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Another late issue, not just by the promised month but a few extra days. Blame Purcell, Handel and the change from King's Music to The Early Music Company Ltd. (I already find myself abbreviating it to EMC, though it isn't formally called that.) I can't see another issue of *EMR* appearing in June, so for the rest of the year we are planning

Issue 131	August
Issue 132	November
Issue 133	December

The fifth issue of the year (No. 133) will be a special one preparing readers for 2010, the 400th anniversary of our best-selling publication. Next year, the normal alternate-month pattern will return.

I hope to persuade experts to write articles relating to the performance of Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers (don't wait to be asked – volunteer now. You know who you are!) I would also be interested in more personal articles from those for whom the work (or anthology) means something significant. Perhaps descriptions of weird performances, anecdotes about disasters, or disasters narrowly avoided, first encounters with the music, 'Why I hate Monteverdi's Vespers', etc. etc. Is there anyone who remembers the Morley College performance in the 1940s? My first encounter was a broadcast from the York Festival in, perhaps, 1959 conducted by Walter Goehr, followed by purchase of a L'Oiseau Lyre recording about which I now remember nothing. (Back in the late '60s, I gave it to someone who became one of *EMR*'s first subscribers.)

This will be the basis for a substantial section on our new web site, along with existing material (information on the liturgy, explanation of *chiavette*, advice for conductors of choral societies, programme notes and translations, etc). Meanwhile, we will devote time to preparing a proper on-line catalogue, with more information than the highly compressed King's Music catalogue, last revised in 1997 and updated with supplements. We'll spend time drafting short blurbs on some of the music while we're cruising round the Med in a few days time. If you serendipitously find the new website, ignore the jumbled contents: it's just our designer using some of our existing material at random in the process of finding the best layout. *CB*

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

CZECH BÄRENREITER

Tropi ordinarii missae: Kyrie eleison, Gloria in excelsis deo Editor Hana Vlhová-Wörner (*Repertorium Troporum Bohemiae Medii Aevi* Pars II) Editio Bärenreiter Praha (H 7959), 2006 272pp, £25.00

This contains 45 Kyrie tropes (not all with music) and 7 for the Gloria. They are transcribed into modern black-blob notation, though Kyrie 2 and Gloria 4 (version II) have crotchets and quavers without indication of what note-values they represent. The clue is in facsimile xii, which shows a source of Gloria 4. The only item likely to be familiar is Gloria 3, whose trope had a life of its own as *Dies est leticie* (known from *Piae cantiones* etc). On the whole, though, the tropes are not regular enough to double as separate songs. The volume contains far more than transcriptions: the music only occupies pp. 169-247. There are thorough commentaries of texts and music, detailed information on sources, and a substantial introduction. All textual material is in Czech and English (though the Latin tropes are not translated). The single colour reproduction on the cover gives some idea of the visual quality of at least one of the MSS. I found it frustrating that there was no index of items: I'd been using the book for some time before I realised that the order was alphabetical. Vol. 1 of the series is devoted to tropes for the propers, vol. 3 will have Sanctus tropes and vol. 4 tropes for the Agnus Dei.

Simon Bar Jona Madelka *Septem Psalmi Poenitentiales quinque vocibus exornati...* Editor Miloslav Klement. Editio Bärenreiter Praha (H 7999), 2007. xvi + 127pp, £19.00.

see separate article on p. 9.

Adam Michna z Otradovic *Compositiones Vol. 12. Sacra et Litaniae Pars VII, VIII, IX: Litaniae de SS nomine Jesu, Litaniae B. M. V., Te Deum* Ed. Vratislev Bělskčý, Jiří Sehnal Editio Bärenreiter Praha (H7997), 2007. xx + 139, £23.50

Michna's music is rather less obscure than Madelka's. His *Sacra et litaniae* was published in Prague in 1654. Previous volumes in the series have printed the six masses (one being *pro defuntis*); this volume completes the edition. The Litany on the Holy Name of Jesus is scored for six-part strings, SSATTB and continuo. The second Litany (the Loretine) is for SSATB and four-part strings. The Te Deum is for SATB soloists, SATB chorus ad lib, two violins, continuo and three trombones ad lib. However if the trombones are omitted, there are bars with nothing happening except for the continuo and places where they accompany a solo voice. Their role, though, is chordal, so the organ sound would suffice. Omitting Choir II and using just solo voices leaves out nothing that matters. The editor assumes that the continuo part should be doubled by violone, bass viol or bassoon, but doesn't distinguish between the different nature of the continuo parts. The first litany has a string bass part independent of the continuo, so doesn't necessarily need that sort of reinforcement, whereas the other two works have no separate part for a melodic bass instrument. It is not clear from the score itself that the Organo part, despite having its lower stave in normal-size print, is an editorial addition. I see the point of the continuo part showing the original barring, but it must be confusing if the separate part is printed thus. There is no mention in the score of performance material being available. I'm puzzled by the comment on p. xx: 'Instrumental parts, with the exception of the violin, can be performed only by soloists.' Why more than one violin per part? And I don't believe that the upper parts in the *Litaniae BVM* are for violins: they are in C1 clef and intended (according to BC) for viola players on violins or small violas but reading as if in alto clef. I won't try to comment on the music, but we will probably encounter Michna at the Beauchamp Summer School in July, so I may make some general comments after that.

GYFFARD II

The Gyffard Partbooks II Transcribed and Edited by David Mateer (*Early English Church Music* 51) Stainer & Bell for the British Academy, 2009. xv + 256pp, £70.00

Vol. 1 appeared in EECM 47, and was reviewed in *EMR* 121, to which the reader is referred for general comment. This volume has 21 items, beginning with four masses completely unknown to me: anon *De nomine Jesu*, William Whytbroke *Upon the square* and two further masses on the square by William Mundy. The square masses (on different squares') are problematic in that the squares are sometimes transposed and give total ranges to the parts that are utterly uncharacteristic of 16th-century music. The editor offers two possibilities. One is that other voices that are silent at the relevant places could swap parts. That might work with a score, but would be rather awkward from parts, especially since there was unlikely to be a score from which to organise the moves. This isn't rejected on such practical grounds, but it seems marginally more likely that the work was reduced into the Gyffard four-part format from a larger scoring. That still,

1. 'A square is a bottom part derived from a polyphonic composition of the late 14th century onwards in order to be used (usually via monophonic storage) in a later composition... Compositions using squares may place the borrowed material at any pitch, in any voice part. The square may migrate between parts, be presented literally, or appear with considerable rhythmic and melodic elaboration.'

Margaret Bent in Grove Music Online

though, doesn't seem very plausible, unless it is possible to reconstruct extra parts in tutti sections; there might have been different parts for cantores and decani, though normally the ensembles on each side have the same vocal configuration. The commentary (printed before each piece) quotes the source melodies. There follow four Magnificats (Mundy, Tallis, Sheppard and Henry? Stoning) and 13 shorter pieces by Philip Alcock, Christopher Hoskins, Thomas Knicht, Robert Johnson, Sheppard, Tallis, van Wilder, Thomas Wright and anon.

I turned first to the two settings of *Sancte Deus* (van Wilder and Tallis), the former new to me, the latter a favourite piece. The clefs of the Tallis are C1 C1 C3 C3, making the work difficult for modern mixed choirs to perform (though with a bit of goodwill, it can just work with SATB, and is certainly worth trying). But with an overall two-octave compass, it works, as the editor suggests, transposed down a fifth for TTBB; up a tone or so, it can also fit SSAA, which is surely what the clefs imply. The Van Wilder version is in G2 G2 C2 C4 clefs; the editor suggests down a fourth for AATB. One wonders whether Tallis was responding to Van Wilder, using the same opening minor-third interval for the entry of each voice, but making the entries more compact and stretching the fourth entry to a fifth. Both composers also use simple chords for *Noli*. It would be interesting to sing them in succession. But how would singers cope with the EECM notation? I am still not convinced that it has got the balance between modern and original notation right. We have had a period when the pre-1950s practice of expecting different editions for scholars and performers has been replaced by a compromise that satisfies both. It seems a pity to go back to needing separate editions again. Far better would be slightly less extreme scores (with bar lines representing the tactus and an abandonment of arithmetically-spaced notes) accompanied by a more pedantic transcription, preserving original clefs, ligatures etc, as parts. The latter would offer singers experienced in early notation a chance to enter the original performing situation and give scholars the information they need (part of that 'information' being how to operate in a situation where you have to manage without a score).

Despite my continued unease with the notation, this completion of the modern edition of the MS is extremely welcome, even if there are problems for singers.

PRB for VIOLS

John Hingston *Fantasia-Suites for three & four viols and organ* reconstructed from the composer's organ parts by Harold Owen PRB Productions (VC074), 2009. Score 38pp + 5 parts, $35.00

John Jenkins *Three-part Airs for two trebles, bass and continuo Vol. IV: Airs in C minor and F major* edited by Andrew Ashbee PRB Productions (VC071), 2008. score (24pp) + 5 parts. $28.00

Hingston's fantasia-suites have previously been published, mostly by PRB, but there remain some works for which only the organ parts survive: these are restored here to something approaching what the composer wrote. The six suites (Fantasia-Almand) pairs for treble and two basses need very little invention from the editor, since for most of the time the music is contrapuntal and clearly notated in the organ part: the opening Fantazia, for instance, needs only a few added notes and changes of octave, and fortunately the Almands are also very fully notated. Knowing players' ability not to read introductions, the function of small-print sections should be footnoted: they are places which the editor reckons might be intended as organ solos, though viol parts are printed for use if preferred. However, in 6B, it indicates a phrase where a viol part is entirely conjectural. Appendix I (no. 10) is for STB viols and has a third movement (an Ayre) with a section comprising only the bass. Presumably the organ was intended to improvise, so the string parts are in small print. The editor writes contrapuntal parts, but perhaps the absence of notation implies a more casual fill-in. The edition ends with Fantazia/Alman No. 4 for two trebles, two basses and organ; only in Alman is much missing from the organ texture. There have been reconstructions of music that requires considerable composition; users may be assured that the touching-up here is minimal (though I don't want to underestimate the editor's skill). Hingston himself, however, isn't to everyone's taste, but it's certainly worth making these pieces playable.

There are no such problems (of reconstruction or of the excellence of the music) with Jenkins, nor are there many editorial difficulties, thanks to an accurate manuscript in the composer's hand. There's no reason to favour either violins or viols for the treble parts, though viol is the preferred choice for the bass. No continuo is specified in the autograph, but parts survive for theorbo; the edition offers two figured parts, one a single stave, the other with a realisation for keyboard. The two suites comprise VdGS 60-67 and 71-74. Attractive, deceptively simple music!

I'll also note briefly here the latest batch from the Viola da Gamba Society. No. 222 contains nine further airs for the same combination as the set mentioned above. I prefer the layout of the score here: the music setter manages to make each piece fit compactly with no page turns without loss of legibility. The pieces are VdGS 85-90, 92, 102-3. Perhaps by Jenkins are two (in d and D) of a set of Divisions on a ground for treble, bass & continuo, the first in a set concluding an anthology of music by Bertali, Cazzati and other (probably continental) unidentified composers (Bodleian Mus Sch C. 80, no. 16). The two treble parts are more or less equal, though the bass has more demisemiquavers. Fun if you have the technique! The bar numbers look very intrusive to me: it would be more use to the players to number the statements of the ground (No. 223). More virtuoso music lies in *5 Duets for Division Viols VdGS 24-28* by Christopher Simpson (No. 220). These are from Bodleian Mus Sch. c. 77, which also contains three duets by Jenkins. These are fine examples, with the two parts thoroughly interwoven.

Ross Duffin has reconstructed a five part Fantasia by Coprario from three extant parts surviving in an extraordinary MS known as the Blossom Partbooks in

Case Western Reserve University , Cleveland. It alternates texted and untexted pieces paired by mode, and seems to have been designed for performance straight through. The editor isn't absolutely specific, but it seems that it is not ascribed in the source, though is paired with the genuine Coprario *Per far un leggiandro vendetta*. The extant parts for Tr T B, to which the editor adds a treble and a tenor. The editor is an experienced reconstructor and these work well, though Duffin does offer a couple of good technical reasons why the attribution to Coprario may be questioned (No. 224).

Finally, a piece of interest to singers as well as players: Richard Nicolson's verse-anthem *When Jesus sat at meat* (No. 221). Delight at having the piece available so cheaply (especially if players and singers can share parts) is dashed by it being transposed up a fourth, making it suitable for SSAABar and turning a standard SSATB-cleffed piece into the apparent pitch at which it would have been notated in chiavetti. The tessitura is wrong for rather a solemn text. In fact, if you start allocating voices from the bottom upwards, the pitch needs to be at least a minor third below this edition (a tone above the original) to work for SSATB.

CORNETTO VERLAG

Cornetto Verlag, Stuttgart, has an ambitious series of facsimiles and editions. Their publisher, Wolfgang Schäfer, has long been a subscriber to *EMR* and occasionally sends us some samples, of which the four latest are mentioned here.

First is a selection from the best-known of the early anthologies of church solo motets, Simonetti's *Ghirlanda Sacra* (Venice 1625). There's a facsimile in Garland's Italian Motet series (though it omits the separate voice part) and complete by Cornetto. The edition by Ulrike Hofbauer (CP 830)modernises less than I do with such repertoire; the only overlap is Monteverdi's *O quam pulchra es*, which I edited at a time when it seemed helpful to add figures to the bass. The bar lines seems very prominent when ruled through both staves, and the big gap between staves means that the Monteverdi unnecessarily spreads into a third page in a way that prevents the organist from seeing where the harmony is going. The other composers are Cavalli (*Cantate Domino*), Milanuzi, Vido Rovetto and Usper.

Philippo Baroni (c.1660-1716+) is new to me. He published a set of Vespers music for the whole year in double choir (*Psalmodia vespertina totius anni, duplici choro perrbrevitaconcinenda*) in Bologna in 1710. It's for two equal SATB choirs with organ, and (apart from the Amen), homophonic with textural variety coming only from the relationship between the choirs. We are not told if the publication included a variety of Magnificats: if not, I reckon the singers would get bored (or would embellish more and more extravagantly). It is interesting that someone has added *Allegro* at the beginning of a declamatory setting of et exultavit. The music could come to life if the words are given vitality. (CP818)

I enjoyed playing two keyboard Partitas by **Gottlieb Muffat** (CP751). One in A minor is explicitly entitled *Partie sur le Clavessin*; it includes a *Paysan* reminiscent of Handel.

Finally, the sonata op. 4/4 in C for violin and continuo, published in Paris c.1760 by Felice de Giardini (1716-96) (CP855: score and parta). This is bereft of any information. It's a bit too galant for my taste, and the format looks a bit amateurish without a title page (though that would add 50% to the number of pages used). The bass figuring (printed above the stave) is much too near the violin part. It seems sensible to align the top notes, but in practice that wasn't normal then and looks odd now. It's less fussy if that is a significant issue to place the figures below. And to be really pedantic, the last note of bar 7 should be a demisemiquaver. I don't want to seem petty. Cornetto produces some marvellous facsimiles, but the modern editions do look a bit amateurish in comparison.

STEIGLEDER

Steigleder *Ricercar Tabulatura (1624)*... **edited by Ulrich Siegele** Bärenreiter (BA 8479-80), 2008. 2 vols, each £34.50.

I must confess that Johann Ulrich Steigleder (1595-1635) is an unfamiliar name to me. From 1617, he was employed by the Collegiate Church (Stiftskirche) in Stuttgart. He published this 1624 collection of keyboard music himself. It seems odd to split the edition into two volumes, since the total size is less than either of the two Bach volumes discussed below. The 12 ricercars are divided equally between the volumes. Vol. I has a short setting of *Wann mein Stündlein* which is interesting in that it seems to be exercise for a student to fill in the middle part. Vol II also has three pieces ascribed to J.U.S.'s father Adam, to which the lengthy introduction is devoted. I must confess that I lost interest in that far more quickly than in playing the three pieces, a *Toccata I° toni*, a Passamezzo with galliard, and a brief **Fuga oder Canzon**, which in itself scarcely warrants being set out in score with all seven versions transcribed for easy comparison. It does, however, show that any process of establishing a single 'correct' text for popular works is irrelevant. Even if one source can be shown to be the original, the varieties of transmission are part of its history. There are two interesting attributions apart from Steigleder: Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli – it is No. 230 in the catalogue by Richard Charteris, who includes it as genuine G.G. in his complete edition. The 1624 pieces are enjoyable to play. They were originally notated on two staves, and that is retained, though not the distribution of parts between them. The editor makes much of the innovation in the use of five staves separated by just the right space to add a note between them. It certainly makes the notation look more modern. There are no explicit pedal parts: not surprising for the Italian-influenced southern Germany, and the composer wore a stilt on his left leg, so probably wouldn't have been very agile on Northern obbligato pedal parts. The Ricercars are enjoyable to play, even if their impetus doesn't always fully sustain their length. But £69 is a lot to pay for the 59 pages of the transcription of the ricercars: fine for academic libraries, but the expansion and concomitant

high price will probably deter mere players. On the other hand, the music is hardly well enough known to justify issuing the ricercars by themselves.

BACH DUBIA

Bach Organ Works *Organ Chorales from Miscellaneous Sources* Edited by Reinmar Emans Bärenreiter (BA 5251), 2008. xv + 177pp, £20.00

Bach *Keyboard Works attributed to J.S. Bach* Edited by Ulrich Bartels & Frieder Rempp Bärenreiter (BA 5249), 2008. 156pp, £21.00

Collected Works and Thematic Catalogues are sometimes planned to exclude as many as possible of the works of dubious authenticity, presumably so that nothing can sully the reputation or individuality of the master. But decisions are made on the questionable assumption that source criticism or musical analysis is a precise science. Cataloguing sources and inter-relating them can provide many clues, as can detailed comparisons of stylistic traits. But they are not always conclusive, and the certainty of one generation can seem arrogant to another. Furthermore, with the growth of interest in reception history, the collected works of Bach should cover what has been thought to have been by Bach throughout the last quarter millennium; one may argue that he didn't write the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, but it has been 'his' best-known organ work for so long that it needs to be available with the genuine organ music, though with its current status made clear.

Not that there are pieces of that status in these volumes. But it is important that dubious pieces are available for comparison. Some might merely show that Bach is better than his contemporaries or pupils, but others might suggest that not all his youthful works were distinctly superior. The best way to use these volumes is to play them without too much concern of matters of attribution. On the whole, they are easier to play than the real thing, and it is interesting to speculate when, if they were by Bach, they might have been written. But these are two intriguing anthologies, thanks to Bach's name being rather easier on the pocket than the music of Steigleder.

The volumes differ in shape, since the first is taken from vol. 10 of the Organ Works while the second is a 'salon des refusés' of vol 12 of the Keyboard Works – pieces not thought worthy of inclusion but discussed in its critical commentary. The organ volume has an introduction but no commentary, whereas the keyboard one has a minimal introduction but a critical commentary. Much of the organ volume works without pedals and only a few pieces demand three staves. Six items in the index of the keyboard volume are noted 'Pedal compulsory', slightly odd terminology for 'pedal required' or 'pedal obbligato'). The organ volume explicitly modernises accidentals; the keyboard volume has no stated policy, though generally does so. But I was puzzled by the countersubject of the Fugue in E minor (BWV 945); there are 3 Cs in the bar; the first is sharpened, anyone used to the playing from facsimiles or editions without modernised accidentals will probably play the two Cs later in the bar as natural, although the edition has no specific indication so should imply sharp. There is editorial comment on bar 12, but not on 5 & 8. It is quite difficult to find the commentary, since the pieces are not in any particular order and are not numbered.

HANDEL *MESSIAH*

Handel *Messiah*... edited by Ton Koopman & Jan H. Siemons Carus (55.056), 2009. xxi + 306pp, €98.80 pb, €128.00 bound

I don't think it fair to write a detailed evaluation, since the only other edition that presents the whole of the *Messiah* complex of material and lets the user make the choice of what to perform is mine. For the English-speaking user, the presence of a German text beneath the English is a minor distraction, perhaps outweighed by the bolder and clearer music type. Fifteen years ago, I would have gone meticulously through the score, checking all the places where decisions were needed. But since I produced my edition, somehow *Messiah* has moved out of my life: I haven't even played it apart from 'I know that my redeemer liveth' at my mother's funeral. Provided that the rest of the material is equally well produced (and judging from the proofs of my new Carus edition of *Israel in Egypt*, I have no doubts on that score), these would seem to be a very desirable edition.

A few points in the introduction invite comment.
p. ix. Three weeks may seem a short time for Handel to have composed the work, but it wasn't exceptionally short for him (or, probably, many other composers).
p. x. Playing the organ part in *Saul* recently, I tried to follow the instructions for when the organ played in octaves and when chords. It's not what a continuo player expects to do, but it seemed to work. Koopman suggests that the claviorganum used for *Saul* could be played with the left hand on the organ manual and the right hand playing harpsichord, but I would have thought it more likely that Handel wanted an organ so that he could vary the continuo sound between movements.
p. xi. **Overdotting.** I was more cautious than older editions in adding this and discussed the pros and cons of individual cases. Just because a composer *can* notate a passage precisely, it doesn't mean that he *needs* to: there is pressure on him to write quickly (remember the three weeks!) but also a desire not to encumber the performer with superfluous information. I don't agree with playing the instrumental upbeats of 'Sureley...' as writ, but in general I concur with Koopman's caution.

Handel's trisyllable pronunciation *su-re-ly* and other linguistic peculiarities receive no comment, nor is anything said on other underlay problems. Jennens' contribution to the success of the work is ignored.

One feature I don't like is the use of editorial small trills: unless both types are visible, it is difficult to tell the difference.

The score is a pleasure to read. But €98.80 (around £88.00) is quite a high price compared with the OUP £40.00. The OUP printed scores are out of print and I haven't seen what the photocopied substitutes are like, but I still have some of the original prints for sale. The OUP vocal scores (£8.25) remain in print, and it would need a drastic collapse of the euro to make the Carus prices competitive: €16.50 for the full version or €13.90 without appendix.

HANDEL VOCAL SCORES

Three new opera vocal scores and one oratorio have appeared recently, all derived from Halle Händel-Ausgabe scores. The earliest is *Rodrigo* (BA 4083a; £32.00, based on HHA II:2). It is slightly misleading for the Preface to begin by calling it 'Handel's fifth opera': maybe the fifth he wrote, but only *Almira* survives of the first four written in Germany; *Vincer se stesso è la maggior vittoria* (fortunately usually given the more concise and memorable title *Rodrigo*) was written in Italy in 1707. Chrysander printed the work incomplete, and there are still a few sections that have not been discovered. It is sensible that gaps are plausibly filled, though surely each editorial addition should be footnoted? As it is, there is nothing on the page to distinguish additions. The function of the items in the appendix should also be explained. The idea occurred to me while reading the preface that perhaps we should take more seriously the option of presenting the autograph as the main text of an edition rather than what was presented at any particular performance (usually giving the premiere precedence): material, not excess of it. It is good to have it in a performable version, though, even allowing for his version being shorter, it's odd that Chrysander's full score occupies a mere 96 pages whereas this vocal score needs 255!

Amadigi di Gaula (BA 4031a; £21.00) is based on one of the earlier issues of HHA, edited by J. Merrill Knapp and published in 1971. The opera was first performed in 25 May 1715 and remained in the repertoire for another two years. The autograph doesn't survive, so there are no precise dates of composition, but there is no shortage of early copyists' MSS. The chapter on the work in *Handel's Operas 1704-1726* by Winton Dean and John Merrill Knapp ends: 'The HHA score... was published too soon to benefit from recent scholarship, though it includes four of the additional arias in an appendix.' Judging by a few spot-checks, the vocal score doesn't seem to have been updated and no placing is given for the arias in the appendix. It would, however, be confusing if the vocal score didn't match the full score. The title role was written for an alto castrato, Niccolini, so this is definitely an opera that counter-tenors should buy.

Ezio (BA 4086a; £28.00, based on HHA II:26) dates from 1731-2. with a libretto after Metastasio. There were five performances but no revivals; the music is fine, but the plot probably needed more effort than the audience was prepared to give. So there are no problems of sorting out the music for different versions, even if there were various changes during composition. The closing vaudeville must have been fun, with each voice presumably trying to outdo the other. The balance of the last verse, however, surely sounds odd with solo voices on three parts but three voices on the alto.

I suspect that you have to be a very thorough Handelian to know anything of *Oreste* (BA 4045a; £32.00) apart from the overture, a keyboard version of which was one of my favourite Handel pieces in my youth. It is a pasticcio, not as so often based on music by a variety of composers, but on his own, mostly from recent operas; so the alert members of the audience would have recognised at least some of the music. It was written in 1734 (curiously both German and English prefaces print 1834 in their first line – not that I am blameless with regard to misprints!) It is, I gather, a well-wrought work despite its anthological background, and like other works of the mid 1730s, includes ballet music for Marie Sallé's company. HHA *Supplemente zu Serie I, Band 1* was edited by the author of the HWV numbers, Berndt Baselt, and it is appropriate that he was responsible for the edition of a work involving a selection of the composer's oeuvre.

Athalia (BA 4082a, £39.00, based on HHA I, 12) comes near the beginning of Handel's English oratorios, a form somewhat different from the Italian one, following the Italian opera convention of three Acts rather than the two acts of Oratorios (was the need to profit from the bars an element in those days as now?) but differing in the extensive use of chorus and to some extant a lessening of the dependence on the da capo aria. This is a fat volume (with a price that is likely to put off choral societies – though not quite as heavy to hold as the Israel in Egypt vocal score), partly because it attempts to show four different versions, listed in parallel in the Contents. The alternatives add nearly 200 pages. I have only ever heard the first version, as performed in the Sheldonian Theatre in 1733, so am not sure whether the alternatives are worth the extra cost and weight for the generality of choral societies – though it is good that op. 4/4 with the Alleluia is printed here; Chrysander included it the 1757 *Triumph*. I'm concerned with the economics of the vocal score, since it makes performance less likely, and the work deserves it. The Novello vocal score managed to squash two double-choir choruses on a page; modern editions should perhaps use the more spacious A4 format for double-choir works.

HAYDN QUARTETS

Haydn *6 Strings Quartets Opus 76...* Edited by Simon Rowland-Jones Edition Peters (7619), 2009. £34.95 (score & parts)

Unless it goes back to cover the pre-op. 20 quartets and the *Seven Last Words*, this excellent edition is now nearly complete, with only two and a half quartets left. As a listener, I think these (and op. 77) are the quartets I know best – and not just because of the 'Emperor'. By now, I suspect that most quartet players will have experienced using the edition, and I hope they find it as convenient and accurate as it seems. It takes a little while to remember the section of the commentary to which the

small digits in the text refer, and no doubt many players will ignore them anyway. What I can't tell as a reader rather than player is how many times there seems to be something odd in the text which the notes don't explain. When op. 77 appears, I'll consult with the player for whom I have been buying the set and get his opinion (Chris: you are warned!) One very petty point: a footnote quoting Haydn should make it clear which language is the original (op. 3/ii). Since the set was published in Austria, London and Paris, it isn't impossible that Haydn wrote it in three languages.

A comment on p. vi is worth quoting (and to a greater or lesser extent it refers to editions of any music):

> There is no such thing as an Urtext. The best an editor can do is to make an informed decision using the evidence of the (often conflicting) sources, explain the *cruces*, and leave it to players to make up their own minds.

The word Urtext should, of course, have died decades ago, but it is concise and useful, provided we have no naïve concept of accuracy. And even when there is one carefully written autograph, there are still questions about what the composer meant! So rival Urtexts are also useful, and in the case of Haydn there is an alternative from Henle Verlag derived from the Collected Works. The latest I have seen is the study score of op. 71/74 (HN 9213; €20.00) parts (HN213 €40.00) are also available. This has a few footnote for significant readings, but with a fuller editorial commentary (in German and English) at the end, which seems less thorough (or, from another viewpoint, less pernickety) than the Peters ones. I suspect players will decide from the convenience of the parts.

A set of the study scores of all the quartets is available from Henle (HN 9216) for €169.00, and each volume are available separately. Their Spring 2009 leaflet also offers a Study Score of the recent Collected Works *Creation* for €14.00: I suspect a misprint!

MORE HENLE

There is a new edition of **Haydn's piano Variations in F minor** (HE 921; €5.50), as well as facsimile. I neglected to answer a letter asking if I wanted a copy of the latter, since I'd slipped it into the quartet score mentioned above, so I hope I'm not too late and request a copy now to write about in our next issue.

Their other offering is a study score (HN 9025; €13.00) and parts (HN25; €26.00) of **Beethoven's Septet op. 20** for clarinet, horn, bassoon, vln, vla, vlc & db. It derives from vol. VI, 1 of the 'new' Collected Works, published last year. It is excellent that such editions are so quickly made available for performance. A feature that struck me at once is that Beethoven's metronome marks are included, but as footnotes giving the date the composer added them – nearly 20 years after the work was written: they are to be noticed, but not accepted unquestioningly (*cf* my comments in the last issue on the variety of speeds Elgar used in his performances of the *Enigma Variations*). It was a popular work in its day: Beethoven was so scared of a pirate edition that he split the parts between different engravers so that none could reproduce the complete work. Now that Beethoven is accepted at his own valuation, we need not share his suspicion of this slighter but engaging work. Despite (or perhaps because of) the survival of the autograph, first edition and a corrigenda list, there were still problems for the editor to sort out, but not major ones. All the editorial matter in the score is also included in the violin part.

EDITION HH GRAAF & BOCCHERINI

First, a curiosity appropriate for these straightened times: a *Duo economique* by Christian Ernst Graaf (1723-1804) for two players on one violin, edited by Christopher Hogwood (HH 243; £7.95). At least if you have to pawn your fiddle, you can find a friend and earn a few coins by busking; with a bit of ingenuity, you can probably embellish it with actions that can make it look quite sexy. The parts are cleverly designed to be of equal interest, and although it will generally be performed as a joke, the music is rather better than it might have been. The edition includes a facsimile (parts on a pair of facing pages) and modern score (helpful for devising how to move arms). Both seem a bit small, and the facsimiles don't need double margins. It's a nice idea, and I suspect it to be popular at summer-school end-of-week concerts/parties. Or try it with the whole violin section of an orchestra as a way of breaking the ice!

More seriously, Keith Pascoe has edited Boccherini's Quintet in C (1779) G 310, op. 28/4 (HH 031). The quintets are most easily accessible from the Janet et Cotelle edition in 16 volumes (in parts), originals of which are fairly accessible and photocopies of which are available from – I was going to say from King's Music, but now The Early Music Company Ltd. These are not authoritative, and I'm interested to see an edition of one (only one among so many!) quintet edited from the main sources. This work also circulates in an arrangement by Lauterbach, which may still circulate among 'modern' players.

Out of curiosity I compared J&C with Pascoe for incidental details. In the opening 4 bars of Violin I, only two of the nine slurs in J&C are in Pascoe. Cello I, however, is more accurate, unless you object to the change from treble clef to be played down an octave to tenor clef. At bar 35, Pascoe has an in-tempo cadenza for both violin and cello I, adding a whole bar, while J&C has two notes with pauses implying that the cello ad libs (without the violin). These are just a couple of examples. The J&C *Grave* is barred in 2/4 rather than C, but the complex cello part is more accurate than I expected (though some verbal indications and slurs are missing). The title page bears the heading 'featuring the well-known *Rondeau* for violoncello'. It begins with some fiendish leaps, but it's not just a solo cello piece: even the viola has a solo. It's excellent that this edition has appeared: let's hope for more.

LETTER FROM BURGUNDY

Brian Robins

The usual dearth of musical activity in this part of the world during the winter, idleness enforced by the folding of *Goldberg*, and illness as fashionable here in France as I gather it has been in the UK all conspire to leave the writer of this letter in somewhat pensive mood. It was illness that was responsible for us missing the one promised red-letter day concert, a commemorative 'Nuit de Haydn' in Chalon-sur-Saône, at which Emma Kirkby was joined by locally-based fortepianist Marcia Hadjimarkos in a huge programme that included English canzonettas and Scottish folk song arrangements, in addition to two piano trios (played by the Trio Hespérides) and solo piano works. Although we did not on this occasion hear Emma, we did see her, as having agreed to accommodate her overnight we had the unique pleasure of welcoming a DBE in our night attire at getting on for 1 am. The following morning (or more accurately later the same morning) the two ladies left for Lausanne, where much of the vocal part of the Chalon concert was recorded for a future release that is eagerly awaited.

The demise of *Goldberg* just short of its eleventh birthday was a heavy personal blow, for having been involved in the planning stages of the very first issue I had a strong emotional attachment to the magazine that did not however preclude occasional harsh criticism of aspects of editorial policy. What did truly surprise me was the reaction of some in the early music world to the closure. These included a long philosophical discourse from a distinguished European director on how the luxurious production standards of *Goldberg* made him feel uncomfortable. Then there was blunt response from a leading British instrumentalist who informed me he was likely to cancel his subscription because Goldberg was too Spanish-biased, a viewpoint neatly counterbalanced by a well-known European keyboard player and ensemble director who aimed a furious diatribe in my direction complaining that so far as he was concerned *Goldberg* could rot in hell because it had largely ignored both he and his ensemble over the years (a check revealed that neither accusation was justified) and that anyway the magazine was not really a Spanish one, but totally oriented in favour of lily-livered British early-music musicians at the expense of red-blooded Europeans!

Such reactions fly in the face of what I've reluctantly come to the conclusion is a pitifully naïve belief that most people in the early music world are inherently *nice* (see above under Kirkby, E). Further confirmation that they are not, or are at least capable of behaving in ungenerous spirit, has come in the past couple of days with the arrival of a petition to save La Petite Bande, as I write under threat of having its financial support withdrawn. Having done my duty, I forwarded the petition to many on my mailing list, as requested by the sender. The response from one British orchestral director was that asking him to sign the petition in the current economic climate was like 'asking turkeys to vote for Christmas'.

One might be tempted to label such reactions as a current phenomenon, a perhaps partially understandable dog-eat-dog philosophy attributable to the fight to cling to survival in a harsh economic climate. Not so, it seems. Last June (*EMR* 125) Clifford reviewed a book devoted to the Viennese fortepianist and harpsichordist Isolde Ahlgrimm by Peter Watchorn, a one-time pupil of Ahlgrimm's. He suggested that he should probably be ashamed that Ahlgrimm's name meant nothing to him. I suspect that the reaction of many *EMR* readers would have been similar, thus highlighting the strange case of an artist who, despite being a true pioneer and the first to record all Bach's harpsichord works (for Philips in the 1950s), has been largely air-brushed out of musical history, a process seemingly started long before Ahlgrimm's death in 1995. Particularly curious in this respect is the role played by the Harnoncourts, Alice and Nikolaus, both of whom played in the historic instrument Amati Orchestra founded by Ahlgrimm and her husband Erich Fiala before the foundation of Concentus Musicus Wien. Nikolaus played as gambist or cellist in no fewer than four of the discs in the Philips Bach series. Yet, Watchorn enigmatically tells us, after this they went their 'separate ways' and neither Harnoncourt has apparently since acknowledged Ahlgrimm or mentioned her name. Both (unlike Leonhardt, who was of course also in Vienna in the 1950s) refused to be interviewed for Watchorn's book. It is one of a number of flaws in the book that his investigative responses were not aroused by this brush-off, which certainly begs a number of questions, not least the bearing it has (if any) on the veil of secrecy that has been drawn over Ahlgrimm's apparently rightful place in the story of the early music movement. Clifford's unfulfilled desire to hear Isolde Ahlgrimm, incidentally, can be rectified by going to <www.baroquecds.com/ordergb.html> where a number of her Bach recordings (including both the English and French Suites) are available either as CDs or to download. Anyone doing so will, I think, be agreeably surprised by the profoundly musical playing that was stylistically years ahead of its time.

Clifford tells me there a few lines left on the page, so there's just space to record a brief reaction to *Gramophone*'s Handel issue, which promises to reveal the composer's 'secret life', an undertaking not fulfilled. And then we have 'How Mozart saved Handel'... from what is never revealed. And surely asking Peter Sellars to write an article on Handel production was akin to asking Eliza Doolittle to write a piece on English grammar? The anniversary special issue is entitled 'Handel Mysteries'. Indeed!

A BUTCHER REPENTS
Madelka's Penitential Psalms

Hugh Keyte

Simon Bar Jona Madelka *Septem Psalmi Poenitentiales quinque vocibus exornati...* Editor Miloslav Klement. Editio Bärenreiter Praha (H 7999), 2007. xvi + 127pp, £19.00.

It isn't every day that sacred polyphony by a 16th-century Master Butcher comes one's way. He seems to have been a man of some substance. Madelka is first documented as becoming an apprentice in the butcher's guild in Plzeň (south west of Prague on the way to Regensburg) in 1575 and became a member of the guild two years later. By 1580 he was a leading member of the guild and able to afford a house and a wife. I was intrigued to review this edition of Madelka's five-part setting of the Seven Penitential Psalms (with a concluding penitential motet). What kind of music might one expect from a successful Silesian-Czech tradesman and respected amateur composer?

First impressions were mainly positive. The writing is competent, varied in texture and vocal scoring, mingling loose-limbed counterpoint and homophony in a way that often recalls the works of Lassus. Lassus-like, too, are such powerfully expressive effects as the hammered-out quaver chords on *valde velociter* that conclude the first psalm. Most impressive of all, for an amateur, is the overall organisation of these lengthy texts. Each psalm is divided into discrete sections, the basic SSATB or SATTB scoring often contrasting with two- and three-voice solo sections, some quite virtuosic; and (ignoring for the moment the chromatic passages, which alternate with more conventional diatonic writing) the tonal organisation of the cycle as a whole is a satisfying, near-palindromic sequence of impeccably ordered ecclesiastical modes: more echoes of Lassus .[1]

We know from Madelka's Latin dedicatory Address to his distinguished monastic patron that modal propriety was a matter of extreme concern to him. Affirming that he has composed the cycle 'in modal harmonies at your behest' (*modalis harmonicis invitatu tuo*), he trusts that the settings will find favour with those 'prudent men who deem impure the medley of most modern vocal works [literally, 'odes'], as being dissolute...and effeminate'. 'Medley' must refer to the promiscuous mingling of modes within a single work or movement, a sullying of their theoretical purity that was becoming ever more common as composers sought a near-madrigalian expressiveness in their church music.

On the negative side there are crudities of verbal stress and some highly unconventional leaps in the vocal lines, these latter occasioned by the frequent and often extraordinary chromatic progressions that do not always have an obvious textual motivation. But behind all this can be sensed the hand of a confident and well-taught musician with a remarkably original mind.

Upon closer perusal puzzlement sets in. Great tranches of notes – as presented in this edition – prove to be intractably ambiguous. Which are to be sharpened, and by how much? How long (crucially) do the notated accidentals apply, particularly the sharps? Realization dawns that the conventions of the time are of limited relevance here, and that Madelka's only work to survive complete is a piece of dauntingly experimental writing that presents performers with problems of interpretation that require expert editorial guidance.

The inevitable question presents itself: was Madelka a free-wheeling eccentric, or is there method in what would surely have struck the average 16th-century purchaser as musical madness? There may be a clue in the dedicatory Address. Like his clerical patron, Madelka explains, he has aligned himself with certain notable musicians of the Old Testament: Asaph, Heman, Ethan, Jeduthun and David. These, 'resisting the inebriation of Hyperion', raised their voices, solemnly, with instruments, in the praise of God.

The meaning is obscure, but this is clearly no routine citation of ancient precedent, for Madelka conspicuously omits the usual reference to one or both of the two traditional inventors of music, the Hebrew Jubal and the Greek Amphion. So is he perhaps seeking to recover the idiom of a particular period of Hebrew music-making? The first four named musicians were leaders of the ritual music devised by King David for the Tabernacle in the newly-founded Jerusalem. They continued to serve in Solomon's Temple, forswearing Hyperionic pride in artistic self-expression and devoting their talents to communal music-making in the service of religion. It is recorded in I Chronicles 16 that at the ceremony at which the long-neglected Ark of the Covenant was permanently installed in the Tabernacle, Heman and Jeduthun 'had trumpets and cymbals for the music and instruments for sacred song'. Madelka would have inferred from this and comparable passages that instruments accompanied the huge Temple choirs, which were generally assumed to have sung in harmony. David was both ancestor of Christ and his prime Old-Testament 'type': the Tabernacle and the Temple that succeeded it were the Old-Testament precursors of the Christian Church: what finer model could there be, then, for a composer intent on renewing supposedly corrupt Catholic church music than the Davidian ordinances that replaced the presumably haphazard and unsatisfactory ritual music of the wilderness years and the unsettled reign of Saul? Moreover, the Calvinists, who were such a threatening presence in contemporary Silesia, had banned the use of instruments

1. See appendix.

in church as a Catholic abuse, so that instrumental participation (like polychorality) was on the way to becoming a confessional signifier for both Catholics and high-church Lutherans.[2]

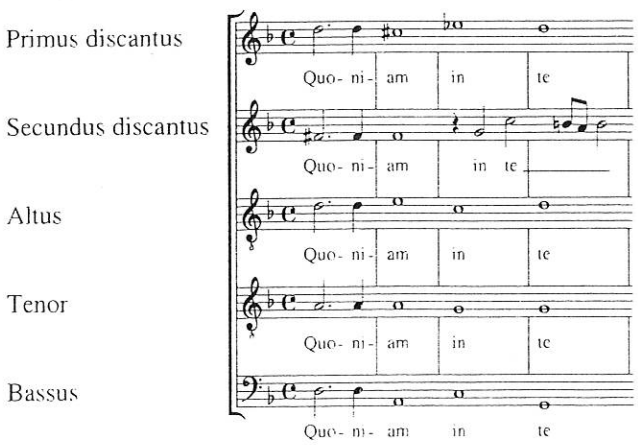
Biblical precedent will account for Madelka's 'communal' choral writing, and for instrumental participation. But something non-scriptural must lie behind his prominent chromaticism, of which there is no hint in accounts of the Temple music. Conceivably this curious aspect of his psalm-cycle could have been an explicitly Christian counterpart to the attempts of the Neoplatonists to resurrect the three ancient musical *genera*: diatonic, chromatic, enharmonic. Madelka was a prominent member of one of the flourishing 'literary' fraternities that were in many ways the Czech equivalents of the Italian Academies, in which speculation about ancient Greek music had begun in the previous century and continued to flourish. Central to the world-view of the Christian Neoplatonists was the notion of parallel (and partial) divine revelation, to the Greek philosophers and the Hebrew prophets. So given that music was of prime importance to the philosophers, it could have been assumed that Hebrew music was ordered in a comparable manner.

But why is there no mention of Madelka's strikingly unorthodox chromaticism in the Address? Could it have been because the print (privately financed?) was primarily intended for those already in the know, fellow members of the literary fraternities who were perhaps the 'prudent men' who looked askance at modern church music? Miloslav Klement's useful Introduction (in Czech, German and English) reveals that most of the holdings of the fraternities were destroyed when they were suppressed by the Emperor Joseph II, but the surviving records show that Madelka was widely known and esteemed among them; and it is among their musical manuscripts that his now incomplete unpublished works are mainly to be found.

Back in the 1550s the youthful Lassus had presented his conception of the Greek chromatic *genus*, in regular alternation with the diatonic, in his still-astonishing Sibylline Prophecies; and Nicolo Vicentino, with the aid of his multi-keyed organ and harpsichord, had had a stab at the elusive enharmonic in a handful of gnarled and scarcely-performable madrigals. Later, Gesualdo would more successfully combine the chromatic and diatonic in his madrigals and church music, and Madelka's younger Czech contemporary Jakob Handl – a Lassus pupil – would take things to an expressionist extreme in his hair-raising motet *Mirabile misterium*. Madelka's Psalms would seem to belong to this experimental tradition. He may, indeed, have been aiming to emulate *two* celebrated Lassus masterpieces, the Sibylline Prophecies and the mighty (unchromatic) cycle of the Seven Penitential Psalms.[3] The latter, like Madelka's cycle, concludes with an additional item (a conflation of two resolutely joyful 'Laudate' psalms), and had been premiered in the Munich Court Chapel on Good Friday 1580.

Could there have been a direct Lassus connection? Virtually nothing is known of Madelka's musical training. Given the possible Lassus inspiration for his Psalms and the fact that the only copy to survive complete is the one purchased by the Munich chapel, either by Lassus himself or with his approval, I wonder whether Madelka may have studied with one of the Munich musicians, even with Lassus himself, the leading exponent of Catholic church music in contemporary Germany and Eastern Europe. But he was no passive imitator. By comparison with the always rational and smoothly negotiated chord-progressions and part-writing in the chromatic passages of Lassus's Prophecies, Madelka's can often appear reckless, even random, with (for example) a bewilderingly rapid alternation between the minor and major of the same chord. Was he fumbling in the dark? His competence in all other aspects of composition suggests otherwise. I suspect that he (together with others in the literary fraternities?) had evolved an arcane theory as to the nature of the Davidian Temple music, involving tortuous chromatic progressions, leaps of 'forbidden' intervals in the vocal lines, and obligatory instrumental participation – presumably in the form of doubling and proto-continuo.

Alas, neither Jakub Michl (in his Preface) nor Miloslav Klement (in his Editorial Notes) mention the chromaticism, and the presentation could almost have been designed to hobble conscientious performance. A random example, the opening of the *Tertia pars* of the third psalm, No 38, will illustrate both the boldness of Madelka's writing and the problem of accidentals.



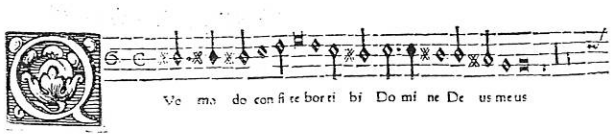
2. Did Madelka truly expect instrumental doubling, or do his references to Temple practice indicate a perhaps-inpracticable ideal? His settings are perfectly suited to *a cappella* performance, and the mere addition of cornetts and trombones, however skilled the players, might well have hindered the realisation of what I suggest below are two degrees of sharpening. As for the organ, violas da braccio & da gamba, recorders, bombards, dulcians, crumhorns and trombones which 'the criteria of historical performing practice call for' according to the editor, the mind boggles!

3. If he knew them. Both the Sibylline Prophecies and the Seven Penitential Psalms were as yet unpublished, and the latter (composed in 1580) are said to have been restricted to the Bavarian Court Chapel for twenty-five years.

The chord-change from bar 2 to bar 3 outsoars Lassus's most daring chromatic flights in the Sibylline Prophecies, with the *Primus discantus* required to negotiate a fearsome leap from C sharp to E flat (a deliberately 'oriental' touch?) In the *Secundus*, the third note is of course a misprint for E (in the original print or in Klement's slackly proof-read transcription). The crotchet rest that follows avoids parallel fifths with the bass: grammatically – perhaps more brazenly than a hardened pro would have allowed himself; there are more flagrant side-steppings elsewhere.

But what of the second F – is it to be sung sharp or natural? 'Undoubtedly sharp' is the instant modern reaction. But when Madelka intends consecutive notes to be inflected (the occasional printer's slip or manifest 'leading note' aside) he is careful to repeat the sharp before each one – and he sometimes demonstrably intends a succession of notes to be inflected and disinflected in a way that goes against all 16th-century norms. Comparison with the Bärenreiter edition's reproduction of occasional pages from the 1568 print (you can see one at Google 'Madelka') reveals that Klement has routinely suppressed what he wrongly assumes to be redundant notated sharps. And he has compounded the resulting confusion by supplying editorial sharps and naturals that are at variance with Madelka's procedures throughout the work – Klement will often cancel a notated sharp far too late, at the first succeeding chord that unambiguously requires the natural – when he notices, that is.[4]

A representative example is the opening of the final motet.



Each of the first three notes is to be sung sharp, so Madelka places a sharp sign before each. At *Domine Deus*, however, the first G is to be sharp, the second undoubtedly natural (since the chord changes from E to C), so only the first has a sharp before it. In both cases Klement has a single sharp before the first G, as though assuming that the modern an-accidental-applies-to-the-end-of-the-bar rule applied. But there are no bars in the print, and modern singers require an editorial natural in the second case if they are to avoid an augmented chord – which is no part of Madelka's harmonic repertoire.

So, in our previous example, did Secundus Discantus's second F have an editorially-suppressed sharp before it, or did the composer mean it to be sung natural? Lacking a photocopy, we have no way of knowing which. And there are countless similar cases.

More complications: I suspect that the two distinct types of printed sharp to be found throughout the print indicate (as do Vicentino's dots above certain notes) gradations of pitch, two crosses side-by-side being a little lower than two superimposed crosses, as can be sen in the facsimile on p. 12. (The latter is often placed before what we would call a leading note.)[5] A close examination of the part-books should show whether I am right about this.[6] Granted Madelka's assumption of instrumental participation, the distinction could have been particularly aimed at keyboards with split keys and plucked instruments modifying pitch through LH finger pressure. Klement not only renders both types as standard modern sharps but in his incipits to each psalm, in the example that can be checked substitutes the second type for the first.

Other editorial shortcomings abound. The short concluding *Moteta Poenitentialis* (*Quomodo confitebor tibi*, from the Office for the Dead) again mingle Madelkan chromaticism with the diatonic. It makes an affecting conclusion to the cycle, but looks suspiciously like prentice work, with (for example) by far the most transparent side-stepping of parallels in the entire print. There are fistfuls of wrong notes and doubtful accidentals, too, many of them in repeated sections (at pitch or transposed) where careful editorial comparison could have resolved at least some of the thorny problems But Klement fails to do this, and even adds further inconsistencies in his editorial accidentals. If the motet is indeed an early work, Madelka must have been composing in his experimental chromatic-cum-diatonic manner long before tackling the Penitential Psalms.[7]

The two psalms notated in *chiavette* are left at printed pitch without comment, a particular annoyance in what is evidently a coherent cycle intended – like Lassus's – for consecutive performance, despite the alternation of SSATB and SATTB scoring.[8] Ligatures are faithfully indicated, but not the more useful coloration, which points up vital hemiola stress to the performer, especially when sight-reading. There is no mention of the anomalous doxology to Psalm 51, and no consideration of the occasional problematic cadences in which an uninflected 'leading note' in an upper voice coincides with the same note in a tenor part: as a rule, singers would automatically sharpen the upper note and relish the clash, but Madelka is consistent enough in adding sharps to self-evident 'leading notes' for this to give one pause: perhaps his Davidian manner is more nuanced than my cursory (and part-book-less) examination has suggested. Klement's Editorial Notes are ill-translated and frequently muddled.[9]

4. The policy of modernising accidentals is accepted far too readily by editors, editorial committees and publishers. [CB]

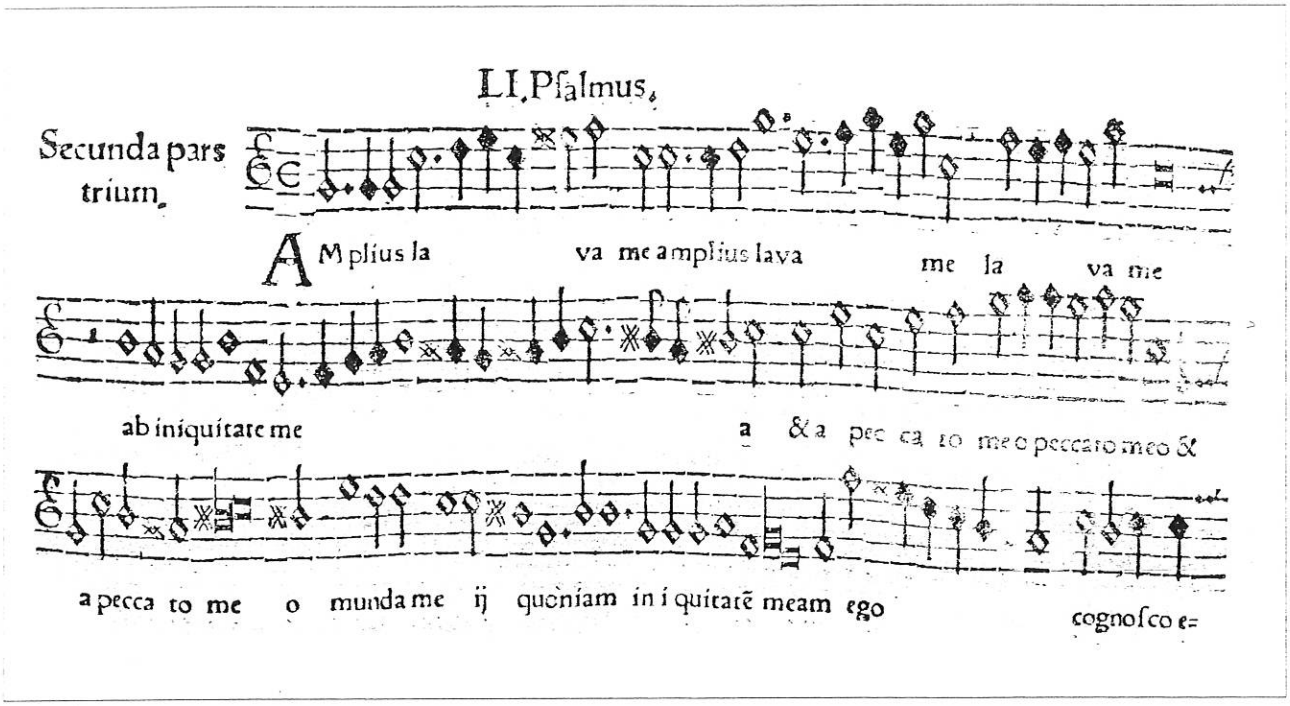
5. Such sophisticated performance of semitones might warrant the phrase 'Bend it like Madelka'.

6. Our initial assumption was that those in the former style were hand-written corrections; if so, the typesetter inserted space for them. [CB]

7 The Psalms were printed in Altdorf, near Nuremberg, far from Madelka's home in Plzeň, but the errors in the motet are emphatically not such as might result from a printer working casually and unsupervised from difficult-to-decipher manuscript parts.

8. For the remaining psalms and the motet Madelka deploys 'stet' clefs, but with the G3 clef replacing its analogue, the usual C1. I wonder if any reader has encountered this elsewhere. *Chiavette* items at notated pitch are particularly maddening in modern editions of cycles. The Sibylline Prophecies – uniquely – have pairs of movements in *three* standard clef-formations, high, stet and low clefs, but were manifestly designed for a single group of performers; in Andrea Gabrieli's intermedi for Oedipus Tyrannus the two outer sequences are in one set of clefs, the central one at another, yet all three are given in the standard modern edition at notated pitch – despite the fact that we know that the same fifteen-strong unaccompanied 'Greek chorus' sang and danced all three.

9. Like so many Czech – and Polish – editors, Klement seems unaware



To sum up, this is fascinating and hugely varied music, allowing us a unique glimpse of what could be produced by a competent if unusually adventurous and cerebral later-sixteenth-century amateur Czech composer of the educated professional classes. It could be a stimulating challenge for specialist choirs with skilled soloists up to the sometimes very demanding reduced-voice sections and (perhaps!) suitable instruments. Audiences would be fascinated. But adequate performance would require painstaking comparison of this edition with the printed source in the Bavarian State Library in Munich and seems not to be available in facsimile.[10] Editorial comparison should have been made, too, with Madelka's other works. Though incomplete, these might usefully demonstrate his workaday manner, or else (like the concluding motet) provide further examples of Davidian experiment.

We must be grateful to Bärenreiter for bringing this mould-breaking music to light, in a typically attractive, spacious and convenient format. But the unique character of the music and its historical importance (both as the work of a 16th-century amateur and as a seeming attempt to revive an ancient Hebraic musical idiom) surely warrant something that reviewers always hesitate to recommend: withdrawal and thorough re-editing.

Neither Hugh nor I had heard of Mandelka until this arrived. We haven't had access to the information needed for a proper study, but the music is so interesting that it seemed worth sticking our necks out a bit to encourage further enquiry on the Butcher of Plzeň. CB

Appendix

The modal scheme in Lassus's setting of the seven penitential psalms (plus concluding *Laudate Dominum*) is a straightforward progress through the eight ecclesiastical modes in order. Madelka's scheme is subtler:

Ps.	Clefs		Final	Mode
	high	stet		
6		*	a	9 (Aeolian)
32	*		C (notated F)	5 (Lydian)
38		*	g	1 (transposed Dorian)
51		*	a	9 (Aeolian)
102		*	g	1 (transposed Dorian)
130	*		C (notated F)	5 (Lydian)
143		*	F	5 (Lydian)
motet		*	a	9 (Aeolian)

The palindrome is strict if we regard the 6th and 7th psalms (130 and 143) as a unity: both are in the same mode as the corresponding 2nd psalm (32) but the 7th (notated in 'stet' clefs) is to be sung at notated pitch, the 2nd and 6th (in high clefs) a fourth lower. Thus clever Madelka has his cake and eats it, preserving the integrity of his near-palindrome while ensuring variety, for Psalms 32 and 130 are not merely at a different pitch from the stet-clef Psalm 143 but also (as usual with the 'high' clefs) exploit a slightly lower, more sombre tessitura. Madelka underlines both the central position of Psalm 51 (the *Miserere*) and its recognised status as the pre-eminent psalm of abject penitance by appending – here alone – a Gloria Patri: an unexpected feature in what is clearly a devotional rather than a liturgical cycle.

This structure is worthy of a Netherlandish master. It demonstrates the thoroughness of Madelka's musical training (about which nothing is known) and gives the lie to any suggestion that the undoubted eccentricities of his chromatic passages stemmed from ignorance.

of the differences between medieval and Tridentine liturgy. Bemused by Madelka's numbering of the psalms, he dubs it 'Hebraic', though it merely reflects the medieval Church's standard division and numbering of the psalms, inherited from Judaism and preserved by most of the Reformers, Cranmer included.

10. Here is a project ideal for Wolfgang Schäfer of Cornetto Verlag, who produces facsimiles, editions and CDs. We haven't heard the recording 1992 Panton recording mentioned in the edition with Svatopluk Jánys directing the Gutta Musicae Choir and the Symposium Musicum instrumental ensemble, but it doesn't seem to be available. [CB]

ENGLISH ORGAN MUSIC EDITIONS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The English 18th-century Organ Voluntary:
Editions from Fitzjohn Music Publications,
Greg Lewin Music and *animus* Music Publishing

As readers of *EMR* will no doubt appreciate, the world of home music editing and publishing is alive and well, aided by the increasing availability of good music writing software and copying facilities, and people with sufficient time to delve into the archives. I have been sent examples from three such publishers, focussing on the eminently delveable books of English 18th century organ Voluntaries, many lodged in the British Library. None would be considered as the 'scholarly' editions usually demanded in the wider early music arena, but are aimed at church organists for church or recital use. Nonetheless they provide an insight into an attractive and often over-looked aspect of English music. The increasing availability of good restorations of original instruments, and more modern organs being built (or restored) in sound historic style, give much greater opportunities for reasonably authentic performances of music from this period. They are often suitable for harpsichord, although the fact that they often included 'harpsichord' in the title was more of a marketing ploy than a serious musical suggestion. They could also be arranged for other combinations of instruments.

All editions are A4 size portrait format. Although the comb-binding (with a plastic front cover and card back) used by Fitzjohn and Greg Lewin allow books to lie flat on the music desk, they can be awkward to file or carry around *en-masse* and are potential rather vulnerable. The Animus volumes are more traditionally bound, with staples in the centre-fold, so far more robust. They were easily folded back so that they lay flat on the music desk. The music in all editions is well laid out, although the spacing varies. Compared to around 40 bars per page with Greg Lewin, Fitzjohn editions have about 32 bars per page, and Animus around 26. The particularly compact Greg Lewin format saves both paper and page-turns but should still be visible from an organ bench. Their complete Marsh Voluntaries, for example, is published in a single volume of 49 pages, rather than the 98 pages of the Animus edition, which is spread over three volumes. Incidentally, the original preface to the Marsh Voluntaries is essential reading for any organist exploring this period. The original publication includes the sub-title *To which is prefix'd An explanation of the different Stops of the Organ, & of the several combinations that may be made thereof – With a few Thoughts on Style, Extempore Playing, Modulation &c.* This is an important insight into performance practice.

All editions have a brief introduction with an explanation of the editorial practice. Fitzjohn and Greg Lewin note editorial changes at the beginning of the edition, without reference in the text – Animus puts such references at the foot of the relevent page, along with editorial suggestions. Greg Lewin puts the date of the original publication on the cover, and Fitzjohn includes the composer's dates – both useful. All editions name the source, but Fitzjohn is the only one to name the current location of the copy used (generally the British Library). Fitzjohn and Greg Lewin include specifications of organs relevant to the composers.

Advice on registration and other performance matters is relatively sparse, and in one case is questionable. One piece of registration practice that very few present day organists realise (including many professionals) and is missing from all publishers, is that the 18th-century Swell had a default position of closed (as opposed to the modern organ's default position of open) – hence it's name, which is derived from the 'Swelling Organ' in Abraham Jordan's 1712 organ at St Magnus-the-Martyr. Indeed, on surviving organs of the period, it can take some physical effort to open the Swell (which was either a set of heavy wooden horizontal louvres or a single wooden board that had to be lifted like a sash window – the so-called 'Nag's Head' Swell), so it is not something to do too often. Passages for the Swell manual should therefore start off quietly, unless indicated otherwise, only occasionally swelling. The Swell manual itself was a short compass division, usually starting from tenor F or G – something that none of the editors seem to have appreciated. Another essential point is that the Stopped Diapason was drawn with practically every registration, one notable exception being with the Flute – which, incidentally, was always a 4' stop.

Volumes can be ordered direct, either from the website or by email or post. Prices shown below exclude postage and packaging, and should be checked with the website.

Fitzjohn Music Publications http://www.impulse-music.co.uk/fitzjohnmusic.htm

Fitzjohn Music Publications is run by David Patrick, who edits all the editions. From the extensive catalogue of choral, vocal, piano and organ editions, I have been sent the following organ volumes.

John Christmas Beckwith *Six Voluntaries*, 1780, £8.50
Thomas Carter *Fugues and Full Pieces* c1800, £7.50
Thomas Sanders Dupuis *Nine Voluntaries* Set 2, £9
Thomas Sanders Dupuis *Eleven Pieces or Voluntaries* Op.8, £10
John Garth *Six Voluntaries* Op.3, 1771, £9.50
Thomas Gladwin *Five Sonatas*, 1755, £8.50
Starling Goodwin *Twelve Voluntaries* – Books 1 & 2, £10 each
George Green *Six Voluntaries* £10
Charles Wesley *Six Voluntaries*, 1812, £11)
Charles Wesley *Variations on "God save the King"* c1799 and a Gavot from Handel's *Otho*, £6

Although not stated on the covers, many of the pieces included Harpsichord and Forte Piano in the titles. The works by Beckwith, Garth, Gladwin, Goodwin, Carter, Green and Dupuis are attractive works in the relatively standard mid-18th century idiom and vary from the traditional two-movement to more substantial four-movement pieces. Beckwith ('Christmas' seems to have been a nickname, rather than a middle name) was from Norwich, being organist first at St Peter Mancroft and then the Cathedral. The first Voluntary includes an unusual little Canon 2 in 1. There are some editorial oddities regarding manual indications, notably in the Allegro of Voluntary 3, where the left hand goes well below the compass of the Swell. Thomas Carter's Voluntary IV starts with a very unusual example of a French style unmeasured Prelude. John Garth was organist in Sedgefield and also played at the Bishop's Chapel in Auckland Castle. His pieces look forward to the gallant style. More editorial registration oddities include "Great Flutes 8' 4' 12th and Tierce", "Swell Principals 8' 4' 2' Larigot & Mixture", "Great Principal 8', Swell Principal 4', S-G". These seem to reflect the neo-classical organ of the 1960s rather than organs or registration practice of the period in question. George Green is one of a number of composers about whom little is known. It would have been helpful to have mentioned that the Flute registration in his Voluntary III would have been at 4' pitch. The Goodwin Voluntaries are intended 'for the improvement of Juvenile Performers'. The Gladwin edition is incorrectly titled as 'Sonatas' – as the editor reveals in his notes, the British Library publication is 'Eight Lessons for the Harpsichord or Organ three of which has an accompaniment for a Violin'. The violin pieces are not included [but they are in the JPH/Early Music Company facsimile at the higher price of £12.00. *CB*] No. III (from *Nine Voluntaries*) by Dupuis has an example of a cadenza at the end of the slow movement. The editorial introduction includes a helpful interpretation of his ornament sign of a turn preceded by a dash. I am not quite sure about the manual indication at the beginning of the 2nd movement of Voluntary IV, repeated at bar 113 – an editorial interpretation might have been offered. And why the editorial 'pedal' indication at the end of this piece? Charles Wesley (the son of the hymn writer Charles, nephew of John and brother of Samuel), introduces music by Handel into five of his six Voluntaries. His *God save the King*' variations are relatively slight, and I am not convinced by the editorial speed indications, which differ for each variation – the Otho (*Ottone*) set are more musically interesting.

Greg Lewin Music http://www.greglewin.co.uk

Greg Lewin founded Hawthorns Music in 1993, publishing editions of early music and recorder and organ music. The organ editions were transferred to Greg Lewin Music in 2006. These are a few of around 35 volumes in the catalogue.

Henry Heron *Ten Voluntaries for the Organ or Harpsichord,* c1765 £10
John Alcock Ten Voluntaries 1774 £10
Matthew Camidge *Six Concertos for the Organ or Grand Piano* Op.13, c1815, £15
John Marsh *Eighteen Voluntaries for the Organ, Chiefly intended for the use of Young Practitioners* c1791, £15

After a short general editorial note common to all volumes, there is a brief description of the composer and the original title of the work. The source is noted as being from a single copy of an original print although there is no mention of where that copy currently might be. It is useful having the date of the original publication on the cover. Editorial additions are minimal, and are clearly marked. Rather than retaining the original division of notes between staves (which usually allows two parts in the same stave), these editions have been edited to have the notes for each hand on its own stave – I am not sure that this is necessary. Notes below the modern organs bottom C are notated as written – the 18th-century organ generally extended to GG and an increasing number of restored or new organs have adopted that compass. Marsh's *18 Voluntaries* are very attractive pieces in a range of different styles – and his Preface is essential reading for all organists exploring this period. I can recommend this edition. Alcock is not as well known as he should be – his pieces are also delightful examples of the genre. Some of Heron's jolly Voluntaries and extracts from the Camidge Concertos are well-known, but it is useful having the complete sets, and setting Camidge's familiar *Gavotta* from Concerto II into its context is welcome. Although I have not checked any of the publications against their original sources, there are a couple of places where something might have been missed or an editorial addition could have been appropriate. In Alcock's Voluntary 1, the second movement (p4), bars 59 and 63, appear to have a trill sign missing, and the bass of the second movement of Voluntary 5 (p16) should probably be marked 'Sexquialtra'. I also wonder if the Swell indication on page 10, bar 10, of the Marsh volume should refer to the treble line only – it is positioned next to the bass line, which is below the available compass.

animus Music Publishing http://www.animusi.co.uk

Animus Music Publishing is a small desktop company based in Cumbria and run by Pam and Adrian Self. It was established in 1995 and specializes in publishing choral and organ music prepared by a range of editors. I was sent the following volumes:

G F Handel *A collection of Instrumental Sonatas by G F Handel, arranged for organ (manuals only).* Ed Brian Daniels, £7.50
J, Marsh *Eighteen Voluntaries for the Organ, Chiefly intended for the use of Young Practitioners.* Ed John Lawson Baker 3 Vols, £7.50 each
Four Eighteenth Century Voluntaries for organ (by Benjamin Skinner, Simon Stubley, J Martin Smith and J Stafford Smith. Ed Paul C Edwards. £5
The Georgian Organist – Four extended English organ voluntaries (by George Berg, Benjamin Cooke and William Crotch. Ed Paul C. Edwards. £5
Seven Voluntaries from Eighteenth Century England for organ. Ed Paul C. Edwards. £5

The catalogue includes many other collections of works by different composers. Despite its title, the Seven Voluntaries is a collection of extracts from voluntaries, reducing its musicological interest and possibly making it less useful to *EMR* readers who may prefer to explore a complete collection. There is a curious "Sw." indication for the bass line of the Allegro of the Linley Voluntary – it is not marked as being editorial, although most of the bass line is well below the available compass of the 18th-century Swell manual and would probable have been played on the Choir. The J Stafford Smith Voluntary (in Four Eighteenth Century Voluntaries) omits the 2nd movement making it, to my mind, similarly less acceptable. The Georgian Organist volume, although billed as 'Four extended English organ voluntaries', includes three works in the pretty standard introduction and fugue format – indeed, two are specifically called 'Fugue'. Only the Cooke work, published as 'Fugue &c.', is of the extended four-movement form that became increasingly popular during the latter part of the century. The Crotch 'Fugue No. 2 in E' is based on an Anglican psalm-chant. Despite his fame as an organists, Handel left very few original organ works, so the transcription of instrumental Sonatas is welcome, even if the instrumental originals mean that parts do not lie under the hands in the way that his genuine keyboard works generally do. Editorial suggestions for filling in the continue parts are given.

Since the above review was submitted, I have received more volumes from Fitzjohn Music Publications which usefully complement the Marsh editions, with information in their prefaces on contemporary performance practice.

Jonas Blewitt *Twelve Voluntaries plus 'Introduction', Op 4,* including the '*Complete Treatise on the Organ*' c1795, £10)
Jonas Blewitt *Ten Voluntaries, Op 2,* £10
Francis Linley *Fifteen Preludes, Op 6, Part Two,* £10)
Eight Voluntaries, Op 6, Part Three, including *A Concise Description of the Organ,* £10)
Eight Introductions and Fugues, Op 6, Part Four, £10

Of the three writers (Marsh, Blewitt and Linley), Blewitt's 'Complete Treatise' is by far the more comprehensive – a fascinating insight into the music and performance. All three were written at the very end of the 18th century, and are therefore to be used with some caution for most of the English 18th-century repertoire, which is much earlier. The *Introduction and Twelve Voluntaries* that follow Blewitt's Treatise are fascinating miniatures (apart from the extended 9th Voluntary) reflecting the range of the musical styles of the period, together with one or two inventive ideas of his own. I would question the notion (made in the editorial notes to Blewitt's *Ten Voluntaries*) that the beat 'began on the lower auxiliary note' – isn't this referring to a practice of 100 years earlier? Of the Linley volumes, the *Fifteen Preludes* are very slight. Scores and (very electronic) sound samples can be viewed and heard at http://www.impulse-music.co.uk/sound/.

LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

CHRISTMAS & EASTER

Early January featured a rather curious liturgical and musical day for me, with a lunchtime concert featuring *Ténèbres* and an evening with Bach's Christmas Oratorio. *Concerto delle Donne* joined the early Easter Eggs in the shops with their lunchtime concert at St John's, Smith Square (8 Jan) of *Troisième Leçon de Ténèbres* by Charpentier and Couperin. In a slight adjustment to their normal line-up of three sopranos and organ, they replaced one soprano with the magnificent contralto Caroline Trevor for the two Charpentier works (*TLT du Jeudi Saint* and *TLT du Vendredi Saint*). Faye Newton and Gill Ross were the two impressive sopranos in those works, and in Couperin's single setting. All three singers excelled in the clarity and focus of their tone, with Faye Newton in particular showing an impressive grasp of French ornamentation. Alistair Ross used the resident 'Raspberry Ripple' stage organ to accompany the vocal works, and played Nicolas de Grigny's grand *Pange lingua* on the main St John's organ, with sung plainchant in between the three expressive organ *versets*.

When invited by the Spitalfields Winter Festival to give a Bach cantata concert, John Eliot Gardiner proposed no fewer than 6 concerts! And so the Festival was handed over in its entirety to the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists who, alongside various educational projects, presented six short concerts (each repeated later on the same evening) contrasting one of the cantatas from Bach's Christmas Oratorio with a motet and one of the Brandenburg Concertos. Christchurch Spitalfields has an ideal acoustic for music of this period and my choice of the last, and most powerful of the concerts proved to be a good one. In the programme, Gardiner noted the life-affirming nature of Bach's Christmas music – 'about as far removed from the familiar kitsch, baubles and tinsel as it is possible to be'. It is not important to me whether or not he is a true believer, but he increasingly directs as though he is. Notwithstanding the power and drama of the music in this particular programme, I detected a gentler side to his interpretations and a slightly more personal engagement with his fellow musicians. Of the singers, Nicholas Mulroy and Matthew Brook were particularly impressive, with notable contributions from leader Kati Debretzeni, double bass Valerie Botwright (for her solo continuo role in *Die Gottes Gnad alleine*), Michael Niesemann, Molly Marsh and Catherine Latham oboes, Anneke Scott and Gavin Edwards, horn (with some spectacularly anarchic playing in the first movement of Brandenburg 1), Neil Brough, trumpet and Silas Standage, organ. Any lingering thoughts of Easter left over from lunchtime were left far behind by one of London's coldest winter nights – we left church into a Jack the Ripper atmosphere of freezing fog.

LATE CECILIA

An intelligent programme note by Hilary Finch on the rise of the cult of St Cecilia set the scene for the concert by *Les Musiciens du Louvre* (under a jovial Marc Minkowski) of works by the anniversary three, Purcell, Handel and Haydn, all dedicated to the 'Great patroness of us and harmony' (Barbican 18 Jan). Despite the length of the programme, the quality of the performances increased as the evening drew on after a not entirely error-free start with Purcell's 1692 Ode. The highlight of the Purcell was the singing of high tenor Anders J Dahlin and bass Luca Tittoto. 'Hark, each tree its silence breaks' drew some attractively English sounds from choir members Neil Baker and David Bates. The musical stakes were raised for Handel's 'Ode for St Cecilia's Day', where the excellent soprano Lucy Crowe shone gloriously as the flute complained, the lute warbled and the sacred organ praised. But it was the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* from Haydn's rarely performed *Missa Cellensis* (which later acquired the name *Missa Sanctae Caeciliae*) that was the musical climax of the evening, where the orchestra and chorus really came into their own, with Nathalie Stutzmann joining Lucy Crowe, Richard Croft and Luca Tittoto as soloists. Marc Minkowski conducted with a stick that both looked like, and indeed acted as, a magician's wand. Although such a wide-ranging concert as this raises issues of period instrumentation and pitch, it certainly did the 'translated lady' proud as she ("Who, while among the choir above ... dost thy former skill improve") continues with an eternity of perpetual organ practice.

SCHOOL & COLLEGE

A rather nervous looking Baroque Orchestra of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama gave a concert of Purcell, Handel and Telemann, directed by Pavlo Beznosiuk (23 Jan). Alongside some fine playing by Emily Askew in Telemann's Suite for recorder and strings in A minor was some impressive singing from soprano Philippa Murray and counter-tenor Michal Czierniawski in scenes from *Alcina* and *Orlando*. Both singers managed very effective contact with the audience, good elaborations of the *da capo* arias, clear ornaments and just enough vibrato to colour the voice without interfering with the musical line.

The Royal College of Music Chamber Choir and Baroque Orchestra (the latter fielding current and past students, staff and several guest performers) travelled to St John's, Smith Square for their concert of Bach's Orchestral Suite No 3, Cantata *Nun danket alle Gott*, the *Sinfonia* from *Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats*, and the 'Ascension' Oratorio (29 Jan). Occasions like this can offer opportunities for student singers whose training probably focuses on a much much later performing style to understand the very

different vocal style needed for Bach and his ilk. As with many student singers, vibrato was an issue amongst most of the soloists, although the choir produced a reasonably coherent sound. There were impressive instrumental contributions from Ilektra Miliadou, continuo cello, Marta Goncalves and Marta Santamaria Llavell, flutes, oboists Alexandra Bellamy and Hannah McClauchin, bassoonist Jane Gower and the energetic guest leader, Barbara Barros.

INSTRUMENTAL CONCERTS

The English Concert's latest Wigmore Hall (26 Jan) appearance featured a solo performance of Monteverdi's *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* by soprano Anna Caterina Antonacci, a singer perhaps best known for singing Carmen at Covent Garden. This followed her intense reading of Barbara Strozzi's *Lamento*. The nine-strong English Concert, led by Harry Bicket (all on excellent form), opened each half with Castello Sonatas, adding in Marini's *Sonata a 4* and *Passacaglio* and Carlo Farina's extraordinary *Capriccio stravagante*, a bizarre musical fantasy with plenty of opportunity for the players to make silly noises as the little dance sections dissolve into depictions of hens cackling, cocks crowing and cats fighting. If this was Charles Ives, then Antonacci's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* was *The War Requiem*. Singing all three parts, Anna Caterina Antonacci bought an emotional intensity and a huge range of vocal colour to the work. Venice in the 17th century was clearly not a place for the faint-hearted.

It says something of the marketing and musical adventurousness of The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment that they can pack in two very different audiences in one evening for a concert billed as "Adventures in German Music 1711-1740" Queen Elizabeth Hall (27 Jan). This featured Bach in Italian mood, Vivaldi in a German incarnation (via Pisendel) and a Bohemian being weird (Zelenka, in his *Hipocondrie*). Rachel Podger was the inspiring director, with soprano Rachel Nicholls singing in two Bach cantatas, starting with a wonderful rendition of *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!* With trumpeter David Blackadder standing alongside her for the first movement. The concert finished with Rachel Podger, Margaret Faultless and Rodolfo Richter playing Bach's Concerto in D for three violins, a reconstruction of BWV1064 – not, dare I say, Bach at his most inspiring, but a great performance. Once the white-haired crusties that make up the typical classical music concert these days had ambled off for their Horlicks, a very much younger and more vibrant crowd took over for the latest of the OAE's 'Night Shift' events – late night repeats of part of the earlier concert aimed at the youth market. The 10pm show was hosted by their resident TV presenter (who was slightly less patronising than usual on such occasions), who managed to get Chi-chi Nwanoku to tell us why she puts sponges in her F-holes. It was a far more informal affair – we even had applause in the middle of a Bach *recit*! Although the companionable Rachel Podger engaged well with the audience, I would have liked the other players to have turned to face it more. In fact, any classical musician wanting to see a most impressive stage manner from a young musician should have seen the pre-concert foyer performance by jazz singer, songwriter Ayanna Witter-Johnson. As their latest publicity states – 'not all orchestras are the same'. Quite so.

The launch of a new period instrument group is always welcome, particularly when it is as well thought out and impressively peopled as 'ensembleF2' (although they might have given more thought as to how the name is to be spelt or presented in plain text, as opposed to their logo – lower case names can look a bit odd). Their launch concert at the Wigmore Hall (27 Feb) was devoted to the music of Haydn, under the title of 'La Passione'. As well as the Symphony that later gained that nickname, they performed the *Trauer* Symphony and the Keyboard Concerto (Hob XVIII:11) and Violin Concerto (Hob VIIa:1), performed by Gary Cooper (ensembleF2's director) and Rachael Podger (who seemed to do most of the leading on the occasion) – a magical pairing of performers. The two *Sturm und Drang* Symphonies were given outstanding performance, the relatively sparse (but authentic) forces and the acoustics of the Wigmore Hall adding much to the intensity of the mood. This was an extremely impressive debut, revealing the musical depth and integrity that performers of this calibre can bring to performance.

Violinist Alina Ibragimova was one of the last pupils at The Menuhin School to appear under the baton of Yehudi Menuhin. She played Bach at his funeral in Westminster Abbey in 1999, aged 14. In the same year, she became the youngest person ever to win the Royal Philharmonic Society Emily Anderson Prize. She has since completed studies at the Royal College of Music (with Adrian Butterfield, amongst others), benefited from the BBC New Generation Artists Scheme, won an award from the Borletti-Buitoni Trust, recorded three uncompromising CDs (of works by KA Hartmann, Roslavets and Szymanowski) on Hyperion and given many prestigious concerts, including the Proms. I went to the Menuhin School to hear her play unaccompanied Bach, the subject of a CD later this year (Menuhin Hall, 28 Jan). I don't think I have ever heard a more promising musician on any instrument – or, indeed, such an intensely musical (and moving) performance of Bach's unaccompanied violin works. Although she plays a period violin (a 1738 Pietro Guarneri), it retains its modern set-up. But she plays with an outstanding sense of period style. One of the most notable things about her performance was her control of tone and texture. In the opening *Adagio* of Sonata 1, for example, she took the musical line to the very edge of audible sound towards the end – musically appropriate in a beautifully paced performance. She concluded the same work at the other extreme, with a virtuosic helter-skelter *Presto*, again featuring a superb control of texture and reinforcing the fact that no amount of musical talent can deny the sheer hard work of practice. In the *Fuga* of the 2nd Sonata, she showed an impressive sense of the large scale architecture and momentum of the work. She has an extraordinarily compelling stage manner – quite focused and seemingly at one with her instrument, she

quietly walks on stage, stands and plays, looking at her violin with intense concentration and involvement with the music. Alina Ibragimova has an exquisite musical talent and an inspiring musical mind.

OPERA, ORATORIO AND ST. VALENTINE

It probably says more about the pulling ability of the enthusiastic Sir Roger Norrington and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment than of Haydn that his obscure oratorio, *The Return of Tobias,* attracted a capacity audience to the Queen Elizabeth Hall (10 Feb). But however much I can enthuse about conducting, singing and playing, I am afraid that I have mentally put poor old Tobias into the 'needs to be heard – but not too often' category. Amongst the issues for me were the dullness of the Apocryphal plot, moments of occasional silliness (such as Tobias announcing 'delay could prove fatal' before settling back for an eight-minute aria) and predictability of the arias, notably in the blindingly blatant move towards the inevitable cadenzas. Many of the arias have the individual ability to impress, but their rather formulaic structure makes it hard to determine the underlying emotion. And even with the additional choruses added for the 1784 revival that formed the basis for this performance, there is not enough choral interest. That said, an excellent vocal cast (Ann Hallenberg, Rachel Nicholls [standing in for Grace Davidson], Lucy Crowe Andrew Kennedy and Christopher Maltman) worked their socks off to convince me of the merits of this pre-Creation, pre-Seasons work. Although Roger Norrington's habit of encouraging applause after every aria did little to drive the already slack pace along, he was, as ever, a jovial host, with little glances back to the audience to check that we were still enjoying it.[1]

My second hearing of the new Transition Opera has slid them further up my scale of appreciation. After last year's rather bloodthirsty interpretation of *Acis & Galatea,* they returned to the delightful Wilton's Music Hall with their take on Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (11 Feb). A collaboration between director and video designer, Netia Jones, and conductor, Christian Curnyn, their strikingly modern productions adopt a commendably high-risk approach, with more than a nod towards its performance in the week of Valentine's Day. They preceded the opera with a cleverly directed sequence of 16 Purcell songs set in a rather dubious speed-dating scenario under the control of a rather flouncy young man with a fluffy white shoulder bag whose notion of speed dating probably wouldn't have included women – the moral of the tale seemed to be that chaps who sit with their legs wide apart really do seem to get the girl (or girls, in this case).[2] Eight video screens reinforced the live singers' interactions with each other most effectively. Although it obviously lacked the emotional intensity of 'The Full Monteverdi', this worked well with the context of the songs. *Venus and Adonis* had a similarly strikingly contemporary setting, this time featuring dating of the internet variety. Andrew Radly continued his Purcellian Cupid role, with the excellent Katherine Manley and Dawid Kimberg in the title roles. A strong cast of singer/actors completed the cast, my only musical quibble being the inevitable vibrato that seems to infect most singers nowadays. The specific resulting problem on this occasion was the clouding of diction. Christian Curnyn's direction, and the playing of the eight instrumentalists, was spot on.

Although its timing just before Valentine's Day might have been a trifle inappropriate (even if Handel's libretto omits the build up to the break down of the relationship between Samson and Delila), The Sixteen's performance of Handel's *Samson* bought an emotional depth to this intense work (Barbican, 12 Feb). With our thoughts more likely to have been on events in the Middle East (Samson is set in Gaza) than matters of love, Handel and Hamilton/Milton's concentration on the psychological, rather than the dramatic, was well observed by a strong cast. Gillian Keith was outstanding as Dalila and the Philistine and Israelite Women, notably in her Act 2 attempt at reconciliation with Samson. One of a number of magical moments was her 'With plaintive notes and am'rous moon', with violinist Walter Reiter standing to play alongside her. Whether or not this was Handel's intention, I would guess that the audience were on her side against the stubbornly proud Samson, even up to the concluding 'hate' duet between the pair. It was fascinating that Mark Padmore's portrayal of Samson had hitherto concentrated on his sensitive side, making his vindictive rejection of Dalila's plea the more telling. Jonathan Lemalu's Harapha was splendidly harrumphing as Samson, having just dispatched Dalila, lays into him. Roderick Williams was a dignified Manoah. It was Nicholas Mulroy's Messenger that delivers the line 'Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fall'n' as the Israelites praise God and celebrate their suicide puller-down-of-temples as a glorious hero.

Valentine's Day proper saw an imaginative presentation by the Gabrieli Consort of Handel's two versions of the *Acis* story, with an afternoon performance of *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* followed by an evening with *Acis and Galatea* (Wigmore Hall, 14 Feb). Anybody who went with a perception that *Acis* was merely an English version of *Aci* was quickly disabused of the idea. It was not just the larger instrumental forces (with the two trumpeters popping out, cuckoo clock fashion, from the stage doors) and the radically different portrayals of Aci/Acis (Gillian Webster/James Gilchrist), Galatea (Barbara Kozelj/Mhairi Lawson) and Polifemo/Polyphemus (Christopher Purves – the only role sung by the same singer in both performances). The

1 Roger has long been an advocate of this aspect of authentic audience behaviour. [CB]

2. I also saw this and enjoyed *Venus*, though was puzzled by the first half. Speed-dating not being part of my experience, I assumed that the two large, erratically moving clocks were more fundamentally about time itself and assumed that the words of the first song related to that. Unfortunately, the singer (the counter-tenor) had the worst diction of all the performers, it was a song I barely knew, and the lights were out so I couldn't read the text provided. I racked my brains for any Purcell songs about time, but kept slipping to a century earlier and 'Time stands still'). .I was also confused that in some songs the second hand was moving approximately at the tempo of the music. At least one other critic was confused, since I read an explanation in a review which was different from Andrew's, confirmed by the conductor. [CB]

contrast between a cantata composed for an up-market 1708 Neapolitan wedding and the jovial 1718 English pastoral masque also couldn't have been stronger. This was reinforced by the staging, *Aci* serious, *Acis* with moments of tomfoolery – for example, Damon supports his suggestion that Polyphemus adopt a slightly more subtle approach to seduction by giving him a rose to give to Galatea which he promptly starts to eat! Acis meets his end by being bopped on the head with a bottle of bubbly. And earlier, Mhairi Lawson had used Galatea's 'Hush, ye pretty warbling choir' to express increasing exasperation at the pretty warbling Rebecca Miles, playing recorder just behind her. Key moments in *Aci* were Pawel Siwczak's harpsichord solo, reflecting a nice bit of bravado from both Aci and Handel, the wonderful double bass and recorders accompaniment to Polyphemus's rare moment of reflection, the latter's use of the gallery as his mountain and a portrayal by Christopher Purves that acted as a reminder that Polyphemus's love for Galatea was just as deep as Aci's – he just showed in a rather curious manner. Paul McCreesh directed an excellent band of players with sensitivity.

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DIDO & GALATEA

Covent Garden celebrated the 350th anniversary of Purcell's birth, and 250th anniversary of Handel's death with a double-bill of *Dido & Aeneas* and *Acis & Galatea*. The decision to use the Royal Ballet, with choreography and direction by Wayne McGregor, was at least in keeping with the first performance[4]) of *Dido and Aeneas*, staged by dancer and choreographer Josias Priest at his boarding school in Chelsea. Under Christopher Hogwood, the playing of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment was tight, lively, finely paced and often moving. The Royal Opera House so rarely stages baroque operas, that many of the well-known singers were appearing there for the first time, including Sarah Connolly (Dido) and Paul Agnew (Damon). So far, so good. What were the choreography and the dance to add?

Historically, dance could be seen as integral to *Dido and Aeneas*. Curtis Price says both Purcell and his librettist Nahum Tate, and their model John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* 'use dance to articulate the story'. That is, the story is presented with great concision, is through-composed, and Purcell adopted contemporary French opera in repeated units of *ariette*-chorus-dance and Italian opera in 'self-contained, modern-style arias' with 'Ah, Belinda' a written-out *da capo* aria , and the great lament a Venetian-style lament on ground bass, according to Price.[5] This historical consideration has little to do with what we could see on the Covent Garden stage. The lithe, strong and flexible dancers of the Royal Ballet were clad in grey shorts and singlets, and bidden to contort their arms, necks and heads in a variety of ugly, non-narrative and hardly rhythmic ways.

The use of the dancers in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* was different. The programme used an illustration of Cranach's nude figures to provide a clue to the dancers' appearance; but in front of a Claudian landscape backdrop, the slim, muscular dancers clothed in body-stockings resembled rather the naked figures of Blake, spiritual beings, in his illuminated books. The choreography incorporated more classical ballet language than in *Dido and Aeneas*, particularly in the pas-de-deux, more graceful and to me more pleasing. Dancers were cast-listed as the dance version of the singing characters, but they were not so differentiated in their dance. The clunky non-narrative dance in *Dido and Aeneas* at least did not intrude in the singing parts, as it was usually placed in the orchestral sections following the singing. This was not so in the *Acis and Galatea*, where dancers appeared in the foreground or background, often during *da capo* sections of the arias. Were the characters supposed to be singing to themselves, in the guise of a small but beautifully-formed nude, to cover their embarrassment at repeating with only a few ornamentations what they had already sung, or were about to repeat?

Dance apart, what did the performances add up to? Visually, the scenery of *Dido and Aeneas* was pared-down and adequate, suggestive of palace walls, hunting forest or fleet of ships (a large prow). Though the dancers were in singlets and shorts, the chorus, both male and female, were in jackets and long skirts. Aeneas was given a fetching wide-legged split skirt, which did not detract from his manliness. After some silliness in the first scene, when some of the chorus were directed pointlessly to walk in front of the singers, the chorus musically and unfussily took their parts as courtiers, witch-observers and sailors.

Sarah Connolly, famous for Handel roles such as Serse, Giulio Cesare and Agrippina, was not on top form following a chest infection, but her stage presence and intelligence provided a powerful and compelling centre as Dido. She looked wonderful, in the mode of the pared-down classicism of James Barry. Her solemn, deeply-felt unease drew us in from the first scene, and emotionally prepared us for the pain and tragedy ensuing from the evil Sorceress's machinations and the deluded Aeneas's betrayal. Lucy Crowe has also made a name in Handel opera, and as Belinda was sweet-voiced, bright but a little fussy in her acting (almost certainly directed to be so). Dido's lament confirmed that Sarah Connolly was unfortunately not in full voice, but this threw even more light on Purcell's orchestral writing, and on the wonderful playing by the orchestra, whose music extends long beyond Dido's singing. So the incomparable Dido's lament was, after all, as profound and moving as one might hope.

The design of *Acis and Galatea* has been touched on, with the opening Claudian landscape backdrop, and the luckily not-nude dancers. Realistic models of deer and sheep put

4. Rumour has it that the traditional date and place of 1689 in Chelsea may after all be true. [CB]

5. It is perhaps not coincidental that Dido's first and last song is a ground. [CB]

work has been described as a pastoral opera. Charles Workman as Acis was dressed as a 20th Century Etonian smallholder. Paul Agnew as Damon could pass muster as a modern-day shepherd. Matthew Rose as Polyphemus, whilst singing exquisitely like a love-besotted giant who hardly knew his own strength, appeared with a grubbily naked upper torso and belted trousers like a road-worker fallen on hard times. The true crime, however, was committed against Danielle de Niese, whose straw-coloured and -textured plaited wig clashed horribly with the singer's vivid natural colour. She was then dressed in a dowdy dark coat, pashmina over one shoulder, and off-white dress. Furthermore, unlike the other singers, she did not sound musically at home, but more like Cleo Laine meets Handel. A considerable part of the audience cheered her in the curtain-call, it must be noted, so this may not be a universally-held opinion.

A big question mark rose towards the end of the work. The lovely Acis, riled by Polyphemus's attempt to seduce his love Galatea, decides to fight the bounder, despite dire warnings from his fellow-shepherd Damon. Polyphemus kills Acis with a stone, and the chorus line up to tell the barely-interested Galatea to dry her eyes and get over it. Galatea has a gallumping dance with the small though perfectly-formed dance version of Acis, and then uses her divine powers to turn the dead singing version of Acis into a river/spring. Now, whatever the insufficiencies of the production, surely the lack of lamenting aria denotes either a loss of part of the libretto/score or an oddity or failure of dramatic structure which one would just not associate with the great Handel? Someone more knowledgeable than I will have to answer that one.

The playing and most of the singing in this double bill was good and often moving, and the idea of using dance performed by such fantastically skilled practitioners as the Royal Ballet was excellent. One felt privileged to hear the works, but they deserved better than this. I imagine that anyone except Wayne McGregor fans would agree that the parts were better than the whole. *Anne Tennant*

Unusually, I took full advantage of the publisher's perk of free seats for every night of an operatic performance. I was very interested in the reactions of those who phoned afterwards to thank me and express their enthusiasm for the show – some unqualified, others more selective. The chief division was over the dance. I found it irritating, and the cavorting pseudo-naked bodies seemed completely devoid of sexuality – hardly helpful in a love story. Also, after the concision of pacing of Dido & Aeneas, *I couldn't adjust to the time scale of the story's slow development in* Acis and Galatea. *In fact, its moments of drama are widely spread, and Handel was probably right to revive it as an oratorio. The most dramatic and original music is the amazing chorus 'Wretched lovers'. Perhaps the ROH should have mounted one of the oratorios that really work dramatically (*Samson, *as done in Buxton last year, or* Saul, *teeming with action and with words by Handel's best librettist, Jennens). Handel may not have staged them himself, but either of them would have made more sense on the Covent Garden big stage, though I suppose the idea would have been thought old-fashioned: but* Semele *and* Theodora *have established a hold on the opera world. As for Purcell,* Dioclesian, *with a proper reconstruction of the machine for the Masque, would have been a real celebration.*

I must admit that I can't dance and don't understand it. But some of my friends were more enthusiastic about that aspect of the production. All praised the orchestra. Anne Tennant is an old friend I have known since she was about 16. She was so eloquent on the phone that I asked her to write a review.

It was nice that the review in The Daily Telegraph by Andrew Porter mentioned our edition, though was wrong to assume that it based on the edition by Windszus (HHAI/9): our original edition was prepared in 1988, though information in the HHA critical commentary was useful for the 2009 revision. Andrew Porter's comparisons with the production of The Fairy Queen with which Covent Garden opened after the war show considerable scepticism of the way the House is run now, but should not be written off as attitudes from a different political and cultural world: they deserve consideration.

My personal experience of Handel recently, however, was not a top-rate performance but the amateur weekend course on Saul, *directed by Laurence Cummings, that I had set up as my farewell to NEMA and EEMF. It was a massive undertaking – even leaving out the long Sinfonia and the da capos of the arias, it ran for three hours or so. The orchestra lacked some vital instruments, and the solo singing was variable (though improved enormously as confidence and a feel for the drama developed). The experience of the third day, with a fairly full run-through in the morning and a complete one in the afternoon, was overpowering. I've never been to a course where there was such a feeling of involvement by the participants. We now know at first hand why Laurence is so dominant a figure in the world of Handel performance.*

The review of Orfeo *below should have appeared in the last issue. Robert Jones is a keen amateur singer, familiar at Early Music Forum courses and summer schools, and editor of the Eastern Early Music Forum Newsletter.*

ORFEO & EURIDICE
Fitzwilliam Chamber Opera, 27th – 31st January 2009
ADC Theatre, Cambridge
Monteverdi: ORFEO (in English)

Once again director/designer Claire V.S. Pike and her team of Baroque opera enthusiasts at Fitzwilliam College provided a very fine evening's entertainment. Working this year under producer Robert Nimmo they undertook Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, often billed as the earliest opera, though more correctly the earliest opera in the current repertoire, and therefore requiring quite a different approach from that of Handel's *Xerxes* performed in 2007. For one thing, the chorus plays an important role, and for another, the principal roles can be mostly taken by non-professionals. So it had the feel of an all-student production.

After a charming scene in which Music was accompanied by two on-stage continuo instruments, the curtain rose on a sylvan scene in the fields of Thrace, inspired (so the programme tells us) by Jan Breughel the Elder. This was one of three excellent backdrops used, which together with light images played on a scrim for part of the underworld scene provided rather better scenery than one usually expects to see in non-professional productions. In Act I the barefoot cast of nymphs and shepherds, mostly past and present choral scholars, performed their routine of songs and dances very competently despite the varied Renaissance-inspired choreography and the tricky series of solos, duets and trios. They certainly seemed to be enjoying the experience, to the extent of adopting a rather child-like demeanour, but the lack of rehearsal time in a busy term was sometimes evident. Animals of indeterminate species appeared, charmed by Orfeo's lute.

The dramatic announcement of Euridice's death was emphasised by the use of lighting effects; this and other technical aspects were effectively handled. In Act III Orfeo's long solos became a little laboured, and although Charon sang sturdily and was suitably unmovable, his encounter with Orfeo's lute-playing ended with him not so much falling asleep as collapsing unconscious!

In the underworld, the atmosphere of menace was created by subdued lighting, circling devils and crawling 'larvae' reminiscent of Hieronymus Bosch. One problem was the positioning of Pluto and Persephone on remote thrones upstage which made their important dialogue difficult to hear. Once back on earth, the Act V scene where Apollo descends to take Orfeo to the heavens featured a handsomely draped basket from which Ed de Minckwitz sang his role with considerable authority. And as the chariot departed, all the stars came out, which was really moving.

There is no getting away from the fact that any performance of *Orfeo* depends hugely on the singer taking the title role. Fortunately in Sam Furness the company had a confident and accomplished singer who handled the wide range of his part with ease, rising effortlessly from the baritone register to high tenor when required to. Apart from Orfeo, the other principal parts are mainly short. One voice that stood out was the melodious tenor of Francis Williams as the shepherd. Among the women, Rachel Bagnall as Music and Hope also sang well but needed to project more strongly, while Emily Dickens coped well with the part of Euridice.

The sizeable orchestra under the direction of Francis Knights played on the whole very well, although the uncertain attack and questionable rhythm from the cornetti was disappointing, especially in the opening Toccata. Dan Tidhar in a resplendent gold robe presided impassively over the continuo harpsichord placed in the wings.

A new singing translation was used, which helped to clarify the action. The principals' diction was clear in most cases, although the application of English words to Italian note values was always going to lead to some awkwardness. The costumes were brilliantly colourful throughout and the backstage team performed their varied roles expertly. I was tempted to see the show a second time and it deserves a further staging elsewhere, as *Xerxes* did.

Robert Johnson

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HANDEL THE BUSINESSMAN

Musical Notes & Bank Notes is the title of an anniversary exhibition at the Bank of England. Anyone who has glanced through Deutsch's *Documentary Biography* will have noticed the considerable amounts of money that passed in and out of Handel's account. Handel had an account at the Bank and visited it in Threadneedle Street to deposit or withdraw cash or sign transfers for Government Stock. From 14 April, an exhibition at the Bank of England Museum will show various documents, including pages with Handel's signatures and illustrations of the Bank as it was then. (10am-5pm Monday to Friday). For details check www. bankofengland.co.uk/museum .

Also, from 14 April until 25 October, a transfer ledger from the Bank of England will be on display at the Handel House Museum

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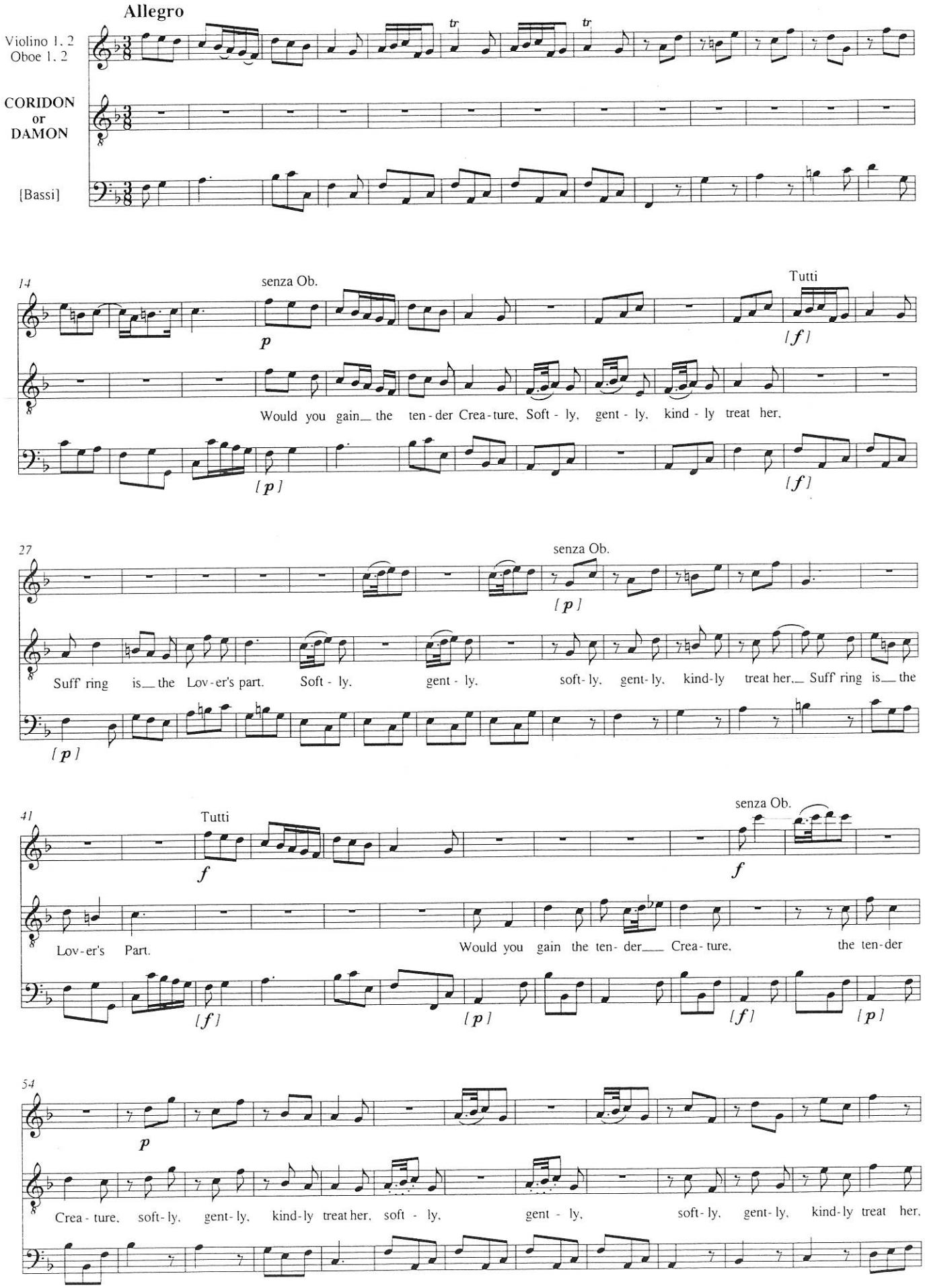
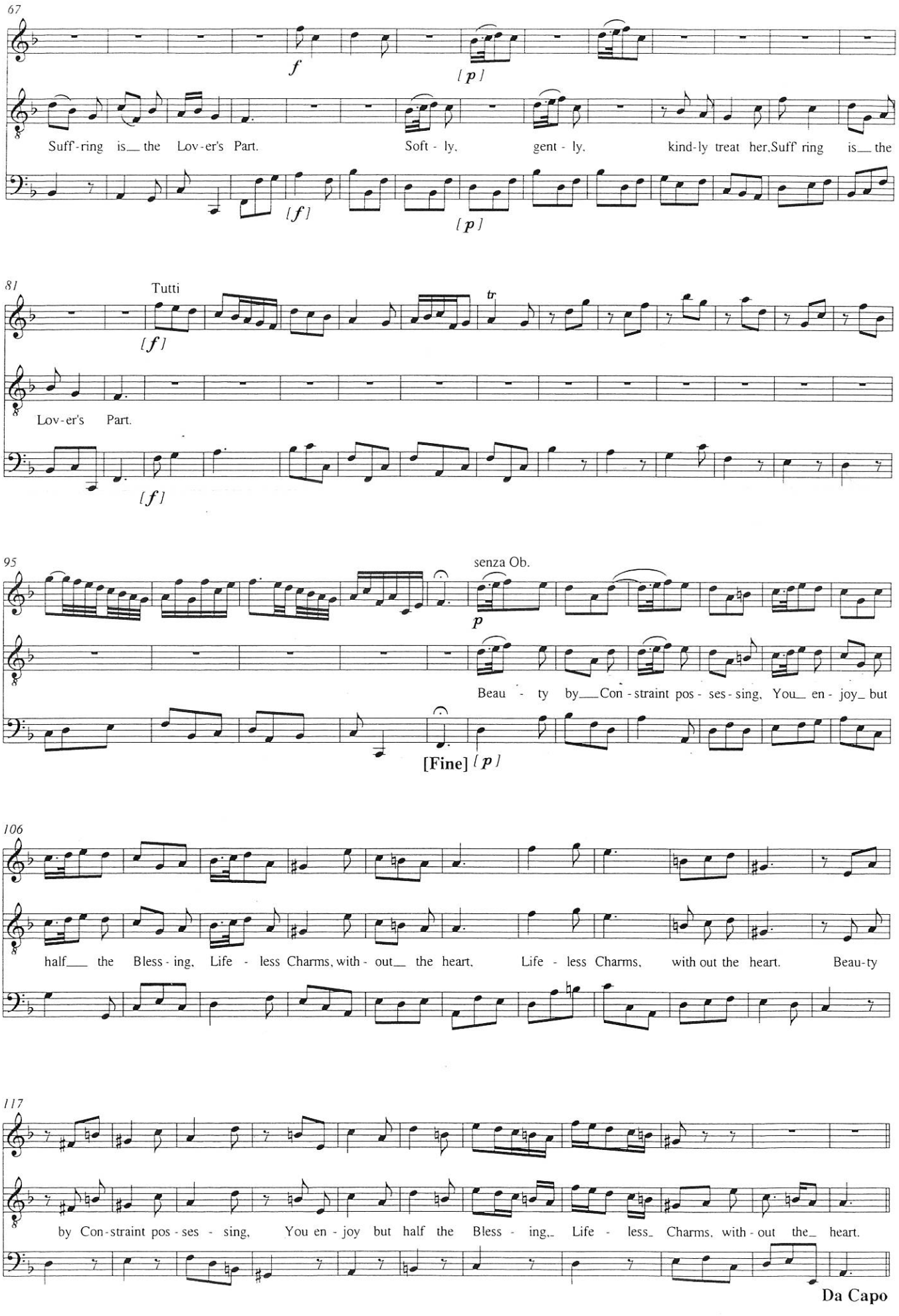
Would you gain the Tender Creature?

On the following pages we have included an air for either Coridon or Damon in Acis & Galatea. *It is chosen chiefly because it is the only movement short enough to fit onto two pages, but with a not unrelated virtue that it requires very few performers. It works with voice (of either sex) and keyboard, to which can be added a treble instrument and maybe a cello. Handel's total forces available would have been a couple of desks of violins, cello, double bass and bassoon. It was sung by Coridon at Canons in 1718, but later was assigned to Damon and transposed up a tone.*

19. (HWV 49a: 14) Air *Would you gain the tender Creature* (Coridon or Damon)




67
f
[p]
Suff-ring is_ the Lov-er's Part. Soft - ly, gent - ly, kind-ly treat her, Suff' ring is_ the
[f]
[p]
81
Tutti
[f]
tr
Lov-er's Part.
[f]
95
senza Ob.
p
Beau - ty by_ Con - straint pos - ses - sing, You_ en - joy_ but
[Fine] [p]
106
half_ the Bless - ing, Life - less Charms, with - out_ the heart, Life - less Charms, with out the heart. Beau-ty
117
by Con-straint pos - ses - sing, You en - joy but half the Bless - ing,_ Life - less_ Charms, with - out the_ heart.
Da Capo

BYRD ON A WIRE

Richard Turbet

BOOKS

The past twelve months have seen yet another book published about Byrd. *A Byrd celebration: lectures at the William Byrd Festival*, edited by myself (Richmond, VA: Church Music Association of America, 2008), consists of selected public lectures delivered over the first ten years, 1998-2007, of the annual William Byrd Festival held in Portland, OR. All the contributors are leading Byrd scholars. "William Byrd: a brief biography" by Kerry McCarthy (pp.13-15) is followed by "Blame not the printer: William Byrd's publishing drive, 1588-1591", a unique and hitherto unpublished text by the late Philip Brett dating from 2001. Two other authors gave single lectures: Joseph Kerman, "William Byrd. Catholic and careerist" (pp.75-83, reprinted in *Sacred music* 135 (Fall 2008): 12-19) and myself, "Byrd's Great Service: the jewel in the crown of Anglican music" (pp.167-71). David Trendell gave no fewer than six lectures: "Byrd the Anglican?" (pp.161-66), "Byrd's masses in context" (pp.95-101), "Byrd's musical recusancy" (pp.105-11), "Byrd's unpublished motets" (pp.179-84), "Context and meaning in Byrd's consort songs" (pp.173-75) and "Savonarola, Byrd, and *Infelix ego*" (pp.123-29). Besides her biography, Kerry McCarthy gave "Byrd and friends" (pp.67-74) and "Rose garlands and gunpowder: Byrd's musical world in 1605" (pp.141-49). The remainder were something of a coup: the first published writings about Byrd by a senior Byrd scholar from Stanford University, William Peter "Bill" Mahrt. Bill contributed "The economy of Byrd's *Gradualia*" (pp.151-57), "Grave and merrie, major and minor: expressive paradoxes in Byrd's *Cantiones sacrae*, 1589" (pp.131-37), "The masses of William Byrd" (pp.87-94) and "William Byrd's art of melody" (pp.113-22). These are profound meditations on Byrd's music from a voice who, though new to print, has inspired many students through his teaching and choral conducting. As an appendix, Mark Williams contributes a "Record of choral works performed at the William Byrd Festival" (pp. 187-93) from 1998-2008 [sic].

Last year I named four books about Byrd known to be in progress. One has now been published The unnamed fifth is the volume about Byrd in the *Master musicians* series published by Oxford University Press, which is being written by Kerry McCarthy. So as I predicted, it lives up to its billing as being as exciting and significant as the other three known to be in preparation.

ARTICLES

Before moving on to recent articles about Byrd, it is a pleasure to note a few which originated well back in the twentieth century. The catalyst was the Ivor Gurney Society which was kind enough to reprint my note entitled "Byrd & Ivor Gurney" from *Annual Byrd newsletter* 3 (1997): 7 in the *Ivor Gurney Society journal* 14 (2008): 44. This led me to "Gurney's solace: Shakespeare, Jonson and Byrd", *Ivor Gurney Society journal* 11 (2005): 7-24 by Pamela Coren, which sets the recent reception of Byrd in a stimulating literary context different from the musicological norm; and two items by Marion Scott: "William Byrd's place in the history of music", *Christian science monitor* (21 July 1923): 14, which is an impressive essay with few allowances having to be made for its date; and "Byrd tercentenary concert at Oxford", *Christian science monitor* (7 July 1923): 16, which is the only published reference to this event.

Focused on Byrd alone is "Sacred and political duality: an analysis of selected motets from William Byrd's Gradualia" by Sean Burton, *Choral journal* 47 (December 2006), in which attention is devoted to *Plorans ploravit, Justorum animae, Ave verum corpus, O quam suavis est* and *Solve jubente Deo*. Published in Polish with an English summary was "*My Ladye Nevells booke* (1591) Williama Byrda: historia, styl, forma oraz wykonawcze aspekty zbioru", or "*My Ladye Nevells booke* (1591) by William Byrd: history, style, form, and performance aspect of this collection", by Aneta Kaminska, *Przeglad muzykologiczny: Rocznik Instytutu Muzykologii UW* 5.5 (2005): 17-43.

Two of the contributors to *A Byrd celebration* had other articles about Byrd published during the past twelve months. Kerry McCarthy's paper "Byrd's patrons at prayer" appeared in *Music and letters* 89 (2008): 499-509. To celebrate the annual conference of the Royal Musical Association taking place at the University of Aberdeen, the local committee arranged for *My Ladye Nevells Booke* (MLNB) to be displayed in Aberdeen City Art Gallery from May to August 2008, covering the period of the conference. Given the strengths of the newly revitalized Music Department at the University, one of the themes of the conference was Byrd's music. All these events were written up by myself in "Lady Nevell brings Byrd to Aberdeen", *EMR* 127 (2008): 9-10.

Michael Procter and Jeremy L. Smith have both published articles about Byrd before. This year Michael contributed "Byrd's music for Candlemas", *Sacred music* 135 (Spring 2008): 24-29. Last year Jeremy gave the first paper at the annual conference on the history of the book trade, held at the Foundling Museum in London's Bloomsbury. At the following conference the previous year's proceedings are launched as a book in the series *Publishing pathways*, and his paper appears as "Turning a new leaf: William Byrd, the East music-publishing firm and the Jacobean succession", at pp.25-43 in *Music and the book trade from the sixteenth to the twentieth century*, edited by Robin Myers, Michael Harris and Giles Mandelbrote (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press; London: British Library, 2008).

Finally, new and most welcome to Byrd publishing is Suzanne Cole, the Tallis scholar from Melbourne University. Her paper "Who is the father? Changing perceptions of Tallis and Byrd in late nineteenth-century England" was also published in *Music and letters*, 89 (2008): 212-26.

Several articles are known to be in preparation or scheduled for publication. Julian Grimshaw's paper at the International William Byrd Conference (IWBC) "Byrd and the development of fuga in England" is destined for *Early Music*. Also from IWBC, Jeremy Smith's paper "Is there a best text for Byrd's Psalmes, Sonets & songs?" is included in *Sleuthing the muse: essays in honor of William F. Prizer* edited by K. Forney and Jeremy, to be published by Pendragon Press. John Harley has written an article on MLNB for the 2009 *Bookplate Journal*. My article "Three glimpses of Byrd's music during its nadir" should appear in *The Consort*'s 2009 issue. And I am preparing "Tough love: Byrd's music arranged for instruments by his contemporaries" for the new electronic *Viola da Gamba Society journal*. At the conference on "Polyphony for the Proper of the Mass in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance" Kerry McCarthy is further pursuing the subject of her recent book in a paper entitled "Byrd and the mass-proper tradition". The proceedings are being published by Brepols in 2010. Finally, news of a remarkable development in Byrd scholarship. During the past year, Kerry McCarthy and John Harley have rediscovered and verified up to ten books signed by Byrd himself. Considering that none at all were known to Byrd scholars before last year, this is an astonishing turn of events. The figure is still uncertain as new rediscoveries keep turning up, and there is at the time of writing some uncertainty that all are signed by William Byrd the composer, his being a common name in Elizabethan London. The findings are being described in an article entitled "From the library of William Byrd" scheduled for this coming September in *Musical times*. Look out for the most dynamic advance in our knowledge of Byrd since John's book in 1997.

There was also an important new publication of Byrd's music during 2008, quite an event with the completion of *The Byrd edition*. The contemporary arrangement for lyra viols of Byrd's Lullaby was published in Kritzendorf, Austria, by Oriana Music (OM119). The full title is *Birds lullaby: Lulla, lullaby William Byrd (c1540-1623) set for three bass viols Alfonso way* reconstructed by Richard Carter from the single surviving part in the John Browne bandora & lyra viol book. Publication of the other piece by Byrd which survives in a contemporary arrangement for lyra viol, *Ne irascaris*, is forthcoming from the same editor and publisher.

RECORDINGS

Volume 11 of The Cardinall's Musick Byrd Edition appeared early in February 2009. For once the advance publicity, trumpeting it as a most eagerly anticipated release, was justified. Entitled *Hodie Simon Petrus* (Hyperion CDA67653) it features several motets from the 1591 *Cantiones* and the sumptuous 1607 propers for SS Peter and Paul uniquely amongst Byrd's *Gradualia* in six parts. These are glorious performances, and at last Andrew Carwood adheres to tempi which allow the singers to do full justice to the music: too often in previous recordings of other *Gradualia* his speeds have been to fast, and have either gobbled up Byrd's rhythmic and harmonic subtleties, or made the performances sound perfunctory. From the 1605 *Gradualia* we are given the first recording of *Laetania*, effective but functional music which is unlikely to be commercially outwith an inclusive project such as this. There are two premiere recordings from the 1591 *Cantiones* in *Levemus corda* and *Descendit de coelis* both of which are superb in quality of music and rendition. Every track is a winner but perhaps the opening of *Miserere mei* and the conclusion of *Circumdederunt me* can be selected for honourable mention, while *Recordare Domine* confirms the excellence conveyed by the earlier recording by the Sarum Consort.

Given the existence of Fretwork's recording of Byrd's complete consort music, it is exciting to be able to report a premiere within this repertory. The early Fantasia a6 #1 (BE17 no 11) survives slightly incomplete and so was omitted from Fretwork's disc. However, it can easily be made good from his 1575 motet *Laudate pueri*. Until recently it was received wisdom that this motet was Byrd's adaptation of his fantasia, but an increasing number of scholars are suggesting that the motet came first. The texts of the two pieces vary in places. There have been many recordings of Byrd's two mature fantasias nos 2-3 in six parts, but number one has now been recorded for the first time. It is played by the Rose Consort of Viols on *Four Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal*, Deux-Elles DXL 1129. On the same label, DXL 1136, and sponsored appropriately by the British Library, is a fine anthology of keyboard pieces *For My Ladye Nevell* (from MLNB, to state the obvious) played by Terence Charlton on the harpsichord. Meanwhile on the Musica Sacra label (m00302) new to CD is *Venite exultemus Domino* on *William Byrd: Gradualia (1607)* performed by Ensemble Plus Ultra, "music for the Blessed Sacrament, Corpus Christi, Feasts of Saints Peter and Paul, and organ works". The intention behind this fine recording is to reproduce the sense of claustrophobia likely to have been present during recusant celebrations of the banned Roman Catholic rites. As proof that Byrd remains a vital force in modern music as well as abiding in the musical museum, Richard Uttley plays *Variations on a theme by William Byrd* by Timothy Jackson on a disc of contemporary piano music entitled *Piano* (UH Recordings 0200 1 1009); the theme in question is the *Pavan: the Earl of Salisbury*.

Forthcoming discs during the following twelve months include volume 12 of The Cardinall's Musick Byrd Edition listed in the current Hyperion catalogue (CDA67675) including more premieres from the *Gradualia*, and a new recording of Byrd's Lamentations, of which we cannot ever have too many, this time sung by The Men of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle (Delphian DCD 34068).

PERFORMANCES

Byrd's music featured in many concerts and recitals, as well as services, over the past year, and this selection seems as delectable as any of its predecessors and possibly even more so, last year notwithstanding. In the annual William Byrd Memorial Concert, at the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Stondon Massey, Essex, the Stondon Singers, under Keith Roberts, gave a programme entitled "Music by Byrd and his Contemporaries" which included *Tu es Petrus, Constitues eos principes, Solve jubente Deo, Infelix ego* and *O lux beata Trinitas,* plus the seldom-performed Fantasia a6 #1 (see above anent recordings) played by the Stondon Recorder Consort.

Most commendably the Choir of St John's Scottish Episcopal Church in Princes Street, Edinburgh, included the divine *Beati mundo corde* at choral evensong on Sunday 17 August during the Edinburgh Festival. Also in Edinburgh, at St Michael and All Saints' Scottish Episcopal Church, Tollcross, Sang Scule with the Squair Mile Consort of Viols gave "William Byrd: Voices & Viols"on Saturday 14 June. In a first half which included music by other composers, Sang Scule performed *Sing joyfully, Laetentur caeli* and *Laudibus in sanctis*, while in the second half they were joined by the Squair Mile Consort to perform *Alack when I look back, Christ rising, Have mercy upon me, Who made thee Hob* and that neglected Christmas gem *An earthly tree.* The consort also played the *Voluntary for my Ladye Nevell* arranged for viols, and the second In nomine a4.

Even further north (yes, there is more of Scotland beyond Edinburgh) "Huntly's Center" was "a celebration of the music of Ronald Center" at Strathbogie Church, Huntly, Aberdeenshire on Saturday 3 May. Local ensembles and soloists combined in an evening of music based around the compositions of this outstanding musician born in Aberdeen in 1913 and resident in nearby Huntly from 1943 till his death there in 1973. The first item was Byrd's *Deo gracias* sung by the Garmouth Singers.

Later the same month, the Renaissance Singers performed the *Great Service* in the Grosvenor Chapel in London's Mayfair on Sunday the 18th. Also in London, Fretwork with Clare Wilkinson gave an exciting programme at the Wigmore Hall on December 7 entitled "Three World Premiers in Wigmore" which, notwithstanding the title, included the Pavan & Galliard a6, *Turn our captivity*, one of the fantasies a6, and the hitherto entirely neglected *Where the blind.*

Lincoln Cathedral provided one of its all too rare admissions that it is associated with Byrd on Friday 12 September when Sandra Tuppen of the British Library gave a talk in the Wren Library about MLNB (see above), and the cathedral's assistant organist Charles Harrison played pieces from the manuscript on the harpsichord.

And at the ever vibrant Hexham Abbey Festival, James Weeks' vocal ensemble Exaudi gave an exhilarating programme of Renaissance and modern music in the Abbey itself on Saturday 4 October. They actually began with the never-performed-live-but-ought-to-be-often *Ave maris stella,* a substantial treasure a3 from the *Gradualia.* This ensured that the proceedings could not get any better but they certainly remained every bit as good throughout, and later the ensemble sang *Vultum tuum* (#16 in *Gradualia*), *Nunc dimittis* also from *Gradualia,* and *O lux beata Trinitas.*

This is my last annual "Byrd on a wire". By the time you read this, I will have retired from Aberdeen University Library, though I shall have become an honorary research fellow, and will have left Scotland to return to England. (Note to Alec Salmond: homecoming works both ways.) I shall continue to offer Clifford occasional articles for as long as he wants them.

My commitment to early music in general and Byrd, and even Carver, in particular will remain unabated. Byrd left us over 500 pieces of music, all of it of the highest quality. I hope that through the column readers have been enabled to engage with this repertory and to venture off the beaten track to perform, listen to, or read about that vast treasure the majority of which remains neglected. While writing this article it was a joy to hear St John's College Cambridge include the magnificent *Tribulationes civitatum* during their broadcast of choral evensong for Ash Wednesday on BBC Radio 3. Apart from his secular songs and Anglican music, nearly all of Byrd's oeuvre is now available on disc, and only two discs remain to be issued in The Cardinall's Musick Byrd Edition of the complete Latin church music. On one of these will be *Salve sola Dei genetrix.* I promise that you will be amazed that such a transcendent musical gem has lain neglected for four centuries, but soon it will be available for all to hear: an inspiring note upon which to end!

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett & Barbara Sachs

1050 YEARS OF CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

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

This is one of those books which pours fascinating light on an interesting subject that has hitherto been inadequately researched but which still leaves the unanswered question: how typical are the results that are presented? What's missing is a survey that can show not merely what we know but what we don't know and distinguishing positive evidence that there were no children at an institution from lack of any evidence. Some statistics might be drawn if a questionnaire were completed for each major cathedral and monastic establishments with columns ticked if children are known to have been present, if there is evidence that they sang, and if so, whether they sang polyphony, with a chronological parameter built in as well. The introduction has some attempt to draw the evidence of the book together, but not in any rigorous way.

That aside, though, this is a book that impinges on our ideas of children's education, their musical training and how music was performed. My reading of it has been spread over several months, so I am no longer equipped to offer any detailed notes on each chapter. Two sections in Anne Bagnall Yardley's contribution on 'The Musical education of young girls' have resonances in modern choirs. The concept of 'liturgical literacy' as 'the performance of sacred Latin texts in which the relationship to grammatical understanding is ambiguous'.[1] And the practice of some choirs of singers raising their hands when they make a mistake is a milder version of 'kneeling to the ground devoutly' (p. 61).

Topics range from Joseph Dyer on the Roman Schola Cantorum from the early 8th century on (somewhat later than the mythical accounts of Gregory the Great) to Noel O'Regan on choirboys in early modern (late-16th and 17th century) Rome. One wonders what the 'false sixths which pulled onto sevenths' were with which the boy singing Anima in Cavalieri's *Rappresentatione* stole away the soul of a listener (p. 238). This book has a wealth of information and will lead readers into all sorts of directions.

SENNFL

Kathleen Berg *'The Swiss Orpheus': an appraisal of the life and music of Ludwig Sennfl (1489/91 – 1543)*. Peacock Press, 2008. 192 pp +200 pp of music, £25.00. ISBN 978 1 904846 32 1

Longstanding readers will know of Kathleen, if only because, when we had Christmas competitions, she always won them and others were discouraged. She has been a music teacher and performer all her life, and over the last few years she has become enthralled by the music of Sennfl. Since there is no book on him in English, she felt that she should fill the gap. Those of us who do know his music, are generally chiefly aware of the Tenorlied, comparatively simple (though sometimes ingenious) setting of strophic songs, sometimes beautiful, sometimes jolly and scurrilous and, back in the 1960s and 1970s, favourite haunts of crumhorn quartets and the like. But he was primarily a church musician, worthy to be ranked with Isaac – which sadly meant more at his time than now.

The biographical part of the book is well documented and neatly arranged by time and topic. I know she spent a lot of time chasing sources, which included a certain amount of absorbing of the local life, helped by having a husband whose mother-tongue was German. It can be read without too much specialised knowledge, and technical matters are explained without being too didactic. The chapters on the music, however, could benefit from a little more musicological investigation. I didn't have to reach far from my desk to see the problems with *Da Jakob nu das Kleid ansach*, for instance (p. 139). But researching a topic like this without easy access to a good musicological library must be incredibly difficult.

The representative collection of music (complete pieces) is extremely useful, though the quality of editing varies a bit. Looking at *Haec est dies* for instance (p. M152), although the text is translated, the punctuation doesn't fit the sense. The relationship between book and music could have been clearer, at the least the notes should give the page of the music and vice versa. Notationally, using a breve rest for a bar of two breves is confusing: there may have been a technical problem with the programme, but these can usually be surmounted with ingenuity.

The disappointment is the lack of a complete list of works to which to tag references in the text and music, and to the list of editions. But I don't want to be critical. I would love to have been able to offer more positive input while the book was being written. Congratulations on the result. There are a large number of retired amateur musicians of considerable intelligence who might like to find similar topics to occupy their spare time (and Kathleen wasn't even retired while working on her book!)

The spelling with two Ns follows an acrostic poem that Sennfl set.

1 p. 50, note 2, quoting Katherine Zieman in *Learning and Literacy in Medieval England and Abroad* ed. Sarah Rees Jones, Tournhout, 2003, pp.97-118.

1589 INTERMEDI

Nina Treadwell *Music and Wonder at the Medici Court: The 1589 Interludes for La pellegrina* Indiana UP, 2008. xvii + 277pp, $39.95. ISBN 978 0 253 35218 7

This arrived a few days after Hugh Keyte, who probably has as deep a knowledge of the Florentine Intermedi as anyone, went home after ten days staying with us. I didn't send it on to him, since that would be more likely to produce a book in four years time than a review in four weeks. However, anyone trying to understand the *Intermedi* would benefit enormously from talking at length to him, since he uniquely has researched the edition, the music, the staging, the philosophy, the symbolism and virtually every aspect of the original production, but (unlike most scholars) has also twice been able to reconstruct the scoring and other aspects of performance, first for a live broadcast relayed throughout Europe in 1979 (Treadwell's bibliography lists the booklet published on that occasion) and for the EMI recording a decade or so later. The video used the soundtrack of the CD, but Hughes visual ideas, based on a thorough study of how the original production might have worked, were not adopted.

There have been four other recordings of the music (Skip Sempe's is too recent to be listed), and the book includes selections with a dozen musicians. The music is not, however, at the centre of most people's experience of music of the latter part of the 16th century: it is rather something to read about rather than hear or even perform. Treadwell has absorbed the vast literature on the subject. What interests me in her approach is the way she takes seriously the surprisingly extensive comments by members of the audience which survive. What is clear from these is the way the symbolism, which is so important in the official accounts, was missed. This could be written off as sheer ignorance. After all, some people go to opera now and don't pay all that much attention to the story. But there is a problem that the language of music and that of visual symbols doesn't correspond, and if the key isn't obvious, they can clash.[2]

The whole complex question of authorial intent and audience reception underlies much of the book. There's no answer, but it is interesting to have it exemplified without any temporal separation of author and reception. But it is also valuable for the close study of how the intermedi work in detail. Introductory chapters discuss the dynastic significance and more general matters. She notices the clash between the humanistic emphasis on textual clarity, apparent in the chordal nature of some of the music, with the virtuosic solos which tear the text to tatters. The tension is resolved by the way embellishment links with the theme of the most famous movement in the work, 'O che nuovo miraculo', the text of the final ballo which (admittedly without words) became an international hit as the *Ballo della Granduca* or *Aria di Fiorenza*. The CD that accompanies the book, directed by the author, who plays chitarrone and guitar, does not represent the extravagance of the original; I don't recognise the names of most of the baker's dozen of performers (though Robert Mealy's is familiar enough, as is Jim Tyler, probably also in the band in the 1979 performance), but 'The Pellegrina Project' produces credible versions of the smaller pieces; the ensemble singing needs just a little more bite, but the sheer beauty of the music comes over.

Sadly, the 1589 Intermedi can come to life only in the imagination: a comprehensive reconstruction is unlikely unless some oil-baron or media mogul shows interest in the idea. But understanding of this significant artistic event is enriched by Nina Treadwell's book.

2. cf p. 18, note 3 above, for a recent failure to understand stage symbolism

VENICE & NAPLES
reviewed by Barbara Sachs

(These two items are in the series I Turchini saggi: Collana a cura del Centro di Musica Antica Pietà de' Turchini.)

Francesco Cavalli *La circolazione dell'opera veneziana del seicento/The circulation of the [sic] Venetian Opera in the 17th century* Edited by Dinko Fabris. Turchini Edizioni, 2005. 358pp €30.00. ISBN 88-89491-01-9

In 2002 the Centro di Musica Antica in Naples celebrated the 400th anniversary of Cavalli's birth by holding a convention organized by the editor of these Acts, along with Federica Castaldo and Paologiovanni Maione. Despite the impression given by the poorly translated dual-language title, only 5 of the 14 studies are in English, but English readers may find the volume irresistible for those, and worth a chuckle on p. 343 at *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Marcians.*

In "Philology and Semiotics of Baroque Opera Performances Today: Making Sense of Cavalli (and Ourselves) in the 21st Century" Carlo Majer sets the stage for the opening performance of *La Statira, Principessa di Persia* reminding us that Baroque opera, a historical multi-medial art-form, had an important role in creating the Western mind (along with, subsequently, *The Rocky Horror Show*). He writes about what recovering a Baroque opera represents, making the nice analogy with adopting a child, and reaching the debatable conclusion that after the necessary musicological input, the result, especially in our visual culture, depends more on the director than the conductor. Jennifer Williams Brown's "Out of the 'Dark Ages': Editing Cavalli's Operas in the Postmodern World" is very thought-provoking, especially to me as an editor of Baroque cantatas. I like her exposition of the purpose of 'modern' versus 'post modern' musical editing, the first seeking a definitive version of the author's intentions, the latter allowing for his changing intentions, and for all the stages of transmission inseparable from the sources themselves. Neither goal is rejected, and using the example of Cavalli's *Calisto* she describes her editorial philosophy, which tries to "mediate...the distance between Cavalli's informal notation and 21st century expectations".

The article by Henrik Schulze on "Cavalli Manuscript Sources and Performance Practice" provides us the

opportunity to see 19 pages of "messy" copies (from *Artemisia, Xerse, Ercole amante,* and *Statira*) used by Cavalli or other continuo players in performance. These document the process of producing an opera, whereas the neat "fair copies", which a copyist (or himself) made for posterity, tell us much less about performance practice.

Beth Glixon's "Poner in musica un'opera" explains how opera composers were paid by impresarios and how some of Cavalli's contracts differed from those generally stipulated; a table showing the fees for 26 operas commissioned between 1650 and 1668, of which 8 were Cavalli's.
Mauro Calcagno untangles historical mistakes of attribution, and advances hypotheses about the political, stylistic, and symbolic motivations for mutilating Aurelio's *Eliogabalo* (set by Cavalli for performance in Venice in 1667), replacing scabrous elements of the drama and previous musical settings, in a succession of productions in various cities, set by Boretti between 1668 and 1678, and in 1687 by Orgiani as *Il vitio depresso e la virtù coronata.*

Jonathan Glixon's short study "*Maravigliose mutationi*: la produzione di scene e macchine a Venezia nell'epoca di Cavalli", is about types of scenery and various systems for paying for them, and is taken from his and Beth's *Inventing the Business of Opera: The Impresario and His World in 17th Century Venice* (2005).

Though Ellen Rosand's title looks misleading, in "*L'Incoronazione di Poppea* di Francesco Cavalli" she does not attribute the opera to him. Rather, she discusses in detail some important tentative conclusions deriving from a close look at corrections, cancellations, transpositions, cuts and remarks that appear in the older, Venetian, manuscript (Vp) which was used by Cavalli – possibly for the Naples production of 1651. Her intriguing speculations account for differences between this manuscript and the later Neapolitan "clean" copy (Np). They are not easy to follow because 1) the examples from Vp, must be read across the "seam", from the back (*v*) of one page across each system to the front (*r*) of the next, but appear here vertically instead of horizontally; 2) some pages are given as examples twice (if discussed twice); 3) where the copyist's recopying of something is shown, it looks so identical (at least in the reduced facsimiles), that one is further apt to mistake one example for another; and 4) the penultimate example, 12a, is labelled Vp instead of Np.
Nevertheless, this is an extremely useful study. I read it with pencil in hand, annotating the examples. Detailed captions would have been helpful! To sum up some of her conclusions: Np was not used for a performance, but made for posterity. Vp, with references to pages copied elsewhere, transpositions to suit the singers, and the contingent cutting of some roles and/or scenes, was clearly used for performance, probably the last one, in Naples, where it might even have been called *Il Nerone.* Because of material missing in Vp, but copied in Np (or for which space was left there), there must have been a third score, which we do not have. So since Vp is both abridged and amplified with respect to the 1642 libretto, it might have been used for the 1643 première and still later revised for another performance (the hypothetical Venice one of 1646?). Since Cavalli personally used Vp, he might have had his wife make the 1650 copy, leading to the opera's being attributed to him in Naples in 1651.

The next four studies regard the exportation of opera from Venice to Naples and/or Palermo. As Wendy Heller asks at the beginning of "Amazons, Astrology, and the House of Aragon: *Veremonda* tra Venezia e Napoli": "What happens when an opera... is presented in the context of opposing political realitities?" – for the anti-clerical, libertine Accademia degli Incogniti, and in the religious circles of the Spanish monarchy? The difficulty is increased here, as the original derivation of the subject, from God-and-country trumpeting Spanish sources, was satirically revised (or parodied) for the Venetian theatres, based directly on the plot of Cicognini's *Celio*, but here named *Veremonda* after the fictitious, exotic wife of a weak, depressed, astrologer king, who is very aptly characterized by Cavalli's music. The anagrammatically named author, "Luigi Zorzisto", must have been Giulio Strozzi; the scenographer, G. B. Balbi, dedicated the Neapolitan libretto to the Spanish Viceroy, praising the heroic Amazon of Aragon, and the Venetian one to the French ambassador, apologizing for his "impudence" (given current French-Spanish tensions); and most surprising of all, Maiolino Bisaccioni's history of the 1647 revolt in Naples, published in 1652, mentions Amazons and denigrates astrologers (these curious quotations are given only in Italian) and expresses the Republican ideals of Venice echoed in this libretto. So perhaps he was even involved (significantly) in the revision of *Celio* together with Strozzi. Heller's answer is that both publics, primed by these astute diplomatic excuses, were satisfied by a "comic anti-hero", a "reassuring victory over the Ottomans", the stupendous spectacle and excellent music.

Dinko Fabris reconstructs the passage of *Statira principessa di Persia* from Venice (1656) to Naples (1666), thanks to the survival of both scores and librettos. The earlier score is almost entirely in Cavalli's hand, and the unchanged parts of the opera (laments, arias on ostinato basses, ensembles) are clearly in his style. The revisions (Neapolitan scenes, characters, dialect) were presumably planned soon thereafter by Francesco Cirillo and Francesco Provenzale, even though the plague of 1656 postponed the event for 10 years. This was the last opera by Cavalli to be produced in Naples, though many other "Statiras" followed, by Scarlatti, Gasparini, Pollaroli, Albinoni, Porpora and Mercadante!
Maria Chiara Bertieri compares the libretti of *Caligula delirante*, presented in Venice in 1672, in Naples in 1673, in various other Italian cities thereafter, and finally in 1714 again in Naples. In "Le pazzie di Caligola dalla Laguna al Golfo" she describes the additions, restylings, metrical simplifications, comic episodes, and new (useless or comic) characters, such as Pistolfo, the latter providing the Neapolitan public with "two madmen for the price of one".

Anna Tedesco's contribution, on Francesco Cavalli and Venetian operas brought to Palermo, is more about operas by Provenzale which were brought to theatres there from Naples, between 1655 (*Giasone*) and 1693 (the inauguration of the Teatro Santa Cecilia). She gives a detailed chronology up to 1700. Only librettos and other

documents have survived, and Cavalli is only mentioned in connection with *Giasone* and Provenzale's *Ciro,* and therefore her intention is limited to the comparison of librettos with those of respective Venetian and Neapolitan performances. Even this is speculative, since variants will not help to reconstruct the lost music, and identical poetic texts are not evidence that the music wasn't rewritten. Her hope is to find evidence of interaction, and even Sicilian music in extant collections of arias.

The Teatro del Falcone of Genoa is the subject of Armando Fabio Ivaldi's study. As in other cities, the Venetian librettos were modified, often with the insertion of comic characters and scenes. Here, however, these changes became essential to the plots. Additional scenes were given to the original characters, new characters, or to characters borrowed from other dramas. Being generally figures from lower classes, they parodied the main story and took sides in disputes with the court, the laws, or the normal vicissitudes of life, contributing to the birth of 18th century opera.

In 1660 and 1662 two operas by Cavalli, *Xerse* and *Ercole amante,* were rather poorly received in Paris; whereas in 1705 the latter was well received. Barbara Nestola investigates how in the second half of the 17th century French collectors, composers, copyists and publishers, despite the current prejudices and disputes over the defects of Italian music, obtained and transmitted Venetian opera arias, many of which have survived in print. In 1695 Pierre Ballard published *Airs Italiens, des plus Célèbres auteurs...* (arias by unspecified composers from operas performed in Venice between 1676 and 1685); between 1699 and 1708 Christophe Ballard published five volumes entitled *Recueil desi meilleurs airs italiens,* in addition to collections of arias inserted in French comedies. The marketing agenda was to give the French "quelque idée de ce grands spectacles", but the end result was to circulate Italian opera. Two tables identify the composers and operas of 26 arias from 6 sources.

In the final study Paologiovanni Maione describes the musical institution of the Cappella Reale in Naples, which hired, between 1650 and 1700, "hombres insignes" from Falconieri to Provenzale – the very musicians (both maestri and singers) who were in increasing demand in "foreign" theatres and therefore less dependent on the court. Documents regard details about of the varying ensemble (in 1609, 24 singers, 8 violins, 2 violas, 2 cornetts, 1 basson, 1 harp, 5 organs, 1 theorbo, 2 archlutes) about which Maione will report more exhaustively in the future.

Marta Columbo and Paologiovanni Maione *La Cappella musicale del Tesoro di San Gennaro di Napoli tra Sei e Settecento.* Turchini Edizioni, 2008. 633pp, €32,00 ISBN 978-88-89491-03-4

The appendices (pages 185 to 614) to this weighty tome present all the musically interesting material from the 17th and 18th centuries found in the historical archives of the Deputazione [this means the board of directors... which was founded in 1601] del Tesoro di San Gennaro di Napoli. The content and transcription of the documents are reported in such a way as to make them comprehensible. An index of names (pages 615-633) lists approximately 1400 names. The text itself is also provided with lengthy footnotes (especially those giving sources other than the Deputazione) and other detailed lists and tables. Most of this documentation is unpublished, and therefore offered as indispensable for the study of sacred music produced by the Cappella del Tesoro, inextricable from the entire sphere of musical activities in Naples in those centuries, not limited to sacred music. The book bases its reconstruction of that activity on the documentation, and in the context of the political history of Naples.

BOLOGNESE SONATAS

Gregory Barnett *Bolognese Instrumental Music, 1660–1710: Spiritual Comfort, Courtly Delight, and Commercial Triumph* Ashgate, 2008. xix + 394pp, £60.00

This is absolutely essential reading for anyone interested in North Italian instrumental music of the period, since Bologna was a major centre of influence, and much of what is written here can (with caution) be applied elsewhere. But the book itself benefits from concentration on the town itself and composers from Cazzati (arrived in Bologna in 1657) to Torelli (died 1709). There is an astonishing amount of information here, tabulated when it is helpful to do so, lots of music examples, all underlying an intelligent discussion on essential topics. The first chapter is musicians and how they worked, including discussion of the ensembles in which they played and the differences in function and location; the significant general quote is from another time and place: Vicentino and Zarlino in the 1550s: loud in church, softly in the chamber music (p. 48). Chapter 2 relates forms and function. Chapter 3 moves from Bologna (and its collection of prints of the period) to Modena, where the MSS give a distinctly different take on the repertoire: more virtuosic and probably influenced by German composers. Chapter 4 is concerned with the difference between *Da chiesa* and *Da camera*, concluding that 'sonata' without qualification usually means the former. He uses a modern terminological analogy: 'nurse' usually implies (or at least used to until recently) female, and sex is only specified for male nurses. Spinet or harpsichord is only mentioned in explicitly *da camera* works; other sonatas require organ (p. 179). Chapter 5 deals with specific musical features that characterise Church sonatas (counterpoint, chromaticism, smooth full sections with suspensions, virtuosity above a pedal (as a sort of intonation), chordal openings suggesting the 𝅗𝅥 𝅗𝅥 𝅘𝅥𝅮 𝅘𝅥𝅮 rhythm of *Kyrie*, etc. He suggests that there are ten points in the mass for which instrumental music might be suitable (p. 241), and I like the idea on the previous page: 'Where we might be inclined to identify secular influences... all but the most dogmatic listeners of the period heard jubilant *topoi* of sacred alleluias.' Chapter 6 discusses tone and mode (useful for anyone who doesn't understand the 17th-century terminology) and the final chapter is entitled 'The Concerto before the Concerto'.

A couple of passing comments.

Table 0.1 (p. 19-20). It's bad enough reading long Arabic numbers without grouping digits in threes (why are computers not capable now of manipulating commas?) but Roman IIIIIII isn't at all clear. It does show the difference in quantities roughly at a glance, but it needs a typographical equivalent of the barred gate so that every fifth mark goes cross-ways, as one would write it.

p. 36. The corentos illustrated do not show a regular shift of accent from the first to the second beat (as the author claims): the rhythmic interest is in the unpredictablility (except at cadences) of the shift.

BACH TRILLS

Jerome Carrington *Trills in the Bach Cello Suites* University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. xvi + 195pp, $xx.xx ISBN 978 8061 4001 8

My initial impressions made me very suspicious. The back cover has encomia by seven modern cellists and Lynn Harrell's name on the front is in type nearly as large as the author on the strength of a foreword that in normal type would be less than a page. Then the Preface suggests that nothing was written on ornamentation until Neumann, though he does refer to Dannreuther. My recollection of Neumann is of intense suspicion, but on the strength of this book, I reckon I must read him again. Carrington is not uncritical of Neumann, but uses him as his main authority, and very sensible much of it is. His detailed discussions seem generally right. With around 100 trills in the cello suites, this allows for two pages each, necessary because he relies on an over-complicated description of types of trill based on Neumann's pedantic classification.

Carrington is right to expect players to understand the harmony. In most cases, deciding whether a trill starts on the beat or on the note above depends on this. The majority of trills (whether notated of not) are on the first note of a dominant/tonic cadence. Unless you are playing the bass, adding them should become second nature. Cellists may be less aware of this, since in ensemble music, they are usually playing the bass, so don't habitually play cadential trills. One of the problems of tables of ornaments (like the usual one Bach copied from a French keyboard source for WF Bach) is that they are always given as melody, with no harmony and no relationship to the beat. But if the player keeps in his head the normal 4 3 harmony of the cadence, he needs to notice if the 4 is already written out: if so, the trill on the 3 starts on the beat. If the 4 is not notated, then he has to decide how long the 4 lasts before he trills. Most of the examples can be solved by that system, without discussing any notes preceding the trill that are encompassed in the various compound trills. In some examples, Carrington confusingly treats a recurring pattern in previous bars as preliminary notes to a trill, which is confusing if that involves subverting the pattern by playing the upbeat at the speed of the trill. Trills not at cadences can be judged on whether any harmonic tension is needed.

The marking of trills was chiefly a convention for keyboard music. Players of other instruments seem to have managed to master the conventions without the need for signs to be scattered all over the music. Carrington is right to be suspicious of the Berlin School (CPE Bach and Quantz) as authorities for Bach's practice. I don't think cellists should be too concerned with details provided they understand the harmony, treat cadential trills as an indication of tension, but don't break a melodic line by repeating the note before the trill when a suspension is not required.

VARIORUM COLLECTED STUDIES

Donna G. Cardamone *The* canzone villanesca alla napolitana: *Social, Cultural and Historical Contexts* Ashgate Variorum, 2008. xii + 312pp, £70.00

This has a more specific subject than most of the Variorum collection of papers that I've read, but it is none the worse for that. I find this sort of detailed and meticulous scholarship fascinating: the taking of, for instance, a particular print and following arguments in all directions to establish it's sources and milieu, how it was printed, who were the poets (if that isn't too posh a word) and composers, and what the songs are about. The repertoire comprises many short pieces, so some are included complete, and the author offers translations that are much more accurate than older scholars would have dared produce. Two articles relate to a major composer who impinges on her subject, Orlando di Lasso. I'm not sure that I'd go out and spend £70.00 on it, but anyone performing lighter music from the mid-16th century will welcome the convenient collection of the articles here. One thing I miss: both Cardamone and Cyr are familiar names, but I know nothing about them. A more personal introduction about what drew them to their areas of research and what broader relationship they have to music and musicology would give the volume a little originality and may convey their satisfaction in the quality and usefulness of their scholarly work.

Mary Cyr *Essays on the Performance of Baroque Music: Opera and Chamber Music in France and England* Ashgate Variorum, 2008. xii + 330pp, £70.00

This begins with important prefaces to the Collected Works of Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre, recently published by Broude, and an article on her from Early Music vol. 31. The other 19 items are earlier, going back to 1971 with a study of an important source of embellished English song, Egerton 2971 (the article reproduced here that I know best). There are also articles on ornamentation in English lyra music, violin playing in late 17th-century England and tempo gradations in Purcell's sonatas. Much of the rest of the book focuses on or around Rameau, and I was particularly glad to re-read the article on the bass in the Paris Opéra orchestra (Early Music vol. 10). Much of the selection here is concerned with how music of the period was performed, which makes it of particular interest to our readership.

CD REVIEWS

CHANT

L'Arbre de Jessé: Chant grégorien et polyphonies médiévales Ensemble Gilles Binchois, Dominique Vellard 68' 33"
Glossa GCD P32302

Given the generous space of a sixty-page CD booklet, how does the editor prioritise? What was particularly welcome was the full explanation of the music's significance in relation to the scriptures, stained glass windows and illuminated manuscripts. A clear account was offered of the Tree of Jesse and how Christ's coming was traced back genealogically through the Old Testament. One could spend several hours savouring the details in relation to the recording. To have produced all this and translations of the Latin in four languages is worthy of the production company's name, Glossa.

The singing throughout is calmly beautiful, the effortless embellishment and interweaving of paired voices executed with apparent ease. The programme sequence derived from seven centuries of sacred music allows for variety of form and style. The intricate motets *Balaam inquit* and *Salve mater* and the rondeau, *Qui pro nobis*, with their full-voiced texture and close harmony, provide a contrast amidst the soprano, tenor and baritone solo pieces. The exciting offertory *Vir erat*, sung by Dominique with alternating leaps and other devices, would surely have prompted the congregation to empty their purses. After a splendid *Rex Saloman* transcribed by Wulf Arlt, the finale is reached with a genealogical sequence according to St Luke sung with swirling ornaments by the two tenors, and *Stirps Jesse*, an example of 12th-century organum sung by tenor and baritone as a moving voice complemented by an adaptable bourdon. *Diana Maynard*

MEDIEVAL

Hildegard von Bingen & Birgitta von Schweden Les Flamboyants 56' 46" (rec 1998)
Raum Klang *Souvenir* RKS 59802 ££

This CD is produced, one presumes, mainly for visitors and tourists rather than for a specialist audience and as such it is clearly introduced, with brief lives of the two nuns, elucidation of their mystical words and comments on the differing styles of their music. No pretence of authenticity is made: the approach of Les Flamboyants is to allow for free interpretation of the monophonic songs, sometimes adding polyphony, both parallel and contrapuntal. Many pieces are accompanied by the vielle and/or flute, 'expressly against Birgitta's wishes'. The excuse is that the adaptations are for a modern audience.

The voices of the singers, Miriam, Kelly and Marilia have a fine ringing quality and they are thoroughly accomplished in their widely ranging embellishments. I mostly found the instruments distracting and intrusive, and, although I could appreciate that the echoing sounds of flute and vielle might suggest the heavenly spheres, there was something flat and diffuse about the sound of the vielle drone. The antiphon *Iam laetaris* was interpreted literally as a pretext for rejoicing in the form of an estampie on flute and vielle, though *O virgo ac diadema* reverted to a contemplative sequence by two singers. Assuming that the listener has by now entered into the spirit of the performance, the 'freely arranged' *Caritas* can make an impact, and this is followed by a complex dance-like, almost busily elaborate instrumental amplification of *Christe Patris excelsi*, followed, as a climax, by the *Ave Maria* celebrated with fountains of sound by two of the singers. *Diana Maynard*

Abbo Abbas: Polyphonies françaises et anglaises de l'an mil Dialogos, Katarina Livljanic. Marie Barenton, Clara Coutouly, Aurore Tillac 64' 08"
Ambronay AMY017

Dialogos have responded to the challenge of bringing to our ears medieval poetic and musical material from Winchester and Fleury which resists interpretation even with the expertise of specialist transcribers, such as Susan Rankin and Katarina Livljanic herself, and requires sensitive scholarly reconstruction before it can be performed. This recording is a feast for those who enjoy organum and acrostics both poetic and abecedary.

The recording is dedicated to the memory of Michel Bernstein who bravely continued to set up the microphones in the face of mortality. It includes an epitaph in narrative style celebrating the life of Abbo of Fleury, murdered after arousing jealousy and intellectual animosity. One of the best pieces is a reconstruction by Katarina of his acrostic poem *Otto valens Caesar* with a high bourdon and two solo voices, Katarina and Aurore, weaving their separate courses over a wide pitch range. The reconstructed 10th-century abecedary acrostic hymn by Wulfstan Wintoniensis celebrates Swithin's saintliness, and is followed by a memorial of Ethelwold Bishop of Winchester's translation to the heavenly spheres. This extensive programme ends with a joyful 11th-century *Christus natus est* with triple repetitions, each sung to a different harmony, which deserves adoption by present-day choirs.

Many ingenious effects were achieved by the voices, moving in parallel organum at pitch intervals unusual to the modern ear, sometimes mirroring each other like reflections in water, sometimes astringent as they were nearly resolving, often in close-textured harmony, occasionally declamatory and even briefly sounding Celtic. Not every moment was entirely pleasant or even as verbally lucid as one might have wished, and one of the voices tended to slide. There seemed to be an acoustic problem on the technical side, producing an uncomfortable reverberation. Just in case it was my CD player or ambience at fault, I played Katarina's amazing *Terra Adriatica* of medieval Croatian and Italian sacred music (Dialogos ED 13107) and the sound quality was perfect. *Diana Maynard*

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

My strange experience with this CD may be worth narrating. Not wishing to play music late at night, but perhaps in a hypnogogic state, I started to piece my way through the italicised English sections of the closely printed booklet. Codex Manesse, also called the Great Heidelberg Song Manuscript, created at the beginning of the 14th century we are informed, 'has one flaw: it contains no music'. Moreover 'most of the minnesong melodies have been lost and the corresponding music can be deduced from a parallel transmission or other sources for only a fraction of the Codex Manesse's texts.' Considerable study and ingenuity was required to pair each Manesse song with a matching tune. As I returned the booklet to its case my eye was caught by 'I CIARLATANI' on the cover. Why should a reputable ensemble call themselves charlatans in a field where 'authenticity' is prized? What ever would Wikipedia have to say on the matter? Well, online references to Codex Manesse had only just been modified, but there was a wealth of colourful illustrations in wonderfully perfect condition.

So it was with considerable curiosity that I actually listened to the recording. Fanfare on shawm and busina; estampie

on citole, rebec, dulcian and tambourine; crusaders' self-righteous claims sung to busina, shawm, fiddle and lute; accompanying fiddle, lute and bagpipes for a 'pornographic' song foisted by successive generations on to the name of Neidhart ... it was certainly in the spirit of medieval entertainment and laughter. Great scope for musicianship was evidently given by the absence of exact rhythmic records in medieval musical resources, or indeed the cutting into pieces of multi-voice notation for the purposes of binding. Linguistic potential is exploited for humorous effect: rushing a mouthful of words into a small musical space and making the most of exuberant assonance and alliteration. We are treated to an encore, too, not included in the list, and spared translation of the lyrics. All thoroughly enjoyable. *Diana Maynard*

14th CENTURY

Trecento Jill Feldman *S*, Kees Boeke *fl, veille* 66' 47" (rec 2001)
Et'Cetera KTC 1902
Jacopo da Bologna, Andreas Horganista de Florentia, Gherdello da Firenze, Matteo da Perugia, Johannes Ciconia & anon

In the February issue of *EMR* I reviewed Codex Chantilly 1 (KTC 1900) by the same team enlarged, so it is remarkable to observe the differences in presentation, whether subtle or obvious. In this earlier recording, Jill Feldman opens the programme by singing with a soprano flute which so closely matches her voice that at times when their parts intersect the listener may be tricked into imagining the flute is singing words. A viella and a tenor flute then take turns to accompany her singing, and there are two solo pieces for flute. Although she adapts the mood and style to the song, this alternating pattern presents the listener with less variety than in Codex Chantilly, where she is joined by a contrasting singer, Carlos Mena.

What affected me more, though, in my receptivity was the stiff manner in which the Trecento CD was introduced. Laurenz Lütteken aroused my interest in Codex Chantilly, and it cannot be just that the translators had vastly improved by 2007, though this is certainly true. An invitation to hear a new relationship to text 'directed towards its exterior efficacious portrayal, its sensual realization' is hardly a warm one. In 2001 Prof. Dr. Laurenz Lütteken through his interpreter indicates his disapproval of two-voice writing in its pure form 'without any "fanciful" but historically perfectly unfounded "completing" parts' whereas for the later recording the team had to be content with conjecture, as a daring approach to uncertain ascriptions and incomplete documentation was essential for their choice of rarer material.

Trecento is a wonderful showpiece for the skill and versatility of Jill Feldman and the instrumentalists, Fabio Galgani, Massa Marittima, Frederick Morgan and Fulvio Canevari. We are treated to complex rhythms, apparently independent and tangential yet complementary explorations of sound in the Pythagorean tuning, nimble delicacy, florid ornamentation, and a range of moods from plaintive to amusingly spirited. *Diana Maynard*

15th CENTURY

Dufay/Ambrose Field *Being Dufay* John Potter *T*, electronics 49' 30"
ECM New Series 2971 *see p. 42*

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

I'm always a bit suspicious when virtually every track of a medieval disc is credited to an arranger rather than an editor or the ensemble as a whole: it's presumably a matter of guaranteeing PRS returns. More worrying is that the music here often has little resemblance to extant music of the period. One could argue that because so little genuine dance music from the period survives apart from bare melodies. But there are a few examples, and they don't sound like this. This will no doubt be useful for dances, and the playing is certainly better than on the recordings dancers used back in the 1970s, when I first encountered early dance. Turning the tunes into music is a largely insoluble problem. I'd be interested to here if it actually works for dancing. *CB*

16th CENTURY

Byrd *Hodie Simon Petrus* The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood 67' 54"
Hyperion CDA67653
7 motets from *Cantiones Sacrae* 1591,
Propers for SS Peter & Paul from Gradualia II

Excellent as this singing is, I am surprised that Andrew Carwood, one of the co-directors of the BBC Singers, did not pick up a few points which sprang straight to my perhaps over-critical ears. In *Miserere mei Deus*, one of the pieces I know best of this selection, the diction of the various singers varies noticeably: the upper voices sing a very dry, barely audible 't', whereas the basses sing a splashy English 't'. And the phrase *dele iniquitatem meam* flags halfway through, instead of leading through the long word to its strongest syllable.

Apart from such minor quibbles, the ensemble singing is admirable, the voices individual and yet blended, and unified in purpose. The recording seems to favour the tenor line – a treat when this is Steven Harrold's glowing voice, and a mercy when it keeps the rather astringent soprano of Rebecca Outram at a safe distance (but beware the Gloria of Nunc scio vere!); the choice of this singer is surprising, in view of the refined and lyrical tone of the other soprano, Carys Lane, and of alto Caroline Trevor. The pronunciation is 'English Latin', and the words clearly enunciated. Most of the repertoire was unknown to me, taken from both the 1591 Cantiones Sacrae and 1607 Gradualia, and all of it is marvellous, with many of Byrd's little 'signature' motifs in evidence but never becoming clichéd. *Selene Mills*

Byrd *Gradualia (1607)* Ensemble Plus Ultra, Robert Quinney *org* Michael Noone
Musica Omnia MO0302 77' 12"
Music for the Blessed Sacrament & Corpus Cristi, and SS Peter & Paul, *Circumspice Hierusalem, Why do I use...*

This collection presents works solely from the 1607 *Gradualia*, and as such is more focused than the Cardinall's Musick recording; it is released as a tribute to Philip Brett, who edited Stainer & Bell's Byrd Edition. Five pieces appear on both discs, and make for interesting comparisons. I prefer the balance and blend of Ensemble Plus Ultra, whose voices are more evenly matched; the overall sound is warmer and gentler, in contrast to the more demonstrative and acerbic sound of Cardinall's Musick. A wonderful moment is the opening of *Solve jubente Deo*, when the voices weigh in like bells, commanding St Peter to break the earth's chains. A sense of authority and inexorability is created, in contrast to Carwood's shouting of orders. Michael Noone's advantage is cemented by his 'secret weapons': whereas Carwood varies his programme by the inclusion of a long litany, Noone gives us an absolute treat in three organ fantasias, very stylishly and beautifully played by Robert Quinney, and – best of all – Clare Wilkinson singing *Why do I use my paper, ink and pen?* The performance is restrained but extremely moving, not only because of the beauty of Clare's voice, but also because of the subtlety with which she speaks the words and varies the phrasing and tone colours. The three verses develop through almost imperceptibly subtle ornamentation in the organ accompaniment, and through the total engagement with the words and the meaning behind them.

I would recommend both these recordings to any eager to extend their knowledge of Byrd's incomparable writing, but if you buy just one, choose Ensemble Plus Ultra for their empathetic response to this great composer. *Selene Mills*

Byrd *For My Ladye Nevell* Terence Charlston *hpscd, virginals* 71' 27"
Deux-Elles DXL 1136

Done in association with the British Library which now owns the MS, this authoritative recording includes 16 of its 42 items, representing a good cross-section of the contents. The opening ground and the other variation sets work particularly well, as do the galliards. The pavanes and some of the contrapuntal pieces are perhaps a little too stately and the music gets a bit bogged down, but they are always intelligently played with care over the voice leading. The Battell is truncated to four sections, presumably for reasons of space, but this makes it a bit tame and loses the build-up which normally makes the Galliard for the Victory so effective. Charlton plays on two excellent modern instruments, both by David Evans: a copy of a the single-manual 1645 Couchet in the Russell Collection and a virginals after Johannes Grouwels of c. 1580. Both are beautifully recorded and sound just right for this music; it is a recording very much worth having. *Noel O'Regan*

Guerrero Missa de la batalla escoutez The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 69' 23"
Coro COR16067
Ego flos campi, Lauda mater ecclesia, Pange lingua, Tota pulchra es Maria, Vexilla regis & Jannequin *La Guerre*

Jannequin's chanson, performed here with great brio, exercised some fascination for Spanish composers, with Esquivel, Guerrero, Victoria and Cererols basing Masses on it. Guerrero took a relatively restrained approach, mostly ignoring all but the start of the chanson. The Sixteen's big sound is well suited to the Mass and makes an interesting contrast with the 1998 recording by Westminster Cathedral which used the instruments of His Majesty's Sackbutts and Cornetts to add muscle. As always, Christophers shapes the music very intelligently, bringing out contrasts, particularly on the rare occasions when Guerrero does quote the music from the heat of the battle. The CD also includes three hymns and the motets *Tota pulchra es* and *Ego flos campi*. Both tuning and recording quality are excellent throughout and this is an exhilarating disc which will be widely welcomed. *Noel O'Regan*

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

Maschera *Libro primo de canzoni da sonare* Liuwe Tamminga org 64' 55"
Passacaille 951
Organs: 1556 Cipri, San Martino, Bologna;
1587 Cipri, Monte San Giovanni;
1588 Antegnati, S. Nicola, Almenno San Salvatore;
1471-75/1531 da Prato/Faccheti;
1596 Malamini, San Petronio, Bologna

England could do with a Liuwe Tamminga to champion its own historic organ repertoire. In the meantime, the man himself continues with his impressive exploration of the Italian repertoire with this CD of the 1570 *Libro primo de canzoni da sonare* of Fiorenzo Maschera, a composer from Brescia who appears to have devoted his compositional energies to the canzona form. Although canzoni were often unspecific about their performing instrumentation, Maschera seems to favour the organ, and his efforts are well rewarded by the excellent performances on five important historic instruments in northern Italy. If you haven't yet discovered the aural joys of the Italian organ, try this CD. The slight inflections to the sound from a sensitive winding system and individuality of the almost vocal voicing of the pipes makes the most complex of all musical instruments sound like a living, breathing being. Liuwe Tamminga is fully immersed in both the music and the techniques needed to play organs and repertoire like this. To balance the Maschera are two works by Claudio Merulo that are well worth listening to, his magnificent *Toccata 5, del settimo tono* being a fine example of the pre-Frescobaldi Italian toccata style. Strongly recommended. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Sweelinck *Keyboard Works Vol. 2* Robert Woolley *hpscd. virginal* 73' 37"
Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0758

For this volume Woolley moves from the organ to a Malcolm Rose copy of the harpsichord from Lodewijk Theewes' 1579 clavi-organ and an Adlam Burnett copy of the Ioannes Ruckers 1611 virginals, both ideally placed for this music. The mellow bell-like tone of the muselar virginals is particularly striking. Woolley includes five toccatas, eight variation sets and the extended *Fantasia crommatica* which combines contrapuntal rigour with elaborate figuration. He displays some stunning technique with an almost incredible clarity in fast passages, always combined with a great sense of line and of the broader structure of the music, never getting bogged down in the figuration. Particularly exciting are the Fantasia and the Toccata SwV 283 which, like much of this music, show clear evidence of English influence in their figuration. A very inspiring recording which should be on everyone's shopping list. *Noel O'Regan*

Vaet *Missa Ego flos campi* Cinquecento
Hyperion CDA67733 75' 21"
Antevenis virides, Ecce apparebit Dominus, Filiae Jerusalem, Magnificat VIII toni, Miserere mei Deus, Musica Dei donum, Salve regina, Spiritus Domini & Clemens *Ego flos campi*

Vaet is a composer well worth hearing, and perhaps one day people will recognise the sound of his name without it having to be spelt out. He lived less than 40 years (c.1539-67), working for most of his adult life as Kapellmeister for the Archduke then Emperor Maximilian II. The disc begins with one of the many 'state motets' he must have written (17 are extant), the acrostic ALBERTUS of the metrical text *Antevenis viride* a6, being clarified in the title as 'in praise of the illustrious Prince Albert, Duke of Bavaria'. The gentle performance suggests a fairly intimate ambiance, but doesn't seem to be chosen especially for this piece, since the style is retained throughout disc. It demonstrates a feature that is common in Vaet: an ability to continue the music without substantial cadences, though it does make it easy for the music to slide out of attention into the background. But it deserves attention, and Vaet comes over here as a composer worthy of note. The six voices of Cinquecento make the music interesting without any lily-gilding. *CB*

The English Stage Jig The City Waites, Lucie Skeaping 78' 17"
Hyperion CDA67754
The Black Man, The Cheaters Cheated, The Merry Wooing of Robin and Joan, The Bloody Battle at Billingsgate, Singing Simkin

C.R. Baskervill's *The Elizabethan Jig* (1931) intrigued me when I bought the Dover reprint on its appearance in 1965. It brought a new dimension to Elizabethan drama, though it was probably rather more lively on stage than on the page. The problem I find with this CD is that merely listening without vision and the feel of a live event makes the continual sexual innuendo (no - it is much less subtle than that word implies) outstay its welcome. The performers are past masters at the style; the brace of Skeapings and Doug Wootton have been performing music like this since the early 1970s and do it with style, but the Radio 3 voice jars a bit. It's all rather unsubtle, though that is inherent in the form so I shouldn't complain too much. But I wonder of those who enjoyed Shakespeare at the time (his language can be vulgar enough, but not with the monotony evident here) slipped away when afterpieces like these followed straight after *Hamlet* and *King Lear*? It is excellent that we have a chance of experiencing the underside of Elizabethan dramatic activity, especially since it is done so well, and it is good to hear so many

familiar tunes in a different context; but the humour wears off quite quickly. *CB*

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

This is a recording of an anthology *Di Manoli Blessi il primo libro delle Greghesche*, published in Venice in 1564. Molino is the author of the words, not the music, which is by leading Venetian composers of the time, including Willaert and Andrea Gabrieli, who sets an extraordinary poem, *Sassi palae*, in which rocks, sandbanks, oysters, cockles, mermaids and rivers mourn Adrian's death. But most of the book is more frivolous. The performances (by five singers, and four players) are excellent, and this draws welcome attention to an intriguing publication. Has anyone produced an edition of it yet? *CB*

Chansons et danses de la renaissance française Polyphonia Antiqua, Yves Esquieu
Pierre Vérany PV709011 54' 48" (rec 1984)

Even in 1984, one would have expected the first crumhorn chord of the opening *La Bataille* to be more-or-less in tune. I'd have dated the recording a decade earlier. Drums in that piece – OK, but not in *Mon désir*, and why such a rushed and breathless *Jouissance vous donneray*? There's some nice singing., but the programme loses coherence as it regresses chronologically, stretching the renaissance back several centuries. *CB*

Diminutions and Ostinati Saskia Coolen *rec, gamba*, Rainer Zipperling *gamba*, Patrick Ayrton *kbd* 72' 12"
Globe GLO 5233
Bassano, Cabezon, Falconiero, A. Gabrieli, Ganassi, Merula, Ortiz, Radion, Rogniono, Salaverde, Virgiliano

A disc of divisions runs the danger of indigestibility. The hazard lies not in resolving the 'dots per inch' but rather in the Odyssean task of maintaining the momentum of the musical arrow as it threads its way through the huge number of axeheads. In this case the problem is ameliorated by two factors. The first is to leaven the divisions with ostinati, which allow us to relax into the predictability of the bass pattern before re-embarking on the next excursion of affects in a divided madrigal. Second, the performances have a jaunty grace which makes light of spurious detail. This is particularly true of Rainer Zipperling's viol – for which the nature of the instrument helps provide scope. The recorder divisions include Saskia Coolen's own – built on the models of Ganassi and Ortiz. These are no mere juxtaposition of musical tables found in those sources. They are assembled with the formal grace of Bassano, and a touch of Bovicelli's flightiness. A programme of this kind for most people will fall into the category of a library recording, to be dipped into. Indeed, probably most CDs are in this category, following as they do the marketeers' wishes for the single composer, single genre schema. This disc does, however, make it from the reference shelves out into the borrowing section. If it isn't clear, that is quite a recommendation!

Steven Cassidy

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

What an opening! If only the soprano had eschewed vibrato. Sadly, in ensemble as well as solo, she spoils a potentially moving programme of motets relating to the Stations of the Cross. I wasn't going to name her, but checking her, I see that Alena Dantcheva sings in some excellent ensembles. Perhaps she sings better for La Venexiana and Graham O'Reilly can tame her! If your tolerance is greater than mine, do buy it; but I find it immensely frustrating. *CB*

17th CENTURY

Biber Rosary Sonatas Elizabeth Wallfisch *vln*, Rosanne Hunt *vlc*, Linda Kent *org, hpscd* 115' 47 (2 CDs)
ABC 476 6831

Elizabeth Wallfisch uses three violins for her version of Biber's Rosary Sonatas. Disc One contains the Five Joyful and Five Sorrowful Mysteries, while Disc Two has the Five Glorious Mysteries and the final work in the set, the Passacaglia for unaccompanied violin. Her partners are Rosanne Hunt on cello and Linda Kent on either harpsichord or organ – none of the kaleidoscopic continuo sections we have become accustomed to in this repertoire, and I'm glad! There is much to revel in here, with the performers really getting into the symbolism of some of Biber's writing, without being overpowering – and they treat it as any other 17th-century music as far as ornamentation is concerned (of which I very much approve). There were one of two moments when I wondered *why* she'd played such a passage in a particular way, but generally I was re-assured on re-listening. Despite the very fine playing, however, Walter Reiter's understated reading of the sonatas remains for me the version of choice – there is a genuine sense of awe that I have heard from no-one else. *BC*

The innocent buyer might wonder why a London violinist (whose link with Australia is mentioned only in a list of orchestras she has directed there) is recording this in Australia with an Australian cellist and an American/Australian keyboard player. Shouldn't the players' biogs give some clue? CB

John Blow and his pupils *Psalms, Hymns and Organ Pieces* Timothy Roberts (1704 Renatus Harris organ, St Botolph's, Aldgate, London)
sfz music Sfzm0207

This CD gives a fascinating glimpse into a little-known corner English musical history. The recent restoration of the 1704 Renatus Harris organ at St Botolph's, Aldgate is an important contribution to the English musical scene, although its billing as 'Britain's oldest church organ' is open to debate. As well as a welcome insight into the sometimes enigmatic organ works of John Blow and his contemporaries (they are not all 'pupils' of Blow, as the title suggests), this CD also includes two examples of the stately congregational Psalm singing of the period, with elaborate organ interludes between each line of the text and the audience at the 2006 opening recital of the organ singing with great gusto. There are also works for organ and voice, sung beautifully by Julia Gooding, Clara Sanabras and Richard Savage. Timothy Roberts' playing is excellent, although there are some occasional moments where his harpsichord playing technique is noticeable, not just in the slurring of notes together but also other matters of articulation and touch of particular relevance to playing the organ. He projects a sprightly energy and vitality into the organ works that brings them vividly to life, aided by his sometimes inventive approach to the complex issue of English High Baroque ornamentation. Incidentally, he not only performs, but also produced and edited the CD.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Giulio Caccini and his Circle La Nuova Musica, David Bates 69' 20"
Somm SOMMCD 083
Castaldi, Frescobaldi, Kapsberger, Monteverdi, Philips

Performances of early 17th-century Italian vocal music have improved so much over the last few years, and have achieved, with the embellishment integrated into the flow of the music, not imposed as an add-on, and accompaniments giving rhythmic as well as chordal support. Here, solos are mixed with ensemble pieces in a fine programme chiefly of Caccini, other contributions including three Monteverdi settings of the same texts as Caccini. One disappointing track, in fact, was a rather laid-back performance of Monteverdi's

Sfogava con le stella, lacking the urgency that I see in the music. But others may be convinced. A fine recording. CB

Guggumos *Mottecta 1612* Il canto figurato Ulm, Fabian Wöhle *org* 63' 38"
Cornetto-Verlag COR10028

If none of Giovanni Gabrieli's music had survived, one could get some idea of it from Guggumos's set of motets, published in the year of Gabrieli's death. Like various young composers from the Danish court and Schütz, Gallus Guggumos (c.1590-after 1666) was sent by his employer, Albrecht VI of Bavaria, to study with Gabrieli. Schütz sensibly chose to publish a book of madrigals as his 'graduation exercise' , thus avoiding the weight of his teacher's style. Guggumos, a less original composer, could not escape Gabrieli's mannerisms. The motets are for 4-6 parts, so there's no polychoral writing; but Gabrieli's most famous 6-part motet, *Timor et tremor*, shines clearly as a model. Beyond its obvious derivation, the music is competent, and, in view of Gabrieli's small output of single choir motets, would be worth singing. Cornetto also publishes a facsimile and a selection in transcription. The performances, by a one-to-a-part vocal ensemble with theorbo, cello (a bit modern for 1612) and organ, are pleasing, if a little careful. The less steady soprano in the very first phrase isn't consistently thus. Contrast is supplied by organ peices by Rodio, Frescobaldi and Froberger, well played on a late-18th-century organ from a Venetian church. I'm glad to have heard this: Gabrieli was a good teacher. *CB*

The name sounds very odd: presumably it was not originally German. There are 7 entries for Guggumos in German phone directories in Aichach-Friedberg and one in nearby Munich.

Jacob Cats *Mourning Maidens and other songs* Camerata Trajectina 77' 10"
Globe GLO 6063 (rec 2003)

Cats (1577-1660) was a writer, not a composer, with a varied sexual life from the age of eleven but reformed with marriage and a successful law career, as well as as a author of moralistic poems, especially encouraging sexual propriety. These became extremely popular: the booklet note begins by telling us that in his day people often placed his collected works next to their Bible. The songs are here fitted to popular songs of the time – rather fewer familiar ones than I expected. The texts are only in Dutch, so most of us will enjoy it for the music rather than the moral words; good background listening, even though it will have no effect on your morals. *CB*

Charpentier *Missa Assumpta est Maria* Le Concert Spirituel, Hervé Niquet
Glossa 921617 (60' 34")
+H. 262, 291, 303, 361, 508

Given its general musical splendour it is surprising that this mass has received relatively little attention from performers. The sources are complex but the Versailles think-tank has done its stuff and there is an excellent edition available at reasonable cost. For this recording Niquet has created a sense of context by interspersing other works by Charpentier among the mass movements. These are the extraordinary motet for unaccompanied bass *Sancti Dei* (H361), the *Offertoire* (H508) and the elevation motet *O salutaris hostia* (H262). *Domine salvum* (H291) is a slightly odd conclusio, as there is already a setting of this prayer for the King within the mass after the *Agnus Dei*. This mass and these performers are made for each other. The strong integration of solo, choral and orchestral forces is a regular Niquet strength and even though Charpentier gives him a generous hand in this work a sense of collective unity of purpose is again strongly evident. I am not convinced by all the tempi, especially in the *Sanctus*, but this is a loving performance of a marvellous work. The rather lumpily translated note is strange, referring to fully-notated instrumental sections as 'improvisations' in all four languages. *David Hansell*

Mazzocchi *Vespro della beata Vergine* Cantus Cölln, Concerto Palatino, Konrad Junghänel 69' 21"
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902001

If we sometimes think of the centre of musical development moving from Rome in the late 16th century to Venice at the turn of the 17th, this impressive Vespers set by Virgilio Mazzocchi (complemented by three motets by Carissimi, a canzona by Frescobaldi and a hymn by Palestrina) shows that the Eternal City did not take long to embrace the new styles. As one would expect from such superlative performers as Cantus Cölln and Concerto Palatino, there is plenty to admire here, from effortlessly beautiful singing and playing to a wonderful sense of pacing. Indeed the only weakness is the packaging – on the back of the sleeve, English and German place the music a century later than the French text, and inside, the text of Mazzocchi's three soprano setting of *Surge amica mea* (which is available from fwww.primalamusica.com) vary from language to language. Let that not detract from Konrad Junghänel's continued exploration of the backwaters of Baroque music. *BC*

Purcell *Dido & Aeneas* Simone Kermes *Dido*, Deborah York *Belinda*, Dimitris Tiliakos *Aeneas*, Margarita Mezentseva, Sofia Fomina *women*, Oleg Ryabets *Sorceress*, Yana Mamanova, Elena Kondratova *Enchantresses*, Valeria Safonova *Spirit*, Alexandre Zverev *Sailor*, The New Siberian Singers, MusicAeterna, Teodor Currentzis 63' 45"
Alpha 140

This is extraordinarily different from the last two Dido's I heard (the CD we reviewed in the last issue and the Covent Garden performance, both with Sarah Connelly as Dido). It was recorded in Novosibirsk (Siberia) in 2007 with forces whose names would look more natural in the Cyrillic alphabet, but with a German Dido and an English Belinda. It is very much *sui generis*, with extreme tempi (if you thought Sarah Connelly's opening ground too slow, as I did, you won't like this). While I confess that this isn't an ideal performance, I did find some of it rather refreshing, *CB*

Mr Henry Purcell's Most Admirable Compositions James Bowman, The King's Consort, Robert King 57' 55" (rec 1988)
Hyperion *Helios* CDH55303 ££

This has been a favourite disc ever since its first appearance, and is an excellent introduction to Purcell's solo songs, made all the more welcome at mid-price. Bowman is at his best in this repertoire, which is a well-chosen selection demonstrating Purcell's gift for setting English texts. Robert King writes in the cd booklet: 'much of [Purcell's] best vocal music is for countertenor, and many songs, though originally written for a different voice, can successfully be transposed (a regular practice of Purcell's day) to fit this most expressive of voices'. Well, we all know that singing songs in transposition was common practice throughout musical history, and I'm sure none of us have any problem with that; but the fact is that apart from three examples from 'odes', almost all of the songs given on this disc have been transposed to suit JB's voice, so wherever all the oft-alleged 'best vocal music for countertenor' of Purcell's is to be found, it isn't necessarily on this disc per se! Most of the items recorded here are soprano songs, including James taking on the persona of Venus in 'Fairest Isle'. Does this matter? Not really, because this is beautiful, musical singing by a great artist, and an excellent model for younger falsettists. *David Hill*

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

The Contest of Apollo and Pan Apollo & Pan (Tassilo Erhardt, Ben Sansom *vlns*, Sally Holman *dulcian*, Steven Devine *kbd*) Chaconne CHAN 0756 73' 14"
Music by Bertoli, Buonamente, Castello, Frescobaldi, Marini, Merula, S. Rossi, Turini

What a wonderful sound two early violins, dulcian and keyboards make! This is another 'contemporaries of Monteverdi' programme, with works by the usual suspects – Castello, Buonamente, Biagio Marini, Tarquinio Merula, and Francesco Turini, as well as Giovanni Antonio Bertoli and some embellished Rore. The two violins are equal in every sense – the ensemble is impeccable, even in the most complex music – and it is revelatory to hear this material with a reed instrument on the bass, as a host of composers (especially later German ones) expected in ensemble music. Fine playing from all concerned. *BC*

English Lute Songs Robin Blaze *cT*, Elizabeth Kenny *lute* 70' 34"
Hyperion *Helios* CDH55249 (rec.1999)

Originally reviewed by Ian Harwood in *EMR* 58, who voiced the question that we still seem so reluctant to face head–on: 'was this the kind of voice that sung lute songs in the 17th century?' Sticking my neck out only a little, I think that we can confidently answer that with a resounding 'no'. Does that mean I am arguing that modern falsettist countertenors should not sing lute songs? Er... not necessarily. When the songs are as beautifully performed as Blaze and Kenny do here, it seems churlish to suggest that they almost certainly didn't do so back in Merrie England, although for me, and many others that I have discussed this issue with in recent months, there will always be the uncomfortable feeling that this performance practice is best described as 'reconstruction-of-something-that-never-existed'. Nevertheless, the whole arc of the program is cleverly arranged, as one expects from Liz Kenny, and really is a lovely listen. Blaze and Kenny cover the range of solo song from Dowland to Purcell, though, despite the disc's title, only four of the twenty-odd vocal pieces are actually lute songs (i.e. with a fully written-out lute part).

Rather in keeping with the likelihood that the falsetto countertenor in lute-accompanied song is a relatively modern invention, the cover of the CD booklet (unusually for Hyperion) features a late-19-century pre-Raphaelite painting of an Elizabethan lady. *David Hill*

O vos amici mei carissimi Constanze Backes, Gerlinde Sämann, Hermann Oswald, Markus Flaig *SSTB*, Instrumenta Musica, Ercole Nisini 60' 25
Ramée RAM 0805
Bassano/Rore, Filago, Marini, Picci, Riccio,

There have been many discs of music 'from Monteverdi's Venice', but few have been quite as satisfying as this – four singers (SSTB) and an instrumental group of two violins, four trombones and continuo (chitarrone and organ/virginals) perform a programme of motets, sonatas and canzonas by a handful of composers, including no fewer than eight very nice motets by Carlo Filago – four for voices and continuo and four with instruments. There are also four canzonas and a sonata by Riccio, and one piece each by Claudio Merulo, Giovanni Bassano, Biagio Marini and Giovanni Picchi – the last for my very favourite combination of fiddles and trombone band. I was unfamiliar with Filago's name, which is rather frustrating – he was organist at St Mark's under Monteverdi, so very much at the cutting edge of the Venetian style. Both the music and the performances are excellent, and I have no problem in heartily recommending this disc to fans of Monteverdi's Venice and the early trombone alike. *BC*

LATE BAROQUE

Avison *Six Sonatas for Two Violins and a Bass Opus 1; Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord Opus 8 with accompaniments for Two VIolins and Violoncello* The Avison Ensemble (Pavlo Beznozsiuk, Caroline Balding *vlns*, Richard Tunnicliffe *vlc*, Robert Howarth *kbd*) 96' 09" (2 CDs)
Divine Art dda21214

It makes sense to issue Avison's two prints for the standard trio sonata line-up as a double disc. Both Op. 1 and Op. 8 comprise six works, the former with the focus on the interaction between the three parts, while the latter are clearly harpsichord works with instrumental support. The trio sonatas were far more successful for me, confirming Avison's contrapuntal agility and revealing some beautiful slow movements. Pavlo Beznosiuk and Caroline Balding are perfectly matched, and perfectly partnered by Richard Tunnicliffe and Robert Howarth (on organ throughout). Op. 8 was less satisfying, mostly because the musical language has changed over the 20 years that passed between the publications – the slow-fast-slow-fast trios have given way to two movement works, and baroque ingenuity has been replaced by a melody-dominated style with slower moving harmonies and too much surface frippery. 2009 marks the tercentenary of the composer's birth and this two CD set, with excellent playing from all concerned, is a fitting tribute which should draw yet more attention to this still overly neglected figure from the English Baroque. *BC*

Bach *Kammermusik der Bach-Familie* Chursächsische Capelle Leipzig 66' 17"
Raum Klang Souvenir RKs 59603 ££
JB *Ouvertüre in e*; JS *BWV 1021*; WF *Duet for 2 vlns in G*; CPE *Hpscd Concerto in a Wq 1*; JC *Fl quartet in A (rec 1996)*

This is the most worthy Leipzig early-instrument ensemble to have come to my attention recently, and very well it manages a challenging programme. Of the actual instruments, Laurence Dean's Traversflöte is the newest old specimen, dating from around 1800; but as he is only feature playing it in the JC Bach Quartet, published in 1776, it certainly doesn't sound out-of-place; much of the work on the disc is well-managed by the violinest/violist Anne Schumann, whose playing is more reliable than that of many western specialists and makes me look forward to hearing the Capelle again soon. Altogether a welcome issue. *Stephen Daw*

Bach *Jesu, deine Passion: Cantatas 22, 23, 127 & 159* Collegium Vocale Gent, Dorothee Mields, Matthew White, Jan Kobow, Peter Kooy *SATB*, Philippe Herreweghe 63' 47"
Harmonia Mundi HMC 901998

This is a wonderful set of Cantatas composed for the Sundays before Lent, and as we reasonably expect, Herreweghe draws from his wisely chosen singers and specialist instrumentalists accounts of such sensitivity and professionalism as constantly to impress and delight us. Even those who, like me, prefer soloists to fill choral as well as solo roles in Bach Cantata performances nowadays are almost inevitably going to find these accounts of the works remarkable for their sincere consistency. Everything, even the balances, is calculated to please.
Stephen Daw

F. Couperin *Ténèbres du Premier Jour* Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr, Emmanuel Mandrin 65' 29"
Ambronay Editions AMY018
+Charpentier *In monte Oliveti H.111, Tristis est anima mea H.112;* Lambert *Miserere*

This quasi-liturgical sequence introduces Couperin's *Tenebrae* lessons with plainchant and faux-bourdons, separates them with Charpentier's *Tenebrae* responsories for the same day (strangely excluding the third, though there's plenty of room on the disc) and concludes with Michel Lambert's simple *Miserere*. A notable feature is the use of a 'real' organ, which allows for much more colour in the continuo than is generally heard. As the note rather laconically remarks, 'it was thought unnecessary to include any other instruments'. In some ways it is a shame that the programme does not have a more

arresting beginning, both in content and performance – the chant is less than perfectly blended – but the general concept is strong. It is particularly refreshing to hear the Couperin pieces in some kind of context rather than as a three movement suite. I do not much care for the sound of one of the solo sopranos; but this is a programme that makes its effect as a whole and by means of its internal musical contrasts rather than by its details. As with the Charpentier mass I have reviewed above, there is much love in these performances. *David Hansell*

Anton Estendorffer *Orgelwerke* Laura Cerutti (1737 Baumeister organ, Kloster Mailingen) 73' 13"
Cornetto CORN10025

Although his father was an organist, Anton Estendorffer's relatively short life as a priest (following studies in philosophy and ecclesiastical law) seems to have been devoid of any experience as organist. Nonetheless 19 organ works by him are to be found in a MS in the monastery of Ottobeuren, all in variation form. This CD includes 12 of them, played on a very well-preserved 18th century organ in Kloster Mailingen, north-west of Munich. Although only a small two-manual instrument organ, it has the wide range of 8' colour stops (and no reeds) typical of southern Germany. The winding produces a delightful singing quality to the speech of the pipes. The inherent problem of programming 12 variation sets in a single CD is not altogether overcome, not least because of the four-square phrase structure of the initial themes, the rather predictable nature of the variations and the fact that they are rarely linked (either by composer or player) meaning that the music frequently just stops. The choice of registrations is good, but I wonder if a more dynamic sense of the pulse and a bit more forward propulsion in the playing might have lifted this CD out of the 'worthy' category. It does seem to be a labour of love, with a slightly homely feel to the presentation. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Handel *Faramondo* Max Emanuel Cencic *Faramondo*, Sophie Karthäuser *Clotilde*, Marina de Liso *Rosimonda*, In-Sung Sim *Gustavo*, Philippe Jaroussky *Adolfo*, Xavier Sabata Gerando, Fulvio Bettini *Teobaldo*, Terry Wey *Childerico*, Coro della Radio Svizzera, I Barocchisti, Diego Fasolis
Virgin Classics 50999 216611 2 9 (3 CDs)

Faramondo is rarely performed, possibly because of its ridiculous and complicated plot (even more than usual). Faramondo, King of the Franks is in love with Rosimonda, daughter of the King of the Cimbrians, with whom he is at war over Rosimonda's brother who wasn't really her brother, and meanwhile more people are in love, some reciprocated, and even the Cimbrian King falls in love – with Faramondo's sister. There are, as well, no really outstanding arias compared with, say, the earlier Frankish opera Rodelinda. However, the music, late Handel opera (1738), is consistently lovely and the opera is also high-octane stuff. The latter point suits Fasolis, who has a tendency to rush, but here that works. There is no chink in the cast's armour: Cencic is a magnificent Faramondo, and Jaroussky (Adolfo) maintains his reputation as one of the best French countertenors around. Karthäuser gives a great performance as the dramatic, feisty-yet-tender Clotilde, and she is admirably matched by de Liso's Clothilde. In-Sung Sim is a Handel bass to listen out for. I Barocchisti are a tight and capable band, and there is some really fine obbligato playing in various arias and continuo playing in the recitatives. In all, certainly a recording to add to the Handel opera collection. *Katie Hawks*

Curiously, Handel had to pause during the composition of this to write the Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline, who claimed to be a descendent of King Faramond. CB

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

This is another in Carus' series of live recordings of Handel's oratorios. Like the others, the recorded sound is very good, and the Dresdner Barockorchester are in fine form. There is much to enjoy in this recording. Tim Mead, a rising star, is a rich and ringing David. Ditte Andersen and Anna Prohaska are admirable daughters of Saul; their voices are quite similar, which works well in terms of family unity, and both do nice things with their arias (for example Prohaska's lovely 'down' in 'Capricious man'). The two tenors (Schmitt's Jonathan and Stoklossa's Priest) have good voices, but sound rather German (there's a lovely 'miskeef' in a recit in Part I). Saul, however, is a disappointment. Jennens and Handel give him a great entrance – fulminating after the irritating triumphant chorus with carillon. But Yorck Felix Speer sounds a bit too much like he's having a picnic. And he doesn't really improve. The Endor scene in Part III does work better, but he still sounds laboured, partly owing to the 'Teutonness' of his English. He does grandeur well, but not rage. The chorus's pronunciation is quite good, but not perfect. The direction is well-judged, but tempi can be a little brisk, and several really dramatic opportunities are lost ('Envy! eldest born of Hell', for example). This is a good performance, but no competition for some of the other available recordings of Saul. *Katie Hawks*

Handel *Coronation Anthems* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 70' 06"
Coro 16066
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba, Organ Concerto in F (with Alleluia), Overture to *Jephtha*, 'Worthy is the Lamb... Amen' (*Messiah*)

The ClassicFM logo on the front says it all, really: this is Handel Pop Classix. Included are the four *Coronation Anthems*, spaced with the organ concerto Op.4 No.4 and the overture to *Jephtha*, rounded off with 'Worthy is the Lamb/ Amen' from *Messiah* (for their recording of which, see last October's *EMR*), and all introduced by – yes, you guessed it – the *Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*. All the pieces are polished and professional, but it's a pointless disc, certainly for serious Handel listeners. *Katie Hawks*

Handel Clori, Tirsi e Fileno Roberta Invernizzi *Tirsi*, Yetzabel Arias Fernández *Clori*, Romina Basso *Fileno*, La Risonanza. Fabio Bonizzoni 75' 02"
Glossa GCD 921525

For October's *EMR* I was asked to review volume II of this group's series of Italian cantatas, and it impressed me very much. I have since got hold of other volumes: volume I was disappointing, but the rest have been top notch, and their latest release reiterates what a worthwhile series this is to collect. (The CD case/booklet is beautifully presented, too.) *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* was written for the Marquis Ruspoli in 1707, and tells of two shepherds who are being strung along in love by the fickle Clori. All three voices in this recording are well-chosen. Invernezzi, who can be a little harsh, is admirably suited to the jealous Tirsi; Romina Basso is sympathetic to Fileno's tenderness; Arias Fernández well-chosen for the heartless Clori. The instrumentalists revel in Handel's superb writing, and argue a good case for this piece's importance to any Handel collection. *Katie Hawks*

Handel *Cantatas and Trio Sonatas* Johanna Koslowsky *S*, Musica Alta Ripa 63' 03
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 309 0399-2
Agrippina condutta...,Pensieri notturni di Filli; op. 2/3 & 5; Recd sonata in c (HWV 386a)

This is a 1990-1 recording of canatatas from Handel's Italian period and trio sonatas from his first years in England. Musica Alta Ripa are a joy to listen to, and they play the sonatas with great love and lightness. The cantatas are less success-

ful, although the tempi are fine, and the playing up to the sonatas' high standard. The problem is the soprano, Johanna Koslowsky. She is rather undramatic, no good for Agrippina facing death, though she is not helped by the recording. MDG claim not to tamper with the acoustics of their specially-chosen recording venues, but they could have done it here to some effect: the singer sounds muffled and distant, as if she's standing somewhere apart from the ensemble in a particularly echoey bit of church. Still, the disc is a nice compilation, and Musica Alta Ripa are outstanding, and at least one of their recordings should adorn your shelves.

Katie Hawks

Handel *Arias* Karina Gauvin, Tempo Rubato, Alexander Weimann 80' 16"
Atma ACD2 2589
Arias from Alexander Balus, Athalia, Jephtha, L'Allegro, Messiah, Samson, Semele, Solomon

This is a curiosity. Weimann appears, from both his booklet notes (at least, those I could understand) and from his direction, to be musicologically aware; Gauvin is undoubtedly a good singer. The playing is very nice, and the tempi, in the main, are fine, although Weimann has a tendency to rush. But the choice of arias on this disc is very out-of-date – the sort of thing recital discs were made of over twenty years ago. It is now more fashionable to have a better underlying theme than simply Handel's oratorios (see, for example, Joyce DiDonato's disc, whose theme was fury: review in *EMR* 128, Dec 2008); and also to explore arias which are less well-known. Granted, *Alexander Balus* is a less familiar oratorio, but it's only small relief after a string of 'Let the bright Seraphim', 'Rejoice greatly' etc. And Gauvin has chosen several tenor arias – notably 'Where e'er you walk' and 'Waft her, Angels'. I thought the days were gone of ignoring arias in one's own voice in order to sing old favourites meant for the opposite sex, however good they are. Weimann says 'I am grateful that she decided to include some arias written for male voices. Her selection demonstrates just how dramatic this repertoire really is; these oratorios, in fact, are operas in disguise.' Fair sentiments, but very last century. Also, this purports to be a disc of oratorio arias – so what is 'Lascia ch'io pianga' (from *Rinaldo*) doing there? According to the booklet, it shows the 'close relationship' between his operas and oratorios. Actually, it's just another old favourite. The orchestral interlude is another random choice – *Concerto grosso* Op.6 No.4 – just one movement, and somewhat fast.

Another curious mixture of informed and amateur Handelianism is Weimann's essay on oratorios. He seems to have read Smith, as he comments on England being the new Israel, but then follows this with 'thus, naturally enough, Handel could re-use the Musette from the final act of *Ariodante* as material for 'He shall feed His flock' What? Yes, there are certain thematic similarities, but a) it's not a straight borrowing, and b) *Messiah* is not about the new Israel.

Both Gauvin and Weimann could do with a course of not only the less-performed oratorios but also the operas. Unless you are an ardent follower of Gauvin, I cannot recommend this disc.

Katie Hawks

Santiago de Murzia David Murgadas *baroque gtr* 52'06"
La man de Guido LMG2085

Santiago de Murzia (c.1685-?) was a pupil of Francisco Guerau, and he played and taught the guitar at the court of Queen María Luísa of Savoy in the early part of the 18th century. Apart from his *Resumen de acompañar la parte con la guitarra* (1717), he is known to have produced two volumes of guitar music: the *Saldivar Codex* and *Passacalles y obras* (1732). For this CD, David Murgadas selects pieces from the *Salvidar Codex*. The booklet notes are in Catalan, with a translation into Spanish and English.

In an attempt to make De Murzia's music more accessible, some of the pieces involve other instruments. For example, in *Folias gallegas*, which is quite a jolly little number, Murgadas' guitar is accompanied by a distant bagpipe, a slightly out-of-tune shawm, and other extraneous noises, for extra colour. Their aim, according to Daniel Vilarrubias' sleeve notes, is to create 'a fresher approach', and avoid being 'academic'. Fresh approaches may be praiseworthy, but I don't think theirs quite works, if only because the instruments do not all blend well with each other. *Al verde retamar* is played as a guitar solo, and sounds fine; in another solo, Las penas, Murgadas creates a sad mood with a quiet, restrained performance; the delicately plucked sounds of Marizapalos are also pleasing. However, some of the other pieces are less attractive, and one can begin to understand why other instruments are included. *Los ympossibles* is not a very interesting piece of music, with its rather irritating dotted-crotchet-quaver-crotchet-crotchet-minim rhythm repeated throughout, so time for more extraneous noises including a violin with some flashy roulades. *La jotta* consists of two lively strummed chords (tonic and dominant), so we have clacking castanets, a shrieking shawm, and other instruments entering at various intervals. *El paloteado* has lots of accompanying thumps, clops and swishings in the background, and a strident recorder in the foreground. *Gaitas* is harmonically banal – mainly tonic and dominant, with occasional excursions to the subdominant – but there is some nice strumming mixed with gentle punteado passages, and sweet harp-like campanellas. *Stewart McCoy*

Pergolesi *Stabat mater* *see* Vivaldi *Gloria*

Telemann *Brockes-Passion* Birgitte Christensen, Lydia Teuscher, Marie-Claude Chappuis, Dobnát Havár, Daniel Behle, Johannes Weisser *SSmSTTB*, RIAS Kammerchor, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, René Jacobs 139' 51" (2 CDs in box)
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902013.14

I realize that in the present economic climate record companies have to sell their product in order to survive, but it really annoys me when the work in question is subjugated to the cult of the conductor. Telemann's setting of Brockes' Passion text is possibly a little too long, but to cut arias from the climax of the work, supposedly because doing so improves the dramatic flow (was Telemann's judgment of such things really so bad?) seems rather savage; could the offending items (which I am reliably informed are actually among the most colourful and descriptive in the work) not have been confined instead to an appendix that those of us with equally poor senses of dramatic timing could choose to include at our own peril? I do agree, as it happens, that the piece is too long, but surely HIP principles would apply to including all the music the composer wrote. We can programme our players to miss bits out we don't like. As for the performance itself, I'm equally underwhelmed. The solo voices are too big for my taste – especially in the trio near the end of Part IV. I imagine Mr Jacobs wanted to recreate the sound of wailing Jewish women – if so, he succeeded, but I'm not sure that's what Telemann had in mind for his *Gläubige Seelen*! The middle section of the trio sounds unbelievably twee after such timbres. The score is colourful instrumentally but it feels as if the orchestra was expected to concentrate on effects that the composer may not have intended rather than actually play it as they might otherwise have done. The choir – which is one I have praised to the heavens elsewhere – did nothing to lighten my mood while repeatedly listening to this two CD set. I am reliably informed that there is an excellent (complete) version of the work on Hungaroton, directed stylishly by Nicholas McGegan. *BC*

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

Veracini *The Enigmatic Art of Antonio and Francesco Maria Veracini* Lyriarte Oehms OC720 70' 49" ££

At first I didn't quite know what to make of this disc. It opens with one movement from a sonata for violin or flute and basso played by Rüdiger Lotter (the solo violinist on the front cover) accompanied by lute alone. It seems to fly in the face of Francesco Maria Veracini's reputation as an astonishingly virtuosic player (not to mention difficult personality) and is all niceness and delicacy. The remainder of the recital includes two sonatas by his uncle Antonio (one for violin, the other a trio sonata with recorder), two of the celebrated *Sonate accademiche*, a sonata from the 1716 set which is more frequently played by recorder players (but given here on violin) and one of Francesco Maria's Op. 1 sonatas *a violino e basso* (not really played 'in a historical transcription for recorder and b. c.', as the notes would have it, but using some of that version – which combines movements from other sonatas - as the basis of a complete re-working of the violin sonata). On the whole, I enjoyed the music. It did not, as I had suspected it might, give John Holloway's ECM recording a run for its money. My primary objection was the use of different recorders within the same piece (I hope my ears did not deceive me) and the twittering (presumably improvised) prelude to one movement. Otherwise, the performances are fine; the continuo team provide an elegant backdrop to both soloists. On the basis of what I've heard, Antonio Veracini's music deserves to be more widely known. *BC*

Vivaldi *Bellezza Crudel* Tone Wok *S*, Barokkanerne 64' 13"
2L56
Cantatas RV 660, 664, 678, 679
Concertos RV 441, 484

This CD is an absolute delight – and all the more so for being totally unexpected. I'm surprised that I have not come across Tone Wik's name before – she has a warm voice, not unlike Emma Kirkby's of a decade ago – beautifully controlled and as capable of sustaining beautiful long lines as executing all the ornaments and coloratura that Vivaldi requires of her. Barockkanerne are an ensemble of 20 years' standing, but this is the first time I have heard them too – on this evidence, I look forward to hearing more: indeed, they should continue to explore Vivaldi's output (especially the bassoon concertos – Per Hannisdal is outstanding in RV484!) *BC*

Vivaldi *Gloria: Vivaldi's Angels* Monika Mauch, Shannon Mercer, Josée Lalande *SSA*, Ensemble Caprice, Matthias Maute Analekta AN 2 9917 66' 15"
The *Gloria* + *Ostra picta*, *In furore*, *Magnificat* & RV 535

I enjoyed this disc enormously. It re-visits a Taverner Consort recording on Virgin Classics, in which Andrew Parrott played around with the idea of the tenor and bass parts of some of Vivaldi's church music being transposed up an octave and taken by women's voices. The closer harmonies this produces (with the tenors sometimes above the sopranos, which can be disconcerting for anyone familiar with the music) are intensified – though the instrumental doubling of the bass part maintains the overall balance and the ear soon adjusts to the octave displacement, as it does when violas play col basso and sound above the violins. Two of the Red Priest's most popular vocal works (the omnipresent *Gloria*, and his equally impressive *Magnificat*) frame the concert, which also includes two motets (sung marvellously by Monika Mauch and Shannon Mercer – who is one of the tenors of the choir) and a concerto which Matthias Maute, the director, and Sophie Larivière play on recorders instead of oboes. *BC*

A Baroque Odyssey Ensemble Masques, Olivier Fortin *hpscd, dir* 52' 25"
Analekta AN 2 9961
excerpts from JB & JS Bach, Dumanoir, Purcell, Telemann, Vivaldi & anon

Even the best efforts of the booklet notes – inexplicably headed 'Habits of the Soul' – fail to unearth a rationale behind this curious collection, an odyssey that rather than taking the listener on a voyage of discovery settles for purposeless drifting through some of the byways and highways of the Baroque. While names such as Guillaume Dumanoir (1615-1697), one-time leader of the *Quatre-vingt violons*, and Johann Bernard Bach (1676-1749), a second cousin of Johann Sebastian, might initially quicken the pulse in the expectation that we are to be offered something a little out of the ordinary, interest rapidly wanes with the realisation that the only work accorded the distinction of a complete performance is Vivaldi's *La Notte*. So if you've ever harboured the desire to hear the central Largo from Bach's F-minor keyboard concerto (taken with excessive sobriety and deliberation) sandwiched between the anonymous fantasy on *Les pleurs d'Orphée* and just three movements from Telemann's well-known Recorder Suite in A minor, this might just be the disc for you. The Montreal-based ensemble includes some familiar names and the playing overall is decent and unremarkably proficient. But the inescapable conclusion is that all concerned might have used their time to rather greater purpose. *Brian Robins*

18th Century Flemish Composers for the Harpsichord. Transcription for piano by Emmanuel Durlet (1893-1977) Edoardo Torbinelli (on Durlet's 1911 Blüthner *pf*) Phaedra DDD 92056 77' 10"
Boutmy, De Fesch, Fiocco, Loeillet, Rack, Stais, van den Bosch, van den Gheyn

A curiosity. Personality, I don't see the point, but it must be nostalgic for older Belgian early-music enthusiasts and for those interested in how early music was revived before then was any expectation of authentic instruments. The playing is very nice, but using a piano makes it seem quaint (perhaps how listeners to Durlet might have felt if he had played a harpsichord!) *CB*

CLASSICAL

Boccherini *Trio, Quartet Quintet, Sextet for strings* Europa Galante 74' 08"
Virgin Classics 50999 2121549 2 9
Trio 22 in D (G 98), Quartet 56 in c (G 214). Quintet 91 in c (G 355), Sextet 4 in f (G 457)

With the sparkling, technically assured playing that we have come to expect from this ensemble comes some fine works from Boccherini's huge oeuvre of chamber music. Such is the technical mastery of period-instrument classical performance nowadays that it almost sounds too easy. The composer was, after all, taxing not only his players but the instruments to their limits. Particularly remarkable are the quintet (with, of course, two cellos) and the sextet, the former being composed in 1792, quite late in the composer's career. The trio of twenty years earlier is, as to be expected, the most traditionally classical in style, but nevertheless has some innovative writing, notably in the second movement. *Ian Graham-Jones*

Haydn *Concertos* Stefano Barneschi *vln*, Lorenzo Ghielmi *org*, La Divina Armonia Passacaille 953 73' 48"
for organ in C & D Hob XVIII: 10 & 2
for vln in G H.VIIa: 4; vln & org in F, H.XVIII: 6

The two organ concertos, incorrectly designated in both the listing and the notes as Hob. XVII rather than XVIII, are early, pre-Esterháza works that probably date from around the mid 1750s, although the revised *New Grove* unconvincingly opts for 1771 in the case of the C-major. This is a charmingly unpretentious concerto that is, as Robbins Landon has noted, at this stage of Haydn's career, all the better for being markedly less ambitious and prolix than No. 2. Although sometimes played on the harpsichord (and even the piano), most authorities agree that these concertos were most likely intended for the organ,

and they make a good impression here in Ghielmi's nimble-fingered performances, although it is difficult to associate the sound of his newly-built Italian organ (Giovanni Pradella, 2007) with the kind of central European instrument one generally hears in this kind of work.

The other concertos date from slightly later, the Violin Concerto from 1769 and the double concerto from 1776. The performances are finely executed, with Barneschi displaying excellent technique and rock steady intonation, But to my mind his full tone and seamless lines belong to a later era, an observation that applies with still more force to some grotesquely over-elaborate cadenzas. The accompanying strings play spiritedly, although a little more finesse would not have come amiss. Overall this is a moderately pleasing if hardly memorable addition to the catalogue. *Brian Robins*

Haydn *Stabat Mater, Liber me Domine, *Symphony 44, *Violin & hpscd concerto in F* Soloists, Orch. Les Solistes de Paris, Henri-Claude Fantapié 116' 16" (2 CDs)
Divine Art dda21212 (rec 1978 & *1964)

This is reissue of a 1978 recording of the choral works and a 1964 recording of the instrumental items. For those wanting a period performance of the *Stabat Mater*, Harnoncourt's recording on Teldec would be a more appropriate choice. The timings of the *Stabat Mater* alone (74.05 compared with Harnoncourt's 58.37) reflect the dated performance style of these works. *Ian Graham Jones*

Mozart *Complete Clavier Works vol. 9* Siegbert Rampe fp 76' 53"
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 341 1309-2
K 265, 280, 396, 408/1, 533/494

Rampe continues to work his way through Mozart's complete works for solo keyboard, on the same harpsichord and fortepiano as in Vol. 8 (which I reviewed in the February 2008 *EMR*), but this time dispensing with a clavichord. His programme note states 'The present CD is part in a series of premiere recordings of Mozart's clavier works performed on instruments of his time'; but a copy made in 1992 of a Johann Schantz fortepiano made several years after Mozart's death (and with a different style of action from what the composer's Walter probably had when he played it) doesn't seem quite compatible with this claim.

The march and variations (on 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star') work well on the harpsichord, and it's good to be reminded that Mozart didn't stick exclusively to one type of keyboard instrument throughout his career. But I have mixed feelings about K. 280. The outer movements sound very impressive: Rampe is a brilliant harpsichord player and he uses the resources of the Shudi instrument, complete with machine pedal and Venetian swell, to reproduce most of the composer's extensive dynamic markings. But it can't really cope with the long appoggiaturas in the Adagio: the resolutions stick out too much. Surely the sonatas of 1775 were written with a touch-sensitive instrument in mind – most likely the clavichord, or possibly one of the new-fangled fortepianos Mozart met in Munich that year.

Another problem with this recording – and with others in the series – is Rampe's extensively 'varied repeats' (to use C. P. E. Bach's phrase). The style is pretty convincing, but would one want to hear exactly the same variations every time, especially when it's not simply a matter of added ornamentation but the shape of Mozart's lines is distorted? A composer can, of course, do what he likes with his own music, but isn't it something of an impertinence for anyone else to take such liberties? I don't doubt for a minute that Mozart varied his repeats, but he would surely have played a different version at every performance. On a CD, however, we're stuck for ever with the same one. What's the answer? The best I can offer is: listen to it once and then give it to a charity shop! *Richard Maunder*

Mozart *Sonatas* Linda Nicholson (1797 Walter *fp*) 77' 08"
Accent ACC 24190
K 281, 310, 332, 576

This is definitely my record of the month, for two reasons. The first is that it gives us the rare treat of hearing a genuine Walter fortepiano of c. 1797 in near-original condition. It's true that, as the programme note says, 'It is somewhat later than Mozart's own piano... and it differs in some constructional details' (especially the action), but it's a joy to listen to: it has a much better sound than most modern copies.

The second reason is Linda Nicholson's outstanding playing, which does full justice to the instrument. It's full of spirit and virtuosity, and she brings out the grandeur of the A minor Sonata K. 310 in a way that's not often attained – the development section of the first movement, in particular, is *terrifying*. Every phrase is lovingly shaped, the articulation is beautifully precise, and the subtle control of small-scale tempo changes is a model of what can be achieved without in any way disturbing the flow of the music.

I haven't enjoyed such a satisfying recital of Mozart's sonatas for a long time, and I look forward (I hope!) to hearing Nicholson's recordings of the rest of his solo keyboard music. *Richard Maunder*

Serpiente Venenosa: Musica en las Catedrales de Malaga y Cádiz en el siglo XVIII María Espada, David Sagastume *SA*, Orquesta Barroca de Sevilla, Coro Barocco de Andalucía, Diego Fasolis 64' 42"
Almaviva DS-0150
Music by Francisco Delgado, Juan Francés de Iribarren, Luis de Mendoza y Lagos, Jayme Torrens, Juan Domingo Vidal, Vidal, Lagos, Delgado

This is an excellent disc that makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing rediscovery of Spanish 18th-century music. The lion's share of the programme goes to Juan Francés de Iribarren, *maestro de capilla* at Málaga Cathedral between 1733 and 1766. Iribarren left a legacy of some 900 vocal works divided between Latin and Spanish settings, the latter forming the majority of his output. Of the six pieces included on the present disc, four sacred cantatas and two *villancicos*, all have Spanish texts, regrettably not translated in the booklet. With the obvious exception of the *villancicos*, the music included bears witness to the strong influence in Spain of Italian music in general and the Neapolitan sacred style in particular. It is all well worth exploring, but finest of all is perhaps the cantata by Jayme Torrens (1741-1803), Iribarren's successor at Málaga. *Serpiente venenosa* (Poisonous serpent) consists of just two movements, a highly dramatic accompanied recitative and a coloratura *aria di furia*, despatched with glittering tone by Maria Espada, who is splendid throughout. Her alto colleague is also capable, but seems ill at ease with the low tessitura of Iribarren's *A la Mesa del cielo*. Fasolis obtains extremely accomplished and utterly committed playing from the Seville orchestra, while the chorus is fine in its more restricted role. *Brian Robins*

19th CENTURY

Beethoven *Symphonies Nos. 7 & 8* Tafelmusik Orchestra Bruno Weil 64' 05"
Analekta AN 2 9947+ bonus DVD

On the evidence of the two works here – there is an earlier coupling of 5 and 6 by these performers that I've not heard – Bruno Weil belongs firmly in the camp of Beethoven conductors who are prepared to allow little deviation from a firm, even rigid control of rhythm. Those who prefer greater flexibility may therefore not entirely warm to what is on offer, but for my own taste these clear-sighted, clean textured and exceptionally well-played performances provide admirably unfussy and ultimately compelling versions of these works. No. 8 seems to me particularly successful, with an opening movement that climaxes with a thrilling peroration of the development, a lightly

sprung Allegretto, all smiling geniality, a sensibly paced Tempo di Minuetto, and a monumental finale in which Beethoven's contrapuntal ingenuity is revealingly laid out before us. No. 7 is arguably marginally less successful, largely because I feel that the demonic dance of the finale works more effectively at a marginally slower tempo, and that the upper string tone in the counter melody of the Allegretto ideally needed greater depth and solemnity.

The most interesting feature of the DVD is the opportunity to view live performances given in Toronto of two movements of each symphony. The interviews and rehearsals are disappointingly perfunctory, being largely restricted to glib truisms, and expressions of mutual admiration by the members of Tafelmusik for Weil and vice versa.

Brian Robins

Mendelssohn *Complete Church Music*
Carus

Not for review, but I thought readers would be interested in a sampler from Carus Verlag, which draws attention to the recording of the complete sacred music by Kammerchor Stuttgart and Frieder Bernius; Carus has also published a complete edition of the music. I expect that a copy of the disc and the Mendelssohn catalogue will be sent on application to Carus. There is a similar sampler for Homilius. CB

Schubert *Works for fortepiano Vol. IV* Jan Vermeulen (Streicher *fp* 1826)
Et'Cetera KTC 1333 115' 28" (2 CDs)
Albumblatt D. 844, 16 German Dances and 2 Ecossaises D. 783, 3 Klavierstücke D. 946, 6 Moments Musicaux D. 780, Sonatas D. 664, 784

This is the fourth volume of Schubert's complete piano music, played on a superb Streicher und Sohn of 1826 by the equally superb Vermeulen. If you already have the earlier discs (I reviewed Vols. 2 and 3 in the October 2007 and April 2008 issues of *EMR*) you don't need me to tell you to get this one as well; if you haven't, I strongly recommend buying the whole set immediately! *Richard Maunder*

21st CENTURY

Ambrose Field *Being Dufay* John Potter *T*, electronics 49' 30"
ECM New Series 2971

My problem with this is that the electronic parameter doesn't have equal strength with either the Dufay or John Potter's marvellously beautiful singing of it. The combination is more languorous than I would normally take my Dufay, but works in the context. I enjoyed individual tracks, but the whole disc (short-running though it is) needs more variety in tempo. *CB*

VARIOUS

Trav'ling Home: American Spirituals 1770-1870 The Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen
Warner 2564 69211-5 (rec 1994) 61' 39"
Liberty Tree: Early American Music 1776-1861 The Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen
Warner 2564 69212-0 (rec 1997) 58' 27"
The American Vocalist: Spirituals and Folk Hymns 1850-1870 The Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen
Warner 2564 69218-3 (rec 1991) 59' 29"

These three discs are reissue of Erato recordings. The repertoire is interesting, but the feel is very much that of the more respectable parts of Boston: I thought of the Lowell, Cabot and God quatrain, but that's a bit too late. This offers a good conspectus of some excellent tunes, but over-sanitised. Texts are available only online; it's a pity that hymns are identified only by tune names without verbal incipit. Worth a mid-price reissue, but I expected something more exciting from this group. *CB*

Simple Gifts The Tudor Choir, Doug Fullington 59' 35"
Gothic Records G-40265

Not really relevant here, but I was pleased to receive this from the conductor, whose recordings of the repertoire in the preceding gifts was greatly enjoyed by both EB and CB. Apart from the Shaker items (the title song recurs through the disc in various arrangements), this is mostly simple music of the 20th century. It is quite brave to produce a disc like this balancing style with good taste, but it mostly works. The sound is straighter than an Anglican choir might produce, which doesn't worry me, but I'd have preferred a simpler adaptation of VW's 'Come my way, my truth, my life' than Allen Percival's, but those who conduct small church choirs could well turn to this for ideas. Unlike a recent disc that disappointed me, this has Poston 's *Apple Tree.* *CB*

DAS ALTE WERK

Another batch of 50th anniversary releases from *Das Alte Werk* arrived. The catalogue numbers are all preceded by 2564 and they are listed here in chronological order (by composer). With two exceptions they feature Nicholas Harnoncourt, soloists, the Arnold Schoenberg Choir and Concentus musicus Wien.

L'incoronazione di Poppea (69261-1, 3 CDs) dates from 1974. The thing that struck me most while listening to it was how important the recording will be for the future study of the development of early performance practice. The reed instruments are especially "interesting" as part of the conductor's instrumental colour-coding of the subject matter (oboes = "vulgar and comical").

Harnoncourt's recording of BWV 208 and 212 from 1990 (69259-2) are – to my ear, at least – a little overly regimented; one can virtually hear the phrasing marks that have been added in rehearsal.

There are three Handel recordings – *Jephtha* from 1979 (69258-7, 3 CDs), *Samson* (69260-2, 2 CDs) and an instrumental disc (*Water Music* and two organ concerti, 69259-4). In much the same way as in the Bach, the scores have clearly been gone through with the 'how can we colour this movement to convey its meaning?' pencil – there is a danger with this approach that everything becomes a caricature of itself, and I found that quite a few movements suffered. The singers are among the best of their style – you won't find Caroline Sampson or Paul Agnew soundalikes – and the choir is (as usual) in fine form. The instrumental disc includes tracks from three sessions (1974, 1978 and 1983) and features a most interesting take on horn trills.

The first of two Vivaldi discs, *Concerti da camera III*, features Il Giardino Armonico (69260-8). The works include five concertos and a sonatina (for recorder, bassoon and continuo), and are not at all the works one expects to hear on compilations like this. Apart from some especially rustic accented notes in the D major Lute Concerto, I really enjoyed it. The second Vivaldi disc features Harnoncourt (69258-9) and includes the famous *Gloria* – and thus came into direct competition with another CD I listened to this month. It is coupled with Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, so makes an attractive coupling, but I think I'd rather forego the latter and enjoy the Canadian take on the former.

Organ works by Mozart feature in Herbert Tachezi's 1969 recording (69256-5). Although I have played both the Church Sonatas in the recital, I am no expert in that field –. so will make no comments about registrations, speeds, etc.. This disc features Alice Harnoncourt and Walter Pfeiffer on violins and no less a cellist than Nicholas Harnoncourt himself. The 'Coronation Mass' and *Vesperae solennes de confessore* make up another recital (69259-7) which benefitted from re-listening The final disc in the batch is his 1996 live recording of Mozart's *Il re pastore* (69259-9, 2 CDs). I enjoyed this a lot – somehow classical and later repertoire can take larger voices and more 'interpretation'; also the live ambience (I was not aware of any audience participation to the detriment of the proceedings) helped a lot. *BC*

OBITUARY

David Johnson (27 March 1942 – 30 March 2009) Scholar of 18th-Century Scottish Music and Composer: an appreciation

I first met David Johnson about five years ago. We had been corresponding about the Scottish Baroque composers James Oswald and John Clerk of Penicuik and eventually began to meet for dinner whenever his travels brought him down from his Edinburgh home to Cambridgeshire. His knowledge of the music of 'Enlightenment Scotland' was second to none, and his gentle company and dry wit was always welcome in our household.

David Johnson's scholarly career, initially based at St. John's College, Cambridge, was launched with the publication of his doctoral thesis as *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1972). This book, which has seen several re-printings, brought to light the synergy between 'folk' and 'art' music which existed in the Baroque and Classical music of Scotland. It discusses, amongst others, the lives and work of John Clerk of Penicuik, William McGibbon, James Oswald , and most particularly the compositions of the Earl of Kelly, for whose 're-discovery' David deserves much of the credit. Subsequently, he collected, edited and published two major volumes of eighteenth century Scottish music: *Scottish Fiddle Music in the Eighteenth Century* (1984, John Donald), and *Chamber Music of Eighteenth-century Scotland* (2000, volume III of the University of Glasgow's *Musica Scotica* series). It would be fair to say that David's musicological work helped to make possible the revival of 18th century Scottish music by enembles such as Puirt a Baroque, the Broadside Band, and Concerto Caledonia over the past two decades.

David also organised and helped to perform these works himself over the years. He was a talented cellist and his group, the McGibbon Ensemble, made two path-breaking albums in the 1980s (*Music of Classical Edinburgh* and *Fiddle Pibroch and Other Fancies*). More recently, he was musical director for two CDs of the songs of Robert Burns, set with varied contemporary Scottish 'folk' and 'art' music (both on the Scotstown Label).

In recent years David published, via David Johnson Music Editions, a range of 18th century Scottish sheet music (including most notably the John Clerk of Penicuik violin sonata, two Earl of Kelly symphonies and quartets both by Kelly and Schetky). He also produced CD/Sheet music sets of 18th Scottish folk tunes, chamber works and violin sonatas for Schott, and was working towards collecting and publishing the complete catalogue of his own compositions which include numerous instrumental works, the opera *Sorry, False Alarm*, a Concerto da Camera for orchestra, and his recently completed Burns Cantata.

In the coming year, David was very much looking forward both to performances of his Burns Cantata, more recordings of the music of the Earl of Kelly, as well as the organisation of a concert for his birthday in Edinburgh this October. I was frequently on the telephone speaking with David about these developments, as well as continuing our hunt into the history of the 'Penicuik Strad' (once owned by the noble Penicuik family of Scotland, now owned by the Austrian National bank, and on display at the KHM Vienna). It is therefore with great sadness that I inform the Early Music community of David Johnson's unexpected death at his home in Edinburgh on, or slightly before, 5th April, 2009. He will be deeply missed by his son Martin, his grandchildren and his many friends. *Kevin MacDonald*

I know David chiefly from his publications. We chatted about various matters at the first West Gallery Conference in Clacton, mostly on matters peripheral to the event, and more recently gatecrashed a long conversation with David when delivering EMR to Kevin. David was passionate about Scottish 18th-century music, and an evangelist for its performance. CB

LETTER

Dear Clifford

I thought that the following would interest you. I heard an amazing radio program this evening. It's a program dedicated to ancient recordings, mainly from the 1930's to the 1950's, and sometimes even earlier. Tonight they gave eight different recordings of the Bach fuge in g minor for solo violin. First, to set ideas, there was Lucy van Dael, and then Henryk Szeryng (1950s), Jascha Heifetz (1930s), Adolf Busch (1934), George Enescu (1949), Yehudi Menuhin (1935), Nathan Milstein (1946) and Joseph Szigeti (1931, apparently this was the first ever recording of this Sonata). Before each of them the program editor said a few words about the recording situation. (The Busch recording was live – it's amazing, well worth hearing; Enescu played it as an encore after the Beethoven concerto, also recorded live, Menuhin was just 19 years old etc). It was amazing how different these great violinists were from each other. When the last one (Szigeti) was being played I thought that I'd wish to hear the 'authentic' version again. And then the program editor asked 'whom do you prefer?' and 'do you prefer the "modern" or the "authentic"?' and played again the recording of Lucy van Dael (1996): the first shock was of the semi-tone lower and the sound of the Baroque violin, but then, I must say that the difference between this recording and the others was not greater than between all these antique recordings among themselves. I think that these 'ancient' violinists did something which was the main idea of the 'authentic movement' – they actually thought about what they were playing. Of course, they didn't think about 'what Bach would have wanted', but they thought about what *they* wanted to convey in their playing, and then they did just that. So Heifetz sounded angry, Szeryng as if he was in some amiable conversation, Busch was playful, Szigeti was serious. The whole program lasted less than an hour, and it was one of the best I heard in years. *Lydia Peres*

Lydia is a mathematician and baroque violinist in Haifa, a long-standing subscriber to EMR and a friend. CB

Pastime with Bad Company