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I missed the broadcast of the first night of the Proms: I was too busy sorting out parts of the Biber Mass a53 for the Dartington summer school. But I half-listened to a talk by John Drummond, the Prom director, that followed it and was intrigued by his dismissive remarks on early music. He claimed that he likes Emma Kirkby as a person but finds her voice unsexy, as opposed to that of Callas. I must confess that, in the opera-going days of my youth, the idea that any soprano could be sexy did not occur to me. They often wore quite low-cut dresses, and the wobbles in their voices corresponded with the wobbling of the upper parts of their breasts. My ideal female figure and voice was somewhat more controlled. I may have heard a few sexy voices earlier, but the first time I encountered one with a matching appearance was not on the opera stage, but at Dartington in the early 1970s. I'm not writing a novel, so we did not fall head-over-heels in love: she was with her husband and our relationship was purely musical. But my reaction is exactly the opposite to Drummond's: Kirkby's voice is sexy, while that of Callas isn't. Can whether we like early music or not depend somehow on our sexual predilections? Can a psychiatrist cure us?

Drummond also complained that some baroque music was doggedly uneventful (my words: I don't remember his). Each musical style has its characteristic virtues and weaknesses. Some of us dislike the pretentiousness of late-romantic music; when it works, it is magnificent, but a Telemann sonata can in many circumstances be preferable to a Mahler symphony. When classical music was a single repertoire, music-lovers were expected to love all of it. Now (thanks to the vast expansion of types of music available) that idea has vanished. There always were exceptions. Singers, both choral and solo, and organists had their own musics (to use the ethnomusicological plural) which did not entirely overlap with the common repertoire. Now every type of music is expanding. How long will it be before early music becomes an impossibly wide term?

CB

BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

EARLY TALLIS

Thomas Tallis *Salve intemerata; Missa Salve intemerata* edited by Nick Sandon. Antico Edition (RCM134), 1995. xvi + 40pp, £10.50

Thomas Tallis *Ave rosa sine spinis* edited by Nick Sandon. Antico Edition (RCM136), 1995. viii + 12pp, £6.50

These continue Nick Sandon's progress through the Peterhouse Partbooks and present early works of a composer who relates both to the world of Taverner and Ludford and to that of Byrd. The voices are SATBarB. The motet and mass *Salve intemerata* are transposed up a tone, *Ave rosa* remains at the originally-notated pitch. While I am all in favour of transposing *chiavette* pieces a fourth or fifth, I am not sure whether singers should not be able to manage a tone; after all, they seem to be able to cope with Lully and (for some conductors) Purcell without transposed editions and I find the untransposed *Ave rosa* much easier on the eye. The editor does, however, offer untransposed copies on request. At the risk of saying the same thing about each item of this excellent series, I repeat that the preservation of original note-lengths but (unlike TCM) with regular barring is the most satisfactory way I know of presenting this type of music for the modern reader, though I would myself favour the retention of accidentals superfluous by modern conventions. (I have had no complaints on our retention of accidentals in 17th & 18th century music.)

The motet *Salve intemerata* survives in a variety of sources so there is no need for editorial reconstruction of missing parts. There are no other sources for the Mass, but the tenor can often be reconstructed from the motet. Despite the eight additional MSS listed for *Ave rosa*, there is still 22 bars of the treble missing from a duet between treble and bass: these are deftly supplied. There is little on the page to warn the user when we change from Tallis to Sandon: the main clue is the mensuration sign being bracketed. In *Ave rosa* the text of the added part is in italics, but not in the mass. The information is, of course, given in the substantial introductions, but it should perhaps be more immediately obvious.

The way later sources modernised aspects of the music makes the critical commentary for *Salve intemerata* extensive. The editor has some doubts: 'I must admit that when I look at these stodgy pages of commentary I wonder whether the end justifies the laborious means' (p. iv, note 13). I sympathise with his dilemma and wonder whether the solution is to summarise the general characteristics of each source, give evidence for the reasons for preferring one, and then only quote alternative readings that are

plausible or of particular interest. We are not, in these works, dealing with cases where every bit of information is required to help us reconstruct an original, lost source, since many of the differences are not the result of copying errors but of scribes adjusting the music to later styles, whether of performance or notation. The way the readings are listed by source rather than bar by bar makes it slow work assuaging any disquiet felt at a particular place in the motet, but the interesting differences between the two copies in the same MS are more readily compared with that lay-out.

These three works look as if they will be marvellous to sing, though the prices are higher than the extraordinarily low prices that many singers expect to pay for their music.

SCOTTISH CONSORT MUSIC

Sixteenth-century Scottish Fantasies and Dances ed. Charles Foster. London Pro Musica, £7.00 (score & parts)

Since Kenneth Elliott's *Musica Britannica* vol. XV, very little Scottish renaissance music has appeared in print, so the publication of Dr. Foster's editions of the work of John Black and others is to be welcomed. This is a practical performing edition (with parts suitable for wind and for strings), which probably excuses the fact that editorially reconstructed parts and editorial ficta are not identified on the page, although the notes clarify the former. There are eight pieces, none of which have hitherto appeared in the present form in print, which range from the merely pleasant to the profound, and constitute a representative cross-section of the Scottish consort music of the period. But what they do not constitute is 'virtually all the surviving instrumental pieces from Renaissance Scotland', a misleading claim made both in London Pro Musica's catalogue and on the back of the edition itself. Even in the sources drawn on here there are other fine pieces, and rich sources like *The Art of Music* are ignored completely. It is a pity that, in opening this valuable window on the Scottish renaissance, Dr. Foster and LPM seem by this description to have virtually closed it at the same time! It is to be hoped that the Maister of the Sang Schule of Sanct Nicholace Paroche can be prevailed upon to provide more treasures from this neglected repertoire. The introduction is interesting, though occasionally inaccurate. For instance, Robert Stewart, gentle patron of the arts, to whom James Lauder's lovely pavan was dedicated, has been unfortunately telescoped with his notoriously lawless namesake, bastard son of James V, and error which would hardly have pleased either!

D. James Ross

ENGLISH BASSANOS

David Lasocki with Roger Prior *The Bassanos: Venetian Musicians and Instrument Makers in England, 1531-1665* Scolar Press, 1995. xxxvi + 288pp, £40.00. ISBN 0 85967 943 8.

Information about the Bassanos has been accumulating over the years; here it is thoroughly sifted and assembled into a single volume. David Lasocki has done a vast amount of biographical ferreting about English wind-players and his wide knowledge of the source material enables him to put together a family history covering 18 members of three generations. Some of the details may seem uninteresting to all except specialists. Yet erratic though the records are, and with so little detail about the personalities behind the names, they throw much light on how musicians made their living and established themselves in their community. The book has chapters on each generation as well as on their economic and social status, the court recorder consort (which they dominated), their other playing activity and their work as instrument-makers. It is interesting that cornets are grouped with recorders rather than with sackbuts.

The Bassano who impinges beyond the musical world is Emilia, wife of Alfonso Lanier (a member of another clan of court musicians also recently covered by a book from Scolar Press, which was not sent for review). Her small claim to fame was as the mistress of Lord Hunsden, Elizabeth's Lord Chamberlain (is Hotson's theory that he was the model for Malvolio generally accepted?) and as the author of a volume of poems *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (1611), now of interest to both feminist and Jewish scholarship; there is a recent new edition by Susanne Woods, Oxford UP, 1993. In 1973 A. L. Rowse claimed that she was the 'dark lady' of Shakespeare's sonnets. In his discussion of this topic Lasocki is ably assisted by Roger Prior (though at the expense of some repetition: we are told on both p. 103 & 121 that Emilia restricted her sexual activity with her astrologer to heavy petting). Prior astutely points out that the literary world would on principle be suspicious the claim for 'modern literary criticism is intent on removing the author from the text'; to believe in the concept that there was in reality a 'dark lady' would in itself contradict how critics feel that poetry should function. Rowse's case does, however, seem to be plausible. The extent to which Shakespeare is fictionalising, both with regard the personality of the poet and of the dark lady, is, of course, unknowable; but reading the poems with what is known about Emilia in mind gives genuine illumination rather than just satisfying curiosity at a *roman à clef*.

This is the section of the book that will be most widely read, but there is much else of interest. There is a brief appendix on the Bassanos who stayed in Venice and another on the later history of the family in England; the name is still alive in musical circles, since a sackbut-playing descendant, formerly Peter Goodwin, has reverted to his family name.

PRIULI & VALENTINI

Steven Saunders *Cross, Sword, and Lyre: Sacred Music at the Imperial Court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg (1619-1637)*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995. xx + 358pp, £40.00 ISBN 0 19 816132 6

Priuli has secured a small place in our consciousness; some of his music is published and occasionally performed. Giovanni Valentini, however, is virtually unknown, apart from an article in JAMS 1991 which is incorporated here. They were the leading musicians at the court of Ferdinand II, the politically naive and religiously obsessed Emperor whose intolerance of protestantism caused the 30 Years War. His religious observance required a large musical entourage. Saunders here offers a thorough study of the interaction between music, liturgy and politics and relates the music of Priuli and Valentini to its function. He is not entirely convinced by Valentini's music; the book has an appendix of a dozen complete works or movements and the reader will probably confirm that judgment. Sadly, his *Messa, Magnificat et Jubilate Deo* for seven choirs has only a couple of parts extant (one for a trumpet which reiterates a single note.). I was particularly interested in the paragraph on the imperial visit to Dresden, for which Praetorius wrote music (including perhaps some of the pieces in *Polyhymniae caduceatrix et panegyrica*). A further anthology *Fourteen Sacred Concertos from the Court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg* will be published by A-R Edition.

*Our music example this month is one of the two motets by Priuli in Simonetti's *Ghirlanda sacra*: see pages 11-13.*

MONTEVERDI LETTERS REVISED

The Letters of Claudio Monteverdi, translated and introduced by Denis Stevens. Revised edition. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995. xviii + 458pp, £45.00. ISBN 0 19 816414 9

The first edition, published by Faber in 1980, was a landmark in Monteverdi scholarship. It is an important book. It is amazing that so many letters have survived, though frustrating that so few of them offer direct illumination on specific extant works. It is one of those books that needs to be continually in print, and it inevitably will need periodic revision. This new edition is completely reset, with no attempt to preserve the original pagination (inconvenient when checking references to the first edition), so changes are not immediately apparent. The portrait of Monteverdi himself that was the frontispiece of the 1980 edition has gone: only on the dust jacket are we told that it is of Tristano Marinelli, not Monteverdi. The front of the dust jacket reproduces a lost picture of a quartet of musicians from Mantua from about 1612, one of whom may be Monteverdi. It is claimed that he is holding a *viola bastarda*; even if I knew exactly what the term means, the picture is far too murky for such precision about its identity to be confirmed.

There is one new letter, a brief one from 1630 of no great moment. The numbering of the two editions does not always correspond because some dates are changed. Letter 12, formerly dated 22 June 1611, has been moved forward to 22 January and swaps place with Letter 11, with nothing to suggest doubt about the date or reason for the alteration. The notes to the other letter of 1611 show a lack of response to criticism of a weakness of the first edition: unsubstantiable identification of works mentioned with surviving works. With the likelihood of so much music having been lost (the letters themselves make this apparent), we should be cautious in identifying titles. A *Dixit Dominus a8* of 1611 may have nothing to do with those published thirty or forty years later, nor is there any point in airing here the editor's mutually-contradictory guesses that the 1610 setting a6 needs a choir and might have been composed in 1595. There are several points in James H. Moore's lengthy (and by no means hostile) review in JAMS 1982 that might have been taken on board. A simple example comes in letter 101, when Stevens has not corrected (by omitting) a suggestion made in ignorance of the Carmelite liturgy. As with any new edition, one has to make the decision whether to continue to use the volume to which one is accustomed or change to the new one. I find the Faber volume lighter to hold (790gm compared with Oxford's 1000gm) and typographically more elegant. It is also a book I have grown very fond of over the years and am reluctant to put aside. But there is no problem for younger Monteverdi enthusiasts: buy this revised edition at once unless your knowledge of 17th-century Italian is so fluent that you can read the Italian texts.

ITALIAN LUTE MSS

Victor Coelho *The Manuscript Sources of Seventeenth-century Italian Lute Music*. Garland, 1995. xxix + 711pp, \$115. ISBN 0 8153 1382 9

'This book is a history, description, and thematic catalogue of the fifty-two tablatures... that make up the manuscript repertory of seventeenth-century Italian lute music.' This first sentence of the book is a succinct summary and introduces an extremely thorough survey of a repertoire that is not at all well known. Coelho contrasts the 100 lute-books published in Italy in the 16th century with the 19, all except one for archlute or theorbo, in the 17th (including six by Kapsberger and five by Melii). The MSS are therefore essential for understanding the cultivation of the lute and for the survival of repertoire for the smaller instruments. Some 2000 pieces are listed here, and it is typical of the author's awareness as a musician as well as cataloguer that he can add that almost two thirds of them merit performance by professional players. After fifty pages of general introduction, there is a thorough description of each MS and then a listing of the contents, with both tablature and transcribed incipits, with concordances noted. There is an index of titles but no attempt to generate any index of incipits: perhaps this was wise, since basically similar settings of popular material may well not be

recognised by any mechanical arrangement. This is the result of ten years' research; the time has been well spent and lutenists will be grateful that this territory is uncharted no longer.

KERLL COMPLETED (AGAIN)

Johann Kaspar Kerll is certainly an interesting composer, but it baffles my why the two main Austrian publishers should feel the need to produce competing edition; very confusing for A. A. Kalmus here, who are agents for both. Doblinger divided their edition by John O'Donnell into four volumes (Diletto Musicale 1203-6); Universal Edition has three volumes (UE 19 541-3), of which the last has just appeared (£21.00). This contains the *Capriccio sopra il Cucu* (in three versions), *Battaglia*, *Ciaconna*, *Passacaglia*, 4 Suites and the piece for mechanical organ, along with four dubious pieces in an appendix. It corresponds more or less with DM 1205, though that lacks the Cuckoo and the Battle (included in the previous volume) and has no appendix. Both editions preserve white notation, but UE does not go so far as to keep separate stems for each note of a chord. UE has bigger and blacker notes. DM has slightly more editorial information. Differences between the editions, as far as I have checked, seem minimal. I don't know which to favour. (See also *EMR* 4 p. 3.)

PURCELL ANTHEMS

A Purcell Anthology: 12 Anthems edited by Bruce Wood. Oxford UP, 1995. vi + 106pp, £7.95. ISBN 0 19 353351 0
Purcell Funeral Sentences with March and Canzona for the Funeral of Queen Mary edited by Christopher Hogwood. Oxford UP, 1995. 34pp, £3.95. ISBN 0 19 337877 9

The chances are that any choir intending to buy a Purcell anthology will already have snapped up the Faber one (£3.95 for 5 anthems, all of them included here in editions which are more scholarly, though not different enough to affect the average church choir). So although apparently good value, the question is not whether you can afford £7.95 for twelve anthems as for seven. And of those seven, many choirs will have sets of *O sing unto the Lord* and *Rejoice in the Lord alway*. Then there are rival editions of the Funeral Sentences, which makes the economics even more difficult to solve.

This is a shame, since this has a wider selection than the Faber, is better-looking than the Church Music Society separate editions (also from Oxford UP) and benefits from having the editor who is most knowledgeable about the sources of the period. Whether or not choirs invest in it, it is certainly a desirable purchase for anyone interested in Purcell's music who does not own the seven volumes the Purcell Society devotes to anthems etc. The selection includes the most popular works, with some less well-known. There is a fine introduction, with up-to-date suggestions on performance practice: one hears far too many performances based on musicological ideas of a

quarter-century ago. The editorial organ parts sensibly follow the practice of parts surviving from the time and make the upper part double (in a simplified form) the treble line in choruses: the assumption that the organist avoids doubling the vocal parts is one that has been questioned recently for 17th-century music.

I have one quibble over layout. Why is it necessary to waste space with a realisation of sections scored with strings? If there are no strings available, the organist will play their parts; if they are present, a keyboard realisation (either in a full score or separately) could be supplied with the hired parts for those who need it. It is presumably because of this that the volume is A4 rather than OUP's normal choral format.

I must return to one textual point in *Jehova quam multi* that I raised in our April issue (p. 14). Why is there a false relation at the end of the first tutti section (tenor, bar 20, note 3)? The autograph has a sharp before the G, as does the only other contemporary copy (by Blow). Bruce Wood is surely too good a scholar to get it wrong, so I am extremely puzzled. Incidentally, he says nothing about the text; if we knew where the Latin translation came from (it isn't the Vulgate) we might be more able to guess where the motet might have been performed.

Although the notes in the anthology state that the version it prints of the Funeral Sentences is the final version, there is no suggestion of any doubt which version should be edited. Christopher Hogwood, however, has presented three different versions. This will be interesting to musicologists, though I'm not sure what the organist/choirmaster at Puddletown Major will make of it. It is confusing that the third version (with no *Thou knowest Lord*) is followed by the 1695 setting of that text, encouraging performance of a sequence that is unlikely to have ever been intended: it would have been better if the layout had made the path of least resistance the more plausible one of concluding with what Hogwood labels the second version of *Thou knowest*, which is what Bruce Wood does. (He sensibly places the 1695 setting completely separately.) That, however, would make the use of the March & Canzona even less justified. Experienced singers may welcome the preservation of the original irregular, mostly-long bars, but the front end of the publication seems aimed mainly at specialists. The back, however, contains *The Queen's Funeral March and Canzona*, complete with Thurston Dart's additions for four timps. It was probably his recording (a fill-up with Bach's *Magnificat*) that first brought together the sequence of funeral music that most of us know, and I still have a sneaking admiration for the version which first captured my attention. Whether Hogwood shares this or whether OUP just wanted to incorporate the brass edition that they had previously sold separately, this is likely to perpetuate a version that sounds increasingly dated. I would encourage the use of the alternative tenor drum part rather than timps. Those who are aware of the problem of what the altos sing four bars from the end at on the 'to' of 'to fall' (where what is usually

taken as the main source, Fitzwilliam 117 – whose scribe is William, not Bartholomew Isaack – wrote G flat) will be interested that Wood takes over Dart's enterprising B flat, with its diminished octave leap, while Hogwood prefers G natural (and does not annotate the point).

There are King's Music editions of several of the anthems mentioned here. It would be inappropriate to make a direct comparison, so they are listed in an advert on page 23.

MORE VIVALDI

The Vivaldi Collected Works has for the last few years concentrated on music, both sacred and secular, for solo voice. Two new volumes contain cantatas for soprano, strings and continuo edited by Francesco Degrada: *Che giova il sospirar* (RV 679; Ricordi PR 1337, £11.95 score, £11.95 parts) and *Perché son molli* (RV 681; PR 1336, £12.95 score, £11.95 parts). In both cases, the parts come as a set with 3.3.2.2: this may look extravagant if you only want one of each, but the price is reasonable and it saves a lot of time for the publisher. In the latter cantata, the viola part is editorial. It does seem slightly odd to assume that the score was copied from an incomplete set of parts (the source is a peripheral one of English provenance); perhaps the scribe or his master was more accustomed to the two-violin-and-continuo instrumentation and just ignored the viola part. It is a pity that the editor does not have the courage of his convictions; an editorial part (by Michael Talbot) is printed as a part in an appendix rather than in small print in the score, making it difficult to evaluate and awkward for a conductor. Either would make a welcome break in a programme of concertos. *Usignoletto bello* is for soprano and continuo (RV 796; PR 1338, £9.95). A separate bass part is included, but since an additional copy is needed for the keyboard player and the music takes only 12 out of the 28 pages, perhaps an extra copy of those could be slipped in as well, or alternatively a part giving voice and bass that could either be used by the proficient harpsichordist who doesn't like realisations or by the singer. The two sources (both now at Dresden, though only one is part of the old collection) are in different keys; the editor, Karl Heller, argues convincingly that the higher is the original and prints only that. It is a gentle pastoral piece, with a second aria that is quite Handelian. (In the UK Ricordi publications are sold by Boosey and Hawkes.)

HANDEL'S SINGERS

C. Steven LaRue *Handel and his Singers: The Creation of the Royal Academy Operas, 1720-1728*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995. 213pp, £30.00. ISBN 0 19 816315

That 18th-century composers, from Handel to Mozart, tailor-made their arias for individual singers is now generally accepted. I found it interesting when planning Emma Kirkby's record of songs sung by Mrs Arne that we felt we had a good idea of what her voice was like from the sort of music written for her. Steven LaRue goes further in

showing the sophisticated way in which Handel's whole dramatic conceptions developed as he realised the distinctive characterising skills of his singers. The key example is *Tamerlano*, where the arrival of Francesco Borosini fundamentally changed the opera. The opera was rewritten for a whole complex of reasons: he had a different range, he had a different dramatic style, he brought with him a different version of the text and Gasparini's setting of it to influence Handel. The facts are not new. The description in Dean and Knapp (whose paperback reprint from Oxford is announced) is thorough, and can be followed in the Garland facsimile or my edition. But LaRue expounds even more clearly the musico-dramatic effects of the change of singer. But *Tamerlano* also shows that Handel was capable of adapting a role, that of Irene, for a new singer merely by transposition, with no further implications.

The subtitle of the book made me expect an opera-by-opera or singer-by-singer survey. We have instead a series of case-studies, featuring Durastanti, Senesino, Cuzzoni and Bordoni. The argument derives from close study of the sources, so the 'general description' of them is a useful introduction. I am sure that during the next few years we will be seeing many studies of Handel's autographs from a musical rather than a text-critical viewpoint. This sets the path. I found it hard work, especially the chapter on *Tamerlano* (even though I had gone over much of the same ground in sorting out versions and compiling a table of the structure of the MS), but this is a valuable study. For prospective performers, it is discouraging: we can never capture the frisson of a great singer performing the music Handel wrote for him/her, so an essential element of the work is lost to us.

J. P. H. PUBLICATIONS

Many readers will have taken advantage of John Edmonds wide knowledge of 18th-century English instrumental music and bought music from him at Jacks, Pipes and Hammers. He has recently been issuing facsimiles in conjunction with Martin Grayson under the name J. P. H. Publications (Bridge View, Garrigill, Alston, Cumbria CA9 3DU). All are on grey or cream A4 sheets and comb-bound with a transparent plastic front. *Eight Solos for a Violin with a Thorough Bass* (1746) by Joseph Gibbs is particularly welcome. The title page proclaims him 'of Dedham in Essex' and he is known to art-historians as the subject of a portrait by the local artist, Gainsborough. One can see that their quality matches their repute, and some of the amateurs who subscribed must have been taken by surprise at their difficulty when they started to play them (£15.00); but I suspect that many of the names in the subscription list are there as patrons rather than prospective performers.

John Hebden is more obscure. At least, the biographical information in New Grove is sketchy. But the introduction to the new facsimile places him primarily in York rather than London and mentions that the family still thrives, so a

little more information would have been welcome. His string concertos op. 2 (1745) have been recorded; his *Six Solos for the German Flute with a Thorough Bass* without opus number (so presumably his opus 1) were published at about the same time and are now reproduced (£12.50). Hebden aims more at the amateur market than Gibbs, though circulation among modern amateurs is likely to be restricted by their regrettable reluctance to play from figured bass. Three of the six sonatas are in the minor, a good sign; they are well worth playing.

I am at present sorting out the anthology of 18th-century music for country choirs that will be take place on August 18-20 (report in the next issue). So the appearance of *Eight Anthems in score for the use of Cathedrals and Country Choirs Composed by Samuel Webbe [1788]* is well timed (£8.00; £6.00 each for multiple copies). The reference to country choirs may perhaps have been a little optimistic, since it is a respectable collection, set out in proper score order with middle parts in alto and tenor clefs, the bass figured, and with no blatant consecutive octaves and fifths. The reference on the contents page to 'principle Treble parts' being sung by a tenor and vice versa refers to alternatives for the solo parts, not to West-gallery-style doublings. Webbe is best known for his glees and for his contribution to the popularity of *Adeste fideles*. He was brought up a catholic and worked in London's catholic chapels. This collection, however, is Anglican in the verse-anthem-with-continuo form, but with rather more for the chorus to sing than often happens in 18th-century anthems. The alto and tenor clefs may restrict use, but there are anthems here that well justify revival.

18th CENTURY

Woodcock's set of 12 Concertos (1727) are tempting to recorder players, since six of them are for the instrument. The use of the 'small flute', notated as if for treble recorder but sounding a sixth higher (i.e. a tone above a descant) causes problems. Grete Zahn is editing them for Doblinger; nos 1-3 have appeared so far (DM 1197-9 from A. Kalmus; around £15.00 each for score & parts, recorder/piano also available). She writes the recorder part out for a normally-pitched descant and transposes the orchestral parts down a tone. This is a reasonable compromise, at least for the amateur market, and the concertos come out in plausible keys. They do not need an orchestra, just two violins and continuo. Each is in three movements, the second being accompanied by unison violins without keyboard (so the accompaniment in Walter Bergman's Faber edition of No. 2 is wrong). The editor points out that there is another version of No. 3 ascribed to Jacques Loeillet.

Hasse's six flute sonatas op. 2 appeared in London in 1740. They are being published by Universal in two volumes edited by Gerhard Braun, the first of which contains nos. 1-3, (UE 19 499, from A. Kalmus; £9.95). The first sonata is conventionally late-baroque, nos. 2 & 3 are more modern. The original layout of treble and figured bass score is

preserved for the parts (sometimes the figures are omitted from such layouts, infuriating for keyboard players who prefer just treble and bass to a realised version).

The same format is used for the two suites for treble and continuo that Nicolas Chédeville included in his *Amusements Champêtres*, 1735. The first (or rather fifth: 1-4 are for two trebles) is easy-going, the sixth quite vigorous. The edition is presented for flute but the composer's list of instruments is wider: musette, vielle, flute or oboe, and he might have added treble recorder (UE 19 498; £7.95).

Two sets of keyboard concertos by Wagenseil were published in London in the 1760s; nos. 5 & 6 complete Rudolf Scholz's edition of the second set for Doblinger (DM 585-6; £19.25 for score of no. 5, £13.25 for no. 6, parts also available). Whether the designation 'for the organ or harpsichord' is authentic may be debated: that is perhaps related to the London performance tradition, where organ concertos were regular occurrences, rather than the continental: some editorial comment would have been welcome. There is nothing organistic about them. Accompaniment is for two violins and bass, so chamber performance is possible, probably preferable. No. 5 in B flat has three movements, each of around 100 bars, and looks effective. No. 6 is much shorter.

Musica Rara continues its series of C. P. E. Bach's *Complete Sonatas for Flute and Obbligato Keyboard* with vols 4-6, containing Wq 85-7 (H.508, 509 & 515), each at £7.50 from A. Kalmus. For H. 508 & 509 there is a competing edition from Breitkopf, with the two sonatas in one volume. Musica Rara provides more editorial information but Breitkopf looks better and, with two sonatas in a single volume, is probably a little cheaper. For H. 515 there is no choice. This is not an adaptation of a trio sonata, and has a keyboard part that it composed throughout, not alternating between solo and continuo.

I haven't kept track of the whole series, but Doblinger's working through the Boccherini symphonies must be nearly complete. The most recent in the series is a dubious one, with three designations, Sinfonia "A", No. 31 and G 500, in D, dating from about 1765. It is a very short, four-movement piece for strings with a pair of horns ad lib (DM 631; score £13.75, parts also available).

The Köchel catalogue has a large number of pieces which for various reasons Mozart did not complete. Some comprise virtually complete movements in outline form, and are a temptation to editors. One such is an insert aria for Paisiello's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* written in September 1789 for his sister-in-law Josepha Hofer (Weber), later to be the first Queen of the Night. What survives is a fairly full sketch: voice and continuo with one or two violin parts when the voice is silent. But the closing tutti is missing. This is printed in NMA II 7:4 p. 168-175 from a secondary source. The autograph disappeared in 1935 and only reappeared in 1988. A new edition from Doblinger (DM

1164; score £18.15) contains a completion by Thomas Christian David. He convincingly justifies not using the easy solution of closing with a repeat of the introduction and fills out the scores for pairs of clarinets, bassoons and horns, as well as completing the string scoring. I looks convincing, and except for the fact that Mozart's arias are performed so rarely anyway would be a useful addition to the repertoire.

MOZART ESSAYS

H. C. Robbins Landon *The Mozart Essays*. Thames and Hudson, 1995. 240pp + 16 pl, £18.95. ISBN 0 500 01653 4

I commended a book recently for eschewing *the* in the title; this one must be criticised for its arrogant presence. The essays do not benefit from that sort of hype; they are of considerable interest, but are mostly parerga rather than major works. Four of them are new, the remaining eight have appeared before, though some have been revised. Landon is as always the (the definite article is appropriate here) great communicator of enthusiasm for any music that he writes about. Sometimes the continued extolling of his hero becomes a little tedious, but his belief that the original documents can provide illumination and interest to the non-specialist is a refreshing contrast to books which avoid anything so specific. His own writing is easy and beguiling, though he grows less and less concerned to say anything very specific about the essentials of the music itself. Consequently his surveys of the symphonies, the masonic music and the Latin church music are useful for their documentation rather than their musical comment. I'm not sure if I would want my sleeve-notes collected into hard covers, though the examples here on the violin-viola duos, piano quartets and string quintets are better than most. Other subjects covered include *Idomeneo* & *Thamos*. The preface to Landon's new Breitkopf edition of the *Requiem* will get a wider audience here; there is, however, far more information in Christoph Wolff's *Mozart's Requiem* (see *EMR* 7, p. 7). I suspect that it is still news to many who believe the old myths that some of the work may have been played at Mozart's memorial service five days after his death. One would have expected that the revision for book publication might have included reference to other editions of the score. Similarly, in the church music essay, he refers to the Mass in C minor having been 'reconstructed by me' without noting the Maunder version. A few pages earlier in that chapter (179) he seems to think that *de Confessore Pontifice* is a different language from *Confessor Pontifex* rather than a different case. The final chapter discusses other recently-discovered documents of Mozart's last year, including the strange account that Prince Lichnowsky was suing Mozart for a substantial debt; Landon suggests that Lichnowsky was so generous to Beethoven because he had a conscience about Mozart. This is not a major work on the subject, but there is much background information that will entertain and instruct those who are unlikely to read through the Documentary Biography and its supplement or the *Mozart-Jahrbuch*.

YORK EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Clifford Bartlett

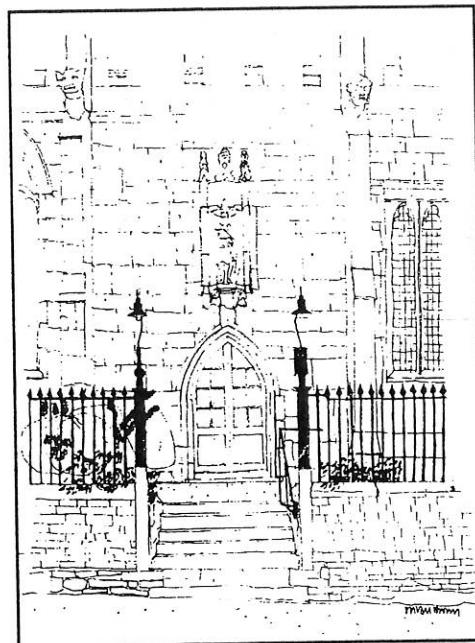
A celebration of the genius of Henry Purcell and his 17th century world. Thus the title of the 1995 Festival held in Britain's most tourist-aware city (at least north of Oxbridge and south of Edinburgh) from the 7th till the 16th of July. It is difficult for me to avoid comparison with the Boston Early Music Festival which ended three weeks earlier. York is much smaller than Boston, both as a town and in terms of the amount of music it includes. In fact, the number of main events is about the same. But York has no opera and no fringe, though the Festival itself managed to incorporate short concerts by young performers by including the *Early Music Centre Young Artists' competition*. These all took place after I left, but I heard that the standards were extremely high. Short concerts were in general a feature of the Festival, with lunch-time and late-night performances, mostly in the delightful medieval churches that the city has in abundance. (There is a scheme afoot to convert one of them into an early music centre if funds become available.) In most cases the audience capacity was far lower than at Boston; that must make financing difficult, but improves the listening experience.

There is a considerable amount of street music in York, and one disappointment is that the festival does not seem to have attracted early-music buskers. Perhaps a busking competition could be instituted for next year, the winner being the group that collected most money.

I only managed to attend the first weekend, and even then missed on the Friday night an enticing programme with Odes by Blow, Jeremiah Clarke (on Purcell's Death), Purcell's *Come ye Sons* and, appropriately, *The Yorkshire Feast Song* (which that comparatively perfect Wagnerite G. B. Shaw described in 1890 as being 'cognate with the Meistersinger in its most characteristic feature'). My first concert was a disappointment. Having been so enthusiastic about the York Waits in July 1994 it was disappointing that their *Maggots, Marches, Jigs and Rigaudons*, based round Playford's *English Dancing Master*, did not work too well. A major problem was that the two violins added to the group lacked the panache to bring it off: the playing was too careful, and the programme was too long (an hour and a half, no interval and nearly 30 pieces); I would have thought an hour was the absolute maximum the material could stand. The introductions were a model of their kind, and some pieces were fun. But the group is happier in earlier repertoire, as they proved when they relaxed into some renaissance dances at the Exhibition half an hour after later.

The first of the two concerts on the Saturday evening was outstanding. Few early-music singers have the dramatic

personality of Catherine Bott and she used it to the full in *Mad Songs of the Restoration Theatre*. This was a concise and well-planned programme with mad songs ranging from what seems to have been the first in a tradition, Purcell's *Mad Bess* of 1683, through other examples by Blow, Eccles and Finger. The vast emotional range within each song was presented in an extrovert way which, not so many years ago, would have been considered outrageously free by informed audiences. But now that we have singers who have got inside the style, such freedom can be exploited to the full, and we were given a most memorable concert, whose success owed much to Timothy Roberts' flexible and imaginative accompaniment. During the performance my mind had turned to Handel's famous mad scene, and I was interested that Anthony Rooley (one of the Festival's artistic advisers) was also thinking of *Orlando*: what a shame York's budget does not run to opera!



Entrance to St. Olave's Church by Susan Brown

An hour or so later in the same church (St Olave's, Marygate), the Rose Consort of Viols with Jacob Heringman (who played viol as well as lute) traced the English fantasia from the time of Henry VIII (a puzzle canon by John Lloyd) to Purcell. The last time I heard the Rose Concert at York was a magical programme of *In nomines* two years ago. This time there was the same transition from dusk to darkness but less magic. I don't remember anything about the time spent tuning then; of this concert I can remember little else. The players did the right thing: they were in the church tuning long before the

concert began and the audience assembled early, so the temperature should have settled. Perhaps it was the plethora of candles, which generated heat as well as light. Perhaps lighted music stands give off too much heat. Perhaps the Consort was just too perfectionist and the audience may not have minded a few sour notes. Perhaps there should have been less changing of instruments. Anyway, although the playing itself was impressive, the concert as a whole did not work. (I should, however, add that the concert was part of a concurrent conference held by the Viola da Gamba Society on 'The Fantasia in England from Alfonso Ferrabosco II to Henry Purcell', and the more active viol-players in attendance were less disconcerted by the time spent tuning than I was.)

Sunday lunch-time brought a companion to the mad songs with a programme of the often highly-charged religious songs of the period; Timothy Roberts was again master of the keyboards (organ as well as harpsichord), with Andrew King the singer. It took me a while to adjust to the very different sort of expressiveness his voice has when compared with Kate Bott's. At first, he seemed stiff, and only relaxed with Humphrey's *Wilt thou forgive*. Strangely, this sacred programme was in the secular Merchant Adventurer's Hall, a magnificent medieval room – presumably churches are in use at noon on a Sunday. (The city was, in fact, performing its role as an archiepiscopal seat, since the Anglican Synod was taking place; Brian Jordan, staying at the the viol conference, told me that he had breakfast with six bishops.) Again, Purcell's music was mixed with that of his contemporaries. On the whole history's judgment that Purcell is superior is born out, but on the evidence of these programmes, to pay exclusive attention to Purcell is rather like assuming that all the worthwhile action at Wimbledon takes place on the centre court. (This was men's final day, as we were reminded by a witty encore.)

The event which really brought me to York was a semi-staged performance of *The Prophetess, or The History of Dioclesian*. The University concert hall is quite a small auditorium and the orchestra was given pride of place, which permitted a more delicate orchestral style than that used in the theatre for *King Arthur* at Boston. (The original production was in a theatre, not an intimate concert hall.) A single archlute was clearly audible, very finely played by Liz Kenny, and the oboes were used more sparingly. The play was quite heavily cut, but enough was left to make sense of the story and place the music. Actors read from scripts; surely they would have had more freedom of movement if they had been carrying stapled sheets, not stiff binders? I would have appreciated some sort of visual indication of who was who: it took a while to sort out what was happening. Some singers (especially the basses Steven Varcoe and Peter Harvey) had acting roles, but generally (as was the case in 1690) the two categories of performer were distinct. The spoken part of the proceedings worked well enough, though it hardly justified itself as a play and only one comic scene really engaged the audience. The

music was a welcome reminder that *Dioclesian* has some marvellous music. A concert performance without text does not work very well because it is not until the Act V masque that there is much continuous music, and even there the main dramatic element is missing since we can no longer assemble even a tiny machine, let alone one that virtually covers the whole stage. There are a few songs that outstay their welcome, mostly those added after the original production. This is otherwise vintage Purcell, here presented stylishly and convincingly. Purcell's score is dedicated to Baron Seymour; I don't know if Peter Seymour is any relation, but he directed with understanding and good effect. Individual contributions were impressive; but this is not a work with star roles and it is the overall stylistic consistency that impressed. I had hoped to persuade Andrew Pinnock to let us print his witty Prologue, but he insists on its ephemerality.

I was amused by a misprint in his introduction to the festival programme in which he is made to quote from one F. R. Lewis (as opposed to C. S. Leavis). The quotation itself is revealing, reminding us that it was roughly during Purcell's lifetime that, among other important changes from the medieval to the modern world, the idea that 'business is business' was established. With the ending of elaborate Chapel Royal music, Purcell suffered a similar fate to many now who used to be employed by the state but were forced to find their way in the commercial world. One wonders whether he would have turned to film music and TV adverts rather than to opera? The musical is the form nearest to 1690s opera.

KING'S MUSIC

Music for Country Churches: a West Gallery Anthology compiled and edited by Blaise Compton for the Clacton Conference on Church and Chapel Music 1700-1850, held in August 1995.

Normal price £12.00: price for subscribers £10.00

Contains hymns, services, carols and anthems, mostly reproduced from the editor's handwritten scores, but including some facsimiles

Tans'ur: A New Musical Dictionary from Book V of *The Elements of Musick Display'd*, 1772.

Normal price £2.50: price for subscribers £2.00

Some definitions are quaint and curious, but this gives an surprising idea of what musical knowledge was being imparted to the non-professional musician.

A WOMAN SCORN'D: THE MYTH OF DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE

Seventh New College Interdisciplinary Symposium, Oxford, 19 April 1995

Suzanne Aspden

Those reaching saturation point with this year's endless permutations on a theme of Purcell might well have been forgiven for stifling a groan at the title of New College's recent Interdisciplinary Symposium. After all, surely *Dido and Aeneas* is the one work which does not need the bolstering aid of a tercentenary celebration? Organised by Michael Burden and chaired by Roger Savage with speakers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, the symposium could be seen as a response to such a question. In fact, the Purcell/Tate opera was not directly the subject of the afternoon's papers. With a continuity of performance for the last 70 years or more, we are apt to forget that Purcell's now-canonical work had originally to find its place in a far longer tradition of Didos. It was some of these older poetic, musical and dramatic sisters that this symposium sought to recover.

In the first paper, Wendy Heller (Brandeis University) explored Busenello and Cavalli's *Didone* (1641), which established a prototype for the convention of the abandoned heroine in 17th-century Venetian opera. Comparison of the libretto with Virgil's text also illustrated the way in which the stories of mythological heroines were manipulated by 17th-century writers to serve as *exempla* in the contemporary debate on the nature of woman, that 'monster of our species'. Cavalli's restrictive musical depiction of Didone reflected Busenello's repentant and submissive heroine, a far cry from Virgil's vengeful queen.

Much ink has been spilt in attempts to make Virgil take sides in the vexed case of Aeneas vs Dido. In his arbitration, A. D. Nuttall (New College) suggested that the author's creation of an element of doubt in the *Aeneid* is deliberate. For Nuttall, Virgil is a 'polyphonic poet' who establishes audience sympathy for Dido while at the same time ensuring support for Aeneas' imperial destiny. As a woman whose love for Aeneas provides a (literally) lateral diversion, and a queen whose heroic example parallels Aeneas' linear quest. Nuttall's 'inconstant Dido' illustrates a more general blurring of distinctions between linear and lateral in the *Aeneid*.

The queen that Diane Purkiss (University of Reading) found in Marlowe's *Dido Queen of Carthage* was, in her way, as unsettling as Virgil's original. Like Heller and Nuttall, Purkiss viewed the Aeneas-Dido relationship as a subject for state polemic. That the highly-politicised Tudor stage provided ample opportunity for displaying the monarch is well known. Purkiss suggested that in his early Dido play, Marlowe, the erstwhile spy, was enacting a courtier's concern at the potential instability created by an unmarried female monarch. This is more persuasive than the usual

interpretation that Dido's attempts to keep Aeneas with her paralleled Elizabeth's reluctance to allow her courtiers to undertake dangerous missions.

The final paper came closest to Purcellian home. Andrew Pinnock's *Book IV in Brown Paper Wrappers* investigated English interpretations of Virgil contemporary with the Tate libretto, from the numerous earnest poetic translations of Virgil to Charles Cotton's debauched *Scarronides*, the highly-popular Restoration translation of Scarron's *Virgile travestie*. Pinnock's choice of the cave scene for illustration of variant approaches to the text was significant. As Nuttall demonstrated, Virgil's ambiguities of meaning at this point – did Aeneas marry Dido or not – mirror the ambiguities of Book IV as a whole. In turn, they have raised similar problems for Tate's grove scene: when exactly do the couple consummate their relationship? The gaps and uncertainties in Virgil's narrative allowed some licence to his medieval and renaissance interpreters, who sought to close the story one way or another. Likewise, Pinnock's reading of the translations and travesties suggests that Tate did not offer a coy avoidance of the sex act in deference to the young ladies of Chelsea and their parents, since the reference to Aeneas' 'monster's head' on 'bending spear' would have been understood as pinpointing the moment with ribald accuracy.

This proved a suitably ironic *terminus ad quem* to an afternoon which had begun with Dido, representative of the monstrous woman. Avoiding the questions of Dido's political or moral agency which had been the focus of the other three papers, Pinnock's talk reminded the 80-string audience (if any reminder were needed) that the lasting entertainment value of the Dido-Aeneas tale has in no small measure ensured its use and re-use in literature both before and after Purcell. In turn, the entertainment value of Pinnock's paper, as with those of the other speakers, ensured a lively discussion which carried on into drinks and dinner.

These papers and others on the subject by Michael Burden, James Davidson, Denis Feeney, Jennifer Montagu and Roger Savage will be published in a volume entitled *A Woman Scorn'd*.

The October issue of *Early Music Review* will include a comparative review of two very different productions of *Dido and Aeneas*, one in authentic style by Jack Edwards for Opera Restor'd, the other directed by David Freeman for The Opera Factory. Both productions are touring during the autumn.

REPORT FROM MELBOURNE & ADELAIDE

Peter Leech

Over the last few years I have been involved in a number of projects which may be of interest to your readers. Since 1991, Ensemble Esterhaza (of which I am Musical Director) has premiered a number of exciting 17th- and 18th-century works in Melbourne and Adelaide, including symphonies by Pierre van Maldere and Michael Haydn and overtures by Attilio Ariosti. Esterhaza now play on period instruments and recently premiered works by Croft (Overture to *The Twinn Rivals*), Pepusch (Symphony *Venus and Adonis*) and James Paisible (Overture and Act music from *Loves Last Shift*) for the Melbourne International Festival of Organ and Harpsichord. This concert also featured Thomas Trotter performing a keyboard concerto by J. C. Bach (op. 1 no. 6). I prepared the performing material for the Paisible from facsimiles of RCM MS 1172 and we discovered him to be a thoroughly interesting and much neglected composer. We will be performing more Paisible from MS 1772 – the overture and Act music from *Orinooko* – with New Holland Baroque (Adelaide) in a concert of Restoration theatre music in November, which includes pieces from John Eccles' *Judgement of Paris*, Matthew Locke's *Psyche* and incidental music from Purcell's *King Arthur* and *Fairy Queen*.

Some interesting performance issues arose with the Paisible, with particular regard to the use of French rule of down bow. The King's band of 24 violins would, of course,

have been thoroughly grounded in these rules by Grabu, but it is still a matter of some speculation as to how strongly this practice may have been used in the theatres. Drury Lane in particular employed a large number of French musicians and we know that the finest players worked both at court and in the theatre, so the use of French techniques for this music would seem entirely logical, especially in the movements with a more dance-like quality. With careful judgement, especially in regard to inegales (which are often written out quite clearly in quaver runs in MS 1772) Paisible's music can be brought to life with a great deal of contrast and vitality. In recent times, the St Peter's Baroque Players (based at the Anglican cathedral) have also premiered the theatre music by Paisible and his contemporary Thomas Morgan.

In September, I will conduct *The Fairy Queen* with the Elder Conservatorium Opera School, who have invited restoration theatre expert, Jack Edwards, to coach the singers, actors and dancers in the final preparations for performance. For this event, we will use Clifford Bartlett's edition. A report on this event will appear at a later date.

Peter Leech is Director of Music of St Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide, and Musical Director of The Tudor Choristers and Ensemble Esterhaza, Melbourne.

PRIULI *Ave dulcissima Maria*

Among the comments written on subscription renewal forms has been the request that we give more information about the pieces of music we print. (It is, incidentally, our aim to print a new edition in each issue, but sometimes problems of space make it impossible.)

Our music this month is one of the two motets by Priuli in Simonetti's anthology *Ghirlanda sacra*, Venice, 1625. Simonetti had been a choirboy at the imperial court at Graz from about 1596 until 1609; three years later he was a soprano (probably a castrato) in the choir at San Marco, where he stayed for 20 years. *Ghirlanda sacra: scelta da diversi Eccellenissimi Compositori de varij Motetti à Voce sola Libro Primo Opera Seconda per Leonardo Simonetti Musico nella Capella del Ser.º Prencipe di Venetia in S. Marco. Stampa del Gardano in Venetia MDCXXV* appeared in two formats. There is a score (called in its running title *Partitura dell Motette de diversi Eccelenti Autori*) and a separate voice part. It contains 45 motets for solo voice and accompaniment (probably organ and/or lute). The voice parts are mostly in the soprano clef, some in the tenor. Modern sopranos or tenors need have no com-

punction about performing any of them, and the ranges are generally not extreme. The collection opens with four pieces by Monteverdi, the director of music at San Marco; other composers include Grandi, Rovetta and Cavalli (his first published work). The other motet by Priuli *Inter natos mulierum* will be included in Steven Saunders' anthology for A-R Editions (see page 3).

Priuli was a pupil, or at least a protégé, of Giovanni Gabrieli and took over direction of the annual celebration of San Rocco on August 16, 1612, a few days after Gabrieli's death. He became Hofkapellmeister to Ferdinand while he was Archduke at Graz and followed him to Vienna when he became Emperor in 1619. I edited this motet as an antiphon substitute for a Marian Vespers assembled chiefly from the posthumous Monteverdi *Messa et Salmi* (1650). Priuli has also become topical as perhaps the original adapter of another work that has been keeping us busy lately: the incomplete *Magnificat a33* ascribed to Gabrieli, which Paul McCreesh is recording this month amid the Tintoretto in the *Scuole grande di San Rocco* for Archiv in a reconstruction by Hugh Keyte.

Priuli – Ave dulcissima Maria

Soprano (C1)

18

- a, flor Vir - - - - gi - num, ad te cla - ma -

4 #

20

- mus, ad te cla-ma - mus fi - li - i E - ve. O Ma - ri - - - a, flos

5 # (b) (b) 4

23

Vir - - - - - gi - num, ad te cla - ma -

6 6 4 #

25

- mus, ad te cla-ma - mus fi - li - li E - ve: do - na no - bis

5 # (b) (b) 6 7 b6

27

pa - - - cem, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem,

4 # b

29

do - - - - na no - - - - bis pa - cem.

b 7 6 4 #

Hail, sweetest Mary, true and only hope and life, sweet refuge and solace. O Mary, flower of Virgins, we sons of Eve call to you: grant us peace.

ARCHIV PURCELL

Clifford Bartlett

Dido and Aeneas. Tatiana Troyanos *Dido*, Sheila Armstrong *Belinda*, Barry McDaniel *Aeneas*, Patricia Johnson *Sorceress*, Sailor Nigel Rogers, Spirit Paul Esswood Monteverdi-Chor Hamburg, Kammerorchester des Norddeutschen Rundfunks, Charles Mackerras 447 148-2 (1968) 63' 00

Ode on St. Cecilia's Day Simon Woolf, Roland Tatnell, Paul Esswood, Alexander Young, Michael Rippon, John Shirley-Quirk SAATBB, Tiffin Choir, Ambrosian Singers, English Chamber Orchestra, Charles Mackerras (1969) *The Married Beau* Lucerne Festival Strings, Rudolf Baumgartner (1959) 447 149-2 70' 53"

Choral Works Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, English Concert, Simon Preston (1980) 447 150-2 157' 20" (2 CDs) Z. 25, 27/1-3, 28, 30, 34, 35, 36, 37, 46, 50, 57, 58c, 135, 230/3, 230/7-10, 231, 232

15 Fantasias; Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt (1963) *Chacony in G minor* English Concert, Trevor Pinnock (1983) 447 153-2 56' 36"

8 Suites for Harpsichord Colin Tilney (1978) **2 Voluntaries for Organ**, Z719-720 (1984-5) 447 154-2 57' 00"

Coronation Music for King James II (1685) Choir of Westminster Abbey, Simon Preston 447 155-2 (1986) 62' 46" *Blow Behold O God our defender, God spake sometime in visions, Let thy hand be strengthened; Child O Lord grant the King a long life; H. Lawes Zadok the priest; Purcell I was glad, My heart is inditing; Turner The King shall rejoice*

15 Fantasias Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, August Wenzinger (1954) **Vocal Works** Saltire Singers, Hans Oppenheim (1955) 447 156-2 77' 43"

How pleasant is this flowery plain, In thee O Lord, Oh what a scene does entertain my sight, 'Tis wine was made to rule the day, When the cock begins to crow

This is a strange collection of 8 CDs, available separately as well as in a box. Archiv does not have so consistent a run of Purcell recordings as Harmonia Mundi and Erato (see *EMR* 7 p. 12) so these cover a wide span of dates and avoid many of the major works. That at least prevents too much duplication with other labels. But strangely there is duplication within the set, with two recordings of the Fantazias. There would be some point if one was on viols, the other violins. Instead, there is merely the contrast between an old-fashioned performance of 1954 (admittedly, far better than the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis Byrd

on one of the recently-released Deller CDs) and one that still impresses by Concentus Musicus (even if the rumour that Alice Harnoncourt played with a treble viol under her chin is true); strangely, we are told that the English Concert (which takes part only in the final item, an out-of-scale *Chacony*) plays on original instruments, but no instrumentation is given for the seven players of Concentus Musicus. Whatever is used, these performances are of extraordinary interest and demand attention.

The most desirable of these CDs is the only one not devoted entirely to Purcell, the Coronation Music of James II, devised and annotated by Bruce Wood. This is not a liturgical reconstruction, and the order of items is arranged on musical, not historical grounds (though the original sequence is given for those wishing to programme their players accordingly). Blow's *God spake sometime in visions* makes an impressive opening and the longest piece by far, Turner's *The King shall rejoice* (nearly 21') brings the proceedings to a rousing conclusion, though the extensive instrumental sections convince me more than his vocal writing. The Westminster boys sound very young and fragile: I suspect that they represent the sound of mature, 17th-century boys no more than clear-voiced modern women do. Why do we no longer hear Simon Preston as a choral conductor? Here and in the other choral disc he produces excellent results.

The two-disc box of church music (more generally called *Choral Works*) is the most recent item here, and is also impressive; until the Robert King/Hyperion collection appeared, it was the most substantial set of Purcell's anthems and services available. Can all this music really have been recorded in two days, as the booklet states? The Christ Church boys sound slightly more mature than the Westminster ones and there is some fine singing and playing, marred chiefly by some exaggeratedly slow tempi for the more emotional sections.

Having recently read the survey of *Dido and Aeneas* recordings by Jonathan Freeman-Attwood in the March *Gramophone*, I was looking forward to reminding myself of a performance 'in a different league from previous readings'. Sadly, I suspect most listeners will switch off after the first few minutes. The opening sections of French Overtures are now usually performed at about twice the speed adopted here and the opening vocal movements are also painfully slow. The chorus tends to sing in the choppy manner that was then the alternative to excessive legato. Slowness returns at the end; once the Lament drops

into a perceptible three-in-a-bar, it always drags. I used to agree with the idea that the final dance could be the chorus without voices; but it is not like any dance music and at the speed chosen is surely too slow for any known baroque dance steps? But the reviewer was right: this is a dramatic performance – rather too large in scale, perhaps, but with tremendous verve and shape. If you can take the 1960s style, it is well worth persevering through the opening movements until the drama takes over your inhibitions, and it might carry you through till the last chorus. It is salutary to hear how the product of the best musicological thought of the 1960s has dated: how will our favoured versions sound in thirty years' time? Mackerras is a conductor for whom I have enormous respect and was a pioneer in the 1960s in taking it as axiomatic that musicological considerations must be taken seriously. I wonder how he would perform the work now? The booklet includes interesting notes by Neville Boyling and the conductor, but there should have been at least a couple of footnotes to warn readers that the 1689 performance was not necessarily the first and that the Tatton Park MS (which Boyling discovered) has not subsequently been accepted as a better source than the Tenbury/Bodleian MS. The added music doesn't convince, but this must be one of the first recordings to observe the cues for guitar grounds.

Mackerras' recording of the 1692 *Ode on St Cecilia's Day* must have sounded impressive in its day (1970), and can still be recommended to those who dislike early-instrument performances. But, as with *Dido*, I find that all the niceties of ornamentation etc. somehow make the playing seem more dated than less idiomatic performances; the style now demands a different sound. Simon Woolf is the best treble I have heard for a long time: it would have been nice if the booklet had told us how his career developed.

Colin Tilney was as fine a harpsichordist in 1979 as now. The instrument he used is a spinet by Cawton A[ston] at Finchcocks, which dates from more or less the right period, and the music sounds fine on it. Simon Preston appears here as organist, with a single voluntary played on the Knowle organ and a double one on an irrelevant but attractive instrument in Lübeck Cathedral.

So this is an uneven set, probably best taken selectively rather than as a whole.

We apologise for the delay in printing this, which should have appeared in the June issue.

RECORD REVIEWS

CHANT

Chants Grégoriens de Paques Monks from Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, Québec, Dom André Saint-Cyr, 57' 11"

Forlane UCD 16684

Chants Grégoriens: les Plus Beaux Choeurs Populaires Monks from Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, Québec, Dom André Saint-Cyr, 63' 17"

Forlane UCD 16690

Selecting chant recordings depends on whether your priorities are musical, spiritual or sociological. If you favour the latter two criteria, then nothing can beat recordings of monks who sing the liturgy daily. Those whose interest is primarily musical can go along with that to some extent, especially for the choral portions of the chant. But there is a large amount of solo chant which, for performance outside the privacy of the monastery chapel, needs professional musical skills as well as enthusiasm and devotion. Like many other discs made by monastic communities, these CDs have passages that are embarrassingly out of tune. If you are looking for religious experience, I would have thought that services were more relevant than plums from the repertoire and the *Missa de Angelis*, so the Easter disc is preferable. Though still an anthology, this follows the course of the liturgy from the *Lumen Christi* of Holy Saturday night to the *Regina caeli* that concludes Compline at the end of Easter Sunday in a way that is musically and devotionally more rewarding. There is fervour and a sense of being part of a tradition here, and those seeking background music that also makes them feel virtuous will find it satisfying. The notes include a fascinating account of the origins of Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, founded in 1912 near Lake Memphremagog (which is in the south of Quebec not far from the border with Vermont). CB

Medieval Mass of Blessed Mary; Mass of the Apostles with Palestrina Missa Aeterna Christi munera Schola Cantorum Budapestiensis 62' 24"

Hungaroton HCD 31583

Medieval Mass with Dunstable *Sancta Maria succurre miseris* & *Beata mater* and Ciconia: *Gloria*

There are some respects in which this anthology is the equivalent to the eclectic programmes I remember from the 1960s, with 'early music' from the 12th century to the 16th mixed together with a thread of chant. We have solo lines sung chorally and a viola playing a tenor part of a motet (just as on the Third Programme). But don't scorn this: there is some amazingly good and vigorous singing. I find the chant here far more striking than from the Canadian monks, especially with very boyish sound of the sopranos (some may indeed be boys: a few names look masculine) singing in octaves with the men. The lower parts

disappoint a bit in the Palestrina. But even if the idea of *Nobilis humilis* in conjunction with the *Aeterna Christi munera* mass horrifies you, this is well worth a listen. CB

MEDIEVAL

Alfonso X "El Sabio" *Cantigas de Santa Maria* Ensemble Unicorn, Vienna 60' 23"

Naxos 8.553133

Here at last is a group who can use Arab instruments in medieval music and sound as if they know what they are doing, rather than a renaissance recorder group who have picked up the wrong instruments. They seem to improvise with panache. It is difficult to know how these *Cantigas* might have been performed in the 13th century. This has a mixture of free and rhythmic interpretations and each piece is allowed its own strong identity. The approach is fresh and gives a good mix of voice and instruments through the programme. The rhythmic pieces have a strong dance feel, and there are more gentle, chant-like settings. I especially liked *Que por al non devess*, with plucked strings. Frustratingly, there are no texts or translations – a pity, because the words are used dramatically as if they matter. I'm not sure that the viol-like low instrumental part is in keeping (too renaissance?); but that is a minor quibble in an enjoyable CD.

Alison Payne

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN *Heavenly Revelations*

Oxford Camerata, Jeremy Summery 58' 52"

Naxos 8.550998

Alleluia – O virgo mediatrix, Ave generosa, Kyrie, In princilio omnes (from *Ordo virtutum*), *Laus Trinitati, O Euchari, O pastor animarum, O presul vere, O ignis spiritus, O virgo ac diadema, O viridissima virga*

Hildegard's music can be performed any number of ways, many of which work: this doesn't. Summery's semi-rhythmicised versions give awkward time values to notes and do nothing to enhance the flow of the musical phrase or bring out the text. Strong textual images pass unnoticed in an even wash of shapeless lines. The singers seem to creep from note to note with little awareness of musical structure or meaning. It is bland and boring. Alternation between solo and ensemble, even with the addition of vocal drones, does not make up for the basic lack of interest. The pronunciation is modern 'general purpose', missing the opportunity to try the more astringent flavour of 12th-century German Latin. Listen to *Sequentia* instead. Alison Payne

Le Roman de Fauvel Dominique Visse, Anne Azéma, Ensemble Project Ars Nova, Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen 65' 56"

Erato 4509-96392-2

This is just one facet of a multi-media production: only something of that sort can do justice to *Fauvel*, which is not only a

mixture of verse and music but also survives as a document that is far more than the sum of its parts. It was issued in an expensive facsimile in 1990; the back of the booklet at least gives a general idea of how it looks. (It is a pity that the four smaller reproductions back onto adverts that show through the paper.) The CD gives some 30 of the 167 musical items in the MS; these include polyphonic motets, monophonic songs and bits of chant. These are linked with brief narrative, just enough to give the listener some idea of the whole of this intriguing satirical work. It is slightly disconcerting that the opening words 'Ci commence le livre de Fauvel' are followed, not by the first music item, the motet *Favellandi vicium*, but by a song that comes later. (Those using the CD for study would find it useful if the tracks had been given folio or item numbers of the MS.) But that is to quibble. The performances are enormously enjoyable. Joel Cohen and his two main singers, Anna Azéma and John Fleagle, have studied the MS closely; that would not necessarily have affected the performance of some singers, but here the understanding of the original music, text and concept comes across powerfully, and they are ably supported by the other members of their groups. There are full texts and translations. This is an eloquent introduction to a unique document. CB

RENAISSANCE

Dufay Missa L'homme armé Oxford Camerata, Jeremy Summery 60' 01"

Naxos 8.5530872

Also includes chant *Illumina faciem tuam, Jubilate Deo, & Veni Sancte Spiritus* and Dufay's motet *Supremum est mortalibus bonum*

The minor but intrusive pitch discrepancy between the end of the beefy rendition of the theme tune and the marvellous entry of the first *Kyrie* does not spoil the overall impression of this new budget recording of Dufay's sublime masterpiece. Beautifully expressive, robust toned and articulated, well paced – it's compelling listening. Balance is excellent. The more numerous trebles sound fractionally distant, allowing the tenor and contratenor parts to sound equal and clear. The interpolated chant is occasionally too effortful, but the full-toned approach pays off with a real sense of the enormous scale of the mass. The motet is given a sonorous performance, also secure and well-paced. The booklet has separate essays in English, German and French, none of which tells us much about the politics of the motet. Its structure and three-voice texture is medieval, its mellifluous harmonies in thirds and sixths look forward. After 7 minutes of serious polyphony, the names of the two sponsors (Emperor and Pope) close the piece in startling homophony. What corporation today will have such a plug in 500 years time? Robert Oliver

Canzoni villanesche alla Napolitana

Ensemble Daedalus 60' 31"

Accent ACC 94107 D

16 items by Cambio, Capirola, Cimello, Donato, Fontana, Lassus, Maio, Meo Fiorentino, Nola

The documentation impresses even before hearing a note, with an excellent trilingual introduction, list of sources, texts and English (but not French or German) translations, a table showing who performs in which piece, and a page on the Beaune Festival and France Telecom (which must sponsor half the French CDs we receive). On listening to it, I was surprised, since I am used to this repertoire performed primarily vocally and in a far more vigorous way. This is utterly unlike the Lassus CD reviewed in our last issue and the villanelle come over here rather more laid-back and relaxed. I'm not sure if that is what the music itself demands, but the Ensemble Dedalus makes a good case for it. CB

Codex Specialnik music from a Prague manuscript

The Hilliard Ensemble

ECM New Series 1504 447 807-2 77'15"

anon Missa Petite camusette & motets; Agricola O virens virginum; Gontrásek Bud' huohu chvála cest, Josquin Ave Maria, Petrus de Grudienz (4 motets), Plummer Tota pulchra es, Johannes Touront Chorus iste & anon motets.

After last month's potboiler we now have a genuine new release from the Hilliard, presented conspicuously without lavish packaging with a cover as simple as a classic title-page. It comprises 25 items from a large MS that was mostly copies towards the end of the 15th century but which may well have remained in use until the 17th. Some of the music is much older, in style if not in composition, and this disc begins with a Christmas motet whose four texts (that of the quadruplum appropriately beginning 'Exordium quadruplum') neatly complement each other. The triplum text of the next piece is again appropriate: 'Trias sunt munera'. There is one overlap with the Petrus de Grudienz pieces on the *Music at Charels University* disc I briefly mentioned in February; there *Pneuma eucharistiarum* is sung with instruments almost perkily, making the Hilliard sound a little too beautiful. A greater variety of vocal styles might have characterised the strands in the MS more clearly. But this is a valuable CD, opening up new repertoire and presenting it enticingly to the listener. CB

Music for Joan the Mad (Spain, 1479-1555)

La Nef 66' 06"

Dorian DIS 80128

Songs of exile; At Toledo, seal of the Catholic Kings; Reconquest; Love and Death; The New World Music largely anonymous; composers represented: Juan del Encina, Josquin, Cornish, Agricola, Vásquez

Joan was the wife of Philip the Handsome; her grief at his death was intense, perhaps excessive. Her son Charles V treated her as mad and shut her away for the rest of her life. She was devoted to music, and this CD is based on a stage show built round her melancholic later years. It is imaginative and brilliantly performed. Most of the music

is monophonic, treated freely. I found its style implausible, and my hunch was confirmed by the unsatisfactory way the pieces that survive in complete form were treated. Despite the use of 'early' sounds and being done in the best possible taste, I wonder whether this is essentially any more (or less, as documentation of the ideas of the 1990s) historically valid than the soundtrack of a Hollywood costume-drama. CB

Gesellige Zeit German songs, madrigals and instrumental music of the 16th and 17th centuries

Basler Madrigalisten, Ensemble Galliarda Basel, dir Fritz Náf 51' 52"

musicaphon BM 56 803

Works by Senfl, Franck, Hassler, Lechner, von

Bruck, Zirler, Hausmann, Isaac, Hofhaimer,

Lichtlein, Demantius, Eccard and anon

This 1987 recording has recently become available here. The music conjures up images of peasants and travelling apprentices (the latter being the *Gesellen* of the title) slugging beer and generally making merry with song and dance. Not that the performances are allowed to be anything more than light and bright – there's none of the ooh-aar-ing of Gardiner's *King Arthur* or the rustic playing included in some of Christie's *Charpentier* discs. A marked tendency for some vocal lines to bulge is occasionally off-putting, but this is a largely enjoyable compilation. Neither texts nor translations are provided. BC

Tugend und Untugend (Virtue and Vice): German Secular Songs and Instrumental Music from the Time of Luther

Convivium Musicum, Ensemble Villanella, Sven Berger

Naxos 8.553352 70' 09"

38 items by Music by Amerbach, Bruck, Finck, Hofhaimer, Isaac, Kleber, Kotter, Küffer, Meyer, Obrecht, Rhau, Senfl.

38 tracks on a 70-minute CD might suggest a restless pot-pourri, but the straightforward and confident performances create a feeling of greater substance. The spaced and chunky style of the *alta* suited the more rhythmically complex style of the Netherlandish pieces. In others, certain rhythmical naïvetés produce jabbed syncopations and stilted chord placements. Whilst a key element of this music is the way it is built around the characteristics of the instruments, this needs no exaggeration: the music should dominate, leaving them to add natural fibre. When this style is transferred to the recorder playing and singing in the *musica bassa*, there is a danger of stereotyping. However, in some of the ballad-like treatments, such as the unison duet for two sopranos *En maidlein* by Senfl, the effect was wonderfully mysterious. The use of the clavichord was a nice gesture, with subtle touches of vibrato and lovely articulation of passage-work. Stephen Cassidy

EARLY BAROQUE

Kapsberger Arie, villanelle, motoetti e opere per liuto Guillemette Laurens mS, Luca Pianca archlute, theorbo, Enrico Onofri vln Teldes Das Alte Werk 4509-96302-2 57' 16"

A veritable stampede to record the lute world's looniest solo music has resulted in multiple recordings of Kapsberger's lute and theorbo pieces, yet his vocal music remains largely unknown. That is a pity, for many of the works recorded here bear comparison with the best of Caccini and d'India, with just the occasional harmonic peculiarity to remind us that this is Kapsberger. Guillemette Laurens's virtuosic and impassioned singing is splendid and Luca Pianca is a sensitive accompanist. His well-chosen solos are neatly played, but I could detect little difference between the archlute and the theorbo, the former being heavily single-strung, resulting in a quite unlute-like tone. A word too for Enrico Onofri's very stylish playing; I wasn't entirely convinced by the lira-style continuo realisation, but I blame this on the violin, not the player. A most interesting collection, and a repertory worthy of further attention. Lynda Sayce

Monteverdi Vespers (1610) The Scholars Baroque Ensemble 81' 22" (2 discs) Naxos 8.550662-3

The differentiating feature of this version of a much-recorded work is the one-to-a-part singing, with no spurious instrumental doubling. The result is by no means weak, with a particularly powerful *Sicut erat* ending the *Magnificat*. But vocal blend and maintenance of line could have benefitted from more attention. Sometimes the effect was more of single voices taken from a large choir than a small group responding to a new sound. The madrigalian aspect could have been exploited with use of 'chamber' rather than the more tiring 'church' voices throughout. The tempi are well chosen and the music never loses its way: the temptation to knock a couple of minutes off the timing to get a one-disc version selling for under a fiver is resisted. The continuo is neat and discreet, forming an excellent support for the wonderfully-articulate (if a little English) tenors and the rather divergent sopranos – in *Pulchra es*, one seems to have her mind primarily on the 'sweet', the other on the 'comely'. The ritornelli of *Ave maris stella* sport some rococo-like divisions and I felt that the whole hymn, for me a still moment in the *Vespers*, was rather over-performed. Musically, I can recommend this, but there are disturbing technical faults: truncated echoes and constant changes of balance and performer/microphone positions. In the *Audi coelum* echo (land, heaven, sea, Maria) there is the distinct sound of an off-stage shipwright. But the apparent movement of the singers is a reminder that we are by no means sure that the 1610 *Vespers* is a unified composition. Stephen Cassidy

Purcell Hail bright Cecilia, My beloved spake, O sing unto the Lord Gabrieli Consort & Players, Paul McCreesh 70' 20" Archiv 445 882-2

This is my Purcell record of the year so far. It has so much excitement and passion and,

in Charles Daniels' performance of 'Tis nature's voice, the best Purcell singing I have heard. This is despite occasional problems arising from the general feeling of commitment and excitement, and (even more occasionally) from the pitch, which at A=415 leaves the tenors with a stiff task at significant moments. They mostly surmount the difficulties, but they might have been avoided completely had the pitch been lowered by a further semitone, as in the Parrott performance (see below). Every inflection, every ornament, every dynamic is in full control, and the performance builds to a climax which makes *Soul of the World* quite overwhelming. The orchestra benefits from the new skill of bass violin playing, which gives the bass sound extra grunt, and the whole approach sweeps you along with an assured direction and nourishing sound. If that weren't enough, there are two magnificent verse anthems, *My beloved spake* written when Purcell was not yet 18 and the masterpiece *O Sing unto the Lord* from a decade or so later, both producing fine ensemble as well as solo singing. If you haven't bought this already, hurry up and do so!

Robert Oliver

Purcell Hail bright Cecilia! Taverner Consort, Choir, Players, Andrew Parrott 56'44" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45160 2 3 (rec 1985)

This has no additional items except for incorporating the organ voluntary in D minor as an appropriate introduction to David Thomas' rousing performance of *Wondrous machine*. There are 12 soloists, and they are all very good, so it is difficult to decide who should be singled out for praise. The low pitch (A=392) solves the high tenor/low alto problem, with Rogers Covey-Crump delivering 'Tis nature's voice with refined artistry and Neil Jenkins bringing suitable bravura to *The fife and all the harmony of war*, with a convincing top note, that at this pitch becomes a C. The performance is meticulously prepared and beautifully lucid, with the orchestra and choir full-toned and springy, without double basses (a bold decision in 1985, when this was recorded). Even if it needs something less cerebral and more earthy, there is still much to enjoy.

Robert Oliver

Purcell King Arthur Véronique Gens, Claron McFadden, Sandrine Piau, Susannah Waters, Mark Padmore, Iain Paton, Jonathan Best, Petteri Salomaa, François Bazola SSSSTBBB, Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 92' 05" (2 CDs) Erato 4509-98535-2

This is an extract of the notorious production by which the management of Covent Garden continued its head-in-the-sands policy of assuming that early (or indeed any) opera is only viable if updated – a topic I will return to more generally next month. At least the text wasn't translated into French as the equivalent to the way that everything (even Wagner) used to be translated into Italian a century ago. But Christie assumes that the work is primarily

French in style – an over-simplification. Purcell's music is based on a mastery of English, French and Italian styles, and performers for whom the French style is so ingrained are not necessarily the most natural interpreters.

I said 'extract', since the CDs include only the music. The booklet has a summary of the plot, which would have been better placed in sequence with the text. Much of the music is purely instrumental and the sprightly orchestral playing is impressive (though I noticed the recorder rather often). The lower soloists were more convincing than the sopranos; the daughters of the aged stream were particularly unseductive. I don't think anyone could have made much sense of 'Fairest isle' at the slow tempo adopted here (is Christie trying to send up the patriotic sentiment?) Bruce Wood's adaptation of the spurious 'St George the patron of our Isle' is a great improvement. Apart from any musical reasons, the various noises included to remind us that this is a staged work would discourage me from playing this at all often: a pity, since much of it is enjoyable.

CB

Purcell The Echoing Air Sylvia McNair, ASMF, Christopher Hogwood 63' 23" Philips 446 081-2

Z.196, 367, 397C, 406, 414, 421, 574/15, 574/17a, 583/2, 585/1, 600/3b, 628/38, 629/40 & 48, 630/17h, 730 + Staircase Ov. & versions of 600/3, 627/31, 629/6, 630/4a & 6b T678

Sylvia McNair is best heard in *The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*, where she has opportunities for emotional gasps and sighs, and for beautifully quiet singing as well as virtuosic runs. But her rhythmic sense is not perfect, and she has a tendency to turn a quaver and two semiquavers into rather uneven triplets. Her American accent tends to creep out here, too. The diphthong 'u' in the oft-repeated title phrase of the chaconne *O solitude* is the only jarring feature in a serene and tender performance. *O lead me to some peaceful gloom* is beautifully sung, if you can take the descending glissandi. The difficult task of evoking trumpets that never sound is achieved magnificently and with a touch of irony. She is radiant in triumphant fanfares, as in *Hark the echoing air*, but misses the humour at 'Cupids clap their wings' and sounds embarrassed at the repeated 'clap's. The close recording flatters the voice but makes her sound like a recitalist with a backing group: the band deserves a more equal role. It blossoms in the instrumental items, which extend the mood and release the tension created by the songs. The *Staircase Overture* is spoilt by erratic rhythm created by the over-enthusiastic editing of rests, but otherwise the playing is splendid, particularly the imaginative continuo from Laurence Dreyfus and Paul O'Dette.

Selene Mills

Purcell Harmonia Sacra Gabrieli Consort and Players, McCreesh 70' 01" Archiv 445 829-2

Lord what is man (Z.192), O Solitude (Z.406), In the black dismal dungeon (Z.190), Lord I can suffer (Z.136), In guilty night (Z.134), Plung'd into the confines (Z.142), Awake ye dead (Z.182),

The earth trembled (Z.197), My op'ning eyes are purg'd (Z.722), With sick and famish'd eyes (Z.200), O I'm sick of life (Z.140), Close thine eyes (Z.184), Funeral Sentences (Z.27), Voluntaries in G (Z.720) and C (Z.717) and Ground in C (W. Croft? Z.D221)

'O! I'm sick of life' would have been an apt title for this CD, a collection of extremely poignantly-performed sacred songs, mostly melancholic and little-known. Their subjects range from sorrow, suffering, solitude, despair, rebuke, natural catastrophes and death (of course) to the Last Judgment. The beauty of the performances, however, should keep listeners on the right side of suicide.

Kah-Ming Ng

Purcell in the Ale House: English part songs Pro Cantione Antiqua, Mark Brown, Ian Partridge 66' 54" rec 1978-9 Teldec Das Alte Werk 4509-97993-2

20 part songs by Bennet, Browne, Coleman, Isham, Purcell & Ravenscroft; 8 lute songs by Campion, Dowland, Jones, Pilkington

The eponymous Hero contributes just over 6 minutes with four catches, which sound as if they are sung by a choir! The rest is principally from Ravenscroft's 1609 & 1611 collections of popular songs along with some lute-songs (beautifully performed, though not what you would expect from the CD's title) and even some religious pieces. Apart from these, the 'ale-house' repertoire is sung in a style which is certainly 'antiqua' these days. This reissue is bound to disappoint those who buy it on the strength of its title.

Robert Oliver

Daniel Purcell Sonatas and Cantatas Les Trésors d'Orphée 66' 15" Stradivarius STR 33360

When I started to listen to this, I assumed that I had mixed up two discs, since the sound of an unaccompanied soprano was utterly unexpected. This is a misplaced faithfulness to the source: so harmony-based a song needs a bass, and providing one is hardly difficult. In other respects, this is a welcome and convincing anthology. The soprano tessitura seems a fraction high, making the clear-voiced Laura Crescini (a versatile lady who also plays organ continuo in a recorder sonata) sound a little shrill – I wonder how much of the music was intended for a tenor. She sings five cantatas and an anthem, separated by three trios sonatas and two solo sonatas. This is an attractive presentation of a composer who has been almost completely neglected here, apart perhaps for his completion of *The Indian Queen*.

CB

Rosenmüller Church music and sonatas Zedelius S, Haffke A, Immer tpt, Kammerchor der Universität Dortmund, dir Willi Gundlach 52' 33" Thorofon CTH 2175

Laudate Pueri, Missa brevis, two string sonatas

The four pieces on this disc are really five. The so-called Missa brevis, in fact, consists of independent settings of Kyrie and Gloria. The music is full of contrast. *Laudate pueri* is

scored for two four-part choirs, trumpet and strings, while the sonatas are a2 and a3 respectively. Cantus Cölln have recently shown that performing eight-part vocal music one to a part is entirely successful. In 1986, when the choral pieces were recorded, Gundlach opted to perform some of the extended tutti passages chorally, which required some microphone support for the strings. By 1992, the date of the instrumental recording, the strings have a much clearer tone and a bit more stylistic sense (with even an improvised cadential decoration) - still miles from *Musica Antiqua Köln*, of course, but definitely a marked improvement. This is strong music, which deserves more attention. BC

Schütz *Kleine geistliche Konzerte* Nos 1-20 of Part I (1636), SWV 282-301 Various artists 61' 00" (rec. 1963, 1965) CANTATE C 57603

Cantate plan to re-release their complete recordings of Schütz's *Kleine geistliche Konzerte*. Vol.1 features 20 pieces for various voices (solos and duets) with continuo, here viol(s), harpsichord, lute and organ. The singing is that strange combination of purity on melismata and automatic vibrato on any note longer than a crotchet. As a recording of one of the major publications of the period, this is a commendable venture, though listening to the disc from beginning to end at one sitting is hard work. BC

Scheidt *Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht* Basler Madrigalisten, dir. Fritz Näf, Ensemble Galliarda Basel, dir. Marianne Lüthi and Manfred Harras 62' 09" CANTATE 580 002

Christe der du bist Tag und Licht, Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, Sende dein Licht, Christe der du bist der helle Tag, Bleib bei uns Herr, 3 symphonies, 3 courants, paduan, galliard. R White Christe qui lux es et dies

I am not at all sure what the problem is here: The instrumental music, with its bright dance rhythms and various colours, is fine, although the recorders sound a trifle dull and the viols, particularly in the treble range, bite the notes ever so slightly. Some of the choral singing is fine; the White is very successful, though including him to give a Latin version of *Christe der du bist* is a bit odd. But the sopranos tend to wobble and the solo voices rarely match at all. At times, I was acutely aware of the seasickness syndrome to which some non-early music specialists refer when they encounter excessively bulging notes! There are neither texts nor translations. BC

Vejvanovsky *Sonatas & Serenades* Virtuosi di Praga, Oldrich Vlcek 60' 38" Discover DICD 920243

Harmonia Romana, Intrada (1683), Offertur ad duos choros, Serenada (1679 & 1680), Sonata campanarum, Sonata a4 in g, Sonata paschalis, Sonata tribus quadrantibus

While perhaps lacking some of the flair of a Biber, a colleague at Kromeriz in the 1660s (and who may have composed the *Harmonia Romana* recorded here), his music does not justify the neglect into which it has

fallen. The editions (*Musica Antiqua Bohemica* 36 & 47-9; DM40 each from Bärenreiter) are not impossibly bad, though would benefit from checking with the MSS, which are still in the place where they were written. Like the early Czech recordings, these suffer from an orchestral approach and are played on modern instruments (I suspect that single modern strings would sound worse). But this is certainly worth hearing and is in many respects stylish. I am intrigued that Milan Hruba is credited as playing 'Universal Brass': what would Hoffnung have made of that? CB

Bläsermusiken der Schütz-Zeit Bläserkreis Bochum, dir. Karl-Heinz Saretzki 52' 30" CANTATE CAN 58 006

Fux Ouvertüre in C minor, Suite I; Hammerschmidt Suite II; Scheidt Suite VII; Schein Suite VIII; Schütz *Canzona* (Die Himmel erzählen), *Symphonia, Aria* (Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt); Rosenmüller *Sonata* (1682), *Sinfonia* (1670), *Intrada* (1670)

One cannot help but be impressed by the technical skill of this ensemble. From the opening semiquaver flourish to the last note of the Rosenmüller, their playing is faultless, their tuning meticulous and their attention to detail unfailing. Whether or not it bears any resemblance to period performances is quite another matter - did cornetto and sackbut players synchronise their trills as their modern counterparts do here? I think not. Notwithstanding this slight anachronism, this disc offers an easy and satisfying introduction to 17th-century German instrumental music. BC

Delight in Disorder *The English Consort of Two Parts, 1640-1660* Memelsdorff rec., Staier hpscd, 70' 32" dhm 05472 77318 2

Music by Coprario, Henry and William Lawes, Locke, Matteis, Purcell and anon

Excellent notes by Pedro Memesdorff explain the 'extraordinary crossroads of historical traditions' which so affected English music in the years 1660-1680, during which the 'Consorts of two parts' began to flourish. The disc is a delight, indeed, consisting of the performers' own arrangements of popular tunes and styles of the day. Particularly effective are the Matteis trumpet tunes, with marches and tunes from Playford to make a set called *Battles*. The players are obviously perfectly in tune (metaphorically speaking) with each other, retaining a sense of improvisation, and great precision and style. The Locke works fuse the use of popular ayres with the more refined form of the Elizabethan consort. In these pieces, Pedro Memesdorff proves himself to be a master of the subtle shade, tone and expression. My favourite piece is the arrangement of *The Plaint* from Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, (chronological precision does not seem to be one of Memesdorff's skills) gorgeously ornamented and hauntingly beautiful - a far cry from the light-hearted tunes with which the disc opened. I suppose we should be grateful for a picture of the cover artist, but what do Pedro and Andreas look like? Angela Bell

LATE BAROQUE

Bach *Sacred cantatas* Reichelt, Töpper, Krebs, Kelch SATB, Heinrich Schütz-Chor Heilbronn, Pforzheimer Kammerorchester, Werner (rec. 1960-64, 148' 25") Erato 4509-98525-2 2 discs Cantatas 6, 31, 67, 76, 80, 87

These reissues from LP are all the better through their transfer to digital CD sound and are especially interesting because they illustrate a style of performance that is now well out of fashion, with its serious problems of style (try track 7 of disc 2 for an example) and even of technique (contrast the contributions of the trumpets throughout the set). But it has one very important quality which gives it stature: the care with which most (but not all) of the material here has been considered in the light of the seasonal Gospel significance. Luther taught that church music was only of value because it assisted in preaching. There are many more elegant modern readings in which the meaning of the text (or the lesson behind it) seems never to have occurred to the performers as worthy of consideration. Fritz Werner largely avoids the more irritating mannerisms of Helmut Rilling and Karl Richter, West German contemporaries who were more prolific in recording Bach but no more authoritative in attitude.

Stephen Daw

Bach *Psalm 51 'Tilge, Höchster, meine Sünde'* after Pergolesi; *Concerto for 4 harpsichords & strings BWV 1065* after Vivaldi American Bach Soloists, Jeffrey Thomas. 48' 47" Koch International 3-7237-2H1

Bach arranged Pergolesi's ubiquitously-admired *Stabat Mater* to words from Psalm 51 (the penitential *Miserere*) during the early 1740s; the occasion is not known. This performance is based on Bach's set of parts, more interesting than his autograph score because it involves modifications made as he prepared to perform the work. Most striking of all is a newly-added viola part which leaps into prominence in the fifth movement [track 8]; it is more discreet elsewhere. Bach also puts the final (repeated) 'Amen' into the major. The performance is good, with excellent singing from Benita Valente and Judith Malafronte. But sadly the violas spoil their moment of glory by playing too deeply into the string with a sudden inappropriate vibrato. The Concerto, with a quartet of harpsichords led by John Butt, is very well played indeed with spirit and care. Stephen Daw

Bach Secular cantatas Barbara Bonney, Ralf Popken, Christoph Prégardien, David Wilson-Johnson SATB, Orchestra and Choir of the Age of Enlightenment, Gustav Leonhardt 74' 01" Philips 442 779-2 *Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht* BWV 211, *Lasst uns sorgen* BWV 213

The programme is attractive, the orchestra comprises players of distinction, the singers

are well-chosen, blending and contrasting effectively. So why am I unimpressed?

1. The playing and even some of the singing sounds as if it lacks commitment or involvement. Has anyone (with the possibly exception of the flautist, Lisa Beznosiuk) bothered about the meanings of the text of the satirical Coffee burlesque, let alone the arias and recitative of Hercules (baroque Boy Wonder) and the competing adult gods around him?

2. The two horn players in *Hercules* cannot manage the parts Bach wrote: period instruments are no advantage if accuracy has to be sacrificed for their use.

3. Speeds seem to be too fast for the fast movements, too slow for the slow ones.

4. The element of trying to delight patrons is missing. It sounds as though some distraction has affected everyone adversely. A pity: this could have been so much better.

Stephen Daw

Bach Secular cantatas vol. 2 Dorothea Röschmann S, Les Violons du Roy, Bernard Labadie 64' 51"

Dorian DOR 90207

O holder Tag, erwünschte Zeit BWV 210, Ich bin in mir vergnügt BWV 204

The Quebec ensemble plays modern instruments, but on this evidence very stylishly under the informed and dynamic leadership of their instigator and conductor Bernard Labadie. BWV 210 is a delightful wedding cantata for soprano and strings: why nobody has paired it on CD with the more famous *Weichet nur* (BWV 202) is baffling. Dorothea Röschmann gives an outstanding performance, warmly accompanied without the thin sound of much recent baroque-string playing. Baroque strings can give important notes a very significant bloom (without regular vibrato), but so can modern ones when played as sensitively as here. BWV 204, a cantata of general contentment and satisfaction, is also given an expressive reading, although its undramatic and uncontrasting text must have posed problems for Bach. Pleasant music for a warm summer afternoon!

Stephen Daw

Bach Jagdkantate (BWV 208), Bauerkantate (212) Angela Maria Blasi, Yvonne Kenny, Kurt Equiluz, Robert Holl SATB, Arnold Schoenberg Choir, Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt 64' 10" Teldec Das Alte Werk 4509-97501-2 (rec 1988)

This recording of the Hunt and Peasant Cantatas reminds us that Harnoncourt has plenty to give in the way of spirit and style in Bach. The whole effect has just the right blend of intimacy with drama, humour with homage, virtuosity with spontaneity. Harnoncourt used to be criticised for his 'mannered' performances, though I find many other performances insufficiently mannered. Here, the excellent singing and playing is completely secure and rich in musicianship without several of those mannered ingredients. Johann Walther described Pauline Kellner, the *prima donna*

at Weissenfels, as a formidable virtuoso; Bach's music for Diana in BWV 208 was almost certainly written for her, and it suits Yvonne Kenny very well. These are outstanding recordings. Stephen Daw

Bach Harpsichord Concertos Gustav Leonhardt, Lepnhardt Consort (BWV 1052-1065); Herbert Tachezi, Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt (BWV 1052). 212' 48" 3 discs (rec. 1968) Teldec Das Alte Werk 4509-97452-2

Classic recordings, these, from the early days of baroque strings when Leonhardt and Harnoncourt were establishing styles that were not tried in England until the 1970s. This is a strange package, with just one concerto from the Austrian group. It is good to have the whole of Bach's keyboard concerto output on one set, with Anneke Uittenbosch, Alan Curtis and Eduard Müller joining Leonhardt in the multi-instrument concertos. The booklet has a delightful engraving of a cleric blessing a cup of coffee in an 18th-century German coffee house. It recalled a recent sight that in England would have been incongruous but seemed quite natural in a small town on the banks of the Ohio: a family saying grace before tucking in to a meal at a Macdonalds. CB

Bach Musicalisches Opfer BWV 1079 B, S and W Kuijken fl, vln, vdag, R Kohnen hpscd 49' 15" dhm 05472 77307 2

The Kuijken family ensemble (Kohnen still being part of the musical 'family') have recorded the great *Offering* before, but long ago. Their new account is so trustworthy and sincere that one begins almost to take for granted the extraordinary difficulties posed in the baroque flute part in that trio sonata (nearly all barely perceptible here) and the wonderful shaping with which Robert Kohnen invests those outstanding ricercars. Perhaps one takes just a little too much for granted in this account. The music was designed to be performed before one of the most powerful men in the known world, whose expertise as a critic of music and performance was very acute and who was also notorious for his impatience and stormy temper. Do the Kuijkens sound as if their careers depend on how they play? Do they sound even as if Bach is something special (a more heinous 'crime', really)? They may all be superlative musicians, but I favour Musica Antiqua of Cologne with Hazelet on the flute, mainly because they sound more as though they have worked all that out.

Stephen Daw

Pro Cembalo Pleno: J. S. Bach on the Pedal Harpsichord Douglas Amrine 63' 21" Priory PRCD 523 BWV 538, 541, 542, 552, 582 733

There is no confirmed connection between Bach and any pedal harpsichord, and recordings have been exceptional rather than regular over the last 35 years. The instrument featured was made in two sections by Colin Booth, following the

theories of Zell (Hamburg) for the pedal and surviving two-manual instruments by Meitke (Berlin) for the manuals. It sounds responsive and generally well made. The bold programme of big organ works has good moments. But much is regrettably predictable and even a little tedious. Amrine's rhythmic stance is far from exciting and his pedal technique worryingly unimaginative, especially for a player who has worked with Leonhardt and lived in Amsterdam. Since Bach placed so much emphasis on a singing style of playing domestic keyboards, he would surely have expected something very special indeed in the way of attack and articulation by the feet of a player of this rare kind of specialist instrument – and isn't it the bass-line that should dominate ones thinking in Bach's music? It doesn't sound as though it does here.

Stephen Daw

Boismortier Chamber music Harras, Lüthi rec, Gwilt vln, Jochem, Franklin gamba, Forinto hpscd 60' 27" musicaphon BM 56 812

Concertos 'Zampogna' in C, in A, sonatas in F, A, D, E minor, Première Suite op. 59, Ballet de Village op. 52 no. 4

Harras' notes refer to the fact that, although Boismortier is today probably most readily associated with the flute, this CD avoids music for the flute, though he later admits that at least two of pieces are transcriptions of flute pieces! That aside, this is not just another anonymous sampler of the composer's output. All the pieces recorded are of the first order, especially the sonata with obbligato harpsichord op. 91/1 and the concerto for two gambas. Another favourite of mine is the Sonata in E minor, featuring recorder, pardessus de viole and violin with continuo, which more than explains the nickname 'the French Telemann'. BC

Durante Psalm settings Cappella Durante, instrumental ensemble, dir. Gilbert Grosse Boymann 56' 33" Thorofon Capella CTH 2266

Beatus vir (two settings), Laudate pueri, Magnificat (two settings), Misere

Boymann is to be congratulated, not only for producing such attractive performances of this music, but for masterminding the whole project. A specialist in 18th-century Neapolitan church music, he produced the scores and the booklet notes. Unfortunately the latter are not very well served by their translator – Monteverdi has never, I'm sure, been referred to in print as a 'bandleader'. As far as the music is concerned, it is full of fine ideas, alternating homophonic choral writing accompanied by rushing strings and some real counterpoint. The tenors are perhaps the weakest section of this 18-strong choir. The band of 12 plays period instruments. At times, the music is very reminiscent of Handel and well worth exploring.

BC

Fux Ouvertures Il Fondamento, dir Dombrecht 60' 29" Vanguard Classics 99705

In Bb & g (Concentus Musico- Instrumentalis), Bb, d

When we think of Fux, most of us call to mind *Gradus ad Parnassum*, the counterpoint manual which 'updated' Palestrina's system and which was studied by most late 18th- and early 19th-century composers. If any of the tracks on this disc were played for a 'guess the composer' round on Radio 3's Christmas quiz, I suspect no-one would even mention Fux. Far removed from his perceived image as a dull church musician (which I know to be false, having used some of his Proper settings within a Haydn mass), this is as good as quality Telemann. The playing is interesting: it is a notably different sound from that of the same band on the Abel recording reviewed below. In the absence of information about instruments, it is difficult to say why this should be. But the results are most enlightening and a challenge to those who have written off vast areas of repertoire without ever trying the music for themselves. BC

Handel Saul Dietrich Fischer-Diskau *Saul*, Anthony Rolfe Johnson *Jonathan*, Paul Esswood *David*, Julia Varady *Merab*, Elizabeth Gale *Michal*, Helmut Wildhaber *Witch, Amalakite, High Priest*, Matthias Hölle *Samuel Wiener Staatsoperchor*, Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt. 135' 47" 2 discs (rec 1986) Teldec *Das Alte Werk* 4509-97504-2

If I were famous enough to be summoned to make my desert-island selection I would certainly want to include *Saul* if I could find a satisfactory recording. There is much to commend this. But it takes some time to get under way and does not ultimately come up to my concept of the work. Nevertheless, there is much to enjoy and Fischer-Diskau makes an impressive *Saul*. His powerful voice is under control, but some of the higher voices are less focussed; luckily, much of the action is in the hands of the choir and orchestra. If you don't know the work, this reissue is a good way to get to know it, despite a few cuts. CB

Handel Great arias Ann Murray Sop, OAE, Charles Mackerras 75' 00" Forlane UCD 16738

Giulio Cesare: *Va tacito, Se infiorito, Aure deh per pietà*; Serse: *Ombra mai fu, Se bramate d'amar, Crude furie degli orridi abissi*; Alcina: *Verdi prati, Mi lusinga, Sat nell'Ircana*; Ariodante: *Scherza infida, Doppo notte*

Ann Murray is hailed as Britain's leading interpreter of Handel's trouser roles; and so she should be, at least for those who are more comfortable with a mezzo than the likes of Jochen Kowalski and Derek Lee Ragin for these high-testosterone castrato roles. Diction and coloratura are faultless, though speech-rhythms are virtually absent in the over-sung recitatives. The OAE comes across as being mismatched with Ms Murray's ample voice, though there is some superb horn playing. Kah-Ming Ng

Handel The Complete Oboe Concertos & Sonatas Paul Goodwin, St James's Baroque Players, Ivor Bolton 56' 13" (rec 1985) Meridian CDE 84303

HWV 287, 301, 302a, 314, 357, 363a, 366

This includes opus 3 no 3, the three 'oboe concertos' (the third in the version whose earliest source was an edition of 1863 – though apparently an earlier MS has now been found), op. 1/8, the alternative version of op. 1/5 and the B flat sonata not in opus 1; the mislabelled op. 1/6 is excluded. It seemed a bit doctrinaire to have a bassoon in all the sonatas and I tired of the sound, despite Frances Eustace's musical playing. Paul Goodwin's playing is captivating as ever. The recording is an attractive spin-off from an early Lufthansa Festival and is well worth its reissue. CB

D Scarlatti Sonatas for harpsichord, vol. 3

Rowland 151' 12"

Kingdom KLCD 5005-6 (2CDs)

K. 62, 108, 118, 123, 156-7, 185-6, 197, 215-6, 240-1, 268-9, 277-8, 302-3, 304-5, 364-5, 426-7, 468-9, 522-3, 550-1,
vol. 4 155' 23"

Kingdom KLCD 5007-8 (2CDs)

K. 82, 165-6, 211-2, 217-8, 228-9, 234-5, 244-5, 270-1, 294-5, 314-5, 362-3, 422-3, 456-7, 495-6, 499-500, 511-12, 534-5, 540-1

In volumes three and four, Gilbert Rowland plays some 66 Scarlatti sonatas and presumably one hears as much again if one purchases the first two issues. The sonatas are well played and he must have put an enormous amount of work into them, probably over years. Perhaps a recording like this is made for reference, as nine hours of Scarlatti, non stop, makes one aware of his love of repeated left-hand chords, surprising modulations, syncopation and open 5ths in the bass, as the booklet says. However, the success of this endeavour is rather diminished by the use of a very dull harpsichord, which does not have the fullness of tone needed for the big percussive pieces. There are some strident upper notes, but they are not consistent enough to form a 4' register on every note. Some sonatas are a bit boring. On the other hand K294 is very beautiful and K457 is exciting. A less enthusiastic lover of Spanish music might prefer a better harpsichord and just those sonatas for which the performer feels really deeply. Michael Thomas

Telemann Triple Concertos Collegium Musicum 90, Simon Standage 60' 28" Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0580

In Bb for 3 ob, 3 vlns & bc; A for fl, vln, vlc & str, F for 3 vlns & str (Musique de Table II), E for fl, ob d'am, vla d'am & str

Chandos's Telemann series continues with four of his most popular concertos. Only one, the flute/oboe d'amore/viola d'amore piece, overlaps with last month's issues. As usual, a lot of thought has gone into making these performances come alive – the opening of the above-mentioned piece is a case in point: From a distance it sounded as if the tutti strings were playing pizzicato – it was only on nearing the room that the slightly percussive staccato bowing became clearer. Equally, the lively contest between the oboe and string bands in the opening concerto is thrilling. Rachel Brown very occasionally overblows, but this does not

spoil another excellent *Collegium Musicum* release. In spite of what was written elsewhere about their Albinoni concertos, I remain convinced that this is currently one of our most stylish period bands. BC

Vivaldi Concerti Jaap Schröder vln & director, Wouter Möller vlc, Michel Piguet ob, Concerto Amsterdam 48' 30" (rec 1978) Teldec *Das Alte Werk* 4509-97454-2

RV130, 169, 208, 424, 461, app. 17 (Telemann)

In recent months I may have seemed rather unimpressed by Teldec's batches of re-releases. At last here is something genuinely worth the effort. Concerto Amsterdam give first rate performances of these five concerti. I was rather taken aback by Jaap Schröder's Andrew Manze-esque vibrato in the slow movement of the *Grosso Mogul* (I had previously thought him a bit of a purist). The last piece (from a Swedish source) is not strikingly Venetian, but I'd hesitate to attribute it to Telemann. Is under 50' justifiable, even at mid-price? BC

Bass Duos from the French Roccoco Hans Roelofsen, Rudolf Senn d.bass, Vaughan Schlepp hpscd 66' 54" Ottavo OTR 79448

Barrière Sonata in D, Boismortier op. 14/5 & 6, op. 40/1 & 2, *Corrette Sonata in A* op. 24, *Guignon Sonata 6 in E*, *Guillemant Sonata 2 in E*, 3 in b.

It's a bit of a pity that the sleeve notes don't explicitly tell us what instruments are played here. In one sentence, the author talks about two specially made copies of a Maggini, while in the next he tells us that the present basses were made by Jaap Bolink. Thinking it might just be bad translating, I checked the French and German, but these too are ambiguous. Whatever they're playing, Messrs Roelofsen and Senn are very powerful advocates of the rather insubstantial music on the disc. It was particularly striking that in spite of the French-ness of the recital, the music is most decidedly Italianate in style. While the melody is played at written pitch, the continuo is given at the lower octave, so there's none of the growling overlapping one might expect (thank goodness!) The notes also make a big deal about the continuo part being improvised. If this is the group's first baroque project, then we can forgive them their excitement. BC

Recorder Music of the Italian High Baroque Schneider rec, Schneider vlc, Bauer hpscd, org, Ozaki lute 61' 56" Capriccio 10 512

A Scarlatti: *Sonatas in G and F*; Giuseppe Sammartini: *Sonata in B flat*; Mancini: *Sonata in C minor*; Castrucci: *Sonata in D minor*; B Marcello: *Sonata in E minor*; Corelli: *Sonata in A minor*, *Sonata "La Follia"*

Another disc devoted to Italian baroque recorder sonatas. The notes try to justify the inclusion of rarely (if ever) performed works by less-well known composers by virtue of their place in the development of the flute/recorder families. Schneider also comments, apropos of the Mancini sonata, that the first Largo 'sounds almost like an

second [movement] recalls, in its serious counterpoint, many of Bach's works'. Indeed, the Mancini, the Marcello and the Corelli A minor sonata sound like exercises in how to write a baroque sonata and the result is merely ordinary. Schneider and his team play in an exemplary fashion, but the disc does not always come to life. After the fragmented Scarlatti pieces, the Sammartini sonata stands out with a winning adagio and a final jig that avoids the usual rum-ti-turns. The Castrucci sparkles, showing shades of Vivaldi and, played with gusto, is the most characterful and entertaining piece offered. The transcription of Corelli's Op 5 Folia variations receives crisp, stylish playing from all the players and is most enjoyable.

Angela Bell

L'Age d'Or des Castrats Aris Christofellis 58' 26" (rec 1985 & 1987)

EMI 7243 5 55259 2 5

Arias by G. Bononcini, Broschi, Duni, Leo & Porpora.

The unusual repertoire makes this reissue interesting, that it is sung by a male soprano falsettist makes it even more so, and that it is well done makes it worth buying. But it is not without problems. The quality is uneven and you have to get used to the timbre – at times edgy and not always well-controlled in bravura sections. But there is real beauty in the cantabile singing, particularly in the arias by Duni and Hasse, and the music is lovely. Christofellis ranges from the G below middle C (at A=440) to the D two and a half octaves higher (at A=415: two separate instrumental groups play at different pitches) and gives a plausible and often beautiful answer to the unanswerable question.

Robert Oliver

Baroque Opera Highlights Various singers, cond. J. E. Gardiner, Leppard, Minkowski, Scimone, 64' 35" Erato 4509-98524-2 (rec. 1978-1992) 15 items by Gluck, Handel, Leclair, Mondonville, Rameau & Vivaldi

In principle, the mixture of modern and early orchestras seems odd, but there is only one track of Scimone (with Marilyn Horne in Vivaldi's *Orlando furioso*) and two of Leppard (a Sinfonia from *Orfeo* and Janet Baker in 'Che farò'). It is a nice, not too obvious selection for those who can't commit themselves to complete opera sets, though there is nothing to say what the words are about and the selection seems random. The poor note-writer can find no way to link the items and is reduced to writing a very brief history of baroque opera instead, though there is nothing from the 17th century on the CD.

CB

CLASSICAL

K F Abel *Ouvertures and Sinfonias* Il Fondamento, Paul Dombrecht 60' 33" Vanguard Classics 99703

Ouvertures op 1, no 2, op V no 4, op VII no 3, op XIV no 5; Sinfonias op IV no 3, op XVII no 2.

Anyone familiar with the cpo Abel series, or with Abel's orchestral music in general, will

appreciate this recording. Under the inspired direction of Paul Dombrecht, this Dutch group have a definite feel for this well-selected anthology. It is quite clear where Abel's music was an inspiration for the young Mozart and, unlike the Boccherini reviewed below, I did listen to several tracks again. If you are a discerning music lover rather than a complete works fanatic, this is a disc which will delight. BC

Boccherini *String Quartets op. 39 & op. 41* The Revolutionary Drawing Room 65' 16" cpo 999 205-2

The three quartets on this disc receive extremely stylish playing from a quartet who will give the Salomons a run for their money. Despite the increased coverage brought on by the 250th anniversary of the composer's birth in 1993, I am still not carried away by Boccherini's output, even though his themes are attractive and he has sound formal vision. Perhaps I do him an injustice by treating the quartets as background music, but then nothing on the disc made me sit up and take notice.

BC

of the overture the listener is drawn into a dangerous, tension-filled arena where the only possible outcome is the shattering climax of the Supper Scene, here done with a quite overwhelming force. As so often with Gardiner, it is the totality of the concept that is so impressive, an integrality which makes consideration of individual performances an invidious prospect. I can't, however, resist mentioning Prégardien's outstandingly-sung and virile Don Ottavio; he almost makes one regret the omission of 'Il mio tesoro' from the main action. But it is still there, beautifully sung in an appendix at the end of the third disc, for in keeping with most conductors Gardiner has chosen a conflation of the Prague and Vienna versions. The only query I would raise is the unusual inclusion of the Zerlina/Leporello duet 'Per queste tue manine', which is not necessary dramatically and which lowers the voltage. Whilst on niggles, I remain perplexed as to how a conductor who prepares his performances so meticulously continues to allow his singers to adopt such an arbitrary attitude to cadential appoggiaturas and ornamentation at fermatas. But enough churlishness; this set is a magnificent achievement, and above all it is Gardiner's achievement. *Don Giovanni* has been mother's milk to me for more years than I care to remember, but time and time again I found that the superlatively-played orchestral score yielded new discoveries. In keeping with previous issues in the series, the outstandingly vivid recording was made live, this time before a well-behaved audience at the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, the minimal extraneous noise legitimately stemming from stage action. A set to join the pantheon of great versions of the opera – and that means those from Glyndebourne (the 1936 Busch recording) and Drottningholm.

Brian Robins

Haydn *Stabat mater* Vernerová, Smídová, Coppola, Sulzenko SATB, Virtuosi di Praga, Prague Chamber Choir, Pancík 67' 32" Discover International DICD 920232

This recording, on modern instruments, invites comparison with the Harnoncourt version reviewed in May. The slower tempi of *largo* movements is largely responsible for the extra 9 minutes this version takes. The bass Jiri Sulzenko produces a well-rounded tone, but is much more tame than Alastair Miles in Harnoncourt's versions. His chorus, too, is altogether more exciting. This new version strangely provides no text or even movement titles. The Teldec version (4509-90585-2) is to be preferred.

Ian Graham-Jones

Haydn Symphonies 94-96 Orchestra of the 18th Century, Frans Brüggen 66' 43" Philips 438 152-2

These are 'grand symphonies' based on simple tunes. Brüggen, employing forces almost as large as Haydn's London ones, handles the quirky bits of Haydn's score with restraint. Wooden sticks on tightly-strung leather-skinned timpani still manage to surprise, and the wind playing is a joy to listen to.

Kah-Ming Ng

Mozart Don Giovanni Rodney Gilfrey Don Giovanni, Andrea Zilvestrelli Commendatore, Luba Orgonasova Donna Anna, Christoph Prégardien Don Ottavio, Charlotte Margiono Donna Elvira, Ildebrando d'Arcangelo Leporello, Julian Clarkson Masetto, Eirian James Zerlina; Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Orchestra, John Eliot Gardiner 178' 07" Archiv 445 870-2 (3 discs)

With this blazingly dramatic *Don Giovanni* John Eliot Gardiner's cycle of the mature Mozart operas reaches the penultimate point, leaving only the recently-recorded *Die Zauberflöte* to come. From the first bars

Vanhal Violin Concerto in B; Myslivecek Violin concerto in C; Dvorak Romance in f op. 11, Mazurek op. 49 Ivan Zenety vln, Oldrich Vlcek, Virtuosi di Praga 52' 46"

No period instruments here, but it is interesting nevertheless, to hear two little-known concertos from Mozart's time. The Vanhal is accompanied by strings only, while the Myslivecek adds oboes and horns (the latter with that peculiarly Eastern European tone). Zenaty is a very fine player with clean bow strokes and a direct tone. Although I thoroughly enjoyed these, the musicians seemed happier in the Dvorak, playing which, frankly, the Czechs really are in a league of their own.

BC

Auld Scottish Songs: Scots Songs collected by Robert Burns, arranged by Haydn, Beethoven, Weber, Hummel & Kozeluch, Fiddle Music by Niel Gow Scottish Early Music Concert 59' 51" (rec 1987)

Scottish music was virtually the first national music to have been taken seriously and there is no other poet who bridges the gap between art and folk and between

gap between art and folk and between words and music in the way Burns did. Early Scottish material is not widely distributed so it is good to have this collection reissued, even though the quality is a little variable. There is delightful singing from Lorna Anderson in particular and the songs set me browsing in the notes of the 1962 reprint of the *Scots Musical Museum* (whose 1760 pages were good value at a pound back in 1974). CB

Sonatas for viola and fortepiano Anna Barbara Duetschler, Ursula Duetschler
Claves CD 50-9502 72' 01"
Sonatas by C Stamitz, Hummel, Dittersdorf, Vanhal

Three of the four sonatas here follow the *Allegro – Andante/Adagio – Rondo* pattern. Only the Dittersdorf introduces the variety of a five-movement structure with minuets framing the central Adagio and a set of variations to close. Only the Stamitz is not in E flat major. Anna Barbara Duetschler's booklet notes suggest that this music works well if we resist the temptation to compare it to Mozart or Beethoven. I strongly agree. There are plenty of singable tunes and, if they perhaps lack the profundity provided by those demi-gods, they have a simplicity and charm of their own. The viola's dark colours help to balance the keyboard instrument. It seems that both players had a great time making this recording. I recommend it (as the ultimate in corrective therapy) to anyone who has ever told a viola joke! BC

VARIOUS

RICERCAR *Keyboard music in Germany before Bach* Gavin Black on a Keith Hill harpsichord of 1978 (A=412 Hz) 63' 51"
PGM Recordings PGM 101
Froberger Toccata VI, Ricercars IV and VI, Suites I and VI (all 1656), Böhm Praeludium in G minor, Kuhnau *The Death and Burial of Jacob*

German keyboard music of the 17th century is such a big repertoire that only a tiny fraction can be sampled on this disc. Gavin Black approaches his task seriously and accurately. The Froberger suites are played simply, without flourish, but are very enjoyable. The Toccata and the Ricercars work less well on a harpsichord and are more suitable for the organ. The playing of the Toccata could be more free and improvisatory. The Böhm Praeludium is very important, as it suggests several styles of writing used by Bach. *The Death and Burial of Jacob* by Kuhnau makes a fulfilling ending. The harpsichord is good in the lower register but there are certain dry notes in the top octave and one misses the complexity of sound that one gets from a genuine historical instrument. I was reminded that in his anthology of music by Froberger and others (Brussels 15418: there is a facsimile & a Stainer & Bell edition), John Blow placed the earlier Ricercars, needing the organ and perhaps mean-tone tuning, at the opposite end to the domestic music. Michael Thomas

The Royal Harpsichord of George III Martin Souter (Tschudi harpsichord of 1740 at Kew Palace) 63' 48"
Isis CD010

Arne Sonatas 1 & 2, J. C. Bach Sonata op. 5/2, Chilcot Suite in e, Handel Suite in d HWV 437, Mozart Minuets K 2, 4, 5

The first bar of the Handel suite shows that Souter is a good musician, as the music flows in an improvisatory way from first beat to first beat; he is also good at following the contrapuntal lines. The Scarlattian repeated chords in the Chilcot and small patterns of semiquavers are well sculptured. The J. C. Bach Sonata has long lines with rhythms of symphonic scale below them. The Arne sonata is full of ornaments, which Souter makes good use of, falling from one accent or leading to the next, even if it makes the first movement a bit slow. It makes one realise the number of hurdles to be cleared to make an enjoyable recording. 'Enjoyable' and 'intelligible' are surely the ultimate commendatory adjectives: this deserves both. Michael Thomas

Renaissance and Baroque Organ Music Herbert Tachezi 199' 08" (3 CDs) (rec 1968, 1980, 1981)

Teldec *Das Alte Werk* 9031-77606-2

43 items by Cabezón, Erbach, J. C. F. Fischer, Fresco-baldi, Froberger, G. Gabrieli, Hofhaimer, Kerll, Kotter, J. Krieger, Merula, L. de Milan, Muffat, Murschhauser, Pachelbel, Pellegrini, Praetorius, M. Rossi, Santa Maria, Speth, Valderràbano.

Tachezi is probably better known as the keyboard player on countless recordings by Concentus Musicus than as soloist. Here he plays a vast anthology of 16th- and 17th-century music on five very varied Austrian instruments dating from 1561 to 1752. There is thus a particular interest in the performances of music associated with the Empire. But the whole is a fine anthology of south European music, brilliantly played, if a bit shrill for continued listening. CB

The Origins of Russian Piano Music Alexander Maykapar
vol. 1 74' 38"

Olympia OCD 544

Bortnyansky Sonata in C, Larghetto in F, Sonata in F, Sonata in Bb; From 'Collection of the Best Russian Songs' *To live in happiness, My love for you, Though destiny separates us, Where shall I hide my sorrows?* (with Vera Zhuravliova S); anon 19th century *Contredanse* in D, *Allemande* in D, *Waltz* in G, *Contredanse* in G, *Minuet* in G, *Polonaise* in C; from 'Danilova's Copy Book' *I am blamed*; from 'Album from the Prince Jusupov Collection' *Rondo* in A; Karaulov *Russian song with variations*
vol 2 72' 34"

Prac *Mournful March*; Palschau *Oh How bored I am*; Hässler *Character piece*; Khandoshkin *Russian song with variations*; Saltykov *Triumphal march*, *Siciliano* in D minor, *Rondo* in F minor, Yengalychev *Russian song with variations*; Aliabiev *Mazurka* in D, *Farewell to the Nightingale*; Dolgoruky *Polonaise* in C minor; Griboyedov *Waltzes* in Ab and E minor; from the 'Album of Prince Ilya

Meshchersky' *Contredanse* in C minor, *Quadrille* in G, *Waltz* in G, *Mazurka* in G; Zhilin *Polonaise* in G, *March* in Eb

These two discs will undoubtedly fill in large gaps in our knowledge of Russian music, with a whole new repertoire of dances and variation sets to interest keyboard players. There is no information about the instruments used in the recordings (made in Moscow in 1993), though, to my unspecialised ears at least, the square piano is markedly more successful. The four strophic songs in the first disc are ably sung by Vera Zhuravliova, who does well to keep her voice in harness in what can hardly be called taxing music! BC

GLOSSARY

We were amused to hear from Robert King that he had tried to send a sentence from the textual notes to the King's Music edition of Purcell's *3 Parts on a Ground* (we try to discourage the modern title *Fantasia*) to *Private Eye's Pseud's Corner* and that it was rejected as being incomprehensible. Referring to the place where the MS omits a bar in all parts, I wrote (perhaps with tongue in cheek):-

The similarity of the openings of bars 20 and 21 makes a haplographical scribal conflation explicable.

Haplography (Greek for *writing once*) is the normal word used to describe the effect when a scribe is confronted with two similar sequences of signs and jumps from the first to the second (i.e. conflates the passage); its opposite is **dittography**, copying one sequence twice. They are useful words for describing clearly how scribes (or, for that matter, users of word-processors) have made a mistake, and recognising the type of mistake, as in this passage of Purcell, makes it easier to propose a correction.

Early Music Review

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NB These prices are too low for us to absorb any exchange expenses.

NEWS

Newsletter 90 of the Viola da Gamba Society of Great Britain contains several loving reminiscences of the pioneer viol-player Richard Nicholson by young colleagues of the English Consort. Our paths rarely crossed, so I will not offer any specific comment except to say that, apart from his performing (in what was for many years one of the two regular professional consorts in Britain) he performed an enormous service by his editorial work on the Faber editions of the composer dearest to his heart, John Jenkins. Carefully edited and beautifully published, these should keep his name before viol players for many years to come.

The Seventh Biennial Conference on Baroque Music will be held at the University of Birmingham from 4-7 July 1996. Offers for papers should be sent to Dr. John Whigham, Music Dept, The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TS.

The Swiss Clavichord Society was founded earlier this year and has four meetings planned for the next academic year. Details from P. O. Box 1418, CH-1001 Lausanne.

The winner of the Broadwood Harpsichord Competition was Robin Bigwood, who gives the winner's recital at Fenton House on 20 September. Details from Susan Alcock, 62 Messina Ave, London NW6 4LE, tel 0171 372 3206.

American Classical Soloists, based in the San Francisco/Oakland/Berkeley area, are seeking a half-time production manager/music administrator with computing and musical skills. Details from 510 339 7227, fax 510 339 6467. (We review their Pogolesi/Bach on page 18.)

We were delighted to receive a request from the British Council on behalf of an orchestra in Sarajevo for a couple of sets of Boyce's Symphonies. Why Boyce? Apart from the fact that it is marvellously positive music to refresh the spirits of those in so disturbed a situation, a recording of the set was made by the Zagreb Solists and Antonio Janigro, so the pieces must have entered the repertoire and memories of musicians in what was then Yugoslavia.

The Michael Morrow *in memoriam colloquium* was, in addition to the merits of the papers (which will be published in *Plainsong & Medieval Music* next year), an enjoyable reunion of performers, scholars and fans who were influenced by *Musica Reservata* in the 1960s and early 1970s. I was, however, slightly disappointed that, during the formal part of the proceedings, the performers who were present were marginalised and that there was little opportunity for them to participate from the width and maturity of their long experience. I'm not sure that the academic paper was the appropriate form for the occasion.

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All require organ and a player who can manage without a realisation.

String parts £1.00 each; generally the bass includes the continuo line for the whole work, though performance thus is not recommended.

* indicates cheap chorus score available.

All are new, computer-set editions

LETTERS

Dear Mr Bartlett,

I would like to thank both you and your readers, who sent in much valuable information about different versions and sources of *Lilliburlero*, published in *EMR* No 8, March 1995, in response to my previous query in No 7. As a result, I was able to contact Mr Jeremy Barlow, director of the Broadside Band, which had previously recorded an instrumental version on their album *John Playford's Popular Tunes* on the Saydisc Amon Ra label. Mr Barlow told me that he had recorded an original version with the words and music for BBC Radio 3 in 1986 and kindly agreed to send a cassette copy for my private collection. I received it last June, and greatly enjoyed listening to it.

David Lass

Dear Clifford,

I thought you might be interested to hear about a concert which we organised at our sons' primary and middle school the other day; our family's contribution to the Purcell celebrations. The musicians included a talented trumpeter, an ex-pupil of the school who goes to Chetham's [a specialist music school] in September, and eleven children from the school including our boys Laurie (10), Sam (8) and Jack (6), playing strings, recorders and even a clarinet doing duty as second trumpet! The programme was utterly unoriginal: the first vocal section from *Come ye sons of art*, the Trumpet Overture from *The Indian Queen*, 'Strike the viol' transposed for soprano, songs from Gilly with Laurie playing cello in the *Evening Hymn*, and a few harpsichord pieces. We played three concerts; a few pieces for the 5 and 6 year olds, a more extended programme for the rest of the school and finally a concert in the evening for the parents, strung together with what I hope was interesting chat about Purcell. I'd be interested to read about other similar educational projects. Our children worked hard and had a lot of fun, and I was aware that for some of them and probably most of the audience this concert was their only chance to hear or play some of Purcell's music.

Alastair and Gilly Ross

Dear Clifford,

I have been considering an onslaught on publishers of baroque music – particularly of solo and trio sonatas – to persuade them that the bass part should have figures included as a matter of course. Cellists and viol players I have consulted all agree that we can make a lot more sense of the bass line if we can see something of what is happening above. Are any readers interested in organising a campaign of letter-writing?

Elizabeth Dodd

I expect you have forgotten that once you took me to task for including figures in your gamba parts, which you then found distracting – but anything in my hand-writing is distracting! Some publishers have for a long time issued solo-and-bass copies for solo sonatas (the earliest I can think of being the Bärenreiter *Handel*), but spoilt the idea by omitting figures. The issues from Universal reviewed this month do it properly (see p. 5). Comments welcome.

I would also be interested whether players find it useful to have figures added to unfigured basses. Generally, when editing early 17th-century music I have added figures (eg in the *Priuli* on pp. 12-13). There is usually little doubt what the harmony should be, but it is not always obvious to non-specialist players, and it can usually be indicated simply. But I have avoided figures in the vast quantities of Purcell we have produced over the last year. This is partly because figuring Purcell and playing his music just from the bass can be tricky, as anyone who has attempted the trio-sonatas from the facsimiles will have realised. It is easier to play from the score, and that seems to have been the English tradition for most of the 17th century, though it was changing in the last decade or so. Purcell's use of figures in 1683 was no doubt an aspect of his imitation of 'fam'd Italian masters' (though German publications used figures extensively too). The MSS of the 1690s avoid any extensive figuring, and it seemed better to reflect that. It is interesting that editors of *Handel* have invariably scorned the figures of the published editions, though I suspect that, were there a reprint of Arnold available, some players would use it to save doing their own figuring. CB

Alison Payne has sent us a reply to Rosemary's Recipe of a successful Concurrent Concert. I suspect that in Boston performers do have more control than the average early-music group turning up in a strange place, but these points are uncomfortably too often valid.

* Performers are usually told where they are performing; to be able to choose is a luxury.

* Event organisers frequently have no idea how various venues respond acoustically to different sorts of music. (I asked someone last year for a descriptions of a chapel's acoustics and was met with bewilderment.)

* Investigating venues in person is rarely possible unless the project fee is astronomical or the venue very local (both rare as hen's teeth!).

* Performers frequently have very limited access to a venue, often only a couple of hours on the day of the concert. This makes it difficult to rework programmes, change keys, alter positions, etc. to cope with acoustical difficulties.