

# Early Music REVIEW

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**Editors:** Clifford Bartlett  
Brian Clark (CDs)  
**Renewals:** Elaine Bartlett  
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tel +44 (0)1480 452076 fax +44(0)1480 450821  
clifford.bartlett@btopenworld.com  
elaine.bartlett2@btopenworld.com  
Contact for CD reviews brian@gmail.com

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The very recent publication of the November 2011 issue of *Early Music* (my copy arrived around 25 January) includes another article by Roger Bowers on Monteverdi's Vespers, I haven't had time to digest it, and most of the material I would need to refer to is in cardboard boxes, so I am not making a systematic reply. But I need an editorial, and hoped to be able to extend it elsewhere in the issue. But there was no space available unless I wrote another three pages. Whether I continue in the next issue depends on what Andrew Parrott is writing for *Early Music*'s February issue.

I had an embarrassing experience in Spring 2010, giving a lecture on the Vespers to a group of post-graduates at the Cambridge music faculty. I'm not an experienced lecturer, but at least that event made the version I gave at Berkeley a few weeks later considerably better. Particularly unnerving was the presence of Roger Bowers,<sup>1</sup> who has been working on various aspects of the "work". The information he has assembled about the performing forces at the Mantuan court is fascinating, but I have not been convinced by his previous proposal that the difference between high and low clefs was only a tone. My problem is that I sense that the convention of writing music in two standard clef-patterns must have something to do with notation of the modes (a complicated issue, particularly since ideas of what they were reformulated in the mid-16th-century) but I don't have time to investigate it.

Back in the 1960s, I had realised on practical grounds that there were two standard clef configurations for late renaissance music. If I wanted to take along a few Palestrina motets for a sing-through, it was better to photocopy pieces in high clefs and sing them a little lower (the average amateur singer of my acquaintance could manage to sing up to around down a lower without having to think they were transposing), whereas pieces in high clefs needed to be around a minor third higher, which did need thought -- and also might require altos to read parts at the wrong octave. This might seem to be agreeing with Roger. But the crucial question is: the voice-types to which the notation relates... CB

1. Unnerving, not because we are on bad terms but because I have such respect for him as a scholar. I sang in a choir with him for some years and he has been a subscriber to *EMR* since issue 1; and I remember an enjoyable evening in a hotel discussing the work with Andrew Parrott and Roger in 1993.

## REVIEWS OF MUSIC

## Clifford Bartlett

## GAMBA SOCIETY

The latest batch from the Viola da Gamba Society was too late for the December issue and players most likely to buy them will have standing orders anyway. With so much of the repertoire available from independent publishers, the Society's output is now more obscure, though usually still worth playing. I'll list them in numerical order.

231. This contains 12 **Divisions and a Preludium** that were bound with a copy of Simpson's *Division-Violist* in the Bodleian (Mus. 184c.8). The first four items are by Roger L'Estrange (at least, that's the almost inevitable expansion of the initials R.L. or R. L. E). No. 5 is probably half by Simpson himself, half by Polewheele, Nos. 6-8 are anonymous, Nos. 9-12 are by Jenkins and in his own hand, followed by an incomplete and bassless Preludium. Jennifer Barron's edition seems thorough, though the music is a bit early for changing from the early to modern conventions of notating accidentals – not merely using naturals but omitting “redundant” accidentals. But grounds are so tonal, that it isn't a serious problem. One comment worried me – fingerings are retained for nos 12 & 13 because they are by Jenkins. If that implies that other fingerings are omitted, that is a pity, since they too can be informative. The score is quite small for gambists to read, but that doesn't matter because there is a larger copy of the viol part. Fun to play, if you have the technique.

232. **Five Airs in G** (VdGS 22-26) by Thomas Brewer make a satisfactory Suite, and would work as well as string quartets as well as TrTrTB consorts – though the editor, Virginia Brookes, might have told us whether the source MSS (BL Add MS 31423 & Bodleian Mus. Sch. E431-6) stated or implied that viols were the expected instruments. The opening Pavan begins a series of off-beat rhythms as early as bar 2.

233. **Browning à 4** (2008) by Rhiannon Evans is for TrTTB. The Browning theme gives ears not accustomed to modern viol music a point of recognition. The only unusual technique is the series of harmonics in the final section. I'd like to hear it.

234. **Little Consort for Violin/Treble viol, Lyra Viol and Continuo** by George Loosemore, his only fully-extant viol work, surviving in a miscellaneous collection of viol music in Brussels Conservatoire. There are six pieces for treble and lyra in defhf tuning, which I must confess I cannot read. Since there is a separate lyra part, it could have been transcribed in the score.

235. Another modern pieces: **Trio for Viols 1997** for TrTB by Michael Edwards. He was a cellist with a wide experience, including freelancing at Covent Garden and Sadlers Wells, jazz and (from 1972-4) membership of The Electric Light Orchestra (which, judging from the Wikipedia article, was more popular than I realised).<sup>1</sup> He spent the 1980s in various communes, then settled in Devon in the 1990s, where he was a founder-member of Devon Baroque. He was killed in September 2010 by a large bale of hay rolling down a hillside onto his van. The Trio was edited by his friends and first performed in Dartington Great Hall three months later. The notes are not particularly difficult, but making the rhythms spiky on viols is more tricky.

## PURCELL ANTHEMS REVISED

Purcell *Sacred Music Part V: Continuo Anthems Part II*  
Edited under the supervision of the Purcell Society by  
Robert Thompson (The Works of Henry Purcell, 29)  
Stainer & Bell, 2011. xxv + 198pp, £575.00

The most obvious change from the original Vol. 29 of 1959 is that the contents are different. Then, the anthems not included in vols 13, 14 & 17 (which were first published a century ago and revised twice) were placed in vols 28 & 29 in alphabetical order. Now they are devoted to continuo anthems divided chronologically between the volumes. The Preface gives a plausible chronology, but stylistic deductions don't always survive the test of time, and seem to me to be a less reliable means of consulting the right volume than the previous order. Also, those who have the older editions will find that the “Complete List of Purcell's Anthems as they appear in this edition” is no longer valid. Rather than offering an updated list, the new volume omits it.

Vol. 29 now contains the latter half of the anthems without strings, starting with *Thy word is a lantern*, argued as being post-1685 because its cheerful triple-time would have demanded the inclusion of strings before then. Four of the 11 anthems do have specific dates. I don't know if it's my age, but the anthems that I am most familiar with are in the first three volumes – or did Wooldridge and Arkwright pick out the plums? The two anthems to which I was drawn are predominantly for two trebles – *O Lord, rebuke me not* and *The Lord is king, be the people...*, both with minimal choral participation. They could sensibly be re-issued as a pair. The musicological updating is welcome,

1. I've failed to find the Electric Light Orchestra LP which I bought on the strength of a typist in the BBC Music Library being married to a member of ELO – a cellist, I think, so a successor to Mike Edwards..

but the failure to evaluate the sources gives the user no criteria for evaluating the extensive textual commentary. I wonder why the biblical sources of the texts no longer head each anthem, and I'd have expected the Z numbers also to appear with the title. I'm not sure that the larger page in itself improves legibility, since the slightly off-white paper of the previous edition avoided dazzle. Of the other two major academic series from Stainer & Bell, EECM is white but *Musica Britannica* has retained its off-white tradition. The difference is only slight, but somehow the brightness seems a bit clinical.

A study of editorial suggestions (verbal or notational) of performance practice matters like organ realisations and speeds over the history of the Purcell Society editions would be interesting. This edition firmly favours organists playing the bass and doubling the upper parts. In some cases, early examples survive and are printed. The change in recommendation surely undermines the need for a separate two-stave editorial organ accompaniment: it's hardly difficult to read the treble parts and continuo from the score. The comments on tempo are sensible if not precise! But I still don't understand why time-signatures have to be turned into numbers: don't the Associated Board theory exams expect students to know them?<sup>2</sup> I wonder when the Committee last discussed bar numbers. There is a case for numbering in fives when there are parts, but when everyone is using the same score, they are quicker to find at the beginnings of lines, and checking the critical commentary would have been easier.

If you want to evaluate the quality of these anthems, get the Hyperion complete church music. My spot checks on the editions did not produce anything significant.

#### ROYAL CROFT

**William Croft *Canticles and Anthems with Orchestra***  
Edited by Donald Burrows (*Musica Britannica*, 91).  
Stainer Bell, 2011. li + 234pp, £88.00

Croft is best known for a hymn tune (attribution not certain), assumed to have been named after St Anne's, Soho, where he was organist around 1700; the resemblance to a Bach organ fugue is presumably coincidental. His *Burial Music*, which incorporates Purcell's *Thou knowest Lord*, has remained in regular use. He published a two-volume collection of his own anthems in 1724 which seems not to be available on-line, alas! This anthology, however, contains works for special occasions, and only the last two items are found in that anthology. The works included here are:

1. *Te Deum* for AAAATTB soli, SSATB, 2 tpts, oboe & str.
2. *Jubilate Deo* for AATB soli, SSATB, 2 tpts & str.

2. I never worked through the series myself, apart from Grade 1.  
3. Nothing came of my suggestion that it would be useful project for Harvester Microfilms (or was it hard-copy from Garland) to issue a series of the 18th-century collected church-music volumes.

These are large-scale pieces, written in the tradition of Purcell's 1694 *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* and according to the composer's note on his score, "Performed twice before her most Gracious Majesty Queen Ann att y<sup>e</sup> Chappell Royall on Thanksgiving Days and Thrice att S<sup>t</sup> Paul's." These performances would have been on 17 Feb. & 7 Nov. 1710, with the St Paul's services for the Thanksgiving in 1715 and The Sons of the Clergy in 1717 & 1718. The alto quartet (only the top part demands a falsetto voice) occurs in movement f of the *Te Deum* in an imitative setting of "The father of an infinite majesty... also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter".

3. *The Lord is a sun and a shield* for ATB soli, SATB, 2 tpts & str. This was written for the Coronation service of George I at Westminster Abbey on 20 October 1714.

4. *O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his name* for SATBB soli, SATB & str, perhaps written for the Chapel Royal for Thanksgiving Day in June 1716

5. *O give thanks unto the Lord for he is gracious* for AB soli, SSATB, tpt and str, written to welcome the King's return to court on 15 November 1719, where it was performed with Croft's *Te Deum* (without the *Jubilate*).

6. *Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous* for SSATB soli, SATB, oboe & str, written for New Year's Day 1720 at the Chapel Royal, also with his *Te Deum*.

These six anthems are substantial works, with independent movements. The editor numbers them as subsections of the work (1a, 1b, etc for the first work, 2a, 2b... for the second), which is unnecessarily complicated for performance, even though it does make it quicker to find a particular anthem in the volume without using the contents list, which, thanks to the extraordinary number of preliminary pages that is characteristic of MB, is not rapidly accessible at page xv – it would be far easier to use were it on the last page of the volume. Only the *Te Deum* has a free-standing orchestral introduction, and that is only one movement. It is interesting to trace the development of his writing in the period when he was competing with Handel: I hope choirs will try programmes with music by both composers – though Croft should probably be in the first part of the concert! The edition draws on the editor's vast research on Handel's music for the Chapel Royal and the circumstances of its performance, which is expounded more fully in his *Handel and the English Chapel Royal* (Oxford UP, 2005). Performance material is available on hire: I hope it will be used.

#### VIVALDI KYRIE & GLORIA

**Vivaldi *Kyrie* RV 587 Edited by Malcolm Bruno and Caroline Ritchie ... Score Bärenreiter (BA 8950), 2011. viii + 28pp, £9.00 iv + 27pp, £6.50.  
Vocal score (BA 8950a), £6.50**

**Vivaldi Gloria RV 589 Edited by Malcolm Bruno and Caroline Ritchie ... Score Bärenreiter (BA 7674), 2011. xiii+ 51pp, £12.00.**

Vocal score (BA7674a), 2011 vi + 46pp, £7.50

Orchestral parts for both works available for sale

There is no direct relationship between these pieces: the *Kyrie* probably dates from the 1720s, while the *Gloria* from the mid-teens (Ryom's 2007 catalogue gives the respective range of dates as 1720-35 and 1713-1717), so are not a pair. Mixing single- and double-choir works wasn't unusual: the setting of the last three *Kyries*, for instance, has identical music for the two voice/string choirs, but it would be a bit odd to have a concert performance of the *Gloria* without re-arranging the performers. The editors suggest that the *Kyrie* was written for Rome, then postulate a large orchestra, but the two specific listings I know (the Caldara and Handel Holy Week oratorios in 1708) were hardly likely to have been typical. The *Kyrie* requires four-part strings and voices for each choir, with two pairs of SA soli for the "Christe eleison".

The *Gloria* (the famous one, revived by Alfredo Casella in 1939 and by far his best-known vocal work) requires SSA soli, SATB choir, trumpet, oboe and strings. There is no shortage of good, critical editions<sup>4</sup>. The introduction to this new edition is written in a way that should not put off non-academics and draws attention to specific aspects of the notation that can easily be overlooked – though I'm not sure that I believe that all of them are significant. Prices are comparable with Carus, which I have hitherto recommended; the Oxford UP is competitively priced at £6.50, but the full score (not large format) costs £38.95 – only £2.05 cheaper than their *Messiah*! A great advantage of these Bärenreiter scores is that they are in full-score format reasonable priced, easy to read and reliable. The only disappointment, in view of the editors' description of the autograph, is the absence of a facsimile or two. The vocal scores are fine.

#### ALBINONI Op. 1

**Albinoni Sonate a tre for two violins, violoncello and Basso Continuo... op. 1 Vol. 3 Sonatas VII-IX Edited by Martin Lutz Breitkopf & Härtel/Musica Rara (MR 2273), 2011. 38pp + 3 parts, €20.00**

The first non-Corellian trio sonatas I played were nos 10-12 of this same set, from a yellow Schott/Antiqua edition, and I was mightily over-impressed. The counterpoint is easy-going but effective and I'm sure I would enjoy playing them now if I had the time. There aren't any serious editorial problems, apart from realising the bass. Lutz generally adopts three-part writing, not the thick chords advocated by some Italian theorists. There is a more modernly notated Amsterdam edition (facsimile of

4. Having mentioned the thematic catalogue, it's worth saying that it is very selective in the modern editions it mentions, including only the two from Ricordi and ignoring the excellent ones from Oxford UP and Carus.

all 12 sonatas available from the Early Music Company for £15) as well as the original Venice one and its reprint, the difference being primarily in note-beaming, which the movable-type Venetian edition does not have. This edition follows modern conventions.

#### BÄRENREITER TELEMAN

The 24 *Essercizi musici*, containing 12 alternating pairs of solo and trio, is one of Telemann's most significant publications. "Exercises" and the equivalent in other languages (eg *Lessons Übung*) was a common term for publications for students or amateurs. A complete edition of the set was published by Bärenreiter in 1955 as the first volume in Telemann's *Musicalische Werke* and replaced in 2009 by vol. 47 in the same series (BA 5857; €415 for score and parts<sup>5</sup>), described as "the first ever Urtext edition". It seems a bit of a waste of effort when so much Telemann isn't available at all, especially since the conscientious user can acquire the Broude facsimile (PF 140) for somewhat less than the cost of the six solos sent for review. The parts include a figured bass – one copy only, and the keyboard player has to use the score with realisation. The three volumes I have received are:

BA 5880: 2 Sonatas for violin & Bc, TWV 41: F4 & A6

BA 5889: 2 Sonatas for oboe & Bc, TWV 41: B6 & e6

BA 5890: 2 Sonatas for Flute & Bc, TWV 4: D9 & G9<sup>6</sup>

The price is £15.50 for BA 5880, £18 for the others. All have the slow quick slow quick pattern, without the pairing of movements that Bach often favoured. The music is now well-known, and needs no recommendation. Few players will have a use for all 24 pieces (presumably to follow in another nine publications). The first volume of the *Telemann-Werkverzeichnis* (1984) dates the publication as 1739/40, but the editor's introduction gives around 1727-28 and the publisher's handout for reviewers has "approx. 1729", which must say something about development or otherwise in Telemann's style. Good for the edition to be updated, but I doubt if many people will throw away old editions and buy the new. Were I judging an exam or competition (which I never have), I'd be inclined to take off a few marks if the players were using an older one – but that would disfavour players who had checked the new edition and corrected their old one. The editor is Klaus Hofmann the Herbipolitan – memorable because he adds his home town (Würzburg) to his name.

5. BC's proof-reading comment on the price was a series of exclamation marks, but I checked Bärenreiter's website again and it definitely shows that price on 29-1-2011..

6. Just in case readers are puzzled by the normal German numbering systems, WV (Werke Verzeichnis = Catalogue of Works) is preceded by the initial of the composer. BWV has no further subdivisions, but other systems (FWV for Fasch, for instance) divide the music into categories. Telemann's music for solo instrument and continuo is numbered 41, followed by a colon and the key, with a number (usually arbitrary) if there is more than one piece within that key – capitals are major, lowercase are minor; Es is E flat, fis is f sharp minor, B is B flat, H is B natural.

*Die Donnerode* (TWW6:3) was published in score in vol. 22 of the Musical Works (1971), and has been performed and recorded. The first part was probably written in 1756 as a response to the Lisbon earthquake on 1 November 1755; the second part followed several years later, the earliest known performance being 26 April 1762. It had a high reputation at the time, which is justified by modern performance. Each part begins with an SATB chorus, followed by a series of "arias" (though more like accompanied recits); Part 1 ends with a duet for two basses, Part 2 with a chorale. The soloists are SATBB, and there is a large orchestra: 2 fl, 2 ob, 2 bsn, horn, 3 tpts, timps and strings. This vocal score is 40 years too late, but is to be welcomed: the price is £13.50 for 65 pages. There are no clues in the score to specific instrumentation. Orchestral material is only on hire.

#### EDITION WALHALL

*I didn't manage to cover all of the batch of Edition Walhall that Franz Biersack gave me at the Greenwich Early Music Exhibition in time for the December issue: apologies for the delay*

I'm surprised that I hadn't written about Kapsperger's *I Pastori de Bettelemme* (EW 842; €9.80), since I thought I had, and whatever I thought has now vanished from my mind. It is also a pity to have missed Christmas, though I suppose that a review in December would have been too late to have encouraged a 2011 performance anyway. It's a short oratorio for six voices and continuo. Had the original clefs been indicated for each character and choral line, they might clarify how the solo lines relate to the larger ensembles. The work begins with a nine-bar Sinfonia a3. After which the pair of violins presumably creep out for a drink. There's rather a lot of Italian recitative to hold the attention of an English audience, unless texts or surtitles are provided. The music looks a bit uneventful, but it's difficult to judge simplicity on the page. I'd be interested to get feedback from anyone who has performed it. The text is printed as verse with a German translation opposite

Schmelzer's *Duodena Selectarum Sonatarum* is being published in four volumes (vol 1, nos 1-3: EW 839, €13.80). The set of twelve (to translate for non-Latinists) trio sonatas is available in score in DTO 105 as well as online, but players need parts! The edition by Markus Eberhardt seems fine. He abandons a realisation but prints a blank stave for players to scribble in ideas, which tends to encourage over-careful elaborations. I find it odd that the score, intended primarily for study (since there is a separate Bc part) is printed much more spaciously than the parts, whose density is determined by fitting the music on single pages. The parts of vol 2 happen to turn out as more expansive. The individual works are entitled Sonatina and are quite short, comprised of sections rather than movements, which is as expected for a publication of 1659.

Biber's *Serenade à 5 [mit dem Nachtwächterlied]* (EW 859; €24.80) is the particular edition I wanted to see in this batch. I remember vividly a performance about 40 years ago, with the nightwatchman wandering round the audience clad in a scruffy coat with a lamp hanging over his shoulder (he's now a successful composer, with seven symphonies and a dozen string quartets to his name). The 1934 Nagel edition seems no longer to be available, though there is a fairly recent score in DTO's rounding-up of miscellaneous Biber pieces. The MS survives in Kromeriz/Kremsier, though it is dated 1673, by when he was working in Salzburg. The edition includes a facsimile of the annotated title page and the Nightwatchman's part. The remarks on the title page are paraphrased rather than translated in the English introduction, so I quote here the translation BC kindly provided when proof-reading.

The Serenade, Allemanda, Aria, Gavotte and Retirada are all repeated twice from the beginning, as one usually does to perform other balletti. However [they should be] "wohl besetzt" (meaning played by several musicians) especially Viola 2 which mostly provides the bass. In the Ciacona comes in the Nightwatchman, who nowadays calls out the hour around here. And all the other instruments play without the bow, as if playing a lute. The same applies to the Gavotte. It comes off even better if the instruments are played under the arm.

The scoring, in Biber's terminology, is "2 Violin, 2 viol. Violone con Cembalo": viola 1 is in C3 clef, viola 2 in C4; the violone (with its bottom Cs) obviously plays at notated pitch. I'm somewhat puzzled by the number of parts supplied: two copies for each violin and for the cembalo. There are two copies of Viola 2 because of the clef – one is as original, the other in Alto clef. The two copies of the cembalo part have the name adjusted to *basso continuo*, which will make performers assume that a cello or bass viol is expected to play the part as well, as well as two scores. The director will normally be either the leader or the keyboard-player; if the latter, it is annoying if you have to keep turning pages for repeats. It's good to have a new edition, but a pity that a superfluity of parts increases the price.

Johann Wilhelm Hertel's Harp/keyboard Concerto in D (EW 533; €22.50 – parts are in preparation as is a piano score) is one of three (the other two are published as EW 421 & 537). The music looks pleasing rather than earth-shattering, but the presence of a pair of horns bring a bit of bite to the strings in the tutti. The MS is not autograph but a copy by Westphal (who copied a lot of Telemann and CPE Bach). Two facsimiles show a title page (for *la Harpha ô il Cimbalo concertato* whereas the first page of the solo part is headed *Cembalo concertato*). It is figured, but also has a reduced score on the upper stave until the solo entry. The layout of the score would have been more sensible if the *Basso* part, which isn't figured, had been placed above the solo as part of the string group: the figures would then have been clearer. The Reynolds portrait of Jane, Countess of Eglinton (1777) with harp looks very pretty (though it

doesn't look as if she is really playing it), but was this the sort of instrument Hertel was writing for?

*A movement from a Sonata per Cembalo by Hertel appears on pages 16-17.*

Finally, a *Grand Duo op. X for violin and viola* by Charles Khym (c.1770 - after 1819). He was an oboist based chiefly in Vienna. He wrote duets for clarinets, flutes and oboes, as well as this example. It is a substantial piece. The first movement is in sonata form with an *Adagio* introduction. The second movement is a theme and variations on what Beethoven would have called "Pria ch'io l'impegno" but is known outside the Classical world as "A Scottish soldier". Then comes a minuet & trio and a closing rondo finale. The editor, Lysiane Brettschneider, assures us that it isn't too difficult to play. The problem is the inevitable comparison with Mozart's amazing pair of duos. (EW 848; £14.80 for score and parts)

#### DILETTO MUSICALE

This extensive series, mostly of 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> century music but also including critical editions of Strauss waltzes, has been running since 1958. It has shown considerable interest in the Muffats and DM 1417 (£19.95) comprises *Capriccios and Preludes for organ* by Gottlieb Muffat. It is based primarily on a group of 12 Capriccios, 6 Caprices and 7 Preludes from Vienna: Minorite Convent, XIV 715, and is edited by Erich Benedikt. I'm not clear of the precise difference between the three titles, but the Caprices seem less improvisatory to the ear than the Capriccios (though the latter seem to be fully notated and the improvisatory feel comes from the rhythm); the Preludes are shorter. The MS shows the derivation back to Frescobaldi a century earlier with its original notation (fortunately not retained by the editor!) of a six-line stave for the right hand and eight lines for the left; the editor refers to "so-called Italian tablature", but the description is common among those familiar with the sources. The music seems to be primarily for organ (manuals only with a short octave), but it sounds well enough on harpsichord. The facsimile showing what embellishment signs mean fails on the most important one – the pair of oblique dashes between the staves of six- or seven-note chords. On a harpsichord you can spread them, but I imagine that organists were expected to be more elaborate.

Luigi Tomasini (1741-1808) was leader of the Esterhazy orchestra throughout Haydn's tenure there, and also participated in the composing and playing of baryton trios. A *Trio in B flat* (DM 1430; £17.95) for two violins and cello seems a bit overpriced compared with the more substantial (in length as well as substance) Muffat reviewed above. It is the composer's adaptation of one of his baryton trios. If you are attached to the idiom, it is enjoyable but it may seem trivial to others – some people have that reaction to Baroque trio sonatas!

#### NEW FIGARO

*Mozart Le nozze di Figaro... Edited by Ludwig Finscher*  
Bärenreiter (TP 320), 2011. xxxiv + 709pp, £38.00.

This study-score is based on the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe II, 5: 15 (NMA 4565) edited by Ludwig Finscher, first published in 1973 and revised by Ulrich Leisinger. The score itself takes up to p. 594 and 595-641 contain two items written for the 1789 revival, arrangements and sketches. The new edition has an Addendum 1997/2002 and an Addendum 2010 with more alternative versions, making a fat volume (including prelims) of 743 pages. The relationship between the verbal addenda and the 2010 introduction which replaces that of the original NMA volume is confusing and it would have been better had they been properly integrated. The main introduction, for instance, despite being dated 2010, accepts at the end of p. xxix that the autograph of Acts III & IV is still lost, and explains that the main source was an edition edited by Georg Schünemann and Kurt Soldan (Peters, 1941). But the autograph emerged later in the 1970s, and a facsimile of the whole score was published in 2007 (see p. 655). All introductory material is in German and English (unlike the original NMA volume and the 1991 reprint of the NMA in study-score format). The updating is useful. It is excellent that the additional material is included: serious students and performers will need to digest it, and it is good value (the full-size score is about ten times the price). It is, however, quite heavy to hold and only those with strong arms can read it for long without a table-top. Curiously, vol. 7 of the 1991 version includes three other short operas and has altogether 1067 pages, but weighs 1.080kg as opposed to the 1.420kg of the separate *Figaro*. But the more substantial paper of the new edition is worth the inconvenience.

#### ARIAS FOR CALVESI

*Arias for Vincenzo Calvesi, Mozart's first Ferrando* Edited by Dorothea Link (Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era, 84). A-R Editions, 2011. xxxv + 118pp, \$130.00

Building CD recitals around the repertoire of a singer is quite common now – I planned one myself for Emma Kirkby as Cecilia Young/Mrs Arne back in 1991. This is Dorothea Link's third publication of this sort, the first being devoted to Nancy Storace (RRMCE 66), the second to Francesco Benussi, Mozart's first *Figaro* and *Guglielmo* (RRMCE 72).

Calvi was born in Rome and made his first stage appearance in 1777. A table on pp. [xxii-xxiii] lists over sixty roles between then and 1795. Over half of them were in Vienna, where he worked between 1785 and 1793, though the only Mozart opera was *Cosi*. This volume contains twelve arias composed for him in Vienna, plus one from Venice in 1778 and another from a short period in Naples in 1789/90.

The introductory material is full of useful information. The editor squashes (drawing on Ian Woodfield's researches) the idea that Mozart omitted "Ah lo veggio" and shortened "Un'aura amorosa" because Calvesi wasn't up to it. Mozart would have composed the role for the particular singer, and must have heard him in some of the twenty or so operas he had sung in Vienna – it's difficult to imagine that he wouldn't have turned up at Storace's *Gli Equivoci* in December 1786, when Stephen and Nancy were encouraging Mozart to travel to England with them.

The presentation of the music itself is, as I've mentioned in relationship to other A-R editions, unsatisfactory in that the voice part is accompanied by only a two-stave reduction. That's fine for singers trying out repertoire, but there's intense frustration if a singer wants to perform it at a professional competition or in a concert with orchestra. Singers rarely know how to get hold of orchestral material – indeed, they often have no idea what the real accompaniment sounds like. One expects A-R to be producing proper scholarly editions, and if they can't afford the space to print a full score, at least they could list the scoring and set out the information on the sources more clearly (not buried in chunks of prose) and make clear whether a source really is a full score or a cut-down version: is there always a full score extant? Ideally, A-R or the editor should have the score available online with orchestral parts available for hire or, preferably, sale. As someone who gets requests from orchestras for obscure arias, I find this aspect of the publication intensely frustrating. A pity, since mixing programmes by Mozart with music by his contemporaries would be of considerable interest.

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### GUSTAV LEONHARDT

30 May 1928 – 16 Jan. 2012

If there was a vote on the most important figure in the world of Early Music over the last half-century, those of the older generation of performers and listeners would mostly vote for Leonhardt – and quite a few younger ones would as well. He has a skill, understanding and authority that few of his colleagues could match, and so many of our leading keyboardists have studied with him. He wasn't a showman in any overt way. He reminded me of George Malcolm (though without his scepticism of historical instruments!) Seeing both playing, I could imagine them as Bach (as Leonhardt was in a 1967 film); both intensely musical (in their different ways), not overtly virtuosic or apparently emotional, but everything coming across with immaculate technique but without fussy extravagance.<sup>7</sup>

He came from a family where music was an integral part of its daily life. He studied at the Basel Schola Cantorum and Vienna (a recent biography of Isolde Ahlgrimm and reviews thereof dropped hints that her influence on him has been passed over), and produced a thesis on the Art of Fugue in 1952, claiming (almost certainly correctly) that it was a keyboard work – he also made a recording of it; these demonstrated the importance of the link between scholarship and performance and established his reputation. Those who are not harpsichord aficionados will remember him chiefly for the first recorded early-instrument cycle of Bach's church cantatas, with direction divided between him and Harnoncourt (the contemporary, rather more extrovert early-instrument pioneer, though he moved on to later music). The process took 20 years (1971–90), and was perhaps undertaken before suitable skills were consistently available, but it was nevertheless an impressive pioneering enterprise.

Bach was his chief love, but he played most of the harpsichord repertoire, and seemed surprisingly at home with French music. English music was mostly neglected, perhaps because he was no Handelian: the popularity of *Messiah* counted against it. He was a pioneer in recognising that vast amounts of 17th-century music were worth reviving – and not just keyboard music – but only if they were treated *sui generis* rather than with the conventions of an all-purpose (i.e. late) "baroque" style. His conducting was not as universally successful as his keyboard playing, and he didn't rate the activity highly.

He announced his retirement after a concert in December. All who have worked with him have learnt something, even if his relationship with orchestras was not always of the best.<sup>8</sup>

CB

7. I may be over-praising George, but he was the first harpsichordist I heard (a concert in Balliol in 1957–58) that a friend and I travelled from school to hear.

8. The only time I had a chance to speak with him, he was so annoyed by the orchestra (and probably vice-versa) that he brushed me aside.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

## Stewart McCoy &amp; Cliford Bartlett

## BAROQUE GUITAR

James Tyler *A Guide to Playing the Baroque Guitar*  
(Indiana UP, 2011. x + 160pp, \$34.95 ISBN 978 0 253 22289 3)

The present book was published posthumously. Its aim, as stated in the preface, is "to provide a practical point-by-point guide on how to read and interpret guitar tablature as well as suggestions for performing the music in an informed and stylish manner". The book is in two parts: the first deals with notation and playing technique; the second is an anthology of carefully selected pieces, each with an informative introduction about the composer, the source, the notation, technical considerations, and corrections to the text.

Part 1 begins with a description of the baroque guitar, the number of frets, the range of string length (58-74 cm), and so on. The second chapter describes the three main ways of stringing the guitar:

- A: re-entrant with no bourdons (low octave strings) on the 4th and 5th courses;
- B: partially re-entrant with a bourdon on the 4th course only;
- C: with bourdons on the 4th and 5th courses.

This is the opposite way round from how he names them in *The Early Guitar*.

The third section deals with right- and left-hand technique. I was surprised that Tyler suggests holding the left hand as violinists do, with the fingers pointing slightly towards the bridge. For the right hand he recommends consulting the facsimile of Fernando Sor's *Méthode pour la Guitare* (Paris, 1830), and warns against modern editions where Sor's instructions have been misinterpreted. One should play without nails and avoid rest strokes.

The fourth section is devoted to notation: Italian tablature, illustrated by a *Canario* from Carlo Calvi's *Intavolatura di Chitarra* (Bologna, 1646) in stringing C; *alfabeto* for strumming chords (learn a few at a time); and French tablature, with an extract from Lelio Colista's *Passacaille dite Mariona* (probably stringing B, and reproduced in full in Part 2).

The fifth section deals with strumming techniques, including the *trillo* and *repicco*, and the sixth covers mixed tablature and ornament signs. In the seventh he shows how chords in stringing A are "inversionless", which can be an advantage for accompanying a singer. This stringing

enables a guitarist to play what Gaspar Sanz calls *campanelas* - scalic passages where successive notes are played on a different string allowing the sound to ring on like bells. Tyler explains how it is possible to play *campanelas* with stringing C, by plucking just one string of a pair, and not touching the bourdons. He discusses the possibility of tuning the 3rd course in octaves, which seems plausible in some passages of music by Sanz and Roncalli. In section 8 he touches briefly on how a guitar may be used as a *basso continuo* instrument, with an illustration of a *Balletto* set by Giovanni Ambrosio Colonna.

Tyler's refreshing style of writing is exemplary. Everything is explained in clear, easy-to-read English, without the blight of verbosity so prevalent in other musicological texts. He uses specialist words where necessary, but always explains what they mean.

Part 2 is an interesting, wide-ranging anthology of music for the baroque guitar, with four items in stringing A, six in B, four in C, and four with continuo. Each piece is presented first in tablature, followed a page or two later by a transcription into staff notation. It is frustrating for the scholar who may want to compare the two, but practical for the player who does not want the inconvenience of page turns while playing. This is typical of Tyler, whose approach is always practical, without losing sight of the academic. He uses modern typefaces and standardises rhythm signs, but includes all the original tablature, *alfabeto* symbols, ornaments and other signs.

The first piece of the anthology is *Pavanas por la D* by Gaspar Sanz (1675) based on the *Pavaniglia*, a well-known Italian ground played from c.1546 to the middle of the 18th century. Tyler could not have picked a better example to show the dilemma a player has with regard to stringing. The first half of the piece has a strong bass line suggesting bourdons on the 4th and 5th courses (stringing C). There is a slow passage (bars 30-32) where all the notes are to be played on the lowest two courses, gradually moving high up the neck. There would be no advantage to be gained using these strings, if the stringing were re-entrant, so again, stringing C seems most likely. However, the last section of the piece consists of a series of *campanelas* crying out for the re-entrant stringing A, which is the one Sanz recommends in his Preface, although not for any particular piece. To complicate things further, the voice-leading in bars 13-14 and elsewhere implies a third course strung in octaves. Modern players do what they think is best. Gordon Ferries (DCD 34036) opts for stringing A. His *campanelas* sound clean and fresh, but in the first section,

the bourdonless bass line is swallowed up by the higher notes, and one feels something important is lacking. Taro Tacheuchi (DXL 1030), on the other hand, opts for stringing C with bourdons. His first section is more convincing, with rich bass notes supporting the harmony, but unfortunately his thumb catches the bourdons in the *campanulas* section. He is not tempted to add a high octave string to his third course, but he quietly slips in a high a' in bar 14 to iron out the questionable part-writing. For the record, Tyler prefers Ferries' re-entrant stringing A, and marks in places where a high octave on the third course would be desirable. I happen to prefer Tacheuchi's stringing C, but who is to say which is correct? *Stewart McCoy.*

#### TONUS PEREGRINUS

**Mattias Lundberg** *Tonus Peregrinus: The History of a Psalm-tone and its use in Polyphonic Music* Ashgate, 2011 xiv + 323pp, £65.00

I had very little awareness of plainsong until I left school, the main exception being a few hymns (*Veni creator*, *Pange lingua* via Holst's *Hymn of Jesus*, the *Dies irae* and *Veni Emanu*l, which felt ancient, but had no early sources until Mary Berry found a 15th-century *binatim* version in the 1960s). But I looked through other hymns in the English Hymnal -- something to do during school notices -- and was aware of *Hodie Christus natus est* from *A Ceremony of Carols* in my last year at school. I did not experience an Anglican evensong until I joined the Sunday evening college choir. I found it an unusually moving event, chiefly because of the singing of the *Nunc dimittis* (non-Anglican readers may not realise that the Latin title conceals an English prayer-book text) and the manner in which the Master spoke "Lighten our darkness..." So the *tonus peregrinus* became the first psalm-tone that I encountered, appropriately, since Lundberg tells us that it is one of the three major uses of that tone. The others are *In exitu Israel* and, for Lutherans, the Magnificat. *In exitu* is the proper psalm for Sunday vespers; it is a pity that most of the Vespers reconstructions one hears are Marian, so don't have that psalm. Lundberg is concerned with polyphonic settings, and finds one among the earliest surviving polyphony, the *Scolica enhiriadis* from the 9<sup>th</sup> century. He has done a massive trawl of music since then, though discoveries outside these categories are hardly exciting.

What is probably the most recorded setting is rarely described as such: the Allegri *Miserere* (ascribing it too specifically to Allegri is a simplification). The chant is usually sung to the second tone, but the polyphonic verses are clearly settings of the *tonus peregrinus*. (John Rutter's edition prints both.) Two other very familiar works also feature the tone. In the case of Bach's *Magnificat*, it follows a Lutheran tradition which is too complex to summarise: read chapter 9 and the interpretation on pp. 251-2, which might make a link with *In*

*exitu Israel* despite it not associated with that psalm in Bach's musical background). The other famous use is in Mozart's *Requiem*. The author offers two reasons why Mozart drew on it for *Te decet hymnus*. The text comes from Psalm 64, which the Vulgate heading links to the return from the Babylonian exile, since there were enough settings of *In exitu Israel* (referring by extension from the Egyptian to the Babylonian captivity) that Mozart was likely to have known. Also, the belief (recirculated some decades ago) that the *Tonus peregrinus* was a remnant of the liturgy of the Temple was advocated by Padre Martini, whom Mozart met in Bologna and from whom he obtained a copy of Allegri's *Miserere* (without the *abbelli-menti*). So Mozart was trying to plug into the antiquity as well as the spirituality of the tone.

Lundberg offers a lot of information here, but I do find it a bit heavy-going. The emotive nature of the music I've mentioned (which no doubt some of the other pieces he describes share) demands a more personal approach. Perhaps he could find a publisher for an anthology of some choral pieces

#### *La douceur du toucher*

**Yonit Lea Kosovske** *Historical Harpsichord Technique: developing La douceur du toucher* Indiana UP, 2011. xi + 221pp, \$35.99 ISBN 978 0 253 35647 5 (book); \$28.95 ISBN 978 253 00145 0 (download)

The subtitle could, I suppose, come from a sex manual or massage advert. Here, of course, it refers to ways of coaxing the sound to make notes played through a keyboard sound sensual. The book is particularly valuable for the range of sources that it quotes, divided into chapters Preparing to Play, Touching the instrument, Articulation and Fingering. Players can learn a lot from it. But it reminds me of those books on performance practice that covered everything from Sancta Maria to Türk relating to organ, harpsichord, clavichord and early piano as well as non-keyboard instruments, with evidence from a wide geographical and chronological range. We've got beyond that! Learning the harpsichord was often far wider an exercise than learning to play *Leçons*, *Essercizi*, etc. Both Bach and Handel taught continuo, which was used as a means of instruction in composition. Students reading this book should continually bear in mind that touch is only one aspect of learning to play a keyboard. There's no point in learning how to play a trill or an appoggiatura if you don't know when they should be played – marking them in detail was not widespread through the 200 or so years that the book covers. So use the book for what it offers, but don't think that it will make you a great player or even give much help in understanding what the music is about. And don't let your teacher confine you to the harpsichord alone.

## LONDON MUSIC

Andrew Benson-Wilson

### BRÜGGEN, HAYDN & WEBER

Nowadays Frans Brüggen doesn't really give the impression of being prone to having bouts of uninhibited fun, but he looked on like a kindly, if rather frail uncle as the young things of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment romped around the playground that Haydn and Weber had prepared for them at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (1 Nov). Those who had not read the programme note, or didn't otherwise know the work, would have been rather perturbed by Haydn's opening of *Il distratto* Symphony (No 60), based on incidental music he wrote for a play about a 'distracted man'. Considered, understandably, as 'that old tosh' by Haydn, this bundle of anarchic musical jokes was given a rather well-behaved performance by the OAE.

Playtime took on a darker edge with Weber's extraordinary *Concertina for Horn and Orchestra*, in which Roger Montgomery took centre stage as the 'class show-off' (or, in an entirely different scenario, as some sort of high priest presiding over a pagan ritual) for one of the most polished examples of natural horn playing I have ever heard. Weber seemed to be having fun with the poor horn soloist, with increasingly complex demands on his technique and sheer stamina, including a moment when he has to hum into the horn at the same time as playing a note, something that by a quirk of harmonics should, and did, produce a four-note chord. In the last *EMR* I wrote that, as far as I was concerned, horn players should be worshipped as minor deities. Judging from this performance, Roger Montgomery must now be seen as the horn's Zeus. Weber's 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony (dismissed by Weber, along with the 1<sup>st</sup>, as "an unwanted puppy that should mercifully be drowned") added an air of quirkiness to the playground fun before order was restored for the concluding 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony of Schubert. It is nice to be able to praise a viola player – in this case Tom Dunn for his melancholic reading of the opening melody of the *Adagio* of Weber's Symphony. Horn player Gavin Edwards also deserves a mention. The downsides to a great evening were the interruptions from the booming but indistinct BBC voice emanating from one of the concrete bunkers to the side of the Queen Elizabeth Hall stage.

### AAM'S HALLOWEEN

The Academy of Ancient Music is also capable of having fun, as their Halloween Wigmore Hall programme 'Witches and Devils' demonstrated (2 Nov). Set around an exploration of the musical aftermath of the 17th century obsession with witchcraft and demonic powers, the programme contrasted instrumental music (the inevitable

'Devil's trill' and Telemann's take on frogs) with the far meatier extracts from Handel's *Alcina* and Charpentier's *Médée*. Amusing as the instrumental works were, aided by Pavlo Beznosiuk's acting up, it was the outstanding singing of Rebecca Bottone that will stay in my memory. Vocal extracts from *Alcina* were contained within instrumental excerpts including the Overture and four dances before she entered, unaccompanied, with *Ah! Mio cor!* as *Alcina* reminds herself that, despite losing her magical powers, she is still a queen with power over life and death, the steely edge to her vocal tone expressing the switch perfectly. Handel's Act II portrayal of *Alcina*'s loss of power came with the pairing of *Ah! Ruggiero crudel* and *Ombre pallide*. Director Pavlo Beznosiuk gave the former a neat instrumental portrayal of *Alcina*'s unsuccessful attempt to summon up the avenging demonic spirits by having the violins playing slightly out of synch, giving an impression of depth and echoing emptiness. Rebecca Bottone had the chance to further develop a character in scenes four to seven of Act III of Charpentier's *Médée*, starting with the monologue *Quel prix de mon amour* with its wistful muted string opening accompaniment. An expanded viola section provided a series of rich tapestry of sumptuous tonal delights, notably towards the end of the fourth scene. Rebecca Bottone, in her debut with the AAM, was stunning both vocally and emotionally in her portrayal of *Médée*. A young singer to watch out for.

### MASS FOR SIR CHARLES

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment joined with the Philharmonia Chorus for a joint celebration of the life of Sir Charles Mackerras and Beethoven's monumental Mass in D, the 'Missa solemnis' (4 Nov, Royal Festival Hall). The conductor was Gianandrea Noseda. He impressed me from the very start by waiting for complete silence before starting, something that conductors seem loath to do nowadays (indeed, several do the exact opposite). He continued with a most impressive reading of this complex work, his clear physical involvement with the music and the performers being an exemplar for any other conductors in the audience. Musically, Noseda exposed the sheer drama and power of Beethoven's music, such as in the ferociously driven opening to the *Gloria*, the exquisite diminuendo of *et sepultus est* and the beautifully controlled build-up of the fugue at the end of the *Credo*. The quartet of German soloists were well chosen, with soprano Anne Ellersiek particularly impressing me with her clear voice and tone. Matthew Trustcott was the outstanding instrumentalist with his stunning violin solo in the *Benedictus* – the best interpretation of this expansive passage that I have heard.

## EGMONT, FOUR &amp; SEVEN

It is a while since we have heard the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique perform Beethoven, but they made a welcome return at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (9 Nov) with the Egmont Overture and the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Symphonies as a prelude to a US tour. John Eliot Gardiner was in a talkative mood, playing extracts from Egmont before the work started, and reflecting on recent changes in Beethoven performance practice and the interaction between period and modern orchestras. The "revolutionary fervour" of Egmont was apparent, not least in the abrupt mood changes and in Gardiner's turbulent interpretation. That mood continued into the symphonies, with strong, driven and occasionally slightly angry performances drawing some excellent playing from the OAE. Anneke Scott and Joe Walters excelled in some tricky horn writing, as did Jane Gower, bassoon.

## BACHFEST 21

The London Bach Society's 21st Bachfest featured Steven Devine playing the 'Goldberg' Variations, Rudolfo Richter playing violin sonatas, the Bachfest lecture with John Butt, a singing day and a flagship concert at St John's Smith Square by the Steinitz Bach Players (10 Nov). This featured two cantatas based on the raising of the widow's son (for the 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity) and the Mass in G. *Christus, der ist mein Leben* (BWV 95) includes a verse from four different hymns separated by recits and a tenor aria, the latter with some fascinating musical textures. Bach the instrumental colourist was even more to the fore in *Liebster Gott wenn werd ich sterben*, (BWV 8) again with a cornet adding to the texture. The opening chorus has the flute depicting the funeral bells in repeated notes while the oboe sings above pizzicato strings. A mismatch twixt conductor and programme note writer meant that the "lively gigue" predicted for the bass aria *Doch weichet, ihr tollen, vergeblichen Sorgen!* was in fact performed as a gently lilting reflection of hope. The parody Lutheran Mass in G was in complete musical contrast to the cantatas, particularly the opening intense fugal Kyrie with its harmonic unpredictability. The four soloists were something of a dream team, with Cecilia Osmond (a late stand-in), Robin Blaze, Nicholas Mulroy and Giles Underwood. Rodolfo Richter also gave a sensitive and musical performance of the E major Violin Concerto, his mellow tone being a particularly attractive feature. Of the other players, I liked Helen Verney's cello continuo together with Rachel Beckett, flute, and James Eastaway, oboe. The concert was preceded by an interview with Sir Nicholas Kenyon.

## IN MEMORIAM RICHARD CAMPBELL

It wasn't an appropriate occasion for a normal review, but I want to record the memorial concert for Richard Campbell given by his family and friends in the packed

church of St Martins in the Fields (28 Nov). The Dufay Collective gave a rousing welcome with a bagpipe flourish and there followed contributions from Fretwork (the group Richard is probably most associated with), Clare Wilkinson, Michael Chance, Nicholas Hurndall Smith, David Miller, the Feinstein Ensemble and the Tregye Festival Players. It was particularly touching to hear music from his own children, Jocelyn (his elegiac Duet for Violin and Piano) and Chloe, playing bass and singing with her group Unkle Bob. Fretwork played Andrew Keeling's haunting 'Chinvat Bridge <In Memoriam Richard Campbell>' while Clare Wilkinson sang 'When I am laid in earth' with the touchingly appropriate lines "Remember me, but forget my fate". There are links to various obituaries at <http://www.fretwork.co.uk/who/campbell>.

## GUILDHALL CANTATA PROJECT

Also at St Martin in the Fields was a rather curious lunchtime concert from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama Cantata Project Ensemble (6 Dec). The opening Bach cantata, *Ich habe genug*<sup>1</sup> was sung by three contrasting sopranos, Iria Perestrelo, Roya Stuart-Rees and Rosemary Galton, displaying very different vocal styles and timbres. All were impressive, although I slightly favoured the warm and gently boyish timbre of Iria Perestrelo, her voice blending well into the instrumental consort. An odd arrangement of Lebègue's *Noël: Une Vierge Pucelle* (written for the distinctive and powerful sound of a grand French West End organ) for combined harpsichord and continuo organ was segued, for no apparent reason, straight into Christoph Berhard's cantata *Currite pastores*, a fascinating multi-sectional work sung by tenor Simon Gfeller. The players were Rafael Font and Christiane Dahl, violins, Geoff Irwin, viola, Donald Bennet, cello, Alex McCartney, theorbo, Joseph Chesshyre, organ and Jean Rondeau, harpsichord, with the distinguished flautist, Katy Bircher, standing in for one of her pupils. Rather than the expected hour long concert, the whole thing was over in less than 40 minutes and, as the vast majority of the audience hadn't noticed the segue into the final work, everybody just sat there waiting for more music.

## MOZART &amp; THE ORGAN

Kings Place (2 Dec) was host to a fascinating concert exploring Mozart's relationship with the organ, the instrument he dubbed the 'King of Instruments' and played often, although he wrote little for it. Daniel Moul played a curious looking, but just about effective, two manual and pedal travelling extension pipe organ. Each half opened with one of Mozart's well known F minor Fantasias written for mechanical organ (and virtually unplayable by humans as far as I am concerned) and was joined by the two violins and cello of Arcangelo for a

1. Bach scholars now use the spelling *genung*. CB

selection of his delightful little Epistle Sonatas. The tortured and intense *Adagio and Fugue* K546 was contrasted with the little *Adagio* written for glass harmonica and the jovially angular *Gigue*, a work that dates from Mozart's only visit to Leipzig and one he might have played on the Thomaskirche organ. Daniel Moulton displayed sensitive articulation and musicality along with excellent technical skill in the virtuoso works.

#### THE FIRST MESSIAH

My solution to this year's pre-Christmas plethora of *Messiahs* was to go to the first one on offer (Royal Festival Hall, 6 Dec) and only try the others if I didn't like the first. As it featured the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Laurence Cummings, the others didn't have much of a chance. With just 22 in the Choir of the Enlightenment and a string compliment of 9/8/6/4/3, I was glad of a seat close to the front. Authentic-ish, I know, but in a hall the size of the RFH, a trifle mean for those sitting above the gangway. Even with the improved acoustics of the hall, they can't have got anything like the impact that I got from my seat. It is a difficult one – I have got used to small scale period orchestras in the Proms in the cavernous Royal Albert Hall and normally advise any companion who is not used to such things to just close their eyes and let the sound slowly envelope them, as it will. But, given that they can sell out the RFH for performances like this, I wonder if the OAE could one day put on a reconstruction of one of the vast scale Handel commemoration performances, maybe based on the two 1784 Westminster Abbey concerts which fielded 500 performers.<sup>2</sup> Until then, they could do little better than this, with four such outstanding soloists – the expressive communicator Elizabeth Watts singing with wide-eyed glee, the boyish timbre of Tim Mead expertly integrating his elaborations into the melodic flow, the ever-excellent Nicholas Mulroy bringing an exquisitely meditational sensitivity to "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart", and Lisandro Abadie pairing up front-stage with David Blackadder for "The trumpet shall sound".

Laurence Cummings was his usual inspiringly ebullient self, exposing a sense of detail to the text and articulation and negotiating the links between movements expertly. I enjoyed Paweł Siwcza's contributions from the organ (going beyond the usual continuo remit with a fine sense of style), as well as Jonathan Manson and Chi-chi Nwanoku on continuo cello and bass. We had the usual awkwardness during the Hallelujah chorus, with the four soloists standing up near the start, followed at random intervals by about half the audience. I do feel that this is something that conductors should attempt to control – Stephen Layton, for example, turns and directs the audience to stand. Quite how conductors should signal the audience to remain seated would be an interesting topic for discussion.

2. Burney's account lists all the singers and players.

#### LADY GEORGIANA

The series of regular events at Dr Johnson's House in Gough Square included a visit from Lady Georgiana, the singular name for a group of three ladies playing the part, in full fancy dress, of characters from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Their short concert (6 Dec) looked at music of London's pleasure gardens, in particular "Love in the pleasure gardens", a continuous sequence of songs and instrumental music. Their singer has a varied career that includes acting, rock/pop singing, song-writing and dressmaking. The fluctuations in her voice came over more as a nervous edge than a natural vibrato and didn't help the rather unsettling feeling that she was not quite on the note. Considering that they have been touring this show since last Spring, I was also surprised at the singer's reliance on the score and the slightly awkward interaction between members of the group. But acting and singing in a very small space with the audience within feet of you is hard to bring off. Tuning was an issue with the harpsichord and bass viol, the latter unfortunately caused by a slipping peg. I am not sure why the viol was chosen over the advertised cello – I rather doubt that a bass viol would have been used for this repertoire at this period.

#### GUTHRIE'S WINTERREISE

Listening to *Winterreise* is not supposed to be a relaxing occasion, but in Thomas Guthrie's gripping, and occasionally chilling, performance (under his own direction, and presented by Up in Arms) the tension was wracked up rather more than usual. The setting was the compact Tristan Bates Theatre, hidden away in the back streets of Covent Garden. The backing instruments were a Stoddart grand piano dating from around 1824 (with its complicated cross-braced "Patent Compensating" structure) and a period, but updated, guitar (a more Schubertian accompaniment than it might seem). Against a backdrop of simple projected animations and images, Guthrie appeared in semi-darkness from behind a pile of sackcloth that turned out to be a puppet – the upper half of a rather perplexed and forlorn looking grey figure whose slightly Mondrian-esque face reflected the alienation of the increasingly anguished winter wanderer. It (or they) started with throat clearing before the sequence of songs, the guitar (beautifully played by Sam Cave) making sadly rare but exquisitely effective contributions. From then on Thomas Guthrie sang from just behind the puppet, controlling its slightly angular movements while singing. This innovative and moving performance raised far more questions that I could cover in this short review, not least the obvious conflict between the visual image of the impassively-faced puppet against the half hidden face of Thomas Guthrie, a face capable of expressing as much as his communicative and sensitive voice. Not knowing what to look at was just the start of it. But leaving aside such questions, this was a unique and perfectly valid take on a complex work. My only quibble was with the rather

aggressive piano playing (fortunately moderated by the relatively restrained volume of the piano) of David Owen Norris, who was clearly not as willing as Guthrie to meld into the background. This is a continuing project for Guthrie, and stems from a Kent Opera commission in 2004.

#### EUBO 2011-12

In the October issue of *EMR* I wrote about my invitation to spend time with the 2011 incarnation of EUBO (the European Union Baroque Orchestra) in Echternach, Luxembourg, at the start of the first of their four tours. As *EMR* readers will know, EUBO is a training orchestra that re-forms annually, made up of around 25 young musicians, normally at just post-graduate level. Having reviewed their very first concert of the year, it is lovely to be able to hear the very last concert of their time together, at the church of St John the Evangelist in Oxford (18 Dec) the evening after their appearance at the Spitalfields Festival. Having got to know many of the young players, I felt for them playing in a public concert knowing that this was their last time together as a unit. But that is the itinerant life of many a professional musician – strings that pass in the night. Each of the EUBO programmes is usually led by a different director and concertmaster, and this time the pair were the flautist/ conductor, Alexis Kossenko, and Zefira Valova, both former members of EUBO. Their programme was “A Breath of Enlightenment”, looking at the transition from the Baroque to the Classical era (renamed for this final performance as “A Seasonal Celebration”). Locatelli’s *Concerto pastorale* showed little of the Christmas spirit, with its rather sombre opening *Largo*, full of foreboding, an intense fugal second movement and a darkly expectant *Grave*. It was only in the final movement that the Italianate charm began to emerge. Alexis Kossenko swapped his baton for a recorder for Sammartini’s *Concerto in F*, the occasionally slithery harmonic structure of its opening leading to a finale where the recorder twiddled its way around various cycles of fifths. Graupner’s *Ouverture in E* preceded Telemann’s *Concerto in E minor* for flute, violin and strings, a contrast of beauty of tone with beauty of expression. Pisendel’s *Sonata in C minor* with its dark colours only occasionally relieved by elements of chiaroscuro, led to Geminiani’s *Concerto grosso in D minor*, an extraordinary *pot pourri* of musical textures and a late flowering of the *stylus phantasticus*, noted for its use of an internal string quartet. The concert finished with Bach’s *Suite No 2*. Alexis Kossenko was clearly an inspirational director, his expansive and almost balletic gestures driving the instrumentalists to musical heights. Desk positions are rotated, so it was a matter of luck that the players who had the chance to show their individual skills on this occasion were Liv Heym and Lucia Giraudo, violins, Femke Huizinga and Lola Fernandez Mateos, violas, Federico Toffano, cello, Pippa Macmillan, bass and Anna Flumiani, bassoon.

#### THE YEAR'S MIDNIGHT

A very welcome alternative from the usual Christmas concerts came at Kings Place on the night of the Winter solstice (21 Dec) when Fretwork joined with the wonderful singer, Clare Wilkinson, and one of the giants of British theatre, Sir Tom Courtenay – a fascinating combination. Their programme, “The Year’s Midnight”, was inspired by Donne’s poem *A Nocturnal upon St Lucy’s Day, being the shortest day*, which opens with “Tis the year’s midnight” (I wonder how many poems start with an apostrophe?).<sup>3</sup> It went on to explore “thoughts of winter, night, moonlight, sleep, cold and darkness”: the darkness, in turn, evoking death; night evoking spectral light, stars and the moon; frost, to Hardy, evoking the sound of a thrush; cold, according to Ted Hughes, including the apposite simile of “the butterfly in its mummy like a viol in its case”. There was something musical about Courtenay’s delivery as it veered rhythmically from *detaché* to *staccato* and *legato*, with occasional crescendos and *con moto* moments. Clare Wilkinson gave us vocal images ranging from Dowland’s “In darkness let me dwell” and Purcell’s *Evening Hymn* via Peter Warlock’s *Sleep* to Duncan Druce’s sinuously intertwining fragments in *Bereavement* and Tan Dun’s evocation of infinite space, *A Sinking Love*. Her beautifully clear and focussed voice combined with perfect diction to catch the mood of the various works to perfection. One of the loveliest vocal moments was Byrd’s “Out of the orient crystal skies” with its concluding shepherds song, “falantidngdido”. The six viols of Fretwork played music by Woolrich, Lawes and, during an interlude from the main concert, works by the three winners of the NCEM Composers’ Award, Christopher Roberts’ “my o’erflowing teares” with its plucked melodic fragments and breathy vocalising, 17-year-old Sarah Gait’s atmospheric “Death-fires” and 16-year-old Bertie Baigent’s *In Memoriam In Nomine*, with its sinuous harmonic structure. Three talented youngsters!

#### CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

Alongside his other musical activities, Stephen Layton is Fellow and Director of Music at Trinity College Cambridge. As part of his annual Christmas Festival at St John’s, Smith Square, he combined his Trinity choir with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment for four of the six cantatas of the Christmas Oratorio (22 Dec). It was no surprise that the Trinity students were extremely well drilled – indeed, their opening *Jauchzet, frohlocket!* sounded more like a barked order than a shout of joy. But they soon settled into a more appropriate vocal mood and, singing from memory throughout, produced a disciplined, controlled, strong, clean and focussed tone with an excellent blend and variety of tone. Christmas concerts like this, given at

3. Two come immediately to mind ‘Twas brillig... and

‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse... CB

the end of the first term of the academic year, are a real test of university choirs, with some of the choir members only having around 10 weeks interactive experience. The same sense of attention to detail was apparent from Stephen Layton's conducting, with his careful control of the links between sections, the balance of instrumental colour, the unfolding of recitatives and, at all times, with both a scholarly and emotional attachment to Bach's reflections on the words. I was impressed with soprano Katherine Watson when she appeared with *Le Jardin des Voix* in March 2009, and loved her relatively brief contributions in these cantatas. She was up against some vocal big-hitters, with Iestyn Davies, James Gilchrist and Neal Davies all on excellent form, the alto notably so in *Schlaf, mein Liebster*, Gilchrist in *Frohe Hirten*, both with flautist Lisa Beznosiuk. As a side-thought, it was interesting to read that the university subjects of the three Cambridge educated soloists had been Anglo-Saxon history and literature, Archaeology and Anthropology, and Medicine (at Trinity, St John's and King's). This concert was broadcast live on Radio 3, so many readers will have had the chance to come to their own conclusions, but this set me up for the festive season very nicely.

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#### GREEN MAN CONCERT – CONCENTUS VII

This group of young musicians comprising Emily Atkinson (soprano), Cheyney Kent (baritone) Louise Strickland (recorder), Belinda Paul (oboe and recorder), Helen Shillito (horn), Emily Robinson (cello) and Masumi Yamamoto (harpsichord) gave a varied and well chosen programme of music in the church of St John the Divine in Richmond on 18 November 2011.

All the pieces were published by Green Man Press under the careful eye of General Editor, Cedric Lee. The major theme was *Actéon* (from hunter to hunted) interspersed with some locally featured music, such as Purcell's "On the brow of Richmond Hill".

The concert opened with two pieces by Purcell before moving to the *Acteon* cantata by J B de Boismortier (1689-1755) and ending the first half with a cantata by Nicolas Bernier (1665-1734) entitled *Diane et Endimion*. The first of these is the classic story where Acteon sees the nude Diana bathing and in outrage the goddess turns him into a stag. This one featured the natural horn. The second is a more tongue in cheek smaller scale version where Endimion complains that he only sees her at night. The group captured the nuances and delicacies of the French baroque beautifully.

In the second half opened with *Acteon Cantata Burlesque*, the only known cantata by Pierre-Cesar Abeille, with a very witty tone and performed in a suitably humorous manner. In keeping with the spirit of humour we moved

into Purcell's Don Quixote dialogue "Since Times are so Bad" where two yokels are having a conversation about how they intend to get rich by moving to the city, He is full of impractical ideas which she soon squashes and they decide to remain where they are in pastoral happiness. This was followed by a recorder sonata by Anne-Danican Philidor (1681-1728) and ended with two very moving pieces by Purcell, the first from *The Fairy Queen* and the second "How pleasant is this flow'ry plain and grove" gave the group an opportunity to display their virtuosic abilities.

This excellently designed programme was performed with great virtuosity by a highly skilled group of young players. The delightful music is available from Green Man Press 180 Sheen Road, Richmond TW9 1XD, +44 (0)20 8332 9522

Mark Windisch

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#### LETTERS

Dear Editor,

The papers by David Hill and Mike Diprose in issues 144 & 145 provide a lesson which too many EM enthusiasts have yet to learn – that what we may think sounds "best" or "right" of "most musical" is not a safe guide to what was done in the past. Howard Mayer Brown told us this several decades ago. Historical performance practice is to be investigated by criteria of evidence and probability such as we expect in law courts and in reputable scientific studies, and a little reflection will make it obvious that current aesthetic judgments are not to be trusted. I write with some feeling from my own experience over many years of trying, with mixed success, to bring rational judgment into ill-informed arguments about historical temperaments. In the 'thirties we "knew all the answers". We have since learned how much we don't know and can never hope to know, and can only speculate to the best of our incomplete knowledge.

Why didn't the old trumpeters drill tuning holes?

- They were quite happy with what we may think an imperfection
- As a privileged and conservative clan, they were proud of their expertise in minimising it.
- The possibility was simply overlooked.

Take your choice!

John Catch

The reliability of the legal system depends on what happens before (and if) cases go to court and if the court hears all the evidence. Watching Brian Cox's recent TV programmes on astronomy, I was amazed how the image of the universe has changed since (aged about 9) I wanted to be an astronomer; aesthetic matters, however, are not so clear-cut. CB

Dear Clifford,

**Julian Drake & Vejvanovsky**

During our conversation at the Greenwich Exhibition I mentioned that I had seen a cartoon by Julian Drake of "Wojwanowsky at work" that might amuse BC (who wrote in *EMR* in 1996, Vejvanovsky was "not the world's most conscientious scribe". Julian drew it in May 1970, while we were listening to Woj's *Sonata Italica* (5 trumpets, str & Bc) on a DG LP with Arnold Scherbaum leading the trumpets. The mad trombonist is a mutual friend who would only willingly listen to recordings featuring his instrument. [Julian Drake was the cartoonist for our predecessor, *Early Music News*.]

**Repeats in Brandenburg 1.**

If you play all the possible repeats in the Minuet & Trios, half the audience will have left to catch the last train long before the end. The solution is supplied by the recent recording by Café Zimmermann, who play the minuet one in a bar at about  $\text{minim} = 65$  and get through the whole movement in just over 5'30". They make all the repeats in the two sections but for the minuet they make the full complement of repeats only in the first and last of the four statements. – a nice touch is that the dynamics of the first statement (1<sup>st</sup> time *f* repeat, repeat *p*) are reversed at the last statement (first time *p*, repeat *f*). The horn section teeters on the brink of overdoing the *joie de vivre*.



**Virginia Pleasants**

Virginia Pleasants, pioneer on clavichord, harpsichord and fortepiano, has died at the age of 100. I got to know her during my eight years as chairman of the British Clavichord Society, of which she was founder-member and for which she gave several recitals, including 20th-century repertoire. In 2004 I had the privilege of presenting her with one of the first BBC Awards for her contribution to the clavichord revival – we couldn't call it a lifetime achievement award because she was only 93 at the time! In 1949/50 Virginia was one of the first to record Haydn piano sonatas for the new medium of long-playing records: her four discs for Robbins Landon's Haydn Society are still a pleasure to listen to (albeit on a modern piano). She later made a couple of recordings that have remained, I think, unique: Quincy Porter's harpsichord concerto (recorded behind the iron curtain in the sixties for Polskie Nagrania) and in 1980 a selection of J. B. Cramer's *Studio per il Pianoforte* (1804-10) on a copy of a six-octave Graf by Robert E. Smith of Boston. Apparently, Virginia's husband Henry Pleasants (1910-2000 – author of many books and articles on music and London music critic for the New York Times and then The International Herald Tribune) was the model for 007's CIA counterpart in Fleming's Bond novels – was Virginia carrying classified information in her portable clavichord on her many post-war travels? She told me that her passport was confiscated for several days on her recording trip to Poland, leaving her wondering if she would ever see the other side of the iron curtain again. Incidentally, her teacher in post-war Vienna was Eta Harich-Schneider, a pupil of Landowska.

Garry Broughton

Virginia was born in 1911 and died on 26 Nov. 2011. She must have been in her 80s when I met her at one of Norrington's South-Bank "Experiences" and remember that the conversation was interesting: I should have asked her to write something for *EMR*, to which she subscribed for many years. I don't remember her as looking anywhere near so old as she must have been then.

CB

We have deferred until the next issue letters by David Charlton, Stewart McCoy and Simon Ravens, and a reminiscence by Graham O'Reilly of Ian Spink (who also died in November)

[www.permusica.eu](http://www.permusica.eu) contains a data bank of articles in Italian musical periodicals of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (up to 1970), most of which are very hard to find in libraries today, and provides free access to full-text images of up to 50 articles per day.

Johann Wilhelm Hertel (1727-89)

Sei Sonata per Cembalo No.1 in G: middle movement

[2.] Largo



5



10



15



20





## CD REVIEWS

## MONTALBÂNE

*Recordings from the Montalbâne Festival,**Chanterai d'aquestz trobadors* Belladonna  
Talanton TAL 90006 58' 14"

The group of three female singers studied at the Basel Schola Cantorum. They sing well, and the unison sound is quite distinctive. The programme is sufficiently varied for listening with no texts as guide: I might be able to work out what a Troubadour poem is about from a printed text, but not from listening to it sung. It is a pity that there is no introduction, texts or translations. A refreshing feature is the presence of livelier songs than one usually encounters among troubadour recordings. Enjoyable, if a bit frustrating! Talanton seems to be linked with Raum Klang. CB

*Der erlauchte Fürst (The Illustrious Prince: Courtly Culture at the Time of the Master of Naumburg)* Ioculatores & Jörg Peukert  
Talanton TAL 90003 42' 22"

Markgraf Heinrich III. der Erlauchte von Meißen, Heinrich von Morungen, Johannes Rothe, Walther von der Vogelheide, Konrad von Würzburg, Reinmar von Zweter & anon

This disc honours Margrave Heinrich III (1218-1288). As well as his military and political achievement, he was a patron of and participant in tournaments and singing competitions. The singers strive to make their texts audible – there are no texts in the booklet, though the balance of two singers (one also playing a bell) against seven players and a speaker seems extreme. I'm amazed that anyone should issue a disc that is so short – did something go wrong at the concert? CB

*Amours me fait desirer* Ensemble ALTA  
MUSICA, Rainer Böhm 62' 17"  
Talanton TAL 900004

Music by *Cordier, Landini, Machaut, Pykini, Robert, de Senleches, von Wolkenstein & anon*

I'm a little surprised that a programme of mostly 14th-century music is performed by a group bearing the name Alta Musica, which here (judging by the players) means a shawm band rather than "music for high voices". I'm a bit suspicious of the sound as early as some of the music here, especially for the opening and very familiar *Alleluia* from the Montpellier MS – the playing, though, is fine and that scoring doesn't feature very often. Contrasting the

performance of Senleches's *La harpe de mélodie* with my first encounter with it in the 1960s shows how singers have mastered the technical and conceptual difficulties; I wonder, though, whether women were trained to sing such difficult music and why the ensemble has three female voices and six players, thus excluding the more plausible male singers and the option of having some songs performed entirely vocally. Nevertheless, don't let me put you off. It's an enjoyable anthology, beautifully performed. CB

## MIDDLE AGE

*Neidhart A Minnesinger and his "Vale of Tears": Songs and Interludes* Ensemble  
Leones 64' 42"  
Naxos 8.57449

So many recordings of medieval songs sound incredibly beautiful but neutral with respect to the words. This, however, is different. The singing is direct but not coarse, and the accompaniment matches. The poems themselves are incredibly sophisticated, with complex irony, as the excellent booklet note describes. The texts and translations are on the Naxos website – and for once they really are! The songs here come from a generally ignored but early MS from c.1300: this will be published in colour facsimile and transcription with commentary. It is certainly the most impressive of this batch of medieval songs. CB

*Paz, Salam & Shalom Canticum Novum*,  
Emmanuel Bardon 75' 31"  
Ambronay AMY033 (Harmonia Mundi)

Readers of the December *EMR* will have seen an enthusiastic account by Brian Robins of the Festival d'Ambronay. *Paz, Salam & Shalom* is a product of the Centre Culturel de Rencontre based near the site of the Abbey of Ambronay, which was destroyed during the French Revolution but has since been partially restored. The emphasis of this recording is on the musical and spiritual unity of the three Religions of the Book. The tolerant source we are to imagine is 13th century Toledo before the Catholics tore the three cultures asunder. Nearly half the concert is drawn from the *Cantigas de Santa María*, Alfonso X el Sabio, there is one dance ritual from Algeria and the rest is Sephardic music associated with places to which the

Jews were scattered: Alexandria, Sarajevo, Istanbul and Jerusalem. The languages are Ladino for the 15th-16th century Sephardic songs of the Jewish diaspora and Galician-Portuguese for the thirteenth century *Cantigas*. The nature of the Moorish influence is not explored, but the oud and kanun feature among the instruments played.

The director admits to taking some liberties for this programme, especially with the instrumentation, which includes the Tibetan bowls and the exotic *flamboyant* for percussion. The result is atmospheric, with moods ranging from the sombre to a relentlessly cheerful impetus, and varied rhythms are performed in all their delicate intricacy. The singers, Barbara Kusa, Emmanuel Bardon and Yves Bergé, have fine voices well-adapted to the popular nature of the narrative lyrics, and they end with an impressive canon-like profusion of sound. Diana Maynard

*The Earliest Songbook in England* Gothic  
Voices, Christopher Page 64' 40"  
Hyperion Helios CDH55297 (rec 1999)

Some of the Gothic Voices recordings sound a fraction edgy – though a valuable corrective at the time. This is just a fraction mellower, and beautifully makes the point that medieval music doesn't have to have accompaniment and that what matters is the quality and understanding of the voice. Try track 2 for a stunning five-minute monody from Catherine King (*In hoc mortus occidente*). The music isn't well-known (unless you know the CD or the edition, by John Stevens and Christopher Page), but it's certainly worth hearing, and has the cohesion of coming from a single source. CB

*Mare Nostrum* Hespèrion XXI, Jordi Savall  
Alia Vox AVSA 9888 A+B see p. 3215<sup>th</sup> CENTURY*Espris d'amours: Miniatures flamandes*  
Capilla Flamenca, Marinix De Cat 64' 49"  
Musique en Wallonie MEW 1157  
Binchois, Busnois, Cardot, Du Fay, Fontaine, Frye,  
Grenon, Malbecque, Morton, Pulois & anon

Any CD from this superb Belgian ensemble is a cause for celebration, but this recording of 15th-century music associated with the golden age of book illumination is a pure joy. The group's languidly confident approach is utterly convincing, while the individual

virtuosity of the vocalists and instrumentalists is stunning. The continuing interest in the treasury of Flemish music of the Renaissance is perhaps one of the few silver linings of the ongoing political instability in this part of Europe, but it has led to some intriguing research into the political context which gave rise to some of the finest music of the time. The present recording includes gripping performances of church music by the Flemish greats Busnois, Binchois, Du Fay and Pullois, along with the British Frye and Morton, and the less familiar Cardot and Grenon, all superbly interpreted. Add to this auditory feast the visual feast of the programme booklet with its exquisite illuminations, and you have some idea of the rich treasures that await in this production. By the way, don't give up on the extended playout after the final track, as there is a mouthwatering ghost track hidden away at the end. -- the quodlibet *Je vous pris/tant que mon argent/ ma tres douce amie - gilds on the lily!* James Ross

16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

**Eccard Sacred and Secular Songs** Staats- und Domchor Berlin, Lautten Compagney Berlin, Kai-Uwe Jirka 58' 10"  
Carus 83.449

Ordinarily this disc would have gone to James Ross. Unfortunately, having thought I had sent it to him weeks ago, I discovered it in my pile. Rather than delay the review for two months, I decided to listen to it myself. The programme is a mixture of the sacred and the profane – there are German and Latin texts with a slightly caricatured approach: the jolly pieces have percussion (which I could happily have done without) or funny effects like what I think is a shawm preluding a piece about lamenting hens – I kid you not – with some sort of disgruntled hen noise, while the more serious pieces take on a solemn tone. I appreciate that all of this might be a means of motivating the boys of Berlin Cathedral to get into the music, and I must say that they sing very well, as do their adult colleagues. There are many solos on the disc, and each of the singers acquires himself very well. In some pieces, a recorder doubles the treble, some times it's a cornett. I imagine the whole project was great fun but, much as I enjoyed many aspects, two things did not quite work for me – the imbalance between the Lautten Compagney's stately consort-like introduction and the huge sound of the full choir that followed, and the bells,

drums and tambourine. Perhaps I will send the disc on to James and he can write another review in the next issue! BC

**Eccard Mit Freude musizieren Sacred & Secular Works** Opella Musica, Ensemble NOEMA, Gregor Meyer 59' 18"  
cpo 777 700-2

This debut disc from Opella Musica is a rather touching local celebration of a Mühlhausen boy made good, recorded in Mühlhausen, partly funded by the city and part of a project exploring the community's musical heritage. A pupil of Lassus, Eccard is best known for his German partsongs, both sacred Lutheran Lieder and secular songs. These demonstrate a thorough grasp of polyphony and a secure talent at word setting. More interesting perhaps is his five-part Mass based on the chanson *Mon coeur se recommande à vous* by Lassus, which is employed to varying degrees in a work of simple but attractive polyphony. Eccard's enduring popularity well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century is a testimony to the accessibility of his compositional style, and the present forces offer suitably straightforward performances employing various combinations of voices and appropriate instruments to provide an illuminating cross-section of this influential and interesting composer's oeuvre. James Ross

**Philips Cantiones Sacrae Quinis et Octonibus Vocibus** (Antwerp 1612 and 1613) The Sarum Consort, Andrew Mackay Naxos 8.572832 (rec. 2000) 65' 08"

Whenever I listen to the music of Peter Philips I am struck by the apparent ease of the composition, be it for five or eight voices, and in these lovely performances this musical facility is perfectly matched by beautifully idiomatic performances. A clever mixture of the very familiar with the rarely performed ensures variety, although with Philips's constantly varied harmonic palette there is little risk of tedium, and Nigel Gardner's subtle contribution on chamber organ provides further textural interest. Spending most of his life on the continent as a religious exile, Philips enjoyed considerable celebrity, publishing more work than any other English composer of the time except for Byrd, whose pupil he may have been. Particularly impressive are the eight-voice works on this CD and some time I would like to hear performances of Philip's double-choir sacred music with an opulent mixture of instruments and voices, such as would undoubtedly have been employed

in some musical establishments on the continent. However, the Sarum Consort's impassioned and beautifully delineated performance of *Ave Regina caelorum*, one of the finest of his eight-part motets, is powerfully evocative. James Ross

**The Organ Tablature from Klagenfurt** Manfred Novak (Ebert organ, Hofkirche Innsbruck) 103' 05" (2 CDs) MDG Scene MDG 606 1701-2 Josquin, Mouton, de la Rue, Senfl, Sermisy, Verdelot & anon

The Klagenfurt Organ Tablature appears to date from around 1560 and is the oldest surviving example of keyboard music from Austria and one of the earliest examples of music in the New German Tablature. It is arranged in descending order of the number of parts, from six down to four. There are two original organ works, Ludwig Senfl's *Preambulum* and an anonymous *Exercitatio* but, typically for a great deal of Germanic keyboard music of the period, most of the pieces are intabulations of vocal works, sacred and secular. Such intabulations are rarely explored, either academically or aurally in concert or recordings, and so this is an important contribution to our understanding of early keyboard music. Although improvised ornamentation was likely to have been an important aspect of the performance of such works, Manfred Novak avoids adding to the written text of the Klagenfurt Tablature, for sensible reasons well explained in the notes. As well as its obvious interest as an aural document of this important manuscript (and some excellent and sensitive playing), this CD also demonstrates one of the finest historic organs in the world, the c.1558 Ebert organ in Innsbruck's sumptuous Hofkirche. This musical masterpiece of Renaissance art shares the Hofkirche with one of the highlights of Renaissance sculpture, the monument to Maximilian I. At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> CD is a detailed exploration of the distinctive sounds of the organ, with spoken introductions in German. Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Tune thy Musicke to thy Hart: Tudor & Jacobean music for private devotion** Stile Antico, Fretwork Harmonia Mundi HMU 807554 Amner, Browne, Byrd, Campion, Croce, Dowland, Gibbons, Parsons, Ramsey, Tallis, Taverner, Tomkins

After the excesses of the Christmas season it is not only the palate which needs

cleansing: the ear can also feel sated and in need of something bright and refreshing. The clean yet intricate lines of English Tudor and Jacobean polyphony is just the ticket, and Stile Antico just the choir to deliver it. Among the many joys of listening to them is the clarity with which each vocal line is heard, whether alone or as part of the perfectly blended texture. The mood of each piece is set instantly, and there is plenty of contrast in this highly attractive selection. Alongside well-known pieces such as Campion's *Never weather-beaten sail* and Tomkins's *When David heard*, the recording includes several pieces new to me, including Amner's extraordinarily beautiful *A stranger here*. Tomkins's *O praise the Lord*, which opens the disc, is a brilliant setting in twelve-part polyphony of the shortest psalm (117), ostensibly the most 'churchy' piece here, but there is evidence that it too was performed in a domestic context. The dynamics are carefully and lovingly graded; the ebb and flow of Ramsey's *How are the mighty fall'n* is almost heart-breaking. The madrigalian aspects of the music are handled in context rather than with exaggerated reaction to individual words; this contributes to the beauty of line and satisfying nature of the performance – which, in spite of my opening remarks, is a veritable feast. The presence of Fretwork, in their final recording before Richard Campbell's death last year, adds a poignancy of sound and emotion, as well as a perfect complement to the superb ensemble work by the singers, and contributes to the relevance of the music for private devotion.

Selene Mills

#### 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

Buxtehude *Cantatas & Sonatas* Le Concert Brisé, William Dongois 76' 24" Accent ACC 24240 BuxWV 67, 76b, 82, 87, 92 (twice), 261, 269 & 271

The rationale behind this recording seems to be "if so many sonatas for violin, cornetto, trombone and bassoon exist, surely that was a fairly standard instrumental line-up, so rather than restrict ourselves to pieces that are scored precisely thus, we can look at other viable repertoire." All of which is entirely valid – and many worse things have been done in the name of HIP experimentation – and Le Concert Brisé certainly make a strong case for their adaptations. Dongois argues that instruments listed on the covers of manuscripts are only the most logical choice but by no means the only one –

perhaps it's a little too generous an interpretation; surely a lot more depended upon the forces the composer (or Kapellmeister who made the copies for his ensemble) had to hand at the time. Be that as it may, these are fine performances – of course they are! The singer is no longer the main focus, but now a duetting partner or "first among equals". Since, as Dongois also points out, many of the instrumental contributions to vocal works are decorated versions of the phrases sung by the singer, that it exactly as it should be. I listened to this recording many times because, much as there is merit in the project, I don't quite understand why they undertook it; I think I would far rather have heard them play the many sonatas written specifically for their line-up! BC

Peeter Cornet *Œuvre pour orgue* Amaud Van de Cauter (1696/2005 Van Belle/Decourcele organ, Nielles-les-Ardres and 1675/2007 Bremser/Thomas organ Antwerp) 102' 26" (2 CDs)

Paraty 308.107

Although only his keyboard music has survived, Cornet (c1575-1633) was a key figure in the musical life of the Brussels court; a contemporary and colleague of Philips and Bull (and godfather to the former's daughter). Like many keyboard composers of his time, Cornet's music combines elements of the Italian, Spanish, Dutch and English styles. As the booklet note points out, it dates from that period of magnificent organ publications between 1623 to 1627 by the likes of Titelouze, Scheidt, Frescobaldi and Arauxo on the cusp of the Renaissance and early Baroque. Particularly noteworthy in the former style are the four extended Fantasias, each around ten minutes long, and extraordinary examples of the Sweelinck school. His sequence on *Salve Regina* is worth comparing with Bull's, as indeed is his *Aria del Granduca* with Sweenlinck's. Although Nielles-les-Ardres is only a few miles south of Calais, its organ, together with the Antwerp organ used in CD2, has its roots in the Flemish organ school of which Peeter Cornet formed an important part. Van de Cauter makes very effective use of the organs' resources – listen, for example, to track 3 played on Vanture (Principal 4'), Sesquialter and Voix Humaine: a wonderfully scrunchy sound, and so evocative of the organ of the period. His use of articulation and fingering shows a real understanding of the techniques required for music of this period. Andrew Benson-Wilson

Grandi *Motet vénitien*s Dominique Moaté S, Sharman Plesner & Caroline Gerber *vn*, Jean-Christophe Deleforge *violone*, Marie Languet *theorbo*, Pierre Cazes *hpscd* TT Pierre Verany/Arion PV711101

I have mixed feelings about this recording. In the first place, it is wonderful to have a disc devoted to the solo motets (with and without *sinfonie*) by Grandi; like Rigatti, he died tragically young, and yet he had issued many books of motets and other church music. Of course, both of them (and their colleagues at St Mark's and elsewhere in Italy) are still dwarfed by the colossus that is Monteverdi, whose 1610 *Vespers* seems unbeatable as the repertoire of choice around the world for music from this period. The problem here is the solo singer's voice. Although she has nice tone, finding her way around Grandi's melodies and appropriate ornamentation seems a challenge. Perhaps it is a little too big for my north European tastes? The playing, on the other hand, is very nice; the violins are perfectly matched, though distinctive enough, and the continuo section provide a sound basis for the whole ensemble. Do not be persuaded by my dissatisfaction, though – if you are a fan of the period, give this a try, if only to hear more of Grandi's fabulous music. BC

Locke *The Broken Consort Suites from Tripla concordia* The Locke Consort 116' Metronome MET CD 1086 (2 CDs)

These two discs should please our Finnish contributor Jaakko Tuohiniemi (cf *EMR* 143, p. 32); indeed, they should please anyone who is interested in English Baroque music. The first contains the six suites from *The First Part of The Broken Consort For Two Trebles and a Bass* as well as a G minor suite from *Tripla concordia*, while the second has the *Second Part's* five suites and a G major suite from the TC. The six works in Part 1 of TBC follow a regular four-movement form: Fantazie, Courante, Ayre and Saraband; those in Part 2 (which Peter Holman's typically informative note tells us may, in fact, be incomplete) are looser in shape, beginning with Pavans (because the King was not a fan of the irregular rhythms of fantasias, apparently) and introducing other dances, such as Galliard and Jigg. The TC suites are longer and more varied still, with a more pronounced French flavour. I am not sure why I was not introduced to these works when I studied Purcell's trio sonatas at university – we were basically sold the line that Purcell had his grounding in

writing viol fantasies and then the fam'd Italian masters came along and changed everything. In fact, the trio sonata already had a fairly solid footing in England by the time Purcell turned his hand to the medium, even if Locke's nomenclature retains its "olde english"-ness. The interplay between the two fiddles is masterfully handled, and it is evident that Locke had absorbed many French and Italian influences. Throughout the discs, The Locke Consort stick to two violins, gamba or bass violin and theorbo; given that this may well become the recording of TBC, perhaps they could have filled out the discs with alternative versions with organ or spinett? But that is a small price to pay for such a welcome revelation! BC

**Perti Messa a 12** Choir & Orchestra of the Cappella Musicale di San Petronio, Color Temporis vocal ensemble, Collegium Musicum Almæ Matris chamber choir, Michele Vannelli *maestro di cappella* 47' 28"  
Dynamic CDS 707  
+*Sinfonia avanti la serenata; Plaudite mortales* a 8 (1678); *Colonna Laudate Dominum a 3 cori* (1672)

Hand on heart, I did not expect great things from this release. The music was always going to be interesting, of course – Perti's name pops up in music histories too often for him not to have been at the very least a competent composer; likewise Colonna (although you would have had to look closely at the cover to see that his triplet choir *Laudate Dominum* was also on the menu). In fact, I was truly impressed by the singing and playing of all concerned. Not surprisingly, the acoustic of a huge cathedral is not ideal for such projects (from a recording perspective) but things have been managed to such a technical standard that, for most of the time, everything is clearly audible, and two composers of real stature emerge. Perti's music is definitely worth exploring, so choirs interested in repertoire other than Renaissance motets and masses (or perhaps looking for something to combine with Gabrieli in this anniversary year? should seek him out – he clearly has a gift for polychoral writing. He also writes interesting movements for groups like four sopranos and four basses, so your singers had better be capable of holding solo lines, too! I have no hesitation in recommending this disc to all fans of the Italian Baroque. BC

**Scheidemann Organ Works** (Norddeutsche Orgelmeister, Vol. 4) Joseph Kelemen (Örgryte nya kyrka organ, Gothenburg) 79' 20"

OEHMS Classics OC 882  
WV 10, 19, 29, 34, 44, 55, 69, 73, 87 & 106

Scheidemann (c1595-1663) was one of the key Sweelinck-inspired Hamburg composers in the period that eventually led to Buxtehude. He is credited with the foundation of the school of extended chorale fantasias that are such a feature of this North German school and influenced the young Bach. To hear one of Scheidemann's finest examples, listen to track 5 from *Magnificat VI*, with its extraordinary echo sections – or track 9, where you will find more than 10 minutes devoted to the chorale *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*. The Örgryte nya kyrka organ is one of the highlights of the recent organ-building world. It is a scholarly reconstruction (by Gothenburg University) of an Arp Schnitger organ, based mainly on Hamburg's Jacobi-kirche organ, with the older pipework that Schnitger included within his organ. The case is based on Schnitger's 1699 organ in Lübeck's cathedral, destroyed in 1942. I was at the organ's formal opening in August 2000 sitting, bizarre as it may sound, on the bench of the 1871 Father Willis organ from St. Stephen's in Hampstead that is now in the north transept. On this CD, the pedal action sounded rather clattery, notably at the start of track 3 – I don't recall this being an issue when I have played this organ, but perhaps the microphone placing exposes it. The playing is well conceived, allowing Scheidemann's music to speak through careful use of articulation. Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Schütz Musikalische Exequien** [und andere Trauergesänge, Vol. 3] Mields, Zügner, Schneider, Kobow, Mäthger, van der Kamp, Lutze, Dresdner Kammerchor, Hans-Christoph Rademann 68' 24"  
Carus 83.238 (SACD)  
SWV52\*, 94\*, 95\*, 277, 279-281, 419\* & 464  
(\* first recordings)

I was immediately struck by the beautiful vocal sound, subtle shaping and an organist (Ludger Rémy) who knows exactly how long to hold a note. And if one wants to perform any of the pieces, one knows where to get the scores! This starts with the half-hour *Musikalische Exequien*, which has in the past sometimes bored me – but not here! Of the four previously unrecorded pieces, SWV 52 struck me most: six verses (to words by Schütz himself) for soprano and continuo on the death of Duchess Sophia of Saxony on 7 December 1622, sung impressively, if with a little quivering, by Dorothee Mields. Buy it! CB

**Barbara Strozzi Ariette a voce sola Op. 6,** 1657 Tadashi Miroku cT, Silvia Rambaldi hpscd 59' 26"  
Tactus TC 616901

This is an arresting production in several respects. The bare-breasted Venetian woman on the cover, assumed to be Strozzi, confirms the 17th-century fashion among Venetian women referenced by scandalised English tourists, but also possibly puts a face to the enigmatic female composer. Further surprises await within, with the very bright recording of the frankly extraordinary male soprano Tadashi Miroku. Recording extensively with the Bach Collegium Japan, he has built a solo career on a remarkable voice, both strong and versatile. That Strozzi was renowned chiefly for being a female performer and composer makes her perhaps an odd choice for a male singer, but Miroku more than does justice to her flamboyant music and lyrics. I am slightly more dubious about the harpsichord accompaniment, having always pictured Strozzi accompanying herself on a lute. Indeed, the harpsichord does become a bit unrelenting in my opinion, but Sylvia Rambaldi inventively solves the lack of instrumental introductions to Strozzi's songs (surely a further indication that these were self-accompanied) by drawing on contemporary Venetian keyboard publications. In spite of my reservations about the musical medium and that brittle recording tone, I think these are startlingly evocative recordings of unusual but vivid repertoire. James Ross

**Valentini Musiche Concertate** 1619 La Capella Ducale, Musica Fiata, Roland Wilson 58' 38"  
cpo 777 533-2

This CD is a revelation. Valentini was a composer I had barely heard of and I approached this CD with some trepidation, but very soon the quality of the music and performances had me riveted. A pupil of Giovanni Gabrieli, this Venetian composer was clearly one of the first to realise the potential of the concertato madrigal, and here in 1619 we have an inventive cycle of large-scale madrigals to rival the great cycles of Monteverdi. Employed in Poland and then Vienna, Valentini clearly had access to some of the finest singers and players in Europe, and exploited them fully in these demanding and ground-breaking works. His dominating presence in Vienna helps to explain the very Gabrielian church music of native Austrian composers such as

Christoph Strauss, who in the relatively small musical world of Baroque Vienna must have been well acquainted with Valentini and his music. The performances on this CD by the Capella Ducale and Musica Fiata under the direction of cornettist Roland Wilson are unerringly superb and suitably extrovert. *James Ross*

*Il Canto della Sirena: Cantate Napoletane dell' età barocca* Pino De Vittorio T, I Turchini, Antonio Florio 211' 43" (3 CDs) Glossa GCD922603

Coppola, Coya, Durante, Fagioli, Fago, Greco, Manelli, Marchitelli, Netti, Provenzale, Rubino, Sabino, A. Scarlatti, Tricarico, Vinci & anon

This is a re-packaging of three discs recorded in the early 1990s which provide a comprehensive survey of Neapolitan songs and cantatas 1650-1750. Discs 1 and 3 are solo recitals by Pino De Vittorio; disc 2 involves five other singers and all discs include instrumental pieces to add variety. I have my doubts as to the historical likelihood and appropriateness of some of the realisations of the earlier music, but as a whole this is charming music which offers enjoyable listening. There is an informative essay in four languages and the sung texts are translated into English. *David Hansell*

#### LUTE & OTHER SONGS

*Tears of Joy –English lute songs by various composers 1557-1660.* Zefiro Torna: Cécile Kempenaers, Soprano, Jurgen De Bruyn, Philippe Malfeyt, Lutes, Didier François, Nykelarpa. 54' 48" Klara KTC 4038

Zefiro Torna is an excellent Belgian ensemble from Mechelen, flexible in size, but here presenting a program performed by their four core members. None of the music given here is deeply profound, but the performance is absolutely delightful and well balanced. Another disc sung by a singer with absolutely perfect accentless diction in English – which is, in fact Cécile Kempenaers third (possibly fourth) language! A few songs are sung by the less than accentless gentlemen of the ensemble and their slightly 'Sting-like' vocal delivery in lute songs stands somewhat apart from Miss Kempenaers, but this does not detract in any way. After mostly quite 'straight' performances, the disc ends with the most quirky but delightful re-imagining of Dowland's 'Time stands still' I have ever heard. I won't spoil the surprise, but I found it strangely moving, and it is the one track that I keep

returning to time and time again! This disc comes with a well-filled 'sampler' disc celebrating fifteen years of Zefiro Torna with a selection from their previous discs. Sadly, the already downright wacky booklet notes suffer from the curse of 'not passing the English translation to a native speaker to check for howlers', and includes references to 'nine-headed' polyphonic music, and songs that 'centrally stage the female figure, celebrate her beauty and melancholically sing about the longing'. Mind you, that last sentence accurately describes about ninety percent of all songs ever written quite succinctly. Enthusiastically recommended. *David Hill*

poor Purcell. If, like me, you struggle to discern where any vestige of talent in Miss Björk Guðmundsdóttir lies, then Susanna Wallumrød's performance will see LUTE & OTHE SONGS all too familiar. My grief couldn't wait, I'm afraid. This is truly dreadful, and there's nearly an hour of almost identical breathy, enervating dirge. But please don't just take my word for it, make your own minds up by listening at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvt618Nnshc> (Cohen), and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNS1-34tMJo> (Purcell)

*David Hill*

#### DIVISIONS & EMBELLISHMENTS

*Stile Moderno: new music from the 17th century* Quicksilver 73' 30"

Aris APL72546

Bertali, Castello, Cima, Fontana, B. Marini, Merula & Neri

The expected cast of Castello, Cima, Fontana, Marini, Merula, Neri and Bertali is given a bright and confident treatment by these established American players. Castello is thrust onto the stage with a hearty pat on the back, and by the time we get to Merula's *Ballo detto Pollicio*, the party is well underway and he enters with a folksy romp. This energy and exuberance, whilst never compromising musicality and finesse, is exactly what this repertoire needs to build the scaffolding for its characteristic quirks. Castello has been chosen for the opening to set the scene with a strewing of these quirks. However, it is indulged with an over-lush rubato, which tends to dissipate the momentum needed to carry the ear over the many abrupt changes of style and pace which are written into the music. By contrast, the Cima, which is through composed, has as a result an arch large enough to accommodate this level of detail. So after my reservation over the first track, the programme gets more and more engaging as it progresses. The violins and cello are joined in the larger Castellos by dulcian and trombone, which are phrased to blend perfectly with the strings, even to the extent of matching some of the timing idiosyncrasies inherent in violin playing. This unity is slightly worked against by a rather extreme use of stereo mixing – fracturing the group by showing several parallel viewpoints, as opposed to providing one solid image. Still, this is an exciting performance by an assured ensemble, and worth adding to the many available recordings of this music. *Stephen Cassidy*

*Pleasures & Torments: Songs by Henry Purcell & John Blow* Johann Linderoth T, Vegard Lund lutes 55' 42" Euterpe Musica EMCD 1113

This is a joy from beginning to end. CB was very enthusiastic about Linderoth's earlier Dowland recording with Inger Alebo, and this is just as enjoyable. How wonderful to hear these songs accompanied entirely by a plucked instrument for a change, and sung with such perfect, accentless diction as to render the printed English text redundant. Many young British native singers cannot match Linderoth's perfect vowels, I am ashamed to say. Wonderful too, to hear 'Music for a while' performed with all the correct notes for once, and the Alleluias of the Evening Hymn sung without a breath, I might add. A little more attention to the translation in the printed booklet would not have gone amiss: we learn that Linderoth "...withholds a particular fondness for works of the 17th century". Well, I wouldn't have said that on the evidence of this recital! Every home should have one of these discs. *David Hill*

*If Grief Could Wait* Susanna Wallumrød voice, Giovanna Pessi harp, Marco Ambrosini nyckelarpa, Jane Achtman gamba ECM 2226 57' 41" Purcell interspersed with Leonard Cohen, Nick Drake & Susanna Wallumrød

I really do not enjoy writing a negative review, but I must record that it is a remarkable achievement to present songs by Leonard Cohen in a manner of vocal delivery, as here, that is even more depressing and will-to-live-sapping than that of the songwriter himself, a performer who has seldom, if ever been mistaken for a ray of sunshine. I cannot bring myself to describe what she does to

*A flute in the ice* Lux Borea <TT>

Euridice EUCD64

Adriaensen, Clemens non Papa, van Eyck,  
van der Howe, Lassus, Terzi & trad.

The idea for this intriguing disc arose from the discovery of a flute, a songbook and a drumstick in an abandoned dwelling in arctic Norway. The discovery was made in 1871 by seal hunters, and these items (with many other effects) had lain preserved by icy temperatures since 1596, when a certain Willem Barentz and his men became trapped by ice whilst trying to find a passage to China. This is the almost impossibly romantic backdrop for the attempt to recreate some of the sounds which might have been familiar to these intrepid Dutch explorers. A reconstruction of the flute has been made for the recording and it has a rather more rounded sound than the more customary glassy tone of the parallel-bored renaissance instrument (which it nevertheless is). The versatility this allows is exploited in a range of pieces – largely from the songbook, which contained the words of religious songs and the title of the melody to be used. It is easy to imagine a singer whiling away the dark hours in this way, helped along by the flute player who may now and then be persuaded to take a lively tune on his own. Whether the original ship also carried a viol and lute, part of the ensemble here, is a matter of conjecture, but presumably there was at least a drum.

The flute and drum are teamed up for van Eyck's *Batali*. This feels authentically military, with powerful fifely playing obviously aurally referencing the marching which would have passed van Eyck in his churchyard in warring Holland. The drum is freely played, aiming to respond to the flute, which doesn't ring true. No-one can know of course, but it seems more fitting that the drummer too would have copied the military percussion patterns he would have heard and not have confused the picture by overlaying the flute detail with distractingly similar strokes. The singing is beautifully rendered, but again it might have been in more harmony with the "big idea" of the disc to have stripped away a layer or two of conservatoire varnish and reconnected us with the religious honesty – and desperate hope – of those trapped seafarers.

Stephen Cassidy

*La Bella Minuta: Florid Songs for Cornetto*  
around 1600 Bruce Dickey 70' 36"  
passacaille 979

Music by Barbarino, Brunelli, Guami, Luzzaschi,  
Mayone, Palestrina, de Rore & Trabaci

Bruce Dickey, the father figure for many modern cornett players, makes a return to the stage in a solo recording – it is twenty years since his colourfully titled "Quel Lascivissimo Cornetto". This is truly a masterful recording. The first thing that strikes is the sound: the sheer space of the ducal church of Santa Barbara in Mantua, responded to by the spacious and architectural playing which is Bruce Dickey's trademark. The integration of the full-blooded organ of 1565 with the full and at the same time brilliant high pitch cornett – new equipment I suspect – mixes into the space wonderfully. All this expanse gives room for a new level of lyricism and expressiveness. The sound concept and the musical concept are exceptional, with quite mesmerising results. There is a mix of known writers of divisions, one or two less familiar, and some written by Dickey himself. Bartolomeo Barbarino – who wrote for voice and is not generally known (if I can extrapolate from my case) – provides a new, and recognisably different and charming, voice to the mix. Josquin's beautiful *Mille regretz* is the vehicle for Dickey's own divisions; once in the style of Ganassi and once in the style of Bassano. These are separated by a beautiful realisation of the song on the harp, and preceded by an unornamented version for cornett with the ensemble. Each divided version follows its own musical thread, as if being conceived in the moment by Ganassi and Bassano respectively – not added from a book or recipes by either. Bassano's own written-out complete versions display a suave flow, and that is on show here. In the case of Ganassi we can only guess, but the effect here is of a real "cool jazz" free line which manages to thread through what might in isolation or on paper be rather bizarre components. A complete disc of divisions might ordinarily be indigestible, but that is not the case here. The occasional islands of calm and the ability to make the divisions a feature of, and yet subservient to, a larger scale musical idea means that this recording can be experienced in its entirety, and enjoyed all the more for that. Give yourself the space. Stephen Cassidy

*Tromba Hispanica Batallas y Canciones*  
Barocktrompeten Ensemble Berlin, Johann  
Plietzsch 66' 09"  
Raumklang RK 2906  
*Biber Sonata à7; Cabezón Pavana con su glosa; de*  
*Heredia Pange lingua espagnol; Kapsberger pieces*

for theorbo & Bc; *Murcia La Tarantella; Sanz Folia + seven pieces under the title "Clarines y Trompetas"* + anon.

It may seem unlikely that the brilliance of six baroque trumpets can be balanced by a guitar and lute (and sometimes a small, lovely sounding organ) but this recording achieves this in three ways. First the continuous elastic tone of the trumpets allows through the percussive pluck of the strings which adds pace to the necessarily harmonically simple music, without feeling artificially achieved. The trumpet phrasing is exceptionally well shaped, even sometimes beautiful, and whilst thrilling as trumpets should be in patches, never becomes too insistent. The brilliance and self-aware surety of the playing I suspect is aided by trumpets which sport finger holes. I would be very interested to hear the same players with unmodified trumpets – their technique is obviously up to it, and I think the result would be an even closer "match" with the continuo.

In this programme of Spanish music played by a German ensemble, there is an amusing, if jingoistic, reference to a historic source recording the fact that a certain Spanish trumpet ensemble hired two German trumpeters – and had to release two Italian and six Spanish players to pay for them. I guess the Euro would control such imbalances today. The second balance is in the programming. Generous time is allowed for the strings and continuo to have their say in peace, in passacaglias and other dance-oriented music. The choice of pieces keeps something of the momentum, rather than allowing the mood to sag before the return of the trumpets. Some of these (and other) pieces are accompanied by the now almost ubiquitous middle-eastern flavoured drumming – if that is to your taste. Kapsberger is included for extra spice, though I am not aware of any Spanish connection, barring a certain coincidence of name with the contemporary monarch. The third link with the continuo instruments is that much of the music for trumpet ensemble of the time was not written down, and indeed guarded as a secret. However, trumpet-looking music can be found wound into the intabulations made for organists (here Cabezón and de Herida) and guitar (here Sanz and de Murcia). These have been reverse-engineered to recreate some speculative but very convincing trumpet originals. Together with the existing surviving material (eg Biber) these add together into a well balanced concert.

Stephen Cassidy

## LATE BAROQUE

**Albrici** *Concerti Sacri* Cappella Augustana, Matteo Messori 73' 46"  
Musica Rediviva MRCD 008

This is not a new CD, but seems to be newly available. Hailed at the time as the first disc devoted solely to Albrici's music, it is a brilliant introduction to his smaller-scale music. Cappella Augustana, at least for these performances, consists of a pair of not quite equal sopranos, a fabulous bass with a range the size of a piano and huge amounts of power across its scope as well as a very deft touch in Albrici's oft-brilliant melismas, two violins, trombone, dulcian and continuo (consisting of violone, spinet and organ, though not always playing throughout). Albrici was an important bridge between the styles current in Italy and northern Europe, most importantly as one of the court composers and directors in Dresden, and it is clear that the nine vocal pieces on this excellent CD (misgivings about the slight discrepancy in soprano edginess mentioned above notwithstanding) were written for virtuoso singers and players. What a glorious place the Saxon capital of music have been (for the rich!) BC

**Bach** *Cantatas & Motet* Veronika Winter, Damien Guillot, Marcel Beekman, Benoit Arnould SATB, Akadémia, Françoise Lasserre  
Zig-Zag Territoires ZZT 090502  
BWV 12, 78, 118 & 150

The Chaconne is the connecting thread between the three cantatas presented here by the French ensemble Akadémia, a group of singers and players from the Champagne-Ardennes. The two pre-Leipzig cantatas are sung one to a part but 78 has three to a part. There are single strings in the very early 150, with its echoes of Buxtehude and similarities to 131 in the way fugati interleave the more homophonic sections. The balance of singers and instruments is splendid, and the basic quartet have lovely clean, clear voices: no-one pushes on their held notes, there is precision and splendid articulation but also warmth and colour. They blend excellently, but retain their individuality. The duet in 78 is poised and the balance with the obbligato instruments just right. The soprano is clear as a bell, and the bass resonant in the lower register and mellifluous at the top. Among the instruments, the strings can do etched passion as well as smooth and there is a

fine oboist playing a Stanesby copy producing an amontillado tone. The bassoonist – playing a reedy instrument at 392 in 150 – is great. The notes say that the Contrabass is playing in 150, but if it is, it is extraordinarily discreet: it sounds more like an 8' Violone to me. The odd piece out is the Funeral Motet *O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht*, given in its later version with strings and wind, as well as the two litui. Again, the basso continuo line is occasionally difficult to hear clearly. But these are tiny details in what is an excellent, spirited and beautifully-judged disc. Like the ensemble Ricercar, I hope we hear more of them in this repertoire.

David Stancliffe

**Bach** *Les six Motets*. Ensemble Vocal Jean Sourisse.  
Syrus 141449

The first recording of the Bach motets that made me sit up and take notice (in the 1970s) was by the Regensburger Domspatzen: it was fresh, bright, full-throated and uninhibited, and until I hear the choir of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig live in the early 1990s, I had nothing to compare it with. This choir of thirty-five singers (11:8:8:8) – well-known in Paris like their eponymous director, Jean Sourisse – has had Parisian and state subsidy for many years, and sings a wide range of music, like our BBC Singers. Given that they are not Bach specialists, they sing with commendable zing and brightness for such a well-oiled instrument. They make a very fluent sound, and their slightly choralsociety tone is really noticeable only in slower passages; some passages are given to single voices in Singet. A photograph of the continuo section (cello, bassoon, organ and 16' violone – used too much, I think) is shown in front of the choir and certainly are prominent in the recorded sound. There will be some among our readers who will like this version, but others will opt either for a boys' choir version (like New College under Higginbottom) or for a smaller scale one (like Andrew Mackay with the Sarum Consort) both of whom have a degree of freshness and vitality that is somehow ironed out in this very perfect though rather old-style performance, recorded in 1999 in a resonant acoustic.

David Stancliffe

**Bach** *Saint John Passion (1749 version)*  
Charles Daniels Evangelist, Joshua Hopkins Jesus, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Capella Romana, Monica Huggett (2 CDs)  
Avie AV 2236

**Bach** *Saint John Passion (1749 version)*  
Cantus Colln, Konrad Junghänel dir, Hans Jorg Mammel Evangelist, Markus Flajig Jesus (2 CDs)  
Accent ACC24251

These two recordings of the Bach St John Passion invite comparison with each other, and with last year's by Ricercar – let alone previous small-scale versions by The Scholars (1994) and Andrew Parrott's Taverner Players (1991).

For a start, Monica Huggett's version is strictly 1724, with no flutes; "Ich folge" is played on a violin – with a rather repetitive, non-authentic (at least, different from the autograph score) phrasing – and "Zerfliess, mein Herz" on an oboe and a da Caccia. It works OK, but I miss the pattering flutes in the former and the contrasting tones in the icy Zerfliess. Nor can I work out what is going on in the previous number, where a five part wind band holds the chords against which the strings play their rhythmic interjections to the tenor's "Mein Herz": is the organ holding the show together? Otherwise, this version is splendidly balanced, with a single violin – I think – playing the figurations in the turba interjections that are flutes in later versions. Best of all, it has a splendid evangelist in Charles Daniels, accompanied in his dramatic and closely miked singing by the harpsichord, while Christus has the organ and rather oddly the lute, as if it was Monteverdi. The basic quartet of singers are well-matched; I like her tempi, and she (properly, I think) uses three upper strings to a part – 3.3.1.1.1 – with her oboes and bassoon and a group of 12 singers. The balances are excellent, and the surging strings and committed singing in the opening chorus provide a foretaste of things to come.

Junghänel's 1749 version seems to start rather more heavily: only 8 singers here, but just a touch of the plodding; some squeezing of the notes, and the players not as well balanced – only one-to-a-part strings, playing rather readily, with the 8 voices. And although the notes speak of Bach's added instrumentation containing a bassono grosso, which it translates (correctly, as Suzuki thinks) as a contrabassoon, the instrument played here (though no details are given of any of the instruments) is an 8' one. The evangelist stands a little further back from a microphone, and is accompanied fluently (rather to my relief) by only an organ and 'cello, (played sostenuto, and with the 16', for Christus) in spite of the booklet speaking of a harpsichord being expected

by Bach to play along with the organ throughout. The Contrabass is also used in the ritornelli of the opening alto aria, and the tenor one too, unlike Huggett. The chorales are well-balanced and sung fully, even lushly.

In Part II, the contrasts deepen. Junghänel's chorus comes to life in the close interchange with Pilatus: they are more in the foreground than the Evangelist; the bass and strings in "Eilt, eilt" is well controlled and the upper voiced poised; and the muted violin with the flute in "Zerfliess" (another 1749 change) gives it a reedy edge. But the soprano is rather warm, and the final chorus and chorale seems a bit soggy. Huggett's turba chorus has more dramatic edge, and her balance is much better. Her solo voices sound fresher and brighter, especially in "Es ist vollbracht" and "Zerfliess", and the faster tempo of her closing chorus and the brightness of the final chorale maintains a sense of the drama to the end.

While I don't think I learnt anything new from Junghänel, I certainly did from Huggett. If you don't have a small-scale performance, you might buy Junghänel, but you probably bought Pierlot with Ricercar last year. But you won't have heard anything like Huggett; and even if you don't like it very much, it's a vivid performance.

David Stancliffe

**Bach** David Goode (1714 Silbermann Organ, Freiberg Cathedral) 80' 26" signum records **SIGCD261**  
BWV 541, 544, 564, 582, 593, 622, 654 & 682

David Goode preceded Robert Quinney (see below) as organ scholar at King's College Cambridge in the 1990s, and there are similarities in their playing, not least in its jovial and spirited approach. Like Quinney, he occasionally takes a rather cavalier approach to the notes, with neo-baroque flourishes of his own that go well beyond authentic ornamental additions. English organists do seem to like this sort of thing, but only the first few and the last tracks are affected. Goode ups his travel costs by choosing Silbermann's masterpiece organ in Freiburg Cathedral, one of his earliest instruments (built when he was younger than both Goode and Quinney) and one of the finest historic organs around. The registration choices are sound, although I would have avoided the rather alarming tremulant on track 5 as it interferes with the melodic flow. The programme includes the more obvious Bach favourites, together with his extraordinary

five-part *Vater Unser*, one of the most complex of all his organ works, but sounding effortless in David Goode's interpretation. These are confident and assured performances.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Bach** *Trio Sonatas for Organ* Robert Quinney (1965 Frobenius organ, The Queen's College, Oxford) 78' 57" Coro **COR16095**

I am guessing that Robert Quinney's parents were unlikely to have even met when the hugely influential 1965 Frobenius organ was installed in the chapel of The Queen's College, Oxford. It was the first, and is still one of the finest, of a whole generation of neo-baroque organs, with tracker action, pipework voiced on historic principals and with divisions arranged in the Germanic 'werkprincip' manner, with a clear architectural and acoustic separation between the two manuals and pedals. It never was 'authentic' in the way that so many continental organs of that time aimed to be – indeed, I would argue that the UK still does not have an organ capable of interpreting Bach in a way that Bach would recognise, either as a player or listener. But it is no surprise that a young player like Mr Quinney would chose it as a vehicle for the *Trio Sonatas*. His playing is youthful and full of joyful spirit as he bounces Bach's (and his own) little motifs back and forth, with more than a hint of the neo-baroque playing school that developed in the UK in the years after this organ was installed. You will get more authentic interpretations and instruments from the continent, but this CD is worth a listen, both for the instrument and the lively playing – and, of course, the music.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Bach** *Organ Works Vol VII* Margaret Phillips (1728 Hildebrandt organ, Sangerhausen & 1735 Silbermann organ, Petrikirche, Freiberg) 145' 57" (2 CDs)  
BWV 582, 541, 546, 551, 568, 943, 575, 576, 580, 581, 946, 570, 1027a, 594, 597, 591, 767 etc.  
Regent **REGCD308**

If you want an English organist that plays it straight, Margaret Phillips is the one for you. I hope she doesn't mind if I suggest that she (like me) is a little closer to the generation that was influenced by The Queen's College organ than Messrs Goode and Quinney, but she has managed to shake off the neo-baroque playing style that went with it. As well as paying respect to the notes, she is also aware of the articulation and other stylist aspects of Bach

performance and produces attractively unmannered interpretations. Her performance of Bach's take on Vivaldi's mind-bogglingly finger-twisting *Grosso Mogul* Concerto is exemplary. The two organs used enable a useful comparison between the work of Hildebrandt and Silbermann (the topic of an article I have recently written for *The Organists' Review*). The Sangerhausen organ is not as well known as many of Hildebrandt's instruments and is not in as good condition as more recent restorations, although you wouldn't really notice on this CD. Bach nearly became organist here aged 17, his third son Gottfried Bernhard eventually succeeding where he had failed. The Freiberg Petrikirche organ was the last of four that he built for his adopted home city, and has benefited from a recent restoration and a return to original pitch and a more authentic temperament. Although there is no Bach connection, the organ includes stops that Bach would have approved of, including the pedal 32' Groß Unterstatz. The recording sounds slightly more 'distant' at Freiberg. Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Bach** *Sonata 1 & Partita n° 1* Marie Cantagrill 45' 36" ABP Musique Classique Productions **AB1/2**

This strictly speaking is not a disc for our readers. The playing is very good, the violin tone rich, and the tempi wisely chosen. But this is "old school" Bach with chords spread upwards or downwards as suits the convenience of the fiddler (or perhaps the whim of the editor whose version she chose), not so much Bach's lines. There is nothing "bad" about it, and there are many modern violinists who could learn a thing or two from Cantagrill's resistance to the dreaded automatic vibrato and equally her eschewing of the dramatic *rallentandi* that mar so many otherwise enjoyable performances. I hope I am not being too harsh!

BC

**Bach** *6 Partitas* Elina Mustonen hpscd 152' 19" (2 CDs)  
Polyhymnia Records **PH0908**

Bach's Partitas are perhaps the apotheosis of the genre, epic in scale, musical quality and virtuosity. Recording all six is bound to be a challenge but also inspiring, as Elena Mustonen observes in her comprehensive notes. She plays a modern instrument (after Couchet) which has pleasing 8-foot registers though a slightly metallic edge to the highest octave of the 4-foot, which is hard on the ear when, as is

occasionally inevitable, the tuning is not absolutely perfect. Her interpretations are considered, with careful phrasing and some discreet decoration on repeats which is very well judged. This consideration and care, however, does sometimes produce tempi that are a little laboured – the semiquavers of the D major Sarabande, for example, lack real direction – but will help any listener wanting to explore the music in real detail. Any such listener using the notes should be alert to the recorded order (2,3,4,5,1,6), for which no reason is given. *David Hansell*

**Bach Goldberg-Variationen** Franks von Promnitzau (1736 Weiße-Orgel St. Laurentius, Gräfenroda) 57' 02" organum as-0 5051

Even if you already have a shelf-load of Goldberg recordings, this would make an attractive addition to your collection. Whatever the arguments are for or against performance on the organ, the lively and imaginative playing of the modestly named Franks Wilfried Promnitz von Promnitzau is enthralling, if not altogether 'straight'. The use of two manuals and pedals, alongside some interesting articulation, brings a clarity to the musical texture, and the tone colours are well-chosen. The CD has its occasional quirks, one being the clatter of stops being pulled before the *Ouverture* that opens the second group of pieces – this presumably being related to Promnitzau's imaginative theory about the origins of the work. I will leave you to find out what von P does at the end.

*Andrew Benson-Wilson*

**Bach The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II**  
Peter Hill pf 158' 10"  
Delphian DCD34101

I didn't look at the accompanying blurb when this arrived, so I wasn't expecting to hear a piano. If I'd seen the disc in a shop, there would have been nothing to tell me what it was played on: the remark that Peter Hill had a "crystalline musical intelligence" might lead one to assume that it would obviously be played on a harpsichord! Normally, we would only review modern-instrument performances if there was something really outstanding. I'm not going quite that far, but I was glad that I did open the packet, and I do find that harpsichords can sound aggressive and clavichords too self-conscious, while a piano is more comfortable. So for some moods it is right, and the playing here is sensitive and thoughtful. *CB*

**Bach Six Sonatas for Violin & Harpsichord** Ingrid Matthews vn, Byron Schenkman hpscd 94' 60" (2 CDs)  
Available online at  
<http://magnatune.com/artists/matthews>

I first heard Byron and Ingrid play at the Boston Early Music Festival when Clifford and I went over to promote our publications. I was treated to lots of the fringe events, as well as the big opera (Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo*, which we had edited for the festival), and I heard them play with a trio sonata grouping, and Byron playing solo Bach. I remember writing something along the lines of how it was almost as if Byron was making it up as he went along and I feel like there's something of that here, too. Although it's more difficult to be totally spontaneous when there are two of you, this pair obviously know one another well enough to play about with this very familiar music without ever upsetting the flow, or upsetting the purists. The recorded balance is excellent, with the bass of the harpsichord given enough aural space for the harmonics to enrich the sound picture. For a long, long time, my favourite recordings have been those by Monica Huggett and Ton Koopman, another mercurial pairing with more than a hint of the improvisational about them, but the current 2 CD set will sit alongside it on my shelves and I will be hard pressed to decide which to listen to. *BC*

**Bach Die Kunst der Fuge** Léon Berben (1742-4 Wagner organ in Angermünde)  
Ramée RAM1106 79' 31"

We now know that CPE Bach noted that the Art of Fugue was "expressly prepared to be played on both clavier and organ", so arguments about the use of the organ should be superfluous. The CD includes a note by Peter Wollny outlining the latest research and opinions about this enigmatic work. Joachim Wagner was based in Berlin (Angermünde is just to the north) but his organs are close in style to the central German organs that Bach knew. This example now has an unequal temperament after Silbermann, and is pitched at  $a'=448$ . No individual registrations are given, but the sound-world as the work unfolds is sensible and self-evident. Léon Berben plays the work as written, without the use of 16' pedal stops (until the final fugue, which is not 'completed'), and with an attractive sense of articulation and musical flow.

*Andrew Benson-Wilson*

**The Best of Bach in B minor Ensemble**  
Schönbrunn <TT>  
Globe GLO 5243  
BWV 209 (Sinfonia), 1030, 1050a & 1067  
(+ 25th anniversary bonus CD)

I haven't previously seen a recording devoted entirely to works in one key, but at least it removes the problem of the uncomfortable key-changes which sometimes afflict other CDs. Lest you are surprised at omissions from the choice of music, I should point out that it is restricted to pieces including solo flute, so we have the Sinfonia from the secular cantata *Non sa che sia dolore*, the orchestral suite, the sonata for flute and obbligato harpsichord, and an early version of the fifth Brandenburg Concerto. The single strings and continuo balance well with Marten Root's baroque flute – for the sonata he plays an original Denner of 1725 – and I only hesitate to recommend this recording because of the annoying habit of sometimes placing the last note of a movement very late. The bonus CD includes tracks from the group's recordings on period instruments of pieces by 18th and 19th century composers including JS Bach, Locatelli, Haydn, Mozart, Kuhlau and Debussy.

*Victoria Helby*

**Delange Sonate e Sonate a tre Ensemble Solstice 66' 48"**  
Musica ficta MF8013

This is the first recording of some lovely music by the 18th-century Belgian composer Herman-François Delange. Born in Liège in 1715, he completed his education on the violin before obtaining a scholarship to study composition in Rome. From there he travelled to Naples before finally returning to Liège in 1741, where he was employed as a violinist until his death in 1781. His surviving works include opera and masses as well as vocal and instrumental works. Not much is known about his time in Italy, but it clearly affected his musical style, with its attractive melodies and expressive slow movements. The solo sonatas were originally for violin but the music includes instructions for adapting them for the flute, the instrument used here. The Belgium-based Ensemble Solstice play with obvious enjoyment and the recording is perfectly balanced, with great support for the upper parts from the continuo instruments. This is a CD which I am happy to recommend for the quality of both the music and the performances.

*Victoria Helby*

**Fux *Triopartiten*** La Gioconda (Lucia Freihofer, Mónika Tóth vlns, Barbara Julia Reiter vlc, Anne Maria Dragosits kbd  
Querstand VKJK 138  
K303, 306, 334, 336, 356, 389 & 390, E67

This is an excellent CD. The playing is marvellously clean and clearly recorded, and the repertoire the Neue Hofkapelle GRAZ have chosen for their debut recording is wide ranging and engaging. From the slightly odd sonata for three unaccompanied violins (I've known it for a long time, having edited it for Clifford's catalogue and heard a rather less convincing live performance at a concert in Dundee – no, I was not playing!) to larger works including trumpets. The CD is organised by genre, beginning and ending with courtly music (two fabulous overture suites), then *per l'opera* (pieces from *Il mese di Marzo* and *Pulcheria*), chamber music (the three violin piece), and church music (a five-minute patchwork sinfonia and two one-movement sonatas). All in all, an excellent introduction to Fux's music. If your music history has convinced you he was a dusty old fuddy duddy who dreamt in four-part invertible counterpoint, this will show you a new side. The counterpoint is still there, but unless you've got an iPhone app analysing as you go along, I doubt you'd notice! I do hope we hear lots more from this promising ensemble. BC

**Fux *Triopartiten*** La Gioconda 60' 19"  
querstand VKJK1108  
K319, 320, 322, 323 & 326

Like the recording reviewed above, La Gioconda's selection of five varied trios (as well as a Rondeau from a sixth, K. 321) is an excellent introduction to Fux, the instrumental composer. Once again, there is counterpoint a-plenty, but no more so than in Corelli and if the music sounds by turns more French and German than Corelli, we should not be surprised. Two of the pieces (K. 323 and K. 319) have French or Italian movement titles as well as tempo markings. The pieces have between four and six movements and there is no definitive structure. The two violinists of La Gioconda are well matched and the continuo line-up of cello and cembalo or organ provides a well-shaped bass line and varying degrees of chordal accompaniments. The technical complications of Fux's music do not override the graceful melodies he writes and there are many surprises along the way – one movement has the two violins

playing in unison, for example. A beautifully played, sharply recorded disc that is well worth exploring. BC

**Handel in Hamburg** Music from Almira, Nero, Rodrigo, Daphne and Florindo The Parley of Instruments, Peter Holman Hyperion Helios CDH 55324 63' 36"  
+Oboe Concerto in G minor (rec 1997)

There is possibly a word missing in the subtitle – "instrumental". When it appeared, this disc was the first recording of suites from Almira, Nero, Florinda and Daphne, at least some of which was reconstructed by Peter Holman. All of the music was written when the composer was around 20 years old, and had clearly already mastered the French style – it's only the G minor oboe concerto HWV287 (with soloist Frank De Bruine) that has Italianate movement designations (though even one of those is labelled *Sarabande*). I think this is the disc that spawned the *EMR* expression "silly pluckers"; while they were certainly not omni-present I have to say that I rarely found any of the continuo playing distracting – the notable exception was Track 7 where I found it perverse for them to play the third beat of a sarabande across the rest of the band; sounded a little more like Piazzolla than Handel – not that I seriously mind! BC

**Kuhnau *Sacred Music*** Deborah York, Marianne Hellgren, Lisa Beckley, Susan Hamilton, James Bowman, Robin Blaze, Charles Daniels, James Gilchrist, Peter Harvey, Colin Campbell SSSScTcTTTB, The King's Consort, Robert King 74' 43"  
Hyperion helios CDH55394

Like many Thomaskantors prior to the appointment of a certain Mr Bach, Johann Kuhnau's music has largely fallen into obscurity. The only piece that used to get an occasional airing was *Tristis est anima mea*, but even it is more often dressed up in Bach's (admittedly more intense) arrangement. As a direct result of this outstanding recording's original appearance, at least one more work has started to enjoy greater popularity – the delightful soprano cantata, *Weicht ihr Sorgen aus dem Hertzen*. Typical of Robert King's *Contemporaries of Bach* series, this is a well-filled CD, and the pieces cover everything from solo motet to the fullest forces imaginable. The playing and singing is wonderful; he clearly has the knack of choosing voices that shine as soloists, and yet are able to combine in consort without any tension either within or between the parts – truly

not something every conductor can pull off. If you missed this first time around, you can now discover the wonderful world of Kuhnau even more cheaply. BC

**The Submission: Sonatas, Suites and Concertos of the Loeillet Family** Les Goûts-Authentiques, Jan Devlieger 66' 31"  
Et'cetera KTC 1434

The composers represented on this recording are Jean Baptiste Loeillet (John of London), his younger brother Jacques and his cousin Jean Baptiste (de Gant). The eleven members of Les Goûts-Authentiques play in a variety of combinations, giving us a sonata for two unaccompanied recorders by JB de Gant, a trio sonata by JB of London, one of Jacques Loeillet's quintets for two voice flutes and two transverse flutes with continuo, and two short concertos, one for flute and one for oboe, which may actually be by Robert Woodcock. These last are quite entertaining, but for me the most successful pieces are the London Loeillet's Suite III in C minor played on the harpsichord by Jan Devlieger, and the latter's arrangements for various instruments of some of the same composer's dance tunes. These, including *The Submission* of the CD title, were published by the dancing master Kellom Tomlinson in London between 1715 and 1728 as single line melodies with choreography.

Victoria Helby

**Rameau *Pieces for keyboard*** Jill Crossland piano 70' 58"  
Signum Records SIGCD278

I have always felt that French music has been one of the greatest beneficiaries of the period instrument revival. I never really appreciated Berlioz until the Norrington *Symphonie Fantastique*, and Boismortier and Hotteterre certainly do not respond well to the bullying of the modern flute. Similarly, I have never been convinced by Rameau or Couperin on the piano, even in the most distinguished hands. Jill Crossland does her best, but the opening *prélude* sounds embarrassed by its timbre and pieces like *Les Cyclopes*, deprived of the physicality of the harpsichord, are just notes. Ironically, the booklet quotes one of Rameau's friends as saying *His heart and soul were in his harpsichord*. Quite. David Hansell

**Telemann *Germanicus*** Olivia Stahn Claudia, Elisabeth Scholl Agrippina, Matthias Rexroth Florus/Lucius, Albrecht Sack Segestes,

Henryk Böhm *Germanicus*, Tobias Berndt *Arminius*, Friedrich Praetorius *Caligula*, Dieter Bellmann (speaker), Sächsisches Barockorchester, Gotthold Schwarz cpo 777 602-2 164' 12" (3 CDs)

Telemann's *Germanicus* was long thought lost – indeed, lots of it still is – but Michael Maul's knowledge of the early Leipzig opera scene enabled him to identify a bunch of arias that had previously scarcely been noticed as belonging to one version of the piece (which the composer seems to have revised). With a printed libretto at his disposal, he set about trying to make sense of the torso. Selecting music from Telemann's other operas (including some other bleeding chunks) and those of his contemporaries (Melchior Hoffmann emerges as an interesting composer as a result), which sometimes involved re-secularising opera arias that had been "contrafacta'd" into sacred cantatas. In the end, he has created something very worthwhile. Rather than ask a contemporary composer to write new recitatives, or a musicologist to attempt a reconstruction, Maul has opted to have the action conveyed by means of a narrator. I have sat through a performance where this happened (the dancers and costumes required for the production I attended had been stuck in a traffic jam halfway across Europe, so the director decided to go for concert performance and cut his losses) and it was dreadfully boring. Here, however, it worked a treat – partly, I think, because the narrator in my live experience was something of a ham, while here the job is done with Audi-like efficiency. The facts are delivered, and the music begins. Occasionally, perhaps where Maul felt that Telemann might have used accompagnato style, the last few lines are spoken by the singer before his or her aria: The music is glorious; though still a relative youngster and writing in a new medium, Telemann already understands how to use the instruments of the orchestra perfectly – there is a beautiful aria with pairs of recorders and oboes, and then suddenly the violins interrupt with scales: I'm fairly certain the young Fasch must have heard it, as a very similar thing happens in one of his mass settings! The singers are very fine, although the sopranos are sometimes just a little harsh at the top of their register. Tobias Berndt as Arminius is outstanding. A thoroughly enjoyable recording that might inspire further performances, though perhaps someone does need to be commissioned to write at least some recitative. BC

**Telemann VI Nouvelles Sonatinas**  
L'Apothéose (Enrico Di Felice fl, Daniele Bovo vlc, Francesco Bianco hpscd) 51' 06"  
stradivarius STR33901

For Telemann's *Nouvelles Sonatinas* there is some astoundingly good playing from all three participants on this record. All for transverse flute and continuo, these six sonatinas are in the four-movement pattern. Although the publication suggests alternative instrumentation for some of the sonatinas, they all seem to work well for the transverse flute. It appears from the notes that the basso continuo is in part missing, and has here been reconstructed – not that it was possible to discern where the composer left off. This disc is thoroughly recommended.

Ian Graham-Jones

**Telemann Wind Concertos Vol. 6**  
Camerata Köln, La Stagione Frankfurt, Michael Schneider 64' 02"  
cpo 777 402-2  
TWV 51: a1, h1; 52: B1, F3; 53: C1, D1, D3

Proof – if proof were needed – that Telemann, like Vivaldi, did not simply regurgitate the same concerto! Volume 7 of this excellent and enlightening series is already announced, and I can't wait to hear it. The present disc has two solo concertos for flute (one of them might be a piccolo or a soprano recorder, – the notes are unclear) and one for oboe, one each for pairs of recorders and horns, one *Concerto alla francese* for strings with the French wind trio, and finally a three-movement piece for a pair of flutes with bassoon and strings. Though common strands of style can be detected between the various works, each of them is quite individual and, if anyone ever tells you Telemann is predictable, play them Track 2 of this disc – it's a seminal lesson in cadence avoidance. As one would expect of any enterprise involving Michael Schneider, these are no mere recordings for recording's sake; with a well-drilled assemblage of top-notch performers, there is much to cherish and enjoy, from the quirky Polishness of the "piccolo" concerto to the martial fanfares of the double horn piece, and the mellifluous lines of the concerto for two recorders. You shouldn't need any encouragement from me to buy this! BC

**Ulich Flauto con cembalo** Lux Borea (Paul Wählberg rec, Pavel Serbin vlc, Andreas Edlund hpscd) <TT>  
Euridice EUCD 63

Until relatively recently, this CD would have been impossible to make. While the continuo part was known to have existed, the flute part was thought lost, or imagined as well as lost on account of the suggestion that a copy had somehow made its way to Russia. Whether this was in the 18th-century (Ulich worked at Zerbst, from whence a young German princess travelled to St Petersburg to marry the Tsar, taking music as part of her personal affairs, and ultimately to become Catherine the Great), or more recently (as part of the war booty which has been turning up all over the former Soviet Union in recent years) is unknown. Now that the partbooks have been re-united, Professor Paul Wählberg and his countryman Andreas Edlund have joined outstanding Russian cellist (whom our readers should know from Pratum Integrum's on-going masterseries of Telemann orchestral suites) to produce a very fine recording of this interesting music. If you were asked to describe early 18th-century recorder music, you would most likely imagine short pieces with three or four movement in alternating and contrasting tempi. Ulich's six pieces range from four to nine! Some have dance titles, some merely tempo markings. Where they are rather conventional is in the choice of key: two are in G, with one each in C, D minor, F and B flat. The disc is filled out by two keyboard suites also by Ulich, revealing him to have been a fairly gifted cembalist. For recorder players looking for new repertoire, this would be a good place to start – the editions are available from Walhall. BC

**Vivaldi Teuzzzone** Paolo Lopez Teuzzzone, Raffaella Milanesi Zidiana, Delphine Galou Zelinda Roberta Mameli Cino, Furio Zanasi Sivenio Antonio Giovannini, Makoto Sakurada, Le Concert des Nations, Jordi Savall 160' (3 CDs)  
naïve 30593 (*Tesori del Piemonte* Vol. 49)

As this series progresses, the less I understand why Vivaldi's operas have not made more of an inroad into mainline repertoire. The arias in this example, which tells the story of a Chinese prince whose throne is stolen by his father's former lover (who secretly aspires to marry the prince!), are absolutely crackers – there are full scale examples with trumpets and drums, and there's one where a solo oboe and a solo violin take turns at accompanying the solo voice. Even when there isn't an obbligato instrument or subtle orchestral effect, the

singers and the band really get their teeth into some striking melodies and some breath-taking virtuoso material. The action is of, course, carried forward by the recitative, and Savall's approach is interesting – some are accompanied (as we've come to expect) by cello and harpsichord, but others have just a cellist playing chords, and others also involve lute. One thing about the production does disappoint me: Vivaldi cast the title role as a woman but Savall opts for a male soprano. Whatever your personal tastes, if it is documented fact that the composer ignored castrati he had used in works both before and after *Teuzzone*, surely a trouser role is what he wanted? Neither of the higher pitched male singers are quite up to the task (there are serious tuning issues in at least one of the arias), and I think that a shame. The drama – and the music – are hopefully of sufficient quality to encourage some houses to take up the score as a future project and there may well be more recordings in future. BC

**Vivaldi** *Il Cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione Opus 8* The Avison Ensemble, Pavlo Beznosiuk 114' 10" (2 CDs) Linn Records CKD365

Vivaldi's Op. 8 set of twelve concertos begins with *The Four Seasons*, but it is good to have the complete set of violin concertos in one box. On disc 1, the *Seasons* are followed by the excitingly evocative *Il Tempista di Mare* and the pleasing *Il Piacere* featuring Pavlo Beznosiuk's virtuoso playing, while the second disc contains some of the less familiar concertos – all (except for *La Caccia*) without programmatic context – which contain some of the finest music of the Op. 8 set. Continuo is varied: Beznosiuk uses archlute or baroque guitar, harpsichord or organ in different concertos. The booklet has some useful brief notes and the complete texts of 'The Seasons', though it is pity that it is printed white on green paper – not the best for those with eye problems.

Ian Graham-Jones

**Vivaldi** *Concertos for Strings* Arte dei Suonatori 61' 53" BIS BIS-CD-1845 RV 114, 128-130, 134, 143, 152, 157, 158 & 693

This selection from fifty or so of Vivaldi's ripieno string concertos is one that is worthwhile having in your library. Even though it appears to have been recorded in a reverberative acoustic, the recording quality is excellent, and the playing from

this small period band is neat and spirited. I am not sure what the rationale is for performing the *Concerto Madrigalesco* concerto RV129 with single strings, but it was strangely disappointing, having heard some of the music in its choral versions in the composer's *Magnificat* and *Kyrie*. Some may have Standage's three-volume collection of these concertos produced by Chandos some ten years ago, and the tempi are in general more brisk (Standage, for example, shaves more than a minute off the new version of the *Concerto Madrigalesco*), although the recording quality is understandably less good. Ian Graham-Jones

**Vivaldiana: Venetian Flute Music by Vivaldi & his contemporaries** Michael Form rec, Dirk Börner kbd, Mélanie Flahout bsn, Delphine Biron vlc 79' 23" Pan Classics PC10255

Albinoni sonata (from op. 4!); Bach BWV951; Marcello Ciaccona in F, sonata "13" in d; Veracini sonata in a; Vivaldi RV52 & 86; Vivaldi/Sieber sonata in f [The identity of some of the items is dubious.]

In common with many of Vivaldi's concertos for solo bassoon, RV86 has a virtuoso bassoon part – a sonata à 2 with continuo, whereas RV52 – unusually for Vivaldi – is a three-movement dance suite with, I suspect, a second melody added in the right hand of the organ in the opening siciliana. (Is Handel's Op. 1 No. 4 recorder sonata cribbed from this, or vice versa?). The offerings of Veracini, Albinoni and the Marcellos are interesting enough to have an airing. The fine toccata-like Prelude and Fugue (on a theme by Albinoni) for harpsichord solo makes a suitable interlude, as does the Marcello Ciaccona a fitting conclusion to this disc. Ian Graham-Jones

**Zelenka** *Sacred Music* Carolyn Sampson, Rebecca Outram, Robin Blaze, James Gilchrist, Michael George, Peter Harvey, The Choir of the King's Consort, The King's Consort, Robert King 73' 52" Hyperion Helios CDH55424 Z47 (Lectiones and Invitatorium), Z134, 135, 147

Regular readers will know that I cannot get enough of Zelenka. As part of his *Contemporaries of Bach*, Robert King chose not to go for one of the masses, but to explore little-recorded repertoire, so there is a large-scale Litany (regular features in Dresden Catholic chapel services, this setting is for the Venerable Sacrament), two Marian antiphons and a selection of pieces from the Office for the Dead. This combination of top flight performers and

a calculated but natural feeling for the music results in performances that really bring out the best of this still far too marginal composer – some of the solo numbers would not be out of place in the theatre, and I think it's a safe bet that there may have been more than a few dewy eyes in the Dresden chapel from time to time. BC

**Das ist mein Freude: Soprano Cantatas from the Großfahner-Collection** Maria Jonas S, Chursächsische Capella Leipzig 77' 20" CPO 777 546-2 Buttstädt, Künstel, Pachelbel, Telemann & Topf

The Großfahner Collection (currently in a library in Weimar) is one of those German village church archives where musicologists might discover a veritable treasure trove of cantatas and other pieces of early 18th-century music, some unique. Although many are by obscure composers (I think I would put three of those represented on this disc into that category), many are by more important figures (like Pachelbel's *Mein Fleisch ist die rechte Speise* for soprano, scordatura fiddle and continuo, for example; even one of the three Telemann cantatas, though, is missing in the TVWV!). Typical of the German approach to these things, the local authorities have been encouraged to give money to support research into the collection, as well as into concerts and other promotional events (such as the release of this disc, though it is also sponsored by Stiftung Kloster Michaelstein). Our readers will know most of the performers, and it will come as no surprise that the performances are excellent. The two violinists take turns playing first or second, and share out the solos; they are joined by a viola in one piece, and a pair of gambas in another; the continuo involves permutations of cello, violone, organ, harpsichord, bassoon, theorbo and calcedon. The singer has a ringing, clear voice and navigates all the runs very nimbly, though she perhaps lacks the warmth a Carolyn Sampson would have brought to the more lyrical movements. BC

**Duetti** Philippe Jaroussky, Max Emanuel Cencic, Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 74' 21" Virgin Classics 50999 0 70943 2/3

G. Bononcini *Bella si ma crudel, Chi d'amore tra le catene, Pietoso nume arcier; Conti Quando veggio un'usignolo; Mancini Quanto mai saria più bello; B. Marcello Chiaro e limpido fonte, Veggio Fille; Porpora: Ecco che il primo albero; A. Scarlatti Nel cor del cor mio*

Two of today's most charismatic young countertenors, Jaroussky and Cencic, bring to the concert platform not only very different personalities, but well contrasted vocal qualities that serve to give these Italian cantatas a strong sense of character. I've noted recently in these pages the Frenchman's beautifully rounded, pure tone, almost androgynous in quality, while the Croatian Cencic conveys a greater sense of assertion, the voice perceptibly darker, with just a trace of vibrato. That the combination of the two voices is capable of producing ravishingly sumptuous sounds is immediately apparent from the tender cantabile lines of the opening aria from Giovanni Bononcini's *Pietoso nume arcier*. In keeping with the genre, all the works here have a pastoral theme and a similar design: one or more cantabile arias in which the composer exploits the often plaintive lyricism of the situation and a quicker concluding aria that offers the singers the opportunity for a display of virtuosity. It's eagerly grasped here, with some dazzling singing of *passaggi* from both singers, although one might wish they had not shown such reluctance to provide cadential trills; Jaroussky is capable of singing perfect examples. My only other complaint concerns some over-fussy continuo work, William Christie's twee twiddles being a particular irritation. But the last thing I wish to do is to end this joyous celebration of the countertenor voice on even a slightly sour note. If you want to hear just how irresistible this CD is, go to the penultimate track, taken from Benedetto Marcello's *Tirsi e Fileno*. Both music and singing are nothing less than an act of unabashed seduction. *Brian Robins*

*The Father, The Son & The Godfather*  
Paradiso Musicale (Dan Laurin rec, Henrik Frendin vla, Anna Paradiso hpscd) 69' 39"  
BIS BIS-CD-1895

J. S. Bach BWV1030; C. P. E. Bach Wq 88, 163;  
Telemann:TWV 41: D6, 42: d7, g9

The relationship between JS and CPE Bach and Telemann (father, son and godfather) is the basis for the selection of music on this CD. Ignore the rather strange cover and you will find a variety of music which sounds really good on this combination of instruments, though only one, the CPE Bach trio sonata for bass recorder and viola, uses the specified instrumentation. I'm not usually very keen on flute music being transferred to the recorder but the JS Bach sonata in B minor, played at the original pitch on the

voice flute (tenor recorder in D), works well. There is a Telemann cello sonata, and a sonata for keyboard and gamba by CPE Bach played on the viola. The programme starts and ends with trio sonatas by Telemann with his characteristic lively Polish-influenced final movements. Everything is played stylishly with appropriate ornamentation, so it's such a pity that the players have decided to allow the last movement of the final piece to disintegrate rather than come to a proper conclusion. This is probably quite fun in a concert but could get rather annoying on repeated listening, so you may want to switch off this otherwise very enjoyable recording before the last track. There are good booklet notes, with additional information about the instruments and music editions. This must be the first time I've seen the page turner listed in the end credits!

*Victoria Helby*

*Bach and Sons: Clavichord and Flute*  
Benjamin-Joseph Steens clav, Jacques-Antoine Bresch fl 63' 36"  
Evil Penguin Records Classic EPRC 011  
CPEB Wq61/6, 87; JCFB:Sonata in C; JSB BWV998, 1020; WFB Sonata VI; JSB/CPEB? BWV1031

This disc alternates sonatas for flute and keyboard obbligato with keyboard solos. Surprisingly, the balance between the clavichord and flute works well without, we are told, any intervention by the sound engineer, though the flute has obviously had to exercise restraint to maintain it and to match the subtle nuances of the clavichord. The delicate result suits this music well. Two of the flute sonatas with BWV numbers are now thought to have been composed by CPE Bach, and the majority of the music dates from a period when, according to his own writing and that of Quantz, the clavichord was regarded as an appropriate instrument for accompaniment. You are warned not to turn the sound level up too high, so listening to it with headphones is probably the best way to give this recording the attention it needs in order to appreciate it properly.

*Victoria Helby*

*Lamenti* Stefanie Irányi mS, Hofkapelle München, Michael Hofstetter 62' 40"  
OEHMS Classics OC 811

*Handel Lucrezia; Hasse Arias from Didone Abbandonata; Haydn Arianna a Naxos*

This is a thoughtfully devised programme of fine music – Haydn's cantata, especially, should be much better known than it is.

The strings play with a sense of engagement, not just accompaniment, and also with great refinement in their phrasing. I enjoyed Stefanie Irányi's singing most when she wasn't trying too hard. Her restrained self sings with no more than minimal vibrato and a really lovely sound. However, when she moves into full 'wronged woman' mode the vibrato becomes intrusive and so much attention is given to the relative strength and, in particular, weakness of individual syllables that the words and musical line all but disappear. The concise though informative notes are in German and English and the Italian texts are translated into German only. It feels odd to the point of courtesy that there is no information in the booklet about the soloist.

*David Hansell*

*Haydn's Arianna is accompanied by a string quartet – presumably the anonymous one in the Library of Congress*

CB

## CLASSICAL

*J C Bach A Music Party* Amarillis 75' 46"  
AgOgique AGO003  
5 Quintets (op. 11/ 1, 3 & 6, op. 22/ 1 & 2),  
Sextet in C

At the risk of appearing to damn with faint praise, I must say that this is absolutely charming. Anyone who has heard any of JCB's *sinfonia concertante* will know how good he was at finding ways to blend contrasting instruments and yet allow them their individual voices. And that is exactly what happens here. Every player has opportunities to shine in these relatively large chamber ensembles and the members of this group take them with style and a sense of gratitude. Even the cello is released from supportive duties for some assertive melodic moments and the harpsichord also has obbligato sections. Arguably, we do not hear enough of this particular Bach. Use this release to redress the balance.

*David Hansell*

*Mozart Vesperae solennes de confessore, Coronation Mass* Laurence Kilsby, Jeremy Kenyon, Christopher Watson, Christopher Borrett TrATB, Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum dir Benjamin Nicholas; Charivati Agréable dir Kah-Ming Ng 54' 59"  
Delphian DCD34102  
+ *Ave verum corpus*

A recording of Mozart sacred music with trebles and a minimal-sized orchestra, much as Mozart would have had at his disposal is unusual. The choir sing with spirited tone, yet with careful phrasing

and attention to detail in this performance, the *Benedictus* of the Mass beautifully sung by the young Laurence Kilsby. I found the band, perhaps because of its small size (5 violins, and just one each of the lower strings), less satisfying, and the timps were at times rather invasive, maybe because of the positioning of the microphones. Nevertheless, overall it was a satisfying listen, with some excellent booklet notes. Ian Graham-Jones

BC also wrote an untypically extensive review of the above CD as well, so review of this, so it would be a waste not to print it!

This is not a repertoire I expect to get excited by. The *Coronation Mass* has pretty much been ruined for me by the term I spent trying to coax a semi-decent performance out of the local university choir, and the Vespers stick in mind from the concert where, playing one-to-a-part, my E string broke mid-phrase and the entire band stopped playing in shock! So I owe this thoroughly excellent CD a debt of gratitude – not only are these excellent performances (I might even go so far as to suggest this might just be the best English “cathedral” choir I have heard in many years), but the recording is absolutely crystal clear. Charivari Agréable (in their interesting line-up of five violins, one each of viola and cello with two basses) are in splendid form – the acoustic and the microphone placement allow the violin scales to cut through the warm but perfectly focussed sound of the full choir and oboes without having to push their instruments to fortissimo. The solo quartet (who are only named on the reverse of the CD and inside the booklet, and the men's biographies are conspicuous by their absence) balance wonderfully in consort and all make marvellous solo contributions – the tenor and bass are particularly impressive, and I would love to hear more solo work from them (perhaps singing some Stanley in this anniversary year?) Equally impressive is young Laurence Kilsby; listening to the disc in the car without having looked at the booklet at all, I thought a woman with a boyish voice had been selected for the recording – I was astonished to discover that it actually was a boy! I defy anyone to listen to his *Agnus Dei* and not be impressed! He hits notes bang in the middle and then warms the longer ones with slowish vibrato that neither distorts the pitch nor interferes with his ability to get on with any ornamentation at the end of them (in *Laudate Dominum*, for

example). I felt I could *hear* conducting in that piece, and there was another instance in the opening Kyrie of the mass where a rather clumsy *rallentando* back into the *Tutti* almost led to a disaster. I hope more recordings of this fabulous voice are planned before it breaks and is lost forever. Even with *Ave verum corpus* sandwiched between the two main works, there was still plenty of room for at least two more pieces – we could have had an Epistle sonata from CA, or even some of the smaller scale church pieces which might have offered the soloists more opportunities to shine. BC

**Richter Sonatas for Flute, Harpsichord and Cello** 2 Paulina Fred fl, Heidi Peltoniemi vlc, Aapo Häkkinen hpscd 61' 50" Naxos 8.572030  
Sonatas 4-6 (1764), *Praeludium* in C, *Andante* in F

I reviewed the performers' recording of the first three of Richter's sonatas last year and this is a welcome completion of the set. The VI *Sonate da Camera a Cembalo Obligato, Flauto Traverso o Violino concertato e Violoncello* published by Haffner in Nuremberg in 1764 are revised versions of the six flute sonatas included in his twelve sonatas originally published in two volumes in London in 1759 and 1763. The playing here is elegant and expressive, and Richter's Mannheim background is evident even though his often contrapuntal, non-virtuosic style was felt to be a little conservative at the court where he was employed as a singer and composer. The sonatas are quite long three-movement works but there is room on the CD for his two extant keyboard works, the *Praeludium* in C, perhaps originally for organ without pedals, and the *Andante* in F, also for unspecified keyboard, which the author of the booklet suggests may have been composed for harpsichord teaching purposes. Victoria Helby

#### 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

**Beethoven Egmont, Symphonies 4 & 7** Die Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht, Johannes Leertouwer 72' 06" Globe GLO 5246

It is appropriate that this CD from the recently founded Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht should open with the Egmont Overture and its Dutch hero of Goethe's play. The distinctive tone colour of the period instruments, aided by the sheer power needed to set them in motion, is immediately apparent. The Fourth Sym-

phony, with its gloomily enigmatic opening, makes a well-chosen follow-on from the story of the unfortunate Count. Johannes Leertouwer has been artistic director of the orchestra since its foundation and, judging by the booklet's photos, is seen, at least by the recording company, as something of a figurehead, pictured stern and hirsute on the cover and shaven and slightly friendlier in the notes. His conducting is punchy and colourful with some well chosen use of *tempo rubato*, a directing style he explains in the notes. The orchestra works on a project basis, reforming for each occasion and clearly includes some fine players, notably the two horn players, Erwin Wieringa and Gijs Laceulle. This CD is from a live 2010 performance in the attractive and lively acoustic of the Vredenburg Leidsche Rijn, with the repeats and coughs removed but, apparently, few other edits. The recording quality is excellent. Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Berlioz Grande Messe des Morts** 1837 Wroclaw Ensemble [Robert Murray T, Gabrieli Players, Wroclaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Chetham's School of Music Symphonic Brass Ensemble, Gabrieli Consort, Wroclaw Philharmonic Choir], Paul McCreesh 88'36" (2 CDs)  
National Forum of Music NFM 635212028025  
or  
Signum Classics SIGCD280

This is a spectacular inauguration of Paul McCreesh's new *Winged Lion* record label – no shrinking violet he. The presentation is both attractive and frustrating. As with some other releases I've seen recently this comes as a hardback CD-sized book with the discs in the endpapers. The Polish notes read from one end, the English from the other but on the outside there's no way of telling which is which and nowhere can I find a track list, so the only way you can find out what is on each disc is to play them. The extent to which period instruments are used is not entirely clear from either the sound or the words. The latter refer specifically only to historic brass and percussion and an old/modern mixture in the strings. However, what is clear from the sound is that everyone is either instinctively or rehearsed to the point at which they have become HIP-sympathetic and the lush acoustic (and let's remember that Berlioz – another non-shrinking violet – considered the building the most important instrument) blends everything together convincingly. This is a

work famous for its spectacular moments but actually I found the more intimate sections just as moving, not least the (deliberately) relatively distant-sounding tenor solo, convincingly Gallic in his declamation. The huge forces are not always perfectly together but actually that adds to the very human dimensions of the performance. The engineers have done a remarkable job as well, with much audible detail, especially in the bass. There will be many for whom Colin Davis's recording will continue to be the standard-bearer for this piece, but this release offers a valuable complementary view. *David Hansell*

**Chopin 9 songs in Polish and German versions** Dorothee Mields S, Nelson Goerner Pleyel fp 51'55"

The Fryderyk Chopin Institute NIFCCD 023

Chopin's songs are historically a bit like Handel's harpsichord suites – we enjoy their existence but if they weren't there our view of the composer wouldn't really be affected. Various poets had a go at translating/paraphrasing them into German to bring them into the Lied tradition and on this disc Dorothee Mields sings both the Polish originals and these 'Liederised' versions. Her interpretations are not fundamentally affected but it is, of course, interesting to hear the different colours of the two languages side by side. But frankly I scarcely noticed the words in either language so bewitched was I by the simply wonderful vocal tone and phrasing. These are pure and exquisite respectively and the general approach is completely without affectation. More singing should be like this. *David Hansell*

**The Circle of Robert Schumann** Vol. 2

Gudrun Schumann vln, Wolfgang Brunner Hammerflügel

Capriccio 5074

**Brahms Allegro** (F. A. E. sonata), *Regenlied*; **Dietrich Allegro** (F. A. E. sonata); Kirchner Opp. 63 & 90; **Reinicke Sonata** op. 116; C. Schumann 4 songs; R. Schumann Opp. 70, 73 & 85/12, 102;

My partner likes his music to have heart and passion, so these two discs have proved very popular over the past six weeks or so. In fact, they have possibly been heard more than would normally have been the case, despite the fact that I am a violinist, because Gudrun Schumann and Wolfgang Brunner are pushing the boundaries of HIP performance, certainly in terms of the amount of emotion that can be wrought from their instruments while very much staying

within the limits of what is historically possible and without ever becoming sentimental. As a by-product of their willingness to explore the lesser-known by-ways of 19th-century repertoire for violin and piano, we are treated to a programme that would otherwise be unimaginable – the second disc is taken up by premiere recordings of Reinicke's E minor sonata and music by Theodor Kirchner, for example. We are used to violinists using different instruments from piece to piece, but here it's the pianist – depending on the repertoire, he uses one of three Hammerflügel. I hope this duo will continue to unearth yet more jewels for future releases – is it not time we had a HIP Brahms sonatas recording (violin and viola!)? *BC*

**Strauss Music for wind instruments**

Octophorus, Paul Dombrecht 74' 02"

passacaille 981

Opp. 4 + 7, "Fröhliche Werkstatt"

I remember reviewing these performances first time around, and being thrilled to hear such wonderful music played by such an outstanding ensemble. The programme consists of two youthful works (the opus 7 serenade for 13, a copy of which was sent to Hans von Bülow, which resulted in him commissioning the opus 4 Suite in B flat), and a much later work, the Sonatine No. 2, whose brooding harmonies and sweeping melodic lines foreshadow one of the composer's instrumental masterpieces, *Metamorphosen*. I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending this re-release – it is a perfect combination of repertoire and performer; one can't help but be carried along by Strauss's huge wave-like melodies and harmonies. *BC*

**Miklós Perényi** Britten Bach Ligeti

ECM New Series 2152 476 4166

Bach: Suite VI, BWV 1012; Britten: Third Suite, op. 87; Ligeti: Sonata

This disc is not really one for our pages. Perényi is undoubtedly a fabulous cellist and his performances are always worth hearing, whether or not they fit our HIP criteria. In choosing to play the piece on standard cello (as opposed to the five stringed instrument suggested in the manuscript), the tone colour is completely different from what the composer expected – even if, in many other respects, Perényi is truer to Bach's original than many others who play these pieces on modern cello. One absolutely outstanding aspect of Perényi's playing is his bowing –

for extended periods you'll have to listen hard to detect even the merest hint of a change of direction. HIPsters should stick with Wispelwey. *BC*

## VARIOUS

**Mare Nostrum**

Montserrat Figueras, Lior Elmameh, Hespèron XXI, Jordi Savall 158' 03" (2 CDs)

Alia Vox AVSA 988a A + B

Prices range about £5 either side of £30

This is another of Savall's CD books, running to 439 pages plus 15 showing the front covers of other Savall recordings, mostly six to a page. The text is in ten languages (three in non-roman characters), each with ten essays. Sung texts are printed in the original and five other languages. It's a substantial book, though quite hard-going, since the format is of a DVD booklet with a rather small font and the glossy paper makes it quite heavy: 850 grams. The essays, around three pages each, impressively cover a wide range of topics, sometimes perhaps oversimplified a little, but stimulating and well worth reading. There is also a chronology linked to a series of quotations from the Mediterranean cultures. The *Mare nostrum* has some things in common, but current politics are divisive, the Abrahamic faiths are hostile to each other, and the attempts of the West to promote democracy is mostly ineffective.

The music is left to speak for itself, and I have doubts about how clearly it does so. I'm not criticising the performances as such, and the 28 individual items are pleasant enough. But it is difficult to understand what they are about, and there is no information to give them any context. Some are beautiful, others are impressive or intriguing. But listening is a bit like casual encounters of a tourist and there is little meaning. One piece stood out as being obviously a lullaby – and very beautiful it was (*Noumi, noumi yaldati* track 1, 13). Others sound marvellous, but I, 1, for instance, seems like all-purpose arabic dressed up by modern western musicians, but is sourced as 15th-century Spain/Rhodes. No criticism of the performers; both of these track can stand as worthy memorials to Montserrat Figueras. *CB*

*I had hoped to produce an article on Performing Gabrieli, but time was occupied elsewhere.*

*We have rather more CDs than usual awaiting reviews: we hope they will be included in the next issue.* *CB*