sandwick Sandplate' as an alternative of the 1990s. It transpired that this is an all metallic version of sandpaper and available in three grades. Unlike sandpaper it has a glue backing and can be stuck to any shape of sanding block. The coarse grade removes material at a rate almost equal to that of a fine set plane, the medium grade at a faster rate than any sandpaper but leaves a fine finish and the fine grade almost polishes whilst still removing material. It was easily the most useful and most used tool, handy at every stage. All the other tools I already owned. A few special hand tools are required, but these are either supplied with the kit or there are instructions on how to make them from parts supplied with it. I managed without either the block plane or the cabinet scraper.

The next day I set about making jacks - the small wooden parts that pop up and pluck the strings. At this early stage I encountered my first real problem. The instructions referred to 'the front' and 'the back' of a jack. Now this might make sense to anyone who has examined the inner workings of a harpsichord but was not very informative to me. By a process of elimination I chose a possible avenue of

progress and decided to make just one of the fifty eight jacks needed. There were two spares anyway if I got it totally wrong. The first task was to drill a hole 0.65mm diameter through the jack. I have drilled thousands of holes in my life but never anything this small. I have at least three boxes of drill bits marked out from 1.0mm to 10mm. Why three? Well, all of them have the drill bits smaller than 3.0mm missing, as I have usually broken these on about the fifth hole drilled and the rest are blunt as I have never mastered the knack of re sharpening them. All the drill bits required to build the spinet are supplied with the kit, but I could not imagine drilling fifty eight jacks without breaking a 0.65mm bit. The instructions were to clamp a hand drill in a vice and whilst holding a jack in one hand to offer it up to the drill bit. Now my hand drill is rather old and not very well made. Whilst the drill bit was rotating on its own axis it also progressed through an orbit of about 2mm diameter in a sort of planetary action. Ah well, this was only a trial run and there were two spares anyway. I completed my first jack about two hours later. The author of the instruction manual claimed to make ten in an hour!

The next step was a trip back to Woods to let them examine my sample and give further advice. In any case I had already planned a business trip to Bradford for later in the week. The staff were most helpful and demonstrated to me how they make jacks using some beautiful and rather expensive looking tools. My jack was almost right. They were sorry about the lack of diagrams in the instructions but I was the first person to attempt to build from this kit. Yes, they had sold several kits but nobody seemed to have started building yet or if they had, no problems had been reported. In fairness this was my only visit to Woods. Everything else I was able to complete using the instructions and drawings supplied. I am also told that some diagrams of jack construction have subsequently been added to the manual.

The case of the spinet took shape rapidly. This is basically a box with some rather unusual mitred angles in it and one curved side. All the really difficult bits of cutting the long mitred joints and steaming the bentside has already been done. The pieces fitted beautifully. Internal braces are fitted and it is not long before you begin to get an idea of the final shape and size of the instrument. I took a deep breath before attempting to fit the soundboard. This is very thin, varying between 1.6mm and 1.8mm in thickness. The instruction manual gives clear guidance on how to achieve the varying thickness and, improbable as the methods might sound, in practice they work well. Hitchpins, bridge pins and nut pins all have to be cut from brass wire, filed square and then fitted. Some accuracy is called for here. The geometry of a bentside spinet is more complicated than that of a harpsichord. The keyboard is set at roughly 45° to the strings. The tuning pins and the nut pins are set approximately parallel to the keyboard whilst the jacks are obviously parallel to the strings and all the strings are parallel to each other. A full size drawing of the spinet is supplied and careful use of this together with much

forwards and backwards checking enabled me to achieve a good result. I know that one pair of strings is slightly out of position, but the casual observer would not be able to notice this and it does not effect the final playing or sound. There is some trimming of the case to do using mouldings supplied. The curved pieces could probably be fitted without steaming as they are relatively thin. I chose to give mine a little pre-bend by poking them down the spout of a boiling kettle for ten minutes and then clamping them around a dustbin lid whilst they cooled off.

Next the keyboard. Building this took me nearly a third of the whole building time. It could probably be reduced to a quarter if you had a fine electric band-saw and a fixed electric sander, but it would still be a major part of the whole. I possessed neither so all the work was done with a very fine hand saw and my trusty Sandwick Sandplate. The problem is that there are fifty eight of everything and although no individual task is particularly difficult or time consuming, considerable care is needed. My saw did slip once and I have a slight nick in one of the keyplates. Woods have offered to supply me with a spare but I have turned the offer down. You would not buy a real leather coat if you wanted a synthetic looking plastic one with no marks or variations in it. I feel the same about my keyboard. The small nick is my mark to remind me that I made it.

The strings went on next. The tuning pins are supplied bright, with instructions on how to black them if you prefer. The instructions call for an electric or gas cooker ring to heat up the pins. We only have an Aga, a type of solid fuel cooking stove. The pins went on the hotplate and the lid was closed over them. During the next twenty minutes of slow heating the pins gradually went through various shades of blue and purple before reaching a deep matt grey. These were forced into their holes using quite a lot of brute force and resulting in a blistered finger. There are one or two knacks in stringing a harpsichord using brass wire supplied on reels. Now that I have fully strung all fifty eight notes I feel that I am beginning to acquire some of them. Maybe after a hundred strings I shall have mastered it. In the meantime I have a spinet that sounds right and plays right but some of the stringing probably looks a little untidy to the eye of a connoisseur.

Finally it was back to the jacks, which is where I had started. I set up for some serious batch production. It really was straightforward once you knew what you were doing. I never quite got up to the ten completed in an hour rate given in the manual but I came close. And the 0.65mm drill bit? I broke it on the sixtieth jack so I ended up with the fifty eight I needed and the one sample I had made right at the beginning.

The inside of the case and the soundboard were given three coats of white French polish, rubbing down with fine wire wool between coats. At least that is what I think it was. My knowledge of timber finishes stops short at Dulux undercoat and gloss. The walnut to the outside of the case

and lid was given two heavy coats of linseed oil well rubbed in with wire wool and then two coats of Briwax, a petroleum based wax, again rubbed in with fine wire wool. This has given a satisfying semi-gloss sheen to the whole instrument with very little work and little skill.

The spinet has not yet been given a full work-out by an experienced player but I like what I have heard to date. To my amateur ear it has a very full tone, coming close to the harpsichords I know.

Would I do it again? The motivation would not be the same as this was partly a present from me to my wife. I did, however, thoroughly enjoy doing it. Some might say that I even became obsessed with it. Yes, I would do it again; but I might buy that bandsaw and sander first. They could not be economically justified as the time saving might only be twenty hours but if I was to follow it up by building the harpsichord next and then the clavichord...

We are grateful to Wood's of Bradford for making this article available to us.



KING'S MUSIC

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New Publications

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RECORD REVIEWS

MEDIEVAL

Daniel and the Lions (Ludus Danielis) New York's Ensemble for Early Music, dir. Frederick Renz. 70' 37" (rec 1986) Fonè 88 F 09-29

Quite an old recording, presumably sent because it hasn't been available here previously. It must have been about 35 years ago when an earlier New York group put this piece on the map (its advert in the personal column of *The Times* for a sword-swallowing and fire-eater turned out to be a marvellous piece of publicity). This performance is somewhat in the New York Pro Musica style, with lots of instrumental participation and rhythmic impulse. I'm not sure if one would want to record it thus now, but in its way it is impressively dramatic. CB

RENAISSANCE

Byrd Early works for voices, viols and virginals 1 Fagiolini, Robert Hollingworth, Fretwork, Sophie Yates 73' 00" Chandos CHAN 0578

Ad Dominum cum tribulare, Attolite portas, Da mihi auxilium, Domine secundum actum meum, Misere mihi Domine; Farewell false love, My mind to me, O Lord how vain, Triumph with pleasant melody, Truth at the first, Who likes to love; All in a garden green, La volta, O mystris myne, Wolsey's wilde

Any concerted effort to bring the early works of William Byrd to disc is to be applauded, and this first recording in a projected series by I Fagiolini and Fretwork deserves further plaudits for its energy and idiomatic style, springing in part from a tireless pursuit of authenticity in every respect, including pronunciation. Just occasionally this sidetracks the singers into over-bucolic mannerisms, surely inappropriate in the context of art-music; but on the whole it sounds very natural and convincing, and illuminates more than it obscures (full texts are provided). Fretwork's unobtrusive but flawless support should not go unmentioned, and Sophie Yates' garrulously 'ill-tempered' virginals provide diverting episodes in a fascinating programme. D. James Ross

Fayrfax Missa O quam glorifica The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood ASV CD GAU142 74' 26"

+ troped *Kyrie Orbis factor*, chant hymn *O quam glorifica*, *Ave Dei Patris filia*, *Somewhat musing*, *To complayne me*, *That was my joy* (anon).

Having established their reputation with Ludford, The Cardinall's Musick has now moved on to Fayrfax and here makes an impressive start. The Mass was probably the composer's Cambridge doctoral exercise from 1504 and is a work of considerable complexity, perhaps surviving only in a simplified notation. It is sung from a new edition by the group's musicologist, David

Skinner, which corrects that in CMM. The recording was made in the Fitzalan Chapel in Arundel Castle, which Skinner has shown to have been associated with one of the major sources, the Lambeth Palace MS. The singing is bold and confident: a good, solid sound is built up from individual lines sung with expression and due attention to the words, helped by choice of a sensible pitch (i.e. not up a minor third). The booklet is most informative, apart from setting out the plainsong hymn as prose. The secular works will sensibly be divided among the CDs of the sacred: they would have a lack of variety as a disc by themselves, but they make a bonus on what is already a generous timing. I first played this immediately after the Morales disc reviewed below. There, the marvellous sound and the music were not quite on the same wavelength; here refreshingly they are in perfect unison. Since writing this I have had the chance to hear the group sing in Ludford's church, St Margaret's, Westminster. This showed that they don't depend on the microphone and heavy editing for their success. CB

Gibbons Hosanna to the Son of David The Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, Fretwork, Marlow 74' 23" Conifer 75605 51231 2"

Almighty and everlasting God, Behold thou hast made my days, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, Deliver us O Lord, Glorious and powerful God, Hosanna to the Son of David, I am the resurrection, Lift up your heads, O all true faithful hearts, O clap your hands, O Lord how do my woes, O Lord I lift my heart, O Lord in thee is all my trust, O Lord in thy wrath, Out of the deep, Praise the Lord O my soul, See see the Word is incarnate, This is the record of John.

Having heard too many recordings of Gibbons' church music marred by muddy recordings or sloppy singing by hordes of unfocussed boy trebles, it is a joy to hear an enterprising selection of the familiar and unfamiliar presented by a choir truly confident in this repertoire. Richard Marlowe's purposeful direction suggests an impressive understanding of the Jacobean idiom, allowing sour cadential harmonies to speak for themselves rather than hammering them up. The choir is also well served with the viols of the ubiquitous Fretwork, but it is to the singers themselves – soloists and choristers, male and female – that the chief accolades belong. D. James Ross

Josquin Missa de Beata Virgina; Mouton Motets Theatre of voices, Paul Hillier Harmonia Mundi HMU 907136 52' 49"

Mouton *Ave Maria gemma virginum*, *Ave Maria virgo serena*, *Ave sanctissima Maria*, *Nesciens Mater*, *O Maria piissima*

I was impressed when I heard this programme at a concert in Berkeley three years ago. The movements of the mass are separated by motets by Mouton, which are not at all overshadowed by Josquin's most famous mass; the opening double-canon *Nesciens mater* is particularly fine. The mass

presents problems, most obviously in the use of *chiavette* for all sections except the creed. Here there is no transposition into a coherent tessitura and the high pitch is retained. This makes an extraordinary contrast between the end of the Gloria and the opening of Mouton's *Ave Maria... virgo serena* (in which what is sung at bar 33 bears little relationship to the score.) In principle I would prefer low-pitch through-out, but the choir is happier with the higher music, which it sings with greater definition. Clarity of diction is erratic and the music often feels rushed. The CD is certainly worth hearing, but I feel that the Theatre of Voices is not at its best here. CB

The music is performed (with a few differences) from the editions published by Fazer reviewed in EMR 8; an advert is enclosed with this issue.

Lassus Villanelle, moresche e altre canzoni Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini Opus 111 OPS 30-94 59' 06"

'Everything you ever wanted to hear about sex but could never find on a CD of early music...' we are told. In fact, the texts are mostly vulgar rather than erotic. Despite that, it is an entirely captivating record. The eight singers rightly treat the music with enormous flexibility, enjoying every bar of Lassus' sophisticated reworking of popular or pseudo-popular material. Congratulations to John Sidgwick for wrestling with the texts and translating them. A whole disc of fun pieces perhaps needs selective listening, even though the performances are irresistible. Arcimboldo's fruity portrait of the Emperor Rudolph II forms a suitably enticing (and ambiguous) cover. CB

Morales Missa Mille regretz Concert de les Arts, Victor Alonso 54' 12" Accord 204662

Also included: *Lamentabatur Jacob*, 3 vihuela transcriptions & the chanson.

The performances here by six singers (AATTB), vihuela and organ are very impressive, with an exciting sound and considerable intensity and musical understanding. But I found listening an effort because of the slow tempi. I don't think that a renaissance choir would have taken the word 'Lamentabatur' as a cue to sing at half speed. The Mass is a little faster, and I eventually adjusted to it. Josquin (if it be he: cf the article mentioned on p.4) crams so much into his short chanson that is marvellous to be able to hear it expanded over five movements. I'm not sure that the vihuela accompaniment helps; it is not consistently-enough audible to be more than an occasional distraction. Is it a Spanish practice to intone the Gloria and Credo tutti? The three vihuela transcriptions are not identified (don't Spanish libraries have Brown's catalogue?) and are recorded so closely that the movement of the hands distracts. CB

Palestrina *Canticum canticorum*

Ensemble William Byrd, Graham O'Reilly
Jade 74321 28337-2 79' 53"

This new complete recording of Palestrina's beautiful setting of texts from the Song of Songs makes a fascinating comparison with the almost ten-year-old version by the Hilliard Ensemble. The French ensemble's reading is generally faster, more colourful, though less well-blended than the English group, with individual voices standing out, and is less secure in intonation. One is reminded slightly of the style of the Ensemble Clément Janequin: what is lost in blend is compensated for in drama. But these are not chansons; so in spite of some striking insights, I found this less than fully convincing and on repeated listening some of the bumpier moments began to grate.

D James Ross

Pallavicino *Il sesto libro de madrigali a 5* 1600

The Consort of Musicke, dir Anthony Rooley 63' 57"

Musica Oscura 070976

The sleeve photograph alone might be enough to persuade some people to buy this CD and the sight of Emma Kirkby and Mary Nicholls clad in the flimsiest of gauze gowns does give the flavour of these erotic settings by Pallavicino (1551-1601) of Guarini and Tasso. The Consort of Musicke does justice to them, savouring each delicious word and madrigalian device, of which the composer uses the whole gamut. I particularly relished his suspensions and dissonances, for example in *A poco a poco io sento*, which contains gloriously overlapping phrases as well as a touching series of sobs (not overdone here) at the end. *Lunge da voi* reveals one of the secrets of Kirkby's fascinating voice: her opening leap is wider than an octave, but still seems perfectly in tune, the slight sharpness at the top being absorbed into the tone quality. Although the singers blend their voices together while retaining their individual sounds, the combination does become a little wearing and occasionally phrases bulge uncomfortably. The prevalence of one key and mood throughout makes it heavy listening in one sitting.

Selene Mills

Tomkins *Consort Music for Viols and Voices, Keyboard Music*

Rose Consort of Viols, Red Byrd, Timothy Roberts hpscd, org, John Bryan (hpscd duets) 65' 01"

Naxos 8.550602

Above the stars, O Lord let me know mine end, Thou art my King O God; Fantasia 1, 2, 12 & 14 a3, Fantasia a6, Pavan & Almain a4 in F, Pavan & Galliard a5 in a, Ut re me a4; A Fancy for two to play; In nomine (org), Miserere, Pavan & Galliard Lord Strafford, Voluntary.

This recording of relatively little-known music by one of the better-known names of English music is very welcome. Tomkins is a composer of much wider range than those who only know his church music and madrigals might think. Here are real delights: 3 verse anthems with viols, viol consorts and some keyboard music, all

excellently played. Red Byrd treat the anthems with their now familiar vigour and early accents; the music is far better served by this than by the manicured collegiate approach. It is occasionally a bit rough, and could benefit from a less consciously naive vocal technique – too much running words together, for instance. On the other hand, there are times when the Rose Consort could do with a bit of Red Byrd's vigorous and articulate boldness. But the 3-part consorts are given plenty of variety and zest and the keyboard pieces are brilliantly played. It is well worth buying and will win Tomkins many new fans. Robert Oliver

Introitus: *Vokalmusik von Dufay bis Palestrina*

A meditative journey through time. The Hilliard Ensemble, Hesperion XX. 65' 56"

EMI Classics 7243 5 55207 2 2 (rec 1982-92)

Alma Redemptoris mater (chant), Arcadelt *Il bianco e dolce cigno*, Cabezon *Pange lingua* IV, Damett *Salve porta paradisi*, Dufay *Nuper rosarum flores*, Dunstable *Veni Sancte Spiritus/Veni Creator*, Escobar *Clamabat autem mulier*, Hayne *De tous biens plaine*, Josquin *Ave Maria...Virgo serena, Mille regretz, Nymphes des bois*, La Rue *O salutaris hostia*, Lassus *in monte Oliveti*, Ockeghem *Requiem (Introitus)*, Palestrina *Tota pulchra es, Vulnerasti cor meum*, Power *Quam pulchra es*

I suspect that most of our readers will be put off by the title, cover, pretentious (and misleading) note and booklet design; why, for instance, a facsimile of a Frescobaldi title-page on the back when there is no music later than 1594 on the disc? The absence of texts and translations is also a handicap to serious listening. It is, however, a fine anthology of first-rate and finely-sung music from Dunstable to Palestrina. One gem is Dufay's motet for the consecration of Florence Cathedral over whose numerical proportions there has recently been controversy in JAMS. If you want a sampler of the Hilliards, this is a good buy – the two tracks of Hesperion XX are short and immaterial.

CB

EARLY BAROQUE

Biber *Missa Alleluia à 36 Schmelzer Vesperae solennes Gradus ad Parnassum, Concerto Palatino, Choralschola der Wiener Hofburgkapelle, Junghänel* 73' 55" dhm 05472 77328 2
Biber *Missa Alleluia; Froberger Fantasia II; Palestrina Coelestis urbs Jerusalem; Schmelzer Vesperae solennes*, two sonatas

This is the CD I have most looked forward to hearing this year. The programme is based on the services of a church consecration: Biber's figural music is interspersed with the Proper chants. Schmelzer's psalm settings are preceded by antiphons, and the service is completed by a hymn setting by Palestrina and an organ interlude by Froberger. In the very rich acoustic of the massive abbey at Melk in Austria, one very readily appreciates the flood of sound to which the sleeve notes make reference. Biber is rather more instrumental in his treatment of voices than Schmelzer, whose style is more melodic. This excellent recording is part of an on-going dhm set in

conjunction with the Austria 200 project, which aims to shed new light on Austrian music, 1550-1750. I look forward to hearing the next release.

BC

Buxtehude *Six Cantatas*

McFadden, Dukel, Kenny, van Altena, MacLeod SSATB, Orchestra Anima Eterna, The Royal Consort, van Immerseel 65' 30"

Channel Classics CCS 7895-1

Der Herr ist mit mir (BuxWV 15), Führwahr er trug (31), Herzlich Lieb hab ich dich (41), Jesu meines Lebens Leben (62), Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin (76), Nimm von uns Herr du treuer Gott (78)

Philippe Herreweghe's Collegium Vocale (who shoulder most of the work here) must have felt very much at home under van Immerseel's direction, for his performances of these cantatas are informed by the same strong sense of rhetoric which has distinguished the peerless series of recordings of Bach cantatas under the choir's founder. It is an approach which works well in this music, for Buxtehude has an infinitely varied and acute response to the dramatic possibilities offered by his texts. A fine team of soloists makes the most of the more limited opportunities that come their way and van Immerseel draws richly expressive, if not perfectly finished, playing from his orchestra. Only BuxWV 76 currently appears to be available, although BuxWV 62 was included on a valuable but sadly transient two-disc Erato set directed by Ton Koopman. The present disc (which is very well balanced and recorded) should therefore be snapped up by anyone who admires this repertoire whilst the going is good. English notes, but only German texts.

Brian Robins

Buxtehude *Sacred Cantatas* vol. 1

The Sarum Consort, Chamber Choir of St Peter's in the great Valley, dir Martha N. Johnson. 62' 58"

PGM 102

Erfreue dich Erde (BuxWV 26), Jubilate Deo (64), Lobe den Herrn (71), O fröhliche Stunden (85), Quemadmodum desiderat cervus (92), Singet dem Herrn (98), Wachet auf (101)

PGM stands for *Pro Gloria Musicae*, and this new series comes with an enthusiasm for 'extensive musical research' and 'minimalist microphone technique' that is highly commendable but is better left for the small print in the booklet. This recording is, however, most welcome, especially as the first in a series called The Buxtehude Project. It contains seven cantatas in a well-balanced programme with smaller pieces placed between three large-scale pieces (*Wachet auf, O fröhliche Stunden, & Erfreue dich, Erde*). Tamara Crout Matthews (sop) sings *Singet dem Herrn*, James Russell is the tenor for *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus & Lobe den Herrn*. Steven Rickards is the counter-tenor in the only well-known work, *Jubilate Deo*, with Donna Fournier on viol. This is not such an internationally-famous team as on the Channel disc; but the performances are entirely creditable and I hope that the series continues.

CB

PGM Recordings 1600 Broadway, Suite 610, New York NY 10019-7485, fax 212 586 5339.

Joan Cererols *Missa pro defunctis; Vespers*
Currende, Guillemette Laurens sop, Erik
Van Nevel 78' 28"
Accent ACC 94106 D

Cererols is a composer I have long been fond of, so I am delighted to be able to give high recommendation to this well-filled CD, though would suggest that the Requiem and the Vespers are heard at separate sessions. Cererols music is thoroughly integrated with the chant, and at first may seem too limited; it does not have the immediate attraction of his Christmas villancicos and the strophic *Dies irae* may disappoint if you have grandiose expectations. It did, however, remind me very much of contemporary mid-German music: Cererols is not as isolated as is often assumed. It is refreshing to hear a Vespers where chant and polyphony really belong together. CB

Marais *Music for viol and theorbo* Susanne
Braumann and Fred Jacobs 59' 39"
Globe GLO 5122
Suites in e 1701, in a and D 1711, in e 1717

Of the multitude of Marais discs to appear in Le Depardieu, this one dares to be courageously different in its choice of accompanying instrument. Marais himself recommended theorbo continuo, on account of the way its tone blended with that of the viol. The sound is certainly attractive, but I found it lacking in variety after a few tracks. I longed for the more incisive bite of a harpsichord or a guitar in some of the fast movements (and I speak as a theorbo player!) There is effortless rapport between the players (as one would expect from half of the excellent Locke Consort) and both handle their giant Italian instruments with impressive assurance. The presence of the microphones seems to encourage cautious tidiness at the expense of some passion but this starkly simple approach suits some movements very well and is certainly worth hearing. Lynda Sayce

Monteverdi *Orfeo* Eric Tappy *Orfeo*,
Ensemble vocal et instrumental de
Lausanne, Michel Corboz. 119' 06"
Erato 4509-98531-2 (rec. 1968)

Those old enough to remember how Monteverdi operas were performed in England in 1968 will find this reissue amazing. The original orchestration is taken seriously and the solo singing, while perhaps more full-blooded than current UK taste prefers, is stylish and convincing, especially Eric Tappy's *Orfeo*. The main problem is the contrast between solo and tutti sections. The former can be enjoyed without making allowance for the passage of time, but the latter are heavy and slow, feeling as if they come from a different performance. The problem is in part the use of a string orchestra (yes, I know the score lists 10 violins, but it doesn't say they play together) and partly the divorce of the chorus from the natural spoken speed of the words. This is a set that is important for any historical study of the Monteverdi revival, but is enjoyable only in part. CB

Monteverdi *Selva morale e spirituale et
l'oeuvre religieuse pour Saint-Marc de Venise*.
Soloists, Ensemble vocal et instrumental de
Lausanne, Michel Corboz. 7 hours
Erato 4509-98530-2 (6 discs) rec. 1967

I did not realise when I packed this for our American trip that the usual 3-disc box contained six discs, so it was a pleasant surprise to have so much music to occupy the more monotonous roads of Ohio and Indiana. The title on the front (which omits 'et l'oeuvre religieuse...') is misleading, for this contains not just the 1640/41 *Selva morale* but the 1650 set (though regrettably without Cavalli's concluding *Magnificat*: it is odd that there were none by Monteverdi available) and miscellaneous church pieces from various anthologies: virtually all Monteverdi's post-1610 church music, in fact. (It's a pity no-one told the note-writer.) The virtues and weaknesses are very much those of the *Orfeo* set, which was recorded the year after this by largely the same forces and probably gained enormously from the experience of this vast project. Some of the performances here sound a little unrehearsed, made for completeness rather than because the participants had the music under their skin. The same major weaknesses apply as in *Orfeo*: when parts are doubled, the tempo and intensity sags and the listener loses interest. There is, too, a general lack of enjoyment of the Latin words. That said, this is a useful compendium, rather cheaper than the scores of the Collected Works vols XV & XVI. So, provided that ones patience can tolerate the choral contributions, it offers an excellent way to get to know this aspect of Monteverdi's output. It suffers, though, from the lack of any logical arrangement and I found that the overall impression encouraged the rather low evaluation of Monteverdi's later church music that was prevalent in the 1960s. Still, if you are going on a very long journey, this is a convenient companion. CB

Monteverdi & Frescobaldi *Missa in festis
Beatae Mariae Virginis* Sylva Posser sop,
Adriano Dallape org, Vox Hesperia,
Romano Vettori dir. 55' 40"
Fonè 94 F 06
Monteverdi Mass A4 (1650), *Adoramus te Christe*
a5, *Cantata Domino A6*, *Domine ne in furore a6*,
Laudate pueri a5 (1650), Frescobaldi *Fiori musicali*,
Deus noster, Ipsi sum despontsata

Much of this represents an older style of Italian early-music performance that sounds as if it could date from any time in the last few (though not as many as four) centuries. I don't believe that this is how Monteverdi expected to hear his music, but it is interesting to hear a fairly full-bloodied organ playing along with the choir, which makes sense if it doubles the voice parts most of the time. The solo motets are attractively sung in a style much cleaner style than the choral ones, which have an intensity that purer performances can sometimes miss. The Frescobaldi, played simply and directly, sounds well on the 17th-century organ of SS Pietro e Paolo at Brentonico. CB

Purcell *Ten Sonata's in Four Parts* Locke
Consort 65' 00"
Channel Classics CCS 7295

These were on my 'set works' list at university, so I know them rather well from study as well as sight-reading through the facsimiles. Rarely have I heard them played this way, though: while most groups make a determined effort to highlight every ounce of that fam'd English vein with which the pieces are allegedly clogg'd, the Locke Consort take them at face value and play straight through. Perverse as it may seem, this, in fact, makes the scrunches all the more powerful because they occur in a relatively stable context. In case you're still in any doubt, I found these exceptionally persuasive performances: the violins are perfectly balanced; the theorbo and viol combine in accompaniment and bass passagework which matches the upper voices; each of the sonatas is neatly characterised. Very impressive – my Purcell disc of the year, so far. BC

The Glory of Purcell Emma Kirkby,
Catherine Bott, Alfred Deller, James
Bowman, The Academy of Ancient Music,
Christopher Hogwood. 74' 55"
L'Oiseau-Lyre 444 620-2 (rec 1954-1995)

This anthology chiefly derives from the recordings of Purcell's complete incidental music made by the AAM some 15 years ago (the booklet does not date the individual tracks). The only modern-instrument track is an extract from *Come ye Sons of Art* with Alfred Deller. More recent items include the final lament and chorus from the recent *Dido* with Catherine Bott. There is a fine *Golden Sonata* and an impressive performance of *The Plain* from *The Fairy Queen* with Emma Kirkby and Cat Mackintosh. Everything is secular until the last two tracks, which have recent recordings from Winchester of *Hear my prayer* and *Rejoice in the Lord alway*. I thought at first that this selection was somewhat unfocussed, but we have found it enjoyably varied as background music, with an attractive mixture of the familiar and the less-known. CB

Viadana *Vespri di San Luca* Vox Hesperia,
Coro dell'Accademia Roveretana di Musica
Antica, dir Romano Vettori (74' 10")
Fonè 94 F 09 CD

Not, perhaps, a record for animal rights activists, since the booklet tells us that Viadana (between Parma and Mantua) is the capital of the pig-slaughtering industry. The local Accademia has assembled a Vespers services for the feast of St Luke with music by its eponymous composer, mostly from his Psalms for four Choirs, op. 27, 1612. I made the mistake of first listening to it while driving home from playing in a performance of Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers, and it took several movements before I could adjust to the less expressive musical language. But it was worth persevering. Viadana's reputation (more in print than in performance) is for his small-scale concertos, so it is interesting to hear some of his larger-scale output, and

also to hear polychoral music from outside Venice or Rome. Judging from the illustration, however, the performance was nowhere near spaced out enough: no church would have allowed the area in front of its altar to be so cluttered with musicians. But quadraphonic recording did not catch on. Not as outstanding either for its music or its performance as the Biber or Cererols, but is well worth hearing. CB

LATE BAROQUE

Albinoni *Il nascimento dell'Aurora Festa pastorale per 5 voci e orchestra* Anderson, Zimmermann, Klare, Browne, Yamaj SSSAT, I Solisti Veneti, Scimone 114' Erato 4509-96374-2 (2 CDs) (rec. 1985)
Albinoni *Oboe concertos* Anthony Robson, Collegium Musicum 90, Standage 71' 48" Chandos CHAN 0579
 Op 7 nos 3,6,9,12 Op 9 nos 2,5,8,11

Albinoni still lives in the shadow of Vivaldi. These two recordings make it clear just what a shame that is. Vivaldi may historically be the more important figure, but there is somewhat more grace and simplicity in Albinoni's output. The Erato re-release features a live performance; there are quite a few hair-raising moments which might have been edited out in a studio version. The piece itself is a chain of *secco* recitative (undoubtedly the weakest feature here) and binary aria pairs, with occasional ensembles. Taken individually, the arias are pleasant enough; the whole is rather sickly sweet. Still, it should inspire further interest in Albinoni's vocal output. The Chandos set inhabits a different world altogether. There are eight concertos in the standard three-movement layout, each emphasising the lyricism of the solo line rather than any contrived virtuosity. Robson's playing perfectly matches this ideal and he is most discreetly supported by the fine instrumental ensemble. BC

Bach *Mass in B minor* Schäfer, Danz, Schäfer, Quasthoff SATB, Windsbacher Knabenchor, Deutsche Kammerakademie, Beringer 108' 27" Hänsler CD 98.959 (2 CDs)

This is a reasonable modern performance with mostly good tempi, well-selected soloists (but only four instead of the five Bach called for), mostly deft instrumental playing (though too-strident a one-family trumpet ensemble) and an attractive overall sincerity. Most interesting to the 'early' musician, however, is the frequent choice by the continuo organist, Friedmann Winklhofer, of the four- and even two-foot register for his right-hand realisations. I don't really think that Bach would have expected this (except just possibly in the *Quoniam*), but here it is documented on disc. There are better complete performances of the Mass, but it is worth hearing for this one ingredient. Stephen Daw

Bach Concertos Rousset hpscd, Schröder vln, Academy of Ancient Music, Hogwood L'Oiseau-Lyre 443 326-2 57' 17"

Hpscd Concerti in E (BWV 1053), A (BWV 1055), g (BWV 1058); vln concerto in a (BWV 1041)

Those who search for a performance of Bach's latish harpsichord concerto transcriptions where early instruments and deep thinking about the issues of performance surrounding Bach have enriched the whole are unlikely to find much edification in the rather traditional and even lightweight accounts afforded by Christophe Rousset, for all his nimble dexterity. Jaap Schröder's older recording (1981) gives deeper insights into the violin concerto, with all its tributes to Vivaldi's techniques and forms, though this listener still finds the violin-concerto disk of Sigiswald Kuijken with La Petite Bande even more rewarding. AAM has made more considered Bach recordings than these, which are really not as good as the famous names might lead us to expect.

Stephen Daw

Bach *Trio Sonatas* (BWV 525, 527, 529, 530), *Duetti* (BWV 802-5), *14 Canons* (BWV 1087) The Paladian Ensemble 74' 56" Linn CKD 036

These are quite well-made arrangements for violin, record, gamba and lute/guitar of four of the organ sonatas, the delightful keyboard duetti from *Clavier-übung III* and the wonderful perpetual 'Goldberg' canons discovered in the 1980s. There is nothing unmusical, although it is all really too polite and even *galant* for my taste, especially the organ sonatas, which seem to me to gain little from the transcribing process. But this is surely the most delightful account yet of the canons. It is all over too soon in just under seven and a quarter minutes, but that track is the one I will hear easily the most often.

Stephen Daw

Bach *Organ works, vol. 1* Jacques van Oortmerssen on the 1734 Müller organ in the Waalse Kerk, Amsterdam 75' 40" Vanguard 99101

What a wonderful CD – and the first of a series to boot. I very much look forward to reviewing every one of the rest! Jacques van Oortmerssen has built up an international following as a teacher and player from his base at the Sweelinck Conservatory and the Waalse Kerk in Amsterdam. He plays with the authority of one who is completely at ease with his music. His style is instrumental: each note is prepared, touched and articulated like a carefully faceted gemstone. In addition to approaching his music from a historical perspective, his playing is imbued with a consummate musicality. As ever, an important Dutch organ shows itself to be an ideal instrument for Bach interpretation. The typical and sensuous sounds of the Prestant/Vox Humana and Roerfluit/Quintadeen combinations send a shiver down the spine and it is good to hear one of the Vivaldi/Bach concertos sounding as if played by violins. The pieces are as carefully chosen as a recital programme, and there are even intelligent notes with organ specification and registrations. What more can I say? Andrew Benson-Wilson

Bach *Eight concertos for harpsichord* (BWV 972-6, 978, 980 & 981 86' 52" (2 discs) Divox CDX-29206-7

Hans Ludwig Hirsch is a lively player with plenty of spirit and a complementary ability to characterise the wonderfully diverse slow movements so eloquently transcribed by Bach from the works of Vivaldi and the Marcellos. The heavy modern instrument, unlike that upon which Bach might have played these works (perhaps a Mietke, an Italian harpsichord, or even a chamber organ), is a bad influence on the interpretation. Something that made a stronger differentiation between the individualities of the Italian composers' and which was less predictable within movements would have been preferable. Nevertheless, a recording to be welcomed, since there are very few accounts of these splendid pieces available; there is room for another set of the remaining concertos.

Stephen Daw

Croft *Select Anthems* Choir of New College, Oxford, dir Edward Higginbottom, Timothy Morris org 67' 13" CRD CRD3491

Croft's *Musica sacra* (1724) set a fashion for the publication of collections of anthems in score (previously, church music had circulated in MS). This contains eight examples, with two organ voluntaries. Only one piece is at all well known, *God is gone up with a merry noise*. The rest do not deserve their neglect and these convincing performances make it clear that we should not relegate Croft to being a one anthem and one hymn composer. The singing is effective, with all solo parts taken by members of the choir. CB

F Couperin *Premier Livre de Pièces de clavecin* Rousset (Joannes Ruckers harpsichord of 1624) 181' 41" HM HMC 901450.52 (3CDs)

This is a clear recording of a stimulating and exciting performance which is highly contrasted and shows great attention to detail. All the motifs are firmly sculptured with clear articulation and the sharpness of the short notes suits the dance movements very well. The expressive pieces are played quite slowly, the *Bandoline*, *Reveil Matin* and *Garnier* being particularly beautiful. The full tone of the 1624 Ruckers from Colmar is very good for the big pieces in the low register, like the *Ténèbreuse* or the *Favourite*. However, perhaps a French harpsichord of around 1720 would be more subtle and richer in harmonics. Sometimes semiquaver runs could do with more shaping to the climax. When they run at top speed to the cadence, the result lacks rhythm and is emotionally flat. Nevertheless this is a remarkable set of three discs and anyone who buys it will not be disappointed.

Michael Thomas

Desmarets *Deux Grands Motets Lorrains* Schlick, Van der Sluis, Geraerts, Van der Kamp SSH-CB, Choir of New College Oxford, Ensemble Fiori Musicale, Higginbottom (rec. 1976)

Confitebor tibi, Domine ne in furore.
Mystères de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ
 Alliot-Lugaz, Oudot, Huttenlocher STB,
 Ensemble Vocal et Instrumental de Lyon,
 Cornut (rec. 1983)
 Erato 4509-98529-2 77' 40"

The review copy of this re-issue has a very nasty moment in track 20 at about 1' 16" where the pitch momentarily changes: prospective purchasers might like to check this before closing the deal! Were they to allow this to deter, they would, in fact, miss a treat, as the *grand motet* psalm settings receive splendid performances under Edward Higginbottom's stylistically sure direction. His choir sings with great vigour and the instrumentalists match both this and the more intimate utterances of the excellent team of soloists, among whom the relaxed bass of Harry van der Kamp is particularly outstanding. The recorded sound is very good too – close enough to convey detail yet giving a real sense of space in the *tutti*. The accompanying oratorio is less successful. This is a speculative reconstruction 'at times working on a figured bass only'. The largish choir and modern instruments do not serve this music well. Too many lines are diffuse and/or ill-phrased and much of the ornamentation, including that of the soloists, is very laboured. Desmarest's eventful life story and a useful commentary on the psalms constitute the booklet's main essay, but there are neither full texts nor translations.

David Hansell

Handel Complete Violin Sonatas Ensemble Baroque de Nice 67' 14"
 Pierre Verany PV795032
 HWV 361, 364, 368, 370-373

This is the repertoire I was raised on, so it comes as something of a joy to hear it complete, even though what is recorded here does not match what Handel scholars now recognise as his 'complete violin sonatas': four of them are anonymous and there is a strange description of the g minor sonata as being from opus 2. Gilbert Bezzina's violin playing is clean and bright, if very occasionally rhythmically unsure. Frédéric Audibert on cello and Vera Elliott on harpsichord supply a steady bass line. This is Handel and imitators in relaxed mode, rarely indulging in virtuoso display, seldom even decorating the written line. Hardly on a par with some of the more virtuoso performances, this is still a worthwhile account of these pieces, which I enjoy despite their mixed attribution. BC

Lalande 3 Leçons de ténèbres
 Etcheverry, Charbonnier, Boulay 60' 53"
 Erato 4509-98528-2 (rec. 1977)

In his settings of Jeremiah, Lalande shows himself absolutely the equal of Couperin and Charpentier and lovers of these composers' *leçons* should not hesitate to add this re-issue to their collections. The music is full of felicitous melodic detail and, as might be expected, reaches peaks of expressiveness in the 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem'

refrains that conclude each section. Each of these is constructed upon a descending chromatic ground bass and will not disappoint even the devotees of a certain similarly written lament! Music of this kind inevitably places an enormous burden on its singer. Micaëla Etcheverry sings with the involvement of one who has clearly thought about and appreciates the text and some of the more sombre verses especially (e.g., track 12) are chilling. A wider range of brighter and more varied vowel sounds would have aided her projection of the details of the words and she does push sharp from time to time, but overall this is a rewarding interpretation. The continuo playing is sensibly restrained but with enough inventive detail to keep it alive. Laurence Bouley is also the author of the informative booklet note and, glory be, there are full texts and translations. There is one technical eccentricity: the last chord is artificially faded. Why? David Hansell

Locatelli Concerti Grossi Europa Galante, Biondi 53' 50"
 Opus 111 OPS 30-104
 Concerti op. 1. nos. 2, 5, 12; op. 7. no. 6;
 Sinfonia in f.

This is the second such compilation of Locatelli's orchestral music I have received recently. There are only two pieces which overlap with Concerto Köln CD. The playing here is, as one would expect, rather more passionate; for once, I feel that this approach pays rich dividends – the music is not, of itself, particularly exceptional and Fabio Biondi and his players pad out the bare notes with some wonderful phrasing. Biondi opts for a tripartite orchestra: the usual concertino and concerto grosso plus a ripieno which joins in when solo and tutti parts are the same. It's an interesting notion and, although the addition of an extra player hardly makes a great deal of difference, it seems to work well. BC

Locatelli Sonate op. 8, vol. 1 Rossi vln, Canino hpscd 70' 27"
 Dynamic CDS 105

When I first listened to this my heart sank – the modern violin isn't as much of a problem as the modern harpsichord, whose heavy, dull tone and perpetual chuntering becomes irksome within a very short time. And any keyboard player who resorts to the lute stop for variety gets no Brownie points at all. Given a second chance, the disc actually repaid the effort; the reservations remain, but there is some fine music here and the occasional flash of brilliance from the performers. But if Libby Wallfisch is seeking new pieces to record... BC

Rameau Naïs Russell, Caley, Caddy, Tomlinson STBarB, English Bach Festival Singers and Baroque Orchestra, McGegan 105' 53" (2 CDs)
 Erato 4509-98532-2 (rec 1980)

As a re-release, this would not normally merit more than a short mention as there is nothing particularly remarkable about the

set. There is some lovely music and nothing is fundamentally wrong. Equally, given the William Christie treatment, it might move into a different dimension. The reason I was so impressed was the casting of the leading male role as a high tenor. Paul Agnew's recent successes in the repertoire have shown how successful this can be – a pity that in the last 15 years so few have followed Ian Caley's excellent example. At mid-price, this is well worth having. BC

A Scarlatti Sinfonia and concerto with recorder Mendoza rec, Musica antiqua Toulon 52' 38"
 Pierre Verany PV795031

It would be easy to dismiss this as wallpaper music, particularly as there is no contrast of instrumentation, but it is definitely worth giving it a chance to enjoy the delicate slow movements, perky dialogues between recorder and violin, various types of allegro, frequently fugues. The playing is faultless with good balance between soloist and tutti. The recorder part is more orchestral than soloistic. Mainly first recordings and a welcome addition to the catalogue. Angela Bell

A Scarlatti Works for organ and harpsichord Andrea Marcon (Pescetti organ of 1732/33, now in Polenigo; Grimaldi da Messina harpsichord 1697, copied 1987 by Tony Chinnery) 62' 10"
 Divox Antiqua CDX-79403

Toccatas aperta d'organo, per organo, per cembalo, in Alamire; fugues in the first three tones; varie partite obbligate al basso

Andrea Marcon's note refers to these pieces as 'intended to surprise and move the listener and to grip his imagination'. They most certainly do. This CD should bring Alessandro Scarlatti's generally overlooked keyboard works to a much wider audience. The centrepiece is the massive (24 min) *Toccata per cembalo*; the other works are for organ and played with spirit and verve on the lovely sounding Pescetti organ of 1732 in San Giacomo di Polcenigo, with a wonderfully buzzy reed in the first piece. Interpretation and performance are first rate, with some beautifully articulated passagework. Marcon quotes Casini's advice to a performer 'to lend the voice of the heart to his instrument, either through a gentle, ethereal touch or through the powerful force of passion'. This range of keyboard touch is well demonstrated by Marcon, and is particularly effective where he leans towards the gentle; the force of his more powerful passions occasionally lead to over-abrupt release of chords which, on the keen and silvery voicing of Italian organs, can leave an unsavoury hiccup or anguished yelp from the pipes. A fascinating repertoire and an exciting player. Buy it.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Seixas - sonates pour clavecin Anne Roberts BNL Productions 112839

On this recording we hear 14 of the 100 sonatas of Seixas which have survived. The notes tell us that when this young Portu-

guese musician went to study with Domenico Scarlatti at the Lisbon court, Scarlatti said, 'I should be taking lessons from you.' Like Scarlatti, Seixas writes a lot of very brilliant virtuoso pieces as well as simple, tender ones. Anne Roberts combines the brilliant technique and musical sensitivity needed to make these sonatas so successful. Among the more memorable performances are the exciting opening *Allegro* of Sonata 27 in d and the beautiful, lyrical *Moderato* of Sonata 29 in the same key. The harpsichord is by Du Cornet, after Grimaldi. There are three original Grimaldis in Paris, Nuremberg and Geneva with cross-grained soundboards and no bars other than the one parallel to the bridge, giving a bright, full tone. This light and lively harpsichord adds to the success of this recording.

Michael Thomas

Telemann Concerti per molti instrumenti
Arita fl, Westermann ob, Hoeprich chal, Manze vln, Roberts and Sinclair db, La Stravaganza Köln, Manze 59' 59"

Denon CO-78933

Concertos in E fl, ob d'am, vla d'am, str; in e fl, vln, str, Dfl str; in Eb str, in G fl, chalumeau, ob, 2 db, str

Four of these pieces fall into the four movement *da chiesa* pattern. The variation in solo line-up shows what a colour-aware composer Telemann was and indeed, as the last piece on the disc shows, what an innovator! The band's playing reflects the influence of the exuberant Andrew Manze and is by turns dynamic and captivating. One petty criticism: the group photo in the booklet is rather strangely captioned with names which don't match the players shown.

BC

Telemann Orchestral suites Camerata Köln, Schnieder 76' 36"
dhm 05472 77324 2
Suites TWV 55: D 23, a 2, D 6

Only the first of the three suites on this disc is not well-known. Its scoring is not unusual for Telemann, replacing the standard oboe pair with flutes. What is rather stranger is the sudden appearance of a horn in the final movement; Schneider suggests the part may have been written for Ludwig VIII of Hessen-Darmstadt, a fanatic huntsman and dedicatee of another piece in the same manuscript. The others are the celebrated A-minor 'flute' suite (played by everyone from James Galway up) and the D major suite with obbligato gamba. As one expects from this group, the playing is first rate.

BC

Telemann Orchestral suites and concerto
Freiburger Barockorchester, von der Goltz 74' 02"
dhm 05472 77321 2
Suites TWV 55: D15, fl, G10 (*Burlesque de Quixotte*); Concerto in E minor

Here again, the contents of this disc are not new, apart from the excellent concerto for two violins, where von der Goltz is well partnered by one of the other fiddlers (the booklet doesn't credit the individual

concerned). The colourful *Don Quixote* suite is rightly popular, the F minor suite includes a Chaconne with two recorder parts and the D major pits a string band against an oboe band. The performances ooze style. From the opening declamatory bars of *Don Quixote* to the rollicking close of the final *Rejouissance*, there isn't a dull moment, not a note out of place. If you plan to buy only one of the three Telemann discs reviewed here, this is the one.

BC

F M Veracini Sonate accademiche, op. 2
The Locatelli Trio 175' 42" (3CDs)
Hyperion CDA66871/3

Fresh from the tremendous (and well-deserved) success of her Locatelli *L'arte del violino*, Elizabeth Wallfisch and her Locatelli Trio colleagues have recorded another of the baroque violin's giants. Over three discs, they engage in the most dramatic readings of the 12 sonatas which make up the set. Some are accompanied by harpsichord, others by organ. The recordings were made in 1993 by WDR, Cologne. Each of the movements has a precise tempo indication and involves a whole host of technical exploits. Dazzling as some of the playing is (from all three players!), I found it more difficult to sustain interest in Veracini's music than I had in Locatelli's and I'm afraid I didn't even manage to last for a whole CD at a time. The fault may be mine, maybe the music's, but not the players'.

BC

F M Veracini Six sonatas for flute Bernabò, fl, Curtis, hpscd 62' 45"
Dynamic CDS 114

To quote the notes, 'Veracini's musical thought moves, within well-defined forms, which are clearly organized'. Unfortunately, after a couple of sonatas, Veracini's musical thought becomes very predictable indeed. Giorgio Bernabò does produce some lovely ornamentation but all too often resorts to filling in with scales which appear merely for effect and add little expression to the music. Alan Curtis provides a solid accompaniment, but the harpsichord tends to be more prominent than the flute, which could surely have been placed further forward to combat the dull ambience.

Angela Bell

Vivaldi The Four Seasons Standage, The English Concert, Pinnock 40' 54"
CRD Records crd 3325 (rec. 1976)

Vivaldi Il Proteo Il Giardino Armonico, Coin, Antonini 64' 14"

Teldec 4509-94552-2

Concerti for 2 violins and 2 cellos (RV 564), 3 violins (RV 551), 2 cellos (RV 531), violin and echo violin (RV 552), violin and 2 cellos (RV 561) and 'Il Proteo' (RV 544)

Vivaldi 19 Sinfonias and concertos I Solisti Veneti, Scimone 120' 07" (2CDs)

Erato 4509-96382-2 (rec. 1978, 1983)

Concerti RV 114, 118, 120, 128, 133, 143, 151, 152, 157, 158, 163, 167; Sinfonie RV 113, 132, 134, 137, 140, 146, 168

Vivaldi Concertos Vienna Flautists 59' 17"

Discover International DICD 920230

Concertos RV 114, 117, 134, 143, 151, 159, 549, 550, 551 and Sinfonietta RV 169 Arr. for flute ensemble

Vivaldi Seven concerti English Concert, Pinnock 59' 11"
Archiv 445 839-2
Concertos for strings (RV 156, 166), recorder (RV 444), oboe (RV 449), bassoon (RV 485) 2 violins and 2 cellos (RV 575) and violin, 2 recorders and 2 oboes (RV 577)

There's a veritable flood of Vivaldi concerti this month. Two are re-releases. The English Concert *Four Seasons* is not the Archiv set and lacks the obbligato cello in the slow movement of Winter that is omitted from most modern editions. The disc is a little on the short side, too, but Standage's playing is always worth hearing. The Erato set consists of Vivaldi's solo-less orchestral music and, if the playing now seems a little dated, this is still an interesting repertoire. The thought of a whole disc of flute arrangements filled me with horror; perhaps even more worryingly, I found myself warming to it. The Vienna Flautists use all sizes of flutes (down to the contrabass!) and produce some very interesting sounds. Though not unpleasant, it's rather like listening to Bach on a synthesizer. For the purists, there are two excellent recordings. The English Concert play a whole range of pieces, including solo concerti for various wind instruments, two ensemble works (one of them from the Dresden collection) and a string concerto. Alberto Grazzi is the most individual of the soloists; Peter Holtslag's recorder playing is wonderfully agile. For me, though, the pick of the bunch is a Teldec set featuring Christophe Coin and Il Giardino Armonico. Their choice of pieces for various string combinations shows just how skilled a composer Vivaldi really was. There is virtuosity a-plenty from all the soloists and the band! Quite superb.

BC

Markgräfin Wilhelmine von Bayreuth Opera arias, harpsichord concerto Luz, Kraus ST, The Lukas Consort, Lukas 51' 49"
Campion Records RRCD 1333

Wilhelmine von Brandenburg-Bayreuth was Frederick the Great's sister, so it should come as no surprise that she was an able composer. The Lukas Consort play modern instruments in a style not unsympathetic to period performance practices. Indeed, the harpsichord concerto on the disc is perhaps the ultimate in authenticity – the original keyboard part is lost, so Viktor Lukas improvises in the rests in the surviving parts. It's a successful venture too, utterly persuasive and rather charming. The arias, two each for the soloists Angelika Luz and Adalbert Kraus, are lengthy affairs (the last takes over 10 minutes) but show the clear influence of the Berlin court composers.

Zelenka Concerti Freiburger Barockorchester, von der Goltz 63' 50"
dhm 05472 77339 2

Zelenka Hipocondrie ZWV187, Concerto à 8 ZWV186, *Symphonie in A minor*; Pisendel Concerto in D, *Sonata in C minor*

The exploration of the rich repertoire of the famed Dresden court orchestra, begun by Reinhard Goebel with his Heinichen and

Veracini discs, continues here with music by two of the most important composers. Zelenka's music is quirky to say the least; Pisendel treads a slightly more traditional path, but there is much fine music here. The performances, as ever with the Freiburgers, are lively and full of deft turns of phrase – if the original band were half as good, August the Strong was on to a good thing!

BC

CLASSICAL

Haydn *London Symphonies 99 & 100* La Petite Bande, Kuijken 51' 43"
dhm 05472 77328 2

This is the third installment of London Symphonies from Kuijken and La Petite Bande. The remarks I made in reviewing the second (Symphonies 96-98, *EMR* 3) hold true here – Kuijken's judgment of pace and his vision of overall shape are impeccable. As usual, his aims are fully realised by some dynamic playing from the band.

BC

Haydn *Cello concertos in C & D, Symphony 104 arr Salomon* Wisselwey, Florilegium Channel Classics CCS 7395 73' 01"

I have nothing but the warmest praise for this recording. Wisselwey is outstanding, Florilegium are excellent, Haydn is a genius! None of that is surely surprising – their past exploits have seldom failed to reach the very highest of standards. The two concertos are well paced, the tutti sound warm and rounded, the soloist poised and very much in control. The inclusion of Salomon's arrangement of Symphony 104 is an inspired piece of programming; we too rarely hear these pieces and this intimate and colourful performance should inspire others.

BC

Haydn *The Seven Last Words* van Immerseel, Channel Classics CCS 6894 56' 40"

The notes chronicle five versions of these meditations, originally commissioned as orchestral interludes for the Good Friday three-hour service at Cadiz Cathedral, and argue convincingly that the composer supervised this transcription for harpsichord or piano. This is the least known of the versions and this disc should help to remedy the unjust neglect it has suffered. The reproduction of a Walter fortepiano by Christopher Clarke has a pleasing body of sound throughout its compass and Jos van Immerseel does it and the music justice. He allows the melody of Sonata II *Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso* to unfold most movingly.

Margaret Cranmer

Kozeluh *Missa pastoralis* Losovà, Skvàrovà, Svejda, Podskalský SATB, Prague Radio Mixed Chorus, Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, Kulínský

Dvorák *Mass in D major, op. 86* Losovà, Benackovà, Kopp, Novák SATB, Bambini di Praga, Youth Chorus of the Prague Symphony, Kühn Mixed Choir (male voices), Hora org, Kulínský Multisonic 31 0036 56' 34"

As usual, we must apologise for the absence of the proper accents in the Czech names. This recording is interesting for two reasons: Kozeluh's agreeable music is rarely heard these days, particularly his choral works; secondly, the Dvorák, which strictly is outside our field, again offers insight, this time in the form of the Bambini di Praga, a children's choir without the subliminal qualities of English cathedral schools and with no Germanic turbo-charge. The *missa pastoralis* is common in Czech music of the 18th century; there are no bagpipe drones or airy flutes, but there is some fine music. Overall, not a disc for early music specialist, but an attractive pairing, well worth investigating.

BC

Weber *Symphonies 1 & 2, Konzertstück* Tan, The London Classical Players, Norrington 60' 30"
EMI Classics 7243 5 55348 2 8

This was unknown music to me. Rather than listen to it without prior knowledge, I sat down and read the excellent booklet notes by John Warrack. When I heard the music, everything he said fell into place, as if he had unlocked the secrets of Weber's mind. Very few groups seriously challenge Norrington's London Classical Players in this sort of repertoire. The wind playing, in particular, is magnificent. Melvyn Tan is in fine form. Don't expect to find any long-lost Romantic masterpieces here, but look out for various delightful touches, especially in the colourful orchestration department. Highly recommended.

BC

VARIOUS

From chant to Renaissance Voices of Ascension, Keene 63' 50"
Delos DE 3174

Chant; Anon *Rejoice in the Lord alway*; Hildegard *O virga ac diadema, Ave generosa*; Dufay *Alma Redemptoris*; Josquin *Ave Christe*; Isaac *Sanctus*; Tallis *In ieiunio et fletu*; Byrd *Justorum animae, Rejoice rejoice, Sing joyfully, Miserere mei Deus*; Weelkes *Hosanna to the Son of David, Alleluia I heard a voice, Farrant Lord for thy tender mercy's sake*; Palestrina *Stitiv anima mea, Surge illuminare, Ascendo ad Patrem*; Ingegeri *Tenebrae factae sunt*; Lotti *Crucifixus* (a8)

This is an unashamedly commercial follow-up to Voices of Ascension's last disc, *Beyond chant – Mysteries of the Renaissance*. Around 20 strong, this American choir has something of an Oxbridge flavour. The women's voices are as pure as they come. The performances vary in style to suit the individual pieces and the choir achieves its stated aim to present a cross-section of early repertoire which is at once enjoyable and stimulating.

BC

Common Grounds: Recorder consort music La Fontegara, Amsterdam 65' 01"
Globe GLO 5112

Anon *Estampie, Polorum Regina, Beata Viscera* (2 settings), Mariam matrem, *Lamento di Isult*; Isaac *J'ay pris amours, La morra, O Venus bant, Tartara*; Eccles *Divisions on a Ground*; Bevan Browning; Corelli / Marais / D Scarlatti *La Follia*; Brumel *Tandernaken*; Ruffo *La Disperata*; Lapicida *Tandernaken*; Ruffo / Merula / Marini *La Gamba*

This is a thoroughly enjoyable and revealing disc. The notes explain clearly the group's rationale behind listing three composers for *La Follia*. La Fontegara delight in bringing to bear all their knowledge and musical experience in their improvisations and arrangements, even if it means that, with the aid of 20th-century hindsight, elements from different generations become juxtaposed. The choice of material works well: different workings on the same ground or theme provide interesting contrasts. Particularly striking, in a sombre, contemplative way, is the group from the Llibre Vermell, with its 13th-century English 'ritornello'. The technique of the group is superb, especially in the thrilling sound of recorders played perfectly in unison. There are some intonation problems, but the clarity of sound and the transparency of only three voices really makes one sit up and listen. A must for all recorder players.

Angela Bell

ORGAN ANTHOLOGIES

Early French Organ music: Volume 2

Joseph Payne Organ of St Mark's Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan 70' 25"
Naxos 8.553215

Titelouze *Ad coenam Agni providi, Magnificat quinti toni*; Jullien *Dessus de Voix humaine, Basse de Trompette*; Lebègue *Offertoire in C, Une Vierge pucelle, Trio à 3 claviers, Dessus de Cromhorne, Tierce en taille*; Roberday *Fugue et Caprice No. 3*; Du Mont *Allemande*; L. Couperin *Duo, Fantaisie*; Anon (1617) *Magnificat secundi toni*; Attaignant (publ.) *Parce Domine after Obrecht, Sanctus and Benedictus* (Mass *Kyrie Fons bonitatis*), *Magnificat quarti toni*; Anon (c. 1650) *Ave maris stella*; Raison *Elevation in C minor, Gigault Kyrie double à 5 parties, Fugue grave, d'Anglebert Fugue grave, Quatuor sur le Kyrie*

With so much going for it – an interesting range of music and a new organ based on research into some major historic French organs – why is this CD so disappointing? First must come the organ. Worthy as it may be (and I cannot fault the specification, spread over four manuals), I am afraid that, to me, it just doesn't sound French – or at least, not like the warm and sensuous classical French organs I have played or listened to. It can sometimes sound quite unpleasant. Unfortunately, the playing also does not inspire me. Such a shame, for at Naxos prices, this will probably reach a wide audience; I hope purchasers are not put off buying a recording of a real old French organ.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The Schnitger organ in Our Lady's of Der Aa church in Groningen, Holland (1699-1702, restored 1989-1990) Stef Tuinstra and Bernard Winsemius 72' 58"
Lindenberg LBCD15

JS Bach BWV 528*, 539, 569*, 656, 766*; Bolt (1927-1990) *O Lam van God*; Hanff* *Ach Gott von Himmel, Ein feste Burg, Wär Gott nicht mit uns*; Lübeck *Praeambulum in E**, *Nun laßt uns Gott*; Pachelbel *Ciacona in D*; Tunder *Praeambulum in g** = played by Tuinstra, the rest by Winsemius

Every organ-lover's (every musician's?) library should have at least one recording of this magnificent organ (originally built by Schnitger for a church in Hamburg in 1699

and recently restored). This is as good as most I have heard. The playing is sensitive and musical, with Tuinstra taking a slight lead over Winsemius. It is particularly good to hear Lübeck's partita on *Nun lasst uns Gott dem Herren* with its fiendish pedal part accomplished with apparent ease, and there is a commendably violinistic performance of Bach's Praeludium and Fuge in D minor, both played by Tuinstra. Programme notes include the complicated history of the organ, specification and registrations. During the course of the restoration, the advisor, Klaas Bolt, died and hommage is paid with two of his short neo-classical chorale preludes. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

The Silbermann organ of Bremen cathedral and its copy in the Silbermann Museum, Frauenstein Christopher Stembridge, Paul Gerhard Schumann and Martin Rost 105' 03" (2 CDs)

Zöllner Studio Dresden - no number
Aston A Hornpipe; Bach BWV 588, 1102, 1115; Bonelli Toccata Athalanta; Bull Why ask you, Salve Regina 3; Buxtehude Wie schön leuchter der Morgenstern, Fuga in C; Erbach Fantasia 1' tono, Canzona 8' tono; Frescobaldi Aria detta Balletto; G Gabrieli Canzon 9' & 10' toni; Gesualdo Gagliarda; Guami Canzon La Lucchesina; Kerll Toccata IV Cromatica; Mozart Adagio K617a; Pachelbel Fantasia in g; Pfeyll Sonata in G; Piazza Sonata a due Organi No. 1 Stanley op. 6 no. 6; Stubley Trumpet voluntary; Zipoli Pastorale in C; Terreni Sonata in D

What an opportunity has been given to the organ builder Kristian Wegscheider from Dresden. Commissioned to restore the eight-stop 1734 positive organ by Gottfried Silbermann built for Etzendorf and now in Bremen Cathedral, he was then asked to build a copy for the delightful Silbermann Museum in Frauenstein. Before the two instruments left the workshop, this recording was made. One CD is of Stembridge's very fine and musical playing - he has a feel for both music and instrument which makes for very fine listening. I am afraid the other two organists let their cathedral and concert hall roots show (in the very severe test of an organist's ability: playing a small organ in a dry acoustic), but there is some spirited playing, including some well co-ordinated duos. The copy is just recognisable as such, but is still very fine - a couple of hundred years will make all the difference. The music is a delightful wander around Italy, England and Germany from the 16th to 18th centuries.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Two Van Vulpen organs Hans van Nieuwkoop 68' 37"
Lindenberg LBCD13
Scheidemann Praeambulum; Sweelinck Psalm, 23; Kerll Canzona in D minor; Hanff Helft mir Gottes Güte preisen; JS Bach Präludium und Fughette in G, BWV 902; Distler (1908-1942) Variationen; de Klerk (b. 1917) selection from 'Twelve Images'; GB Martini Sonata II in G minor; Bohm Herr Jesu Christ dich zu uns wend; Handel Trio in G minor; Rellstab (1759-1813) Sonata in D

Two recent small organs by the Utrecht firm of Van Vulpen are put through their paces by Hans van Nieuwkoop, teacher at the Sweelinck Conservatory and organist of

St Laurenskirk in Alkmaar. Both organs are in the old Dutch tradition, although the smaller house sadly lacks an old Dutch acoustic in which to make itself felt. The fine playing of van Nieuwkoop deals well with the different acoustics and is particularly effective in the unforgiving conditions of the closely microphoned house organ. The programme includes one of the newer additions to Sweelinck's collection, the previously anonymous Psalm 23, one of Böhm's delightful chorale variations and a rare example of Handel's solo organ music, a Trio di Hendel found in a Berlin source. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Schubert and Boehm: Works for flute
Rachel Brown fl, Simon Nicholls pf 70' 58"
Chandos CHAN 0565

This disc celebrates Boehm's centenary and more than half the recital consists of his own music and arrangements played on instruments adapted to Boehm's own models. It is obvious from the start that Rachel Brown and Simon Nicholls are expert players and musicians. Brown plays with a glorious wide, open sound and little vibrato. Nicholls is a skilled accompanist, yet is never too retiring, especially in the Schubert. Most of the items are showpieces. Flute and piano interact delightfully and there are some lovely moments. The two songs from *Die Winterreise* arranged by Leopold Jansa retain almost exactly the original piano part: clearly the texts also had some impact, especially as 'die kalten Wind bliesen'. The Boehm pieces are stunningly played, but even with such wonderful players, the continuous broken chord accompaniments and oom-pah bass lines soon become tiring. *Angela Bell*

Barber Adagio for strings; Elgar Serenade for strings, Elegy for string orchestra; Strauss Metamorphosen Smithsonian Players, Slowik 68' 50"

For some people this might be taking 'early music' too far. For me, though, one of the greatest advantages period instruments have is the far greater clarity they bring to dense and complex music. Barber's *Adagio* and Strauss's *Metamorphosen* gain infinitely from this transparency. The recorded sound is so alive and direct, the performances of both had me sitting on the edge of my seat - not reaching for the knife as others have in the past! The Elgar was rather more surprising. I hadn't anticipated any great differences from the recordings I knew, but again some marvellously inspired playing brought out some previously unheard lines. The booklet notes detail the background to all the pieces, including an extensive section on the complex harmonic structure of the Strauss, complete with additional tracks on the disc. Elgar's covering note to the Elegy was: 'if it will not do, never mind - tear it up. It is not very original I fear but it is well meant.' Thank goodness they ignored that advice! All in all a positively revelatory experience. *BC*

King's Music Diary

Copy date for the next issue is August 1st.

Our August travels will probably include a trip to Venice for August 16 to hear the Gabrieli Consort and Players perform a reconstruction of the concert at San Rocco described by the English traveller Thomas Coryat, whose information is backed up by archival documents showing payments to the musicians. The *tour de force* will be Hugh Keyte's new reconstruction of the 33-part Magnificat, apt for the seven organs known to have been involved in the 1608 event, expanded from the surviving 10 and 17 part versions. Hugh has been studying how composers of polyphonal music went about doubling of parts as a guide, to his imagination. A recording from Archiv and King's Music edition will follow.

From August 18-20 CB will be at the West Gallery conference at the Grand Hotel, Clacton. We have assembled a wide range of experts and hope to draw the threads together from scholars and performers who have been investigating non-collegiate English church music in the 18th and early 19th century (cf the article in our December issue). Performers are also welcome. Information from Christopher Turner at the Colchester Institute School of Music, +44 (0)1206 570271.

The following weekend (August 25-28) we may well put in an appearance at the Suffolk Villages Festival. It will include Tudor music from Cambridge Voices directed by Ian Moore, Shirley Rumsey singing to her own lute and guitar accompaniment, *Dido & Aeneas*, preceded by Locke's *Masque of Orpheus* and Purcell's *Saul and the Witch at Endor* from Opera Restor'd, *Hail! bright Cecilia* contrasted with Drago's 1687 St Cecilia Ode and a London Pleasure Garden programme. Richard Burnett gives a lecture recital on the early piano. Details from 01206 211359; box office (from 31 July) 01473 827718

We welcome a new reviewer this month. I met Rosemary Druce (no relation to Duncan) over her plan to mount a performance of King Arthur in Croydon on 3 September. Kah Ming Ng, one of our regular CD reviewers, is conducting. For details, see the advert on page 15.

8-10 September is the London International Exhibition of Early Music: details in the advert in last month's *EMR*. We shall be there with samples of virtually all our publications: since we do not normally have our output on public display, this is the best opportunity to browse through our output and is a chance to meet us.

We are sorry there is no music this month: we had something prepared but there was no space.

Apologies for a slip in Francesca McManus's phone number last month: the contact for *New thoughts about old music* is 081 940 7086

LETTERS & COMMENTS

Dear Clifford,

You say you are puzzled what a 'sprinkling lute' may be. How about this for an idea? I was reminded of the quote when reading Andrew [Parrott]'s chapter on Purcellian performance practice, as he refers to it (p. 401, quoting as source North I 243-8)

For the sprinkling or arpeggio, the proper genius of it, must have pauses...

If 'sprinkling' is an arpeggio then might this not be a particularly appropriate epithet for the lute in view of the dominance of the French style of playing in England (at least as far as the solo repertoire was concerned). According to the so-called 'style brisé' very few chords are played as such but rather are split up in a sort of arpeggiated play. Mace, of course, also gives examples of the 'breaking of parts'.

Michael [Lowe]

Dear Editor,

In your 11th issue, June 1995, I found the obituary for Thomas Binkley – and was surprised and annoyed that someone who had obviously never met Thomas and certainly did not appreciate his work wrote about him in such a widely-circulated journal. It is true that time has passed by. Our recordings are different from those of today – they certainly had different aims – maybe the British never liked them. I still think that a certain 'casualness' has to creep in, mainly in medieval music. We all advance rapidly to slick perfection, – or better to be replaced easily by the computer (synthesiser): that happens already for some instrumental parts in my own concerts. But since the words are never understood, why not replace also the singers? I personally find the highly-praised recordings of the highly-praised medieval ensembles not very interesting to listen to, so I stopped listening to early music. But I am grateful that I had the years with Thomas Binkley, it was always interesting, alive and varied. We discussed things from time to time, we enjoyed our time together, we laughed, fought... But that does not belong to an obituary, nor does your sentence 'sadly a certain casualness...was allowed to creep in...'.

Andrea von Ramm

When Wendy Gillespie, who had, I believe, been standing in for Thomas Binkley as head of department at Bloomington during his illness, asked me to include an obituary I made it clear that I did not know him and that I had not always been entirely enthusiastic about his work. She nevertheless pressed me to write something, and mentioned that he had been pleased at my brief review of the reissue of his *Carmina Burana* recordings (EMR 7, p.14). It therefore seemed right to be honest. Would he have disapproved? The difference between a concert and a recording is too complicated a subject to embark on here, though I do feel that greater care (even at the expense of a little spontaneity) may be necessary in performances that will be repeatedly rehearsed. Those who work as performers or reviewers tend to forget that many people get to know much of the repertoire from single recordings, and although we may abhor the idea, for them each recording can become the definitive performance. I strongly agree on the importance of the words in medieval song, a point I stress in my reviews.

CB

WENDY BURGER

Some readers may know that the reason *Early Music Review* exists was that I withdrew from *Early Music News*, in which I had written since 1977, because the chairman of the Early Music Centre unilaterally over-ruled a decision of the Centre's Council and sacked its type-setter, Peter Williamson (who had also edited it from 1979 to 1992). Fortunately, Peter is a successful designer and printer – London concert-goers will, whether aware of it or not, be familiar with his work for the Wigmore Hall – and he has found plenty of other work to replace it. But he has recently suffered a more serious blow. His wife, Wendy Burger, has suffered from cancer for some years, and she died last month. Wendy and Peter met at the Early Music Centre in the late 1970s. She was a promising singer, and worked with Nigel Rogers among others. But her health was not good, and she decided that she preferred to devote her energies to bringing up a family, which she combined with teaching singing. We offer our commiserations and best wishes to Peter and his two sons Zachary & Benjamin. Wendy always seemed so cheerful, despite her illness; we hope that memory of her optimistic nature will help sustain them during their grief.

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The implementation of the new European copyright law has been delayed to allow for further representation. Publicity has been given to the protests by performers demanding royalty from recordings, but I have seen no further comment on the issue which concerns me: the 25 years protection for new editions. I'm not a legal expert, and the information in the Draft Statutory Instrument is not entirely clear. But since infringement can involve two years imprisonment, it is important to know whether my initial understanding that one edition of an unpublished work blocks any future editions is true. The document implies it by excluding from the relevant provision any work which has previously been performed, broadcast or made available at an establishment which is open to the public. (Does that include my house? Anyone who has asked to come and see me has been welcomed.) If it were just the new edition in itself that were being copyrighted as at present, it would not matter if anyone had edited it before. So it does seem that only one edition of a newly-edited work will be permissible and I will not be able to produce my own edition of any work published after 1995.

The document is available from Roger Knights, The Patent Office, Hazlitt House, 45 Southampton Buildings, London WC2A 1AR, 0171 438 4777, fax ... 4780/4713. My thanks to Simon Hill for sending me a copy.

HANDEL INSTITUTE

The Handel Institute has two awards of up to £1000 each, one for Handel research, the other to help young professionals to perform Handel's music. Details from Prof. Colin Timms, Dept. of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TT: closing date 1 September.