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It is stimulating to encounter a group of musicians whose assumptions differ from ones own. There were several strands present at the conference on West Gallery Music at Clacton in August. Over the last few years enthusiasts have studied the repertoire, mostly in isolation from main-stream musicology, and a performance style has emerged. At the conference some of their assumptions were questioned by representatives both from the folk and from the 'art'-music world. On the whole, the practitioners feel more in touch with the former than the latter and there was some suspicion of the 'musicologists' (among whom, after some of my recent comments here, I was surprised to be numbered).

The conference proceedings will be published, so there is no need to write a report. Study of the printed sources shows that the *Under the Greenwood Tree* repertoire is part of an interlocking network of styles and practices prevalent throughout English church music through most of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th. There is no clear break in the line from the cathedral to the primitive style. (I'm not sure that the suggested non-pejorative replacement of 'primitive' by 'vernacular' is an improvement: 'primitive' has an appropriate implication of vigour and in artistic circles does not imply contempt.) It is also clear that the performers were not necessarily unlettered rustics. The written image tends to come from reformers or from nostalgists (Hardy and George Eliot) of the end of the period.

What is needed next is a study of the vast quantity of music created when the choirs were expanding during the 18th century and a survey of its use. Apart from its sociological interest, such a study will probably show that the best church music of the period was written, neither for cathedrals nor for isolated chapels, but for the more sophisticated of the urban and rural choirs and orchestras, and that it circulated widely through print. Concentration on late rural survivals has marginalised it and undermined the conviction that it is music worth reviving in its own right. CB

BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

FRENCH & OCCITAN SONG

Margaret L. Switten *Music and Poetry in the Middle Ages: a Guide to Research on French and Occitan Song, 1100-1400*. Garland, 1995. xxvi + 452pp, \$73.00. ISBN 0 8240 4797 4

Although this is in the series *Garland Medieval Bibliographies* and much of it is indeed bibliography, it is much more than that. The bibliography starts at page 173 and is preceded by a masterly survey of the history of the study of the repertoire from the compilation of the source manuscripts up to a couple of years ago. The bibliography itself concentrates on work of the 1980s, though standard material from earlier is listed. This limitation seems sensible; earlier literature is easily discovered (most obviously through footnotes in the works cited) and a more extensive survey would have been too vast. Most entries are annotated. I happened to finish reading the text on my way home from a PMMS council meeting, so checked the listing of three of those present as a quick test. Excluding the introduction, John Stevens has six entries, though two are duplicates. It is sensible for the revised NOHM II to have a general entry as well as separate entries for the two relevant chapters, but I'm puzzled why the article on Adam de la Halle's courtly chansons in the *Dart Festschrift* is entered twice, with a lengthy annotation at the second entry but no cross-reference from the first. The entry for his major work, *Words and Music in the Middle Ages*, has an impressive nine-line summary. Christopher Page has nine entries (plus 15 in the introduction and 10 in the discography), the most important (nos. 407-9) again receiving apt abstracts (though the practice of quoting the publisher on your own side of the Atlantic rather than the originating one always seems to me to be discourteous to the firm that takes the risk and does the work). There are six entries for Margaret Bent, in one of which she is only mentioned in a cross-reference; not included (it appeared too recently) is her reaction to Page's *Discarded Images*. This spot check shows the compiler to have done her job well. A more random check, however, does reveal one anomaly: the section *FACSIMILES* lists few motet sources.

The discography contains a few archival issues but covers the last 20 years quite thoroughly. Comments tend to be tactful; 'generous use of instruments' is probably intended as a warning, not an objective description. Generally, it is the presence of introductions, texts and translations that receive specific mention; some receive praise, one is condemned as 'useless for scholarly research', which may well be true but makes one wonder whether some of the bibliography entries might in return be labelled 'useless for performers'.

The clue to the repertoire covered is given by the five facsimiles: after a troubadour *vida* come sample pages from a troubadour MS, a Trouvère MS, the Montpellier MS and Machaut's *Remede de Fortune* (BN Fr 1586). It is perhaps a pity that the unhappy isolation of French from Latin song is perpetuated, but one has sympathy with the view that the book would then have become too unwieldy and might in consequence have had to abandon its particularly useful encompassing of both monody and polyphony. The long introduction is as clear and impartial a survey of how researchers have approached the repertoire as one could imagine; anyone coming new to the subject or requiring to refresh the memory is unlikely to find a better place to start. It makes this more than a compendium that saves the student the bother of doing his own computer check; it is also an aid to understanding.

ONOMASTICON

Graham Strahle *An Early Music Dictionary: Musical Terms from British Sources, 1500-1740*. Cambridge UP, 1995. xl + 469pp, £60. ISBN 0 521 41688 4

This large book (the format is slightly bigger than A4) is a dictionary of musical terms as they were defined and described at the time, not as we use them now. *Monody*, for instance, is a *lamentable or mournyng song, such as is songen in funeralles* (1538) or a *Song of Sorrow or Lamentation sung by one Person* (1737). [The Oxford English Dictionary quotes *The Daily News* in 1887 for the modern usage, though defines it less well than its quotation.] Strahle compiles his entries in part from dictionaries, in part from musical treatises and other such writings. His practice of repeating virtually-identical definitions is monotonous to read but valuable in showing continuous use, though repetition may be a sign of laziness and practical usage may well have changed or terms become obsolete long before lexicographers, whose interest was predominantly in rare words, abandoned them. There is also a problem in that dictionary-makers and pedantic musicians were more likely to define a word from its derivation than its current use. *Antiphon* is given several definitions which make it appear to refer to double-choir music. Catholic vocabulary seems to have been forgotten very quickly. *Motet* is described in 1658 as a *verse in Musick, a stanza of a Song, also a short poesie* which is nearer 13th- than 17th-century usage, while in 1659 it is a *spiritual hymn sung on solemn daies by the Eunuchs or Nuns in Rome*. Quotations are arranged chronologically under each word, but with dictionary definitions given before the more diffuse quotations from musical sources. Similar terms are adequately cross-referenced and classical proper names are included.

Thorough though it is, however, this book should be used for what it includes and arguments should not be drawn from what it omits, since it does not record usage in sources of other categories. *Ventiges for the Holes of a Flute, Pipe, etc* is quoted only from 1736, but it was by then over 200 years old. (But perhaps Bailey was merely glossing Hamlet, in which case the word does not have a technical meaning.) Stahle in his introduction points to the absence of *Orpharion*, but it was used on title pages in 1596 and 1597. *Carol* is another example. Dictionaries stress the meaning of *dance* until the 1650s, whereas the modern combination *Christmas carol* seems to have been normal through the 16th century and Byrd's *Carroll for Christmas Day* is hardly a dance. This is a companion to the OED and does not replace it.

The substantial introduction discusses the sources used and is an interesting essay in its own right. When mentioning Dowland's translation of *Ornithoparcus* the original date of *Micrologus* (1517) should have been stated, since the other translations mentioned in the sentence (p. xxi) are more or less contemporary with the original works, apart from Ptolemy. I found it a fascinating book to browse in. Some words were new to me: I like *Venitarium* for *The Hymn-book or Psalter*, the Venite being the first item in Matins. Apart from its curiosity value, this is valuable for stressing the difference between musical culture then and now.

I try to avoid mentioning King's Music output outside adverts, but our cheap (£2) reproduction of Tan'sur's A New Musical Dictionary (1772) is relevant here. It was aimed at a popular market but it still has many recondite and archaic terms. The most extensive and original entry is on the Tarantella, contributed by Stephen Storace. Tan'sur includes one topic neglected by Strahle, change ringing.

CORNNETTO

Two editions and a CD have arrived recently from Wolfgang Schäfer's Cornetto Musikverlag in Stuttgart. Laurens Lemlin worked at Heidelberg in the 1540s and has hitherto been remembered, if at all, for his 15 songs. New Grove lists 10 motets, three of which are collected into a booklet which includes modern score and facsimiles of the original parts, so a single copy provides enough material for a performance. *In convertendo* and *Deus in adiutorium* have intonations in the tenor parts, *Nisi Dominus* (not the complete Psalm) is more free and the most interesting. Gallus Dressler (b. 1583, d. in the 1580s) is better known. The title *Spottlied auf das Augsburger Interim* refers to a provisional formula for a settlement between catholics and protestants negotiated in Augsburg in 1548. This 'satirical song' is not a psalm setting but a short four-voice denunciation of the Interim. The package includes four copies of the score plus four sheets of facsimile of the piece from partbooks in Heilbronn. There is also a facsimile of an engraved sheet with the music as part of its design; details are not given (I'm sure I have seen it reproduced elsewhere) and it is not clear enough to read.

Cornetto has also been involved in recording and a double CD set includes much of the repertoire whose publication we have drawn attention to earlier this year. My experience suggests that producing both scores and recordings is not commercially as sensible as it might seem, so I hope this venture succeeds. Some of the music is quite obscure, but there are also dances from Phalèse (not perhaps recognisable to anglophones as the *Löwener Tanzbuch*). The discs are varied in ensemble and generally well performed, if a bit stolid after the *Musica Reservata* reissue (see p. 15). The vocal ensemble pieces are particularly enjoyable; I could have done with more of them and less of the loud wind. The set would sell better if the booklet had an English translation: Schäfer has probably not realised the linguistic laziness of the Anglo-Saxons.

HOW TO PLAY THE CORNET

How to play the cornet by Jeremy West (with Susan Smith) is the book which cornettists have been waiting for since the instrument's modern revival and which Christopher Monk never got round to writing. It is available from Jeremy West, 47 Chalsey Road, London SE4 1YN at £20.00 plus £3.00 post & packing. In the first section, fifty pages of wisdom distilled from his two decades as a leading player, teacher and now maker, West sits us down with the patience of a true master and takes us through such basics as holding the instrument, fundamentals of technique, warming up, breathing, articulation, fingering, intonation and ornamentation. The exhaustively thorough music section that follows is over a hundred pages long and elegantly set (and only at times, one suspects, written) using the latest computer technology. Here you will find scale passages in every key you will be asked to play and some you won't, drills (though surely not even the dullest student will need a two octave scale of C major written out in semibreves in order to practise long notes), a score of pieces ranging from Tallis's Canon to Bovicelli's divisions on *Anchor che col partire*, and – for that truly professional touch – precast blocks of baroque ornament ready to be bolted on to any note that looks lonely and unloved.

West rightly dwells on the problems of intonation, though his own understanding of the quarter comma mean-tone system is not above suspicion, telling us as he does that in it fifths can be played pure (not so, they are a quarter comma flat, one of the reasons the system was abandoned in favour of more sophisticated solutions) and confusing mean-tone and just intonation. Here he is in exalted company: even Howard Mayer Brown (for instance in his New Grove article on performance practice, vol. 14 p. 383) didn't quite cotton on to the fact that equal temperament fifths (a twelfth of a comma flat) are much more in tune than mean-tone fifths (anything up to a third of a comma flat). In practice, though, this lapse doesn't matter, as West deals well with the fundamental issue of abandoning equal temperament and playing in just intonation – a section that could be studied with advantage by many a cathedral choirmaster ('nice bright thirds, boys!')

Quite why the book needed two authors isn't satisfactorily explained – it's not as if it's an autobiography of a football star nor is it set out as a master and pupil dialogue. One moment you are being handed out tips by an avuncular music teacher: 'get to know your body...' then, before you know it, you are standing nervously in front of the professor's desk receiving your final warning that 'the very fact of categorisation can lead students to believe that the necessary and sufficient way to improve one aspect of technique is to work on the section devoted to it'. This has the same disconcerting effect as the old double act of the KGB interrogators: one shines lights in your face and threatens to stick needles under your fingernails, whilst the other apologises for his colleague's boorish behaviour and offers to light your cigarette.

There are more than a few slips and inconsistencies in both the music and the text, an increasing habit in these days of desk top publishing, when books can be, in Auden's phrase 'born whole and normal like a beast', without the midwifely attendance of that over-educated literary busybody, the sub-editor. But the book is sure to become a vade-mecum to all those wrestling with this most formidable of instruments, and no doubt these infelicities can be put right in the subsequent editions which it so richly deserves.

Andrew van der Beek

PURCELL IN HIS OWN HAND

Henry Purcell *The Gresham Autograph: facsimile*. Introduction by Margaret Laurie and Robert Thompson. Novello, 1995. xiii + 154pp, £70.00. ISBN 0 85360 524 6

I have previously expressed surprise that British publishers have not thought fit to honour the Purcell tercentenary with reproductions of the major sources. I would have thought that the printed *Dioclesian* and MS *Fairy Queen*, accompanied with their libretti, were obvious candidates. One important source for which a facsimile edition is particularly appropriate is the autograph song-book owned by Gresham College and now in the Guildhall Library. This has now appeared as a beautiful volume published by Novello for the College and the Purcell Society with an introduction by two distinguished experts on Purcell's songs and theatrical music and on his MSS. It is printed on strong paper with a fine binding – too heavy for a singer to hold or put on a normal music stand, but with its oblong format manageable on most harpsichord desks. There is a curious inconsistency in titling; the label on the front has *Gresham Autograph*, omitting the definite article of the title page, whereas the spine has *Songs*. That is my only criticism. If you want to buy any permanent memorial to Purcell year, this is it.

Yet it is wrong to think of it as something monumental. Like the recently-discovered keyboard MS, this is essentially an ephemeral source, not a carefully-prepared text of each item designed to be preserved for posterity. It is possible that some printed sources may have been

published with that as a partial motivation, but here we have a practical document, containing versions which are probably not intended to replace those in the sources of the works from which many are taken but which are written out for a friend or pupil, perhaps as Purcell remembered them or as he thought suitable for the particular time, place and singer. It is thus ideal for facsimile reproduction. It brings the performer in direct contact with Purcell and his singer, reading from the same image as they did. But an editor of any of the complete works from which separate songs are included in the MS may well feel that he should print the version that survives in the major sources of the work as a whole, even if they do not survive in the composer's hand: I have taken that attitude in my editions. So it would be easy for these most authentic but not most authoritative versions to be inaccessible and ignored. But now any singer can acquire them. The musical handwriting is clear, the words ungainly but not unreadable. Sopranos in particular (the songs are in treble clef, where necessary transposed to suit that voice) should be dropping very broad hints that this would be their ideal Christmas present.

ASSOCIATED BACH

Since our readership is international, I should explain that virtually all English (and former colonial) children who take private music lessons work their way through a series of graded exams set by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. These seem on the whole to be fair, sensible and equitable, though my own distant experience is curious – I gave up after erroneously receiving a grade V certificate for a Grade IV piano exam. There was a period when teachers had to tell pupils to play Bach's ornaments wrong in case the examiner was old-fashioned, but those I know now are far too sophisticated for that to be necessary.

Apart from running exams and publishing set works, the Board publishes its own editions of standard piano works. I have been impressed over the last few years with their Handel editions and Richard Jones' version of the '48' is extremely impressive. He has now followed this with *Clavierübung Part II* (omitting 'part' would have avoided the mixture of languages). I won't comment again on the wisdom or otherwise of including fingering, but it is here quite discrete and the musical text is extremely grateful to the eye, with carefully calculated page-turns: no modern printer could get away with squashing the second movement of the Italian Concerto onto one opening in the way Bach's engraver did. Four pages of performance notes replace most of the clutter that a previous generation of editors would have put on the page and suggest how pianists might interpret Bach's manual indications in the Italian Concerto. They also draw attention to structural points. There is help on rhythmic alteration: assimilation of the dotted crotchet/quaver patterns to semiquavers in the opening of the French Overture. The introduction is concise: I wonder young pianists (and their teachers) might benefit from a little more advice. The extreme contrast in keys in the two works is mentioned, but there is no

speculation about any tuning implications. This is good value at £4.50 (from Oxford UP).

Jones provides more help to the players in *Baroque Flute Pieces*, three volumes (with two more to come), each £5.25, from the same publisher. We do not normally mention educational material; but these seem useful and will encourage players to be aware of the need to change styles between repertoires from an early age. They also impinge on a matter raised in our last issue. Parts are included both for flute and for cello and the latter is figured. The editor suggests that they might be used by players who wish to improvise their own accompaniment, though the normal convention at this period was for solo sonatas to be played from score. Even here sources are meticulously quoted, something which a good teacher could use to encourage players to think more about how music from the past reaches them.

GLUCK DOCUMENTS

Patricia Howard *Gluck: an Eighteenth-Century Portrait in Letter and Documents*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995. xiv + 271pp, £35.00. ISBN 0 19 816385 1

I have a problem with Gluck in that I have rarely found his operas as effective as his propaganda suggests that they should be. Also, the success of that propaganda (which became an agenda for romantic and early modern opera) is probably the chief reason why earlier opera has, until recently, been misunderstood and undervalued. So like him or not, he is a significant figure, and this book is welcome. It lacks the comprehensiveness and apparent objectivity of the Deutsch documentary biographies; maybe the Victorian Life and Letters is a better analogy. All the composer's own letters are included, in readable English translations, as well as the important prefaces to the scores and much of the contemporary writing about him, though we are spared an exhaustive reprinting of the French controversialists. The author takes a series of anecdotes transmitted by Reichardt as genuine (giving only a reference to an unpublished paper she read last year as justification); in view of his fallibility as a source of Mozartian anecdotes, perhaps one should be more suspicious.

In view of Gluck's later insistence of the importance of music, it is interesting that what is quoted as 'the first authentic review of a Gluck opera' (p. 11) does not mention the composer of the music at all: the reader is left to notice that irony unaided. The anecdote about Handel comparing Gluck's counterpoint unfavourably with that of his cook is not given the possible mitigation that the cook, Gustavus Waltz, was a skilled musician: he had been a leading singer in London for over a decade, played the cello and may well have been skilled in counterpoint. There is a nice misprint on page 33, a *moist* prestigious opera house in Naples – the effect of the Mediterranean! Why did Gluck consistently affect the title 'Chevalier' when Mozart, who had been awarded the same Papal knighthood, didn't?

It is good to have an up-to-date biography of Gluck in English, and the full documentation is welcome. But if the book is translated into French or German, perhaps the polyglot letters could be printed as written.

RECORDEER DUETS

I neglected to mention last month Anthony Rowland-Jones's *Playing Recorder Duets: a guide to the repertoire for two unaccompanied recorders* (available from Allegro, 10 Sion Place, Bristol BS9 4AY) It is an A4 pamphlet of some fifty pages, the final ten of which contain an extensive repertoire list. The rest of the book comprises a historical survey of the repertoire, drawing attention to music which, from the author's wide experience, he can testify as being worth playing. Playing recorder duets is probably the cheapest way of ensemble music-making, and develops independent musicianship in a way that playing with an 'accompanist' (often a more broadly-experienced so dominating musician) does not do, though it may encourage slack rhythm.

HYMNS AND CAROLS

Rollo G. Woods *Good Singing Still: a handbook on West Gallery music* West Gallery Music Association, 1995. 161pp. ISBN 1 999947 00 0

John Playford *The Whole Book of Psalms: a Facsimile of the Eighteenth Edition dated 1729* edited by Gordon Ashman. West Gallery Music Association, 1995. 307 pp. ISBN 1 899947 01 9

A Festival of Village Carols: Sixteen Carols from the Mount-Dawson Manuscripts, Worrall transcribed and arranged by Ian Russell. Village Carols, 1994. 60pp. ISBN 0 9524871 0 1

Rollo Woods was a name I frequently heard mentioned when we were working on the relevant sections of *The New Oxford Book of Carols* and I was delighted to meet him at the recent West Gallery conference. What was an amateur enthusiasm has become, in retirement, a full-time study and he has produced a succinct and readable handbook inviting the reader to reach out from the familiar to the unfamiliar and with enough bibliographical references to enable him to follow up particular topics, though many of them are not yet adequately researched. The subject impinges on many other areas of study – local history, church history, hymnology, folk music, organology – and has in Britain been ignored by most musicologists, with a result that those working on it have an intense suspicion of them. This is not so in the USA, and the American Musicological Society has itself published the *Collected Works of William Billings*, an outstanding though not unique exponent of a style which was similar on both sides of the Atlantic. One wonders whether the ongoing research by Nicholas Temperley, whose *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge UP, 1979) is the only extensive academic discussion of the topic, would have been found acceptable at an English university even if resources had been available. This is a fine introduction to the pre-Victorian way of singing hymns, psalms and carols.

Two other items I bought at the same conference are also of interest. Playford's three-voice settings of the Psalms were immensely popular and ran into 20 editions over eighty years. The choice of the 18th for reproduction was arbitrary: a copy that needed rebinding was presented to the West Gallery Music Association and the opportunity was taken to copy it while it was dismembered for binding. There is heavy showthrough, but the photocopy reproduction is legible enough. It is issued on A4 sheets with the original openings printed across the page; the cheapness makes this an acceptable convenience. Apart from the importance of the music, this is probably the easiest way to acquire the words of the Old Version.

When working on the NOBC we were aware of the carol-singing tradition that survived at Worrall but assumed wrongly that it was unique; at the conference Ian Russell described similar practices elsewhere in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire. His edition of 16 carols come from MSS in which the traditional singers carefully preserved their repertoire, though which were not directly used for performance – not souvenirs, as seems to have been the case with e.g. early opera prints, but private documents that are treasured in secret by the performers. This edition is not in fact just a record of the traditional performance. It includes two extra features. The carols were probably originally in the normal West Gallery scoring of three or four parts. They survived just as tune and bass. The MSS contain two extra parts (alto and tenor, though we must remember that the tune, notated as soprano, was also sung at tenor register) which were attempts to bring the music up-to-date. These are given here in small print and look just a little too law-abiding to be genuine. More recently, the instrumental accompaniments have been neglected. Russell handles this in a slightly confused way, giving us a practical version which is intended to influence the tradition rather than recording precisely what is in his sources. Fortunately, he says that he has kept detailed notes of changes he has made, so those of an academic bent should ask for these. The layout is also a problem, with a score for the two violins and bass printed after the vocal version and generally after a page turn: a separately-bound instrumental score would have been far more convenient (unless he is intending players always to memorise). Singers also have problems with page-turns in the placing of extra verses. But despite inconveniences, this is an entertaining collection. As I said to the editor, I'm not sure whether listening to recordings of drunken singers is a particularly musical experience, so I only recommend the tapes to students of performance practice (after all, who would want to listen in the cold light of day to any ensemble bawling after several pints, however exciting the event felt at the time). But, after an extensive late-night sampling (with wine and beer, though not in a pub), I can recommend this to those who want a change in their Christmas repertoire.

West Gallery Music Association, The Library, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, The Wharfage, Ironbridge, Telford TF8 7AW; I can't remember the prices, but think the Woods was £7.50, the Playford around £10. Village Carols, Bridge House, Unstone, Sheffield S18 5AF.

IMAGO MUSICAЕ

Imago Musicae VIII, 1991, edenda curavit Tilman Seebass adiuvante Tilden Russell. Libreria Musicale Italiana, 1995. 223pp. ISBN 88 7096 057 9

Most of this issue is devoted to illustrations of music in classical Greece and is not related to the topics we normally cover here. But it concludes with a lengthy article (65pp) entitled 'Music-related imagery on early Christian insular sculpture: identification, context, function' by Ann Buckley. As a non-expert, I was puzzled by the title: I would expect 'early Christian' to refer to the first few centuries AD and the rather vague 'insular' to mean Cyprus, Malta or some other Mediterranean island. In fact the period is the 8th-10th centuries and the place north Britain and Ireland. The instruments in evidence are round-topped lyres, triple pipes, curved horns, long horns, trumpets and triangular harps. As always with research based on iconological evidence, it is frustrating that instruments are shown with enough precision to be reconstructed yet we have no idea what to play on them – though I'm sure someone will read the article, assemble a few more instruments and make a CD of early Celtic music. The author, however, is properly cautious in suggesting that iconographical tradition necessarily represents a local performing tradition.

Publications from Libreria Musicale Italiana are available from Rosemary Dooley: address on page 10.

The Plainsong & Mediæval Music Society



Grants to performers

Applications are invited from performers for funds to assist with the preparation of a programme of plainsong and/or medieval music for commercial recording. Grants, which will not normally exceed £300, are intended to cover the cost of facilities (such as extra rehearsals) that will enhance the quality of the performance or the scholarship on which it is based.

Further particulars can be obtained from the Chairman, Dr Christopher Page, at Sidney Sussex College, Sidney Street, CAMBRIDGE CB2 3HU, who should receive applications not later than 1 January 1996.

L'INTEGRALE DES 54 SONATES POUR CLAVECIN de Joseph HAYDN
Cluny, 1995

Michael Thomas

Amongst the many music events this year in France, Marcia Hadjimarkos' recital series of the complete Haydn Sonatas stands out as remarkable. The concerts were given at the Musée d'Art de Cluny between January and August.

Hadjimarkos' playing has been described in the French press as masterful, full of human compassion with faultless finger technique. She had the good fortune for the concert series to have excellent instruments all either made or restored by Christopher Clarke. For the early, pre-1765 sonatas she used a piano-type clavichord, copy of a 1790 J. C. Schiedmayer. This instrument with its slightly reedy tone in the bass sounded very well in the big room and its shallow case gave a bright tone in the treble. For the later sonatas, she used a square piano by J. Bätz, made in 1789 in Frankfurt, and three different forte pianos. The copy of Anton Walter in Vienna, 1790 with its heavier bridge and stringing gave full tone while the copy of the 1793 Längerer from the Finchcocks Collection had a more delicate and precise sound like a Johann Stein. The last three sonatas, composed in London, were played on a forte piano by Broadwood of 1806. The piano with its sonorous, dramatic, almost vulgar tone made me think of early Beethoven.

Haydn's sonatas are full of contrasts and changes of colour with motives reflecting each other or contradicting in an almost capricious style. While listening to Hadjimarkos, one feels her whole intelligence and sensitivity focused on each motive. Nothing is lost. Her intensity is transmitted to the audience, which followed with rapt attention such as one rarely sees. She allowed the tempo to move with the natural ebb of the music. The texture was clear and the runs impeccable, balancing at the top and then trickling away so delightfully that I wished certain sequences would go on for longer. Almost all the movements made a complete form like a huge arch with a climax and a resolution. This was marvellous in music like the F minor Variations Hob XVII/6 but also in the less well known works.

This was a rare opportunity to hear the whole of Haydn's keyboard output and follow its evolution over 45 years of composing, performed on excellent period instruments. One can only hope that this can be repeated in the future for a wider audience.

DIDO'S LAMENT

Clifford Bartlett

I saw two stagings of *Dido and Aeneas* within a month. One was ideal – the production by Jack Edwards that Opera Restor'd is touring. In every respect what the audience sees and hears seems to flow from the music and in a style that belongs with it. The set is minimal, but the costumes easily make up for that by filling the stage, thus making touring easy (the performance I saw was in a church in Cambridge). Dance is integrated into the acting, and the ingenious idea of linking witches and sailors works well. Vocal and instrumental styles matched, and the opera was a moving whole.

I expected David Freeman's version to be provocative. In fact, it was bitterly disappointing, and he had little to say about the work. The stylistic clash between the wobbly singers (no comments about their appearance!) and the period band was disconcerting, the absence of dance upset the balance of the opera, and the staging was utterly unilluminating. According to the programme, 'Opera Factory is committed to divesting opera of its grand and elitist image and re-establishing it as a genuinely popular art form'; was Act I really intended to satirise its idle-rich

setting? This was well set-up by the most languorous overture I have heard, but to what point? Only the witches (not modernised into anything else) were effective.

The companion piece was Britten's *Curlew River*, which is published with detailed staging instructions (like the guides circulated by Ricordi for the later Verdi operas). I remember the original 1964 production and expected this to be utterly different. The acting area had changed from oval to square and was covered with pebbles (an interesting idea except that I would rather hear music uninterrupted by the noise of the set), but the style set in 1964 and demanded by the work itself was in effect, if not in detail, preserved (apart from the revelation of a monk's underpants, about as childish as jokes about what Scotsmen wear beneath their kilts). This was a moving performance of one of my favourite operas (not unrelated to early music, since the climax is probably the most powerful setting of a chant *cantus firmus* since Monteverdi), with Nigel Robson outstanding as the mad woman. I'm not sure whether the work might not be stronger if the acting remained more formal, but it worked well.

OLD AND NEW IN UTRECHT

James Chater

Now in its 14th year, the Utrecht Early Music Festival continues to flourish thanks to imaginative programming and loyal audiences. A sense of adventure, a willingness to perceive the old in the new, the familiar in the exotic and vice versa, determines the unique character of the festival, as does the character of the location itself: an ancient university town at the centre of a small, internationally-minded European country, whose numerous churches possess fine acoustics and are all within walking distance of each other. Utrecht is also the home of a significant minority of non-Caucasians – justification (not that any is needed) for the large part played, for the third year running, by music from areas outside western Europe.

As in previous years, the festival was loosely based on a number of interlocking themes: Purcell, the secular cantata (also the subject of a round table), Russian Orthodox music, non-Western music, Dufay, the madrigal comedy, and the voice. This last was also the theme of the opening marathon (Vredenburg, 25 August), *The Night of the Voice*, a dazzling and at time provocative display of different styles and techniques of singing far removed from each other in time and place. These ranged from Marco Beasley's deceptively throw-away rendering of Neapolitan songs to Catherine Bott's remarkable *pianissimo* in the Entry of Night from Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, Max Emanuel Cencic's male soprano in arias by Jommelli and A. Scarlatti, Tomoko Mukaiyama accompanying herself on the piano in Nergeijk's disconcertingly caustic *You're My Fairy Queen Dearest*, the passionate sliding, twanging and wailing of the French quartet Sanacore in the neglected repertoire of Italian folk polyphony, and the genial overtone singing of Gannadi Tumat from Tuva, Mongolia, no less remarkable for its closeness in sound to Stockhausen.

In a format which is gaining ground, not only at Utrecht but elsewhere, old and new were twice combined in the same concert, the better to manifest the affinities between them. The most striking example of this was Fretwork's performance (Leeuwenbergkerk, 3 September) of some fantazias by Purcell and of two *Contrapuncti* from *The Art of Fugue* interspersed with viol consorts commissioned by the South Bank Festival from Peter Sculthorpe, Simon Bainbridge, Poul Ruders and Barry Guy to mark the tercentenary of Purcell's death. (Ironically, Purcell's fantazias were themselves written in conscious imitation of a style that had become obsolete.) None of the pieces exhibited a slavish imitation of Purcell's style or technique, and I sensed that Sculthorpe may not have been completely at home with the medium. Quite otherwise was Guy's *Buzz*, composed with the *Fantazia upon One Note* in mind, in which viol sonorities (flageolet and 32-note chords) were

combined with jazz sounds to create intricate, intriguing scurries of sound.

The Estonian group Hortus Musicus Tallinn offered a programme along the same line (Pieterskerk, 26 August), this time alternating Italian music of around 1400 with music by their compatriot Arvo Pärt (played on 'original' instruments!) to illuminate the static, impressive and at time bell-like characteristics of both. This was lovely music-making, led by the versatile Andres Mustonen, though *Fratres* did not achieve its hypnotic, ritualistic effect because of too many changes in instrumentation. (I missed a performance of the same piece earlier the same day on a squeeze-box and two hurdy-gurdies.) The possibility of *ad libitum* instrumentation in the case of Pärt's music is symptomatic of his affinity with the past, as are his setting in Russian of Psalms 117 and 131, both of which occur in the Orthodox rite.

A vivid portrait of a living tradition was provided by the series of four concerts by the Moscow Patriarchate Choir covering almost the entire history of Russian Orthodox church music. This all-male choir fulfils the stereotype of the rich, dark Russian choral sound with a vengeance; indeed, the ringing quality produced by their overtones recalls 19th-century travellers' comparisons of Russian choirs to the sound of bells. Their first concert (26 August) featured the earliest medieval chant and the discant based on it, a harmonically wayward idiom (at least for Western ears) in which seconds and fourths are treated as consonants. The other three concerts (27, 28 & 29 August) traced what some may consider to be a decline into an increasingly-western idiom during the 18th and 19th centuries, though I was agreeably surprised at how eloquent even the most operatic pre-revolutionary church music can be when sung in a stark, straight-forward manner, without excessive vibrato or histrionics. High points included Bortnyansky's exuberant setting in Russian of the *Te Deum* and the sombre *Apocalypse* by Vladimir Martinov (b. 1946), in whose music the dissonant sounds of early Russian polyphony can be heard clearly.

An early-music festival such as this can provide a forum in which the old and the new, often at loggerheads in our culture, can coexist peacefully, or even be reconciled or fused together. Another thing it can do is conjure up the atmosphere and context in which the music originated. One group which can do this exceedingly well is Sequentia (director: Benjamin Bagby). The spacious apse of one of Utrecht's most beautiful medieval churches, the Pieterskerk, provided the candle-lit setting for the Brunswick Easter Play (2 September), a paraliturgical drama with

music drawn from various 13th- and 14th- century sources. The slow build-up starts with the laments of Jeremiah and of the three Marys, moves through the famous 'Quem quaeritis' scene with the angel, and culminates with the entrance of the two apostles, this moment punctuated by some entrancingly other-worldly three-voice singing from the three Marys (Barbara Thornton, Carol Schlaikjer and Lucia Pahn) combined with men in unison.

Besides being musicians, today's early-music performers are to an increasing extent scholars, teachers, actors, entertainers, ritualists, dancers, even composers. This has advantages as well as dangers. For instance, I enjoyed Steve Player's stylish dancing in The Harp Consort's 17th-century English programme of song and consort music (Geertekerk, 31 August), but tenor Douglas Nasrawi's improvised *Sonnet to a Ground* turned out to be a catalogue of Purcellian effects without a cause. Anthony Rooley's carefully-devised programme with the Consort of Musicke (Vredenburg, 29 August), a four-part invocation 'From Dusk to Dawn', revealed some little-known masterpieces (for example, John Ward's evocative *Come, sable night* and the colourful *When the cock begins to crow* published under Purcell's name) as well as a few duds.

For entertainment in its purest form we were offered madrigal comedies by Vecchi and Banchieri, the P. D. Q. Bachs of Italy around 1600. There were two staged performances: Banchieri's *Studio dilettevole* (Ensemble Douce Mémoire, 27 August) and La Péniche Opéra in a pasticcio combining parts of works by Vecchi and Banchieri (1 September). However, for comic timing allied to musical sensitivity, the Concerto Italiano's unstaged performance (Vredenburg, 26 August) of madrigal comedies by Vecchi, Striggio and Banchieri was in a class of its own.

Purcell's *King Arthur*, performed by the Gabrieli Consort and Players directed by Paul McCreesh (Vredenburg, 3 September), was a fitting conclusion to the festival, suitable not only in view of the tercentenary but also because Arthur represents the Dutch king William III. The orchestra played with verve and polish, though the strings lacked bite in the famous Frost scene. But the hushed chorus was very effective here, as was the clear, boyish soprano of Susan Hamilton as Cupid. The scene with the obstreperous Comus was a delight, and the predominantly Dutch audience unselfconsciously joined in the patriotic chorus. Unfortunately Susan Hemington Jones showed signs of tension as Venus in 'Fairest isle', but the vast Passacaglia, involving orchestra, soloist and chorus, had a apt majesty and gracious sweep which earned an encore.

This year's Festival has demonstrated that the combination of old and new can work well as long as arbitrary juxtapositions are avoided, as was the case. Perhaps it would be a good idea for the Utrecht Festival to follow the London South Bank's initiative and actually commission new works specifically to be played alongside historically-aware performances of early music.

Colloque

la musique ancienne aujourd'hui: quels enseignements pour demain? Strasbourg, 12-16 janvier 1996

Au mois de janvier prochain, se déroulera, à Strasbourg, un colloque organisé par le Conservatoire National de Région. Le thème, l'enseignement de la musique ancienne, rassemblera des interprètes, enseignants, directeurs de conservatoires, musicologues et journalistes qui se consacrent à cette musique, tant en France qu'en Europe.

Information: Philippe Suzanne, C. O. D. A.
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ACADEMIE MUSICALE DE VILLECROZE

15-28 July 1996

A course for voice students, under the direction of Denis Stevens, will concentrate on the madrigals of Claudio Monteverdi and his Italian contemporaries.

The cost of this course, which also includes lodging, full board, and return journey London-Villecroze, will be entirely met by the Academy in the case of each student whose application is successful. At present there are vacancies for S S A T T B.

Applications should be sent by 15 November 1995 to Professor Denis Stevens CBE, Morden College, 19 St German's Place, London SE3 0PW, in the form of a letter giving the following information: age, type of voice, prior courses of study, experience in the Italian madrigal repertoire (c.1590-1640); and a cassette featuring this repertoire.

Musica Fabula is a truly international ensemble: Liliana Mazzarri (a Venezuelan soprano), Sarah Pillow (soprano from the USA), Steven Player (baroque guitar, dance & *commedia dell'arte* from Scotland) & Jan Walters (baroque triple harp, from the USA). It will be giving the first modern performances of liturgical and secular music by G. Felice Sances (c.1600-1679) at Boxgrove Priory near Chichester on 6 October.

Details from Jan Walters, 01243 371569

MISSED THAT - CAUGHT THIS

Pressure of work and a commitment to attend the West Gallery Conference in Clacton 36 hours after the end of the San Rocco Gabrielian Extravaganza prevented our trip to Venice in mid-August. It would have meant an all-night drive, which would not have been a good preparation for talking and singing till 2 o' clock for the next three nights. Deutsche Grammophon do not need our help to promote the McCreesh recording and video. We were as usual very involved in editing, typesetting and printing the music for this venture so were pleased to hear that all went well. Hugh Keyte was no doubt happy that his reconstruction (re-composition) of the Gabrieli Magnificat a33 was so convincing that the reviewer accepted it as genuine. We were sorry to miss the music, San Rocco, and a chance to celebrate a birthday and wedding anniversary in style.

We were also sorry to have missed a Locatelli Festival (it is his tricentenary as well as Purcell's and King's Music publishes facsimiles of all his printed works). We fleetingly visited Amsterdam in search of a few missing bars of Vivaldi at the beginning of September and found that the festival began the day after our return. (3rd to 15th September). In addition to an exhibition, and lectures the Amsterdam Locatelli Concours were to give concerts in the English Church (where he was buried), the West Church, Walloon Church and the Concertgebouw. We wish we had seen the publicity earlier. If any reader was there, we would be interested to hear how things went.

Sept. 8-10 brought the London Early Music Exhibition, this time returning to its roots at the Royal College of Music. The atmosphere seemed particularly friendly and the RCM staff were sympathetic and helpful. Opinion was divided about the way exhibitors were scattered around the building. It was less noisy, but there was also less sense of cohesion and, on the first day at least, the scattered exhibitors felt they were being ignored. The days seemed rather long, and the Sunday was very quiet. It may have been the weather. I wonder whether a better opening pattern might be Thursday from 4.00 till 8.00 (allowing one to set up on the day and for evening attendance), Friday 10.00 till 6.00 and Saturday 10.00 till 5.00. One severe inconvenience is the lack of access on the flat; those with heavy loads had to carry them. I'm not sure whether I would vote for a repetition there or not.

As for the public, we felt less busy than two years ago, and it was noticeable that people were very cautious with their money, however interested they might appear in what they were looking at. It was nice to meet some subscribers whom we did not know, and we hope that there will be some response in subscriptions to the copies of the magazine we handed out.

Having been busy with the exhibition and editing lots of Vivaldi concertos for Naxos, we have no new titles to advertise this month.

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OFFICIUM PASTORUM

(The Service of the Shepherds)

as performed in Rouen Cathedral
in the 13th century

edited by

Clifford Bartlett

This edition is transcribed as plainly as possible from the source. Styles of performance have changed enormously over the period I have known the work. Older books claim the importance of this and similar plays as the origin of Western drama; currently the emphasis is more on their function in the liturgy. The style of performance will depend on which school of thought you favour or which is more relevant to your performing circumstances. It is clear that the original 'performance' was an integral part of the liturgy and was not designed for an 'audience'. The crib was behind the altar, so invisible, and there was probably very little light to see dramatic action between Matins and the midnight *Missa in gallicantu* (cocks crow early on Christmas night).

There are two musical problems on which the notation gives no guidance.

Pitch. The absolute pitch is immaterial. It is, however, necessary to decide whether the relative pitch between sections should be preserved. There is a clear sense of tonal (in the broadest sense) relationship centred round E and especially G which would suggest keeping to a single pitch-level. This means that the shepherds are tenors, the

angel a baritone and the midwives tenors (or sopranos). The 7 angels (probably a symbolic number rather than the number of boys in the choir at a particular time) should, of course, sing an octave higher. Alternatively, the whole work can be sung lower, avoiding the need for tenors but making the angel a bass (or perhaps a high tenor).

Rhythm. Most of the music should be sung as chant (a statement which begs a lot of questions!) There are, however, two sections set to metrical verse. When I first encountered the Officium, such sections were transcribed in triple rhythm in accordance with the rhythmic modes and the supposed stress of the verse. We are now more suspicious of stress accent in French Latin and of forcing rhythmic patterns devised for Notre Dame polyphony onto monody. However, the Latin does fall into a regular shape if each syllable is given equal length and melismas are sung as if they were a single note. The longer melismas at e.g. *homo deus* and *transeamus* may be treated more as ornaments than notes of substance so need not force a slow tempo.

Additional copies are available at £1.00: please do not photocopy this one.



KING'S MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

Elaine Bartlett

Redcroft, Bank's End, Wyton, Huntingdon, PE17 2AA

Officium pastorum (Rouen)

In sancta nocte nativitatis domini post *Te deum* angelus assistet annunciet christum natum esse et hoc dicet

[Angelus]

Hoc audientes vii pueri stantes in alto loco dicant.

[7 Angelii]

Audientes pastores eant versus presepe cantantes hoc Re[sponsorium].

[Pastores]

[repeat Eya... annunciatum est]

Tunc pastores gradiantur per chorū in manibus baculos portantes et cantantes usque ad christi presepe versum.

[Pastores]

Tran-se - a-mus us-que beth-le - em et vi - de - a - mus hoc ver - bum
quod fac - tum est quod fe - cit do - mi - nus et os - ten - dit no - bis.

Illis venientibus duo clerci in presepe cantent versum.

[Obstetrics]

Quem que - ri - tis in pre - se - pe pas - to - res di - ci - te.

Pastores respondeant.

[Pastores]

Sal - va - to - rem chris - tum do - - - mi - num in - fan - tem pan - nis
in - vo - lu - tum se - cun - dum ser - mo - nes an - ge - li - cum.

Item ob[s]tetrics cortinam aperientes puerum demonstrent dicentes versum.

[Obstetrics]

Ad - est hic par - - - vu - lus cum ma - ri - a ma - tre su - a
de quo du - dum va - ti - ci - nan - do y - sa - y - as di - xe - rat pro -phe - ta.

Ostendant matrem pueri dicentes.

[Obstetrics]

Ec - ce - vir - go con - ci - pi - et et pa - - - ri - et fi - li - um
et e - - - un - - - tes di - ci - te qui - a na - - - tus est.

Tunc salutent pastores virginem ita dicentes.

[Pastores]

[1] Sal - ve vir - go sin - gu - la - ris, Vir - go ma - nens de - um pa - ris
[2] Nos Ma - ri - a tu - a pre - ce A pec - ca - ti pur - ga fe - ce;
An - te se - cla ge - ne - ra - tum Cor - de pa - tri - es; A - do - re - mus nunc cre - a - tum Car - ne ma - tri - es.
Nos - tri cur - sum in - co - la - tus Sic dis - po - ne Ut det su - a fru - i na - tus Vi - si - o - ne.

Tunc viso puerō pastores adorēt eum, deinde vertant se ad chorū dicentes.

[Pastores]

Al - le - lu - ia, al - - - - - le - - - lu - ia.
Iam ve - re sci - mus chri - stum na - - - tum in ter - ris
de quo ca - ni - te om - nes cum pro - phe - ta di - - - cen - tes.

Postea statim incipiatur missa

White notes indicate plicas (liquefiant notes); the original notation does not specify their exact pitch.

Source: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds latin 904, ff 11v-14r. The MS is a Gradual from Rouen dating from the 13th century. There are also Ordinals from Rouen which give more detailed rubrics but not the full text and no music; a sample is included in Karl Young *The Drama of the Medieval Church* Oxford, 1933, vol. 2. p. 14-16 (followed by the text of the version printed here). The best modern edition is in Susan Rankin *The Music of the Medieval Liturgical Drama in France and England*, Garland, New York, 1989; commentary in vol. 1, pp. 178-184, transcription vol. 2 pp. 122-126.

The *Officium pastorum* is performed after the *Te Deum* which concludes Matins and before the first Mass of Christmas. A crib is prepared behind the altar and an image of St Mary placed in it. (I have translated the Latin subjunctive into indicative, in accordance with the modern convention for stage directions.)

In the holy night of the nativity of the Lord after the Te Deum, an angel stands forward and announces that Christ is born, saying:

Fear not, for behold, I announce to you a great joy which shall be for all people, for born to you today is the saviour of the world in the city of David. And this will be a sign for you: you will find the infant wrapped in swaddling and lying in a manger.

Hearing this, seven boys standing in a high place sing:

Glory in the highest to God and on earth peace to men of good will.

Hearing this the shepherds go towards the crib singing this response.

1. Peace is announced to earth,
glory in the highest.
Earth is allied to heaven
with grace as mediator.

God, the mediator, is also man,
he has descended in his own [image],
so that guilty man may ascend
to the permitted joys.

Eya, eya!
Let us go, let us see
the word which has been made [flesh].

Let us go so that we may learn
what has been announced.

2. In Judea a boy is crying,
a boy, the salvation of his people,
by whom the old enemy of the world
foresees that he will be destroyed.

Let us go, let us go
to the manger of the Lord
and let us sing, let us sing
praise to the fruitful virgin. Eya...

Then the shepherds progress through the choir carrying staves in their hands and singing this verse until they reach Christ's manger

Let us go to Bethlehem and see this word which has been made which the Lord has done and shown us.

Two clerics coming to meet them sing this verse. [The Ordinal describes them as two presbyters in dalmatics.]

Whom do you seek in the manger, shepherds, say?

The shepherds reply:

The saviour Christ the Lord, a child wrapped in swaddling according to the angelic words.

Then the midwives, opening the covering, show the child, saying this verse:

Here is the little child with Mary his mother, of whom foretelling long ago Isaiah the prophet spoke.

They show the mother of the boy, saying:

Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and as you go tell that he has been born.

Then the shepherds greet the Virgin, saying thus:

1. Hail, unique virgin,
remaining a virgin you gave birth to God
begotten before the world of the heart of the father;
let us now adore the child born of the flesh of his mother.

2. Mary, by your prayer,
cleanse us from the defilement of sin;
so order the course of our dwelling here
that we be given to enjoy the vision of your son.

Then, having seen the boy, the shepherds worship him, then turn to the choir saying:

Alleluia, alleluia.

Now truly we know the Christ is born on earth.

All of you sing with the prophet saying:

Then follows the Mass at once.

The Shepherds retain their dramatic role as they rule the choir for the mass and participate in the dialogue *Quem vidistis, pastores... Natum vidimus* that opens Lauds.

There are a few places where the MS is not quite clear. Editorial textual additions are in italics; the music is missing for *Deus* (line 8) and *Et dicamus* (bottom of first page). The non-metrical sections are mostly common to other Shepherds' plays. The first verse insert (*Pax in terris*) exists as an independent poem; BN 904 omits the refrain after the second verse. The second poem has not been found elsewhere; in the MS its second stanza is written out in full without the flat signature; it has a double note A on the first syllable of *peccati*. It is likely that the poems were sung more metrically than the chant-like sections.

The transcription retains the original pitch; some transposition may be necessary. Slurs represent ligatures; white notes plicas. These were notated as little tails on the stems of the preceding notes and do not give a fixed pitch. They are mostly used as liquescents on syllables ending with soft consonants, to which they may be sung. The Latin text is modernised with respect to use of consonantal U & V and is lightly punctuated. Capitals are used only for the beginnings of sentences and for new lines of the poems.

I am grateful to Inglis Gundry for showing me in the 1960s that this repertoire could be performed as well as studied. I have his version (with English text and strong rhythms) still in my head. After preparing this edition I found I had a copy in Hugh Keyte's hand of the play and surrounding liturgy edited by John Stevens and Mary Berry for a broadcast in 1980. It supplies a precedent for the use of void notes for plicas.

Clifford Bartlett, September 1995

RECORDS FROM AMERICA

Clifford Bartlett

I was amazed by the extensive advertising from EMI and Virgin recently proclaiming that they could now easily import from their German warehouse CDs that had been unavailable in the UK. They should have been embarrassed to show to the public how incompetent their distribution system had been: it would not have occurred to me that there was any problem in supplying the UK from Germany.

Getting CDs from the USA is more complicated. Postal rates are higher (though cheaper from than to the USA) and there may be customs costs and delays. There are a fair number of American CDs that are not available through UK distributors. I hope that we will build up our listing of them, and by the end of the year Peter Berg's new CD mail-order firm will be able to supply anything mentioned in *Early Music Review*.

Meanwhile, at the Boston Festival I made contact with some labels that are not easy of access here, so I will comment here on some of the discs received, a mixture of new recordings and reissues.

I'll start with Boston Skyline, partly because I have more CDs from them than anyone else, partly because the most exciting disc comes from them. Their series *From the Vault* comprises reissues of recordings of early music from the 1950s, '60s and '70s, making a point that not only are the performances milestones but that the quality of the recordings is higher than the pressings of the time could reproduce. They make of practice of assembling their CDs from the best tracks of their source records, not necessarily reissuing them as entities. I don't have the original LPs (I tended to go to concerts or listen to the radio rather than buy LPs then), so cannot judge whether the omissions are sensible.

The highlight is *16th Century Italian & French Dance Music* by Musica Reservata (BSD 123; 64' 16") taken from two Philips discs (of 1970 and 1971). This is a recording that everyone should own, and if you still have the LPs they are probably worn out. The unexpected feature is the singing of dance music (perhaps on the assumption that it is easier to get voices in tune than a consort of loud wind instruments). No-one before or since has been able to take this popular, often potentially trivial music and perform it to make the listener feel that it really matters. Having had the sound in my head for so long, I was interested to find the reality was more relaxed than my recollection. A glance at the names of the performers is fascinating. The star and characterising singer was Jantina Noorman, whose amazing voice conventional critics loved to hate; Margaret Philpot, Nigel Rogers and David Thomas were there, as well as such

stalwarts of early singing as Grayston Burgess, Edgar Fleet, John Dudley and Geoffrey Shaw. Wind players included David Munrow, Bernard Thomas and Michael Laird; most of the sackbutters are still around, including the young Peter Goodwin (not yet renamed Bassano). Cat Mackintosh and Trevor Jones were among the string players, James Tyler, Anthony Rooley and Ephraim Segerman played lute, and Christopher Hogwood and Harold Lester played harpsichord: so many people who have been important in the early music world since. Also some who haven't: I was intrigued to see the name of Richard Bethel, a friend at the time, who worked for the Milk Marketing Board or some such organisation; he played a great bass shawm at our wedding twenty years ago and I haven't seen him since. The disparate forces were held together by John Beckett, with Michael Morrow providing the research, planning and inspiration. Please release their other records.

Although only ten years older, *Dance Music of the High Renaissance* by Praetorius, Widmann and Schein (BSD 118; 56' 26") is from a different generation. This is taken from an Archiv LP of 1961 by the Collegium Terpsichore conducted by Fritz Neumeyer. We are in a different world here. Admittedly, *Musica Reservata* rang the changes on the instrumentation of dances, but here the process is more like modern orchestration. Also, the director falls into the trap of linking two separate publications of Praetorius, his study of instruments (source of a whole range of wonderful instruments otherwise barely known) and *Terpsichore*, a collection of French dances for strings. This record is the source of much later big-band dance performances, though should be imitated with circumspection. It is completed with a selection from the Ulsamer-Collegium's 1971 disc in a more disciplined style.

Now Make We Merthe (BSD 121; 65' 10") contains 11 tracks from an LP of Christmas music under that title by Grayston Burgess and the Purcell Consort of Voices of 1967, preceded by 12 tracks from the 1965 CD *Medieval English Lyrics* directed by Frank Ll. Harrison and Eric J. Dobson (who were also involved as editor and textual adviser in *Now make We Merthe*). The *English Lyrics* was a foretaste of the comprehensive Faber book by Harrison and Dobson, which I have seen sold cheap so often that it must surely be out of print by now. (I was involved in helping Harrison produce a series of anthologies of a wider range of English medieval music for Faber which was abandoned when he died.) Luckily, the performances sound more impressive than the performing editions printed in the volume look and there is some marvellous Christmas music here. I didn't know the recording, but can now understand why certain items that seemed obscure to me were included in

The New Oxford Book of Carols. Despite the use of modern instruments (even a heckelphone), there are some marvellously stylish performances here, and the use of early pronunciation makes it so much easier to escape from the normal 1960s style of singing; listen to Gerald English in *Edi bi thu* or *Miri it is*, for instance, the latter with an exuberant accompaniment on viola and harp. The boys of All Saints, Margaret Street (a collegiate establishment a few hundred yards from Broadcasting House that was axed soon after) make an exciting contribution to the Christmas section. Another essential purchase.

Sir Cristemas (BSD 124; 51' 29") is not really our repertoire, but follows on from the previous disc. It is mostly drawn from a 1965 Argo disc by The Elizabethan Singers, conducted by Louis Halsey, of a mixture of arrangements of traditional carols and new compositions. Most of the arrangements now sound terribly dated and it is the new works that stand out, and not just the famous pieces by Joubert, Walton and Maxwell Davies; Bernard Naylor's setting of James Joyce is haunting, and Halsey's own simple *Balulalow* withstands memories of Britten. The Elizabethan Singers was among the best of several amateur-professional London small choirs that were killed by the singers' union Equity's ban on such mixtures. Some turned into fully-professional groups (e.g. the Taverner and the Monteverdi Choirs), but Louis Halsey had less success in the 1970s. The sound is a little upper-middle-class, but it is worth hearing.

In the early 1970s, the gap between modern- and early-instrument baroque orchestras was not as wide as it was to become. In the 1960s the English Chamber Orchestra (associated with Arnold Goldsborough and Raymond Leppard) had experimented with baroque styles and Philomusica of London had been a significant force, but dropped out of the limelight when Thurston Dart was appointed Professor at King's College, London, and was occupied with administration. Neville Marriner had played with Dart (one of my early record purchases was their 7" disc of Purcell's Golden Sonata and 3 Violins on a Ground) and his Academy of St-Martin-in-the-Fields started as primarily a baroque group. By the mid-1970s, their style was moving away from that which groups like the other Academy (of Ancient Music) were developing, but in *J. S. Bach: Four Concerti Transcribed* (BSD 127; 66' 35") from 1975 & 1976 the ASMF offers fine performances which feel more attuned to the music than their more recent recordings. They were perhaps kept on the track by their harpsichordists, Christopher Hogwood and Nicholas Kraemer (both of whom still conduct modern bands as well as their own baroque groups). There is fine oboe playing from Neil Black in versions of BWV 1053 & 1055; Tess Miller (who could also play the baroque oboe) joins Carmel Kaine in BWV 1060R; only the three violins in BWV 1064R disappoint (and the orchestral sound is less stylish as well); perhaps it is the absence of an oboe to give a focus to the modern string sound that makes it less acceptable. Neil Black, incidentally, is the fine first oboe on a stylish new Handel recording from the ECO (see p. 16).

Philomusica provides the orchestra for the opening and closing pieces on *Masterworks for the Harp* (BSD 119; 63' 27"), Handel's op. 4/6 & 5, both played as harp concertos by Ossian Ellis and recorded in 1959. No. 6 is here presented in the reconstruction by Thurston Dart as the *Concerto per il Liuto e l'Arpa in Alexander's Feast*. It sounds delightful, though op. 6/5 is more cumbersome. The rest of the disc is more recent harp music recorded by Marisa Robles in 1965, music I previously knew only from writing notes about it.

I twice heard Ralph Kirkpatrick playing Elliott Carter's double concerto in BBC concerts at Maida Vale, but not any baroque music. Unlike the discs heard so far, his recording of Bach's Partitas 1, 2 & 6 (BSD 132; 74' 25") is a period piece in that the use of a 16' register encourages a weighty style and slow speeds in some movements and I do not find the sound of the unnamed instrument appealing, despite the claim that this was the first LP to feature an instrument modelled on those played by Bach himself (Archiv's original documentation would surely have identified the maker and model). Nevertheless, Kirkpatrick is an important figure in the revival of harpsichord music, so this is worth hearing, and there is plenty of enjoyable playing. Another disc (BSD130) contains Partitas 3-5.

Seymour Hayden, a Professor of Maths as well as a harpsichordist, is a name unknown to me. A pupil of Kirkpatrick, his recording of *The Goldberg Variations* (BSD 126; 47' 35") dates from 1977. This time we are told about the instrument, which was made by Eric Herz in a Kirkman/Shudi style, slightly odd for mid-German music. The playing has plenty of panache but is at times a bit solid; it is also short on repeats.

I'm not sure what to make of *The Siena Pianoforte* (BSD 131; 66' 10"). The history of the instrument given in the booklet reminded me of my father-in-law's vivid account of how he escaped from Dunkirk in 1940 with only a pocket flask of brandy to keep him alive; this went down well with old soldiers drinking with him in the British Legion club, but in fact he got no nearer France than Salisbury Plain and the story was complete invention. It seems odd that anyone would use priceless wood from the Temple of Jerusalem to build merely an upright piano (especially before 1800), and would Liszt really have been so enthusiastic about an old upright. Virtually every part of the instrument is new, so don't expect this 1955 recording to offer any clues to what it might have sounded like in its mythical past. But it is worth hearing for Charles Rosen's playing of Scarlatti and of Mozart's Sonata in Bb K.333. Kathryn Dèguire's playing of K331 a couple of years later is less memorable.

Lyrichord Early Music Series includes both new issues and reissues. I mentioned Kevin Moll and Schola Discantus's recording of two Ockeghem masses last November and their release of French Sacred Music of the 14th Century is reviewed on page 15 below. La Follia Salzburg recording of Biber's *Mensa Sonora* (LEMS 8017; 62' 46") is frustrating; the

playing is impressive, but it is ruined by the close recording of the harpsichord so that the impression is of a set of classical accompanied sonatas; even solo fugal entries are not spared. Sadly, it cannot be recommended.

Also recent is *Istanpitta*, a jamboree of 14th-century dances played by New York's Ensemble for Early Music directed by Frederick Renz (LEMS 8016; 65' 42"). Technically this is fine and some tracks sound well, but regular readers will be aware of my suspicion of the jam-session approach to this sort of music; I expect others will find it more convincing than I do. Curiously, one track reminded me of the instrumental chant paraphrase that frames Britten's *Curlew River*, which perhaps places the style in the mid-1960s, though Britten's heterophony adds a spice missing here.

The first medieval recording I bought was a 10" disc of Leonin and Perotin sung by Russell Oberlin, Charles Bressler and Donald Perry with Seymour Barab on the viol from Classics Club in 1958 or 1959 at a cost of 12/6 (£0.62½). Having no criterion for evaluating music of the period, I lent it to my Director of Studies who, although I was reading English, happened to be a medieval music expert, John Stevens. John is a polite man, but it was clear when he returned it that there was little he could say in recommendation. So I taught myself how to transcribe the notation myself and tried, unsuccessfully, to get friends to sing it. The record thus had an influence on me. But I don't think that justifies its reissue (LEMS 8002; 46' 58"). I'm puzzled by the title *Notre Dame Organa De Santa Maria* for a disc containing the Christmas chants *Viderent*, *Sederunt* and *Alleluia Nativitas*. Lyricord have issued several other Oberlin discs from the period, though not the one I remember with pleasure (but how it would seem now?), New York Pro Music singing English 15th-century carols.

I had a problem of communication at the Titanic stand at Boston, in that I was seeking recent recordings of early music while the person manning it failed to see that either criterion was relevant to what he should give me. So I came away with a mixed bag, not all of which is relevant.

The firm has been around for quite a long time: I used to get LPs from them to review in the early days of *Early Music News* and remember them being more interesting for their repertoire than their execution or recording. Perhaps the name Titanic has a different resonance in the USA, but here it is inextricably linked with a large object sinking. We did have one if their records sent to us last year which our reviewer rejected on the grounds that the recording was so bad that she couldn't hear the performance. Luckily, there is no such problem with the batch here, though I regret that I cannot say anything about the disc that potentially interested me most, a recital of Byrd's keyboard music on virginals and organ by James Nicolson played on a modern 'mother and child' virginals by Lynette Tsang and an old-fashioned organ of 1706 by J. C. Rindt at Hatzfeld an der Elder. Sadly, the box now contains Spring and Summer of the John Eliot Gardiner recording of Haydn's *Seasons*. A

simple swap isn't the answer, since I don't have a box for the Haydn. So I can merely mention it to arouse curiosity. The title is *The Passinge Mesures* (Ti-225; 79' 00").

The only other 'early' recording was of Murray Forbes Somerville playing Bach's *Orgelbüchlein* on the Flentrop organ in the Adolphus Busch Hall at Harvard (Ti-221; 81' 25" – the longest single CD I have seen). I enjoyed hearing it with the facsimile in front of me. The playing struck me as a little plain – we have become more expressive again over the last few years – but perfectly acceptable if you want a disc with the whole set and don't demand an old organ, though I don't recommending hearing it from beginning to end in one sitting. Perhaps one should mark a calendar and begin or end the day with an appropriate chorale.

I was most intrigued to see a recording of an historic organ which included a piece written by a younger college contemporary: it really makes me feel old! I suppose that we must start being careful how we preserve even instruments as recent as 1952, the date of a well-kept but unmodernised Aeolian-Skinner instrument in Jacksonville, Illinois. Paul-Martin Maki plays a characteristic programme of Elgar (op. 28), Reger (op. 47), Roger-Ducasse, Percy Whitlock and Derek Bourgeois on a disc that is called *Elgar & Co* (Ti-226; 74' 22"); did no Americans write for this sort of organ?

Other discs show an enterprising choice of repertoire (guitar music of Johann Kaspar Mertz (Ti-218), for instance, Piano music of Thalberg (Ti-227) and a fine recital of Alkan's *Symphonie* op. 39, Beethoven op. 31 and Liszt's 2nd *Mephisto Waltz* plus a real curiosity, Liszt's version of a Saraband & Chaconne from Handel's *Almira* (Ti-220).

I was a little disappointed by *Where Home Is: Life in Nineteenth-Century Cincinnati*, an anthology of popular hymns, songs and instrumental pieces directed by John Miner (New World Records 80251-2; 51'49"), reissued from the bicentennial Recorded Anthology of American Music; it all seemed rather cosily middle class, though I was intrigued by *Home, sweet home* as a German hymn (*Bei aller Verwirrung und Klage allhier*). Rev. Augustus Dameron Fillmore's work is interesting. His *Silent night! hallowed night!* seems like an attempt to parody Mohr and Gruber without infringing their (or a fraudulent American publisher's) copyright while the archaic minor-key *Blessed Bible, how I love it* has the real feel of the Billings period and could have done with a far more vigorous performance in the 'Northern Harmony' style. I never suspected that Philip Bliss had a sense of humour. The idea of the record is a good one: perhaps some English towns might like to emulate it.

Boston Skyline Records, 73 Hemenway Street, #508, Boston MA 02115

Titanic Records, P. O. Box 204, Somerville MA 02144-0204

Lyricord Disc Inc, 141 Perry Street, New York, NY 10014

New World Records, 701 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10036

The other American company we met in Boston was Dorian, whose output is covered regularly in our review section; their discs are available

RECORD REVIEWS

CHANT

The Ceremony of the Shepherds and Midnight Mass Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge, Choristers of King's College, Cambridge, Mary Berry 58' 16" Herald HAVPCD180

This begins with the Rouen Shepherd's play (the one printed on pages 12 & 13 of this issue) with the ensuing mass as in the Rouen sources. It is a recording of a live celebration from the chapel at Arundel Castle, complete with priests muttering in the background. This may add to its authenticity, but it is much easier for the ear to segregate the different sounds *in situ* than through a pair of speakers or headphones and I hope that this is a one-off demonstration. I wasn't too convinced by the King's boys, and is there evidence for singing in falsetto, as is done by the angel? The slow speed of 'Pax in terris nunciatur' worried me; having equal length per syllable is fine, but one then needs to treat melismata more as ornaments than fully-weighted notes. It is a pity that the booklet gives English but not the Latin texts, particularly since not everything is in the normal Tridentine books. Certainly worth hearing, but this is more for fans than new listeners and would not be my first Schola Gregoriana choice. CB

MIDDLE AGE

The Lily & The Lamb: Chant and polyphony from medieval England Anonymous 4 Harmonia Mundi HMU 907125 66' 45"

This is a record that scores highly for overall beauty and atmosphere though the very integrity and style that holds it all together did leave me craving a little grit or excitement. The programme is a mixture of Latin and English texts, based around three sequences about Mary at the foot of the cross, all beautifully sung with conviction, clarity and poise. The four singers sound more similar than they look, their voices lacking the individuality that might give more energy to the polyphony. In only 2 pieces did I hear any real womanly energy (11 & 13), both moving, one-to-a-part settings where dissonances are enjoyed to the full. More astringency would bring out the individual lines, but perhaps English writing (closely-woven and richer with thirds than, say, French) suggests a more blended approach. Initially apprehensive, I was won over. The monophonic pieces are sung in unison (no solos) and here the blend works, the lines flowing freely and comfortably. Even long hymns (over eight minutes) are tolerable in a comfy chair. There is a full and informative booklet. Nothing very exciting happens, which means that as a CD for relaxation this is hard to beat. Alison Payne

Popes and Antipopes Orlando Consort Metronome MET CD 1008 70' 50" Anon *Gloria Clemens deus artifex tota clementia* *Pictagore per dogmata*; de Bononia *Arte psalentes*; Brassart *Te dignitas presularis*; de Caserta *Par les bons Gedeon*; Ciconia *Gloria Suscipe Trinitas*, O Petre Christi *discipule*; de Civitate *Clarus ortu*; Dufay *Balsamus et munda cera, Supremum est mortalibus bonum*, *Ecclesie militantis*; Egidius Courtois *et sages*; de Joan *Incite flos orti Gebenensis*; Tapissier *Eya dulcis*; *Velut Benedictia viscera*; Zacharie *Già per gran nobilità*
French Sacred Music of the 14th Century. Vol. I: Mass settings from the Papal Chapel at Avignon Schola Discantus, Kevin Moll Lyrichord LEMS 8012 67' 56"

Recordings concentrating on music of this period are rare enough, so the simultaneous appearance of two is a welcome coincidence, especially since the repertoires are different. The Orlando disc derives from a BBC recording and the excellent booklet is by Margaret Bent, who has assembled a programme of music from the 1340s (an anonymous *Gloria Clemens deus artifex* in honour of Clement VI) to Dufay's imposing *Ecclesie militantis* and *Supremum est mortalibus* of 1433. Stylistically, this offers a wider range of music than the American anthology, which contains Mass ordinarys from roughly the same period. On the whole, the English group is more assured than the American, but not by enough to make the latter in any way uncomfortable to listen to. Both seem to want to make the music sound as acceptable to modern ears as possible: I wonder whether it should not sound far more exotic and that we should be experimenting more with different sorts of sounds, even though we can never know if we are right. That apart, both discs reveal a wealth of virtually unknown music and extend our knowledge and experience. I hope the tourist shops in Avignon will pile them up. The Schola Discantus disc is arranged with all the Kyries first, then the Glorias, but several alternative orders are suggested so that you can programme your player to produce complete masses, an excellent idea. CB

RENAISSANCE

Byrd and Gibbons Harpsichord works Laurent Stewart Pierre Verany PV 795051 Byrd *Alman* MB11, 1st French *Coranto* MB21-a, 3rd French *Coranto* MB21-c, *Pavans and Galliard* MB3, *Prelude* MB12, *Fantasia* MB13, *My Lady Nevell's Ground* MB57, *Rowland* MB7, *La Volta* MB91; Gibbons: *Fantasia* MB5, MB6, MB8, MB11, MB12, MB14, French *Coranto* MB38, *Galliard* MB20, *Ground* MB20, *The Italian Ground* MB27, *Pavan and Galliard* MB18-19, *Preludes* MB1, MB4, *The Queen's Command* MB28

Laurent Stewart is the young French harpsichord player who made such a good debut recording of Frescobaldi. This record is also good but I wonder if he gets the spirit of the English composers quite so well.

Frescobaldi suggested his music be played with fluidity but his advice need not be confined only to his own music. I would have liked some lengthening of the long notes with the short note leading up to them crisp and clean, and the bass could often be more detached. The French Corantes of both Byrd and Gibbons are a delight as is the Rowland, which is to my mind one of the outstanding pieces of all time. The recording was made on a copy of the Ruckers in Amiens, which I felt was a bit dull and thuddy for this music. A more vibrant Italian type would give more swing to the bass of the dance music and the notes would have a bright jingle between them. I wonder if the rather thick harpsichord sound was the result of using strings too thick of a very soft iron. Thinner strings in harder iron and quill plectra could give a brighter tone.

Michael Thomas

Alfred Deller, HMV Recordings 1949-55 77' 27" EMI Classics 7243 5 65501 2 4 Songs by Anon, Bedyngham, Campion, Ciconia, Dowland, Johnson, Morley, Purcell, Rosseter, Wilson

This is a strange anthology, starting with a pair of Rosellas (full marks to Lionel Salter for ascribing the English one to Bedyngham, not Dunstable) accompanied by viols. Then comes a group of lute songs with Desmond Dupré. Another jump takes us to Purcell, with Walter Bergmann playing note-for-note his published realisations; at least at this pitch they make more sense than in the soprano transposition. Two lesser-known songs have Basil Lam on the harpsichord. I knew Basil well during the 1970s (in fact, more often than not we had lunch together, along with Louis Halsey, see p. 16) but never heard him play a note. He is recorded far more discreetly than Bergmann but has a better idea what a continuo player should do. As for the singing, I find this on the whole more impressive than on the Vanguard discs (more of which are waiting for review); there are fewer of the mannerisms and a less wayward personality emerges. Perhaps the EMI producers were stronger disciplinarians. CB

EARLY BAROQUE

Buxtehude Complete Chamber Music II: Op 2 sonatas John Holloway vln Jaap ter Linden b viol, Lars Ulrik Mortensen hpscd 63' 09" Marco Polo 8.224004

The seven trios of his opus 2 demonstrate the variety of Buxtehude's imagination. There are dance movements, fugal movements, divisions over ostinato basses, improvisatory preludes, intense adagios and ear-catching tunes. The playing brilliantly matches all these moods. John Holloway's violin is rich-toned and he is always in command, with virtuosity to spare. Jaap ter

Linden never forces, yet matches the violin at all points, and the harpsichord, always an independent voice, gives dynamic variation and shape. A very enjoyable record.

Robert Oliver

Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli Intonationi, Toccatte, Ricercari & Canzone Christopher Stemberger (Arezzo Cathedral organ, 1534) Sarx Records SX 013-2 75' 29"

Despite my long enthusiasm for the other music by the Gabriels, I have never felt entirely at home with their keyboard works. It is difficult to find any stylistic point of contact, this being an extreme example of a situation where the conventions of medium and form over-ride composers' individual traits. While I can't say that this CD has completely changed my opinion, I do get a stronger feeling of shape and sense than usual and the arrangement of the pieces by the twelve tones offers an excellent way of getting the feel of how musicians of the period felt about modality. The disc is anyway worth acquiring for the sound of the organ itself and it contains an excellent booklet by the organist.

CB

Available from Sarx Records, Via Morandi 2, Buccinasco (Milano), Italy. EMR has a few copies for sale at £10.00.

William Lawes The Royall Consort Suites Nos. 1-10 The Purcell Quartet 127' 12" Chandos CHAN 0584/5 (2CDs)

The first complete recording of these suites is an important issue and should convince doubters of Lawes' significance. Some people have difficulty with his music for viol consort, but the Royall Consort is more public – less introspective, less extreme, yet entirely characteristic. The scoring (pairs of violins, bass viols and theorboes) allows for a wide variety of texture and mood from polyphonic fantasies to lively dances. All the suites in D are grouped on the first CD: a logical arrangement, but one that the listener should not be bound to, especially as the tessitura of the violin parts seems fairly consistent in those suites and the problems of balance occasionally obtrude. In every other respect this is fully worthy of the occasion, the 350th anniversary of Lawes' untimely death in the Civil War. The performances are full of fire and make the most of the variety of the music. All who love the music of Lawes will enjoy these discs enormously. If you are new to it, try the Pavans from the suites in C or F, one of the 30-second Sarabandes, or the very first piece, the Fantasy of the D minor suite, with its opening theme introduced by the theorbo, its changes of texture, long phrases and building of intensity to almost unbearable pitch, its crunching false cadence, 'wrong' notes and signature close... What music, what a composer to celebrate!

Robert Oliver

Purcell Come ye sons of art Taverner Consort, Choir & Players, Andrew Parrott 54' 38" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45159 2 7 (rec. 1988)

Welcome to all the pleasures, Funeral Sentences, Come ye sons of art, Funeral Music for Queen Mary

This reissue is well worth having. There is an interesting contrast between two works written by the time Purcell was 21 and two from the last two years of his life. The music is well known, but Parrott makes his usual perceptive observation of what would have been done, and achieves musical gains. The most obvious is his adoption of lower pitch for the odes, thus solving the high tenor/low alto problem. The most telling consequence is in 'Sound the trumpet', which I first met on a record by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Victoria de los Angeles and have subsequently heard from pairs of sopranos, countertenors and (never to be forgotten) contraltos. Here it is sung by a falsettist and a tenor, and their crescendo (in turn) on their first 'A' makes the point wonderfully, the note beginning identically but broadening differently. The choir sings with crystal clarity and gives prismatic colours to the extraordinary chords in the youthful Funeral Sentences. The whole, indeed, is sung with poise, clarity and zest.

Robert Oliver

Purcell & Blow Voluntaries, Suites and Grounds Gustav Leonhardt 62' 29" Philips 446 000-2

Blow: *Voluntaries in D minor (Cornet Stop), D minor, A and G; Purcell: Grounds in C minor, in Gamut, A New Ground, A New Irish Tune, Hornpipe in E minor, Rigadoon in C, Sefauchi's Farewell. Suites Nos. 2, 4, 5 and 7, Suite of Lessons in C, Voluntary for Double Organ, Voluntary in G*

The organ of the Grote Kerk, Edam, is certainly a splendid instrument, upon which the small organ repertoire of Blow and the tiny one of Purcell (2 pieces) are here sounded in all their splendour. 'Splendour', indeed, for here, as in the backwaters of many a really significant composer, are to be found cheek-by-jowl the orthodox and the highly unorthodox. Taking Purcell's own contribution, what might seem more predictable than his *Voluntary for Double Organ*, yet what a wonderful surprise we find in his sectionally delightful *Voluntary in G*. Here is reason enough for Curtis Price's delightful heading in the booklet notes 'A Touch of the Wild'. Blow's *Voluntary No. 18*, to which he refers with such relish, is, of course, that in D minor, which is the last played of the four (unnumbered) organ pieces with that title on this disc. The harpsichord pieces were prepared before advantage could be taken of the rediscovery of the new autograph in 1992. Leonhardt has the clever knack of seeking out and projecting the individualities of Purcell's oh-so-vocal keyboard style. This is one of my favourite recent Leonhardt records, all the richer because, even for him, portions of this repertoire were probably still unfamiliar so that we are able to share his musical exploration.

Stephen Daw

Lully: the father of French (and English?) opera. *Ex Cathedra* gives you the chance to decide, when it performs Lionel Sawkins' new edition of *Isis* at Birmingham Town Hall on 3 November. Details from 106 Oxford Rd, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AE.

LATE BAROQUE

Bach Harpsichord Suites Robert Hill 62' 37" Music & Arts CD-874

Partita in C minor BWV 997, Suites in E flat BWV 819a, in F minor BWV 823, in A minor BWV 818a, in A major BWV 832

Robert Hill is now based in Freiburg, West Germany, but formally studied at Harvard, where his doctoral thesis on early Bach manuscripts was presented in 1987. He plays with a good modern insight and technique, although one has to wait until the last 2 Suites here (BWV 997, the latest work and 832, which comes from much earlier) to hear him playing with really exciting authority. The instrument he has chosen is regrettably a French Taskin copy; a German copy would have sounded more appropriate throughout. The idea of tracing the progression of Bach's thinking about dances and suites for keyboard without resorting to familiar music makes for fascinating listening. Since he is the editor (for Harvard UP) of the *Andreas Bach Buch* and the *Möllersche Handschrift*, the repertoire with which Bach grew up, it would be nice if he could collaborate with an organist (maybe John Butt of California) in a complete recording.

Stephen Daw

Bach The Italian Connection Christopher Herrick organ Hyperion CDA 66813

BWV 593, 594, 595, 596, 574, 579, 592

Bach 3 Concertos for Organ Solo Rudolf Scheidegger Divox CDX-29208

BWV 593, 594, 596, 574

Both these recordings were made on modern Metzler organs in Switzerland. They include four pieces in common: the three Vivaldi concertos and the Legrenzi fugue BWV 574. The Scheidegger was recorded in 1984 (although rather naughtily you only find this out by close reading of the insert); the Herrick is a 1994 recording and includes the two Ernst concertos and the Corelli fugue. Herrick's playing is strong, with crisp articulation, direct and consistent touch and a number of ornamental additions to the score. Despite the reference in the excellent programme notes (by Francis Pott) to Bach's wish to preserve the underlying string sonority, Herrick's playing owes little to string sound or style. For example, there is confusion in solo arpeggio passages whether there is one voice or two (the lowest note is occasionally held on well after the rest of the arpeggio is sounding), and the use of echoes in similar passages is anachronistic. Nonetheless, a powerful interpretation, with much use of the distinctive Metzler pleno. Scheidegger's playing style is rather of its time, with rather too much staccato for today's mellifluous taste. As with Herrick, the registrations are strong and organic, with little string influence. If you like organ music gutsy, you should not be disappointed with either CD, but personally I prefer a more violinistic interpretation, both of tone and style.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Forqueray Harpsichord Suites Nos. 1,3 & 5
Luc Beauséjour, 66' 52" Naxos 8.55340

I heard the first few bars of this record by accident but it so aroused my interest I had to stop and listen to it all. Antoine Forqueray was a bass viol player and these suites were originally written for 2 viols and harpsichord and were arranged for harpsichord solo possibly by his son Jean Baptiste, who published them and included three of his own pieces. The low range is maintained which makes some of them sound very dead and almost like the contemporary description of Antoine Forqueray - 'crabby, crotchetty and old'. There are also strong driving pieces and some with the refined elegance of the French style of the time. No details of the harpsichord are given; it certainly has the big sonorous French tone necessary for this music with two very distinct tones on the 8' stops. With the 4' on, as for the final *Jupiter*, the sound is truly splendid. Luc Beauséjour gives a very good performance throughout.

Michael Thomas

Nicolas de Grigny Messe pour Orgue André Isoir (on the Cliquot organ in Poitiers cathedral). 75' 28" (rec. 1972)
Calliope Approche CAL 6911
with Lebègue: *Elévation* in G, *Symphonie* in B flat

Ioir's interpretation of the French classical repertoire has always impressed me. His playing is very musical, but with the spirit and gusto to bring the music to life - that certain *je ne sais quoi* that contemporary writers mentioned as essential and that a good French Brandy used to provide before nuclear testing. Isoir has recently recorded the whole of Grigny's *Livre d'Orgue*, complete with plainchant and motets, at St-Michel en Thierache (Erato double CD). However, if you want your De Grigny served Poitier style, this CD is for you. Isoir's pace has increased over the twenty years between the recordings: his Poitiers recording is in monumental style, with majestic performances of the larger scale *Dialogues* and the *Offertoire*, all complete with remarkably inventive ornamentation in true Gallic improvisatory style. An excellent CD of some of the finest organ music ever written: De Grigny's *Recit de Tierce en taille* always reaches the parts that others do not. (For those following the various De Grigny controversies, Isoir plays bar 35 of the *Tierce en Taille* as Walther 'corrected' it, rather than as De Grigny had it printed and as Bach accepted it. This CD always keeps the traditional order of the *Gloria* pieces.) Buy this CD, despite the careless booklet. Buy the new double CD as well. Buy anything you can of Isoir's!

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Handel Apollo e Dafne, Crudel tiranno Amor
Nancy Argenta, Michael George, Collegium Musicum 90, dir. Simon Standage 58' 07"
Chandos CHAN 0583

These are finely dramatic performances, powerfully sung, brilliantly played. There is, though, a problem of scale between the

singing and playing. *Apollo e Dafne* is in many respects operatic, but the balance between bass and the oboes and bassoon in the first aria suggests that something more intimate is required; it was probably written for somewhere smaller than Hanover's opera house, though *Crudel tiranno Amor* does seem to have been intended for the King's Theatre, Haymarket. The relationship of Nancy Argenta to the band is more comfortable, and as a whole this is well worth buying; it is beautifully played and, apart from the point mentioned, sung. CB

Handel Orchestral music English Chamber Orchestra, dir. Sir Charles Mackerras Novalis 150 108-2 75' 30"
Concertos HWV 335a, 335b, Op. 3 No. 1, Overtures to Rinaldo, Acis and Galatea, Arrival of the Queen of Sheba, Pastoral Symphony from Ariodante, Dances and Dream music from Alcina, Overture and pifa (two versions) from Messiah, Ombramai fu, Dead March from Saul, Symphony with four horns from Giulio Cesare, March from Scipione

I mention elsewhere (p 16) the pioneering work of the English Chamber Orchestra in developing a modern-instrument baroque style in the 1960s, when Mackerras frequently conducted them. Hearing this recent recording, I can only regret the polarity between the early and modern instrument bands over the last couple of decades. As I wrote last month (p.14), Mackerras is aware of performance-practice research and is also one of the best conductors around. So we have in this enterprising mixture of famous and obscure Handel an example of how well his music can be played by a modern band; sample op. 3/1, for example. I could, though, have done without the slower of the two *Pifas* and the 'Largo' on solo oboe. This sort of anthology would have a more 18th-century feel and be more entertaining if orchestral pieces and arias were mixed together. CB

Handel Susanna extracts Lorraine Hunt, Drew Minter, Jill Feldman, William Parker, Jeffrey Thomas, David Thomas, U. C. Berkeley Chamber Chorus, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, dir. Nicholas McGegan Harmonia Mundi HMU 907168 71' 50"

A strong cast, lively orchestral playing and wonderful music make for a recording well worth buying. The choir is described as a chamber chorus, but sounds large and somewhat unwieldy, though delivers its big numbers very well. All the characters are well defined, even divorced from their full context, and the singing is dramatic. The star of the show is Susanna, one of Handel's great heroines, and Lorraine Hunt is fully equal to the role. She has a beautiful, superbly-controlled voice, and is capable of a restraint which suggests strong emotions (she would make a wonderful Nitocris). But with a cast and performance like this, if you can afford the complete 1990 recording, it would be better to get that. Robert Oliver

Leclair Violin concertos, vol. III Simon Standage, Collegium Musicum 90 59' 05"
Chandos CHAN 0589
Op. 7, No 1, Op. 10 Nos. 3, 4 & 6

The third disc in this Chandos series continues the very high standards set by its predecessors. Despite Lucy Russell's strong conviction that this is Leclair imbuing his Italian model with lots of Gallic language, I don't think many people would instantly associate it with a French composer. The recording is bright, as such lively performances demand. The balance between the soloist (whose parts are even more demanding than in the previous recordings) and band is well judged. Francophobes might find themselves pleasantly surprised! BC

Rameau Hippolyte et Aricie Véronique Gens, Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, Ensemble Vocal Sagittarius, Les Musiciens du Louvre, dir. Marc Minkowski 167' 25"
Deutsche Grammophon Archiv 445 853-2

This latest recording of what, for many, is Rameau's finest work, comes forty years after substantial extracts first appeared on LP. (Interesting observations, both musical and musicological, on past recordings may be found in *Early Music*, 1993). This performance was recorded live at the Opéra Royal at Versailles, which may contribute both to its strengths and its frustrations. There is a tremendous sense of dramatic continuity and the listener's emotions are thoroughly stirred. Throughout, attention to detail is impressive, the profuse ornamentation is fluently handled, and the recorded sound is very fine, with all Rameau's complex interweaving lines clearly defined. All the singers are fully committed and never disappoint, though some might prefer both Thésée and Pluton to have richer low notes. But the real star is the orchestra, clearly relishing its glorious task. The flute playing is particularly delicious, the continuo playing is well-varied in both tessitura and texture, and the tutti are often electrifying.

So what are the frustrations? Simply that not all the music is here. Notwithstanding the fact that certain cuts originated with Rameau himself, there would, I think, have been room on each disc to include the variants, allowing listeners to programme the 1733 conception and the 1742 and 1757 revival as well as an 'ideal' version, which is what Minkowsky gives us. This is, though, despite being a cause of genuine regret, just a quibble. This version is both musically and dramatically logical and gives great satisfaction. The booklet is admirable. Those with the requisite linguistic skills can enjoy four different introductory essays, and there is also a summary of the plot, a note on the edition, and the bonus (for English-speaking listeners) of the translation being on the same page as the French libretto. This is a welcome, much-needed and deeply rewarding issue. David Hansell

Concertos for oboe and oboe d'more Paul Dombrecht ob, Il Fondamento
Vanguard Classics 99701 70' 09"
Concertos in C, d, D and e for oboe, in A and G for oboe d'amore

The very thought of listening to six oboe concertos by Telemann might not exactly

fill you with joy. Il Fondamento's judicious choice of repertoire is, as usual, first rate. Here are six contrasted works, some with contrapuntal fast movements, some with recitative-like slow movements, others with cantilena or dazzling virtuosity. There is so much variety here, that it is impossible to dismiss the man. My eyebrows did rise at various points, notably when Dombrecht opted to play an extended run of semiquavers in the D minor concerto legato, which just didn't sound right to me, though that is just a matter of taste. The string band accompanies to perfection. BC

Telemann Concertos Wiener Akademie, dir. Martin Haselböck

Novalis 150 115-2

Concertos in D (3 tpt, 2 obs), E (fl, ob d'amore, vla d'amore), e (fl, rec), D (vla) and Symphony 'Il Grillo'

This is the latest in a flood of Telemann concerto recordings. If there is nothing to criticise about the performances (apart from the odd bit of tuning and a rather undistinguished sound from the solo violinist), I would question the record company's decision to duplicate material already available – are there really no other concertos by Telemann worthy of recording? That, of course, is a rhetorical question, and even if they had been exhausted, there are surely other composers whose neglect, like Telemann's until *Collegium Musicum* 90 attracted the world's attention a couple of years ago, is surely unjustified. I need only mention my hero, Fasch, for a start... I'm quite certain I am not the only CD collector who would love to see the range widened! BC

Violes Esgales: Music for viol duet Susie Napper and Margaret Little 76' 00"

CBC Musica Viva MVCD 1082

F Couperin *Douzième et Treizième Concerts*; Dautrecourt Concerts à 2 violes égales Nos. 41 'Le retour' and 44 'Tombeau Les Regrets'; Marais Suite 2 in G

We may all have our choices of sexy sopranos, but for unabashed hedonists, you can't get much more purely sensual music than bass viol duets. For those who are unable to participate in this activity, this recording will reveal why bass viol players seem to pair off so readily. There are some great pieces here, notably the *Chaconne* from the G major suite by Marais and his *Tombeau de M. Meliton* (what a name for a viol player). St Colombe's *Les regrets* deservedly became very popular as a result of The Film, and it is beautifully played here, with a lovely slow vibrato on the last note. I would prefer better rhythmic definition in the short dance movements in the Marais suite, but the big movements are superbly played, with wonderful unanimity in the phrasing and ornamentation. It's delicious and it's good for you – like strawberry fool. Robert Oliver

David Hansell is intrigued by the 80-string audience mentioned last month (p.10). 'Is this the ultimate theorbo variant? Has Lynda Sayce commissioned a reconstruction?' Oh for a cartoonist!

CLASSICAL & LATER

Beethoven Symphonies No 1 in C, op 21 and No. 2 in D, op. 36 Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner 57'32" Archiv 447 049-2

Beethoven Symphonies No 3 in E flat, op. 55 'Eroica' and 4 in B flat op. 60 Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner 76' 40" Archiv 447 052-2

Unusual to find you reviewing Beethoven.

Yes, I suppose it is, and my linear approach to his music means that my views are perhaps rather different to those whose vision is coloured by subsequent musical developments.

So, what about these new Eliot Gardiner performances?

Well, there're not actually new, being the first two separate issues from his much publicised and generally lauded cycle which appeared at the end of last year. The first thing I would say is that they are unquestionably the best played and recorded period instrument versions yet to appear, and if I described the conductor as the hero of the *Don Giovanni* reviewed in these pages last month, its his orchestra which deserve the ultimate accolades this time – near-miraculous string articulation at tempi at times faster even than Norrington's (cf No 1. I and IV) and absolutely outstanding playing from the clearly-delineated harmonie band. Then there's the conductor's total control over dynamics, so important in Beethoven generally and here particularly in the *Eroica*. If you play the final bars of the *Poco andante* section of the last movement you'll hear exactly what I mean: not only are the alternating crescendos and decrescendos meticulously judged, but Gardiner proves himself a rare example of a conductor who can differentiate between Beethoven's *p* and *pp* markings. *An unqualified rave, then?*

No not quite, for there are times when I find these performances just a little too objective and lacking the warmer and, dare I say it, the more humane side of the composer's make up – the *Andante* of the C major, for example. At present I admire these performances inordinately and will turn to them when wishing to look the radical, uncompromising Beethoven in the eye. Whether I come to feel affection for them, as I do for Norrington's, only time will tell.

Worth getting, then?

Indeed they are.

Brian Robins

Berlioz Nuits d'été Brigitte Balleys mS *Herminie* Mireille Delunsch S, Orchestre des Champs Élysées, Philippe Herreweghe Harmonia Mundi HMC 901522 53' 32"

Nuits d'été is one of the most delicate works for voice and orchestra in the repertoire. The characteristic dynamics are *p*, *pp* or *PPP* (even *pppp* in *Au cimetière*) and *f* is rare. Most performances over-inflate, so a particular welcome for one that doesn't. Brigitte Balleys sings delightfully and sensitively and the accompaniment is beautifully handled. It

is, however, not entirely honest to describe the work as being for mezzo-soprano and orchestra; the voice-piano version may be, but when Berlioz orchestrated it, he transposed two songs and specified different voices. He had such an acute ear for instrumental sound that it is a shame to upset his choice of pitch and tessitura. CB

Boccherini String quartets, vol 1, op. 8 Quartetto d'archi Venezia 76' 48" Dynamic CDS 111

Six Boccherini string quartets are performed tastefully on modern instruments. They are perhaps interesting for the influence that they had both on Haydn and Mozart. Italianate in style, all in three movements, they are characterised by repetitive motifs and throbbing bass lines, with a predictable amount of chromatic harmony, providing sound, functional music, with some mildly interesting individual movements.

Ian Graham-Jones

Haydn Eight divertimenti for flute, violin and cello Schönbrunn Ensemble 64' 20" Globe GLO 5131

These are neatly and musically played, in a clear and resonant acoustic, on period instruments with spirit and vitality. All are in the expected major keys: only the occasional *adagio* in the tonic minor instead of subdominant major offers some tonal variety. There are the usual charming *presto* finales or minuets, but listening to this at a single sitting is not recommended and there are no masterpieces.

Ian Graham-Jones

Haydn 'Tost I' String Quartets, op. 54 Salomon Quartet 71' 11" Hyperion CDA66971

The Salomons continue to add to their Haydn quartet repertoire with these three quartets of 1789, giving excellent, intense performances. In contrast with the *Divertimenti* reviewed above, these works cannot fail to hold the listener's attention at every turn. Altogether more substantial and rewarding, they are played with the authority we have come to expect from this ensemble. The *Trio* of No. 1, with its obbligato cello part, and the serenity of the *largo* of No. 3 alone are sufficient to capture one's immediate attention. Haydn has transformed the apparently innocuous key of C major for No. 2 into something very special: the sudden, erratic changes of key and mood in the first movement as well as the gut-wrenching improvisatory *adagio*, intensely played by Simon Standage, are just a taste of the surprises for the listener in this work.

Ian Graham-Jones

Mozart Piano Concertos nos 11 in F, K413 and 13 in C, K415. Rondo in A, K386 Robert Levin fp, The Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood 57'10" L'Oiseau Lyre 444 571-2

Robert Levin has continued his projected integral recording of the Mozart concertos with two of the three works published by the composer on a subscription basis in

January 1783. The editions used have been newly prepared (for publication by Breitkopf) from authentic sources by Levin and Cliff Eisen, the latter of whom also provides the scholarly booklet note. As with the first disc in the series (K271 and K414), the performances are informed by the same innate and deeply musical affinity with Mozart which has allowed Levin to reconstruct the *Requiem* so satisfactorily, an affinity further enhanced by the sense of spontaneity which extends way beyond the improvisation of ornaments and cadenzas. The fine instrument (a copy of a Stein of c1785) is ideally balanced with the AAM, who provide playing of refined, chamber-like finesse in K413 and alert vitality in the more extrovert K415. The delectable Rondo in A makes for a highly satisfying conclusion to an important disc which should be added to the collection of any Mozartian.

Brian Robins

Mozart Requiem Ziesak, Maultsby, Croft, Arnold SATB, Boston Baroque, dir. Pearlman (Reconstruction by Robert Levin) Telarc CD-80410

Extra interest is given to Martin Pearlman's good, if not outstanding, performance of Mozart's problematic swan-song by the use of the completion Robert Levin made at the behest of Helmut Rilling, who subsequently recorded it for Hänsler. After detailed comparison with the versions of Richard Maunder (Hogwood/L'Oiseau-Lyre) and Duncan Druce (Norrrington/EMI), my thoughts would take far too much space, so a few general comments must suffice. Like Maunder and Druce, Levin has completed an *Amen* fugue based on Mozart's sketch to conclude the *Lacrymosa*. Like Druce (Maunder omits Süssmayer's *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* altogether) he recomposes the *Osanna* fugue. Otherwise, apart from alterations to the second half of the *Agnus Dei*, Levin's principal editorial work has been to clean up Süssmayer's orchestration. In this respect he has been more circumspect than either Maunder (apart from the *Agnus Dei*) or, more particularly, Druce, whose long-winded (literally) version of the *Benedictus* bears no comparison with the simple, affecting beauty of Levin's. It is this general unobtrusiveness which, to my ears, makes Levin's the most satisfactory solution of these three answers to what will always be an unsolvable conundrum. As to the performances, my loyalty remains with Hogwood; for whilst there is much fine work on the Pearlman disc (his orchestra is particularly good), the choral sopranos are weak as is the solo alto. An ideal would probably be Hogwood/Levin. A final reflection - if poor, despised Süssmayer's work really is bad as recent editors would have us believe, why did musicians put up with it for so long?

Brian Robins

Salieri Concertos for Fortepiano in C & Bb; Steffan Concerto for Fortepiano in Bb. Andreas Staier fp, Concerto Köln 73'53" Teldec 4509-945692

Until we are more familiar with his music, notably the operas, the jury remains out on the degree to which Salieri was slandered in Amadeus. Certainly his cause will be done no harm by these two concertos or the persuasive advocacy of the excellent Andreas Staier. The rhapsodic scena-like slow movements, particularly that of the C major Concerto, are most impressive and throughout there are dramatic rhetorical gestures which provide reminders of the composer's theatrical background. The concerto by the Bohemian-born Joseph Anton Steffan (1726-97) is if anything even more interesting. One of the eight he composed in Vienna during the 1780's, it bears no resemblance to those Mozart was writing there during the same period; heard blind, one would be inclined to date this rhapsodic, discursive work a good ten years later. It doesn't hang together particularly well, but much of the writing, such as in the romantically-inflected slow introduction to the opening movement, is of striking originality. Again it would be difficult to imagine better playing and Staier is given first-rate support from, the Concerto Köln. I strongly recommended this to anyone interested in the development of the Classical concerto.

Brian Robins

Richard Strauss Music for wind ensemble Octophorus, dir. Dombrecht 74' 05" Vanguard Classics 99702

Suite in Bb, op. 4, Serenade in Eb (1881), Sonatine No 2 in Eb

A couple of months ago, the Smithsonian Ensemble released a disc of Strauss, Elgar and Barber. This set of three pieces by Strauss for 13 wind instruments (a nod, of course, in Mozart's direction) is again played 'on period instruments'. None of it is music with which I am familiar and I think it is also the first time I've heard Octophorus. So I was delighted to find myself enjoying this fine selection of music by a composer who so clearly understands the wind medium, especially (of course) the horn. The scoring is opulent and the playing first rate.

BC

ANTHOLOGIES

The Age of Elegance: Suites and sonatas by Handel and Haydn Anthony Noble 59' 34" Herald HAVPCD 181

Handel Overture in Radamisto, Suites in E HWV438 and Bb HWV434, Chaconne in G HWV435; Haydn Sonatas in E Hob. XVI/13, D Hob. XVI/4 and D Hob. XVII/1

This record contains some very enjoyable Haydn preceded by Handel suites in a rather eccentric style. The slow movements are played with the right hand lagging behind the left, an effect which can be expressive if sparingly used but here is so overdone that the rhythm is destroyed. In the quick movements, where there is a theme and a running accompaniment the playing is more brilliant and enjoyable although occasionally lacking in shape. In the Haydn sonatas, however, Mr Noble

seems completely at ease. Here his playing is courageous, well accented, articulated and beautifully phrased. The rather small-sounding Kirkman (with 2 x 8', one of which has leather plectra) seems to suit it. The sudden changes which can sound too much on a modern piano are perfect here. I particularly liked the way motives are repeated in the minor. All together melodic and well shaped.

Michael Thomas

Bach and his predecessors Motoko Nabeshima hpscd 58' 45" (rec. 1991)

Discover International DICD 920283

Bach Präludium, Fuge & Allegro in Eb; Böhm Suite (Overture) in D; Froberger Suite in G minor, Toccata in F; Kerll Passacaglia in D minor; Kuhnau Biblische Sonata No. 4 (Hezekiah); Scheidemann Galliarda ex D; Schilt Paduana Lachrymae

Motoko Nabeshima is one of Gustav Leonhardt's best-established harpsichord pupils internationally. Her playing here covers a wide range, but all is stylistically individual, and this is possibly the most considered playing I have heard of any new keyboard record this year. The last two tracks, the Kuhnau and Bach (this suite a speciality also of her distinguished teacher) sound just right, seemingly spontaneous, yet objective and authoritative. Definitely a recital to be experienced, and certainly a soloist who deserves to be far more widely heard in recordings.

Stephen Daw

Musik på Tre Kronor Music at the Swedish Royal Palace, the Three Crowns Corona artis, dir. Hans Davidsson 143' 33" (2 CDs)

Musica Sveciae MSCD 306-307

Albrici Sinfonia à 6; Dijkman Lamentum en Sorge Music; A von Düben Narvabaletten; A Düben the Elder Miserere mei, Clavier Suite; G Düben the Elder Fadher wår, Surrexit pastor bonus, Choralfantasia; M Düben Praeambulam; Geist Domine in virtute, Schapa i mig Gud; Froberger Toccata; A C Ritter Sonatina, Vater unser, Sweelinck Pavane Hispanica; Verdier Christus är mitt liff; anon. Lentement

The Düben Collection at the University Library in Uppsala is one of the richest sources for 17th- and early 18th-century music. This set comprises sacred vocal and instrumental music from that source and also other related libraries. Of the four members of the Düben dynasty featured, Gustav Düben was the principle collector. The richly illustrated booklet sets the background to the music, which is performed one-to-a-part by up to eight singers with a pair of violins and varying continuo, occasionally supplemented by oboes, a trumpet and a flute. The singing is clean and stylish (the Swedish texts are interesting) and the playing deliberately astringent in earlier pieces, more refined in the later. The Musica Sveciae series continues to reveal the many gems hidden away in Sweden's libraries - long may its good work continue!

BC

The Kalina Choir dir. Noëlle Mann sings Russian music from the 17th-cent. to modern times. Ability to read the Cyrillic alphabet not required, though Russian speakers welcome. Meets in London Thursday evenings at Goldsmith's College. Details from 0181 671 2158.

'EXTREME LONG IN TUNING'

Dear Clifford,

Your review of the Rose Consort of Viols' concert in this year's York Early Music Festival (September *EMR*) shows that at least to your ears we were offering a listening experience that was not unfamiliar in 1676:

for I have known some so extreme long in Tuning their Lutes and Viols... that They have wearied out their Auditors before they began to Play (Mace Musicke's Monument)

As any viol player knows, gut strings react quickly and sometimes with devastating effect to changes of temperature, and more particularly to changes of humidity. And the undoubted audience-drawing power of candle-lit concerts in medieval churches seems to be in direct proportion to the discomfort created to the strings by the very high humidity levels created by candle light (to say nothing of the flickering shadows thrown on the music). So instruments that had been perfectly stable during our daylight afternoon rehearsal began misbehaving alarmingly.

Confronted with a situation like this we have to make an instant decision about how much tuning we can allow ourselves, and it would be interesting to have reactions from other concert-goers about how much they can tolerate. Our experience is that most listeners would prefer to wait a bit for a well-tuned performance than suffer poor intonation, which is perhaps more noticeable on viols than on unfretted bowed strings or on plucked instruments. Another factor to be borne in mind here was the wider BBC radio audience, which only heard the music from this concert and did not benefit from the candlelit ambience.

Maybe we misjudged on this occasion. But our tuning was as efficient and disciplined as we intended. Careful programme-planning had minimalised the small number of instrument changes, and your personal feeling that 'the concert as a whole did not work' was not echoed in the many positive reactions we gathered from other audience members during the rest of the Festival. Maybe you'd simply come to the end of a long day and were looking forward to a swift conclusion!

Best wishes,

John [Bryan]

I did, in fact, state that others were happier with the concert than I was, and listed a variety of reasons for the tuning difficulties. I do (or perhaps 'did' is currently more accurate) play the viol and am only too aware of the problems of tuning a consort. I referred in my review to a previous very-successful York Festival late-night concert where there had been no such problems; I have no recollection of the lighting at that In nomine programme, since I couldn't see the players anyway. I drew attention to the fact that the consort did the right thing and tuned at length in the church before the concert. The difficulty was predictable, and blame should probably be laid on the festival management (sorry, Delma) for expecting you to play with such a handicap. Should not the BBC have anticipated the problem and insisted on no candles or a separate studio recording? With no recording, you might have been able to tune only between the groups of pieces.

MAL CANTO

The following is an extract from a letter in which Andrew O'Connor renewed his subscription and also took out a subscription for Charles Gwynn.

Charles and I are reviewers for an Australian magazine called Soundscapes and we both admire the conciseness and clarity of your CD reviews (while disagreeing with many of the sentiments expressed – for example, we think they are far too tolerant of modern-style singing being used with period instrument ensembles).

In fact, the problem of singing style is alluded to briefly at several points in this issue. I have also been reflecting on it more generally of late – at, for instance, the West Gallery conference. Since the late 1960s and Musica Reservata's experiments (cf page 15), the idea that a completely different style of voice production might be appropriate for certain sorts of early music has generally been ignored. Michael Morrow used to talk about the 'modified shout', and that is a suitable term for the sort of sound that the West-Gallery singers were making, especially in the late-night sessions. Those who have been to Larry Gordon's courses (with Northern Harmony or his other groups) have heard and sung shape-note repertoire in that style, and in their concerts they mix it with Balkan folk-music.

There seems to have been a clear distinction around 1600 between the loud singing of church choirs and the more refined chamber style. I wonder whether the change then was not just a stylistic one but that a completely different style of voice production, hitherto cultivated by the aristocracy in private, became public. *Stilo antico* was sung one way, the new style another. (Monteverdi's *Vespers* would have to be a work for soloists, since it demands a style that choirs did not yet use.) Just as the *haut* and *bas* division between instruments broke down and loud instruments were either abandoned or tamed (trombone music became more subtle, later the shawm was emasculated into the oboe), so the two vocal styles came together. Going back a quarter of a millennium, Machaut's *Mass* might have been sung fundamentally differently from his ballades. It is quite possible that this hypothetical 'modified shout' survived in country churches until earnest clergymen with harmonium-playing daughters and a nostalgia for the ethereal choir-boy sounds of Oxbridge chapels ousted the older sound.

I don't know whether thorough research could substantiate these wild guesses or not. But it is worrying that we have reverted, from convenience rather than as the result of research, to singing most music from Perotin to Handel and on to Elgar and Orff in ways which are not very different. I think one reason for my disappointment with the Michael Morrow symposium was that it would have been the ideal opportunity for raising this question, especially since Jantina Noorman was there. (She is the chief witness for a different vocal style being utterly convincing – I might even, having heard her sing the *Lamento della ninfa*, say sexy). The fact that singers are concentrating on tunings and pronunciation is excellent. But should we assume that folk singing has always been different from art singing? CB

LETTERS

Dear Mr Bartlett

You very kindly sent a copy of each Early Music review even though our entire contribution to recordings of the genre is a 5 minute track of Bach's Air 'on the G string' played on modern instruments.

As someone who was actually in a good stalls seat at the Albert Hall on 21 July, I can vouch for the magnificence of Mahler's 8th symphony. For John Drummond it epitomizes modern man's condition: troubled yet triumphant. Would 5,000 people have come to hear Telemann? Probably not. That does not mean that Telemann's music is any less valid, but rather that it is appropriate to different moods and emotions.

In that respect I disagree that classical music is no longer a single repertory. Nobody is expected to like or even know everything (a situation encouraged by many academics), but there is a danger of élitism in specialising. Never before has such a vast range of music been available through modern media. let us enjoy Telemann and Mahler and break down fashionable barriers.

Incidentally, there are some very sexy voices around but surely the first prize has to go to Cecilia Bartoli, for purely vocal reasons, of course.

Nicholas Dicker

General Manager START AUDIO & VIDEO

Dear Clifford,

We were very disappointed to read your opening article last month. What was the point of it – other than to tell us that you were too busy to do something as trivial as listen to Radio 3. You are obviously not too busy to cause offence to your feminist men and women readers. It is not acceptable to write about the 'wobbling of the upper parts' of female singers. We would suggest that an apology is in order – or haven't you got the balls?

Yours sincerely,

Richard and Gillian Warson

Mahler Symphonies are not suitable for background listening, but a radio 4 talk may be. I was lightly suggesting several points to which I hoped readers might react:

¶ Is the concept of a sexy voice merely metaphorical?
 ¶ If not, can a voice be sexy irrespective of whether you find the singer herself sexy. (I write as a heterosexual man: heterosexual women or homosexual men can change the pronoun.)
 ¶ Do heterosexuals find voices of their own sex sexy?
 ¶ Does the female sexual anatomy have musical implications. (The male anatomy is more relevant for dancers than musicians.)
 ¶ Why is it that people who find voices sexy often claim that 'early music' voices are unsexy?
 ¶ Do others share my own particular childhood reaction?
 Neither my wife nor other ladies I have consulted see anything sexist in raising such questions. I was phoned by one (married) lady who told me that she agreed that Emma's voice was sexy. A (female) singer told me that the page was stuck on a notice board at an orchestral course and elicited much response – she wouldn't tell me what, but didn't imply it was thought offensive.

Dear Mr Bartlett

I am grateful for the coded acknowledgement of my recent request for information with your centre-page musics (sic.), a term I have long used in my interflow with my county music librarian. Opening a window to the significance of editing and publishing such a one as the Priuli motet was most refreshing and revealing: I thank you.

Yours sincerely
 Frank Fordham

I'm afraid that the editorial work was not as perfect as it should have been, in that an extra i appeared in the title and Music was mis-spelt in the publisher's name. Richard Charteris was puzzled by the link between Priuli and the Gabrieli Magnificat a33: I hope Hugh Keyte will make that plain when he writes the introduction to his edition.

Dear Clifford,

In the everlasting discussion of editorial practice may I put in a word for the amateur EM instrumentalist? We may be rather dim and lazy lot, but we are also buyers, and our name is Legion. Editors have understandably reacted against the excesses of the last century, but have too often over-reacted. 'No continuo realisations – we ought to read from score or figured bass'. It is unrealistic to suppose that many of us will ever overcome our reluctance, however regrettable, to put in the necessary prolonged hard labour. I have only come across two amateurs who could do so with any confidence, and one is Gordon Dodd, who is hardly a typical amateur. 'No fingerings/bowings/ phrasings -- do your own thing – be your own editor'. Now I share Dart's views on these matters, I expect the editor to know much more about them than ever I shall, and that he will give – no, sell – me the benefit of his knowledge, although always making clear what has been added or altered. If I don't like his markings I can reach for the snapake.

So come off your fences, editors! Don't throw out the baby with the bath water! Have the courage of your convictions and be more helpful to the struggling masses! Don't be élitist, or make the excuses that 'someone else would finger it differently – different people may need different fingerings'. Of course that is so, but we innocents need help. your ideas will be much better than nothing. Why let the best be the enemy of the good?

John Catch

This presents a view fundamentally different from my own, and I write as someone who has ignored printed fingerings since before he abandoned his Grade exams (see page 4) and never had a lesson on continuo playing in his life – no doubt it shows! But there is enough from me in this magazine already. I leave it to someone else to reply.

*Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,
 Nor Hell a fury like a woman scorn'd.*

Apologies to Jenny Edmonds, who was neglected in our review of the reprint of J. H. P. Publications last month, particularly embarrassing since that particular project was more hers than her husband's.