

Early Music

REVIEW

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Are you one of those people who always have a sharpened pencil at the ready at rehearsal (with a spare in pocket or handbag), and smother your music with squiggles? Or do you concentrate on what the conductor says and try to remember it (as well as your own unmentioned mistakes?) Whatever one's inclination, one should follow the expectation of the conductor. With an ad hoc ensemble and a rushed rehearsal, there is no alternative but to keep the pencil busy. But for an ensemble of any sort working regularly with a director, there should be a stylistic understanding that only requires the unexpected to be marked. The less the music has to be looked at, the more the performers can communicate with each other and the audience.

Those who have studied performance material from the 'early' period (let's say before 1800) will affirm that the sort of pencil markings that we make didn't exist. Furthermore, performance instructions such as those given by more modern composers for dynamics, phrasing, etc. rarely exist either, and certainly not in such profusion as in some editions of early music or in more recent music. I've been looking recently at Bärenreiter's fascinating new edition of Elgar's *Enigma Variations* (see p. 6). In the first six bars of the violin I part there are 24 notes (each bar begins with a rest, followed in alternate bars by 2 quavers and 2 crotchets or 2 crotchets and 2 quavers). Every pair of crotchets is slurred, each quaver has a horizontal accent line. There are 5 dynamic marks and 2 ten[utos]. There is also an *Andante* at the beginning plus *legato e sostenuto* and *p molto espress* specifically for vln I. Any well-used orchestral part will also have some bowings. Does all this tell players unfamiliar with Elgar much about how to play it? Probably not. And does repeating the information each time the phrase comes help? Wouldn't we like to have metronome marks to give us Bach's tempos! But beware, *Nimrod* initially varied between crotchet = 66 and 72, the 1902 reprint of the score slowed it to 52, but in 1920 Elgar started his recording at 48, in 1926 at 46 (so early recordings were taken fast to fit on a side of a disc!) speeding up to 56. Do what I say, or do what I do? For Bach, we don't have examples of the latter. Ultimately what matters is the performers' understanding of the music, which is achieved by study, experience, insight and fashion. CB

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

RENAISSANCE IMPROVISATION

William Dongois *Apprendre à Improviser Avec la Musique de la Renaissance* Éditions Color & Talea, 2008. 78pp, €20.00 (Contact: william.dongois@free.fr)

William Dongois is well-known as a cornettist, and this puts into words and notes his experience in performing renaissance music. I wasn't sure whether to place it here or with books, but it is more likely to be noticed here. The proportion of words to music is much higher than the embellishment manuals of the period, which tend to give vast numbers of ways of getting from A to B but less on the principles and ethos behind it. There is a certain French abstraction in the text that counterbalances this, and players capable of reading French will profit from studying it. I'm slightly suspicious of the way he downplays words. Some of the textbooks are aimed at singers as well as players, and they often have underlay. A text helps to remind players of the shape of a phrase, which is important however many demisemiquavers you add. And with less elaborate additions, if you ignore the text too much, those who know it will think you illiterate! There's something wrong with the typesetting in Annexe 7 and 9e, where the stem directions are a complete mess.

The author sent this to us because one of our customers thought we might be interested in publishing a translation. We're not the obvious publisher to do so, since our output is mostly later, and we're far too involved with Purcell and Handel at present. Also, I suspect that I'd be tempted to anglicise it in ways beyond the language! But it is certainly worth reading, and an English version would be welcome.

DERING CHAMBER MOTETS

Richard Dering *Motets for One, Two or Three Voices and Basso Continuo* Transcribed and edited by Jonathan P. Wainwright (*Music Britannica* 87) Stainer & Bell, 2008 xliii + 161pp, £81.00.

Dering had a low profile when I first started exploring music of his period. I knew Peter Philips and John Bull from their keyboard music; Bull's appeared quite early in *Music Britannica* (vols 14 & 19), and Philips' was available in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (which became accessible in the cheap Dover reprint in 1963 – in the UK probably not till 1964, when I bought my copy), but Dering's music was vocal, and apart from a few duets and *Factum est silencium*, was hardly heard. In fact, even when EECM published his *Cantica Sacra* a6 (vol.15, 1974), the situation didn't change very much. But the smaller-scale motets were intriguing, thanks to their continued popularity after his death; there is a reference to Oliver Cromwell

having a couple of boys trained to sing his duets, and Playford thought it worthwhile to publish a collection of 24 duets and trios in 1662. It might have satisfied curiosity to have published a facsimile of that for scholars and those singers who can read it. But that would restrict access to specialists, and anyway the music can be seen as a whole on a page of score and evaluated (though the plus side might be to make musicologists study and evaluate by performance – assuming that evaluation is still acceptable).

I don't think I'd want to hear a whole concert of Dering. Between studying the volume and writing about it, I had a phone call from our cartoonist, and somehow we got onto our usual topic, Dowland, and then to Dering. David Hill had performed some of the Dering motets in his youth, and commented (pre-echoing a thought that I already had) that you have to work very hard on the music to make it interesting. It's competent, sometimes melodically interesting, but too regular and rhythmically unstimulating. This strikes one from glancing at the pages, even without registering the individual notes and rhythms. I'm not suggesting that Dering is not worth singing, but his music needs careful placing. The editor devotes a couple of pages to vocal ornamentation; sadly, examples of rather more elaborate embellishment for a few of the pieces are printed only in the commentary, where they are likely to be ignored by singers.

Items 1-24 are from the 1662 edition; 25-32 comprise the Dering duets from vol. 2 of 1674 (which also contains duets by Benjamin Rogers, Christopher Gibbons, Matthew Locke, etc). These are late sources, but not notably different in apparent authority from the earlier MSS. There is no particularly good source, and the slightly greater care and consistency of a print makes it sensible for the Playford editions to be the copy text for the modern edition. I tried checking variants in the textual commentary and found them difficult to follow: I don't think that I would have been confident that I had understood the very first variant to the first piece had the wrong note not been printed in the incipit. But at least the layout is clearer than in older MB volumes.

Nos. 33-45 are motets from MS. Nos 39 and 42-45 have attributions to Dering, while 33-38 and 40-41 survive anonymously among attributed pieces: their style makes it likely that they too are by Dering. Some of these require the editor to write missing parts, while an appendix (Nos. 46-57) contains pieces for which reconstruction would be more hypothetical. It is perhaps a pity that blank staves are not left to encourage completion, except that performers are likely to be drawn by the challenge and will prefer music they can complete themselves rather than genuine Dering. Those that lack just continuo can be performed quite plausibly.

Whatever their function originally, the motets circulated as vocal chamber music, though the editor does give the liturgical placement in the separate printing of texts with translations. This would suggest that English Latin pronunciation is appropriate, unless one is recreating the styles of Brussels, Rome and Henrietta Maria's singers. The most common voices for the duets is Cantus and Bassus (so not suitable for Cromwell's trebles), which is a bit restrictive since the Bassus part is virtually identical with the organ (the edition describes the part as for bc without stating, as far as I can see, what it is called in the sources). It is useful that the list of contents includes the voice type. The singers on the CD of music for three basses (see p. 37) might like to look at No. 40.

Unlike the Purcell Society, MB has stopped adding realisations – hardly required for the simple harmonies here by even minimally experienced players. I wish sharps had been retained to figure major chords: using naturals for the purpose is anachronistic and looks wrong. And it isn't necessary to add an editorial sharp 5 to a B chord with a sharp third. There is some doubt on how to relate mensuration signs in this period, and hiding them in the commentary is misleading. As in much music of the earlier 17th century, four-minim bars often become two-minim bars when there are shorter note-values, but this is unlikely to have any mensural significance. The introduction seems to imply that the edition reflects the practice of the sources, at least broadly. But the facsimiles in the edition show that this is not treated consistently. Comparing the facsimile of No. 11 on p. xl with the edition on p. 22, one can see that the shorter bars in the original are ignored. The facsimile of No. 25 on p. xli (No. 25) shows a piece barred almost entirely in 2/2 yet the edition chooses 4/2. Other pieces, however, are barred in 2/2. I suspect that this may affect speeds that singers choose. While interpretation of triple relationships may be inconsistent, as are the signs used in the sources, they are an essential part of the notation and should be shown in the score, not at the end of the volume. This is presumably a matter of MB house style.

There is an excellent introduction and six pages of notes on performance. The editor doesn't seem too convinced by the idea that organists double the vocal parts: perhaps it depends on the organ. The reference to publishing a separate 'offprint' of the four motets in high clefs is encouraging; perhaps some other items may be issued separately as well. Stainer & Bell has a scheme for licensing photocopying. I hope this volume will encourage performers to convince us that Dering's fame really was justified. And congratulations to the editor for persevering over two decades with his project and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

MEDICI HARPSICHORD BOOK

The Medici Harpsichord Book Edited by Aapo Häkkinen
Edition Escobar, 2008. iv + 18pp, €20.00

Noel O'Regan wrote in his review of the editor's CD named after the MS: 'The book in the title is a MS in

Florence Conservatory (Ms. D. 2358) with the Medici crest and containing fifteen keyboard pieces. Häkkinen... conjectures that the music might have been composed by Prince Ferdinand Medici (1677-1723) who died before succeeding as duke and who is known to have had composition lessons. Whoever the composer, these short pieces work very well, despite relying a bit on formulaic writing.' (*EMR* 112 p. 27; the CD is Deux-Elles DXL 1083). Some pieces have the very thick chords that are supposed to be characteristic of Italian continuo realisation of the period. The music is certainly worth playing. The landscape A4 ringbound booklet is nicely printed, apart from the failure to have some sort of proportional relationship between different note-values: when typeset, a crotchet shouldn't take the same amount of space as a quaver (though it doesn't take twice as much either). This elegant edition is available from EMS Music (emsmusic@bellsouth.net).

BRUHNS for ORGAN

Bruhns Sämtliche Orgelwerke... edited by Harald Vogel
Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8663), 2008. 70pp, €20.00.

Nicolaus Bruhns (1665-97) was the son of an organist. He studied with Buxtehude and then worked in Copenhagen and Husum, near what is now the German/Danish border. He was also a good violinist, and is famously known for accompanying himself on the organ pedals. There are four works accepted as authentic: two Preludia in E minor, another in G, and a fantasy on *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*. The edition also contains a Preludium in G minor and a brief Adagio in D. The organ-tablature source of the large E-minor prelude is reproduced in full, making clear that the use of Mensurstrich rather than normal barlines is pedantic, since barring is implied by the tablature. It is comforting to see that *Harpeggio* at bar 95 and the signature C 24/16 really are genuine! There is an appendix on 'The Organs and Their Tuning', which deduces the specification in Bruhns's time. On tuning, the editor comments: 'One should note that there was no uniform practice of tuning in the second half of the 17th century'. This is a fine edition.

FUZEAU FACSIMILES

We've had another batch of Fuzeau's smaller and cheaper FacsiMusic series. Following their colour coding (red for France, blue for Germany), I'll deal with them by nationality, then in date order. I'm still frustrated by the sticky plastic bags, but am reluctant to throw them away.

First, a composer unknown to me (though my computer tells me that I've mentioned him at least once in *EMR*), André Cheron (1695-1766). He was primarily a keyboard player. His op. 1 is a set of *Sonates en trio pour deux Flûtes Traversières avec la Basse Continüe* of 1727. The music deserves playing. The bass part concludes with brief remarks on continuo figuring. He explicitly comments on the use of a sharp as major, a flat as minor: why do modern editors have to introduce naturals to confuse the simple rule? (Réf 50163; €27.00)

Michel Corrette (1707-95) is far better known. *Les délices de la Solitude: Sonates pour le Violoncelle, Viole. Basson avec la Basse Continüe chiffrée* op. 20 (1740) are written to fit the flexible scoring. 'Solitude' is a bit misleading, or does the soloist treat his accompanist(s) as servants and ignore them as people? The continuo part is both essential and satisfying to play. The Fuzeau facsimile is smarter than the King's Music one, but the latter costs only £6.00. (50164; €11.00)

Jean-Baptiste Bréval (1753-1823) was a distinguished Parisian cellist, now known chiefly by student cellists. *Les Nocturnes ou Six Airs Variés pour un Violon et un Violoncelle* op. 9 (1782) are genuine duets, the cello at least equal with the violin (if not more equal) and no keyboard required. The print is somewhat smaller than the Corrette, presumably to make each piece fit an opening; squashing further to fit A4 makes it a bit difficult to read: don't expect to share a single copy. The variations look busy rather than musical, but they may sound better. I'm puzzled what the nocturnal context is supposed to be. (50102; €8.50)

Turning to Germany, we begin with Telemann's *Fugues legeres & petits jeux à clavessin seul*, published by the composer in Hamburg in 1738 or 1739 (inconsistently, although neither this nor the Breval have a date of publication, one is added for the latter but not for Telemann; the TWV number might have been stated too: 30:21-26.) The fugues don't stretch the player's technique too much, since there is only one part per hand. Each of the six fugues is followed by two 'free' movements, also in two-part texture. If you've got the modern edition, there's not much to be gained by getting this as well; but if you haven't and you can manage the C1 clef for the right hand, (or want to learn to do so), it's worth buying. (50168; €9.50)

J. C. F. Bach's *Sonata per il Flauto, Violino e Basso* in A and *Trio fürs Clavier mit einer Violine oder Flöte* in E flat come from CPE Bach's musical periodical *Musikalisches Vielerley* (1770). Unlike most facsimiles, which provide parts and not score, this is just a score: fine for CD reviewers, but not for players – even if you play from enlarged photocopies, you'll still have impossible page-turns. The titling is odd. The Trio is for two players (violin or flute and obbligato keyboard), whereas the Sonata is a normal trio sonata for flute, violin and figured bass, but with the option of the harpsichordist playing the violin part (an obvious way of playing trio sonatas to us, though less so in the 18th century since they were not usually published in score). I was misled by the typography on Fuzeau's title page into assuming that the two titles were alternatives for the same piece, since the type-size of the second title was smaller than the first: adding the keys (or a JCFB catalogue number) would have avoided any ambiguity. The edition I know of the Sonata from Corda Music (CMP 434) costs only £4.00. (Ref 50160; €10.00)

Also from CPE Bach's 1770 anthology come *Deux sonates pour hautbois et basse continue* (Fuzeau's title) by Carl Ludwig Matthes, a composer not known to Grove Online. The heading to the first of the sonatas describes him as

chamber musician to his Royal Highness Margrave Heinrich, but nothing seems to be known about him. A web search found a paragraph in what looks like an introduction to one of the new CPE Bach Edition volumes which quotes a brief complimentary review of these sonatas by J. A. Hiller. They look like standard baroque solo sonatas, printed in score with a figured bass. Stylistically they are a bit old-fashioned for the date and place (Berlin), but pleasing enough, though not laid out for the convenience of the players. (Ref 50166; €8.50)

Christian Friedrich Carl Fasch (1736-1800, son of J. F.) is remembered now chiefly for the creation of Berlin's Singakademie, which was instigated in part to perform the 16-voice Mass that he had written in emulation of one by Benevoli. (I mention it because a few readers have encountered a *Dixit* 116 by him once or even twice in the last few months and will know how good a composer Benevoli was, even if he didn't write what used to be his most famous work.) Fasch junior's *Ariette pour le clavecin ou pianoforte avec quatorze variations* (1782) is certainly a good study piece, requiring a considerable variety of techniques and also enables a student to get used to reading from facsimile without having to negotiate any clefs apart from treble and bass. (Ref 50165; €6.00)

Finally, a complete change of style. Although published just in the 18th century (1799), Beethoven's *Grande Sonate pathétique Pour le Clavecin ou Piano-Forte* op. 13 takes us into a new world. This isn't in fact reproduced from the first issue, since the price printed on the title page has doubled. The autograph doesn't survive, so this is the major source; anyone seriously studying the piece should acquire a copy, and there is no reason why it shouldn't be played from. But do consult the critical commentary of a reputable edition as well: Beethoven wasn't the world's best proof-reader. (50161; €9.50)

HENLE BACH

Four older editions of Bach's keyboard music have been reissued with some corrections and, perhaps a particular selling-point to our readers, without fingering. Rudolf Steglich's 1970 edition of the Partitas have been revised to take account of the MS additions to copies of the original engravings (HN 1028, €17.00 in one volume, or Nos. 1-3 HN 1030 €10.50 and Nos 4-6 HN 1031 €11.50). As far as I can see without copies of the earlier editions to hand, *Kleine Präludien und Fughetten* (HN 1106; €10.50) and *Notenbüchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach* (HN 1349; €14.00) are just the old editions with the fingering removed. The notes look very big to me: the study-score versions of Henle's keyboard music suits me rather better; these remind me of 'The Big Note Book' that I had when I was seven – I hope children are using these as Bach's pupils did.

BREITKOPF HANDEL & MOZART

Breitkopf's offering for the Handel anniversary is modest: the *Hallelujah Chorus* with accompaniment for organ (three staves) with ad lib trumpet (PB 15198; €15.00 – a lot for 12pp). It includes a single sheet with the trumpet part

as Handel wrote, printed for trumpet in D or in A. The score is spacious, though I'm not sure why it exists. All the organist needs is his part set out with sensible page turns: here only one of the six is manageable. The conductor just has to mark the trumpet entries into a vocal score. (Sorry, Melisande: I didn't actually ask for a copy!)

A new edition of Mozart's Piano Concerto in G, K. 453, is more worthwhile (PB 15108; €32.00; parts also available). Unless they have produced a new one that I haven't seen, the Bärenreiter/Neue Mozart-Ausgabe of 1965 suffers from having been edited from the old Collected Works and the interwar Eulenburg miniature score. This is based on the autograph discovered in Krakow thirty years ago. If the differences had been substantial, I suspect that attention would have been drawn to them specifically. Those I have noticed are in the detail. But with Mozart, every detail matters. The most prominent entries in the critical commentary (in German only) concern short passages that Mozart erased. The title page also bears the name Henle, who publish a complementary edition for two pianos (HN 765 or EB 10765).

HAYDN QUARTETS

Haydn *Streichquartette Heft III Opus 17* Herausgegeben von Georg Feder Henle (HN 9207), 2008. viii + 91 pp, €19.00 (parts HN 207; €38.00)
 Haydn *Streichquartette Heft VIII: Zweite Tost-Quartette, Opus 64* Herausgegeben von Georg Feder, Isidor Savlav, Warren Kirkendale Henle (HN 9212), 2008. viii + 106 pp, €19.00 (parts HN 212; €38.00)

We have been receiving the new Peters edition of Haydn quartets with enthusiasm, though without making a detailed comparison with rivals. The Henle scores and parts are based on the Collected Works (*Joseph Haydn Werke*) which the firm publishes. The source volume for op. 17 was an early publication in the series, dating back to 1963, though the preface tells us that the Critical Report is still not published. However, a brief one appears in the study score, and it is useful to have the edition available. Here, the point of comparison is the complete edition from Diletto Musicale, who issue each quartet separately – useful if you only want one of them, but expensive if you want the set. Their miniature scores are surprisingly legible, but I prefer the larger study-score format of Henle, with five rather than four systems per page. Were I buying a set for playing, I'd make my choice on the quality of the parts, which I haven't seen; but the Doblinger score (and presumably the parts) looks fussier by its editorial adding of the obvious.

Unless you want something to slip into your pocket, for op. 64 I prefer the large Peters format (the traditional music size) to the smaller Henle: they do, of course, also have it in large volume in the Collected Works, but op. 71 & 74 cost €117.00 (bound) for just the score. This is not quite so old as op. 17, being published in 1978. For study, the Henle score has the advantage of being available separately. But the fuller information that the Peters editor supplies in his introduction and commentary sways the

balance in that direction, provided that the numbers indicating the presence of information in the commentary do not annoy you.

I have now received the parts for the string quartet version of *The Seven Last Words*, whose score I approved in our last issue. If I still played the viola, I'd certainly be happy reading from them. The avoidance of a page-turn before the *attacca subito il terremoto* is commendable. (HN 851; €23.00)

DIBDIN at SADLER'S WELLS

Charles Dibdin *The Sadler's Wells Dialogues* Edited by Peter Holman (Centre for Eighteenth-Century Music, Massey University, Series 1, No. 3) Wellington NZ, Artaria Editions (AE477), 2007. 193pp,

When I unpacked this, I flicked through and decided immediately that I should send it to Peter Holman to review, then noticed that he was the editor. Dibdin is chiefly known for a song played without words by a solo cello at the last night of the Proms; I don't remember it always being sent up, but the emotion is stretched more and more, so that it can't now be taken seriously even by the player. Dibdin himself, I imagine, was aware of some emotional ambiguity in his sentimental ballad, and those who have seen Opera Restor'd stage some of his dramatic pieces, or know their Hyperion CD, will realise, he is a skilled composer of short stage entertainments.

From 1772 to 1780, Dibdin provided a series of at least 18 short dramatic pieces that are here called *Dialogues* (one of several titles used at the time). They were comedies written for two or three singers and orchestra, and were sung throughout (with secco recitatives). He also wrote three *Introductions* (which opened the programme), which are included here, and at least nine pantomimes (which aren't). A sample programme (listed on p. 11) comprised an Introduction, a series of tumblings, a Dialogue, an exhibition of ladder-balancing, a ballet and a pantomime. This might seem to be at the bottom of the cultural spectrum, but the admission prices were quite expensive: three shillings for a box (including a pint of port), 1/6d for the pit and a shilling for the gallery, with drink sixpence extra. Even Fanny Burney seems to have approved (but perhaps her father didn't!)

Not all the 18 Dialogues survive. Five are complete, another five have complete libretti. The rest are fragmentary. The edition includes all that remains. 'Complete' is not quite the right word. Anyone who has seen any of the opera 'scores' published towards the end of the 18th century (King's Music publishes facsimiles of a few of them) will know that they are cut down, and the orchestration often needs supplementing. The editions here represent the sources, but are hardly performing scores. Yet it isn't too difficult to expend them as required. The simplicity has prevented most music historians from taking the genre and composer seriously. Dramatically, they mostly present caricatures for the middle class of working class life, and as with *Tom Bowling*, it's difficult to know how to take the sentimental aspects. They work well on the stage, and

could perhaps function as after-dinner entertainments – cheaper than employing Tony Blair for a speech and far more entertaining! As a self-taught composer, Dibdin lacked the burden that study with an older composer of the late baroque would have passed on to him. It may 'look initially unpromising on paper' (p. 25), but he moved naturally in the simpler classical style, and had a flair for the dramatic. There is very thorough introduction, from which most of this review is drawn. I was surprised that the theatre seated around 2000 (the present theatre seats just over 1500). I spotted one slip (though whether Dibdin's or Holman's I don't know): the contrasting of two Greek gods (Euphrosyne and Momus) and two Roman ones (Fortune and Bacchus) doesn't work: Roman culture barely existed when Euripides wrote *The Bacchae* in BC 405.

This isn't a practical volume: no matter, since it's a source book rather than a score to sing and play from. It is standard A4 size, but with a typesize that seems to me to be rather large – and I'd personally prefer beaming by syllable rather than instrumentally. You have to fold the pages back quite hard to get them to stay open, but the binding is strong enough. (It's best, though, not to fold beyond 180 degrees.) The two pages with eight small pictures are worth having, especially the rather modern-looking portrait of Dibdin.

Very oddly, although this is volume 3, there is no mention of volumes 1 and 2, let alone any others in preparation. I hope they are as successful as this.

On p. 7 we reprint a facsimile of a song from *The Ladle* (1773).

HAYDN SEASONS

The vocal score matching the Haydn *Gesamtausgabe* edition of *The Seasons* passed across my desk on the way to a customer recently. I'm not writing a review, but it is worth drawing attention to it and also to the full score, which is available as BA 4647 at £67.00 – pretty good value, but to get the commentary with it you have to pay Henle €427.00 for two volumes (it's worth paying an extra €16.00 to have the bound alternative). The vocal score (BA 4647a) is particularly good value at £11.00 for 324 pp – we can't match the price for our publication of Neal Jenkins' version, and even the Novello VSc is more expensive at the moment (coincidentally identical with Bärenreiter's euro price €13.95, which it will probably soon be the Sterling figure!) The significant editorial feature is that it is not based on the full score that Breitkopf published for Haydn in 1802 but on the material used for the first performances in Vienna. The underlay of van Swieten's text in the original (1802) Breitkopf edition was poorly printed, so is here improved. Interestingly, the piano reduction authorised by Haydn is retained – much simpler and less fussy than later ones. The 1802 full score was published in two editions, one with German and English text, the other with German and French. The new vocal score has all three languages. Our customer, incidentally, wasn't entirely happy with edition, claiming that musicology was not adequately working hand in hand with musicianship.

ENIGMA VARIATIONS

Elgar *Variations on an Original Theme for Orchestra Op. 36* »Enigma« Edited by Christopher Hogwood Bärenreiter (BA 9042), 2007. xxxiv + 142pp, £68.00

Rather more modern than we usually review! However, I mentioned this in my editorial, and it is worth considering further. This is a completely new score (the editor reckons there are 3000 amendments to the old one), and the expiration of copyright under the 70-year rule enables the parts to be sold as well (they have only been available on hire for the last sixty years). Sensibly, the pagination and rehearsal numbers are the same, though the inclusion of the original ending on p. 117 displaces the remaining pages.¹ (This ending was used for Ashton's ballet.) A useful addition is that the variation number is shown in Roman numbers at the top of every page: why do scores not normally have running titles?

Elgar was lucky to have a good editor at Novello, Jaeger (Nimrod), and was himself a more thorough proof-reader than many composers. But the thorough critical commentary shows that some details were missed, and one merit of the edition is that it sorts out so many minor inconsistencies between score and parts. The introduction points out ways in which the understanding of some of the notational symbols have changed in the last century – the meaning of accent signs, for instance. But with a work performed and recorded for over thirty years by the composer, there are developments that undermine the idea of a fixed text. The tempi, for instance, changed; perhaps now it was a classic, they could be exaggerated a bit, just as they tend to become more extreme in competing recordings of baroque classics. The footnote added to Variation VIII (WN) in 1949 suggesting that Elgar reached the metronome mark by dividing by two rather than by three is questioned in the introduction, though I don't quite follow the argument.

The introduction focusses more than usual on evidence related to performing the work. Trying to reconstruct a tradition after a century of gradual change is hazardous, but with a well-known and greatly-loved work like this, I suspect that there is still a lot of evidence around; the introduction itself quotes a publication of 1975. The scores of older conductors and old sets of parts should be checked (the BBC must have useful evidence, if any scholar can get at it), and there are surely individual enthusiasts who annotated their copies, though the value of such evidence must be carefully weighed.²

¹ There is no indication on p. 116 that to perform the usual ending, p. 117 is omitted. (We know from 'He shall feed his flock' that, however well you know apiece, skipping a page can cause problems.) Conductors are likely to smother p. 117 with pencil crossings so are unlikely to give the original ending an occasional hearing; the Introduction suggests that Elgar has reservations about the extended version.

² For instance, I've pencilled into my miniature score a [p] at the beginning of the last chord of No. IV, though don't know why. A quarter-century ago, I bought from Brian Jordan a group of miniature scores that had belonged to Doraballa (Variation X). Sadly, the *Enigma Variations* score was a late printing and quite unmarked; her copy of the contemporary *Verklärte Nacht* contained a list of performances she had heard.

7

Sung by Mrs Burnet.

Andantino

Ah When I was a young one Good Lord No Girlfure was
ever like me I'd Lovers I give you my word as thick as the
Leaves on a Tree as thick as the Leaves on a Tree.

2

The first was our old Parish Clerk,
Who pret's'd me again and again,
To let him once kiss me, 'twas dark,
So I fear'd, and answer'd Amen.

3

The Squire would have had me be naught,
But the moment I knew his Intent,
I Doubled, which set him at fault,
And he found himself on a wrong scent.

6

Till at last thou didst come in my way,
To Consent you prevail'd on me soon;
And in my mind from that to this Day,
Our lives have been one Honey Moon.

4

The Sexton, a Suitor in Years,
Complain'd he'd too much of my Tongue,
For I rung such a Peal in his Ears
That my Clapper (he said) was well hung.

5

I could number you fifty or more,
They us'd to come to me in Shoals;
Some fight'd, some protested, some swore,
Nay some were Unhappy, poor Souls!

Recitative

Spirits attend, oh dear oh dear! What does he mean? You're naught to fear.

PERFORMING DIDO

Sarah Connolly & CB

A few months ago, Paul Westcott of Chandos suggested that we might be interested in printing more than a review about their new CD of Dido and Aeneas. Sarah Connolly's responsibility for the CD went way beyond just singing on it. I had recently had several phone conversations with her in connection with Handel arias for a charity concert she was giving. (King's Music is a major supplier of orchestral parts of Handel arias.) Our chats went beyond the specific details of the transaction, and we seemed to have some sort of rapport. I'd not heard her live, but had been impressed with her performance on the DVD of the Glyndebourne Giulio Cesare, so fancied the idea of driving to Gloucestershire for an interview with her. Christmas came and I still hadn't managed to fit it in. My mind went blank when thinking of how to embark on an email interview. So instead I'm printing extracts from a couple of emails from Sarah, prefacing them with a paragraph from her booklet note.

I seem to have known Purcell's Dido all my life, and feel able to express myself in this music like no other, except perhaps in the orchestral songs of Mahler. It strikes me that both composers characterise the polarity of unbearable human suffering by twisting the threads of major and minor keys in a deliberate attempt to disorientate, disarm and seduce the listener.³

Virgil has always informed every one of my decisions regarding Dido's emotions, whether in Berlioz or Purcell. Fortunately, Berlioz was extremely faithful to Virgil's take on Dido's dreadful dilemma and his prose is my constant companion to every production, especially the forthcoming *Dido* at the ROH (a revival of the 2005 La Scala production, conducted by Christopher Hogwood, with Wayne McGregor directing). A literary reference is a gift to a serious interpreter. I firmly believe in making the relationship absolutely real and the one night they spent together, where passions were consummated, happened only a few weeks after his arrival.

Aeneas's fame and notoriety preceded him, so he was hardly a stranger, and all those bloodthirsty regalings of his battles were no doubt a bizarre sort of Peter Greenaway courtship! (Watch *The Thief, the Cook the Wife and his Lover*; pretty gross but compelling). Anyway, with her own realm in jeopardy he was handy to have around! I also believe that Venus and Juno plotted to sacrifice Dido. In Wayne McGregor's production, I asked for a gorgeous but lethal looking necklace to be made for Aeneas to give to Dido as present from his mother Venus, that would double-up as my suicide weapon (naturally Venus' plan!)

I tend to play Dido's awful premonitions for real. She sees ghosts. Belinda doesn't understand the depth of Dido's fear of a conspiracy and love for Aeneas. She's a pawn

from start to finish, and she knows it. In the Grove, she tries to throw caution to the wind until her servant starts singing about Actaeon being ripped to shreds by his dogs. This is hardly light entertainment and Wayne McGregor has her 'possessed' at this point in his show.

In Virgil, during the final argument with Aeneas, she begs him to stay for one more night so she could perhaps be impregnated. All of that is compressed into one line in the Purcell, 'All that's good you have foreswore'.

Nahum Tate couldn't offer anything to match Christopher Marlowe's heartbreaking text near the end of his play, but it's lying somewhere behind Purcell's music and is an inspiration to the singer.

DIDO. I'll frame me wings of wax like Icarus,
And o'er his ships will soar unto the sun,
That they may melt and I fall in his arms.
Or else I'll make a prayer unto the waves
That I may swim to him like Triton's niece.
O Anna, fetch Arion's harp
That I may tice a dolphin to the shore
And ride upon his back unto my love.
Look, sister, look! Lovely Aeneas' ships!
See, see, the billows heave him up to heaven,
And now down fall the keels into the deep.
O sister, sister, take away the rocks.
They'll break his ships. O Proteus, Neptune, Jove,
Save, save Aeneas, Dido's liefest love.
Now is he come on shore, safe without hurt.
But see, Achates wills him put to sea,
And all the sailors merry make for joy.
But he, remembering me, shrinks back again.
See, where he comes. Welcome, welcome, my love.

I'm convinced that performers must have a story beyond what the opera itself reveals; I reckon that the main function of the director should be to help in that, rather than to impose inter-



3. Purcell and Mahler were favourite composers of a musician who had great influence on my early-music development, John Beckett. CB

pretations that are too visible and schematic. I'm not sure if it matters if the audience doesn't realise the singer's or director's private meaning: its purpose is to give conviction to what the singer does. (cf the article on Buxtehude's *Membra* on p. 9)

Sarah replied:

If only more people recognized this truth. People don't want the ingredients, just the depth of flavours.

Except that some of us want to know the ingredients because we like to know how things work. I'm not the sort of person who takes gadgets apart (I wouldn't be able to put them back together again), but I'm sure I am not unique in wanting to know how a performance is created.

Purcell *Dido & Aeneas* Sarah Connolly *Dido*, Gerald Finley *Aeneas*, Lucy Crowe *Belinda*, Patricia Bardon *Sorceress*, William Purefoy *Spirit*, Sarah Tynan *2nd Woman*, Carys Lane & Rebecca Outram *witches*, Orchestra & Choir of the Age of Enlightenment, Elizabeth Kenny & Steven Devine *dir*
Chandos *Chaconne* CHAN 0757 69' 49"

This recording grew out of a production of *Dido* toured by the OAE in 2007, which interleaved Purcell's music and extracts from Christopher Marlowe's play, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. As quite a few readers may have seen that production, it may be useful to refer to it (any references are, of course, to the performance I saw).

On the CD the music stands alone, in an altogether bigger-boned performance. It is now generally accepted that *Dido* was probably first performed at court, rather than at Josiah Priest's girls school. Here it is re-imagined as a court masque, with an opulence emphasised by changes in cast from the touring performance, a clear and spacious recording and an orchestral balance which favours the large continuo group of three theorbos/guitars and a harpsichord (against 11 strings, proportionate to the forces known to have been used in a 1675 court performance of John Staggins' *Calisto*).

Sarah Connolly reprises the role of *Dido*, and wonderfully too: alive to the smallest textual nuance, showing great technical control in a richly ornamented line, and singing throughout with great beauty and real emotional and dramatic impact. 'Ah! Belinda' is taken quite slowly, but "languishes" most effectively, and the Lament is superb.

The rest of the cast is substantially different from that on tour. Gerald Finley takes the strangely limited role of the vacillating Aeneas, and is a fine match for Connolly vocally and dramatically. More unusually for *Dido* castings, Connolly is also well matched by Lucy Crowe as Belinda – it is easy here to believe that she is not just *Dido's* servant, but her sister. As the Sorceress, the Irish mezzo Patricia Bardon is powerful and dramatic, very effective in the darker regions of 'Wayward sisters', but less so in 'Our next motion', where she shows little feeling for textual weight and oversings in the higher reaches. A slow tempo does not help.

The minor roles are well taken, and of a piece with the whole, though Sarah Tynan (*Second Woman*) is a shade less fluent than others. Carys Lane and Rebecca Outram, otherwise excellent as *First* and *Second Witch*, could have occasionally characterized the text even further (there is not much of a sneer in the word "mar", for example). William Purefoy and John Mark Ainsley make effective cameo appearances as the *Spirit* and *Sailor* respectively. The chorus, bigger than on tour, sings superbly, though they are less than ideally served by the engineers in the echoes of 'In our deep-vaulted cell'. Cupid could have thrown his dart with a little more zing, but the witches show the appropriate malevolent glee, and "With drooping wings" is sung with great control and pathos. Echo opportunities in repeats are ignored unless marked by Purcell, which some may miss.

The OAE, directed jointly by Steven Devine (*harpsichord*) and Elizabeth Kenny (*theorbo/guitar*) plays quite brilliantly throughout. To my ears, the choice of continuo in the arias 'Pursue thy conquest love' and 'Haste, haste to town' gives insufficient weight to the bass line (correctly at 8' pitch throughout): but that apart, the continuo playing is very fine indeed – highly nuanced, richly imaginative and varied, and particularly meaty in the dances. The pacing of the whole is generally splendid: one may quibble with a couple of tempi, the occasional speed of pick-up into the next number and a couple of strangely delayed echoes in 'In our deep-vaulted cells', but it is always dramatically aware, unlike one or two other 'early music' recordings.

The performance includes additional music not in the surviving scores, including two guitar improvisations as marked in the 1689 libretto (though it could be argued that since these were added for the Josiah Priest performance, they wouldn't have been in the original masque...). Bruce Wood has very effectively recomposed the lost chorus 'Since our charms have sped', which with a brief dance from Purcell's *Circe* ends Act II in the right key. There are also two further instrumental additions not in the libretto. One, an orchestral dance from Purcell's *Bonduca*, follows 'Ah! Belinda': musically it fits very well, using very similar material, but some may feel it interrupts the musico-dramatic flow, especially as the aria has a concluding ritornello anyway. The second is less contentious. After the Witches' Dance in Act III, Steven Devine plays the brooding Almand from Purcell's keyboard suite in G minor, providing a very effective transition to the final palace scene, even if the opening appoggiatura jars with the preceding B flat major chord.

Overall, this *Dido* is very fine indeed, the sort of performance where the quality of the whole simply washes away any misgivings. Some will regret that the historical rigour of the OAE's playing has not been matched with 'straighter' voices; but what you have instead, with the odd exception, is beautiful, highly nuanced singing with wonderful control of ornamentation and line, and wonderful playing, combining in a very convincing musico-dramatic whole. Buy it! Keith Bennett

MEMBRA JESU NOSTRI

Crispin Lewis

Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri* has become over the last few years his most famous and frequently performed work. Possessing an astonishing power to move, and yet hewn with a characteristic economy of material, it follows a precise structure. The work is divided into seven sections (cantatas), each addressed to a different part of Christ's body on the cross: feet, knees, hands, side, chest, heart, and head. Each cantata is divided into six sections:

1. an instrumental introduction
2. a concerto for instruments and five voices (SSATB), with the exception of the fifth and sixth cantatas where only three voices are used
- 3-5. three arias for one or three voices, each followed by an instrumental ritornello
6. a reprise of the concerto.

The last cantata of the cycle, *Ad faciem*, is the only one that deviates from this pattern, with a final Amen chorus substituted for the reprise. Apart from the sixth cantata, which calls for a viol concert, the work is scored for two violins, viola da gamba, basso continuo, two sopranos, alto, tenor, and bass.

Two years ago I had the idea that it would be a fascinating experiment to combine movement with the music and that this could be done with dancers and musicians sharing the stage space, so that the instruments and singers became part of the dance piece. I didn't necessarily want to see a choreography which followed the obvious route by tracing the pattern of the poem directly, through a series of abstract meditations on the parts of the body, but I did feel that the Buxtehude was ideally suited to interpretation through movement, and that this movement could, if well-conceived, add something powerful to its performance.

What really made me determine to follow my idea through, and to seek to work with a choreographer and dance company, was the chance to work at the fabulously restored Christ Church, Spitalfields. Well known to music lovers through the Spitalfields Festival, it is probably London's most strikingly beautiful baroque building. Thrillingly imposing on the outside, Christ Church also offers an sumptuous interior which is full of opportunities for use. The floor-space available inside stretches throughout the nave, the restorers having decided against replacing the original box-pews, leaving a large expanse in which chairs can be placed according to need. On first talking about the project and agreeing to work together, the choreographer, Jo Meredith, and I agreed that we would set the performance in-the-round, designed to be seen from a variety of perspectives. We could then have at least four entrance and exit points to the centre of the stage, as well as the possibility of using the gallery which stretches around the south, west and north of the

building. We went on to plan a series of formations in which we could place the singers and instrumentalists to mirror the symbolic nature of the work's structure. We agreed that the musicians would not dance or move to any great extent, but that they would constantly reframe the performance space by standing, kneeling or, at one point, even lying in positions within and around the space. Later we had to draw up a detailed plan for them to memorise, detailing where to be at which point in the music and, crucially, how to get to and from their positions without breaking the atmosphere of the performance.

Before working with the choreographer/dancers I did have a few doubts about the legitimacy of the whole exercise. So many times I've sat through new works of ballet or contemporary dance choreography set to great works of music and wished they'd all keep still so that I could enjoy the concert. I felt it was very important to create something which illuminated rather than distracted from the music, something which added a new argument to the work rather than simply mimicking or replicating what was already there, and that, crucially, knew when to step back and allow the music to speak for itself. Stillness is, of course, one of the most powerful tools a choreographer has (as important as, one could say, silence is to the composer/musician). As JM and I discussed a particular section of the Buxtehude where the most apposite thing the dancers could do would be to be still, I recalled one of the most memorably powerful pieces of choreography I had seen, in Kenneth Macmillan's remarkably musical *Romeo and Juliet*, where Juliet in the process of making her fateful, tragic decision, is simply left still and alone in the centre of the stage, while the music suggests a momentous stirring and movement: I've never seen a more precise and powerful representation of a decision taken in turmoil.

On setting out on the process of creating the piece I wondered how early the music would be introduced: whether the dancers would learn the music thoroughly before they experimented with movement, or how, if this was not to be the case, they would find a starting point. There are of course well-known and respected choreographers who will even go as far as to complete their setting of the movement before even choosing a piece of music (While I can see that behind this is the belief that they want dance to stand on its own as a strong independent entity, I remain puzzled as to why they don't then leave music out altogether). I ask JM about her methods. She is a choreographer who passionately believes in dance as a musical art, and who tells me her work is always inspired by a love of the musical material. But her answer is interesting. Though she is assiduous in her learning of the score, she has found that using the

music immediately while creating movement can lead to a kind of flatness in the musicality of the dance: introducing it later on when the movement of the dancers has already been given strong personality allows the music to shape movement that already has character.

At the beginning of our rehearsal period, the dancers start with improvisation, in fact many hours of improvisation. It has always astonished me how hard dancers work; it is typical for them to work continuous very long days, every day, for several weeks, collecting bruises and bumps everywhere for their trouble, with very little break. At first in silence and only later with sections of music, these sessions are always videoed so that nothing is lost. From hours of improvised movement, promising fragments are selected which could then be developed into something – most is discarded. These fragments are then developed, again through improvisation, in a process of intense work. The improvisation is often strongly structured and always prompted by a strong idea or image suggested, sometimes in a very indirect way, by the music. As they work on a section of the work, I watch how one very simple concept shapes how the dancers interact and, furthermore, how the music pushes them even further in this direction. JM tells me how at this point the dancers have been directed to become utterly unable to communicate or express themselves, to be uncomfortable sharing the stage with each other. She has already taken them aside individually and talked to them, giving them individual personalities to shape their movement which fundamentally oppose each other. When this is put together, the music, almost unconsciously for the dancers, is what drives the rhythm of their discourse, and determines their struggle of resolution and irresolution.

A similar idea continues in a danced duet later in the piece: the fourth cantata *Ad Latus* begins with a simple but strong musical idea: above the continuo, two violins play in conversation. Always in parallel thirds, they answer

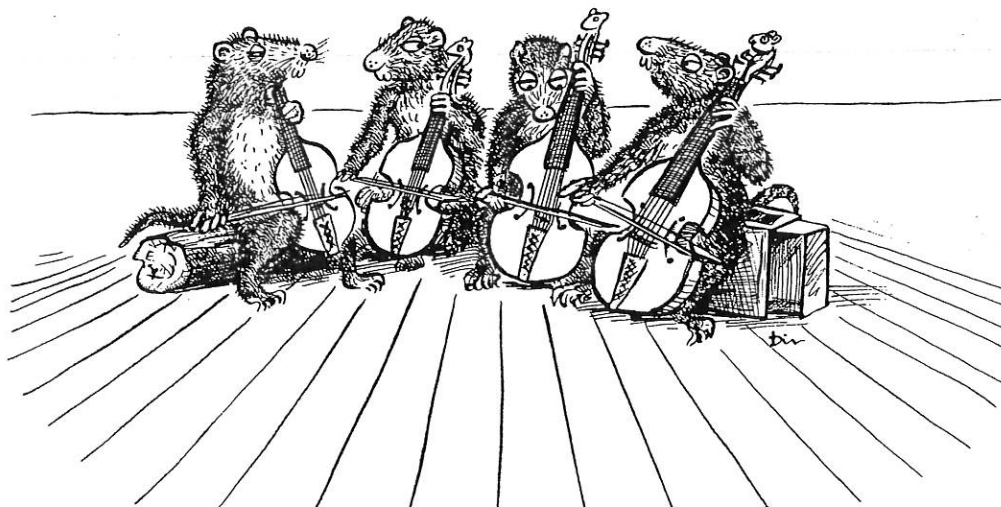
their own high motif by immediately plunging down to play a second voice and then back up to continue the first voice again to create, effectively, an artificial duet. JM takes the two dancers aside separately and rehearses them in strong individual but very different solos which bear little chance of reconciliation. Later, the dancers are asked to attempt to put these two solos together in an awkward duet. Most poignant in their ensuing dance conversation are the small glimpses of agreement that occur, despite themselves.

Elsewhere in the work JM experimented with another concept: using the dancers to deliberately misrepresent sections of music. Here she sets up a simple conceit: a group of dancers stands next to a group of singers as their silent but moving equivalents. But, chosen to represent these people, the dancers resemble people incapable of honesty and only dissemble and falsify what their corresponding singer is saying.

It is odd hearing about these techniques, individual ideas and narratives and then watching a long section of the work. The audience is not let in on any of this, nor is it intended that they understand why the movement has become what it has; no explicit story is given to them and nor is the piece meant to have one. The purpose is that the movement itself is full of intention and describes its own structure; it has to relate an abstract narrative of its own and, just as music does, become a compelling story that everyone understands but nobody could, or would want to, put into words.

The Muscull Compass, directed by Crispin Lewis performs Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*, in a new collaboration with contemporary dance company *Lo Commotion*, choreographed by Jo Meredith, at Christ Church, Spitalfields, London E1. Friday 27th March 2009, 8pm, All tickets £12, available at www.wegotickets.com/event/41753 or telephone 07896853363

Consort of Voles



LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

STEINITZ BACH PLAYERS at 40

The Steinitz Bach Players celebrated their 40th anniversary¹ with a concert at the Wigmore Hall (2 Nov), opening the 18th Bachfest in the process. Their programme was 'JSB at Heaven's Castle', a reference to the cantatas that Bach wrote for the Court Chapel (the *Himmelsburg*) of Duke Wilhelm Ernst at Weimar, after being appointed Konzertmeister in 1714. The concert also celebrated the 300th anniversary of Bach's Weimar appointment in 1708. Four of the Weimar cantatas were performed, *Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn*, *Widerstehe doch der Sünde* for solo alto, *Komm, du süsse Todesstunde* and *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland* (BWV 152, 54, 161 and 61), with Gillian Keith, Michael Chance, Nathan Vale and Peter Harvey as the impressive singers, the last notable in reflecting the emotional strength of the two recitatives in the first cantata. Amongst the players, Henrietta Wayne and Richard Campbell make significant contributions on viola d'amore and viola da gamba, as did Catherine Rimer, cello. The distinguished baroque oboist, Anthony Robson, made his debut on that instrument with the Steinitz Bach Players, and is now being nurtured by them as a conductor. He made a pretty good job in this role, although I found his frequent big *rallentandos* a bit anachronistic. He made an big effort to acknowledge the efforts of his performers – something that not all conductors remember to do.

LES INDES GALANTES

William Christie's regular visits to The Barbican with Les Arts Florissants are always highlights of the season, the latest being his reading of three acts from Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes* (4 Nov), representing love triangles from Ottoman Turkey, Inca Peru and colonial America. However well the singers developed their roles, this was a event where the Barbican's habit of importing concert versions of shows that should be fully staged began to grate because of the extraordinary visual and dramatic imagines conjured up in the three scenes. But the singing and playing was, as ever, exemplary. Christie is a delight to watch as conductor – he combines physical elegance with a clear personal involvement with the music and musicians. My companion would want me to point out that the frocks were by somebody called Christian Lacroix, and I couldn't help but notice the glint of bright red from Christie's flash-Harry shoes. Incidentally, at his pre-concert chat with Sir Nicholas Kenyon (in his latest role as the Barbican's Managing Director), Christie generously admitted that Purcell outshines all French composers and described English audiences as the "most sophisticated in the world". Discuss!

¹ Paul Steinitz's cycle of Bach cantatas began a decade earlier in 1958, using a modern-instrument chamber orchestra. Paul had an ear for up-and-coming soloists: regulars in the early 1960s were Heather Harper, Janet Baker, Robert Tear & John Shirley-Quirk [CB].

VIOL FESTIVAL

The second International Festival of Viols took place at the Royal College of Music over three days in November. The only event I could get to was the concert by King's Strings (11 November), a larger incarnation of the gamba duo Carpe CORdas (Marthe Perl and Clare Bracher, the founder and organiser of the Festival). The programme included works by Pepusch, Marais, an attractive Trio Sonata by Erlebach (who deserves to be better known), Rameau and Dieupart. A notable feature of this concert was the inclusion of dance, with Marthe Perl and Christian Heim stepping out from behind their gambas. They were excellent – indeed, fine as their gamba playing was, I wish they had danced to more of the pieces. If dance is to be included in a music concert, it needs to be done extremely well – and this certainly was! As I couldn't get to Hille Perl's concert at the Festival, I went to a concert she gave a few days earlier (on 9 Nov) with fellow bass violist Charles Medlam and Lee Santana (theorbo) at the little church of St Thomas' Woolton Hill, near Newbury. On one of the most blustery days of the year, the sound of these three delicate instruments in this intimate setting was an absolute delight.

LA RENCONTRE IMPRÉVUE

I am sure that even Gluck would admit that *La Rencontre Imprévue* (a sort of *La Clemenza di Sultan*) is not his greatest achievement, but the acting and dancing skills and sumptuous staging of the Guildhall School of Drama and Music went some way to make up for that, even if much of the playing and singing was disappointing. Regular readers will know my concern over the over-operatic singing style that still seems to be encouraged by singing teachers. This gives their pupils the difficult task of moderating their voice and vibrato for the earlier repertoire – something few can manage. As with many student productions, there was a split cast; the singers that impressed me (on 12 Nov) were Nicky Spence (showing wonderful comic skills as Osmin), Jonathan Sells as Calender, Emily Steventon as Balkis and Daniel Joy as the Sultan. The audience included the usual partisan student supporters found at such events, but there were also rather awkward contributions from what was either a rent-a-crowd or some drama students practising their stage laughs – it all sounded a bit contrived. And I could also have done without so much noise from the techies in the control room at the back, one of whom seemed to be on his mobile most of the time.

LOCKE PURCELL HANDEL

Under Artistic Director Matthew Halls, The King's Consort have been going from strength to strength. Their annual concert showcasing young artists (in this case, six

singers) took place at the Wigmore Hall on 14 November, focussing on music for the forthcoming St Cecilia's day. Away from the vocal works, Matthew Locke's very individual 'Instrumental Musick used in the Tempest' of 1674 was of particular interest, notably the Curtain Tune, Lilk and exquisitely melancholic Canon 4 in 2. The other instrumental work was Purcell's *Chacony* in g, given a beautifully structured and paced reading – it is particularly refreshing to find a harpsichordist director who knows when not to play.² The six singers gave good accounts of themselves in the otherwise complete Purcell programme, with notable performances from soprano Alison Hill, tenor Greg Tassell and bass-baritone James Oldfield. Of the six players, Lucy Russell, violin, Lynda Sayce, theorbo, and Joseph Crouch, cello, had prominent roles, along with Matthew Halls' own sensitive harpsichord continuo playing.

The English Concert and Choir dedicated their Cadogan Hall concert of Handel's *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* and Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (20 Nov) to the memory of cellist Jan Coe, who died last year. It was also to have been a return to the fold by Trevor Pinnock, but illness led to his replacement by their current Artistic Director, Harry Bicket. In the circumstances, the cello solo, played exquisitely by Jonathan Manson, in the first aria of the *Ode* ('What passion cannot music raise, and quell?') was particularly poignant. The solo lines are drawn between the soprano, who gets all the sensuous scenes, and the tenor who gets the bustling bits. Carolyn Sampson and Allan Clayton slotted into their allotted roles with aplomb. Musically, *Fairy Queen* was impressive although the semi staging was not altogether successfully, despite the efforts of Coridon and Mopsa at being silly. Harry Bicket was an impressive director of the choir and orchestra, both on very good form.

La Nuova Musica is a recently formed group, and is in the process of building up a consistent group of performers. Their St John's, Smith Square concert (22 Nov) featured Purcell's *Cecilian Welcome to all the Pleasures* (1683), Blow's 1684 *Begin the Song* and music by Handel. It may be a while before these youngish performers really deserve the description of 'some of Europe's most talented Baroque music specialists', as the programme gushed, but they turned in a pretty good performance. Amongst the 13 players, Hannah Tibel had a particularly important role to play as leader, and Frances Norbury shone in some exposed oboe passages. Of the five solo and chorus singers, I was impressed with soprano Lucy Page and tenor Jeremy Budd. But the undoubted star of the evening was solo soprano, Lucy Crowe – a singer I have praised many times before. Her performance of Handel's *Gloria* was, frankly, glorious! Not only does she have (what I consider to be) a beautiful Handelian voice, rich in expression and tone colour and with the clarity and aural focus that so many singers lack (but which is so important for music of this period), but she also sings as though she means it. Her soaring *Amen* was a delight. No wonder the conductor was keen for a kiss, gaining a very visible lipstick mark in the process!

SPAIN – ENGLAND – PORTUGAL

Under the rather daft title of 'There is Something About Mary', the 16 singers of The Armonico Consort presented a programme of music from the Anglo-Spanish Court (Cadogan Hall, 25 Nov), centred around a performance of Tallis's *Missa Puer Natus*, sung in SSATTBB format rather than the intended AATTBarBB line-up. This was interspersed with works by Tallis, Guerrero, Lobo and Sheppard and organ works by Tallis, Cabezon, Bull and Arauxo played with a good sense of style by Charles Matthews. Although a number of the upper voices had relatively strong vibratos, the overall effect was not as intrusive as it could have been – indeed, the choir's sound was generally warm and rich, albeit with some occasional hesitancy. Christopher Monk's conducting was clear and unobtrusive – something other conductors could emulate. It was a shame that the audience was so sparse.

The Oxbridge choral tradition has been the foundation for the English music world for many years, and still nurtures fine young singers, including an increasing number of female singers. I had not come across the Choir of The Queens College Oxford outside of their home turf, but their first concert at St John's, Smith Square (2 Dec) impressed me. Under the title of *Caeli Porta: 17th Century Sacred Music from Lisbon and Granada* (the title of their new CD on Guild GMCD 7323), they were led by Owen Rees in an excellent concert of 17th century sacred music from Lisbon and Granada. The composers represented included Duarte Lobo (with his fascinating and colourful *Missa de beata virgine Maria* and vigorous 8-part *Alma redemptoris mater*), Maneal Leitão de Aviles (notably with a wonderful *Lamentations*), Joan de Avila (*Circumdederunt me*), Pedro de Cristo (a distinctive double choir *Dixit Dominus*), Manuel Rodrigues Coelho (organ works and a *Nunc dimittis* for solo voice and an unusual example of an organ accompaniment). The key organ work was the *Meio Registo de 2º Tom Accidental* by Frei Diego da Conceição, music that really does need the sound of an Iberian organ to display its real character. The 16 men and 11 women of the choir produced an exquisitely pure sound, particularly the sopranos. What many of the audience may not have realised that student choirs like this, by their nature, have a relatively high turn-over of members – concerts given at the end of the first academic term are particularly brave events. Owen Rees has a specialist interest in music of this period, and his commitment was evident. He was also an impressive conductor, with a very clear beat and well-defined gestures. I hope they will make St John's, Smith Square an annual venture.

KINGS PLACE

Kings' Place is an impressive new arts venue and concert hall (and a wobbly-façaded office block) set in what has been the barren wastelands behind Kings Cross station. Along with The Guardian newspaper, the large office building now houses the offices of the Orchestra of the

2 A theatrical-style piece of this sort in its native France (and perhaps in England) would probably have been played without continuo. [CB]

3 Apparently without apostrophe, though the nearby station often retains one. [CB]

Age of Enlightenment, who make use of the rehearsal spaces in the basement. The small adjoining formal concert hall is an attractive space with a fine acoustic, although the upper level did seem to be influenced by the architecture of Albert Speer. My introduction to it was during the series of Mozart Week events by The Classical Opera Company with an introductory afternoon and evening performance (7 Dec) of Mozart's *Ascanio in Alba*, first performed in Milan in 1771. I have followed The Classical Opera Company since their first performance, with increasing admiration. They cut their teeth on early Mozart operas, and they return to these roots with this production. The effervescent overture makes it clear that this is not going to be the most emotionally intense occasion, the slight plot broadly revolving around the rather unusual twin aspects of love and town planning. It was written in celebration of the marriage of the Emperor Maria Theresa's third son to the daughter of the d'Este Duke of Modena. Sycophancy is therefore rife, not least in the less than subtle association of the Goddess Venus with the former and Hercules (the father of Silvia, the romantic lead, and town planner) with the bride's father, Duke Ercole III. Over the years, Ian Page has steadily grown in stature as a conductor and his direction was particularly insightful on this occasion. Of the five solo singers, I liked James Laing, Sophie Bevan and Rebecca Ryan – and special mention must also go to soprano stand-in Sinead Campbell-Wallace who managed to learn her role in just two days. The chorus was provided by students from the Royal College of Music.

SAMPSON & WADSWORTH

One of the most beautiful concerts in a busy couple of months was given by lutenist Matthew Wadsworth together with soprano Carolyn Sampson at the Wigmore Hall (7 Dec). 'Not Just Dowland' was the suitably descriptive title of a programme that contrasted works, probably by John Dowland, from his son Robert's 1610 publications, *A Musicall Banquet* and *A Varietie of Lute Lessons* with works by John Dowland's rival, Robert Johnson, and some continental contemporaries. I cannot praise either performer enough – both singing and playing were sublime. Carolyn sat next to Matthew and seemed to be singing to him as much to the audience, who were held in rapt attention, not least by Matthew's brilliant control of the pacing and timing of the beginning of pieces. The concert finished with Merula's ravishing *Canzonetta Spirituale sopra Alla Nonna*, with its twin repeating bass notes supporting a meltingly lyrical lullaby of the Virgin.⁴ If you were not at the concert, and want to check if I am talking nonsense, the concert was recorded for release on the Wigmore Hall Live label. Incidentally, Matthew Wadsworth's own new CD, 'The Knight of the Lute', with music from *A Varietie of Lute Lessons*, is also well worth getting (Channel Classics CCS SA 25408).

LA FIDA NINFA

Vivaldi operas are slowly re-entering the music scene, the latest to get an airing being *La fida ninfa*, performed by La Serenissima at the Cadogan Hall (8 Dec). It opens well, with a sparkling three-movement overture (and excellent contributions from horn players Anneke Scott and Jocelyn Lightfoot). It continues in an immediately appealing manner, with some attractive melodies and accompaniments – but at just over three and a half hours, it is unbearably long, even with some cuts to the recitatives. The plot is not worth bothering with, not least because it collapses at the most interesting point and dissolves into some sort of weather forecast. There is some virtuoso writing for the soloists, which only the three younger singers managed to negotiate without mishap, the honours going to Mhairi Lawson (whose voice gets better every time I hear her), the always excellent Sally Bruce-Payne (with some fine characterisations) and Marie Elliott (whose current experience and voice will probably lead her towards a rather later repertoire). Mark Tucker engaged with his role and the plot well, making very effective use of hand gestures. Stephen Gadd and Judith Howard were sadly disappointing. The former had trouble keeping in time, and the latter not only sang in a style entirely inappropriate for the period, but also gave a remarkably detached performance, keeping her head in the score most of the time and turning pages noisily, sometimes during other soloists' quieter moments. La Serenissima were on fine form under the joint direction of Adrian Chandler and Steven Devine.⁵

Although they have been kept busy since their appearance at the 2007 Early Music Network International Young Artists' Competition, a concert at St Martins in the Fields (9 Dec) was the first time that I have since managed to hear the recorder quintet, Consortium5 (Kathryn Corrigan, Inga Maria Klauke, Oonagh Lee, Gail Macleod and Roselyn Maynard). They formed in 2005 while students at the Royal Academy of Music, won the Deutsche Bank Pyramid Award in 2006 and are now Junior Fellows at Trinity College of Music. Their programme was entitled 'The Recorder: Europe's Richman, Poorman, Beggarman or Thief?', reflecting the different roles that the recorder has taken on in music. As in their York appearance, this was an extremely professional performance and presentation. They made excellent use of the space of the church, starting in the gallery and performing a couple of numbers grouped in a circle in the middle of the central aisle. There was excellent communication both between themselves and to the public, and they took turns to introduce the pieces to the huge audience. The very thought of a recorder consort can drive otherwise sympathetic listeners to drink, but Consortium5 somehow manage to avoid all the usual acoustic oddities that can bedevil such groups – notably sub-harmonics and pitch drop at cadences. They have clearly put a great deal of thought into their performances and interpretations, making very effective use of tonguing to articulate and define key notes, for instance. A reflection of their versatility is that they will also perform during the Park Lane series of contemporary music concerts.

⁴ This piece is also on the Savādi CD, *Fabellae Sacrae*, covered in the review section.[AB-W]

⁵ A recording of a different performance is welcomed by BC on p. 33

CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

The Dufay Collective opened the Christmas season with one of their delightfully laid-back lunchtime Banqueting House concerts, recalling music from the 15th to 17th century England in 'Godoy Sire Christemas' (1 Dec). Vivien Ellis took the vocal lead, her gentle voice projecting perfectly in this very large space and making her 'period' pronunciation sound completely natural. Significant instrumental contributions came from William Lyons, Jon Banks and Clare Salaman.

The Gabrieli Consort and Players contribution to Christmas was one of their Venetian spectaculars, given in their London home at Christ Church Spitalfields (4 Dec). The music was based around the 1563 *Missa Praeter rerum seriem a 7* by Cipriano de Rore, which was contrasted by music by Giovanni Gabrieli – an amalgamation of music separated by at least two generations (Rore died when Gabrieli was 10 years old). The concept was a recreation of the first Mass of Christmas as it may have been celebrated at St Mark's, a service that started at about 18.30, four hours after the start of the St Mark's proceedings. The 14 singers, nine of whom had solo spots, were accompanied by a vast collection of cornetts and sackbuts, together with two violin/viola players, two organists and a lone dulcianist – 15 players in all. Of the solo singers, I particularly liked David Allsopp, Marl Chambers, Christopher Watson and Simon Grant. Jan Waterfield made a significant contribution as organ soloist and general filler-in of the gaps between pieces (although I did wonder why the Frescobaldi Toccata that she played at the Elevation was not one of his Elevation toccatas). Gabrieli's 1615 *O Jesu mi dulcissime a8* completed the Elevation section of the reconstruction, one of the most impressive works of the evening. Paul McCreesh was an inspiring conductor, coaxing huge power from his singers and keeping the momentum going despite some very complicated stage manoeuvrings.

In contrast to the Royal Festival Hall, which was hosting a Messiah 'performed in full period costume in an evocative candlelit-style setting' (12 Dec), the Queen Elizabeth Hall featured The Sixteen in 'Make We Joy Now In This Fest' – a title honouring the c1450 version of the text, rather than Walton's setting. The attractive programme contrasted traditional late-mediaeval carols (accompanied by lute, harp and rebec) with works by Tallis, Ravenscroft, Lambe and Byrd (the rarely heard madrigal-style 'This day Christ was born' with its delightfully tripping *Gloria*). More recent carols were reserved for the foyer afterwards, accompanied by mulled wine prepared from the recipe by Harry Christophers printed in the programme. Amongst the soloists drawn from the choir, I particularly liked Carys Lane, Mark Dobell and Eamonn Dougan.

I selected four concerts from the Christmas Festival at St John's, Smith Square. I wasn't able to get to the first of the European Union Baroque Orchestra's two London concerts, although I heard extremely good reports of it. But I did manage their (13 Dec) concert of Corelli, Bach, Handel, directed by the exuberant Lars Ulrick Mortensen.

Most *EMR* readers will be aware that this training orchestra is re-formed each year from students throughout the EU. About 100 applicants are whittled down to an orchestra of about 27, with an average age of 25, who go on to some intensive training and then tour four programmes in about 30 concerts, usually under different directors and concertmasters. This concert was the last of the season, so was a special event for all those involved. They could therefore have done without one of the trials of the touring musician – travel complications. They can have had no more than about 3 hours sleep as a result of an eastern European airport being closed and a coach journey to another airport over 800km away! But there was no sign of any after effects during this exhilarating performance. Although young, most will already have achieved much in their own countries, so being one amongst many other similarly talented musicians must be one of many challenges that EUBO presents. A well-chosen group of pieces allowed many individuals the chance to show their mettle, but on this occasion particular honours must go to the three oboists, Sarah Aßmann, Laura Duthuillé and Amy Power, bassoonist Marie Hervé, horn players Hylke Rozema and Misha Sporck, cellist Poppy Walshaw and violinist Sara Deborah Struntz – along with the more experienced concertmaster Judith Steenbrink, a member of the 2002 EUBO. Their nod to the Christmas season was Corelli's Christmas Concerto.

The seven players of Bell'Arte Salzburg (led by violinist Annegret Siedel) were joined by sopranos Emma Kirkby and Susanne Rydén for *In Nativitate Domini*, a most attractive (and liturgically well structured) programme of seasonal works mostly from the pre-Bach German-speaking world (16 Dec). The Bach contributions were two Arias, including *Bereite dir, Jesu, noch itzo die Bahn* from Cantata 147, *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, and instrumental transcriptions from the *Orgelbüchlein* and the Canon Variations. The other composers were Tunder, Vierdanck, Dedekind, Lübeck, Altenburg, Schmelzer, Schütz, Biber, Lechler, Schildt and Staden. Most of this music is little known in the UK, so it was very refreshing to hear it performed, and by a group who are so clearly dedicated to that cultural heritage and with singers whose voices perfectly match the florid musical lines. Of interest to me was their new continuo organ, with wooden pipework influenced by historic stops from the Arp Schnitger organs in Hamburg and Stade – it blended beautifully with unforced voices. This was Bell'Arte Salzburg's first visit to the UK. They deserve further invitations back, but in the meantime their CDs will be of interest. Two are included in the CD review section, and I can also commend 'Virtuoses Barock', 'Musikalische Vesper', 'Ave Maria' and the CD of this concert – 'In Nativitate Domini'.

The concert by The Cardinal's Musick (*Hodie Christus Natus Est* – 19 Dec) at first looked to be neatly divided into two contrasting parts, one Italian, one German, although the difference between them was not that strong as Palestrina's *Missa Hodie Christus natus est* was written, not in his usual Roman style of two SATB choirs, but in the

Venetian high/low choir style (SSAB/ATTB) that was adopted by the likes of Hieronymus Praetorius and Jakob Handl. The Palestrina Mass was prefaced by his *Hodie* motet (with its joyous cries of *Noel Noel*) and interspersed with chant and Victoria's motets *O magnum mysterium* and *Magi viderunt stellam*. Despite the large Mass and Magnificat settings, I found the two Handl motets particularly interesting, the exuberant *Hodie Christus natus est* (with its fluttering *Angeli* that reappear in the final *Alleluia*) contrasting sharply with the chromatic twists and turns of his *Mirabile mysterium*. I have known Hieronymus Praetorius's monumental organ *Magnificats* for many years (he is the founder of the pre-Sweelinck Hamburg organ school), so it is good to find that The Cardinall's Musick have recently started exploring his choral works. They ended this concert with his magnificent Magnificat in the 5th tone (the second, and more sumptuous of two in that mode) incorporating two of his carol settings – *Joseph, lieber Joseph mein* and *In dulci jubilo* – both works with key moments for a high voice.⁶ I have occasionally found the voices of The Cardinall's Musick a little too forceful and unrestrained for my tastes, although on this occasion they sang with a much greater sophistication and subtlety producing what was, for me, one of the finest performances. The sopranos were particularly good – it was nice to hear how well they can control their vibrato when they need to, letting it rip for the three modern pieces in the programme.

Chapelle du Roi's concert (20 Dec) was called 'The marriage of England and Spain', although most of the music was from some years after Philip and Mary's 1554 wedding, reflecting the increasing continental influence on English music. Although Philip never achieved his aim of becoming King of England, the musical links caused by his very brief time here remained. The centrepiece was a reflection of the religious turmoil of the time, with the pair of motets on the 'By the waters of Babylon' Psalm by Phillippe de Monte and William Byrd, the former sending his 1583 setting of the first four verses to the latter who responded with an increasingly intense setting of verses four to seven. Although their division by the interval might have reflected the scores winging their way across the Bay of Biscay (or across the English Channel and France), it would have been nice to have heard them together.⁷ The eight singers relished the scrunchy harmonies in Mundy's *Adolescentulus Sum Ego* and the more forthright *Angelus ad Virginem*, sung in the version from the 'Cotton Fragments' (NOBC 8: III), producing an attractive blend of consort and individuality. Alastair Dixon's conducting was nicely unobtrusive with some nice shaping of the musical line, notably at cadences.

TWO ORGAN EVENTS

The first of two organ events that might be of interest to *EMR* readers was the 6th annual London Organ Forum at St Paul's Cathedral (28 Nov) devoted to 'The Mulliner

Book and the Birth of English Organ Music'. This took advantage of the recent residency in St Paul's of the two reconstructions of late mediaeval English organs (mentioned several times in previous *EMR*s), with the smaller 'Wingfield' organ in the crypt's St Faith's (the OBE) Chapel and the larger 'Wetheringsett' organ in pride of place in the middle of the Cathedral choir (or Quire, as it is known at St Paul's), where it has been used in services for the last few months. In his opening talk, Patrick Russell stressed the international importance of the English 16th century keyboard school and he and Erik Dippenaar played extracts from the Mulliner Book on the Wingfield organ and a virginals, with Erik Dippenaar in particular demonstrating an imaginative approach to ornamentation and elaboration in his playing. Andrew Carwood, the St Paul's Director of Music, then gave an erudite introduction to the music that was to be sung during evensong, covering a wide range of other musical issues along the way, including commenting on the experience of the Cathedral choir in singing to the mediaeval organs over the previous months. Jane Flynn gave a lecture of the early history of English keyboard improvisation, as evidenced by pieces in the Mulliner Book, showing how the existing pieces may have developed from improvisation practice. The day finished with evensong, with the Wetheringsett organ played by the Cathedral organist, Simon Johnson.

The British Institute of Organ Studies centred one of their day conferences (on 29 Nov) around William Drake's recent restoration of the organ in St Giles-in-the-Fields, an instrument with some pipework from 1678, but standing now as essentially a conservative early- to mid-19th century organ but with a strong 18th century musical input. The talks started with a survey of the complex history of organ building in the St Giles' Parish, an area that housed many organ builders over the years before the 19th century move to the newer London suburbs and provincial cities. Extracts from contemporary newspapers gave fascinating insights into their sometimes turbulent lives, one noting that organ builders seldom had a good word to say about their fellows! Life was not always rosy, with many finding themselves in a debtors prison. One organ builder was quoted as saying that he 'would rather hang himself than go into the workhouse' – something that he promptly did. After a summary of the history and restoration of the organ, we had a peek into the individual lives of Gray and Davison, the 19th century restorers of the organ and a summary of music and liturgy in the 18th century, including some insight into the extra-liturgical activities of organists. Jonathan Bunney, the organist of the church, then gave a recital, his wide-ranging programme showing just how flexible the historic English organ can be when it is conceived as a unified musical instrument with clear historic roots. Despite the very wide range of tonal colour available, the piece that I liked the best was a Fantasia by John Bull played on that most distinctive of English organ stops – the Stopped Diapason.

6 This, about the only piece by the composer one was likely to hear until recently, is on their CD reviewed in the last issue (Hyperion CDA67669). [CB]

7 The problem is that voices and modes don't match. [CB].

Brighton Early Music Festival, 5-8 November

Andrew Benson-Wilson

An invitation for a weekend in Brighton is always welcome, particularly when it includes several concerts of the last weekend of the enterprising Brighton Early Music Festival. Although it has only been going for a few years, the Festival seems to have established itself on the early music concert scene. The 2008 Festival, with the theme of 'These Fairest Isles', took place over four weekends, from 17 October to 9 November. As in previous years, the focus was wider than just 'classical' music, in this case with an input from the traditional folk music scene. The Festival also saw the launch of 'Sing Brighton', a three-year project to promote singing throughout the region, with an ambitious performance of *Spem in Alium*. Alongside such big names as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, I Fagiolini, Red Priest and The Sixteen were performances by young groups and performers, many of them students or recent graduates of the London conservatories or local amateur musicians.

Another Festival project is the 'Early Music Live!' scheme where a number of young groups (auditioned from the London conservatories) are offered tuition in the promotional, educational and outreach aspects of a musician's life, with a day spent in a school, and a short informal concert given in a local pub – this year, under the title engaging 'Tangled Roots – British and Irish folk meets early classical for a beer'. My weekend started with one of these pub events (Thursday 6 Nov) and Ensemble Amaranthos – a group I have reviewed very favourably on a number of occasions since their appearance at the 2007 Early Music Network International Young Artists' Competition. They played works by Rameau, Geminiani, Morel and Telemann, segueing the latter's *Fantasia* for solo Flute nicely into an improvisation on the *Folia* theme. Marta Gonçalves and Elektra Miliadou were excellent flute and cello soloists. The group formerly known as Sine Nomine, but now to become Parandrus, followed with their programme of medieval music. Groups in this scheme are encouraged to work with musicians from other genres, and Sine Nomine included folk fiddler Pete Lyons in their line-up. A couple of them (Emily and Hazel Askew, both experienced folk musicians) then joined him for his own set. Hearing classical music in the comparative rough and tumble of a pub was an interesting experience, although it was clear that the folk fiddler's catchy set was very much more within the pub idiom – helped by the fact that he had the last slot. The following week's gig was 'the sexiest belly dancers in town'.

Three of the other five concerts I heard over the weekend were given by groups in the Festival's 'Young Artists Showcase' scheme, including the Friday evening concert in St Nicholas Church (7 Nov) given by the three sopranos of Levedy with 'Quene of Paradys', a programme of mediaeval English songs in praise of the Virgin Mary. Yvonne Eddy, Lorenza Donadini and Eve Kopli hail from

England, Switzerland and Estonia and met during their postgraduate studies at the Schola Cantorum in Basel. The aim of their group is to 'challenge the popular perception of medieval music as monks singing dull chant'. They had beautifully pure and unaffected voices which blended well with each other, perfectly reflecting the innocent nature of many of the texts. The readings between the vocal works were also nicely done. However, I would have liked to have heard rather more contrast in many of the works, given the nature of many of the texts. This was particular noticeable in a couple of lengthy works with lots of verses – 22 in one case, a dialogue between Jesus and his Mother, where more could have been made of the communication between the two protagonists. Communication with the audience was also a little inhibited, with one singer never lifting her head from her score, and another looking over the heads of the audience. These are all issues that greater experience and performing confidence will solve, which is, of course, the whole point of events like this. On the planning front, the mood, style and length of this concert was probably more suited to a one hour late-night candle-lit concert than a short 'full-length' evening concert.

There were three concerts on the Saturday (8 Nov), starting at lunchtime at the lovely little Unitarian Church with Emerald Baroque, their programme 'Ireland's Enchantment' comprising a mixture of early Irish tunes and new compositions and arrangements, alongside pieces by the Irish composers Turlough O'Carolan, Cornelius Lyons and Thomas Tollet. The Irish certainly know how to write a good tune, and this evocative, if rather lacrymose, concert included some very appealing music. The least successful pieces were the modern works in traditional idiom which, frankly, sounded far too rambling and improvisatory. The plaintive lament 'She moved through the air' was a particular delight, as was 'Black is the colour'.⁸ As with many young groups, they need a lot more of the concert experience that these events provide – they appeared reticent and diffident on stage, and didn't always give the impressive of real engagement with the music or with the audience. One notable exception, both in terms of technical ability and musicianship and in her very engaging stage presence, was recorder player Laura Justice. I am sure that the very enthusiastic and supportive audience that I found at all the Young Artist concerts will help to boost the confidence of these fledgling performers.

The third of the Young Artist concerts was given by The Little Baroque Company, a recently formed ensemble of two violins, cello and harpsichord who met at the Royal Academy of Music. They were members of the 'Early Music Live!' programme during 2007 Festival and won the Audience Prize at the 2008 Fenton House Keyboard

8 An 'Appalachian' piece, probably by John Jacob Niles. [CB]

Ensemble Competition. Their Sunday lunchtime concert (in the sparse surroundings of the Sallis Benney Theatre) was 'The Isles Uncovered', tracing the development of the 18th century trio sonata from the earlier three equal part writing of the seventeenth century fantasia, with works by Locke (movements from 'Tripla Concordia', including the unusual *Chiconae* movement which lacks the expected ground bass), Arne, the Earl of Kelly, O'Carolan, Purcell and Handel. Although there was little to criticise in their playing (and their performance of Purcell's Sonata 6 in g was excellent), I felt that they could have projected far more of themselves into their performance. I was also disappointed with their stage presentation and communication – there was very little contact with the audience and no sense of a buzz or shared musical experience between themselves. It all seemed a bit serious, remote and impersonal. The notable exception to this was cellist Kinga Gáborjáni, who not only played with a commendable sense of musical expression but also, most importantly, looked as though she was enjoying herself. It is easy for young performers, used to the intense business of student lessons, to forget how important this sense of enjoyment is to an audience. If they aren't clearly enthralled by what they are playing, why should the audience be? Of course, one of the most impressive aspects of the Festival was the chance that they gave to young performers to not only show their professional mettle, but also to gain the confidence that comes from concert experience. I hope that all three of these Young Artists Showcase groups will have gone with the ambition to address issues like this.

One group that could never be criticised for a lack of confidence or a diffident stage manner is Red Priest, one of the stalwarts of the Brighton Early Music Festival since its inception. Their Saturday afternoon concert ('Priest on the Run – a wild musical ride through Baroque Europe', in St George's Kemp Town) was a timely reminder that performing music is all about just that – performance. All young musicians could learn from their ebullient stage presence and the sheer professionalism of their approach to music making – but, I suggest, they should not try to copy them, either in their stage antics or, for the sake of 'authentic' performance, their extraordinary musical interpretations. One thing is abundantly clear – Red Priest performances have taken an enormous amount of thought and rehearsal time – in other words, sheer hard work. Their publicity machine is equally well thought out – the large church was absolutely packed. As to their concert, much of the programme was well known from their first CD, but they finished with a sample of the latest project in a gloriously irreverent performance of *the* Toccata and Fugue in D minor. In case anybody thinks they are pure showmanship, their virtuosity is outstanding – and, in the few works that they played 'straight', their ability to play authentically, if they wanted to, is undoubted.

'The thing in world I love the most' was the title of an evening entertainment at St John's Church, Hove (8 Nov) with actor David Timson giving a stunning portrayal of Samuel Pepys, in full period dress, with extracts from his diary starting with a reference to the execution of Charles II and covering the plague and the fire of London. Again,

this was an event that young musicians could learn from – what is acting if it isn't communication? Pepys played the flageolet, recorder, violin and viol, had a fine baritone voice and made an important collection of Broadside ballads. His library (at Magdalene College, Cambridge) also includes a range of musical MSS. And music was the thing in the world he loved the most, although pretty women seemed to come a close second – 'Music and women I cannot but give way to, whatever my business is'. As well as his acting abilities, David Timson also matched Pepys vocal abilities. He was joined by soprano Deborah Roberts (one of the joint Artistic Directors of the Festival) and four players in presenting a selection of music from that fascinating period either side of the Restoration. Notable items were Blow's *Chacone FAUT dedele – Le Carnival* sung by Deborah Roberts, a jovial burst of Scottish fiddle playing by Hilary Michael, Rachel Hatton's recorder in extracts from Locke's *Cupid and Death* and the excellent cello continuo of Kinga Gáborjáni.

The last concert of the Festival was The Sixteen's performance of their 2008 Choral Pilgrimage programme, which I reviewed in the June EMR after their performance in Winchester Cathedral last April. Another reviewing engagement prevented me getting to their Brighton concert, but I would have loved to have heard a vocal group like this sing in the extraordinary space of St Bartholomew's Church – one of England Victorian architectural highlights. Congratulations must go to Deborah Roberts and Clare Norburn, Artistic Directors, and the large army of volunteers that are essential to a Festival like this.

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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett *et al*

MERBECKE, REFORM & RHETORIC

Hyan-Ah Kim *Humanism and the Reform of Sacred Music in Early Modern England: John Merbecke the Orator and The Booke of Common Praier Noted (1550)* (St Andrews Studies in Reformation History) Ashgate, 2008. xviii + 246pp, £55.00. ISBN 978 0 7546 6268 6

Taverner & Tudor Music II: Gloria tibi Trinitas Ars Nova Copenhagen, Paul Hillier 73' 58"

Dacapo 80.226056

Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas + Byrd Christe qui lux; Fayrfax Magnificat Regale; Tallis Te lucis ante terminum; White Christe qui lux es

Although more explicitly related to music than the contribution to the series I reviewed in our last issue, I found this a frustrating book to read, not for anything that is the fault of the author, but because of the subject: the extreme position taken by the protestant reformers over the relative importance of words and music and, going beyond that, whether music is good or bad in itself. This is why I have paired the review with a recent CD, one that features the sort of music that the reformers, both protestant and catholic, found unacceptable: music that was not primarily a vehicle for carrying the text. The key figure in the 'one word, one note' movement was not Cranmer, but Erasmus, the most important individual in the book, though his name is not in the subject index list for catalogues on the back of the title page. Merbecke is remembered now only for his chant, published in an amazing number of editions since 1843 (it's also available in coloured facsimile on the www), and even sung by congregations. This book rounds out his image and discusses his non-musical publications. I don't know if it's worse to leave your *magnum opus* on a train or to have it deliberately destroyed; the latter happened to Merbecke, who produced the first English bible concordance twice; even an abridged version was 1000 pages long!

I don't know to what extent the reformers who were so insistent on *prima le parole* were, like Augustine, afraid of the power of music (like alcoholics who dare not take a drink for fear of relapse), hated music (like those who dislike the taste of alcohol) or did not react to it at all. *In principio erat verbum* is a theological statement, not a prescription for word-setting! *λογος* has a wider meaning than *verbum* anyway. The balance of words and music in all sorts of vocal music has varied. In the early 20th century, for instance, English song favoured the protestant one-note-per-word style: Tippett's two song cycles from the 1940s exploded the principle. In 16th century church music, the movement was in the opposite direction. In many circumstances, it is important to hear the words. But sometimes the words are so familiar that they don't

need to be heard. Everyone knew the text of the mass, the Marian antiphons and many common liturgical texts: there was no need to make them clearly audible, so why not praise God with exhilarating melismas? Even when words are treated with individual respect (and music can spring from verbal sounds and rhythms), in polyphony they are not necessarily audible enough to follow the sense of a sentence. Looking back, much of the fuss over choosing one or other seems irrelevant (as, no doubt, may many bitter modern controversies). Each has its place.

The author tries hard to hang Merbecke's service music to rhetoric and the revival of classical Latin. I have never understood why rhetoric became such a shibboleth in renaissance culture. Modern historian would hardly call the major Roman proponent of rhetorical theory, Cicero, 'a good man skilled at speaking': he may have won one virtuous case, but it wasn't the pattern of his life. Are renaissance sermons better expressed and argued than medieval ones? (It's not a rhetorical question: it would be interesting to know if medieval rhetoric really was improved by a fresh dose of Cicero and Quintilian.) My feeling is that, although Merbecke is an interesting peg on which to hang a discussion on the revival of classical Roman culture, it gives him more significance than he deserves. I tried to follow the detailed argument on specific bits of his chant, and there seemed to be flaws.

So on to the CD. The Latin hymns reflect the ability to produce fine musical settings that *do* present the words clearly, and generally keep to one syllable per beat, if not per note. Yet they do not have the four-square feel of more self-conscious reformist music, but rather a suppleness which reflects the metrical structure of the text closely and enables different texts to be sung to the same music – not just the verses of a single hymn but other hymns in the same meter. The Mass, however, soars. The music seems now to be a natural companion to the lavish tracery of late medieval cathedrals and chapels: Eton College and the Choirbook match. It operates independently of the text, though it is there to satisfy any liturgical constraint; in addition, the mass is related by its *cantus firmus* to the occasion at which it is sung. Could not Erasmus see that music can enrich words by presenting them simultaneously but coherently? Some narnarians react against simultaneous texts in opera and scorn the marvels of the quintet in *Die Meistersinger* and the ensemble toward the end of Act III of *Otello*.

This is more a criticism of renaissance humanism than a review of the book. What I miss from it is any sense of the oddity and perversity of what the reformers of both language and religion were doing. Why did it happen? Apart from broader topics, my mind kept wandering to details like: how did they know which vowels were long,

which were short? (Do ancient grammars survive with lists, or did scholars analyse classical verse for syllables that were in long positions even when followed by a single consonant?) This is not, maybe not a fair review; but I was stimulated in ways that would be too irrelevant to discuss further, so I found it well worth reading.

As for the CD, I didn't send it out to anyone else since I was intrigued by the cover: a style of design in various letter styles with a message that looked so familiar but which I couldn't place at a glance. *Ex divina pulchritudine esse omnium derivatur...* I hadn't thought of David Jones for nearly 50 years! This is a more complex design than the one that is easily found if you look up the quote, from Aquinas, on the www with the usual spelling *divina*. It is tangentially related to the book, since it shows that even words can become embedded in visual images: meaning is not all: full marks to whoever chose it for this music. The programme is based on Taverner's *Gloria tibi Trinitas* mass, presented not liturgically but as part of a well-designed programme, with chant, Fayrfax's *Magnificat Regale* and a series of chant-based hymn settings by Tallis, Whyte and Byrd. It makes an immensely satisfying sequence, with a variety that seems coherent rather than imposed for the sake of it, and the performances feel absolutely right.

VENETIAN OSPEDALI GRANDI

Laura Moretti *Dagli Incurabili alla Pietà: Le chiese degli ospedali grandi di Venezia tra architettura e musica (1522-1790)* (*Studi di musica veneta: Quaderni vivaldiani*, 14) Florence: Olschki, 2008. x + 200 pp, €28,00 ISBN: 978 88 222 5766 6

Holidaying in Venice many years ago, I hugely enjoyed a concert in the beautiful church of the Pietà (just along the waterfront from the Doge's Palace) consisting of a complete set of Concerti Grossi played in their published order. Contributing to the pleasure was the superb acoustic and the assumption that we were sitting in the very church in which the renowned singers and players of this hospital for female 'orphans' had been directed, in his own specially-composed music, by the Red Priest. I already knew that 'orphan' was largely a euphemism for the female offspring of Venice's superabundant prostitutes (so celebrated by Corryat). I now realise that the church was a replacement of the one Vivaldi knew, begun four years after his death, and that the names of the *ospedali grandi* are misleading. All four of them, the *Pieta*, the *Incurabili*, *Santa Maria dei Derelitti* (universally known as the *Ospedaletto* despite its considerable size), and *San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti*, sheltered a variety of the city's needy: unparented children of both sexes, retired sex workers, beggars, the aged, and the incurably and terminally ill.

For the most part, and by the standards of the times, the inmates were treated with characteristic Venetian kindness: no Magdalen Sisters' sweat-shop cruelty here. Accommodation was rigidly segregated, typically with the church (an invariable feature) separating the male and

female halves. The boys were trained for trades – the navy, etc, and were expected to leave in their early teens. The girls learnt domestic skills, and might either marry or remain in the hospital for life. Suitable girls received expert musical tuition. Hidden from view in grilled balconies, their choral and orchestral accompaniment to Mass and Vespers were of the highest standard and were vital factors in attracting the voluntary financial donations and legacies on which the *Ospedali* largely depended.

Laura Moretti's book is splendidly cross-cultural. She traces the history of the four *ospedali* as far as possible, from their foundations to their eventual closure in the differing social conditions of the 19th century. The *Pietà* was much the oldest, but records survive only from the rebuild of the 1740s. Its chapel is the only one to survive intact. Those of the *Mendicanti* and the *Ospedaletto* have been radically adapted for other uses; that of the *Incurabili* was demolished in 1831. Fascinatingly, she gives comprehensive plans, engravings and photographs that allow us to see just how the musicians' balconies functioned, how they were adapted to accommodate increasing numbers as orchestral accompaniments burgeoned, and how they connected up backstage with each other and with rehearsal and concert rooms. Space no doubt precluded her from connecting the chapels' physical layouts with specific musical repertory, but acoustics are amply treated. New grilles fronting the *Ospedaletto* balconies, for example, were thought to be impeding the music's satisfactory transmission, and were replaced. The rebuilt *Pietà* chapel, in which Sansovino, Palladio and Longhena (architect of the Salute) all had a hand, proved to be unsatisfactory too, with the singing fetchingly ethereal but the diction muffled – here again, alterations were made to rectify things. (The first big service in the Gesu at Rome, a spectacular polychoral affair, revealed even worse acoustical problems: but clerics of the period took the music of the liturgy seriously and laboured to rectify deficiencies, unlike most of their later counterparts – witness the dire acoustic of St Paul's ever since the vandalistic removal of Wren's screen: the enclosed choir had previously been an ample and acoustically satisfactory performing space.)

The book is based on Moretti's doctoral thesis, hence its huge bibliography (though I noticed that one or two items in the Grove booklist are missing). It will surely form an invaluable resource for anyone working on the *Ospedali* from a musical, architectural or sociological angle. *Hugh Keyte*

THE GAMBA IN BERLIN

Michael O'Loughlin *Frederick the Great and his Musicians: the Viola da Gamba Music of the Berlin School* Ashgate, 2008, xviii + 253pp, £55.00 ISBN 978 0 7546 5885 6

This is the second item I wanted to send to Peter Holman to review; in this case (unlike the Dibdin) he contributed only the Foreward. We have been hearing rather more of mid-18th-century gamba music in the last decade or so, but I hadn't specifically associated it with Berlin. O'Loughlin pin-points the repertoire specifically to the court of

Frederick the Great, with a total of 52 works, for which he includes a thematic catalogue with incipits for each movement and details of sources and modern editions. The most famous of the composers is C. P. E. Bach (who wrote 3 solo sonatas, in C, D and G, H. 558, 559, & 510 (modern editions by Alamire and Güntersberg). The most prolific was Johann Gottlieb Graun. Other composers were Janitsch and Schaffrath. The Bohemian Joseph Benedikt Zyka and one of his sons joined the Berlin orchestra in 1764, thirty years after the fashion for violin music there began, and wrote a set of six trios for violin, gamba/cello and Bc in the Berlin style. C. F. Abel visited Berlin and the couple of solos in an appropriate style surviving there may have been written there (both published by Güntersberg). That prolific Berlin composer of chamber music, Quantz, left nothing for the gamba: he was presumably too busy writing flute music for Frederick.

The familiar mid-century treatises by Quantz and CPE Bach give considerably insight into the style of chamber music in Berlin, and relating their instructions and advice to the music studied here illuminates not only the style of the gamba music but makes one realise the sort of music the treatises particularly related to – they are not of such universal application as is sometimes assumed. In fact, the music here is more sophisticated than the Quantz I know. Frederick the Great was entirely behind the stylistic principles, but didn't quite have the technique. I lack direct experience of the music described, but a few years ago I played keyboard for some chamber music by Janitsch, about whom I knew nothing: it felt like late-baroque developed in a way that linked neither with Mannheim nor Vienna. In recollection, it must have been the Berlin style, with emphasis on both expression and counterpoint.

The unknown name here is Ludwig Christian Hesse (1716-72). His father Ernst Christian (1676-1762) was one of the leading gamba players of his time, working for the house of Hessen-Darmstadt for 68 years and travelling widely, with access to royalty and nobility around Europe, as diplomat as well as musician. Ludwig Christian also played the gamba superlatively. He spent his adult life in Berlin, and was presumably the catalyst for the production of so much gamba music in that city. He is not known to have composed, but some of the repertoire is in his hand.

The book is clearly written. It suffers a bit from repetition, but that at least makes the separate chapters more self-sufficient than they might be otherwise. A feature I like is that the chapter on sources says something about the collections in which they survive – frustration with the Sing-Akademie is evident in the comment 'In my experience, the Sing-Akademie is the only collection which refuses to allow copies to be made for research purposes of works of which it holds the only original source' (p. 59 n. 29). But the author does mention on the next page that the collection is being filmed and will be available on microfiche. All interested in late gamba music will find this worth reading; but also conveys well the distinctive style of chamber music in Berlin around 1750.

HEARTZ III

Daniel Hartz *Mozart, Haydn and Early Beethoven*, 1781-1802 Norton, 2009, xviii + 846pp, £45.00. ISBN 978 0 393 06634 0

This completes Hartz's survey of (in one sense of the term) classical European music, following his *Haydn, Mozart and the Viennese School, 1740-1780* and *Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style, 1729-1780*. It can be treated as a massive sequence of programme notes. An amazing number of pieces have comments and descriptions that are more penetrating than those available at many concerts or in CD booklets. If there is a theme, it is connection. Few books on music these days interrelate life and music so closely, not in any naïve way, but in deducing (or, when one doesn't agree, speculating) how the music fits with the composer's pre-occupations at the time. Hartz sometimes exaggerates thematic relationships, but it's interesting to have them presented to evaluate rather than ignored. The interrelation doesn't extend to interweaving the account of the music of the three composers, though connections are not, of course ignored. Scholarship is worn lightly, but thorough and up-to-date awareness of it lies beneath the surface. Hartz can write well: it's a long book, and will often be consulted piece by piece, but is worth reading right through (though its weight can be hard on the arm away from a desk). It deserves a massive and enthusiastic appraisal, but brief commendation may be a more effective ploy.

FONTI MUSICALI ITALIANE

Fonti musicali italiane 12/2007. Comitato Nazionale Italiano Musica CIM/UNESCO and Società Italiana di Musicologia. LIM Editrice, 2007, 318pp. €30.00 ISBN 978-88-7096-509-4

This is an annual musicological periodical concerning Italian sources, or sources in Italy, which I have never reviewed before. Its format is unusual (22.5 x 21.5 cm) and it is an inch thick. Pages 7-225 contain eight articles; pages 227-314 a detailed bibliography, jointly compiled by Giulia Giovani, Angela Nisi, and Leonardo Miucci, of 850 publications – monographs, articles, proceedings, catalogues, and editions of music – from or about Italian sources which came out in 2006; pages 290-300 and 301-314 contain two amazingly thorough indexes to this bibliography, one with the names of authors, editors and composers, the other with subjects, places and names of persons and works written about. If you vaguely remember seeing something about a composer or are looking for what a particular musicologist has done in 2006, you can find the bibliographical item(s); they should call the magazine *Documents*.

Pages 315-318 give abstracts in English of the articles (all in Italian) in the main body of this tome. These are:

Luigi Collarile, *Considerations on the publishing activity of Claudio Merulo (1566-1570)*. This is based on previously unknown documents, and describes his policy and

possible collaboration with other publishers after closing his house.

Elena Previdi, *Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729) and his treatise on the musical instruments of antiquity*. This is the impressive story of a scholar (scientist, historian, astronomer, archaeologist) commissioned in 1700 by Clement XI to study ancient documents, including the Bible, to determine the mostly likely instruments that 12 angels should be depicted as playing – for a fresco never realised. Nevertheless, his considerable research was published posthumously as *De tribus generibus instrumentorum musicae veterum organicae dissertation* (1742). The article discusses manuscripts of Bianchini's drafts and designs, and compares his original intentions and ideas with the Latin version completed by an anonymous reviser who might have been his nephew. There are 15 plates showing his sketches and the engravings of numerous – and very curious – percussion, string, and wind instruments.

Maria Rosa Moretti, *New «Sacred Dramasi» for a history of the musical activity of the Philippine Congregations of Genoa in the 18th century* – a private collection of 45 libretti from 1736-1749 serves to reconstruct the type of repertoire performed in Genoa, in comparison with other oratories.

Giuliano Castellani, *Ferdinando Paër's «Agnese» from Parma to Paris: sources and versions*. This analyzes five sources, from the autograph of 1809 to the various librettos and corrected manuscript copies from as late as 1826, which document various revisions of the opera by composer and librettist (Buonavoglia) between 1809 (its premiere in Parma) and 1824 (the second production at the Théâtre Italien in Paris).

Barbara Migliorini, *Music and musicians in the correspondence of Marquis Francesco Sampieri*. This concerns letters with musical significance by a composer of operatic and sacred works who directed musical activities in Bologna up to his death in 1863, covering a period beginning in 1810, therefore on the Italian social, cultural, musical scene in the first half of the 19th century.

Mariella Sala, Bazzini [violinist, composer and teacher, 1818-97] *Autographs: findings and new discoveries*.

Annarita Colturato, *A «too imperfect» industry: the manufacture of pianos in Turin in the 19th century*. Includes many plates of keyboard instruments and their mechanisms.

Daniele Poletto, *Keyboard instruments at the Savoy court: preliminary survey* – based on information from 18th and 19th century inventories

Barbara Sachs

RECERARE XIX

Recerare XIX/1-2 2007 Journal for the study and practice of early music directed by Arnaldo Morelli. LIM Editrice [2008]. 255 pp, €24 ISSN 1120-5741
recerare@libero.it; lim@lim.it; www.lim.it

Most of this issue is devoted to music history rather than practice. Not counting the book and music reviews, 4 of the 7 studies are in English, as well as the abstracts of the other 3. The first study concerns the pontificate of Clement VII (Giulio de' Medici), 1523-34, and musical performances sponsored by him mainly before the Sack of Rome (1527). Anthony M. Cummings discusses documents which, being few, seem to indicate his relative disinterest in the patronage of music compared to the amount (including secular music) sustained by his cousin Leo X during his pontificate (1513-21), offering the hypothesis that what little Clement did was done more as a family duty. He constructed the Laurentian Library (designed by Michelangelo), transferring the family archives back to Florence, and these included musical manuscripts not destroyed in the Sack.

In chronological order the last study of the volume should come next, but perhaps it was placed at the end because of its brevity. It poposes a new attribution, replacing those debated for centuries, and provides us with a previously unknown composition of Orlando di Lasso. Luisa Clotilde Gentile identifies as his the *Canon Quinque Quintus* on *Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis*, previously thought to be by Palestrina or Giovanni Animuccia, which occupies the bottom portion of a painting in the Museo Pinacoteca della Casa Santa of Loreto. Lasso made a pilgrimage to Loreto in 1585, bringing music with him; his coat of arms appears in the painting; and towards the end of his life he also wrote motets on the same invocation.

Emily Wilbourne's "*Isabella ringiovinita*..." focuses on the early career of the actress-singer Virginia Ramponi [Andreini by marriage] a.k.a. "Florinda" (1583-1630?), before her acclaim in the principal role of Monteverdi's *Arianna*. Her mother-in-law, Isabella Canali Andreini, was held in much higher regard (as poet, actress and singer), and the article concerns Virginia's strategies to emulate Isabella, before her fortuitous break-through in 1608.

I couldn't put down Patrizio Barbieri's "*Pietro Della Valle: the Esther oratorio (1639) and other experiments in the 'stylus metabolicus'*". With new documents on triharmonic instruments". Della Valle (1586-1652), a proponent of the enharmonic style of Giambattista [Giovanni Battista] Doni (1594-1647), looking forward to the *recitar cantando* and backward to the Greek *tonoi*, actively pursued the construction of chromatic continuo instruments (a violone panarmonico, a cembalo triarmonico with three keyboards, and an organ to be built so that music in the "metabolic" style could be played in church). To appreciate the types of passages and modulations being referred to the reader must go to other sources and other articles by Barbieri, duly mentioned in the footnotes. Some of the details given are totally obscured by imprecise translations (e.g. "high region of the fifth chain" means, I assume, *the part of the circle of fifths with many sharps*; and "the transition from the phrygian to the hypolydian involves a brusque jump of [from?] two flats and [to?] as many as seven sharps in [the] key". Even the Kircher example, which Barbieri has



Fig. 2. Example drawn from *Musurgia universalis* by Athanasius Kircher (1650, vol. I, p. 675), identifiable with the aria of Amàn, in the First Part of *Esthèr*. The key-boards to which the indications refer are those of Della Valle's Triharmonic Harpsicord

discovered to be a fragment from the lost *Esthèr*, and which specifies the use of a middle and a high keyboard, is a frustrating puzzle. Can anyone explain it? [example] The interesting libretto, in which Della Valle supplied mood indications (*strepitoso, mesto, pietoso e grave, affettuoso, allegro*) as well as designations of the modes used (*dorio, frigio, lidio, ipolidio, iastio*), all necessary information for performance, is attached in the appendix.

Barbara Nestola researches the reception of Italian music in France in the 17th and 18th centuries. Having discovered a manuscript in Paris of *L'Egisto ovvero Chi soffre spera* by Virgilio Mazzocchi and Marco Marazzoli, she surmises, for historical, political, technical, logistical, and documentary reasons, that it was this opera (a reworking of Mazzocchi's *Il Falcone* from 1637) performed in Rome in 1639, rather than *L'Egisto* by Cavalli performed in Venice in 1643, to have been produced at the French court by Jules Mazarin in 1646, as previously assumed. Not only are her speculations about the circumstances convincing, but they also account for its tepid reception and consequently the lack of detailed first-hand accounts – in fact without the name of the composer(s)! The anonymous manuscript (Pn: Rés. 1355 [I-3]), which may or may not have been the source used in 1646, presents significant differences from the Roman version, which in turn leads to other hypotheses...

Most of Carlo Mannelli's (1640-1697) 300 compositions have been lost, as well as his *Studio del violino*. All we have of his are two sets of trio sonatas, which Antonella D'Ovidio describes in "«Sonate a tre d'altri stili»: Carlo Mannelli violinista nella Roma di fine Seicento", using a variety of additional historical documents to explain why his style, albeit original, and his position, successful as he was, failed to compete with Corelli's. She makes plausible the theory that he deliberately took a different stylistic path, aspects of which were dated and too heterogeneous to serve as a model, but nonetheless interesting because of the idiomatic violinistic writing.

Anthony R. DelDonna is preparing an edition of Francesco Mancini's *Il zelo animato* (1733), which in this study he describes in relation to Mancini's career, to the *drama sacro*, and to its educational function in the

Neapolitan conservatories. What emerges is tantalizing – that we will soon have access to this *drama tragisacro* [tragic-sacred], destined for talented emerging (all male) singers, and highly representative as a "compendium of contemporary conventions" of Neapolitan opera. The plot is Biblical (Elijah, Elisha, Ahab, Jezebel *et al.*), but the work has three "lowly" characters implausibly transferred from the Naples of the *commedia dell'arte* to Jerusalem, whose antics parallel some themes of the main plot. (DelDonna says that the soldiers scaring Tufolo into believing he has been poisoned by eating crickets is inconsequential, but it follows the scene in which Benadab commits suicide by drinking poison.) DelDonna's unidiomatic English needs some editing (simple things like *characters* for his "personages" and *paring* for "pairing", and some sentence restructuring) but he must be given overwhelming credit for including and translating illustrations from the flavourful comic parts which are in Neapolitan. There are only a few fragmentary musical examples, all marred by bad textual underlay, which I assume the actual edition will present reliably.

The volume concludes with very informative reviews of *Il primo libro dei madrigali... di Geronimo Vespa da Napoli* edited by G. Mastrocola; S. Franchi's *Annali della stampa musicale romana dei secoli xvi-xviii, vol. I/1... 1601 al 1650*; a collection of studies on Giovanni ...Bontempi (1625-1705) edited and/or written by B. Brumana; the acts of a 2002 convention on *Francesco Cavalli...The circulation of the Venetian opera in the 17th century* edited by D. Fabris; a modern (A-R) edition of four Masses by A. Scarlatti and F. Gasparini... from S. Maria Maggiore, Rome edited by L. Della Libera; two volumes on Mozart in Italy; E. Pasquini's book on Padre Martini [reviewed *EMR* Aug. 2005].

Barbara Sachs

For outstanding items for review in the next issue, see p. 38. Our apologies for the delay, but the list below of new Handel editions which are due at the same time as this issue should be finished gives some idea of our other current preoccupations.

Acis and Galatea We replaced our old score, a corrected version of an 18th-century print, with a freshly type-set version, and there will be new orchestral parts as well. This is for the production at Covent Garden, beginning on 31 March, together with *Dido and Aeneas* (using the edition we prepared for 1995). Christopher Hogwood conducts the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Admeto New score and parts for the Göttingen Handel Festival, which will also visit the Edinburgh Festival.

Dettingen Te Deum New score and set of parts.

We have had a particularly busy time during January, hence the delay in sending this issue out. So also apologies if the concerts listed for the beginning of February in the Diary have already happened.

CD REVIEWS

Rather more reviews are carried over to the next issue than usual, chiefly because the Handel anniversary has overloaded me with large projects and close deadlines (*Acis and Galatea* and *Admeto* being the most troublesome) as well as an unexpected number of orders for Handel, Purcell and (for no centennial reason) Biber. So I've listed in sequence the items that should have been reviewed and hope to add some enticement to listen to them in the April issue. CB

CHANT

Bernard de Clairvaux: Medieval music of the Cistercians Ensemble Officium, Wilfried Rombach 61' 25"
Christophorus CHR 77301

Our convention of beginning with chant upsets chronology and feeling here. Bernard's dates are c.1090-1153, but the style of the performance here isn't located in any particular century. The booklet doesn't say where the rhythms come from. That of the opening hymn, which is a legendary biography of St Bernard, is quite elaborate. The disc is largely devoted to the famous poem/hymn ascribed to him, *Jesu dulcis memoria* (entitled *Jubilus rhythmicus* [not *metricus*] *de nomini Jesu*): 35 of the 48 or so stanzas are sung in groups through the disc. The tune used here (one that begins with repeated notes then drops a fifth) can stand the repetition, and were I using it as a route towards mysticism I would probably be annoyed by the drones and organum that varies it. However, most of us will welcome the variety. I think I would only replay the recording as background music, but that is not to say: don't buy it. I find it soothing, but would like a chance to pick out some words: diction is subordinated to the sound, but that is enticing enough to justify it. CB

MEDIEVAL

Endzeitfragmente; Fragments for the End of Time; 9th-11th centuries Sequentia (Benjamin Bagley, Norbert Rodenkirchen) Raum Klang RK 2803 77' 32"

Hear the voice of the ancient bard who present, past and future sees ... For this recording Benjamin Bagby, bard of our time, presents medieval sung poems depicting the Apocalypse through images, visions and prophecies. As the director points out in the booklet, these oral narratives, heard by early Christians in Aquitaine and German-speaking lands, would easily have been assimilated into familiar tales of world destruction from

Norse and Germanic pagan traditions. The song texts, whether in Latin, Old High German or Old Saxon, are translated into German, English and French, even to the extent of matching Latin acrostics in English. For their musical interpretation Bagby and Rodenkirchen play copies of 6- and 14-string harps, a swan-bone flute, medieval transverse flutes and a symphonia (hurdy-gurdy), producing an entertaining programme of acoustic and linguistic variety.

The master of storytelling, Benjamin Bagby sings and declaims with full appreciation of each language's sound resources, matching musical rhythm to Latin syllable length, and for dramatic effect stretching Germanic vowels in both pitch and duration. He adopts at times the folk hortatory style that survives nowadays in moralistic nursery tales, using an exaggerated expressive range, changing tempo, teasing with rhetorical questions, warning in cheerful tones and uttering grim prophecies for all unrepentant sinners among his audience. The accompaniment of harp and flute helps to create the atmosphere, whether of monastery or convivial Saxon hall. The interludes allow us to hear the qualities of the instruments: the delicate virtuoso playing of the high-pitched shrill swan's bone flute, the melodic horn-like transverse flute and the dance rhythm of well-synchronised harp and transverse flute. Diana Maynard

Amors e Cansó: Trobadors de a Corona d'Aragó Marta Infante, Jordi Ricart ST, Capella de Ministrers, Carles Magraner Licanus CDM 0823 74' 59"
songs by Berangyer de Palou, Guiraut Riquier, Matieu de Caersí, Ponç d'Ortafa, Raimon de Miraval & anon

Centred upon the Troubadour Repertoire in the Kingdom of Aragon, this CD is a companion to *Al-Hadiqat al-Adai'a* (see below). By 'troubadour' is understood here any artist between the late eleventh and late thirteenth century who could create, or bring together, both song lyrics and music. Word had priority over melody, and retrospective songbook manuscripts, relying upon memory as the tradition faded, record only a tenth of the music for the many hundreds of lyrics. A brief account of several troubadours and their surviving work is given in the booklet, and the lyrics are printed in full with verse translations in a range of languages. Themes range from courtly love to mourning for the death of James I of Aragon in 1276.

The customary instruments of trouba-

dours and their accompanying minstrels – flute, viella, harp, zanfona, medieval lute, gittern and percussion – are joined by the Arabic 'ud, but in general the rhythms and style of singing could hardly be further from Moorish. In the more refined pieces, such as those sung by the baritone Jordi Ricart, the regular pulse of European convention is kept subdued, allowing the intricate and delicate rhythms of strings and woodwind to be appreciated, and the lyrics are clearly enunciated with restrained ornamentation. A few pieces, especially those involving the mezzo-soprano Marta Infante, are more rumbustious with the emphatic steady percussive beat associated with medieval festivity. In Arabic music the patterns of several heavy and light beats unevenly spaced within a rhythmic unit which may itself be quite long, like for instance the *qa'im wa-nisf* rhythm of the final dramatic piece on CDM 0824, give an entirely different effect from a steady pulse. The drama of the final item on CDM 0823 is of an entirely different order with its atmospheric use of the zanfona to set a religious ambience, developing into a sanguine and almost satirically operatic send-off for the monarch.

Diana Maynard

El jardí perdut Al-Hadiqat al-Adai'a: Música e poesia andalusí a la València s.xii-xiii Ensemble Akrami, Mohamed Amin El Akrami; Capella de Ministrers, Carles Magraner 60' 50"
Licanus CDM 0824

The expressed aim of this recording is to honour the theoreticians, poets and composers who flourished in the Moorish courts of Valencia by recovering scattered poetic compositions preserved in Morocco and uniting in harmony the texts, melodies, voices and instruments of Andalusian tradition on both sides of the Mediterranean. For this reason in Valencia two ensembles have come together, the Ensemble Akrami and the Capella de Ministrers, at the Saló Alfons el Magnànim del Centre Cultural La Beneficència. The Arabic lyrics are printed in Spanish, French and English verse translations and are based around the themes of love and nostalgia for the lost paradise garden. The booklet notes in minuscule print are academic but detailed in a slightly confusing way. For the English reader they are obfuscated by the translator's poor command of verb tenses, though the description of the 'ud as 'billowing of body and short of handle' brought a smile.

Abderrahim Abdelmounem sings magnificently in a highly ornamented

Arabic style, accompanied by the 'ud, rabab and darbuka, while medieval European instruments are represented by flute, rebec, viella, gittern and percussion. A range of Arabic vocal forms (especially the *mawwal* and *tusiyya*), modes and rhythms are heard, and we are reminded that the poetic form, *qasida*, based on classical Oriental metre, was developed to a high degree of sophistication in Andalusia. The combination of intricate rhythm with decorative flourishes and melismata sustains the interest throughout, and the sound of the medieval European instruments at times suggests how traditions may have merged and developed in Spain. For the early music listener who is unsure about enjoying Arabic music this seems an admirable introduction.

Diana Maynard

Codex Manesse: Minnesänger der grossen Heidelberger Liederhandschrift I Ciarlatani Christophorus CHE 0138-2 65' 26" (rec 1996)

to be reviewed in the April issue

Camino de Santiago: Medieval music on the way of St. James Ensemble für frühe Musik Augsburg 59' 13" Christophorus CHR 77300 (rec 12986)

This has a wider stylistic range than most Pilgrim's Way discs, at the risk of a lack of coherent tone: I have no feeling how the music here would impinge on pilgrims. As a programme of music of the period, it is worth hearing, but is better at the beautiful than the vigorous. The group would probably do better not the jumping on the Santiago band-wagon: they don't sound tough enough.

CB

14th CENTURY

Codex Chantilly vol. 1 Tetraktys: Jill Feldman, Carlos Mena, Marta Graziolino, Silvia Tecardi, Kees Boeke 63' 10" Olive Music.Et'Cetera KTC 1900

This is the most daring presentation I have heard of what has come to be known as *Ars Subtilior*, the innovative system of composition which spread from Avignon across Europe from the 14th century and survives in a few MSS, including the *Codex Chantilly*. Once notation indicating both duration and pitch made integration of rhythmic complexity with polyphony an exciting possibility, the way was open to skilful composers of the time to indulge in such sophisticated intricacies as Tetraktys interprets here. First, though, Laurenz Lütteken points out in the booklet, modern performers need to overcome any predisposition to feel the relationship between lyric and music in terms of 19th century conventions.

No concession is made by introducing the Pythagorean temperament gently through the medium of recognisably 'medieval' renderings to which the listener might be accustomed from, for instance, Philip Pickett's New London Consort *Ars Subtilior* (Linn CKD 039). The amazingly versatile Jill Feldman opens with a ballade ascribed to Solage, pitching groups of notes at unfamiliar intervals and subsequently joined by instruments playing in different rhythms and at different though not inharmonious pitches. Notation of this eulogy to Jean, Duc de Berry, set on six lines can be seen on the CD cover, complete with the distinctive red notes indicating an alteration of note values by one third. The mystery is how a singer can have the ear to perform it not only with beauty but also with any degree of conviction, and this Tetraktys does not disclose to the uninitiated.

What follows is pure joy, as Carlos Mena joins Jill Feldman in an intricate anonymous virelai and eventually in a ballade of considerable sophistication by Jacob of Senleches. The rich quality of his alto voice with its sustained and expressive phrasing delights the ear in a ballade tentatively ascribed to Phillipoctus of Caserta, which Jill Feldman, her pure tones like air rippling on a feather, contrasts with a virelai perhaps by Antonello of Caserta. The instrumental interludes and accompaniment on harp, viella and flute are soothing and sympathetic, yet never cease to be of musical interest. The ballade *Narcissus* is a remarkable composition ascribed by virtue of style to Franciscus Andrieu, composer of *Armes, amours*, the lament on the death of Machaut. This recording deserves to be heard by all early music enthusiasts and it would be good to hear reactions or detailed comments by specialists.

Diana Maynard

15th CENTURY

Dufay & the Court of Savoy The Binchois Consort, Andrew Kirkman 72' 03" Hyperion CDA67715
Missa *Se la face ay pale*, Propers for St. Maurice + motets *Magnanime gentis* & *O très piteulx*

In the latest of a series of first-class interpretations of 15th-century sacred music, the Binchois Consort place Dufay's most admired Mass setting, *Se la face ay pale*, in the liturgical context of a set of polyphonic propers for the patron saint of the Court of Savoy, St Maurice. These are supplied from the rich resource of 15th-century propers in a simple faburden style in Trent MS 88. These settings are quite possibly also the work of Dufay, or if not, certainly in the functional style which would have been

used in major religious celebrations. The pleasant but undemanding textures of the propers allow the more adventurous polyphony of Dufay's setting of the ordinary to sparkle – I shall eschew high-flown metaphors of tracteries and stained glass – and the singers more than adequately realise their stated aim of bringing the opulent Court of Savoy aurally to life. As a bonus they include the chanson upon whose tenor the Mass is based, but in the later extremely busy setting which may, or more likely may not, be the work of Dufay. Also supplied are two motets, the vernacular *O très piteulx/Omnès amici*, whose tenor (taken from the Lamentations) corroborates that the piece was written to mark the fall of Constantinople, and *Magnanime gentis*, a political piece of the sort that Dufay excelled at. The singing on the CD is mellifluous and animated, the pronunciation authentic (as one expects with this group), and if the recording is just a little dry (what is it with English recordings of 15th-century repertoire?) both the liturgical context and the confidence of the performance make this a valuable addition to our understanding of Dufay's output.

D. James Ross

Musik für Orgel und Zink The 'Oldest playable organ in the world' in concert Brett Leighton (c1430 organ, St Andreas in Ostönnen, Westphalia), Doron D Sherwin, cnt. 72'36" Motette CD 20321

Although it is extremely debatable whether this really is the 'oldest playable organ in the world' (there is very little about the case that reminds me of other Medieval organ cases), bits of its insides (notably parts of the windchests) are certainly very old. But this CD is of interest for the combination of zink (cornetto) and organ, a combination that became enshrined into organ history by the inclusion of a zink stop in a number of historic organs. The programme is fascinating, representing rarely heard pieces from around 1400 to about 1590, including music from the Faenza Codex and by Illeborgh, Hofhaimer and Schlick and. Both zink and organ playing are exemplary, with the latter making effective use of Buchner's rather odd manner of playing trills.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Renaissance Winds: Music for alta capella around 1500 Les haulz et les bas 65' 54" Christophorus CHR 77291 (rec 2003)

Those familiar with the group's previous three discs will find this an interesting development. The stark alta capella sound with its formal medieval filigree melts away as this disc progresses, to reveal the form and chordal palette of mid-renaissance music and beyond. We end up in the mid-16th-century and with a five-part ensemble,

having started a hundred years earlier with three players. The journey is fascinating: the extra shawm and sackbut and full chords sound startlingly lush set against the earlier tapestry. Whilst, of course, we are familiar with the facts here, a description cannot substitute for the experience of hearing the shift happen in sequence on developments of essentially the same ensemble. So the answer is of course to avail yourself of a copy and listen to Busnois, Agricola, Josquin, Ockeghem and Stockem give way to Gervaise, Gombert, Luther and Passereau... and then be tempted to get hold of one or two of the previous discs if you missed out. As a final observation, it is fascinating to hear very directly the fundamental effect that musical literacy had on the way music came to sound.

Stephen Cassidy

Whatever ye will: Dance in the 15th Century Gaita (Andrew Casson, Chris Elmes, Cait Wenn) 51' 28"
Gaita Medieval Music GMMCD02
www.gaita.co.uk info@gaita.co.uk
to be reviewed in the April issue

16th CENTURY

Du Caurroy Requiem des Rois de France; Les Meslanges Douce Mémoire. Denis Raisin Dadre 141' (2 CDs)
Naïve (rec 1998 & 2004)
Limited edition in hard-cover illustrated booklet

This is a luxurious re-issue of 2 CDs originally issued in 1998 (*Requiem*) and 2004 (*Mélanges*). Presumably this is timed to mark the composer's anniversary this year (1549-1609) though at the time of writing there is no mention of this release on the websites of recording company or performers. The *Requiem* is presented in the context of the funeral of Henry IV (of France) in 1610, complete with a seven-minute funeral oration, beautifully declaimed and printed complete (with translation) in the booklet. As a whole, this disc is one of the most compelling I have heard recently. Do not be put off by the idea of extensive spoken French: here it's almost more musical than the music. The second disc is a selection of du Caurroy's other works – sacred and secular songs, psalm settings and instrumental pieces. The singing is all forthright yet dignified and disciplined. Among the instruments are a remarkable set of 'column flutes' copied from originals in the Musée de la Musique in Paris. These are recorders but with a double bore like a dulcian. The sound is very full-toned, especially in the church acoustics used for both CDs, and will be a revelation to anyone still suspicious of the musical credentials of any kind of recorder. The booklet (English/French) gives full details of

these, the programmes, the texts and the performers and is richly illustrated. Du Caurroy's *Requiem* was performed at all royal funerals in France from 1610 until the Revolution. Having heard this recording, I can understand why. David Hansell

Orlando di Lasso in München Münchner Dommusik, Ecco la Musica, Karl-Ludwig Nies 59' 44" (rec 1996)
Christophorus CHE 0133-2 (rec 1995/97)
Lassus *Missa super entre vous filles* a5, (with Clemens chanson); *Magnificat* a5, *Salve regina* a5, *Te Deum* a6; + F. Lassus *Canzona* a4; Sennfl *Laudate pueri* a4, *Veni Sancte Spiritus* a5, *Virgo prudentissima* a4

An impressive disc by a small choir, 2 cornetts, 4 sackbuts and organ, all well balanced. The mass is taken just a little too fast, which means that the section ends can only be shaped by slowing down rather than careful placing of the cadence: one doesn't need the brake after each section of the Kyrie. But the alternatim *Te Deum* is splendid, and the whole disc is a good introduction to the liturgical music by Lassus and Sennfl. Worth reissuing. CB

Taverner & Tudor Music II Gloria tibi Trinitas Ars Nova Copenhagen, Paul Hillier 73' 58"
Dacapo 80.226056
Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas + Byrd *Christe qui lux;* *Fayrfax Magnificat Regale;* Tallis *Te lucis ante terminum;* White *Christe qui lux es*
see p. 19

Weelkes Sacred Choral Music Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum, Benjamin Nicholas 59' 52"
Delphian DCD34070
to be reviewed in the April issue

Gregesche: a musical treasure of the Venetian renaissance Zefiro Torna 51' 47"
Et'Cetera KTC 4028
Music by A. Gabrieli, Merulo, Padovano, Wert, Willaert etc
to be reviewed in the April issue

Chansons et danses de la renaissance française Polyphonia Antiqua, Yves Esquieu Pierre Vérany PV709011 54' 48" (rec 1984)
to be reviewed in the April issue

Via crucis: La Passione nella Spagna XVI secolo Daltrocanto Dario Tabbia 47' 28"
Symphonia SY 06224
Music by Anchieta, Esquivel, Guerrero, A.Lobo, Morales, Navaro, Penelosa, Romero, Victoria
to be reviewed in the April issue

The Voice in the Garden: Spanish Songs and Motets, 1480-1550 Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 52' 08"
Hyperion Helios CDH55298 ££ (rec 1993)
Music by Encina, Enrique, Mena, Millán, Narváez, Peñalosa, Segno & anon

This must be the most modern repertoire recorded by Gothic Voices, stretching some way in the the 16th century. The edgy sound and clear tuning gives life to simple homophonic writing, though the half-minute homage to Michael Morrow sounds politer than I remember from *Musica Reservata* and the church style of Peñalosa's *Ne reminiscaris* doesn't convince. But the next piece, *Dindindrin*, restores ones faith. Most recordings of the repertoire assume that because Encina and co. worked at court (the main source is the *Palace* cancionero), they should sound more refined, but that doesn't mean decadent. CB

17th CENTURY

Buxtehude Opera Omnia XI; Organ Works 4 Ton Koopman (1683 Gercke/Herbst organ, Dorfkirche, Basedow, Germany) 54' 01"
Challenge Classics CC72248

My heart sank when the latest Koopman Buxtehude organ CD arrived – and very nearly stopped beating altogether (or, more accurately, nearly exploded) when I heard the first minutes. I struggled to listen to the rest. I have praised a few of Koopman's earlier organ CDs and have admired much of his conducting, but this Buxtehude CD series has reached depths that even I thought unfathomable. As I have commented before, it is telling that Koopman's name is more than twice the size of Buxtehude's on the cover, as this series is more about Koopman than Buxtehude. Whether it is a complete misunderstanding of any of the musical aspects of Buxtehude's style or a deliberate attempt to impose his own personality on the playing, the result is bizarre, mannered and eccentric. Speeds are excessive to a degree, registrations are odd, articulation is mannered, ornaments mostly consist of rambling doodles with no bearing on period style. Koopman's attempt to justify his use of so many ornaments is flawed, generally by confusing the difference between harpsichord and organ playing. I will take some convincing to believe that organists in the 17th and 18th century played the organ like the harpsichord, as Koopman suggests. Most organists can rattle pieces off like this – it is not that clever. What saddens me most is that a (very) few players try and mimic Koopman's style – and many listeners, attracted by a well-known name, will end up thinking that this is what Buxtehude's music actually sounds like. It most certainly is not. Although I would not recommend buying this CD on the strength of the historic organ, it is a fine instrument from midway between Lübeck and the Polish border. It is tuned in meantone, and

features the 'Basedower Lions' – lions-head masks that, when the pedal 16' reed is played, roll their eyes and stick out their tongues. I wonder if that is what Ton Koopman is doing to Buxtehude, and to his listeners? At 54 minutes long it is, like the other CDs in the series, criminally short. As far as I am concerned, that is a blessing, but it is an unfair marketing ploy on those who will have to buy five CDs when four would have done. Seek and destroy.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The Buxtehude Influence: organ music by Buxtehude & Bach Andrew Arthur 159' 54"
Priory PRCD 1006 (2CDs)

Although this is intended to demonstrate the modestly-sized new Danish organ in Trinity Hall, where Andrew Arthur is Director of Music, it avoids the usual eclectic programming for such occasions by concentrating on the links between Buxtehude and Bach. Although the organ is very much closer to the sound world of the latter, the CD emphasises the former (with a score of 20 pieces to 7 in Buxtehude's favour). The organ is an interesting departure for many Oxbridge college chapels, in that there is a focus on historical principals alongside the inevitable requirement to perform a very wide teaching repertoire and to cope with chapel services. Unfortunately for the listener, the key stop that is missing is that vital, but mythical stop, called 'a generous acoustic', though the dry acoustic will be an excellent teaching aid for students – there is no room to hide!

The nature of the organ makes it difficult to differentiate between the style of the two composers, although I wonder if slightly more might have been done in the performance to separate the two masters. They came from very different musical traditions and, although the young Bach was obviously influenced by Buxtehude, the organs that his own interpretations were intended for were, by and large, of the central, rather than north German tradition. Although there are one or two points of detail I would happily discuss with Mr Arthur, the playing shows a good understanding of period performance style and technique. Bach's Fantasia in G minor (shown incorrectly as by Buxtehude in the sleeve notes) and the Bach Passacaglia are given particularly fine performances, showing just what a smallish organ is capable of when played well.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Giulio Caccini and his Circle La Nuovo Musica, David Bates 69' 20"

Somm SOMMCD 083

+ Castaldi, Frescobaldi, Kapsberger, Monteverdi, Philips

to be reviewed in the April issue

Jacob Cats Mourning Maidens and other songs Camerata Trajectina 77' 10"

Globe GLO 6063 (rec 2003)

to be reviewed in the April issue

Girolamo Frescobaldi Works for organ Liuwe Tamminga (1471-75/1531 da Prato/Facchetti organ, 1596 Malamini organ, San Petronio, Bologna) 76' 10"
Accent ACC10120 (issued in 1996 as ACC 96120D)

Liuwe Tamminga is in the fortunate position of presiding over two of the most important historic Italian organs, something made easier by the fact that they face each other across the vast choir of the Basilica of San Petronio in Bologna. When playing the older of the two, dating back to 1471, it is easy to forget that the organ behind you is also much older than any playable organ in England! It is the older instrument that gets most of the playing on this CD, with just one track making use of the *Voce Umana* stop on the 1596 organ (a stop slightly mistuned to the *Principale* to give a gently undulating effective, used in Elevation toccatas). The older organ is based on a 24' *Principale contrabasso* and a 12' *Principale* stop (the compass is FF-a"), the latter with double and triple pipes to the higher notes. The organ has an extraordinary vocal quality, with each pipe seeming to speak with an individual voice – it is an exquisite sound. Liuwe Tamminga has made good use of his post by producing seminal recordings of the Italian masters, in this case with a well selection group of pieces by the supreme master, Frescobaldi. He is an outstanding interpreter, getting to the very heart of the music and serving nothing but the music.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Marais, Sainte-Colombe Pièces de viole Josh Cheatham, Julien Léonard viols, Skip Sempé *hpscd* 65' 46" + bonus DVD
Paradizo PA0006

The main disc is accompanied by a 20-minute DVD consisting of various short movements: *Hotteterre Rondeau* for recorder (with Julien Martin), a movement from one of Telemann's Paris Quartets (with Sophie Gent, violin) and two of the pieces which feature on the main recording. Dealing with the DVD first: it is certainly charming to watch as well as listen to music delightfully performed. Watching the bass viol was a

little disconcerting as the sound and vision don't quite coincide (this seems no problem with the treble instruments.) There could have been better coordination between what we saw and what we heard, such as the solo viol doing something vigorous while we watched the accompanying viol, or a prolonged shot of the recorder player not playing. I'd prefer to see more of the bow and the left hand than the face of the performer, but that may be a player's reaction only.

The main recording features Marais suites from the third and fifth books. Josh Cheatham plays two viols, a modern copy of the 7-string for the A minor suite from Book 3 and the Sainte-Colombe Concert *Le Raporté* (so-called apparently because the first movement is transcribed from lute tablature by the compiler of the MS), and an anonymous 17th-century 6-string bass for the suites in G minor from Book 5 and G major compiled from Book 3 and Book 5. The two viols also play the Sarabande à 2 viols from the 1st Book. This last, plus the Chaconne in G major (Book 5) also feature on the DVD. I enjoyed Josh Cheatham's playing very much. He is in complete command throughout, and at his best in the brilliant fast movements – the Gigue angloise from the Book 3 G major suite, for example, and the Chaconne, also in G major, from Book 5. He takes *Le Jeu de Volant* at tremendous pace, and it is exhilarating. I felt he played always within himself, too much so in the slower movements, and there could have been greater contrasts between Marais' fort and doux. However these are minor complaints in the face of such formidable command of the instrument. The accompanying team is very nimble as indeed it needs to be, and the second viol, Julien Léonard, plays beautifully in the Marais Sarabande and the Sainte-Colombe Concert. The sound throughout is ravishing, and I particularly liked the sound of the 17th century 6-string – quite astringent, but with a wonderful glow particularly on the top string.

Robert Oliver

Monteverdi 'Teatro d'Amore' L'Arpeggiata, Christina Pluhar 59' 54"
Virgin Classics 50999 236140 0 0

Some of this is among the best Monteverdi singing and playing that I know. But the music is so often treated in a cavalier way which varies between the brilliant and the irritating. Much as I love the cornett, I don't want it intruding everywhere. In many respects it is interchangeable with the violin, but when there is a name in the sources, it is always violin, not cornett. The duet *Zefiro torna* loses its concentration and intensity when instruments come and go: the big event,

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

the breaking off of the ground and the move from G to E, is undermined. Similarly, the simplicity of *Si dolce è'l tormento* is lost as the song progresses. I enjoyed the disc of *Los Impossibles* and the live concert was amazing. My conclusion from the visible evidence of the video clip on that CD that the 'improvisation' is written out or very well rehearsed was confirmed by a friend who happened to phone while I was writing this. But that programme was explicitly a mixing of 17th & 21st century. This only happens here in an effective jazz *Ohimè ch'io cado*; I would have enjoyed more of such effective cross-overs though I am not complaining about the marvellous 'straight' *Pur ti miro* that follows it. Do buy it, but don't recommend it to those who don't know the music already: they need some point of comparison to be aware of what is being so brilliantly, if sometimes perversely, added. CB

I have only received this in white disc form: there is, as well as a normal version, a de luxe version with an 80-page booklet.

Purcell *Dido & Aeneas* Sarah Connolly Dido, Gerald Finley Aeneas, Lucy Crowe Belinda, Patrícia Bardon Sorciress, William Purefoy Spirit, Sarah Tynan 2nd Woman, Carys Lane & Rebecca Outram witches, Orchestra & Choir of the Age of Enlightenment, Elizabeth Kenny & Steven Devine dir

Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0757 69' 49"
see pp 8-9

Purcell *Cease anxious world: Songs & chamber music* La Rêveuse 60'
Mirare MIR 033

We can doubtless expect a variety of approaches to Purcell in this anniversary year. The USP of this French ensemble is their rich and varied continuo scorings (drawn from harp, theorbo, keyboards and viol) and their willingness to extend a song by first playing it as an instrumental piece by way of an introduction. The harpist also contributes a quasi-improvised set of variations on *A new Irish tune*. It's all done very well, but I do think that the listener should be told exactly what is happening and I also think that instrumental variety should remain within the bounds of historical likelihood. *Music for a while* with harp and theorbo? (and some strange notes in the vocal line.) Julie Hassler is brave to tackle the English repertoire. She is not really convincing with the short vowels, oddly enough, and some are so swallowed that the notes disappear with them; but her tone is very good and the emotions of the songs are fully expressed. Overall, the programme is good in principle but it is short by modern CD standards, despite the odd inclusion of a sonata by Finger. The notes explain the

context of the music, but say little about the specific pieces. David Hansell

Mr Henry Purcell's Most Admirable Compositions James Bowman, The King's Consort, Robert King 57' 55" (rec 1988)

Hyperion Helios CDH55303 ££
to be reviewed in the April issue

Schildt *Organ Works* Annette Richards (1554/1654 Raphaelis organ at Roskilde Cathedral) 57' 10"
Loft LRCD-1104

Melchior Schildt is one of the many composers whose surviving complete works don't even make up a full CD. Indeed, (like the music of Scheidemann) they wouldn't be known at all were it not for the discovery of the Clausthal-Zellerfeld manuscript in 1955. A native of Hanover and pupil of Sweelinck, his works show an inventive and original musical mind at work – albeit, it seems, a rather troubled mind that led to such incidents as assaulting the famous organ builder Gottfried Fritzsche in the organ loft at Wolfenbüttel. As if to make amends, the Fritzsche organ case that witnessed this incident is on the front cover of the CD. His surviving work shows more extremes of expression than any of his contemporaries, including notable uses of chromaticism such as in the chorale *Herzlich lieb hab' ich dich*, a contemplation of death with its ecstatic concluding swoop down and up the keyboard. His key work is the monumental *Magnificat primi toni*, a 20-minute-long setting which includes a 9 minute choral fantasia. The Roskilde organ is one of the most important surviving northern European instruments – the cathedral being the Danish equivalent of Westminster Abbey, in terms of its royal connections. As Schildt spent some time in Copenhagen, he may well have known the first incarnation of this organ Annette Richards is an English export to the States and is an excellent interpreter of this repertoire.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

We are grateful to Loft for sending four discs this month, three of which we have reviewed (the fourth is an anthology programme on Fisk's organ op. 114 in Seattle.) They are available in the UK from Priory.

Sweelinck: *Master of the Dutch Renaissance* Jonathan Dimmock (1521 organ, Oosthuizen, NL; c.1550 organ, Andreas-kerk, Hattem, NL; 2000 GOArt organ after Schnitger, Örgryte Nya Kyrka, Göteborg S) 116' 16" (2 CDs)

Loft LRCD-1106-07
+ Byrd *The Woods so wylde*; Scheidemann *Paduana Lachrymae* & anon

Although the first two organs pre-date Sweelinck's birth, and the third is a reconstruction of an organ from around

80 years after his death, all three allow convincing representations of the aural world of Sweelinck – not least in their mean-tone tuning. All are important instruments in their own right, notably the Oosthuizen organ. Although nominally dated 1521 from case markings, it seems likely that this was merely the date of a rebuilding of an even earlier organ, giving us a rare example of Gothic pipework. The Örgryte organ is the extraordinary 2000 recreation of a 1700 Schnitger organ by the GOArt team in Gothenburg. It includes an example of the Zincke, a stop that Sweelinck is known to have made use of and which went on to become the basis of some registrations of his pupils in North Germany; curiously, the famous Zincke/Trumpet combination mentioned by Praetorius is not used.

Sweelinck's music fills the whole of the second CD, but he shares the first with Scheidemann (one of his star pupils), Byrd, and the anonymous composer of the *Susanne van Soldt Notebook*. The playing is stylish and the registrations reasonably appropriate if you can forgive the use of the full resources of the Örgryte organ rather than only those registrations that Sweelinck would have known in Amsterdam. Lovers of 32' reeds (which Sweelinck could only have dreamt of) should go straight to track 15, CD2! Recommended. Andrew Benson-Wilson

Matthias Weckmann *Organ Works* Joseph Kelemen (1693 Arp Schnitger organ, St Jacobi, Hamburg) 69' 42"

OEHMS OC627

Praeambulum primi toni a 5, Fuga ex D pedaliter primi Toni in D, Ach wir armen Sunder, Es ist das Heyl uns kommen her, Lucidor einss hutt der schaf, Gelobet seystu Jesu Christ, Canzon in D, Fantasia ex D

The almost primate grandeur of the opening few bars of this CD give a good foretaste of the music of one of the most important North German composers of the pre-Buxtehude era, combined with the majestic sound of one of the finest organs in the world – the 1693 Arp Schnitger organ St Jacobi, Hamburg, an organ containing a vast amount of historic pipework. Weckmann was organist here before Schnitger restored the organ, and many of the pipes that Weckmann would have known were retained by Schnitger – and are emphasised in the registrations used on this CD. Incidentally, this is also the Hamburg church where Bach applied to become organist in 1720, only to be passed over by a competitor who just happened to have paid 4000 Marks into the church coffers, thereby paying for about one seventh of the cost of the Schnitger organ! The musical highlight is

Weckman's extraordinary *Es ist das Heyl uns kommen her*, a massive variation set that forms the 17th century equivalent to Bach's *Art of Fugue*. Alongside a 10 minute chorale fantasia as its sixth verse are canonic movements, the whole enclosed by two massive movements for full organ. Joseph Kelemen's interpretations are excellent, particularly in his use of registrations respecting Weckmann's own direction. Recommended for the composer, organ and player.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

De Profundis: [J.C.] Bach, Bruhns, Buxtehude, Tunder Stephan MacLeod B, François Fernandez vln, Ricercar Consort, Philippe Pierlot 66' 03"

Mirare MIR 041

J. Christoph Bach Lamento *Wie bist du*; Becker Pavan 45, Sonata 43; Bruhns *De Profundis*, *Der Herr hat seinen Stuhl*; Buxtehude *Ich bin eine Blume zu Saron*; Tunder *Da mihi Domine, O Jesu dulcissime*

This disc has the same title as a 1985 *Musica Antiqua Köln* recording for Archiv. Both recordings offer a selection of small-scale penitential motets from 17th-century Germany, although they have only one piece in common (Nikolaus Bruhns's *De profundis clamavi*). The Ricercar Consort's disc is characterised by its use of a large organ for continuo (the 1998 Aubertin organ at St Loup sur Thouet, although no details of it are given in the booklet). The organ continuo enfolds the vocal and instrumental soloists in a warm resonance. The use of a large organ is historically appropriate, for the motets on this disc were mostly written by organists and were probably performed from church organ-lofts; indeed, in 1965 the musicologist Martin Geck coined the term 'organist music' for these small-scale non-liturgical motets. But the all-embracing organ sound diminishes the amount of light and shade in these performances. The contrasts within pieces are not as sharply etched as on the Archiv disc, and I wonder if the organist could have used more variety of registration and articulation. Moreover, in a programme dominated by penitential motets, Buxtehude's lilting setting of the Song of Songs, *Ich bin eine Blume zu Saron*, comes as welcome light relief. Yet despite a certain lack of variety, these are thought-provoking and elegant performances.

Stephen Rose

Van Dyck: a musical portrait Various performers 46' 40"

Arion ARN60792 rec 1992-2008

Music by Byrd, Dowland, Fontana, Holborne, Purcell, Zanetti

This 'Official CD of the Van Dyck exhibition at Jacquemart-André's museum,

Paris' is a compilation of mostly English music, with some Italian, hung on the thread that Van Dyck might feasibly have heard it on his travels and during his attachment to the English court. It feels hastily put together with a single sheet insert drawing our attention to the obvious similarity between Van Dyck's portraits and the music of Holborne, Dowland, Byrd, Purcell, Zanetti and Fontana. Nevertheless, I hope the marketing technique works for the intended audience, since the performances are all excellent, and though oddly juxtaposed, should provide a quality way-in for new ears. We have vibrant and tense Fontana from the Ensemble Almageste, and Dowland from a young-sounding John Elwes – light and lyrical – as the best examples. For EMR readers it may be worthwhile seeking out the recordings from which they came. Stephen Cassidy

LATE BAROQUE

Attilio Ariosti *The Stockholm Sonatas III* Thomas Georgi viola d'amore, Lucas Harris archlute and baroque guitar, Mime Yamahiro Brinkmann vlc + Emma Kirkby BIS-CD-1675

Recueil de Pièces pour la Viola d'Amour, II; Pur alfin gentil viola

In this final CD in the set, Georgi uses one 6/6 strung viola d'amore throughout with the sympathetic strings tuned to a scale rather than the usual doubling of the playing strings – no doubt to avoid having to retune them constantly during recording. Notably, Ariosti used a different tuning for almost every one of these sonatas and even uses different tunings for different pieces in the same key. Whereas the second CD of the set focused on the possibility that Ariosti used an alto range tuning, on this CD Georgi focuses on exploring the soprano tuning possibilities of the instrument. Also included is the cantata *Pur al fin gentil viola* sung by Emma Kirkby.

Ariosti's style in this last set is distilled, showing what he had learned from his experiments with the viola d'amore in the earlier works in the set. These last sonatas are shorter and with fewer repetitions. Sonata no. 16 sounds distinctly Vivaldian with its opening octave leaps and three movement form.

Georgi's playing is impeccable with keen intonation, not an easy task, as players of the viola d'amore will acknowledge, given the many tunings required. The ornamentation is thoughtful and well researched. Lucas Harris and Mime Yamahiro Brinkmann, as on the other two CDs, produce a varied and sensitive accompaniment that enhances yet never detracts from the solo line. Kirkby's

contribution is well matched and the parts are all well balanced.

The booklet notes are, as usual, well written, very informative and give lots of background information to the context as well as explaining Georgi's musical and technical choices in such areas as tuning and ornamentation.

With this complete set, Georgi has accomplished a feat of both musicology and performance. That we now have a complete recording of this set available, and one of such high quality, should help bring Ariosti's instrumental work to the wider audience it deserves as well as being very useful to those wishing to study this important part of the viola d'amore repertoire. Leon King

Discs I & II: BIS-CD-1535 & 1675

Critical edition by Michael and Dorothea Jappe via: www.baroqueboxset.cornetto-music.de
Edition by Thomas Georgi to be published by www.primalamusica.com

Bach Cantatas 20, 2, 10 Siri Thornhill, Petra Noskaiová, Christoph Genz, Jan Van der Crabben SATB, La Petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 64' 47"

Accent ACC 235307 SACD

This is my first experience of Kuijken's minimalist Bach and I have to say that I enjoyed it a lot. The three cantatas on the disc are from the very top drawer and four singers and small instrumental group (woodwind, brass and organ with 2.2.1.2. strings, the last 2 being basses de violon) give them crystal clear readings, not lacking in passion – as some critics would perhaps associate with such an approach – and fully relishing Bach's astounding breadth of creative talent. The outstanding soloists are able to blend their voices perfectly in the choruses. As well as the booklet with texts and translations, there is another which covers the background to the complete 20 CD-edition. All in all, a wonderful production: if you're in any doubt, listen to Track 1 – but be warned: you'll be hooked! BC

Bach *La Nativité: Cantatas 61, 122, 123, 182* Monika Mauch, Matthew White, Charles Daniels, Harry van der Kamp SATB, Montréal Baroque, Eric Milnes cond 72' 47"

ATMA Classique SACD2 2403

According to the booklet note, Montréal Baroque under the direction of Eric Milnes intend to record all of Bach's cantatas for the ATMA label. This disc uses one singer per part and an orchestra of about twenty players. Compared to other solo-voice recordings, Montréal Baroque offer a warmer and more resonant sound than Joshua Rifkin's Bach Ensemble; they have more emphasis on

line and less on dance metre than Sigiswald Kuijken's recordings. In general, these performances are full of vigour and momentum, with excellent clarity of contrapuntal lines. I particularly enjoyed the spirited rendition of the first movement of Cantata 61 and the exhilarating rhythmic energy of the opening chorus of Cantata 123. Of the vocal soloists, Monika Mauch stands out for singing that is precisely controlled, yet also conveys the mood of the text. I look forward to hearing more recordings in this series. *Stephen Rose*

Bach *Solo Cantatas 35, 169, 170* Bernarda Finck, Freiburger Barockorchester, Petra Müllejan 76' 20"
Hamonia Mundi HNC 902016

On most recent recordings, Cantatas 35, 169 and 170 are the preserve of counter-tenor soloists. Bernarda Fink offers the distinctly different timbre of an operatic mezzo-soprano. Her voice is a large one, but the vibrato is reasonably controlled, and she gives her lines a good sense of momentum. However, some of the notes in the first aria of *Vergnügte Ruh* BWV 170 are a little too low for her. The Freiburger Barockorchester provide a stylish accompaniment, with sprightly playing of the organ obbligato parts by Wolfgang Zerer. Peter Wollny contributes an excellent booklet note, commenting perceptively on the dance rhythms and harmonic features of these cantatas. *Stephen Rose*

Bach *Cantatas 51, 82a, 199* Natalie Dessay S, Le Concert d'Astrée, Emmanuelle Haïm Virgin Classics 50999 235004 2 6 63' 35"

In several of Haïm's recordings, her direction has been rather mannered; not so here. The tempi of three of the loveliest of Bach's solo cantatas are well-chosen, and the playing is very fine: *Le Concert d'Astrée* is more than a mere collection of musicians – it is a proper ensemble. The superb Neil Brough is the trumpet in *Jauchzet Gott*; two flutes take it in turns to accompany *Ich habe genu(n)g*, which seems a little over-resourced, but both approach the work with great sensitivity, as does Patrick Beaugiraud (oboe) in *Mein Herz*. It's a shame, then, that Natalie Dessay does not show similar sensitivity. Apart from the too-frequent vibrato, she insists on bel-canto-esque swoops up to the note. This really grates – so much so that I cannot recommend this disc. Someone should remind her that she's singing Bach, not Bellini.

Katie Hawks

Bach *The sacred masterworks* Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki 10 CDs BIS-CD-9020/22 £

St John Passion, St Matthew Passion, Mass in B Minor, Christmas Easter & Ascension Oratorios

There are no more elegant recordings of Bach than those of the Bach Collegium Japan. That's in no way to suggest no excitement or emotion – quite the opposite – but that they are connoisseur's recordings which never tire from repeated listening. On top of that, Suzuki has the spirituality which a lot of European directors seem to lack. His attention to detail is splendid, whether something as prosaic as using Germanic Latin pronunciation in the *B Minor*, or in bringing out lines in Bach's complicated musical structures. And all of his tempi are carefully considered (meaning that even if you don't quite agree, you can still listen without irritation!) The line-up of soloists is consistently good, with regulars Peter Kooij, Gerd Türk and Robin Blaze joined by various others. The choir is a choir, and not a collection of soloists all competing to be heard, and the orchestra is brimming with talent. I could write a lot more, detailing nice bits in each of the works, but they are very long, and so, therefore, would this review be. If your collection of Bach's big choral works is incomplete, then you need this box set. Even if, for example, you have the Archiv Gardiner box set, you still need this one. In fact, you just need this set. *Katie Hawks*

The Bach Organ of Störmthal, Hildebrandt, 1723 William Porter 50' 12"

Loft LRCD-1086

BWV 570, 589; 599, 610, 611, 616, 619, 625, 628, 632, 636, 638, 646; 957, 1090, 1092, 1095, 1112, 1115, 1116

Bach dedicated the organ at Störmthal in November 1723 together with his Thomaskirche choir and with Anna Magdalena as soloist. This was the start of the friendship between Bach and the organ builder Zacharias Hildebrandt (whose first organ this was after his training with Gottfried Silbermann) which culminated in Hildebrandt's monumental 1748 organ in Naumburg with Bach as the consultant. This CD is important in that it sets out to show how suitable much of Bach's music is for a small, one-manual organ. For a contrasting approach to Bach at the organ, see the review of the new Thomaskirche Bach-organ below. The programme is very well chosen to demonstrate the wide range of tone colours available by using small combinations of stops – one-third of the pieces use three or fewer stops. Extracts from the Neumeister Collection and the *Orgelbüchlein* are framed by three free works. William Porter is an outstanding interpreter of Bach, his sensitive and thoughtful approach to playing combining with an excellent sense of articulation to produce performances of gentle musicality. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

J. S. Bach *Achtzehn Leipziger Choräle* Almut Rößler (2000 'Bach' organ, Thomaskirche, Leipzig) 55' 222 + 47' 51"
Motette MOT13151 (2 CDs)

This CD (released in 2003) presents a very different view of Bach at the organ to the Störmthal CD reviewed above. Bach lamented never having had an organ with which to fully reveal his musical intentions – and it took 250 years before the Thomaskirche acquired one. The Bach-organ was built in the Millennium and Bach anniversary year of 2000, not without controversy. The specification is based on an organ that Bach's uncle proposed for the Georgenkirche in Eisenach (where JSB was baptized) with a case loosely reflecting that of Leipzig's Paulinkirche – an organ that Bach is known to have preferred to his own. Saxon and Thuringian organs are very different from the North German organs often associated with his music, so hearing Bach on this organ could open up a different perspective on his sound world. Almut Rößler is a successful protagonist, not least in her avoidance of the tinkly neo-baroque registrations associated with the North German organs.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Bach Albert Schweitzer (The Complete American Columbia Records, rec 1951/52, Parish Church, Günsbach, Alsace) 217' 21"
Andromeda ANDRCD 5123 3 CDs

I kept this for myself rather than sending it to Andrew because Schweitzer was the first famous organist I knew of and I had no recollection of what he sounded like. I approached him then from the religious angle: the distinguished theologian and organist who went off to run a leper colony in west Africa. This substantial collection is devoted chiefly to preludes/toccatas/the passacaglia and fugues, with half a dozen chorale preludes and a canzona. As was inevitable, his missionary work has been questioned. His organ playing would have fallen out of fashion anyway, but also suffered from an unsurprising failing of technique. His pedalling was particularly vulnerable, and some slow tempi may well have been determined for ease rather than for musical reasons. One can, however, imagine that, in his prime, he offered a thorough understanding of the music. The phrasing and larger-scale shaping is often convincing, and the sympathetic listener can at times feel why he had a high reputation as a Bach player. *CB*

EB commented that, as a child, the only Germans she had heard of were Hitler and Schweitzer.

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

Bach *Flute Concertos* Marcello Gatti fl, Ensemble Aurora, Enrico Gatti 56' 01"
Glossa GCD 921204
BWV 1050a, 1067 & Concertos in b after BWV 209/1, 173a/2, 207/3

'Flute concertos' seems an unlikely title for a CD of music by JS Bach. The soloists and single strings of Ensemble Aurora give us the well-known Orchestral Suite in B minor, the earlier version of the fifth Brandenburg concerto, and a flute concerto reconstructed from movements from three secular cantatas. The booklet includes an interesting essay by Francesco Zimei justifying his reconstruction, which is based on the *sinfonia* to BWV 209 *Non sa che sia dolore*, the second movement of BWV 173 *Durchlauchtster Leopold* and a tenor aria from BWV 207 *Vereinigte Zwietracht der wechselnden Saiten*. Together they make a convincing addition to the repertoire of music by Bach for the flute. The concerto is published by Libreria Musicale Italiana of Lucca.

Victoria Helby

Bach *Arranging and Arranged* Pergolesi *Stabat Mater* arr Bach; Bach 5 *Fugues* arr. Mozart Rachel Elliott, Sally Bruce-Payne SA, The Bach Players 57' 44"
Hyphen Press Music HPM001
www.hyphenpress.co.uk/music
info@hyphenpress.co.uk

The main work is Bach's version of the famous Pergolesi work. Some movements sound very German. The opening, however, could almost be the beginning of a Bach Mass or Passion. I was surprised when comparing the scores to see how thoroughly Bach took over all the details of bowing, accents and dynamics that presage a later style of notation. Mozart's string versions of fugues from the 48, however, seem more remote; also, the settings I remember playing in my youth had Preludes, and a series of prelude-less fugues seems odd. The music sounds much shorter in its string form. An excellent performance of an interesting programme.

CB

www.hyphenpress.co.uk/music

Campion *Nouvelles découvertes sur la guitare*, 1705 Michel Amoric 46' 38"
Arion ARN 68483 (rec 1983)

François Campion's *Nouvelles découvertes Sur la Guitarre* is a beautifully engraved book of guitar music, which was dedicated to the Maréchal Duc de Noailles in 1705. The copy now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Vm7 622r), must have been Campion's own copy, to which he added many other pieces by hand. There is a note in it to say that this copy was passed to the Bibliothèque Royale in 1748, the year Campion died. A facsimile was

published by Minkoff in 1977, and it is presumably this facsimile which Amoric used for his recording. The introduction to the facsimile, written by François Lesure, has been reproduced in the sleeve notes to the CD. Unfortunately Minkoff's English translation is not also reproduced; instead we have a translation by Josephine de Linde.

In the notes we read that Amoric plays a copy of a 1690 Voboam guitar made by Luthfi Becker in 1978. Unfortunately, it does not sound much different from a tinny modern classical guitar. The stringing is totally wrong for Campion: the fifth course should sound an octave higher, so all Campion's carefully constructed campanella passages come out as musical nonsense. A striking example is the Menuet from page 38, where off-beat passing notes end up sounding an octave lower than they should. The incorrect stringing also has an effect on the harmony; for example, in the Gigue (track 7), what should sound as a root position chord of F# major comes out as a clumsy 2nd and inversion instead. Amoric plays what is there in the tablature, but having strung his instrument incorrectly, he ends up playing wrong notes all the time.

One of the interesting features of Campion's *Nouvelles découvertes* is that some pieces have an unusual tuning. It is unfortunate that the only unusual thing about the tuning in this recording is that it is hopelessly out of tune. Suffice it to say that the quality of the performance is reflected in the English translation, which I enjoyed far more than the music. We read, for example;

in 1705, the date of issuance of new discoveries of the guitar, François Campion is older than 18 or 19 years. He has just completed its training guitarist, and composer théorbiste with Mr. Maltot, theorbist at the Royal Academy of Music [...] The works he does burn in 1705 are of a style closer to the authors of the previous century as Corbetta and pursuits, Grenerin Square or... However, the hand-written documents, after 1705, Campion leaves rewriting battery razgado hit or a game arpeggios in ornaments classified and measured."

'Does burn' translates *fait graver* [has engraved]; 'and pursuits' and 'Square' are the guitarist-composers [Robert] de Visée and [Antoine] Carré.

Stewart McCoy

Corrette 6 *concertos pour orgue & orchestre*. op. 26 François-Henri Houbart (choir organ of Notre-Dame des Blancs-Manteaux), Orchestre Bernard Thomas 55' 36" (rec 1980)
BNL 112959

This 1980 recording uses a modern organ and modern-instrument orchestra. The result is not always sonically happy as the non-vibrato organ harmonics fight with

those of the doubling con vibrato strings but the music itself is very jolly – think Handel with a strong Vivaldian accent. The playing is crisp and clean in a 1980s chamber orchestra style. These pieces deserve the attention of a period instrument ensemble. A couple of minutes with Google suggest that they are about to get it.

David Hansell

Fasch *Concerti Il Gardellino* 61' 50"
Accent ACC 24182
FWV L: D11, D22, d4, d7, g1, A3

No disc that combines music by one of my favourite composers and a star-studded ensemble like Il Gardellino can ever be at risk of getting anything short of a glowing review from me. From a performance point of view, the most striking aspect of the disc (apart from the obviously beautiful sound and utterly effortless virtuosity of the band) is the fact that almost every single track is more relaxed and more gallant, if such words mean anything. Only the Concerto in D for pairs of flutes, oboes and bassoons with strings (FWV L: D22) is new to disc – and a very welcome addition to the catalogue it is; but by limiting themselves to Dresden and Darmstadt sources, they missed a golden opportunity to record the Uppsala variant of the D minor oboe & violin concerto, which is to be lamented. If you didn't explore Fasch's music in 2008 (his anniversary year), take him as a refreshing break from Purcell and Handel.

BC

Graupner *Partitas vol. 7* Geneviève Soly hpscd 55' 09"
Analekta 2 9120
Monatliche Clavir Früchte (1722): April-July

This CD is part of an on-going project to record the complete harpsichord works of Graupner, an almost-exact contemporary of J. S. Bach. It has four suites, taken from a set published in 1722 and named after the months of the year: here we have April to July. The suites are made up mainly of short, relatively simple, pieces with some charm – the sort of music that most amateurs would have played at the time. Soly is a persuasive player, choosing appropriate tempi and registrations on a Hass copy by Hubbard and Broekman. The range of emotion and character in this music is limited and it is probably a disc to dip into rather than to listen to right through, but there are some little gems in here.

Noel O'Regan

Handel *Israel in Egypt* Soloists, Aradia Ensemble, Kevin Mallon 119' 18"
Naxos 8.570966-67 (2 SACDs) £
Handel *Israel in Egypt* Soloists, Vocal ensemble Rastatt, Les Favorites, Holger Speck 119' 46" (2 CDs)

A pair of *Israels*, both of which are very listenable-to recordings, so you would be safe with either. Both sets have good soloists and intelligently written booklet notes, although the Naxos one (with the usual emphasis on economy) lacks a libretto. Naxos is, of course cheaper. But on balance, I would favour Carus.

The Aradia Ensemble is a bunch of fine musicians; Mallon does not always make full use of them, however: his tempi are too brisk, and there is not enough variation in drama. The succession of plagues which befalls Egypt is a case in point: the flies, for example, do buzz well, but the Lord does not speak the word with sufficient gravitas. Speck's tempi lend themselves better to drama: with generally 5 seconds or so more time, he gives his musicians more space to become flies or darkness. He also asks for more dynamic contrast, adding to the drama. His choir is excellent at really bringing out the sense of the choruses, and Les Favorites (these ensemble names get worse) are ideal accompanists. In fact, the way that the tracks are arranged demonstrates their commitment to drama – instead of, as usual, and certainly as on the Naxos recording, listing every recitative and aria or chorus separately, Carus has put some together in dramatic episodes. The soloists on the Carus recording tend to be more heavy-weight, and this also helps the feeling of drama. So, for that more dramatic *Israel*, the Carus wins over the Naxos – and probably leaves various other rivals behind, too.

Katie Hawks

Handel *Jephtha* Markus Schäfer *Jephtha*, Miriam Meyer *Iphis*, Britta Schwarz *Storge*, Patrick Van Goethem *Hamor*, Gotthold Schwarz *Zebul*, Birte Kulawik *Angel*, Dresden Baroque Orchestra & Chamber Choir, Mattias Grünert 161' 09" Carus 83.422 (3 SACDs)

Carus are turning out good Handel recordings at the moment, with excellent sound and artists of a high standard. The Dresdner Barockorchester is a splendid ensemble, as is the Frauenkirche choir, and there is much to enjoy about this recording, from a live performance in Dresden. Grünert pays attention to dynamics well, but his tempi suffer from the haste of a young man – he could afford to be a little more indulgent in the pathetic arias exploring the horrors of the situation (*Jephtha* having to sacrifice his daughter to keep an ill-thought-out promise to God). The pronunciation is perhaps as German as was Handel's, so having the libretto to hand is necessary (don't listen to it in the car). Markus Schäfer is a vigorous *Jephtha*, whose martial side is very believable, but he lacks the sensi-

vity of, for example, a Nigel Robson (on the Philips Gardiner recording) when it comes to *Jephtha* the distraught father. His daughter *Iphis* (Miriam Meyer) is nothing to write home about (I preferred the *Angel*, Birte Kulawik), but her lover (Patrick van Goethem) is rather good. *Jephtha's* wife *Storge* (Britta Schwarz) could be more assertive (especially when arguing with her husband to let another die), and *Zebul* (Gotthold Schwarz) could be more intelligible; but it is a nice performance, and worth consideration.

Katie Hawks

Handel *Saul* Yorck Felix Speer *Saul*, Tim Mead *David*, Maximilian Schmitt *Jonathan*, Ditte Andersen *Michal*, Anna Prohaska *Merab*, Eric Stoklossa *Priest*, *Witch*, Clemens Heidrich *Ghost*, Dresden Chamber Choir & Baroque Orchestra, Hans-Christoph Rademann 165' 07" (3 SACDs) Carus 83.243

to be reviewed in the April issue

Handel *Clavier Works* Siegbert Rampe *hpscd* 78' 48" Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 341 1537-2 HWV 427, 428, 430, 432, 435, 483, 567, 579

In this generous-sized recording Siegbert Rampe sets out to show the suitability of a 16' harpsichord for Handel's music, using an instrument by Matthias Kramer, after Christian Zell 1728. It is also tuned to A=408 so it does all sound quite low. He includes three of the suites published in 1720 plus some other music from manuscript sources, all of it from Handel's early years in Hamburg and Italy. Rampe plays it like the music of a young man in a hurry to impress, as indeed the young Handel was, revelling in the variations and chaconnes in particular: these include the first recording of an early Chaconne in G which later became the 'Harmonious Blacksmith' air and variations. Occasionally he sounds a bit too rushed, as in the Presto of the Suite in D minor which loses much of its poise, but the 16' strings do provide a level of gravitas to the performances. Used on its own, as in the short Prelude HWV 567, the effect of the 16' is perhaps too subterranean, but in the bigger concerto-like movements it offers a very convincing depth and resonance. This is certainly a thought-provoking recording and one which will appeal to all Handelian.

Noel O'Regan

Keiser *Dialogus von der Geburt Christi*; C. Graupner *Magnificat in C* Rastatter Horkapelle, Jürgen Ochs 45' 00" Carus 83.417

This is a strange disc – two seemingly unrelated pieces (Graupner doesn't even get a mention on the front cover!)

amounting to a round 45 minutes. The 25 movements in Keiser's *Dialogue on the Birth of Christ* are uncommonly short (only one lasts more than three minutes!). The original version was performed in 1707 and the score is full of interesting instrumentations, such as two obbligato cellos. Graupner's *Magnificat* was one of the works he submitted in support of his application for the Thomaskantor job in 1723. Here again the movements are rather short-winded (though Graupner does actually come across as the stronger composer) and his ability to write counterpoint surely appealed to the Leipzig authorities. The Rastatter Hofkapelle consists of eight singers (this is the first booklet where I have seen separate listings for one Alto and one Altus), each of whom take turn to sing the solos (and very impressively they do so), and a one-to-a-part band. I hope we will hear more from them. BC

Pepusch *Tenor cantatas, recorder sonatas* Felix Rienth T, La Tempesta Basel, Muriel Rochat Rienth *rec, dir* 65' 45" Enchiriadis EN 2024 *Cleora*, *Corydon*, *Myra*; *rec sonatas* 1, 4, 5; *Voluntaries* 1, 2, 9, 11, 12, 14

The German composer Johann Christoph Pepusch spent most of his adult life in London, where he worked at the Drury Lane theatre and as musical director at Cannons. Apart from *Corydon* which was published in 1710, the cantatas date from 1720 and are dedicated to the Duke of Chandos. They are Italian in style with recitatives and *da capo* arias, though the pastoral texts are in English, performed suitably dramatically and with good English pronunciation by tenor Félix Rienth. I only occasionally had to resort to the texts printed in the booklet, but I would have welcomed more ornamentation in the *da capos*. Muriel Rochat Rienth, the director of the group, sets the scene with her stylish obbligato recorder playing. She is also the soloist in three attractive sonatas for recorder and continuo. Interspersed between the longer pieces are six short organ voluntaries which organists looking for a wedding would do well to consider. This is altogether a most enjoyable recording; my only minor complaint is that the gaps between the pieces could sometimes be longer.

Victoria Helby

Rameau *Castor et Pollux* Anna Maria Panzarella *Télaire*, Véronique Gens *Phébé*, Judith van Wanroij *Cléone*, Finnur Bjarnason *Castor*, Henk Neven *Pollux*, Nicolas Testé *Jupiter*, Thomas Oliemans *Hgh Priest*, Anders J. Dahlin *Mercury*, Chorus of Nederlandse Opera, Les Talens Lyriques, Christophe Rousset, Pierre Audi *stage dir* 155' (2 DVDs) Opus Arte OA 0999 D

Castor et Pollux was one of Rameau's biggest successes. First staged in 1737 and revised in 1754, it had received 254 performances by 1785. The revised version is the basis of this production, filmed at the Netherlands Opera in January last year. I wish I could decide whether or not I enjoyed it – and the slightly diffident audience applause suggests that they, too, were unsure. Let it be said at the outset, however, that Rameau's contribution is magnificent, the orchestra superb (flutes and bassoons especially so) and the chorus – seated in the pit and never visible as part of the action – also very good. The solo singing is not quite as flawless as the multiple retakes of a studio would permit but is still of a high standard, especially in the ensemble work, some of which really did send a ver up my spine. As so often with opera, the doubts stem from the production. Unlike the Boston *Psyché*, which set out to re-create the appearance of Baroque opera, this is a modern production which nonetheless does acknowledge some features of period staging. The costumes are broadly 'ancient world', the set is minimalist geometrical and the lighting state-of-the-art (and brilliant). The singers are often reduced to little more than stylised declaimers of the text (sometimes physically contradicting it – 'she is dying in my arms' or would be if she were not 10 feet away) with the drama being more forcefully enacted by their dancing *alter egos*. The choreography is the area which I found hardest to appreciate. The characteristic staccato arm movements of the dancers simply became comical after a while and detracted from their superb athleticism and dramatic contribution, the basic concept of which is excellent. The 'extras' are helpful and should be watched before the opera. It would also help if some of the photos in the booklet were replaced by a printed synopsis of the plot so that it is to hand while viewing, just as a programme would be at a live performance. In the end I am delighted that this DVD exists and am pleased to have seen it but would have preferred a production more in sympathy with the period of the music and the period timbre of the orchestra.

David Hansell

Telemann *Musique de table* (Tafelmusik) Concerto Amsterdam, Frans Brüggen Warner 2564 69457-2 252' 55" (4 CDs) (rec 1964-5)

This is one of Das Alte Werk's 50th anniversary sets and I have to say that, while it may have been ground-breaking in its day (not least of all for the sheer magnitude of a project to record *Musique de table* complete), it has not aged

particularly well. If the woodwinds are not too bad, the brass lack the finesse that 25 years has taught players about the natural instruments and the string sound is very heavy by today's standards and, to be honest, lacks shape as we now understand baroque phrasing – they're still driving from the left wrist. A valuable historical document, I suppose. BC

Vivaldi *La fida ninfa* Sandrine Piau Licori, Véronica Cangemi Morasto, Marie-Nicole Lemieux Elpina, Lorenzo Regazzo Oralto, Philippe Jaroussky Osmino, Topi Lehtipuu Narete, Sara Mingardo Giunone, Christian Senn Eolo, Ensemble Matheus, Jean-Christophe Spinosi dir 188' 39" Naïve OP 30410 (3 CDs in box)

This is a wonderful addition to the Naïve Vivaldi Edition. Among the stellar cast lurk (to me!) less well-known names like Lorenzo Regazzo and Christian Senn who are anything but out of place. The singing is universally excellent (the highest plaudits go, of course, to Sandrine Piau, but Topi Lehtipuu is stunning in an atypically strong tenor role – his 'Deh, ti piega' has already made it on to youtube.com!) and Jean-Christophe Spinosi's Ensemble Matheus provide a wonderful accompaniment. This is not the place to recount the comings and goings of yet another unnecessarily complex plot – suffice it to say that the range of Vivaldi's arias is as impressive as in any of his other operas and that each of the cast takes their opportunity to realize the potential of the material he gives them. Vivaldi may have written with specific voices in mind, but he would surely have been delighted with the present cast. Highly recommended. BC

Vivaldi/Chédeville *Les Saisons Amusantes: 6 Concertos from 'The Four Seasons' and other works from Vivaldi* Matthias Loibner hurdy-gurdy, Enrico Casazza vln, Chiara de Ziller rec, Les Eclairs de Musique 54' 21" (rec 2001) Arts 47669-8 SACD
6 concertos are from Vivaldi op. 8

It's *The Four Seasons*, Clifford, but not as we know it. Nicolas Chédeville was the possessor of a licence which permitted him to adapt the work of several Italian composers for the many French amateur players of the hurdy-gurdy, musette and flute. The popularity of Vivaldi's ubiquitous (even then) foursome made it an obvious target. But Chédeville wished to amuse, rather than challenge or stimulate. Thus *Spring* survives almost intact, bar a transposition. *Summer*, however (minor key, augmented intervals, scary storm), is abolished in favour of 'The Pleasures of Summer', adapted from Vivaldi's Op.8/12

& 10 and 'The Harvest' (Op.8/8) before *Autumn* arrives, more or less as we know it though in G major and with the second movement of *Winter* in the middle. The set of six (!) seasons is rounded out by further Op. 8 re-writings to provide 'The Pleasures of St Martin's Day' and an entirely new *Winter* (from Op.8/7 & 9). If you can cope with all the trauma then *amusant* it certainly is, and played with great gusto on this 2001 recording. The informative note deserves a translation into more idiomatic English. David Hansell

Baroque Suites European Union Baroque Orchestra, Lars Ulrik Mortensen 53' 16" The Gift of Music CCL CDG1211
Bach Orchestral Suite 1; Fux Overture a7 in d; Rameau Suite from *Zoroastre*
www.thegiftofmusic.com

I enjoyed listening to this disc several times. The playing – as one would expect from a group of student musicians – is full of energy, though there is not the slightest hint of the players being even damp behind the ears: the next generation of early music specialists is obviously full of rising stars. The programme is an interesting one, contrasting two real suites (one each by J. S. Bach and Fux) with an assortment of music taken from one of my favourite Rameau operas, *Zoroastre*. BC

Oboe Concerti at the Dresden Court Xenia Löffler, Michael Bosch obs, Daniel Deuter vln, Batzdorfer Hofkapelle 70' 36" Accent ACC24202
Fasch Overture in G FWV ??? ; Heinichen Concerto in c (ob & vln); Pisendel Sinfonia in Bb; Concerto 9n g2 obs; Valentini Concerto in D (ob & vln) & anon

This is the second excellent Accent disc I had for review this month. The music is mostly recorded for the first time and, to a certain extent, reflects the renewed interest in the contents of one of the Dresden Hofkapelle's cupboards, which contained a lot of anonymous material. The composer(s) of two of the concerti here are still unidentified. Xenia Löffler is a fine soloist – there is, perhaps, nothing exceptional about her sound or technique, but she is very easy to listen to, and she can more than cope with the demands of the music; Dresden boasted some of the finest oboists of the time, so there's plenty of fancy fingerwork! The programme also includes two concertos for two oboes (with Michael Bosch) and for oboe and violin (with Daniel Deuter), as well as a grandly scored Sinfonia by Pisendel. For an introduction to the varied repertoire of one of the most famous orchestras in the Baroque world, you could scarcely hope for finer! BC

RED PRIEST

Three reissues and a new disc to be launched in Feb 2009 on Red Priest's own label, *Red Priest Recordings*.

Piers Adams *rec*, Julia Bishop *vln*, Angela East *vlc*, Julian Rhodes/Howard Beach *hpsc'd*

Red Priest on the Road: a wild musical ride through renaissance and baroque Europe 63' 09" (rec 1998)

RP001

Castello, Ortiz, Telemann, de Narváez, de Selma e Salaverde, Schmelzer, Uccellini, Purcell, Handel, Vivaldi etc

Nightmare in Venice: ghoulish delights from the fevered brains of baroque masters 65' 54" (rec 2002)

RP002

Vivaldi, Johnson, LeStrange, Cima, Purcell, Castello, Leclair, Corelli

Vivaldi *The 4 Seasons*; Corelli *op. 6/8* 50' 53" (rec 2003)

RP003

Pirates of the Baroque: stolen masterworks and forgotten musical jewels 65' 02" (rec 2007)

RP004

Priest on the Run Red Priest (Piers Adams *recs* Julia Bishop *violin* Angela East *bass strings* Julian Rhodes *hpsc'd*) 63' 09" Leclair, Simonetti, Albinoni, Couperin, Vivaldi, Vitali, Tartini

Only the last of these CDs is a new issue, the other three having been reissued by Red Priest on their new label, and it is interesting to see how their style has evolved during the ten years which have passed since the first one appeared. Red Priest always like to tie their choice of music to some sort of story, and in *Priest on the Run* the idea that Vivaldi in his later years is looking around for a refuge in Europe provides the opportunity to play a selection of mostly well-known pieces from Italy, Spain, Germany and England. They take some liberties with their arrangements, but one is always conscious that their background is in historically aware performance. The 'ghoulish delights from the fevered brains of baroque masters' of *Nightmare in Venice* include Vivaldi's recorder concerto *La Notte*, sonatas in the *stylus phantasticus* by Cima and Castello, and a collection of theatre music by Robert Johnson and Nicholas LeStrange complete with hissing witches. The programme ends with Red Priest's own version of Corelli's *La Folia*, and it is here that they really start to take liberties with the musical material. This trend is continued in the third CD, which is played with great imagination and virtuosity, and a marvellous sense of fun. Don't buy this CD if you are expecting to hear the original Vivaldi *Four Seasons*, but it is certainly my favourite, with its wonderful sound effects and scene painting, based loosely on the sonnets

which Vivaldi attached to his music.

Red Priest's performances are always original, but in their latest offering *Pirates of the Baroque – stolen masterpieces and forgotten musical jewels* I think they may have gone a bit too far for some *EMR* readers. Here we have music with a nautical flavour: Vivaldi's *Tempesta di mare*, Tartini's *Senti lo Mare* and pieces from Couperin's *Ordres* arranged to illustrate a day in the life of a baroque pirate. Then there are other examples of musical piracy including the *Adagio* hung on the Albinoni mast by Remo Giazotto, and a rather convincing baroque trio sonata *La Burrasca* (the sea-storm) composed under the name of Simonetti by the contemporary German Winfried Michel. It's all played with Red Priest's usual wit, energy and remarkable technical skill and I'm sure that when they go on tour with this programme there are plenty of people who want to buy the CD as a souvenir of an exciting and entertaining performance; but I'm not convinced that I want to listen to the last movement of the Vivaldi too often knowing I'm going to hear cries of 'Ship Ahoy' and 'Shiver my timbers!'

Victoria Helby

18th-CENTURY ORGANS

The next five discs from Motette, acquired and reviewed by Andrew Benson-Wilson, date from the last 20 years, but are new to us.

Arp Schnitger Orgel in Brasilien Cristina Garcia Banegas (1701 Arp Schnitger Organ, Mariana Cathedral. Brazil) 50' 55" Motette CD12901

Music by Blasco, de Torres, Pinto & anon

This 2002 CD is probably only of specialist interest for organ buffs who are fascinated by how an Arp Schnitger organ ended up in Brazil. It was originally built in 1701 for the Franciscan church in Lisbon, but was then donated to the town of Mariana by Portuguese King John V in 1752. The music, although giving an interesting insight into the Iberian-influenced organ schools of Mexico, Bogotá and Paraguay, is not really of sufficient quality or interest to warrant a recommendation.

Orgelmusik in der Abteikirche Neresheim Jon Laukvik (1798 Holzhay organ, Neresheim Abbey) 53' 11"

Motette CD10871

Works by Bach, Kittel, Raison, CPE Bach

This disc was issued for the 200th anniversary of the 1798 Holzhay organ in the magnificent Balthasar Neumann designed Abbey of Neresheim, one of the finest of an important collection of late 18th century organs that the counter-reformation generated in South Germany.

A common factor between most of them was the way in which the organ cases merged into the architecture of the church, none better than Neresheim, where the organ is spread across the four pillars of the west-end windows. Although this CD shows the versatility of this instrument, only the works of Kittel are close to the actual period of the organ. The booklet notes only refer to the organ itself, with nothing on the organ or music.

Die historische Jordi Bosch Orgel zu Santanyi, Mallorca Hans-Dieter Möller (1762 Bosch organ, Santanyi, Mallorca) 53' 52" (rec 1986) Motette CD11051

Along with the organ in Madrid's Royal Palace, reviewed in the last *EMR*, the only other more-or-less complete surviving Bosch organ is in Santanyi, Majorca (just one of many important historic organs on this holiday island). One curiosity is the 2nd track, Pedro de San Lorenzo's *Obra de 1º tono de registro de mano derecha* which, apart from the last few bars, is a straight copy of (or source for) a work by Bruhna. The not entirely note-perfect performance concludes with an improvisation given at the opening of this organ after its 1986 restoration. There is the obligatory battle piece, this one being Braga's rather fragmentary attempt.

El Organo mayor de la Cathedral de la Seo de El Salvador, Zaragoza Klemens Schnorr Motette CD MOT13211 67' 44"

The case of the Zaragoza organ is substantially as it was in 1474, but the innards date mainly from the mid-nineteenth century albeit with a substantial nod towards the traditional 18th century Spanish organ sound, not least in the variety of reed pipes, several of which project proudly from the case. As with many Spanish (and some Italian organs), there are two case fronts, each with their own en-chamade reeds. It sounds very strange hearing a William Croft trumpet voluntary played on one of these stops, although Kerll's (was Cabanilles's) *Battaglia* sounds very effective, as do the slight but jovial works by Laseca, Barrera and Belaustegi, almost totally unknown exponents of the 19th century organ school.

Ataungo Organo Barroko Iberikoa Esteban Elizondo (1761 organ, Ataun, Spain) Motette CD11331 70' 40"

Music by Alvarado, Fray Martin, de Solo, Fay Bartoloma, de Oxinaga, de Larrañaga, Cabanilles, Anon.

The organ and most of the composers are from the Basque country in Spain, including a Sonata by the Friar who

commissioned the 1781 organ at Atun. This is a substantial one-manual instrument, with the traditional divided stops and dramatic reed-sounds and colour stops of the Iberian organ. They often have scary faces, usually of Moors, adorning the mouths of the larger pipes – Atun has some particularly entertaining examples of turbaned figures with splendid teeth. The CD finishes with no fewer than three battle pieces – ideal for annoying the neighbours.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

CLASSICAL

C.P.E. Bach *The Solo Keyboard Music 18 Sonatas, Dances and Other Pieces from 1766* Miklós Spányi *tangent piano* 65' 37"
BIS-CD-1492

Wq 65/43, 44, 46; 116/5, 7, 8; 117/13, 118/6

Miklos Spanyi as usual proves to be an authoritative guide through the extensive range of Emanuel Bach's music, and here has most tellingly chosen to use again a copy by Ghislain Potvlieghe of Belgium in 1998; the special effects possible on such an instrument are most expertly used most resourcefully in this recital, which contains dances, a Fantasia and sets of variations, all composed in one particular year.

Stephen Daw

C. P. E. Bach *Magnificat* Monika Mauch, Matthias Rexroth, Hans Jörg Mammel, Gotthold Schwarz SATB, Basler Madrigalisten, L'arpe festante, Fritz Näf 62' 37"
Carus 83.412

+ *Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes*
to be reviewed in the April issue

Haydn *Intégrale de l'oeuvre pour instruments à vent* Les Philharmonistes de Châteauroux, Janos Komives 116' 20"
Arion ARN268790 (2 CDs) ££ (rec 1982)

Not an early-instrument recording (as the presence of a tuba reveals), this is a useful collection of little-known but enjoyable music by Haydn. The most famous item is probably spurious (the St Anthony Chorale), the best the *Introduzione* from the choral version of *The Seven Last Words*. The booklet is concise but informative, apart from the intriguing comment that the conductor 'disappeared on January 28 2005 in his house'.

CB

Paër *Missa piena* Sybilla Rubens, Anke Vondung, Jörg Schneider, Georg Zeppenfeld SATB, Desdner Kreuzchor, Staatskapelle Dresden, Roderich Krelle 61' 27"
Carus 83.246

This normally would not have been reviewed in these pages as it is performed by a large choir and a modern orchestra. That would have been a shame, however,

as it really is a piece well worth exploring – choral societies, take note! Indeed, but for the tragic passing of Richard Hickox, it would have been an excellent piece to continue his exploration of mass settings with Collegium Musicum 90. As well as the standard mass, Paër's mass includes the Offertorium *Laetamini in Deo*. The Gradual-substitute symphony is omitted (perhaps because nothing suitable could be found?) For all the large forces employed, the performance is enjoyable – there is some especially nice solo singing and, among the orchestra, some delightful woodwind contributions.

BC

William Russell *Complete Organ Voluntaries* John Kitching (organ of St James's Bermondsey. 1829) 186' 42"
Delphian DCD34062 (3 CDs in box)

Within days of giving my own all-William Russell organ recital, this triple CD of his complete organ works arrived. Russell (1777-1813) is one of the most important English organ composers, but is little known, partly because his music is so rarely played. So John Kitchen's exploration is particularly welcome. His playing is exemplary. Not only are his performances refreshingly musical, but he pays close regard to matters such as articulation, ornamentation and registration. Although the 1829 Bermondsey organ dates from just a few years after Russell's untimely death, the rapidly changing musical tastes of the time mean that it had already advanced in directions that Russell's own important 18th century organs at the Foundling Hospital and St Anne's Limehouse had not reached during Russell's time. However, it still gives a generally authentic aural perspective of the Voluntaries from Russell's 1804 and 1812 collections. The key missing registration issue is the lack of a Great Cornet stop (and the Swell Cornet, curiously, lacks the essential tierce rank) – both stops are important in a number of the works. The inclusion of a rare French Horn stop only partly makes up for this. The recent and very welcome restoration of this important instrument sheds new light on the organs on the cusp of the late Classical and the early Romantic schools. Such a description applies equally to Russell's music, with pieces in the grand tradition of the English 18th century combined with works under the influence of Haydn and Mozart and farsighted works that reflect Beethoven, not least a symphonically-proportioned five-movement work that concludes with a whole-note scale fugue. Having worked his way through the organ works of Krebs, I very much hope that John Kitchen devotes his future recording activities to the home-grown repertoire as represented by the likes of Russell. Samuel Wesley is an

obvious next choice. Performers who also have academic post should note that this recording was supported by a grant from the Arts & Humanities Research Council.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Sarti *Miserere a 14* The Baroque Soloists Ensemble, Andrei Spiridonov 48' 49"
Melodiya MEL CD 10 01032 (rec 2000)

This disc manages to impress and disappoint at the same time. The work confirms the fact that Sarti was a composer of serious stature (he'd always just been one with a reputation for me) and there are moments in this live performance where the singers really get under the skin of the music and get into stylistic mode. Sadly, the string players (though reduced in number and playing without too much vibrato) can't really get into that space. The booklet notes include two paragraphs on Sarti and as many pages on the cellist who runs the instrumental group. The Russian notes are more extensive, but I was unable to understand them, like (I suppose) many potential buyers.

BC

Feuer und Bravour; Musicke & Mirth: the Viola da Gamba at the Court of Frederick the Great Jane Achtman & Irene Klein gamba, Rebeka Rusó vlc, Barbara Maria Willi flp, hpacd 68' 22"

RaMée RAM 0803

Music by GA Benda, JG Graun, Hesse, Schaffrath & anon

I have not been able to make up my mind about this recital. The performers are the two gambists who make up the ensemble Musicke & Mirth, and two guests: a cellist and a keyboard player. All of the names of the composers are familiar to anyone who is interested in music at Berlin in the second half of the 18th century and the programme reflects the performers' research among the music collections still very much in that city. It is interesting, though, that apart from one of Gottlieb Graun's concertante trios for gambas and continuo, the other works comprise operatic arrangements by the younger Hesse, a pair of anonymous movements and a duet attributed to Schaffrath (although he copied one part into the surviving manuscript, while Hesse wrote the other – and they are quite distinct from one another), and Barbara Maria Willi plays six short keyboard sonatas by Georg Anton Benda. While I found the performances emotionally charged and stylish, I was not that impressed by much of the music.

BC

See p. 20 for a review of a book on this repertoire.

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

Parnasse du Nord Moscow Ensemble 'The Baroque Soloists' 67' 31"

Melodiya NEL CD 10 01031

Music by Antonolini, CPE & JS Bach, Bortnyanski, Myslivecek, Vivaldi

This Moscow ensemble is basically a string trio with a fourth person playing baroque guitar or 'lute-like guitar' (something got lost in translation, I think). Here they are joined by the soprano Svetlana Markina in a very mixed bag of music from Bach to Bortnyanski, none of it seemingly in its original format. So we open with Bortnyanski's C major piano sonata played as a trio sonata (it's actually quite convincing), and we end with three French Romances by Ferdinando Antonolini (died 1824), which (like everything else) are pleasant enough, but not quite what they should be. Clearly the name of the group reflects the era of music in which the performers are interested, but not the way they intend to perform it. BC

Van Peteghem organ, Haringe Katerina Chrobokova 55' 46"

Passacaille 949

CPE Bach Sonata I (1742); Clerambault Suite II ton; Galuppi Sonata in d; G. Muffat Toccata XII; Vanhal Fugue in C & F

The young Czech organist, Katerina Chroboková, first came to notice here during the Oundle Organ Festival, leading to a few UK concerts and a big splash with a cover photo in a UK organ magazine. In similar vein, her (admittedly extremely attractive) face completely fills the cover of this CD. She was invited to record the French-style Belgian organ after giving a recital there – and, it seems, making the church organist's heart go *boom diddy boom*, if his rather gushing programme note is anything to go by. This CD is focussed around the performer rather than the organ (an important historic instrument) or the music (an eclectic programme, with only one piece written for this type of organ). This will undoubtedly add to CD sales, but at what cost to the performer? There is a danger that such promotion will propel her into the limelight while she is, as yet, not revealing her full musical potential. On the evidence of this recording, she has the makings of a fine organist, but needs to step beyond the pure technicality of playing to explore her personal response to the music. Although the eclectic programme is attractive, *EMR* readers might have preferred a programme more directly suited to the organ – as well as the well-known French compositions, there must be a wealth of Belgian music from the period that could do with an airing. Incidentally, the two fugues listed on the cover as by Vanhal are by Brix (both Czech com-

posers born in the 1730s). I hope Katerina Chroboková has the strength of mind to set herself apart from the marketing men and those who can go no further than to equate beauty with talent. She has something to offer the world of music, and I don't think it should be her looks.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

19th CENTURY

Schumann A *Tribute to Bach* Andreas Staier (1837 *Erard* pf) 72' 32"

Harmonia Mundi HMC 901996

Kinderszenen op. 15, *Scherzo...* op. 32, 5 pieces from *Clavierstücke für die Jugend* op. 68, *Waldszenen* 10, 82, 7 *Clavierstücke in Fughettenform* op. 126

With some composers, it is one thing knowing all there is to know, but it's quite another thing knowing what to do with the knowledge. Schumann, a composer whom contemporary musicians found confusing and contradictory, is a case in point. In his excellent accompanying essay on the influence of Bach on Schumann, Andreas Staier has unearthed countless apparent references by Schumann to the B-A-C-H motif, particularly in those apparently guileless pieces *Kinderszenen* and *Album für die Jugend*. And as a performer, what does Staier do with this knowledge? Thankfully, not a great deal. In other words, he doesn't turn these gorgeous miniatures into figures in an illustrated lecture by dangling out the motif at every opportunity. Rather, he suggests in his note that the motif (and other ciphers) were deliberately hidden by the composer, and should remain so. He poses, in what might be a barb at those who wallow in Schumann, the rhetorical question 'are we already guilty of boundless over-interpretation'?

As a player, Staier is poles apart from those pianists who arrive at Schumann from the direction of Rachmaninov: his baroque nurturing is clear, for instance, in his liberal use of unmarked spread chords. Similarly, Staier's historically-informed approach is evident in his choice of instrument (a soft-toned 1834 Erard) and earnest inclinations to make sense of Schumann's notorious metronome marks. Though played with ample feeling, his *Träumerei*, for instance, will be unrecognisable to those used to the tempo-less reveries of Horowitz. An even more extreme test of a pianist's approach is Schumann's pedal marks. The autograph of *Vogel als Prophet in Waldszenen* is one of the most perplexing musical texts I know: based exclusively on an arpeggiated four-note motif, Schumann's fastidious pedal markings seem placed there with the sole reason of obscuring the apparent structural simplicity of the notes above. I have never heard a pianist even attempt to

follow them, and although he nods in their direction, Staier just as often looks the other way. In 'ferreting out the essential message' of Schumann's music, as he puts it, Staier tacitly aligns himself with those who knew the composer and who knew his limitations as a practical musician. The result is both thought-provoking and – here is the essential message – beautiful.

Simon Ravens

Nachtstück Mutsumi Hatano mS, Takashi Tsunoda gtr

Dowland & Company TH6244

Songs by Mozart, Schubert, Spohr, Weber; guitar pieces by Giuliani

This collection of songs by Mozart, Schubert and others, is a delight. I had the pleasure of hearing this duo perform a few years ago at the Lincoln Early Music Festival, and was very impressed by their interpretation of Dowland. Mutsumi Hatano has a wonderfully expressive voice, with a wide range of tone colours and dynamic, and without vibrato. She is discreetly accompanied by Takashi Tsunoda on a guitar made by Georg Staufner from about 1815. Unfortunately for me, most of the information in the sleeve booklet is in Japanese, English being confined to biographical information on the performers. The words of the songs are given in German, together with a translation into Japanese.

The first two songs are by Mozart – *Abendempfindung* and *Komm, liebe Zither, komm*, and then six by Schubert. Schubert played the guitar, and many of his songs were published with guitar accompaniment. The sound is understandably gentler and less in-your-face than it would be with piano, and the effect is utterly charming. The mood swings from a bittersweet *Heiden Röslein*, via a gloomy *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, to an intense *Gretchen am Spinnrade*. There is just one guitar solo – a restrained Allegretto by Giuliani. There follow three songs by Spohr, of which *Mignon's Lied* is particularly pleasing, with its well-arched phrases, poise, and contrasts. The CD finishes with an *Abschied* by Giuliani and a couple of rather beautiful songs by Weber. A most gratifying CD. Stewart McCoy
www.linkclub.or.jp/dowland/
Hagiya-cho 3-21-17, Higashimurayama-shi Tokyo 189-0012, Japan

VARIOUS

Islas Canarias: Historic Organs of the Canary Islands Liuwe Tamminga (organs from 1658, 1723, 1725, 1793, 1818, 1862 in Gran Canaria, Tenerife, La Palma) 79' 31"

Accent ACC 24204

Music by Blasco, Buxtehude, Cabezon, de Taveres, Kellner, Lorente, Marburg, M. Praetorius, Sanz & anon

Sun, sand and sin is what normally attracts people to the Canary Islands, but it also deserves to be a pilgrim site for organ lovers (of the musical kind). The Spanish influence is obviously strong, but its position on the major trading routes means that other organ builders were attracted here, including several from Germany – hence the slightly surprising inclusion of the likes of Buxtehude on this CD. The opening few tracks (played on an 1862 organ in Las Palmas Cathedral that sits aurally in the period of about 125 years earlier) are a startling introduction to the unique sound of the Iberian organ, with its distinctive reed and colour stops – including a *Canarios* stop which is used in the first piece! The second piece, the dramatic and catchy *Diferencias sobre la gaita*, involves the *Gaita gallega* stop, a three-note bass drone of pungent reed sounds. After such an exciting start, the third piece featured the beautifully breathy sounds of the Spanish *Flautado*, following by the extraordinary bombastic *Batalla famoso* from the Martin y Coll collection, here played in its full 12'35" version rather than the shortened version often published. In complete contrast is the little 1658 procession organ of Santa Cruz, La Palma – such organs are not uncommon in Spain, but are rarely recorded. Liuwe Tamminga is best known for his masterly recordings of the sometimes rather austere compositions of the Italian greats (cf p. 27), so it is nice to hear him let his musical hair down. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

In mulieribus Live 2004-2008 49' 16"
www.inmulieribus.org

This is a selection from live recordings, made over four years in two Catholic churches of Portland Oregon, dedicated to the promotion and enrichment of community through the art of music. Female singers directed and conducted by Anna Song present music *a capella* ranging from the twelfth century Codex Calixtinus to Morley and Victoria with the 20th-century addition of Duruflé's chant-based *Tota pulchra es*. Love songs in French are set among religious music, including some traditional Christmas pieces. Packaging, mostly prepared by the ensemble themselves, is simple, but includes an attractive picture of the seven young musicians.

Juxtaposition or grouping of pieces from different centuries in their appropriate styles allows the ensemble to vary the tonal quality and atmosphere. The lower voices sound effortless and free from vibrato, blending with the predominantly treble voices and sometimes providing the drone. From among pieces by Morales, Hildegard, Machaut, Palestrina and anon, I would choose Dufay's *Adieu*

m'amour, adieu ma joye as the one I enjoyed most, as rendered by this well integrated and balanced ensemble.

Diana Maynard

And Glory Shone Around: Early American carols, country dances, Southern harmony hymns and Shaker spiritual songs The Rose Ensemble 70' 17"

Rose 00009

Readers may have noticed that we had few Christmas CDs to review in our last issue. But in December 2006 (issue 116) we had nine, including a Mexican baroque anthology from The Rose Ensemble, which I found disappointing for its lack of panache. The programme is interesting and the performances are pleasing in their way, though my ideal for most of this music requires stronger sounds than what I hear from the Roses. There is also a debilitating unwillingness to accept that hymns comprise a certain number of verses that usually need to be sung through without too much imposed variety. 'While shepherds watched' is a narrative with six verses: two won't do! There's a balancing act to perform to satisfy a passive audience without destroying the illusion of a participating congregation. It is perhaps significant that the information on each item ignores the texts (except for *Wayfaring stranger* – given a prettified performance).

The booklet, despite the detailed title, fails to give one vital piece of information: what sort of performances are recreated here. The words and music come from what we generally call hymnbooks, whose main function was for communal, public worship. Judging by the free use of instruments and inclusion of Playford dances, the context implied for the CD is domestic. Of course, people sang and played hymns at home; they probably sang *Messiah* as well. (I once spent Christmas day with a family where we read through it with four voices, string quartet and piano; but I wouldn't be very interested in a recording of such an event, however good.) A glance at the list of instruments suggests an all-purpose olde-worlde approach that I thought had been abandoned a few decades ago. There's a mid-16th-century Spanish guitar, a 19th-century 8-keyed flute, a seven-string French-style viol, an Afro-American banjo and a tabor after Arbeau. This for music that is mostly late-18th and 19th-century! More rigour as well as vigour needed!

I could go through it hymn by hymn. William Walker (e.g. the marvellous *Babe of Bethlehem*) is treated badly, but Billings fares better. I'd love to have heard all of the version of *Hark! The herald angels sing* with a chorus after every couplet. The Shaker material seems less interesting than the rest. I'd have no objection to the

CD closing with a more recent hymn, but John Butterman's setting of *Christ the Apple-Tree* is too far from the ethos of the selection to suit, especially since most English listeners will have in their minds Elizabeth Poston's simple composition.*

Listening with my hypercritical mind not on full alert, I reckon that that is worth hearing, especially if the repertoire is new to you. Try to imagine it sung by a full-blooded, unaccompanied choir (using a temperament that allowed pure fifths) and soloists to match in a packed church. But also try singing it: several of the items here are in the New Oxford Book of Carols, which no musical household should be without! CB

* I always associate her name with Christmas, not because she edited two carol anthologies for Penguin, one specifically of American material, but because when I was at the BBC Music Library she brought me a box of chocolates every Christmas to distribute to the staff. No-one else brought presents!

A Boston Camerata Christmas: Worlds of Early Christmas Music The Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen 197' 11" (3 CDs)
Warner 2564 69415-0 (rec 1985-99)

A pity this compilation didn't arrive earlier. A disc each is devoted to France, Spain & hispanic America, and the USA, each with a wide chronological range (the USA one starting and finishing later than the others). The USA disc is in direct comparison with the Rose Ensemble, and easily outshines it, though it could still do with a bit more edge to the sound. The other two discs run from early monophony to renaissance polyphony, the latter finishing up with new-world Villancicos that don't quite match Ex Cathedra's recent discs. Buy early for next Christmas! CB

Texts and notes on each item are available at:
www.warnerclassicsandjazz.com/
sungtexts/0825646941506.pdf
(or just google the number)

Tre Bassi: De Profundis Alain Buet, Paul Willenbrock, Philippe Roche BBB, Michel Godard serpent, Hille Perl viol/lirone, Lee Santana chitarrone 52' 30"

Carpe diem CD-16274

Music by Benevoli, Cazzati, Cifra, Ebner, Eisenhut, Gletle + Giodard & Santana

When did you last hear a CD that began with a serpent improvisation? When, for that matter, did you last hear any music for three basses? This is a mixture of 17th-century and modern: it would be good to publish the BBB bc items as an anthology. The voices work together well, individual but not clashing. Three bass singers and three low instruments could sound lugubrious, but they don't. Try it! CB
It's good to see session pictures that are neither trite nor gimmicky.

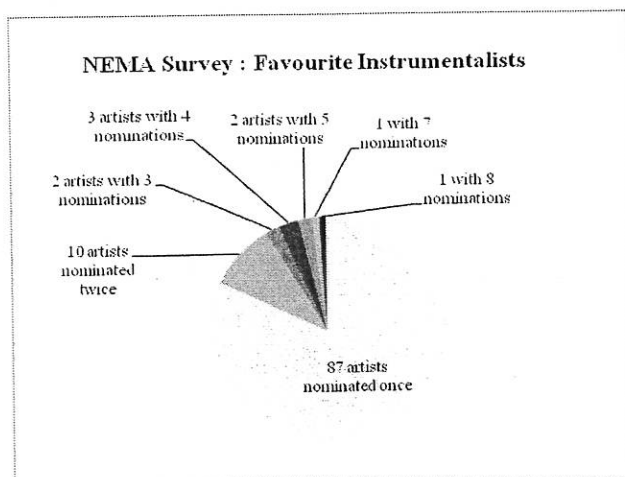
NATIONAL EARLY MUSIC ASSOCIATION SURVEY

The National Early Music Association (NEMA) has launched a survey to find out what early music fans think of their publications and services. The survey includes questions on preferences (composers, groups, singers and instrumentalists) and the condition of the early music scene generally, such as 'Is Early Music in good health?'.

Respondents' views on the type of voice appropriate for singing Handel arias will be of particular interest to those attending NEMA's conference on Singing Music from 1500 to 1900, which will take place at York from 7-10 July 2009. Do put these dates in your diary. Details and application forms should be available within the next month. Information will be on NEMA's website.

I have been analysing the first responses. While they are extremely interesting, it would not be appropriate to publish interim results, as these could bias future responses. For example, if I were to report that only a few people have so far nominated J S Bach as their favourite composer, future respondents might make a point of including JSB in their favourites list. (They might, of course, already be reacting against an excess of Purcell and Handel.) This example has been chosen very carefully, because I can assure readers that JSB is definitely on NEMA's podium!

One trend is coming through, viz. the extremely diverse response profile to the 'favourites' type questions. It's a bit like a stamp collection, with many unique specimens, but not too many duplicates. Clearly, early music fans are very far from being obsessive specialists rooted in the past, as pop, jazz and folk artists are frequently nominated. This profile is especially pronounced in the case of instrumentalists, as the following chart illustrates.



The chart shows that 106 instrumentalists were selected as their favourites by the first 75 respondents. Of these, 87 artists were nominated only by a single respondent and the remaining 19 artists by from 2 to 8 participants.

Obviously, we need a bigger sample. Therefore, would all *EMR* readers who have not done so please hasten to complete their questionnaires? Then send them to Richard

Bethell, 1 Hamilton Close, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7HW. There will be a good bottle of claret going to the first randomly selected, but *fully completed*, questionnaire from those received by the day following the final deadline. I stress that responses will be welcomed from all early music fans, whether or not they are currently members of NEMA. If you have not yet received one, email richardbethell@btinternet.com for a copy (NB. There are no dots between richard and bethell, as incorrectly shown in some publicity material) or download it from NEMA's website on <http://www.nema-uk.org/>. Richard Bethell

The Conference will include lectures, discussions, demonstrations and early-music-forum-like practical music-making sessions in which all can participate. It will appeal to academics, professional and amateur singers, conductors, and all who are interested in how early music might have sounded. It should produce a stimulating four days.

BOOK REVIEWS OUTSTANDING

Young Choristers 650-1700 edited by Susan Boynton and Eric Rice The Boydell Press, 2008. ix + 265pp, £50.00. ISBN 978 1 84383 413 7

Both I and our seasonal guest Hugh Keyte read some contributions with interest over Christmas but I haven't finished it yet.

Gregory Barnett *Bolognese Instrumental Music, 1660-1710: Spiritual Comfort, Courtly Delight, and Commercial Triumph* Ashgate, 2008. xix + 394pp, £60.00
I've read this and recommend it, but don't want to risk writing another first-draft last minute review (cf p. 39).

Kathleen Berg gave me a copy of her book on Sennfl recently, but I haven't had time to read it yet (see advert in last issue).

Ian Woodfield *Mozart's Così fan tutte: a Compositional History* The Boydell Press, 2008. xxii + 242pp, £50.00. ISBN 978 1 84383 406 9

We sent this to Peter Branscombe. He was too ill to write a review for the December issue, but assured me a few days before the end of that month that he would be able to write one in a few days: he had read it (or some of it) before publication anyway. That was the last contact I had with him before his death (see p. 40). His wife could find no sketches for a review on his computer. Peter did assure me that it was an excellent book, though that is a bit to vague to use as a recommending puff by a publisher. What I have read of it, I found extremely interesting. I would hope (probably vainly) that all involved in staging and conducting the work should read it, especially the appendix on 'The Two Sisters Problem'. CB

HANDEL SAUL

It is not too late to book for the weekend workshop on *Saul* with Laurence Cummings in Nottingham on 17-19 April. Singers and players, please contact jane.beeson@btopenworld.com tel 01652 67823.

LETTER

I hope I may be permitted to correct a few inaccuracies in your review of the practical editions of the Water Music and the Fireworks Music, edited by Christopher Hogwood and myself (*EMR* 128, page 5).

These editions do not 'anticipate' the publication of the full HHA edition (IV/13), which replaces the outdated volume by Redlich (1961). The new volume was published in 2007; the practical editions are offprints from that, as is usual Bärenreiter practice. The full volume also includes the Concerto in F, HWV 331, in which Handel reworked two of the D-major movements in the Water Music, probably for a concert in 1723; the practical edition of this work is expected in the spring of 2009.

The important discovery of the early manuscript copy of the Water Music in the archive of the Royal Society of Musicians, and the identification of the copyists, was made by me, not by Christopher. Fortunately this happened in time for information about it to be included in Chris's book.

I don't think it is fair to describe the lack of detailed information about the sources as a 'conspiracy': the full information is of course to be found in the commentary in the full volume, and the policy behind the practical editions is that for performance by busy conductors such information is largely irrelevant; but it is there in the HHA if they want it.

The bass figures printed by Redlich do not come from the Aylesford copy, into which Jennens, as was his wont, added them copiously – Redlich could not have seen this MS. They were invented by Arnold, copied by Chrysander and then Redlich.

Finally, in the conversation which Clifford overheard, the discussion was at an early stage, and in the end we agreed that the 16 bars should be in the main text; and it is not reasonable to surmise that if we taken the other course, these bars would not have appeared in the practical edition: we would have printed them either in the Preface or in footnotes. As it is, the parts have footnotes drawing attention to the Preface, where the problem of the authenticity of these bars is discussed. Terence Best

First, my fullest apologies. The review is a prime example of the danger of writing something in haste then printing it without leaving it at least overnight before reading it again. I had asked Bärenreiter to let me have review copies of the new edition of Water and Fireworks musics so that they could be publicised as soon as possible, in view of the number of performances that are likely this year. Unfortunately, I only realised that I hadn't written anything on the morning the issue was due to be run. So I wrote something quickly, mixing up recollections and the introductions to the scores with quick reference to Christopher Hogwood's Cambridge Music Handbook (CMH). Hence some of the mistakes, and also the failure to say anything very

specific about the music, including the quality and likely authenticity of the additional Water Music bars.

On the specific points raised, I initially assumed that the full HHA edition was published, but quick checks failed to find details. I should have rewritten to be ambiguous on the matter!

Apologies for misattributing the discovery of the additional bars; I assumed that the failure to mention a name in Christopher's list (CMH p. 21) was through modesty; in fact, the preface to the edition makes clear that it was Terence.

Readers will be aware that I am concerned at the way important information in Collected Works volumes is not passed on to conductors of the scores derived from them. People in the academic world forget that access to libraries holding Collected Works series is in many ways difficult for the rest of us. Part of Christopher's argument for including the extra bars in the main text was that, if they weren't, they wouldn't ever be played. It is good to hear that the edition would have printed them anyway, but the chance of them being heard if they were only printed as an appendix would be greatly diminished.

Apologies for making the wrong guess about the source of Redlich's figures: it's something that I would have spotted on a rereading. There is, in fact, some point in including figures from secondary sources: I find that players phone up to ask if we've a figured score of operas and oratorios. In our new *Acis and Galatea*, we have included the figures from the printed full score, even though the edition itself gives the 1718 version of the work, and René Jacobs has performed Jephtha extensively using the figured Randall score. We've also sold a few copies of Arnold's *Messiah* for the figures. Publishers wouldn't have gone to the extra expense of figuring editions if there wasn't a demand for them. Incidentally, I see that the introduction to the study score of Redlich's edition (1963) was translated by Peter Branscombe (see p. 40).

As for the overheard discussion, a reader wrote to suggest that such overheard private discussions should not be reported. I should have clarified that I suspect that Terence and Christopher were acting like barristers on a case, deliberately taking opposing sides to each question. But the fact that such a detailed discussion took place was of great interest (as was the content), and if other editions do not involve such dialogue between scholar and performer, they should. (Though it is difficult to find performers with such editorial experience as Christopher.) I often chat to one well-known conductor who wants access to the maximum editorial research, but complains that the editors often don't anticipate the questions that performers will want to be able to answer.

I ought to rewrite the review, but these remarks cover most of my slips (though I should have mentioned some scoring differences). I'm unrepentant on my comment that the reference to sources in the introduction to the Water Music are confusing without some list of them. That's a judgment that a reader can make more reliably than the writer!

CB

PETER BRANSCOMBE (1929-2008)

Peter Branscombe died on 31 December. Our readers will know him for his kindly (but not uncritical) reviews of the classical repertoire. I feel I have known him longer than I have. The name Branscombe was a familiar one. I remember a prefect called Branscombe when I was in the first year at Dulwich College, and I sometimes wondered whether he was the Peter Branscombe who translated introductions to German editions: I mention one on p. 39 that I noticed a few hours ago. My first contact with him was in 1990, when we needed an edited text and translation for our edition of C. P. E. Bach's *Der Frühling*: the mutual contact was Brian Clark, who knew Peter from his studies at St Andrews. Later that year, Elaine and I found ourselves sitting with him at a dinner during a Royal Musical Association conference on performance practice. We were both charmed by him. I'm sure I had some contact with him over the next few years, but it became regular when I was bold enough to ask if he would like to review for *EMR*, and was delighted that he agreed. Phoning and emailing him always produced affable and enjoyable response, and even some chat about our old school. I hadn't in any way kept in contact with it, but we had some memories in common, particularly of Eric Parsley, an extremely civilised and urbane man who taught languages there from 1923 until after I left. The most peculiar was Peter trying to trace a report from his brother (it was in fact he who had overlapped with me) that I was the last person to have been seen with a copy of the school Cricket Song – unlike Peter, who seems from the *Times* obituary to have been a promising cricketer, I was no sportsman and had no idea that there even was such a song. St Andrews is a long way away, but we visited Peter a couple of times and wish we could have chatted for longer, but we had Clare and John in tow so couldn't relax for long.

Our readers may not all know what a distinguished career Peter had. His formal field of study was Austrian literature, but he spread to Austrian music, especially to Mozart. His name appears in conjunction with Eric Blom and Jeremy Noble as translator of Deutsch's *Documentary Biography* of Mozart, one of my most-used books, and he was the ideal person to write the Cambridge Opera Handbook to *Die Zauberflöte*, published doubly appropriately in 1991. He was also particularly interested in Schubert, but his tastes ranged much wider than that: I only realised recently his wider operatic knowledge. *Grove Music Online* lists 168 entries by him. Its biography of him mentions Jack Westrup (also a product of Dulwich) and Egon Wellesz as musical influences while he was at Oxford. He became lecturer at St Andrews in 1959, and stayed there for the rest of his life, becoming Britain's only Professor of Austrian Studies in 1979. On retirement in 1995 he became emeritus professor. He had the ability to write clearly, without getting caught up in acadamese. He was an ideal reviewer, not least because he was always on time: indeed, when I sent a batch of CDs to our reviewers, his reviews were nearly always the first to

arrive and the ones that needed least editorial adjustment, even over the last years when he was ill.

We were glad and honoured to know him, and *EMR* will be the poorer by his absence. CB



TESSA BONNER (1951-2008)

I was also very sorry to hear of the death of the soprano Tessa Bonner. I first knew her, not as a singer, but as the typist of *Early Music News*. She worked part-time for its editor, Peter Williamson, next door to the Early Music Centre, while she was managing the transition from student to professional musician. I realised that she had a good career ahead of her when I visited Andrew Parrott one day and found Tessa singing the *Sonata sopra Santa Maria* to him (I think this must have been in preparation for his first Prom *Vespers*). Andrew's obituary of her in *The Guardian* (accessible online) has much more about her life than I knew. I was pleased to see her name around so much and that she had a successful career as a singer (particularly with the Tallis Scholars). She too died on the last day of 2008, also of cancer. CB