

Early Music REVIEW

Number 147

April 2012

ISSN 1355-3437

Price £2.50

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- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------|
| 2 | Reviews of Music | CB |
| 6 | Misc. Monteverdi | CB |
| 7 | Dowland in Dublin? | David Hill |
| 8 | Reviews of Books | Hugh Keyte, CB |
| 11 | Gustav Leonhardt: a tribute from friends | |
| 14 | London Music | Andrew Benson-Wilson |
| 17 | John Potter in Cambridge | CB |
| 18 | 60 Years of Bach at Tilford | Rosemary Wishey |
| 20 | Suzuki's Bach Cantatas & Perth Weekend | Beresford King-Smith & BC |
| 21 | Buskaid | CB |
| 21 | Nevell & Byrd | Richard Turbet |
| 22 | Ercole Pasquini | Paul Kenyon |
| 24 | ♪ Pasquini Toccata 4 | |
| 26 | CD Reviews | |
| 46 | Letters etc | |

Early Music Review is published in
alternate months
The International Diary is published every month
except January

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I was singing Richafort's Requiem at an EEMF workshop recently and was intrigued when the director, John Milsom, asked the singers to say what the words of one section meant. There were some muffled suggestions, though I wasn't sure whether people who knew the text well were leaving it for the less fluent to speak out. But it struck me as impressive that, whether they understood the text or not, the two score or so singers present had no problem singing Latin.

There are advantages in singing in Latin. Pronunciation is regular (even if some conductors try to treat German, French and English Latin as different from Italian). At least the stress rules are simple – accent the penultimate syllable unless that is short, in which case the accent is on the antepenultimate (a word rarely used except in that context). Defining a long syllable is more of a problem if Italian pronunciation is used, since the vowel lengths are ignored. But Latin is an easy language to sing, and it helps that many of the words are recognisable from the survival of the essential elements in modern languages – though not always obvious. *Signifer* doesn't mean "iron signal" but "sign-bearer"! But without a knowledge of grammar, putting the words together to make sense is tricky, since sense comes from the endings of the words rather than their order, with the meaning often unclear until the verb appears as the last word. So seeing a phrase spread-out as underlay in a score presents at least a temporary difficulty in knowing how the nouns relate if you don't pick up functional clues from their endings; the sense is more obvious if you are singing from separate voice parts.

I don't know how many children from even the best schools learn Latin now, but I suspect that a fair number of the older singers that one meets at early music fora and summer schools did so. Many (like me) can understand the Latin as they sing it without consciously translating it. If they do, they tend to treat cognate words as having the same meaning in Latin and English, whereas a professional translator will use more idiomatic words. What annoys me is the carelessness with which programme notes and CD booklets (when they still have texts and translations) place existing English bible translations alongside the Latin without checking that they have the same meaning!

CB

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

PSB FOR VIOLS AND PERHAPS VOICES

Weelkes Madrigals of Six Parts "apt for the Viols and Voices" edited by Elizabeth V. Phillips PRB Productions (VC076) 2011. iv + 41pp + parts (see below)

In 1600, Weelkes must have intended to amaze the new century with two new publications, obviously intended as a pair, since a normal madrigal book contained around 20 items while Weelkes issued ten madrigals a6 and ten a5. He names viols before voices, so presumably favoured that medium – though I would find a textless performance of *Thule, the period of Cosmography* very disappointing! However, if we assume that Weelkes is thinking of voices and instruments – viols were the usual domestic instruments, but I'd love *Like two proud armies* on cornetts and sackbuts – the wide ranges of the parts may suggest that some sort of in-and-out scoring could be imposed. The introduction discusses chiavette, but the original clefs are not shown in conjunctions with the compass of each part (which is given).¹ The edition comes as a score \$20.00, score and 6 parts \$40 – choose vocal or instrumental clefs, or score and 9 parts (both sets of clefs) \$52.00. However you perform them, this is Weelkes at his best, though it's difficult to sing with a straight face

*Three times a day my prayer is
To gaze my fill on Thoralis.*

D'India Selected Madrigals from Books IV & V transcribed for viol quintet. Edited by Suzanne Court. PRB Productions (VC079) 2011. iv + 32pp + parts (see below)

These nine madrigals a5, with texts by Marino, Tasso, Guarini and Casoni (the last far less famous, but checking Wikipedia may have solved the authorship of a marvellous six-part setting for voices and instruments by Biagio Marini that I edited about 40 years ago and really should publish!) These are rather more virtuosic and serious than the Weelkes texts, but well worth playing – and singing, since the parts are underlaid. Players should definitely shape according to the texts to achieve the interplay and contrast in the writing and its subtle blend of counterpoint and declamation. Like the Morley, ranges can be wide. Original clefs etc are printed before each stave and the reader can see when transpositions have been made – not systematically, but sensibly. Prices are a little less than the Morley – \$17, \$35 & \$42. Since anglophones tend to know Weelkes better than D'India, buy the latter first. The name of Suzanne Court as editor is in itself a recommendation.

1. I can't lay my hands on my facsimile, but judging from my edition of *Thule...* in my OUP *Madrigals and Partsongs*, they are not transposed. With wide ranges, the clef gives a clue to the intended vocal type.

A-R ECCLES

John Eccles Rinaldo and Armida Edited by Steven Plank (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 176). A-R Editions, 2011. xix + 4 facs + 116pp, \$100.00.

Complete editions of texts and music of the English dramatic works of the 1690s are rare, and this is a welcome example that provides text and music in their running order.² This is part of a sub-series within RRMBE of Eccles' works, though not duplicating *Semele* in *Musica Britannica* 76.³ The introduction provides a concise run-down on the theatrical background and performance matters, sandwiching a summary of the story. One loose sentence ("Given the contemporaneous popularity of the theorbo and guitar, these instruments are strong alternatives for accompaniment in both instrumental and vocal writing.") needs a little clarification. I would guess that their role was with the singers rather than the strings, to the extent that the latter may well have been placed separately, though since the Lincoln's Inn theatre was small, the groups would be squashed together and may have been combined. I would have welcomed a little more on the librettist, John Dennis (1658-1734), better known (but probably only to literary scholars of the period) as a critic than for his plays – this, called a tragedy, was his second.⁴ His poetry reads quite well, but falls back on early styles too readily. Eccles' insertions add some variety, but it is difficult to get the shape of the work from the page, even with the words being in the right place. The five "Musical Entertainments" would probably work well in concerts.

BACH ORGAN WORKS

Bach Sämtliche Orgelwerke, Complete Organ Works... Vol. 4... Toccatas and Fugues, Individual Works ... edited by Jean-Claude Zehnder. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8804), 2012. 182pp + CD, €26.80

Vol. 7... Orgelbüchlein... edited by Sven Hiemke. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8807) 2012. 102pp + CD, €19.80

I welcomed the first two volumes (5 containing Sonatas,

2. Recent Purcell Society volumes include the complete, freshly edited text separately for *Fairy Queen* and *The Indian Queen*; the King's Music edition of King Arthur (1995) intersperses a standard edition of the text in sequence with the music.

3. It might have been useful to have noted somewhere (I can't swear that it isn't buried in a footnote) that the 1704 *A Collection of Songs* is available from King's Music/EMC.

4. He is also the traditional coiner of the phrase "Steal my thunder", but if true, it dates from a decade after the this work, which presumably used the usual device (metal balls in a mustard bowl) – intro. p. xviii.

Trios and Concertos, 6 with Clavierübung III, Schübler Chorales, Canonic Variations) a year ago. The standard edition for those concerned with editorial accuracy and minimal editorial intrusion has for the last few decades been the nine volumes of series 4 of *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, abbreviated as NBA (*Neue Bach-Ausgabe*).⁵ The problem for Breitkopf (Br) is whether there are enough differences to persuade a substantial number of organists to buy the more up-to-date edition. The choice is made more difficult because the distribution between volumes of the two sets does not coincide: you have to buy or retain most of the rejected volumes until Br is complete. Some will be happy with NBA and not even consider updating, even though editorial procedures get ever more sophisticated whether or not new sources appear. The introduction to vol 4 is particularly interesting in relating details of notation to performance.⁶ A bonus is having the critical commentary with the music. NBA has separate, expensive commentaries which few players are likely to buy, whereas Breitkopf's commentaries are printed at the end of the volumes, and are worth inspecting. Information from less authoritative sources can be useful in hinting at how Bach and his pupils changed the way they played his pieces over the years.

I've taken the best-known organ solo of all for comparison – the *Tocatta Con Fuga: pedaliter, ex d*, to use the title of the main, non-autograph source. Peter Williams argued in *Early Music* (1981) that the work was not by Bach, and published (Faber Music) a back-arrangement for solo violin to demonstrate that it wasn't even for organ. It does actually sound quite plausible thus. I was somewhat sympathetic to the idea, since it is odd that the work, while being flashy and apparently virtuosic, is easier for someone with keyboard but minimal pedal skills to play than most of the other Preludes/Toccatas and Fugues. The new editor is sympathetic to the violin idea too, but includes it in the volume nevertheless rather than relegating it to the accompanying CD. Both editions, of course, preserve the flatless key signature. NBA shows the original clefs, but Br gives a fuller incipit with first chord and tempo mark, and is more obvious in showing that, at the start, only two staves are used. Both editions add a stave for pedal, though Br isn't quite so systematic and doesn't waste a separate stave for the pedal bottom Ds in bars 10 & 12. Both editions leave it to the player to spread the chord in bar 10 by analogy with bar 2. Neither edition has perfect page-turns, but I don't think that is possible. (I don't have a facsimile of the main source at hand to see whether the 15-year-old Johannes Ringk – scribe of the only 18th-century source – managed it.) Br capitalises the first letter of all tempo marks whereas NBA only does so at the beginning of the work.

These general differences don't matter, not do all the detailed variants. Bar 1 is interesting. It has four pauses. The first and third beats have octave As with mordents and pauses, which is fine. But Br, following the early MS, places the other pauses over the semiquaver of the two subsequent groups of notes. However, two later copies have the marks placed on the rests, which seem more sensible – there isn't much point in putting a pause on a semiquaver and follow it by a semiquaver and quaver rest.⁷ This is a variant that does affect performance: don't hang onto the last note of the phrase. The same occurs at bars 5 and 7. It is interesting to note the slight rhythmic variations in bars 18-19, which probably suggest that the passage is free and needn't be literally followed. In general, the two 19th-century MSS have some plausibility and are not necessarily inferior to the copy of a teenager. Usually, dipping into a commentary and pulling out versions you like isn't a recommendation for an "authentic" text, but in this case (with no authentic sources, no secure attribution, and maybe a transcription from another medium), all sensible options are open. It is a pity in this case, especially because of its popularity, that the main sources are not reproduced on the supplementary disc, particularly since it includes alternative versions of the other Toccata & Fugue in D minor (BWV 538), the *Passacaglia*, the *Capriccio* (BWV 993) and the *Pièce d'Orgue*.

One irritation is the difficulty of hopping between the score, the specific sections in the introduction and the commentary. Title and BWV numbers are not enough for quick checking. If the music was in BWV order (as in Vol. 7), that would be fine. But this volume needs to be numbered 1-14, with alternatives (including those only on the CD) specified by a suffix. It would also be useful if the list of items included the musical incipit, as in the Henle CPE Bach edition reviewed below.

Serious organists should consider buying vol. 4. The situation is less clear with vol. 7. The introduction is certainly worth reading, but there is a limit to significant details of the autograph.⁸ which haven't been noticed before – though if you are buying the set, I expect you'll eventually succumb and fill the gap.

HANDEL & RAMEAU CANTATAS

Handel Mi palpita il cor: Cantata (HWV 132b) for soprano, oboe and basso continuo Green Man Press (Han 16), 2011. 13 pp + 3 parts, £6.90

There are four versions of this cantata, which it might help to have listed, following the numbering of HWV. I haven't shown the extent to which movements are changed apart from indicating voice and scoring.

5. There are two versions: the original NBA in brown covers and the cheaper versions in blue, both from Bärenreiter.

6. Each volume has an introduction in German and English: the critical commentary is in German, but a translation can be downloaded from www.Breitkopf.com (NBA has no translations.)

7. A facsimile of the first page of the Schubring MS is printed in Br at the end of the fugue, and shows some pauses clearly above rests, others ambiguously placed.

8. Bärenreiter BA £55.50

HWV 132a (S, B, bc, in G) is the second version of HWV 106 for A & Bc

1. *Arioso* Mi palpita il cor

Recit Dimmi, o mio cor (HWV 106)

2. *Aria* Mi piagò d'Amor (HWV 106/1)

Recit Ma non te

3. *Aria* Cari laci (HWV 106/2)

HWV 132b (S, oboe, bc, in G)

1. *Arioso* Mi palpita il cor

Recit Tormento e gelosia

2. *Aria* Ho tanti affanni

Recit Clori di te mi lagno

3. *Aria* S'un di m'adora

HWV 132c (A, traverso, bc, in D)

HWV 132d (A, traverso in no.2, oboe in no. 3, bc, in D)

The version Cedric has edited here was once available from Grancino – I don't know if it still is. It seems to have been written in the first decade or so after Handel arrived in London, though no specific occasion is known. This is the version with oboe for soprano. The torment-in-love text is one of those that may be better untranslated, but the singer does need to understand it. Cedric drops a hint towards continuous performance by using two thin bar-lines instead of thick ones between sections; it's built into the music of the tripartite opening arioso which runs into what the table above calls no. 2 (no. 4 in the edition) and keeps the momentum if the following rest & aria are segued. One suggestion: the editorial link back at the end of the B section of *Ho tanti affanni* needs a quaver as in the opening bar. (The Grancino edition by Timothy Roberts jumps up two octaves for a quaver, descending with crotchet B and quaver G.) [HWV 132c is published by The Early Music Company.]

Rameau *Les Amans Trahis: Cantata for tenor, bass, viol & basso continuo* Green Man Press (Ram 3), 1911. 32pp + 3 parts. £10.50.

This is a duet for an infatuated Tircis (soprano) and his friend Damon, who laughs at him, ending with Tircis adopting Damon's scorn in the final duet. I'm puzzled that Tircis, though a male character, is assumed here to be for tenor: the original clef is treble and, when sung by a soprano, there is no need for occasional continuo notes to be placed, sometimes awkwardly, down an octave. The editorial problem is who plays the single-stave bass when there is no separate stave for gamba. Cedric offers a separate part which has the continuo part for some movements, but not for recits and a duet: I'm not particularly advocating the viol playing the recits, but it should be an option. I'm puzzled about page 12 bars 52-60, which Bärenreiter omits; the performers' edition (I don't have the one with introduction and commentary) omits the any editorial information.⁹ It's a substantial piece, with welcome tongue-in-cheek interpretative possibilities.

9. Quick comparison is made harder by the different bar-numbering.

We also received again Jakob Greber's *Fuori di sua capanna*, reviewed in *EMR*107, June 2005, p. 7.

CARBONELLI

Giovanni Stefano Carbonelli *Sonate da camara a violino e violone o cembalo* (1729) Volume 1: *Sonatas 1-6* edited by Michael Talbot Edition HH (HH 280), £35.00 [Vol. 2 *Sonatas 7-12* HH 280, £35.00]

The Carbonelli Sonatas was one of the first King's Music facsimiles, the result of a request by Monica Huggett about 25 years ago, and costs £9.00. A proper scholarly/practical edition has taken longer to arrive than I expected, but here it is, prepared by a distinguished musicologist and editor with a wide experience of music of the period. Details of the composer's life have hitherto been scanty. He was born thirty years before his wedding to Elizabeth Warren (daughter of the organist of St Peter in the Tower) in 1730, having come to England in the latter half of the 1710s. He was leader of the Drury Lane orchestra from 1720-28 and then freelanced. He had also been in the service of the music-loving Duke of Rutland (father of the Marquis of Granby still remembered in pub names). Later, with the Duke's support, he became a successful wine merchant, continued by several generations of his family (can any oenophile inform us whether the current Carbonelli is a descendant?)

The introduction sketches the biographical material to be published as a separate article. His discussion on Carbonelli's notation is of interest, and the edition itself is fine. The textual notes are set out spaciouly and include implications relating to performance practice. I made a point of doing so myself in my OUP *Messiah* edition (precedents were, to my knowledge, few) and I hope that other editors will follow the same course. Talbot exercises his conscience over whether to include a keyboard realisation; the simple argument is that, since there is a cheap facsimile and it is also available on line, those who prefer not to have a superfluous right-hand part and prefer fewer page turns can read the original. As always, HH has produced another excellent example of music that needs to be more accessible in the hands of a fine editor. Perhaps Monica can be persuaded to return to Carbonelli and record him.

EBERLIN & KÜHNEL

Daniel Eberlin, August Kühnel *Seven Partitas for two bass viols or bass viol & basso continuo from The Kassel Tablatures (c1680-1700)* Edited by Richard Carter & Johanna Valencia Oriana Music (OM122), 2012. 19pp + 4 parts

There are six large MS volumes, mostly of tablature for two viols, surviving in Kassel, where they were copied. The MSS are a bit of a mixture, and in some cases the bass

parts seem to have been added to self-sufficient gamba solos. Most of the pieces here are solos with continuo, with a couple of movements by Eberlin which have two gamba parts and an editorial continuo part. The solo part was notated in tablature, the bass sometimes in staff notation, sometimes in both. The editors' sensible compromise is to print the score in staff notation, together with two parts in tablature and two in staff notation. The pieces are short arias and dances, mostly without double-stopping, and no doubt attractive to play.

LIDL DIVERTIMENTI

Andreas Lidl *Eight Divertimenti for Viola da Gamba, Viola & Violoncello or Basso Vol. 1 (Nos 1-4)* Edited by **David J. Rhodes** PRB Productions (CLOHA) viii + 27pp, + parts, \$35.00

This contains the first four of 8 trios by Andreas Lidl, all from Paris Vm⁷ 6301. Vol 2 will have the other two of the set of six, plus two other similar works, editorially numbered 7 & 8. The scoring isn't entirely satisfactory, and the source may not be entirely authoritative. The viola spends a lot of his time on the C string and very little on the A and the unfigured bass doesn't necessarily need a keyboard. So these slightly-flexibly scored pieces (each with three short movements) are useful if the violins are absent.

C.P.E. BACH GAMBA SONATAS

C.P.E. Bach *Gambesonaten Wq 88, 136, 137* edited by **Wolfram Enssli & Ernst-Günter Heinemann...** Henle (HN 990), 2011. 44 pp + 5 parts, €39.00

"Why five parts" is the obvious question. The instruments involved are gamba (with viola alternative) and harpsichord, with the option of a melodic base doubling it for two of the three works; the third has an obbligato keyboard – a few decades later it would probably have been described as "for pianoforte with viola da gamba accompaniment". Each of the instruments has an Urtext part and an "edited" one (in the old-fashioned sense). The Urtext gamba part follows the sources and is notated, as was common then, an octave higher in treble clef for the two duos, but in alto clef for the accompanied sonata. Another part is in alto clef throughout with bowings and fingerings. There are Urtext and edited parts for a viola and a continuo part, which reflects the normal two-stave publication convention by including the gamba part for Wq 136 & 137, but in small print. There is also an independent adaptation for cello (HN 991).

The two sonatas for gamba and bass are Wq 136 in C and 137 in D. The third (Wq 88 in G minor) is headed *Trio No. 24* in the autograph: the parts, once owned by Brahms, have the title *No. 24 G moll Sonata a Cembalo e Viola da Gamba*, with three staves in the score, two for the harpsichord. A string continuo player is not needed in the

trio, so the basso part only includes Wq 136-7; but it would be a pity if a cellist was invited for an evening's playing then was superfluous for one piece: it was quite common a few decades ago for JSB's violin and keyboard sonatas to have cellos playing the bass. The different scorings should be clearer on the cover and in the order in which they appear in the volume (i.e. Wq 136, 137, 88).¹⁰

The two duos each have their most substantial movement (*Allegretto* and *Allegro di molto*) in the middle, preceded by slower movements (*Andante* and *Adagio ma non tanto*) and followed by an *Arioso*. This places the centre of gravity with the middle movement, whereas the trio has the more expected quick – slow – quick pattern (*Allegro moderato*, *Larghetto* and *Allegro assai*). All date from CPE Bach's time in Berlin, where the virtuoso gambist Ludwig Christian Hesse was based.¹¹

HUMMEL VIOLA SONATA

Hummel *Sonate für Klavier und Viola Es-dur Opus 5 Nr. 3...* Edited by **Ernst Herttrich Henle** (HN1029). 35 pp + part, €18.00.

My engagement with Hummel is slight: I've reviewed a few editions and written a couple of programme notes on him, and have a vivid memory of the house in Bratislava in which he lived as a child, with a multi-storey block built over the top of it. But the only work I've heard more than once is the Trumpet Concerto (in E flat or, more recently, E). He was eight when the Hummels moved to Vienna, where his father became musical director at the Theater auf der Wieden and the boy studied and for a time lived with Mozart. Like Mozart, he made a long European tour with his father.

This sonata, dedicated to the Princess Royal of Denmark, was probably composed on his visit there in 1790. It was published in Vienna when he was 20, and quickly reprinted carelessly by André in Offenbach, which was generally followed in editions by later publishers. The sigla of the editorial commentary are confusing. The first edition is called E, but the other editions are all N with a suffix, whereas surely the Artaria reprint of E should have a different siglum from editions derived from André? This is, however, of no great significance to the player. It was certainly worth producing a reliable edition of the sonata. It may not have quite the distinction of what Mozart was writing in 1790, and a contemporary reviewer hinted that it wasn't quite *au fait* with the contemporary style, but adds "nevertheless, the sonatas' lightness and melodic

10. Poor Helm! He laboured for years to produce an up-to-date catalogue far more informative of that by Wotquenne a century previously, but people still use the Wq numbers because they retain the grouping of the works by instrumentation and have consecutive numbers for pieces originally published in a set!

11. For more information on the gamba in Berlin see Michael O'Loughlin *Frederick the Great and his Musicians: the Viola da Gamba Music of the Berlin School* Ashgate, 2008. reviewed in *EMR* 129.

charm should win them many friends."¹² I don't know if modern violists play it, but the repertoire is small enough for this edition to circulate among them. (There's a review of a recording of op. 8 on p. 44.)

A-R CIMAROSA

Cimarosa *L'infedeltà fedele* Edited by Ethan Haimo (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, 85 & 86). A-R Editions, 2012. lxxxiii + 4 facs + 792 pp in 2 vols. \$300.00 + \$300.00

Having complained that A-R publications of operas have sometimes been issued with piano reductions, I'm delighted to see this presented in full score. Part 1 includes an excellent, concise introduction, with most of the prelims occupied by the libretto with an English translation in parallel. It is primarily based on the text as set by the composer, but includes (clearly marked) text that was in the original version but was cut at an early stage. The recitative was composed by Giuseppe Benevento, who also made the subsequent cuts (maybe in consultation with Cimarosa). There are three other MSS, but secondary, though the one sent to Haydn, presumably for performance, had a progeny in that, although a performance of the opera as it stood was not given at Esterháza, its text was set by Haydn as *La fedeltà premiata*,

Domenico Cimarosa (1749-1801) was commissioned to write a new opera in Naples for the Real Teatro del Fondo di Separazione (now the Teatro Mercadante) in 1779. He took advantage of a new theatre to mix the fixed patterns of *opera seria* and *opera buffa* – not a unique experiment, but one that may have influenced Vienna a few years later. The consequence is some musical variety, fitted to a plot that is more plausible than most. I must confess that this review wouldn't have been written yet if I had read (or played) through the score from beginning to end, but whenever I have opened a page, it has impressed.

So how does one go about performing it? The reverse of the title page doesn't mention vocal or orchestral material. I presume that the soloists' parts in 1779 would have been essentially voice + bass, with cues from the highest-sounding part when there were substantial rests. That could easily be produced from the computer file, as can orchestral parts at comparatively small expense. The harpsichord and repetiteur can also use the voice/bc copies, perhaps with a bit of figuring. So the money invested in the score should enable performances not to be enormously expensive. A "performance edition" was produced in the 1990s; if it was performed, there must be parts around, presumably computer-set then. (There's a score at the University of South Carolina Library). A facsimile of the main MS is at <http://www.internetculturale.it/> under *Per l'apertura Cimarosa*, though I haven't managed

to find it (see vol. 2, p.791, note 3).

This is a highly commendable publication: music worth studying, and also worth performing to enlarge our experience of opera around 1780. I heard a performance of another opera at that period at the Berkeley Early Music Festival in 1990: that's just the sort of event that should be putting on a work like this – even the surtitles were imaginative, thanks to Joseph Kerman.

MONTEVERDI CORRECTIONS

In the last issue's editorial, I made the mistake of rewriting a sentence just before we started running off photocopies of the final magazine. That is a recipe for error, and so it turned out. "Up to around down" is an implausible sequence of words in any context, let alone the meaningless few words that followed – in comparison with that, the letter omitted from *whereas* is no problem to solve and a confused and misleading passage. Replace it by:

If I wanted to take along a few Palestrina motets for a sing-through, it was better to choose pieces in high clefs to photocopy and sing them a little lower, since the average singers could manage up to a tone without being aware of the change of pitch – unless they were told! Transposing music in standard clefs usually needed to go up at least a minor third for normal modern compasses, and that degree of change was generally noticed by the singers!

This was a practical and economic solution and has nothing to do with pitches around 1600. The "..." at the end was intended to lead on to another page, but there wasn't space and I decided not to pursue the matter.

In an article on the prologue of *Orfeo* in the same issue, Ilias Chrissochoidis draws attention to the final bar of the text of the Prologue, pointing out that modern editions failed to print accurately the rests after the last note. I was at the head of the list, since I'd omitted the full length of the *Long* (4-mimin) rest – though in mitigation, the omission was declared in a footnote, and not buried at the end of the volume or ignored. It seems appropriate for the ritornello to enter abruptly after the word *s'arresti*, and the long rest seemed irrelevant and perhaps the invention of a tidy typesetter. Hitherto, all bars have had four minims except the final bar of stanzas 1 & 4, which have a semibreve. But stanza 5 (the one we are concerned with) has six minims, the last of which is a rest. The last note of each stanza has a pause, except that the pause for stanza 5 is placed over the *long* rest. It seems odd to have a long rest extended even longer – or does the fermata mean something else? I'll leave my edition unchanged, though add "with fermata on the rest" to my footnote. CB

¹² Yes, the apostrophe is in the right place: it was published as op. 5 with two violin sonatas. The 1818 Peters edition renumbered it op. 19.

DOWLAND IN DUBLIN

David Hill

Dowland in Dublin Michael Slattery tenor, La Nef
ATMA Classique ACD22650 49' 19"

This disc is smashing, as long as you're not a purist (who is?), and I enjoyed it, but there is something very important that I need to take this opportunity to lay to rest: that pesky claim of Dowland being Irish, which is part of the reasoning behind this CD.

There has been a persistent myth of Dowland being of Hibernian origin ever since the publication in 1922 of the article 'Irish Ancestry of Garland, Campion and Purcell'. (*Music and Letters*, 1922, p. 64-65) by W. H. G. Flood, who based most of his thesis upon Dowland's dedication of *From Silent Night* in his fourth published songbook, *A Pilgrim's Solace* of 1612: 'To my loving countryman, Mr. John Forster the younger, merchant of Dublin in Ireland'. (1922 was the year that Edmund Fellowes' modern edition of *A Pilgrim's Solace* first appeared – Flood must have seized upon the idea instantly)

It should not need pointing out that *merchant of Dublin* no more means 'merchant born in Dublin' than *Archbishop of York* means 'Archbishop born in York' – indeed, our current prelate hails from Uganda. In the preface *To the Reader* at the front of *A Pilgrim's Solace*, Dowland uses that very same term as in the dedication: 'Worthy Gentlemen, and my loving Countrymen', – but here he simply cannot have been meaning that he was expecting to sell the book exclusively to Irishmen in Ireland, nor indeed was he likely to have expected to sell it in Ireland at all, given the political climate in 1612, nor his tendency to 'keep his head down' concerning his Catholicism! Clearly Dowland, by his own hand, does not mean 'from the same country' when he uses the word 'countryman'. Although *countryman* could mean, then, as now, 'native of a country', *country* itself usually meant 'district, region or quarter', and the meaning that Dowland was trying to express is probably 'neighbour'. 'Loving countryman' therefore probably means no more than 'good friend and neighbour'. He may even have added this reference to Forster being a merchant in Ireland to avoid confusion with any other John Forsters (still a common English name, spelt as either Foster or Forster) who were living in, or near to him in Fleet Street at the time. Let there be no doubt about it – apart from the coincidence that Dowland was pronounced the same as 'Dolan' (in the 17th century), Dowland's ambiguous dedication is the sole reference anywhere in his known life and works to potential Irishness!

This total lack of any evidence for Dowland's Celtic ancestry (nor even Dowland's several written deceptions

of himself as English), has not stopped eager Irish Dowland-claimants from erecting a wonderful and colourful portrait plaque commemorating him at Dalkey, which they claim as his birthplace – again with no evidence whatsoever!

W.H.G. Flood's 1922 claim for Dowland (not to mention JD's fellow Cockneys, Campion and even Purcell!) being Irish was discredited by Diana Poulton (*Faber* 1972, pp 24-5), and the notion nowadays is considered to be just another example of chauvinistic wishful thinking – rather like the portrait of 'Dowland' that has spread across the internet (Try a Google Image Search). This painting of a midnight-black clad, pointy-bearded, slightly sinister-looking man in a ruff actually depicts none other than Robert Cecil, Elizabeth's spymaster. Dowland enthusiasts demand a portrait, but there isn't one (he simply wasn't posh enough to merit or afford one), so this one fits their bill, because it 'looks like Dowland ought to look!' Unfortunately, Robert Cecil is a very famous and important other person indeed, and there are numerous versions of this painting. So, shame on the folks at Stainer and Bell for knowingly continuing to use Robert Cecil's mugshot and pretending it's Dowland on their website – despite having been very politely informed by a helpful stirrer some time ago that it's not him,

No-one can surely have any problem with Dowland being Irish or any nationality – he, too, could have been Ugandan for all it matters, or that I care, but he really wasn't Irish, and after 90 years of unquestioning dragging-out of Flood's silliness, we really should expect to see some actual evidence for such claims, not just that one ambiguous dedication quoted yet again! We're Early Musicians – evidence is what we do – or should be doing.

Back to the CD.

Michael Slattery is a fine young American tenor, and sings his 'folked-up' versions of the Dowland songs beautifully. La Nef's director Sylvain Bergeron says: 'We hope that the music on this CD, midway between folk songs and art songs, charms you as much as it does us', and it does. These arrangements, as played by the Montreal-based *La Nef*, are more 'new-age Irish/Celtic' than 'Ceilidh band', sadly, for I had hoped for a rollicking, Guinness pub evening of imaginative riffs and jams on Dowland's tunes, bodhrans, Uilleann pipes and fiddles to the fore; but in fact, they never let themselves go the full Irish, and these re-workings often sound remarkably straight and restrained. Nevertheless, good harmless fun, and I really enjoyed this. Michael Slattery is certainly someone to watch in the future.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett

FERDINAND III

Andrew H. Weaver *Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III Representing the Counter-Reformation Monarch at the End of the Thirty Years' War* Ashgate, 2012 xxi + 325 pp, £60.00 ISBN 978 1 4094 2119 1

Despite such seminal recent offerings as Steven Saunders' *Cross, Sword and Lyre*¹ our picture of church music in the Germanic lands during and after the Thirty Years' War remains seriously skewed by the Lutheran bias of the pioneering German musicologists. Large-scale Praetorian church music did indeed suffer a disastrous set-back in the Lutheran regions, but in counter-reformation Austria a vibrant tradition of Latin church music of all kinds was maintained, thanks to the enlightened (if self-serving) patronage of Ferdinand II and his son Ferdinand III.

Andrew H. Weaver's lucid, jargon-free and admirably inter-disciplinary study places the much-maligned younger Ferdinand in a new light. From a traditional viewpoint, his reign (1637-57) saw an inexorable decline from early military triumphs to the humiliation of the 1648 Peace of Westphalia and its cash-stripped aftermath. This treaty ended the war, leaving the empire, in the view of one historian, reduced to "a miserable, meaningless existence" with "no history at all" after the mid-century, Napoleon eventually supplying the *coup de grâce* in 1806. But such received opinion has been set on its head by Joachim Whaley's magisterial *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*,² which credits the 1648 Ferdinand-brokered treaty with creating a long-lived, stable framework within which the multifarious self-governing units that made up the empire could maintain their independence, judicial rights and religious toleration.

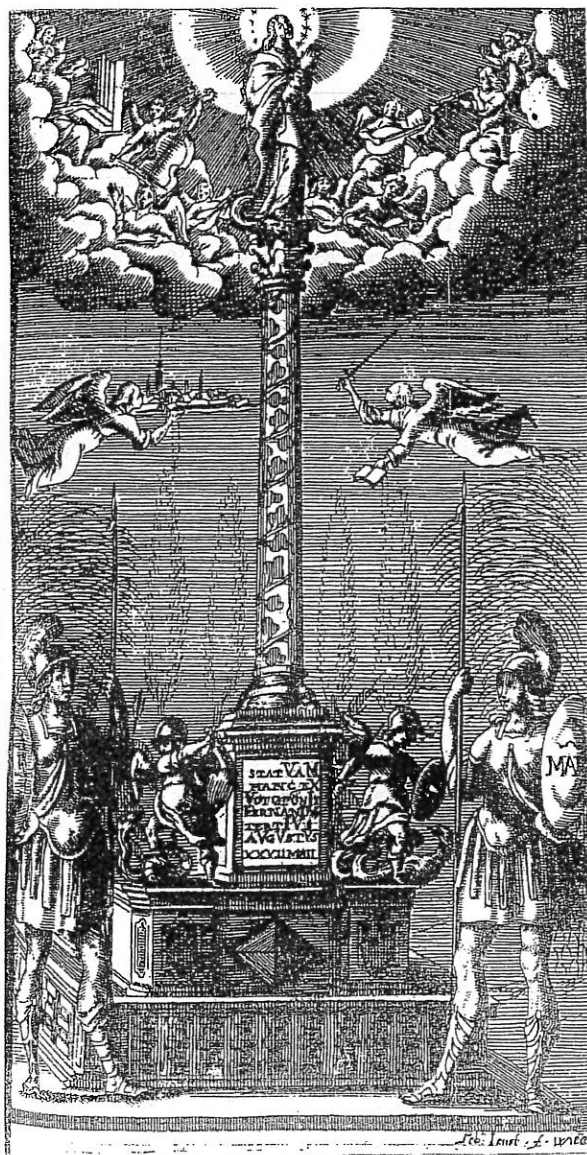
Weaver performs a comparable rescue job on Ferdinand the man: a supposed failure,³ wedged uncomfortably between his father, the all-conquering restorer of Catholic authority, and his successor, Leopold I, who formed the only credible bulwark against the ambitions of Louis XIV and eventually disposed of the threat to Christian Europe with his victory at the 1683 Siege of Vienna. The Ferdinand who emerges from these pages is a highly cultivated, culturally and politically astute ruler who also made the best of the wretched hand that Fate dealt him. He was a

1. Stephen Saunders *Cross, Sword and Lyre: sacred music at the imperial court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg (1619-1637)* Oxford UP 1995.

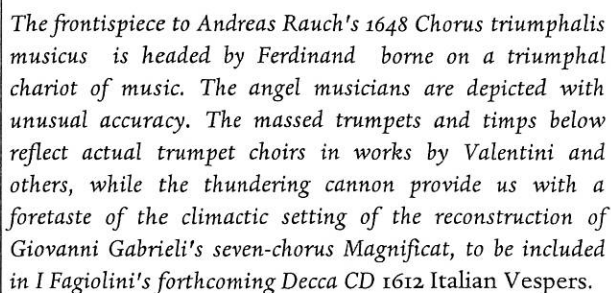
2. Oxford UP, 2012. 2 vols.

3. Weaver points out that the first book-length biography of Ferdinand was published as late as 2008!

THE MARIENSÄULE



The original stone Mariensäule erected by Ferdinand III in the Vienna Platz am Hof in 1647, from an engraving of 1650. As with our Nelson's Column, the ultimate inspiration was the accumulation of columns with statues of victorious generals in ancient Rome. Above stands the Virgin, without child, crowned by 12 stars, treading down the serpent Satan; below four armed Angels vanquish dragons representing heresy. Leopold I moved the column to Wernstein am Inn and replaced it by a bronze version.



This music was a potent weapon in the struggle to re-Catholicise Austria, in which Protestant (and therefore potentially rebellious) undercurrents had persisted long after the mass expulsions of Lutherans by Ferdinand II in 1527/8. And Catholic piety was central to Ferdinand's own

Weaver ties this in with eight prints of Latin church music issued with imperial support by the most considerable Austrian composer to emerge from his initially heresy-busting study, the Roman-born Giovanni Felice Sances.⁴ Marian motets, typically with an Immaculata slant, are carefully placed in these publications to bolster the rejigged *Pietas Austriaca* and, in turn, the image of the Immaculate Virgin's initially heresy-bursting, humble, peace-loving devotee. Fascinatingly, Weaver associates Ferdinand with two settings of a text that was seen as foreshadowing the Immaculate Conception, *Ab aeterno ordinata sum*.⁵ Both for bass, these were in Sances's *Motetti a Voce Sola* (1638) and Monteverdi's *Selva morale* (1641), dedicated to Ferdinand. Weaver similarly links the *Pianto della Madonna* which concludes the *Selva morale* with a work having a different text but the same title that had concluded Sances's *Motetti* of 1638. Weaver argues that in these publications, the seemingly conventional Marian settings were actually part of a contrived promotion of a favoured doctrine that had in Austria become associated with loyalty to both counter-reformation Catholicism and the Habsburg crown. The imperial image was more directly fostered in the lavish court operas of the early years of Ferdinand's reign, and in the Latin oratories and Jesuit school dramas that largely replaced them, presenting a raft of biblical, historical and mythological heroes who exemplified the public virtues the emperor at different periods espoused.

4. Weaver has edited Giovanni Felice Sances, *Motetti a 2, 3, 4, e cinque voci* (1642), (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era* 148). A-R Editions, 2008) and *Motets by Emperor Ferdinand III and Other Musicians from the Imperial Court*, (Collegium Musicum: Yale University) A-R Editions, forthcoming.

5. Proverbs 8, v. 23. Sances' text is not immediately apparent, since his setting begins at verse 22: *Dominus possedit me.*

listeners who ranged from illiterate peasants to hypersophisticated courtiers – something I do not recall having encountered in print. I am intrigued, too, by a Ferdinand-commissioned print of 1648 which exemplifies the religious freedom that he maintained outside the Austrian-Bohemian homeland, and which will catch the attention of lovers of Germani polychorality: the *Currus triumphalis musici* of the former court composer Andreas Rauch, a Lutheran who had lived in Hungary since Ferdinand II's expulsions. It comprises 13 large-scale ceremonial motets, one for each of the Habsburg emperors.

Space prohibits a fuller account of a book that will quickly establish itself as essential reading for anyone concerned with 17th-century Austria. Part of the ongoing Ashgate series *Catholic Christendom 1300-1700*, it is refreshingly free from any hint of denominational bias. Editing appears to be immaculate, the index is a model, footnotes and illustrations (graphic and musical) are copious and clear, there is an Appendix of dedicatory prefaces with translations, and a formidable bibliography. Altogether a delight, this book should appeal not only to specialists but to everyone with an interest in Catholic church music of the period.

Hugh Keyte

EARLY ITALIAN CHANT

John Boe *Chant and Notation in South Italy and Rome before 1300* Ashgate Variorum, 2011. xviii + 420pp, £100.00

I may have requested this under false pretences, since the email from Ashgate asking if I wanted a copy mentioned Boe's work in conjunction with Alejandro Planchart. Having spent much of several days with him in Berkeley in June 2010, I unthinkingly assumed that he had some connection with this collection of Boe's journal articles – after all, I've reviewed enough of this series to know how the format works. However, although I've only a passing interest in south Italian early chant, I was impressed by Thomas Forrest Kelly's *The Beneventan Chant* – Boe's review of it is Essay is Item X in this volume – and, irrelevant to this subject, invariably enjoy his essays in *Early Music America*. Items I & II relate to Kelly's work.

Another area of interest to him is the Ordinary of the Mass. I can see why scholars devote more attention to the more sophisticated propers, but it is the ordinary that is likely to be more deeply in any singer's mind. The *Pater noster* seems to have been particularly neglected but receives attention here. The book allows entry into a series of specialist topics relating to chant earlier and/or different from that which emerged as the standard western European musical language. Until around 1000, there was no specific pitch notation, so much of the evidence involves a series of hypotheses, in particular how good were people's memories and how much one can rely on later notation that gives pitches. It's an area that needs logic and imagination. This book is concerned with the

nitty-gritty, the study of very specific examples – the opposite of the grand theory of James McKinnon, which joined together so many ideas, but not, alas, enough to stand.

CB



WISDOM WITH A LIGHT TOUCH

Forged Notes: Tricks of the trade in early music performance and promotion. Jeremy Barlow with illustrations by Kathryn Lamb Forged Notes Press, 2012. 52pp, £5.99 ISBN 978 0 9571841 0 7

The 24 two-page, 500-word articles here cover, with a humour that is based on knowledge and experience, a variety of early-music shibboleths and fads. They are based on short articles in *Early Music Today* 2002-2006, updated a bit. Here are a pair of opening & closing sentences:

8 The word 'extemporisation' makes the early music world nervous... 'I have to know just how many notes my audiences will stand for' (quoting Liberace)

9, *Playing for Renaissance dance is not every musician's idea of fun... the dancing we accompany too often lacks one ingredient essential to authentic re-creation: sex*."

Barlow got onto the jobs-for-theoribist scam quite early: read 16: "Inaudible Theorbos". The current fashion keeps theoribists off the streets, but the phrase "silly pluckers" is thoroughly appropriate for its automatic presence in the late-baroque operatic pit. I'm sympathetic, too, to his suspicion of the manners of performing renaissance polyphony: I like the quote of an (admittedly hostile) puritan's comment: "choristers bellow out the tenor, as if it were oxen; bark a counterpoint, as if it were a kennel of dogs; roar out a treble, as if it were a sort of bulls; and grunt out a bass, as it were a number of hogs." The way he mentions parts suggests that, despite exaggeration, Prynne knew what he was talking about! The book is full of humour and wisdom.

CB

GUSTAV LEONHARDT: A TRIBUTE FROM FRIENDS

Elizabeth Wallfisch

Many of us have wept, with sadness not simply personal, artistic or professional, but for the wider world of those who never knew Gustav Leonhardt, and now never will...

Gustav Leonhardt was unique. He has been called 'the Gentleman of the profession'. This was his outward manner, an aristocratic bearing, appearing austere, sometimes severe, courteous always, kind often, funny too. To us he was a magician, a true child at heart- his enjoyment of music, childlike and pure and total, and his demands on the musician absolute and passionate. A brilliance and clarity of mind informed his every moment.

Many of us had the privilege to work with 'Mr' Leonhardt over a period of about 20 years. He was a regular guest with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Bach Vereniging in Holland, and he was my guest with Wallfisch Band only 2 years ago, when he was already far from well.

One could easily misunderstand his miniaturist and mannered approach to music making. It was all very intimate, and his sole passion and desire was to speak the musical text always clearly, and with the right colour and affect. We, some of us at least, went through a process of playing smaller and increasingly carefully for the first couple of days of rehearsals – he was scary, his sharp eyes and ears missed nothing... authoritative, never raised his voice, but he certainly raised his eyebrows, and had a tiny gesture with his mouth which meant he wasn't pleased with what he heard. He was patient and quietly spoken, and had really very few 'wishes', but these covered every musical, and textual eventuality.

And then, somehow it all fell into place, and somehow we 'got' it! But beware, a moment of inattention and he was on it like a shot. I loved that. He was the finest, sternest, most intense, most informative, passionate teacher we could have had. He never stinted. He was tireless.

Leonhardt's command of English was superb, far better than most native speakers, wonderfully old fashioned, with some disarming mistakes! Those were the moments when you would see many heads drop behind the music stands, to the score, pencil in hand, to write this little pearl in the music. Those parts are now treasure troves of our rehearsals. His mastery of description was colourful and evocative, clearly expressing his intention. He would ask for 'slices', use words such as 'brisk', 'rough' even. He said more than once 'heart-rendering!' 'Witty' was a favourite. He would enthuse about 'the pleasure of the bar line.' His

demands for a fine grammar in the music were simple, but all encompassing. 'Good beats' 'bad beats', the strong followed by the weak, and the phrasing emerged perfectly, if we achieved this in our execution.

'Never be enthusiastic' was another! For this, we understood 'forgetful', playing without attention, with a laziness he just never could abide. He certainly didn't mean enthusiastic in the way we normally use the word. And he was 'merciless' with us, in the service of the music.

To see him work with choirs was an illumination in attention to the text. He would ask, often vehemently, 'Speak, don't sing'-which is very hard for trained singers to achieve. He was right. And it was not about merely the words, but how each was articulated and the sense brought forward. Again any laziness was sharply and immediately noticed and corrected. A compliment was gold: a moment of enjoyment on his face- and the sun came out for us all.

If one were lucky enough to play, or sing, as soloist with him directing, he was completely allowing, encouraging, and courteous. He hardly ever commented, but to be sure, he was in charge! He showed his pleasure when a singer or player was honest, full of character, genuine and passionate.

Felix Warnock recalls:

'OAE was recording Bach Cantatas with Leonhardt and had chosen for the sessions a soprano he didn't know. We did a concert just before Christmas and the recording was to be between Christmas and New Year. Gustav wrote me a handwritten letter just before Christmas to say that he couldn't work with this soprano and she would need to be replaced. I wrote back saying this was a pretty tall order in the few days available but would he please let me know who his favourite sopranos were and I would have a go. He wrote back saying his favourite soprano was Mrs Thatcher "but probably not in this repertoire".'

'Gustav had a disarming habit of singing while directing; as Annette Isserlis so beautifully puts it, it sounded like a gentle "pfui-pfui-pfui" at 'bat' pitch. With this was his physically awkward, but expressive, and sharp way of 'conducting'. He once described conducting as 'paid aerobics'!

James Bowman coined 'Bionic Woman' as a wonderful admiring title for him, born out of very long, intense and wonderful sessions recording Purcell Odes, when Gustav just never seemed to get tired, nor impatient.

In 1972, Leonhardt invited me to record the 'Ode on the death of Henry Purcell' with him in Amsterdam. The other artists were Rene Jacobs and Anna Bylsma. The recording venue was a church in the centre of Amsterdam, which happened to be next door to a well-known club, called the DOK. Inevitably, the disco music was pretty deafening and it was audible in the church. The recording engineers were furious, but Leonhardt didn't seem at all put out; he calmly suggested that we reschedule our sessions for the morning and afternoon, when calm reigned. But I shall always remember him, seated at the harpsichord, completely unfazed by the alien sounds coming through the wall. His only comment was that it all seemed to be in the same key.

Annette Isserlis also recalls playing a very long Bach cantata in Paris, featuring trumpets and chorus only at the very beginning and the very end. "The last chorus started with a trumpet fanfare, and Gustav had endlessly rehearsed the trumpets to go "Paaaaarp, parp-parp parp, parp, Paaaaarp." In the event, the trumpets were so thrilled that they couldn't be stopped in performance (or so they thought) that they triumphantly reverted to PAAARP PARP-PARP PARP, PARP, PAAARP. It was their bad luck that Paul Tindall, a diminutive and bewhiskered tenor, had leapt to his feet too briskly, and promptly passed out. The performance ground temporarily to a halt as he was carted out, feet first, with his eyeballs upwards. In due course order was restored, and we were ready to commence the last chorus once again. Gustav already had his arms raised, but just before starting, looked over piercingly at the trumpets and, with his finger to his lips stage-whispered "Paaarp, parp-parp parp, parp, Paaarp". Our principal trumpet was so apoplectic with rage that he splatted it uncontrollably. In the bar afterwards, he was heard expostulating: "I mean, for all WE knew, that little bloke might have DIED! And all "He" could do was go on about phrasing!!!"

Leonhardt was very professional and precise- he would always come up to me or who ever was leading the orchestra and have a quiet word, organizing the orchestral bows, and curtain calls, with precision, and a delicious kind of humour as if whatever he planned he could, on a whim, sabotage! He disliked intensely the 'liberal' wish for 'open rehearsals' saying 'it was like inviting one's guests down to the kitchen, when preparing a meal'.

In the OAE in those halcyon days of unlimited- or so it seemed- recording, we had the great fortune to record all the CPE Bach Symphonies for strings, and with wind with Gustav Leonhardt for Virgin Records at Abbey Road. It was a joyous and intense week, of very hard work, with Leonhardt unveiling the mysteries of the mannered styles of Carl Philip. When the final take was done, he put his arms down in that characteristic way of his, clasping them and bringing them down in thanks to us, with a gentle smile on his face, looking at us all, exhausted players. After

a moment he spoke: 'Well, yes – we are none of us Virgins any more'.

Sue Sheppard, cellist, writes,

'There are so many memories! I clearly remember the first concert I did, playing continuo in Bach cantatas. I was quite nervous because, believing him to be an utterly superior being, far above me intellectually, I thought I wouldn't be able even to understand his musical ideas, let alone be up to the task of playing in a way that would be satisfactory to him. But I was quite wrong. He expressed himself so clearly, in his faultless English, and in every concert I did with him, he made me feel enabled to play freely while hugely enjoying the importance he gave to the bass line.'

EW: Yes, I think many of us felt this way about working with him – the initial 'terror', and the subsequent enlightenment and freedom. I remember him once saying with his customary twinkle of humour, when Sue was practising something energetically, and with great attention, 'Susie is busy'.

Sue: I loved his totally unlikely passion for fast cars and James Bond films. Giving him a lift to a rehearsal one day we had only progressed a few yards down the road when he said in measured tones, 'My brother, who knows a lot about cars, says you should always put in the choke as soon as possible'. I did so. When I was about to buy a 1966 classic Volvo I showed him a photo of it. He looked at it and said, 'They say Volvos are very good in a crash'.

EW: On the subject of the early James Bond movies with Sean Connery, when we were discussing their merits, he said: 'Sean Connery was so bad, he was magnificent'.

Alison Bury, violinist:

'What a sad thing - it feels like the end of an era. There are so many memories of dear Leonhardt. Dick [her husband] was talking to him once and he told him that after a tour to East Germany in the days before the wall came down, he was so depressed by the uniform drabness and meanness of everything that when he got back to the West he said he 'wanted to embrace the first BMW' he saw. I always relished his command of the English language, which he spoke more beautifully and precisely than most native English speakers, using words like 'ditties'.'

John Hopkins, Conductor, and Director of the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne Australia in the 1980's writes:

'Leonhardt was booked to give a lecture/demonstration and I asked him if there was anything he needed. He said he would like me to copy 12 bars of Frescobaldi for every person attending. I wondered what he was going to do with these bars but later heard him speak and demonstrate for over 2 hours about the various possibilities and

significant differences that various approaches made. It was fascinating and the next evening we were hearing him putting it all into practice in a harpsichord recital during which the music appeared to be singing.

When I asked him how one should approach early music with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, playing on modern instruments, he told me that it was not necessary to have baroque instruments and to play at A=415. He felt the important thing was to have the 'concept of style'. He certainly showed this very convincingly in all he did. I am so grateful for all he gave us.'

Rosanne Hunt, cellist from Australia, lived with the Leonhardts for a period. She recalls:

'In the mid 1980's I lived, for 18 months, in the attic of Leonhardt's Amsterdam house, keeping an eye on things when he and Marie were away and so on. They were very generous, giving me score-copying and gardening work (planting tulip bulbs and replacing little privet plants in their ornamental garden). One night they asked me down for dinner, and after a couple of glasses of wine (I was not in the habit of drinking at the time) I remember wobbling a bit as I got up to go back to the attic, at which Mr Leonhardt quietly suggested (with a slight smile) "You could take the lift", one thing the house certainly didn't have!

It seemed incongruous that he liked chocolate "hagelslag" (sprinkles) on his breakfast bread, and that he loved to drive very fast. I remember once him telling me how quickly he had managed to drive to their holiday house in Italy. He would sometimes ask if I would like to go for a spin, but his daughter Saskia had told me never to accept!'

Paul Nicholson, harpsichordist, Vicar of Hampstead. Archdeaconry-

'Leonhardt's death has caused me to reach for some of his solo records again. I first heard him live as an undergraduate at York, when he played the music department's 'jangle box' of a concert harpsichord, and somehow made even *that* instrument smile. He was realistic, though, about the ability of the harpsichord to project – even with period instruments – saying, with immaculate English, "the harpsichord concerto is a Lost Cause"! His unique and rigorously disciplined musical expression – though it could be frustrating to individual players and singers – led to very special results when he directed orchestras and choirs, as it did to his keyboard performances. It was a particular privilege to play continuo when he directed music by Rameau, which I remember him describing with relish, during a rehearsal break, as "like a rare perfume..."'

One could think Leonhardt was an austere man, but he was not. It was something on the surface, even dare I say, an affectation. He loved a good joke and cautionary verses, and told them with a wicked cheeky smile. His aperitif of choice was neat Campari. He embodied true humility.

He loved good food and wine, friends and good conversation. Great art, porcelain, Meissen work, were a passion, and his knowledge inexhaustible.

And Bach of course.

When asked to describe what it was that Bach did with words- the miracle of how he did it, Leonhardt had no answer except to say, 'Well, that is Bach', with a gentle shrug, and slightly raised hands.

I would like to think he had soft spot in his heart for us, and in some ways treasured his association with the English players and singers (an Australian or two thrown in). We certainly treasured our association with him, and we will never forget him.

I am grateful for the above, making up for my unsatisfactory comments in our last issue. The following letter seems to belong here as well

Dear Clifford

I think you are incorrect in stating, in your appraisal of Gustav Leonhardt, that "English music was mostly neglected": he played it from the beginning of his career (inspired by Alfred Deller) to the end and his last two CDs, from Alpha 2003/4, contained music by Byrd, Bull, Gibbons and Strogers. His very last recital (Paris, 12 December 2011) included Purcell's Suite in D and two grounds.

His 1966 recording *Englische Virginalmusik um 1600* on Skowronek copies of a Flemish virginals and harpsichord was a landmark: up until then the only available recordings of this repertoire were by Thurston Dart on a huge multi-pedalled Goff.

When Brian Robins asked him in an interview for *Goldberg* if he had always been interested in this repertoire, Leonhardt replied: "Always, always! It's a marvellous literature. In the last decades of the 16th century the harpsichord began to be taken as a serious instrument in England, which had not happened anywhere else, even in Italy. So the English were the first, writing brilliant, clever, difficult music... often large-scale pieces of the highest quality." In a conversation after the marvellous recital he gave for the British Clavichord Society in 2009, Leonhardt told me that Byrd was one of the five greatest composers of all.

Garry Broughton

LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

ACTÉON & AENEAS

The always impressive Early Opera Company presented an inspired pairing of Charpentier's *Actéon* with Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at the Wigmore Hall (12 Jan). Inspired, not only for the textual links between them (Purcell's "Scene: The Grove", where Aeneas appears with his "bending spear", occurs in the same place as the unfortunate Actéon came across Diana and was consequently transformed into a stag and torn to shreds by his own hunting dogs), but also for the musical contrasts between the French and English style and the fact that both works were composed around the same time. In Charpentier's version of the ancient myth, the Goddess Juno takes responsibility for Actéon's demise with Diana merely "giving her support" to Juno's "jealous rage". However fascinating the Charpentier work was, with its series of mini-tableaux, I am glad that it came first, thereby letting Purcell's genius shine through. That said, Christian Curnyn's elegant direction exposed a real empathy with Charpentier's music in his exploration of the sensitivity and the drama of the text. Ed Lyon reflected the changing fortunes of Actéon to perfection, notably in the transformation scene, where Charpentier musically reflects the decline of Actéon's speech into "a garbled sound". After a brief instrumental interlude from Kati Debretzeni and Huw Daniel, violins, and Reiko Ichise, gamba, the 10 strong chorus, from which the soloists were drawn, followed with their lament before Juno, in the unseen guise of Hilary Summers (singing from the rear gallery) gleefully announced the devouring of Actéon. Summers beautifully over-acted the role of Purcell's Sorceress while Marcus Farnsworth portrayed Aeneas as the confused and ultimately controlled figure that a non-feminist reading of the work suggests. Susan Bickley stood in at short notice for Anna Stéphany as an expressive Dido while Claire Booth was a rather jovial Belinda. Elizabeth Weisberg and Clara Hendrick were the witches, with similar cameo roles in the Charpentier.

GABRIELI @ QEH

'Brilliant music, wrong venue' could sum up the concert given by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (14 players with two singers) on 13 January. Music by Gabrieli (in his 400th anniversary year), Monteverdi, Grandi *et al*, was performed under the heading of "The Glory of Venice" at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. St Mark's it isn't! Much of the music demanded a more resonant acoustic and a far more effective aural division of the antiphonal vocal and instrumental choruses. That said, the venue did allow the chance to hear the more intimate details of the

musical text, something that would be missed in the wash of sound that most, apart from the Doge, would have experienced in St Mark's. The lack of acoustic also, unfortunately, exposed the skills of the players rather unfortunately. Perhaps for this reason, the highlights for me were the smaller scale works, notably those sung by Julia Doyle, often with just lute and/or organ accompaniment. She is a singer I have always admired, but she was on particularly impressive form on this occasion, bringing an innate musicality to her vocal lines. Her opening solo, Grandi's *Salve Regina, Mater misericordia* was exquisite, particularly her reading of the concluding *O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria* which sent shivers down my spine. Her use of ornaments was exemplary, as was her ability to shape a musical line, to sing with delicacy and finesse and to blend her voice with the accompanying instruments. Daniel Auchincloss was the other singer, his high, almost *haute contre* tenor adding a luminous gloss to the texture. Robert Howarth directed and provided effective organ accompaniments. Elizabeth Kenny was in her usual innovative form on continuo lute, her flourishes always being in the best possible taste.

GABRIELIS' SEASONS

Not content with conducting his Gabrieli Consort & Players (in Haydn's *The Seasons*, Barbican, 14 Jan), Paul McCreesh also found time to prepare a new English translation, ironing out the quirks of the original English version (a curious back translation of a German translation of the original English poem) and re-working the text and some of the recitative lines to make more musical sense. This is not the place to comment on the detail of McCreesh's efforts, and the musical quality of the performance was so high that there is no need to resort to comments on the translation. McCreesh set a rather unusual format for the orchestra and singers, grouping the violins close to the centre of the front stage, and banking up the remaining players on seven rows above them in a deep, narrow and tight formation. This probably worked well for those in the centre of the wide Barbican Hall, but left those towards the side in a slightly less fortunate position. It would have worked better in the Queen Elizabeth or Royal Festival Halls, with their deep rather than wide plan. The three soloists were two steps up and to the left. They were Christiane Karg (soprano, Hannah), Allan Clayton (tenor, Lucas) and Christopher Purves (bass, Simon), who set the diction stakes high with his opening "drrrrreadful groans and howling". Allan Clayton eschewed his usual rather boyish looks for a Moses impersonation, I guess for a concurrent opera gig, his light tenor contrasting well with Christopher Purves's more

powerful bass. Christiane Karg, a singer I have not come across before, was a most impressive soprano, with a beautifully clean tone and impeccable intonation that helped me forgive her habit of occasionally lifting herself onto a note. Paul McCreesh managed to stop the work becoming too bucolic, sanctimonious or just plain silly (a reflection, I admit, of my normal response to this piece), and found time to maintain his Norringtonesque habit of peering round to check if the audience was still there.¹ There was some spectacular playing from the horns, notably in the chorus: "Hark, hear the sounds of the chase", which also featured some of the finest choral singing. I liked the occasionally little moments of humour, one of the best being the lofty Allan Clayton peering down at the diminutive Christiane Karg as he sang of the "pretty maidens, big and small". The Gabrieli will shortly be recording *The Seasons* – something to look forward to.

JOSEFA DUŠEK

An evening with the Dušeks was the sub-plot of the concert given by the Classical Opera Company (Wigmore Hall, 30 Jan), with three Mozart vocal works written for, or subsequently sung by, the Czech soprano Josefa Dušek, the wife of the Czech composer, Franz Xaver Dušek. The Dušeks' first meeting with Mozart resulted in the Concert Aria, *Ah, lo prevedi ... Ah, t'invola agl'occhi miei* (K272), with Andromeda bemoaning what she assumes is the death of Perseus. The year after he composed the piece, Mozart sent a copy to his latest *amour*, Aloysia Weber with the guidance that she should "watch the expression marks... think carefully about the meaning of the words... [and] put yourself... into Andromeda's situation and position... and imagine that you really are that very person". Soprano Sarah-Jane Brandon followed this advice well, although the oboe in the lovely concluding cavatina was rather too powerful, all but drowning out her voice. A decade after their first meeting, Mozart completed *Le nozze di Figaro*. Although Josefa Dušek, by now specialising exclusively in concert work, did not sing in the opera, she did sing the Act 3 Contessa Almaviva aria *E Susanna... Dove sono* in a concert with Mozart in Dresden. Again the oboe featured, a little less prominently on this occasion. The third of the vocal works was the concert aria *Bella mia fiamma ... Resta, o cara* (K528), written while Mozart was staying with the Dušeks in Prague after the first performance of *Don Giovanni* (written, in part, at their villa). The story goes that Josefa locked Mozart in a garden pavilion until he agreed to write this piece. Mozart's response was to state that if Josefa could not sight-read the work correctly, he would not give it to her, the twisting harmonic line of *Quest'affanno, questo passo* apparently being the key test of Josefa's vocal skills. Both Josefa and Sarah-Jane Brandon achieved this with aplomb, the latter's warm chest tone adding to the restrained

lament of the first section. Without reverting to acting out the scene, I could have done with more recognition from Sarah-Jane that the aria addresses three separate people.

Leopold Koželuh was a pupil of Franz Xaver Dušek in Prague and was invited to replace Mozart as he fled from Salzburg; but he refused, perhaps sensibly, given Mozart's feelings about the city. He eventually became court composer to the Emperor Franz II in Vienna and has since sunk into almost complete obscurity. His 1787 Symphony in G, the opening work in this concert, is a higgledy-piggledy collection of random ideas put together in a rather formulaic manner. The central *Adagio* redeemed things somewhat, starting as a song without words before a Rossini-like crescendo. The evening finished on more familiar territory with Mozart's 40th symphony, the whole directed by Ian Page in his usual sensitive form. The concert was broadcast live on Radio 3, so you may have had the chance to form your own view.

VENICE BY NIGHT

Adrian Chandler returned to the Cadogan Hall (2 Feb) with his group La Serenissima for another of their explorations of the music of Vivaldi, this time with friends including Pollaro, Albinoni, Veracini, Lotti and Porta. The works were grouped to reflect a tour around "Venice by Night", starting with the arrival by boat and an anonymous "I've got a bigger gondola than you" ditty. Before the applause for that had died down (why do directors do that?), Chandler set his band off into Pollaro's Sinfonia to *La Vendetta d'amore*, the title perhaps suggesting that the "who has got the biggest one" debate had got rather out of hand. Things settled somewhat with 'Music for Compline', although Veracini's *Fuga, o capriccio con quattro soggetti* seemed a little quirky for such an occasion. The quirkiness was augmented by Chandler's pre-interval sales pitch. Soprano Mhairi Lawson's exaggerated facial expressions and gestures meant that Lotti's motet *Alma ride exulta mortalis* came over as more as an operetta than a work for compline. Visits to the *Ospedale della Pietà* and the opera house followed. The key instrumental soloists of the evening were Simon Munday, trumpet, and, notably, Peter Whelan, bassoon, in Vivaldi's virtuosic bassoon concerto, RV477.

SCHOLL 156 & 169

Andreas Scholl can walk on water as far as most early music enthusiasts are concerned, and he demonstrated just why during his performance of Bach cantatas at the Barbican (3 Feb). Accompanied by the Kammerorchester Basel, he sang just two works, but both were substantial in length and in emotional and musical content. I am not sure if it was the enthusiasm of a knowledgeable audience or a bit of a *faux pas* (for those that care about such things) from newcomers to classical music concerts, but his opening aria (the first of five movements) got a round of applause.

1. My interpretation of Norrington's behaviour is rather that he is so excited by the orchestra's playing that he can't resist sharing his delight. I'm not so aware of McCreesh's gestures with large orchestras. CB

Actually, if any one movement of Cantata BWV82 *Ich habe genug* deserved applause it was the central lullaby, *Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen*, with the visually communicative and vocally expressive Scholl avoiding the temptation to wring any overt sentimentality from the Pietist text, his gentle voice working closely with the accompanying instruments, notably the violin of Julia Schröder. The first and last movements, and the preceding Sinfonia from Cantata BWV 156, both featured an excellent, but unnamed, oboe soloist whom I assume was Kerstin Kramp. The Sinfonia was rather spoilt by some competitive continuo playing as the theorbo² and organ player vied for melodic supremacy – something, I suggest, best left to Bach's own choice of melodic instruments. Another moment of obtrusive continuo playing came at the end of the recit *Mein Gott*, with a prominent theorbo interfering with Scholl's delightfully placed cadence. Having heard the continuo keyboard player in action, I was a bit wary of how he might perform Bach's concerto BWV 1056 at the start of the second half. Perhaps predictably, he made rather too much of it, coming over all Jacques Loussier in the *Largo* and carrying his cadenza well into the Classical period. The same player fared rather better in the final work, the extended Cantata BWV 169 *Gott soll allein mein Herze haben*, with its prominent organ solos (later turned into a harpsichord concerto) in the opening Sinfonia and first aria. For some reason, this work seemed to invigorate everybody on stage, the instrumental forces lifting themselves from the earlier rather pedestrian accompanying role. Not having any other singers around, the final chorale was sung by the band – not exactly up to Scholl standards! It is not just the sheer unearthly elegance and beauty of Scholl's voice that reaches the parts that others do not reach, but his ability to communicate a real depth of musical thought.

SOUTHAMPTON OLYMPICS

I couldn't get to the London performance of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's contribution to the year of the London Olympics ("An Olympic Thread") so went to an earlier round at Southampton University's Turner Sims. For most *EMR* readers, the key features of the concert were works by Telemann reflecting many nations (the Overture *Les Nations*) and music by Handel and Locatelli based on Classical Greek themes, all rather loosely linked to the Olympics theme. Inspirationally led by Matthew Truscott, the OAE opened with *Les Nations*, pushing the contrasts between the four depicted cultures without resorting to pastiche. One particular feature was their collective ability to play quietly, notably at the end of the *Menuet*. Similarly impressive direction came in Locatelli's concerto *Il pianto d'Arianna*, Truscott's violin taking on the role of soprano solo in this cantata in all but name. I was impressed by soprano Roberta Invernizzi

when I heard her singing Vivaldi in the Barbican in 2008, but her performance in Southampton has put her, in my opinion, amongst the finest sopranos around. Her beautifully assured, expressive, colourful, agile and flexible voice, displaying just a hint of dark-hued mezzo timbre, was the ideal vehicle for Handel's Italian cantatas *Figlio d'alte speranze* and *Il delirio amoroso* (1706/7), the latter work also demonstrating her excellent use of ornament. These two works included prominent instrumental contributions from Matthew Truscott and Margaret Faultless, violins, Andrew Skidmore and Chi-chi Nwanoku, cello and bass, Rachel Beckett, recorder and Anthony Robson, oboe.

However, for most people in the audience, the focus of the evening was the world premiere of the new work by Sally Beamish, commissioned by the OAE and forming the first of the Olympic year's New Music 2012 project. The text she chose was curious, given the occasion, and was perhaps more suited to celebrating the Paralympics based, as it was, on the story of a devastating horse-riding accident that left journalist Melanie Reid as a tetraplegic. *Spinal Chords* provided an evocative musical backdrop to the spoken text, movingly declaimed by Juliet Stevenson. Written for 13 solo strings, Beamish uses the unique sound-world of the period strings to aurally recreate the journey depicted by the text, from the depths of the "compound fracture of the soul" to the more positive build up of hope. Beamish's pre-concert talk was with the OAE's double bass player Chi-chi Nwanoku, a former 100m sprinter until a knee injury led to her taking up the bass.

ECCLES & HANDEL

Bampton Classical Opera pride themselves on presenting neglected works from the 18th century, although I have long criticised them for their curious avoidance of period instruments or singers capable of singing in period style. Acceptable, perhaps, for their normal deanery garden, jolly-romp picnic operas, but rather unprofessional when they transfer to the more sophisticated London stage. So, although their Wigmore Hall concert (9 Feb) was not an opera, credit is due to them for fielding a period band directed by Christopher Bucknall, a young harpsichordist who is gaining performing and conducting experience in the early repertoire. The concert showcased two of their regular opera singers, soprano Martene Grimson (dressed like a fairy tale princess from one of my granddaughter's story books) and baritone Nicholas Merryweather, with excerpts from Act III of John Eccles' *Semele* and Handel's cantata *Apollo e Dafne* written on the cusp of his move from Italy to Hanover in 1709/10. Unfortunately, the very opening line of *Semele* raised a quibble. For a concert promoted by an opera company, and with Jupiter's opening line of "Come to my arms my lovely fair", I would have expected Jupiter to at least spare a glance towards Semele, standing a few feet to his right, rather than directing the line straight to the audience, lovely and fair as some of them might have been. Although I am perfectly happy with concert performances of dramatic

2. "Silly pluckers invade Bach!" perhaps: there's a sceptical survey in Laurence Dreyfus *Bach's Continuo Group*, pp. 170-172. CB

works, nowadays most include at least an element of interaction between the protagonists. Curiously, *Apollo e Dafne* was sung in an English translation, despite the English text also being printed in the programme. Both vocal works gave the chance for solo instruments to shine, notably Persephone Gibbs, violin, Georgia Brown, flute, Rachel Chaplin, oboe and Zoe Shevlin, bassoon. Christopher Bucknall's direction was sensitive to the flow of the music, although there were times in the instrumental works when things became a trifle relentless. Of the two singers, the solid and well-rounded voice of Nicholas Merryweather was the more convincing on this occasion. Martene Grimson's very fast vibrato didn't seem to be controllable and although it didn't unsettle her intonation, it did add a rather disturbing edge to her tone.

VIOLS MOSTLY WITHOUT ORGAN

I have always loved the repertoire for viol consort with organ, a combination that, despite the large number of pieces specifically composed or intended for it, is rarely heard either in concert or on CD. So I was looking forward to the concert given by Phantasm in the chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford (10 Feb) where they are currently Consort-in-Residence. It was advertised as "Music for Six Viols and Organ" and featured, according to the blurb, the *informator choristarum* (Magdalen-speak for organist) Daniel Hyde. But despite the presence of a chamber organ and said *informator choristarum*, only one of the 15 pieces actually used the organ. Having got that off my chest, what about the concert as it was. Firstly, the setting. Rather than sit on the altar steps, Phantasm sat at floor level between the collegiate stalls, giving a sense of intimacy and an immediacy of sound for those fortunate enough to be sitting close enough and, perhaps, recreating something of the atmosphere of a viol consort gathering at the time much of the music was written. The programme ran the gamut of the viol consort repertoire from Byrd (his Fantasia a6 (II) demonstrating his typical effervescent multi-sectional style) to Purcell's youthful final flush with his "Fantazia upon one note" and his extraordinary six-part *In Nomine*, described in the programme note as a "unique concatenation of melancholy and hopefulness" (I only use that quote so that I can include the word "concatenation" in a review – twice, it now seems!). Surrounding the Purcell works, we heard Tomkins winding a theme down and then up in his Fantasia XVII and Gibbons' masterful Fantasia 2 a6 and the *In Nomine* 2 a5. The latter work elicited the following description in Laurence Dreyfus's poetic programme note – "the music ultimately ascends in spirals which exhaust themselves only at the rapturous final cadence where the tragic figure of the opening is resolved in a major key." I couldn't have put it better myself. The one work played with the organ (despite Dreyfus's argument in Phantasm's Lawes CD liner notes that the organ is "more of a hindrance than a help") was the Consort Sett VIII a6 in g by Lawes, a work where the independent melodic writing for the organ

makes it, I would have thought, indispensable. This was another work that sent the Dreyfus literary pen into overdrive, describing it as "resembling a cosmic leviathan in which individuals pursue their naked self-interests whilst harnessed to the iron will of the composer, this is music which challenges the boundaries of contrapuntal comprehension, providing endless fascination at each exposure to its craggy line and sinewy textures." In fact, self-interest, naked or otherwise, was noticeably lacking in this concert as the six members of Phantasm produced a remarkably integrated sound.³

JOHN POTTER IN CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge is saturated by concerts in term-time, and not too badly off in the other half of the year. The main venues are the Corn Exchange (in the town centre alongside a capacious car-park) and at the Music Faculty in West Road (more specifically a music venue, but with less parking). But there is no shortage of other venues, since most of the colleges have chapels and halls which can (and are) used by visitors as well as students. In my undergraduate days, music at my College was minimal apart from Sunday evensong. Half a century later, I am now associated with one of the new colleges, on Huntingdon Road – up the hill from Magdalene, past Shire Hall and a little way along Huntingdon Road to my new one. The Director of Music at Fitzwilliam College is Francis Knights (editor of *Early Music*) who organises a varied series of concerts, and of late we've had several Eastern Early Music Forum courses there – it's a bit out of town, but has parking. The next is on 15 April with John Butt.

A particularly fine concert was given there on February 4th by John Potter, accompanied by Jennifer Bennett violin and Yair Avidor lute & theorbo. I love John's singing. He has the ability to deliver text and notes in a way that gets the balance to perfection. There is body to the sound, though the voice isn't loud. For decades, he was best known as a consort singer, but he has is experienced in many other types of singing, and has written stimulating books on singing within the academic framework but of enormous value to singers. The Dowland was marvellous, and an interesting feature was the use of the violin. Jennifer Bennett's contribution included a fine performance of Pandolfo Mealli's *La Monella* (which, in the small chapel, was perfectly adequately accompanied by the theorbo) and she made sense (for the first time in my experience) of "Go nightly cares", which has never worked for me on the viol. She also joined in some of the songs, taking a verse as solo or drawing an accompaniment from the inner parts – a player I'd like to hear again. The plucker has the style right, but there were a few glitches. A fine concert, and the chairs in the chapel are more comfortable than most. CB

3. It is extraordinary that so many of the later viol consort sources have organ parts: why ever were they copied if they were not played? They are too top-and-bottom oriented to be useful as scores. CB

SIXTY YEARS OF BACH AT TILFORD

Rosemary Wisbey

Once again this summer audiences will be filing up the steep cobbled path to the little parish church in Tilford, Surrey to hear music by J S Bach. This will be performed by ensembles and soloists of high international repute in one of the prettiest villages in England, and this year expectations will be even higher than usual as, like Her Majesty the Queen, the Tilford Bach Society is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee.

One of the aims of the Festival of Britain in 1951 was to encourage the establishment of regular arts festivals all over the country. Denys Darlow, the organist at Tilford, thought this was rather a good idea. Why not set up an annual festival in his own village to celebrate his favourite composer? After each choir practice Denys's bike was tied onto the back of a choir member's Morris 8 and as he was ferried home the concept was discussed and likely local victims selected to form the first Tilford Bach Society committee.

Denys Darlow was well qualified to launch such a venture. He had been introduced to J S Bach at the age of eight, singing in the ripieno chorus of the St. Matthew Passion for several years in Westminster Abbey. Besides being a fine organist, he was also associate conductor of the BBC Opera Orchestra and conductor of his own Alexandra Orchestra and Choir which were based in London. The little committee agreed that the aim should be 'to promote an annual Bach Festival' in which the music should be 'in a manner most consistent with the style and demands of the period'.

Four concerts were planned for the following March, and the local press announced, 'It is expected that it will be a national rather than merely a local event', that 'the internationally famous violinist Nicholas Roth' was to perform as well as 'two members of the famous Dolmetsch family of Haslemere'. However, the first programme was very inexpertly typed on an ancient machine and bore the stern injunction, 'Please do not clap. You are in a Church, and in a sense this Concert is an Act of Worship'. The Alexandra Orchestra, led by Emanuel Hurwitz, presented an attractive selection of works, including two Brandenburg Concertos and the Harpsichord Concerto in F minor. Dr Thornton Lofthouse was soloist for the latter and was to become a popular first President of the Tilford Bach Society. A very large man with a matching personality and hands like bunches of bananas, I remember watching in wonder as his fingers flew over the keys.

The success of that first Festival assured the Society's

continuance and a far more professional-looking calendar of events for the following year was produced. Rosemary Davis, secretary to the Festival Choir, fondly remembered her first acquaintance with Tilford many years later, 'Travelling from London in an extremely rickety coach in company with singers, players, timsps and a double bass, we cautiously approached the village over the 400-year-old bridge. Inside the small church I discovered a secondary meaning to the term 'close harmony'. Applied to this situation it involves direct contact with both singing neighbours, the strategic placing of one's copy to avoid a flautist's head and the sweep of a bow, while maintaining outward calm as the basses sing gustily a few inches from each ear. To jostle in the vestry and have one's toes crushed beneath the mighty foot of John Shirley Quirk was an exquisite honour, and to be the one to unearth Ilse Wolf beneath a cascade of cassocks was a privilege of the highest magnitude. In these snug conditions I underwent the most exhilarating and moving of musical experiences, and now, many years later, I can still depend on the magical effect that Bach at Tilford produces for me.'

1955 brought new excitement. Audience members queuing with their cushions (highly necessary comfort aids in the early years) passed a very large olive green van with cables snaking from it as they filed into the church. The BBC had arrived to broadcast the concert live, the first of many such occasions. The Tilford Bach Festival was by now firmly established as a prestigious national event and certain traditions were already in place, such as the mad rush across the village green to The Barley Mow pub, led by musicians and choir in full flight the moment they had exited for the interval. The church bell would toll to summon them back in time for part two.

Despite recurring problems with finance, the Festival went from strength to strength and in 1964 Basil Lam wrote an appreciative article for the *Radio Times* in which he remarked, 'An enterprise like the Tilford Bach Festival represents a practical effort towards restoring the social and musical environment in which Europe's greatest musician lived. That Denys Darlow's work has a realistic as well as an idealistic basis is shown by the fact that the festival is now in its twelfth year, and has maintained unmodified its original aim'. However, when a *Times* critic reported on a concert by the Tilford Festival Orchestra later that year he 'wished that Mr Darlow could provide a more incisive, more firmly sprung, rhythmic basis'. The cognoscenti of baroque music were inclining towards the burgeoning early music movement and the wish to hear music played entirely on instruments of the period was growing.

By the 1970s, paradoxically the most successful decade in its history, Denys Darlow foresaw a danger that the Tilford Bach Society could well fall musically behind the times. 'Authenticity' no longer meant the inclusion of the odd baroque instrument here and there as it had in the 1950s. Denys fondly hoped that the musicians who had been visiting Tilford regularly, some for almost twenty years, would be willing and able to switch to baroque instruments, but of course it wasn't as simple as that. The number of concerts that the players of modern instruments performed dwindled each year and eventually the fully baroque London Handel Players took over. Soon they, in their turn, became 'old friends' to the Tilford audiences.

The full effect of the change was evident in the 1982 Festival when the programme notes warned, 'You are to hear a new sound for Tilford – authentic baroque instruments.' The opening concert was Handel's *L'Allegro, Il Moderato and Il Penseroso* a sure-fire crowd puller with a star-studded cast of soloists led by the exquisite voice of Emma Kirkby. Denys kindly explained to an intrigued audience that the king-size lute was a theorbo. The musicians looked very young; not really surprising as they were the 'first generation' to have graduated as specialists in baroque techniques.

In 1993 Denys Darlow was seventy two years old and decided it was time to share some of the responsibility of music-making in Tilford. The Society has been extremely lucky in its music directors throughout its sixty years.

Eventually Denys handed over to Paul Nicholson and he was succeeded by Laurence Cummings and Adrian Butterfield. Each has brought tremendous individual talent and commitment to the task of keeping up the high standard of music and the unique spirit of each Tilford Bach Festival. One of the oldest members recently remarked, 'People always say, "That was the best Festival ever!" Every year we say it, but we forget how good last year's Festival was!'

Sadly, Denys himself is in poor health and will not be able to join in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, but it is only right to end with a tribute to the man on the bicycle in 1952, pedalling his way to choir practice and dreaming of a Bach Festival. In the words of a former Festival Choir member, 'the promotion of Bach, Handel and their contemporaries, and the commissioning of new works, the performance of them to a very high standard, and the nurturing of new talent, was quite an achievement, for which I hope due credit will be given to Denys and will never be forgotten'.

If the present members of the Tilford Bach Society have anything to do with it, it never will.

The 2012 Tilford Bach Festival runs from Friday 25th to Sunday 27th May and includes Bach's Musical Offering and St John Passion. For full details of the concerts and of an illustrated book, *Bach Comes to Tilford: Sixty Years of the Tilford Bach Society* please visit the web site tilfbach.org.uk.



Emma Kirkby & Denys Darlow

MR. SUZUKI'S BACH CANTATA SERIES ARRIVES AT A MILESTONE

Seventeen years ago, on the 50th anniversary of the day when, in the wake of the explosion of two atom-bombs, the Japanese had surrendered to the Allies (15 August 1945), a distinguished Japanese musician sat down and wrote an essay, "On starting the complete recordings of J.S. Bach's Cantatas". If you still have Vol.1 of Masaaki Suzuki's series, made with Bach Collegium Japan, do get it out and read again that brief but fascinating essay that acts as an Introduction to this important series, which has just (February 2012) arrived at Vol.50. I would guess that they have half-a-dozen more issues to come. .

By 1995, Bach's 200-or-so wonderful Church Cantatas were beginning at last to find a regular place on concert programmes and on record-labels; the ground-breaking Archiv series by Nicolaus Harnoncourt and Gustav Leonhardt had started on LP and graduated in due course to the CD format, while Helmut Rilling – working in a slightly more old-fashioned style, but with great integrity – was well on the way with his own complete set. Ton Koopman had mentioned to Suzuki (whom he had once taught) his intention to record all the Cantatas, too; John Eliot Gardiner would not appear on the 'All-the-Cantatas' scene until after the Monteverdi Choir's monumental 'Bach Pilgrimage', in the year 2000. Other musicians, too, have embarked on 'partial' sets of the Church Cantatas, some following Joshua Rifkin and Andrew Parrott along the 'one-to-a-part' route (in many cases, with excellent results).

It's interesting to listen again now to Masaaki Suzuki's Vol.1. Throughout the series he opted for a chronological approach, so as a 'starter' we had some of Sebastian's very earliest essays into the *genre* (BWV 4, 150, 196) – all with a distinct 17th-century feel to them, and yet somehow distinctively and authentically "Bach". By Vol.50, which appeared only recently, we've reached 1729 – well into Bach's Leipzig period, after he'd already completed four full cycles of Cantatas for Sunday worship in the Thomaskirche and Nicolaikirche.

What's changed, then, over these 17 years? In fact, very little. Mr. Suzuki looks, perhaps, a tad more grizzled than of yore, and the choir has reduced in size somewhat: in 1995 it numbered 5,5,4,6; in 2011 (when Vol.50 was recorded) it numbered just 3,3,3,3. The smaller numbers have resulted in rather clearer contrapuntal lines – but the choral singing has been highly disciplined, throughout the series, and the soloists have always sung in the choir, leading their respective sections. Japanese vocal soloists featured rather more regularly in the earlier volumes than they do now, but they've always acquitted themselves with distinction; in recent years, of the regular "imported" soloists, the countertenor Robin Blaze, the tenor Gerd Türk and the bass Peter Kooij have all made outstanding

contributions. The instrumentalists have nearly all been Japanese, and of superb quality. Special mention should be made of solo oboist Masamitsu San'nomiya; Bach relies heavily on his baroque oboes, and their playing throughout this series has been absolutely first-class.

So, I think you've got the picture by now! I still consider this the outstanding Bach Cantata series, and I cannot recommend it to you too highly. Some of the earlier volumes are already available as boxed sets, I believe, and doubtless all will appear in that format in due course. Supreme German music, supremely well performed by (mainly) Japanese artists and supremely well recorded by Swedish technicians (working for BIS). *Beresford King-Smith*

MR. SUZUKI IN PERTH

What a year it has been for Perth. The Scottish town known as "the fair city" has finally been granted official city status in celebration of the Queen's jubilee. Earlier in the month, it played host to the Masaaki Suzuki and the Bach Collegium Japan – and what's more, the four day residence in the Perth Concert Hall was the group's only scheduled UK date in 2012.

There were three concerts and a number of supplementary events (including an open rehearsal and a public discussion of performing practice, in which Suzuki was joined by fellow-Bach scholar, John Butt, Professor at Glasgow University). The open rehearsal was pretty much a more relaxed version of the first concert. No stopping and starting, no real in-depth discussions, but a rather more or less a straight play through of all the items on the programme, with an air of confidence and authority which only complete familiarity with one's colleagues and the repertoire can bring.

It was not, however, an all-Bach affair. Rather, each of the concerts (which included a concerto and solo soprano cantata by him) also featured music by other composers. In the first, there was an organ concerto by Handel (played by Suzuki's son, Matsuko) and Telemann's popular A minor suite with recorder, in which the very fine soloist was Andreas Böhlen; in the second we heard Yukiko Murakami play one of Vivaldi's many bassoon concertos. I found it a strange choice. Yes, *La notte*, with all its fantastic and nocturnal associations, is a well known title, but the flute concerto of the same name is far better suited to showing off the soloist; in the third, the fabulous oboist Masamitsu San'nomiya played a concerto by Platti (very much a baroque composer looking to the future, and perhaps the most remote from Bach's style).

I only heard two of the three cantatas, but they were enough to convince me that Joanne Lunn is a remarkable interpreter of Bach's music. Hers is a large, rounded voice, more than capable of filling the ample and rewarding acoustic of Perth's Concert Hall, but also flexible enough to negotiate Bach's sinewy lines, and decorate them without losing the overall shape or her rich tone. More than that, though – she *lives* the

text. Even if you have no knowledge of German (as my companions at the concerts), it was obvious what she was singing about, from her body movements and her facial expressions, and from the rich variety of colour that she brought to different passages. I don't think I've ever felt such religious conviction in Bach singing before – though I don't even know if that is where she is coming from as a singer – even a hardened atheist like me found her performances very moving. It did no harm to the cause that, in heart-rending performances of *Mein Herze schwimmt in Blut* and *Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke*, she was partnered by San'nomiya, whose trenchant interpretations were another eye-opener.

The other Bach work on the first night was the D minor concerto for two violins and continuo featuring Ryo Terakado and Yuki Yamaguchi. Played one to a part (of course), with violone and cello on bass (as well as harpsichord and organ continuo), it was interest to watch the piece – the three upper ripieno string players were lined behind the two soloists, and I enjoyed very much watching the imitative snatches being passed down the line, and it was nice actually to be able to hear the ripieno first violinist when she was the main focus of attention. Particularly impressive across all of the performances I heard was the viola player – her richly-toned instrument held the line beautifully, matching the multiple violins in fugal entries.

On the second evening, the ensemble from the first night was joined by trumpeter Guy Ferber for an exciting rendition of the 2nd Brandenburg Concerto. The *Glasgow Herald's* critic was surprised by the trumpet itself, which was wound like a hunting horn (after the famous portrait of the presumed original soloist, Gottfried Reiche), but puritans would have been more disheartened by the fact the the tubing obviously had holes to accommodate the tricky coloratura writing.

Before the beginning of the first concert, James Waters, the theatre's "creative director (classical music)" gave a brief talk in which he spoke of his almost immediate realisation on beginning the job that the auditorium in Perth would be ideally suited to period instrument ensembles. My own experience of these few days confirmed his vision. BC

BUSKAID

St Marylebone Parish Church, Monday 19 March

Buskaid – the Soweto music school that teaches string players from four to thirty – gave a small-scale concert across the road from the Royal Academy of Music where three of the nine players were studying. In addition, Paul Nicholson played harpsichord and organ and Alex McCartney theorbo. There was a good audience, with a fair number of baroque professionals in attendance. I've been aware of the group for much of its history and am always amazed when I hear them. The programme included music by Biber, Purcell, Boccherini, Bartok and Gershwin – all done very idiomatically. Why can't more

modern chamber groups make the right sounds for such a range of music – does the ASMF ever play Biber? There were also some versions of popular songs by Timothy Kraemer – brilliant arrangements wittily played and with amazing vocals from Cecilia Manyama and Mathapelo Matabane, both string players as well). I bought the CD but was disappointed: they must have acquired more confidence in the style since it was made. Congratulations to the organisation and the band's director, Rosemary Nalden. (www.buskaid.org.za) CB

MORE ABOUT NEVELL & BYRD

Readers will be aware that in "My Ladye Nevell revealed" (*Music & letters* 86 (2005): 1-15) John Harley confirmed the identity of the owner of My Ladye Nevells Booke as Elizabeth (née Bacon), the third wife of Sir Henry Nevill of Billingbere or Billingbear. Just over a decade ago a small but intriguing piece of information about the Nevills and Billingbere/Billingbear appeared in an article entitled "The haunted side of Pace" by Susan A. Smith in an electronic newsletter *The Pace press* dated November 2001, updated 13 September 2009. Pace University was founded in New York in 1906 and now operates on several campuses in the city. One of these is 41 Park Row, an historic building erected in 1858 for *The New York Times*. It houses several of Pace University's departments. The following paragraph from Susan A. Smith's article takes up the story.

On the B-Level of 41 Park Row, there is an old, carefully concealed faculty lounge that is called the Billingbear Room... The Room was once part of a 15th-century English mansion, Billingbear Manor, which housed Sir Henry Neville, the godson of Henry VIII. The name "Billingbear" is a distortion of the name "Bull and Bear" which comes from the legend that a bull and a bear once met in mortal combat. The area was afterward called Billingbear Park. Later, Billingbear Manor was built on the site.

John Harley observes: "The removal of panelling from Billingbear to New York seems to have taken place after a fire had devastated Billingbear House in 1924. The probably fanciful derivation of the name Billingbear, mentioned by Susan Smith, may be doubted. Ekwall gives the original name of Billingbear as 'le Pyllingeber' or 'Pillin(g)ber', the second element of which means 'pasture' (Eilert Ekwall, *The concise Oxford dictionary of English place-names*, 4th ed. (Oxford, 1960), p. 43).

Also on the topic of the afterlife of buildings tangentially associated with Byrd, two of his siblings, Symond and Martha, were married in All Hallows, Lombard Street in the City of London in 1567 and 1568 respectively, and his father Thomas may have been buried there in 1575. The church was burned down during the Great Fire of 1666 and rebuilt by Wren between 1686 and 1694. In 1939 it was demolished, but the tower and wooden interior fittings form part of the new church of All Hallows, Twickenham, Middlesex, built and consecrated in 1940. Richard Turbet.

ERCOLE PASQUINI

PAUL KENYON

Ercole Pasquini (b. ca. 1545) was an organist and composer. For most of his life he worked in Ferrara. There he met Gesualdo, and even wrote a *favola boscareccia* for his marriage to Eleonora d'Este. In 1597 he moved to Rome as organist of the Cappella Giulia, but in 1608 he was dismissed for unspecified reasons, and died some time before 1620.¹ What little he published consisted of contributions to anthologies of vocal music,² but more than thirty pieces of keyboard music are preserved in a number of manuscripts. Amongst these are what appear to be the first sets of variations on the Romanesca and Ruggiero basses by an Italian from outside Naples, and the first *seconda prattica* toccatas by a non-Neapolitan. The variation canzonas are, perhaps, of special interest. At the end of the 16th century this genre was almost wholly confined to Naples. Pasquini's approach to the canzona was innovatory and quite unlike that of the Neapolitans, for he eschewed formal devices, such as inversion and *inganno*, in the manipulation of which the Neapolitans excelled. Highly imaginative transformations of his thematic material were achieved by means of elision and expansion. These techniques are discernible, if perhaps to a lesser extent, in the canzonas of another northerner, Vincenzo Pellegrini. Their canzonas lead directly to those of Frescobaldi.³

Pasquini's compositions were widely admired. His reputation extended far beyond Ferrara and Rome, lasting long after his death. Copies of his keyboard music were being made until well into the 18th century.⁴ A South German organ tablature of the mid-17th century contains an incomplete copy of a canzona by him.⁵ Very little unpublished Italian music travelled that far.

In 1966 an edition of the keyboard pieces appeared under the editorship of W.R. Shindle (CEKM, vol.12). Since then

various scholars (including Shindle himself) have worked on the manuscripts. For Pasquini's most famous canzona (no. 16 in Shindle's edition) a new source has been discovered.⁶ Dated 1600, it is our oldest and best source for the piece. Moreover, Shindle's pioneering edition appears to exclude four pieces that are clearly by Pasquini, as well as a number of pieces which could well have been by him. It also contains a number of misreadings. In keeping with the norms of the time he regularised irregular beaming, bar lines and notation.⁷ A new edition seems to be appropriate, and I am in the process of preparing one. It will be published by Suvini-Zerboni, Milan, under the auspices of the Società Italiana di Musicologia. Hopefully the first of the two volumes will appear around the end of this year.

At the end of this short article I present the text of a typical Pasquinian toccata, together with a commentary.⁸ The piece is preserved on ff. 56r.-57v of ms. Museo Provinciale d'Arte, Biblioteca Musicale L.K.J. Feininger, P.F. 236.⁹ This is the largest and almost the only contemporaneous source that we have for Pasquini, containing 14 pieces attributed to him. It is all in one hand, apart from a few pages by two subsidiary copyists. Consisting of about a hundred folios, it is given over entirely to 16th-century genres (e.g. *Susanna un jour*), to the total exclusion of 17th century genres (e.g. passacaglia and ciaccona) and, in particular, to music by Frescobaldi. It therefore appears to date from ca. 1600. It contains a number of anonymous variation canzonas and a piece entitled *Intrada*. Since this word is not found outside Naples, the

1. Agostino SUPERBI, *Apparato de gli huomini illustri della città di Ferrara* (Ferrara: Francesco Suzzì, 1620). For Pasquini's Roman appointment see Biblioteca Vaticana, Archivio Capitolino di San Pietro, Armadio XV, 1.10 (ex Decretis 1595-1608), f.37r., and for his dismissal see *ibid.* f.257v.

2. See W.R. SHINDLE, *The Vocal Compositions of Ercole Pasquini*, in *Frescobaldi Studies*, ed. A. SILBINGER (Durham N.C., 1987) pp. 124-136.

3. See V. PELLEGRINI, *Canzoni d'intavolatura d'organo fatte alle francese, libro primo*, (1599). Modern edition by Robert B. LYNN in CEKM vol. XXXV (1972) and facs. edn., Bologna (1976). For Pasquini's use of elision and expansion, see the analysis of one of his canzonas included in the article on him by W. R. SHINDLE in *The New Grove* (1980 edn., also available on www.grovemusic.com). See also the paper by J. LADEWIG *The Origin of Frescobaldi's Variation Canzonas Reappraised* in *Frescobaldi Studies*, *cit. supra*, pp. 235-267.

4. See, for example, ms. Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella, Ms. Mus. 73, olim 34.5.28 (ca. 1670), and ms. Biblioteca Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia, Ms. A/400 (ca. 1750).

5. Berlin Staatsbibliothek, mus. ms. 46015, dated 1655.

6. Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella, Ms. Mus. 48, olim 61.4.11., ff. 10r.-12r. For an unpublished piece this canzona may well be unique. There are seven known sources (not all complete) of which six are extant.

7. For example, it was very common for a subject not to be beamed in the same way on each delivery, and for a chord in one hand not to be matched by a mathematically correct number of semiquavers in the other. The latter phenomenon occurs most frequently in trills, but is also found elsewhere. For the performance implications see E. DARBELLAY, *Peût-on découvrir des indications d'articulation dans la graphie des tablatures de clavier de Claudio Merulo, Girolamo Frescobaldi, et Michelangelo Rossi* in *International Musicological Society, Report of the XIth Congress, Copenhagen 1972* (Copenhagen, Wilhelm Hansen, 1974), pp. 342-50, and section 6 (Performance) of the preface to my forthcoming edition.

8. This toccata is no. 1 in SHINDLE'S edition. It is also included in the Faber Early Organ Series (Faber 1988), vol. 17, ed. James DALTON. Unlike Shindle, Dalton included the incipit (but unfortunately gave it incorrectly), and preserved the original bar lines and beaming. However he silently regularised the irregular notation which Shindle had (at least normally) presented in lower case above or below the staff. Otherwise the two texts are very similar.

9. See the facs. edn. by A. SILBINGER in *17th Century Keyboard Music, Sources Central to the Keyboard Art of the Baroque* (Garland, New York, 1987), vol. 16.

manuscript appears to be Neapolitan. Moreover, it is ruled according to Neapolitan convention, with six lines for the upper stave and eight for the lower. We should also note that from f.45v to the end of the MS (apart from the pages used by the second subsidiary copyist), the bottom line of the lower stave has been deleted. This was evidently done to facilitate the copying of (now lost) Roman material onto Neapolitan paper, for Roman paper was ruled 6/7. Such deletions occur in the case of all the Pasquini attributions. Given Pasquini's cultivation of Neapolitan genres, it is not surprising that the Neapolitans took such an interest in him.¹⁰

I should like to thank the many friends with whom I have discussed Pasquini over the years. They are Dr. Alan Brown, the late James Brown, the late Dr Oscar Mischiati, Stephen Daw, Professor Robert Pascall, Dr Bonnie Blackburn, Professor Richard Rastall, Dr Robert Judd, Professor Alexander Silbiger, Dr Christine Jeanneret, Professor John Harper and Professor Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini.

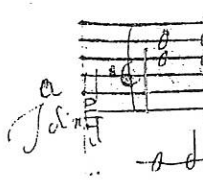
To Fabiana Ciampi I have a great debt of a different order. She has very kindly volunteered to produce (without payment) the pdf file for the complete edition. This is a huge undertaking. Irregular notation (as in bars 4 and 12 of Toccata 4 and innumerable other places) poses type-setting problems of its own, as does my atrocious writing.

Editorial commentary

Bars are divided into crotchet beats. Thus, "b.1 / 4" means the fourth crotchet beat of bar one. "f" means folio, "r" recto, "v" verso, and "n.s." new system. Notes illegible through corrosion are replaced in [], generally without further comment. Missing and wrong notes are replaced in [], with a commentary note. Shindle and Dalton transcribed the title as *Toccata*, but in Silbiger's facsimile edition it is transcribed as *Intrada*. The initial letter does indeed resemble an I, but it is exactly the same as the initial letter of T[enore] d[i] N[apoli] and *Intrada* would have been a strange title for a piece by a non-Neapolitan.



MS Trento f. 56r.



MS Trento f. 49v

b.2/1-8 At b.2/1 *a'* is illegible through corrosion. Dalton took the note to be a breve, but this is unlikely. The copyists's breves are quite wide and at least the extremities of a breve would have

survived the corrosion. He probably wrote a semibreve and forgot to add another at b.2 / 5. Moreover, on the lower stave *a* is clearly a semibreve at b.2/1, and *a* is missing at b.2 / 5.

b.3 / 1. Shindle and Dalton took *f#'* to be a minim, but it seems to me to be a quaver.

b.3 / 5-8 In the bass there is a semibreve *d* at the beginning of the bar and a minim *d* at the mid bar. Both Shindle and Dalton dotted the semibreve. However, it is preferable to regard the minim as a mistake for a semibreve, so that the note is repeated at the midbar.

b.8 / 1-2. Both Shindle and Dalton print *f* natural. But *#* is perfectly clear in the ms., and is certainly right.

b.12 / 6 Shindle marked *c'* as natural, but it expressly marked as *#* in ms.

b.12 / 7-8 Ms. has *f* in lieu of *e'*.

b.13 / 1-2 *e'* and *c#'* missing.

b.15 / 3 Ms. clearly reads *a'c''b'*. In both Dalton and Shindle these notes appear as *a'b'a'*.

b.15 / 4 *c''* and *a'* are semiquavers in ms.

b.16 / 5 *g'* missing.

b.16 / 6 *c''* missing.

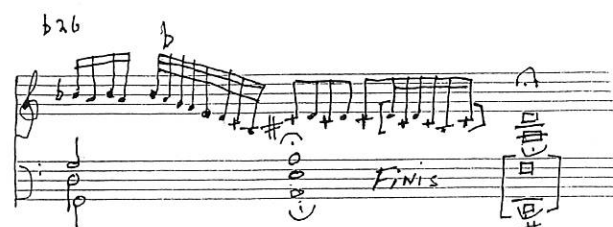
b.16 / 7 *g* missing.

b.17 / 1 Ms. reads *g'* natural. Shindle accepted this, but I agree with Dalton that it should be *g#'*.

b.20 / 1-4 Ms. has *e' d' e' d' c' d'*. Although this was accepted both by Shindle and Dalton, the result is an unprepared dissonance. Emended to *f' e' f' e' d' e'*.

b.25 / 5-6 *d'* missing.

b.27 -end Shindle and Dalton both treated the ms. reading as sound, simply completing the final triad. However, the internal cadences, especially that in bar 18, point strongly to a final cadence on A. Pasquini would surely have regarded the piece as a representation of the third (or possibly the fourth) mode, transposed *alla quarta alta*. It appears to end (impossibly) on D. Evidently the copyist's source ended with the trill on *c#'*, and he supposed that no more than a D major triad was required to complete the piece. In the event he happened to leave this triad incomplete, and failed to add a double bar line. Yet while the trill must resolve on *d'*, that cannot be the end of the piece. There must have been a further passage leading to a conclusion on A. This passage was missing from the copyist's source, and I have supplied a conjectural ending. These bars are shown below in facsimile of the ms and in transcription.



10. The number of lines on a stave varied according to local custom, and is therefore a significant indicator of a manuscript's provenance. See A. SILBIGER *Italian Manuscript Sources of Seventeenth-Century Keyboard Music* (Ann Arbor, U.M.I. Research Press, 1980). Some other sources for Pasquini appear to have a Neapolitan provenance. In addition to the mss. mentioned above in notes 4 & 6, these are ms. Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Codex Chigi Q VIII 206 (ff. 137 r - 138 v) and, perhaps, a highly corrupt source for a canzona (Schindle No. 16) which is now lost, but was known to Torchi and used by him as the basis for his edition of the piece in *L'Arte Musicale in Italia*, vol. III, pp. 257-260.

4

T[OCCAT]A D'H[ERCOL]E [PASQUINI]

Ms. Trento

f.56r

5 n.s.

f.56v

9

14 n.s.

18 f.57r

22 n.s.

25 f.57v

27

S. 000000 Z.

CD REVIEWS

CHANT

Psallat ecclesia: sequences from medieval Norway Schola Sonensis
2L-070 SACD

My attraction to the sequence goes back to an undergraduate essay and has remained the aspect of medieval chant that I lean towards most. Partly it is because of the syllabic text and the rhythmic and musical pattern of AA BB CC... with each pair being identical and subsequent pairs each different – sometimes there is a single introductory and closing phrase. But also it's the close relationship (though not an expressive one) between words and music. Unfortunately, I can't lay my hands on any of my sequential books and editions, so I can't safely make musicological comments. But I certainly enjoyed this recording. The performers are nine Norwegian ladies, conducted by Halvor J Østtveit. They sing beautifully, with words easy to follow (at least, you can identify the words with the booklet texts, which doesn't always happen!) The sequence that listeners might recognise, *Victimae paschali laudes*, follows the modern custom of omitting an anti-Jewish phrase – fine in a liturgical situation, but for a historic recording, we shouldn't censor the past. But this is a delightful recording and highly recommended CB

MEDIEVAL

Berenguer de Palel Joys, amours et chants Ensemble Cantilena Antiqua (Stefano Albarello voice, citole, lute, Paolo Faldi fl, Gianfranco Russo vielle, Marco Muzzati psaltery, perc.) 53' 54"
passacaille 978

I have no recollection of Berenguer – perhaps because he was Catalan rather than Provençal – and I don't know where my photocopy of Anglès's 1935 edition is now. His eight songs are included here, together with two anonymous ones. In fact, it's the style of performance that stands out. The rhythm is regularly triple, with (to use modern terms) three crotchets rather than a minim and a crotchet (though sometimes two syllables are squashed to one note, in a way that sounds natural) – perhaps one might call it a 'no-nonsense' style. The instruments primarily double the voice, with a little elaboration and some sensitive background percussion. I've no idea whether

Catalans favoured the counter-tenor voice, but it works. This isn't one of those recordings that depends on beautiful singing with no rhythmic impetus: the voice serves both text and music well, I liked it. CB

Cesena: Songs for Popes, Princes and Mercenaries (c. 1400) Graindelavoix, Björn Schmelzer 71'48
Glossa GCD P32106

Open up this well-designed economy packaging and you discover a rich presentation of *ars subtilior*, recorded in Belgium but based on a production by the dance company Rosas and the musicians Graindelavoix premiered at the Festival d'Avignon in July 2011. A large sheet of sturdy paper unfolded reveals titles, authors and words (untranslated) on one side and black-clad dancers enjoying various poses on the other. Similarly the laminated cover unfolds to show the arches of le Palais des Papes (minus the queue for admission). The front cover merely shows a small figure on the battlements under a flambeau. Many of the composers have a connection with Avignon and some were on the edge of papal politics at the time. The title 'Cesena' alludes to the forthright ballade by Philipoctus de Caserta in praise of the Avignon anti-pope, Clement VII (Robert de Genève), who had provoked a massacre in Cesena.

The music, most of it from Codex Chantilly, really is something to be heard and savoured. The nine singers accomplish simultaneous rendering of three Latin texts – *Pictagore per dogmata, O terra sancta, Rosa vernans* (1). Their frequent sustained glissandi and liberal embellishments are used to dramatic effect, for instance, in the rondeau *Espoir dont tu m'a fayt partir* (2) by Caserta and the chanson *En attendant d'amer* (8) by Galiot. This is carried to extremes in the rondeau *Fumeux fume par fume* (4) by Solage in which they depict an opium den where smoke swirls timelessly and slides nasally like a somnolent trombone. No doubt this would have been appreciated by David Munrow, who in *The Art of Courty Love* (OC 191. 05410-2) long ago interpreted the rondeau as letting off steam and provoking hot air to get one's own way. The chanson *Le ray au soley* (9) by Ciconia from the Codex Mancini lends itself to shimmering lightness and cadence

patterns. By contrast *Science n'a nul annemi* (7) by Matheus de Sancto Johanne mimics raucously those who cry out loud, and part of a Serbian epic tale, *•uješ li me majko* (11), is sung by a dancer as a market-style nasal recitation, each line with a free-style penultimate syllable followed by a shouted finale. Diana Maynard

15th CENTURY

La Rue Portrait musical Capilla Flamenca, Dirk Snellings 182' 41" (3 CDs in box) Musique en Wallonie MEW1159
Missa de septem doloribus; Missa Ave Maria & Vesperae; Missa Sub tuum praesidium, Missa Alleluia, three chansons, one motet

This boxed set has been responsible for my reviews this month being submitted much later than usual. To my great surprise I have sat down several times to review it and have been seduced by the sheer beauty of the singing into closing my eyes, switching off my critical faculties and just letting it wash over me. I have finally forced myself to be a little more detached. The set is made up of three recordings made between 2001 and 2011 and features two Masses in liturgical context, two without, a set of Vespers and some chansons. The standard of singing of the various line-ups of the Capilla Flamenca is superlative, but much more than that it is exquisitely expressive and spectacularly captured. I have minor quibbles – what a pity the performers didn't record all the Masses with some chant, rather fitting two on one disc and filling with chansons – but in all honesty this is a production to savour, treasure and enjoy. It is lavishly illustrated, mouth-wateringly presented and includes some of the finest early sacred singing you are likely to hear. Buy it, put it on and sit back... D. James Ross

Ockeghem / Da La Rue Requiem Cappella Pratensis, Stratton Bull 57' 15"
Challenge Classics CC72541

Just like Capilla Flamenca, Cappella Pratensis is a group I have watched closely over the years as they have achieved excellence and continued to improve. Their recording of these two seminal Requiem settings, sadly without any liturgical context, exudes quiet authority and confidence. This is a group utterly convincing in its approach to this music,

even pulling off an extraordinary rethink of the *musica ficta* at the start of the Ockeghem *Introitus*. At one stage the group, in an interpretation of an illustration of Ockeghem directing a choir, all held on to one another to co-ordinate timing. Whether or not they still do this, the sweeping unbarred nature of their singing is impressive and compelling. This is a disc which would serve well as a general introduction to this period of choral music or as a definitive recording of these Requiems, the two earliest surviving examples of polyphonic settings of these texts.

D. James Ross

Espris d'amours: Miniatures flamandes
Capilla Flamenca, Marnix De Cat 64' 49"
Musique en Wallonie MEW 1157
Binchois, Busnois, Cardot, Du Fay, Fontaine, Frye,
Grenon, Malbecque, Morton, Pullois & 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 payout 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!

D. James Ross

Geld Macht Musik: Music for the Fugger family bFIVE Recorder Consort, Johannes Weiss T 59' 34"
Coviello Classics COV21105

Translating album titles for Europe-wide marketing has always been a little problematic. There is something not quite right about 'Money Powers Music - Music

for the Fugger Family', although it is an improvement on a 1980s production bafflingly marketed in the UK as 'Music of the Fugger Time'! Notwithstanding their obscurity to British audiences, the Fugger family do make a good focus for a musical programme, as they used their considerable wealth derived from lending money to the leading European powers to collect musical instruments and printed and manuscript volumes of music. Thus it is on this recording that music by Baldeweyn and Alamire alternate with Brumel and Josquin, and chansons, lieder, consort music, dances and motets all vie for attention. The fresh and virtuosic playing of the bFIVE recorder consort brings the music convincingly to life, and the agreeable tenor voice of Johannes Weiss maintains the link with text in one or two of the songs. It is easy to picture members of the richest family in Europe relaxing after a hard day's usury to the sounds of the finer things in life - perhaps we would feel more indulgent towards the bankers of our own day if they used their bonuses to commission, collect and have performed music as beautiful as this!

D. James Ross

16th CENTURY

Byrd Complete Fantasias for Harpsichord
Glen Wilson 77' 30"
Naxos 8.572433
Fitzwilliam Virginal Book 8, 24, 52, 100-103, 117, 261; MB 14/59, 27/1 & 26, 28/46 & 58, 55/3 & 55

Glen Wilson brings together Byrd's nine fantasias, including three based on *Ut re mi fa sol la*, for this recording and prefaces many of them with short *preludia* either by, or attributed, to Byrd or John Bull. He plays on a Ruckers-style harpsichord by Henk van Schepikhoven, a full-sounding instrument which matches the solemnity of his playing, though both instrument and playing can be a bit heavy and stolid at times. Wilson does considerable justice to Byrd's great achievement in crafting these pieces, bringing out their large-scale construction as well as their great variety. He has written good booklet notes which suggest a subtext for some of the fantasias, though this is speculation. He labels them somewhat anomalously as being 'in G major' etc; although Byrd's music often leans towards the tonal, *Musica Britannica's* labelling just by final would be preferable. The last Fantasia on the CD, that in C (MB 27/29), is played from Byrd's earlier version for strings, rather than that

found in *My Ladye Nevells Booke*. Wilson plays it without any ornaments, presumably to allow its contrapuntal complexities to come through, but it sounds a bit odd in the context of the rest of the repertoire and comes across as a bit stodgy as a result. Good to have all of these pieces together, however, and these are very solid performances.

Lassus Biographie musicale vol. 1: Années de jeunesse Ludus Modlis, Bruno Boterf
Musique en Wallonie MEW 1158 56' 14"

Setting very high standards in performance and visual presentation, the *Musique en Wallonie* series is making a valuable contribution to the breadth and depth of Franco-Flemish recordings. Sometimes this involves the investigation of unfamiliar material by mainstream composers, and in the case of the astonishingly productive Roland de Lassus there are always going to be unexplored corners of his output which merit attention. This disc is devoted to the secular and sacred music of his youth, and unsurprisingly the chansons and motets are already the products of a mature musical sensibility. What is interesting is to spot the various musical influences on the musical genius, not yet fully digested into his later urbane idiom. Ludus Modalis sing with confidence and considerable musical expression, and the judicious use of their recording venue gives us a slightly more immediate acoustic for the secular material than for the chansons, which are given a bit of ecclesiastical space. The combination of the high quality of singing and the excellent booklet notes and visual package means that future volumes of this biographical series are to be eagerly anticipated.

D. James Ross

Rabelais Fay ce que voudras Sacqueboutiers, Ensemble Clément Janequin
Flora 2410
Attaignant, Bataille, Bertrand, Compère, Costeley, Janequin, Josquin, Lassus, Lejeune & Sermisy

I'd have loved this as a DVD with subtitles. The music is presented within a spoken narrative (with lute underscore) which is given in full in the booklet but only in French. It's a good story which I will not spoil for those who can follow it. The style of chanson performance with much instrumental doubling put me in mind of David Munrow's recordings. The programme includes two virtuoso pieces - Janequin's *La chasse* and *La guerre*, the two parts of each being separated by speech which is odd musically though does work in the quasi-

dramatic context. Recommended for those who can follow it, but if Flora releases are to make genuine international impact the presentation needs some thought.

David Hansell

Striggio Mass for 40 and 60 voices Le Concert Spirituel, Hervé Niquet 64' 20"

Glossa GCDSA 921623

Benevoli *Laetatus sum, Magnificat, Miserere*; **Corteccia**: *Bonum est confiteri, Tu puer propheta Altissimi, Alleluia & Gloria Patri*; **Striggio**: *Ecce beatam lucem* a40; plainchant.

Striggio Masses are like London buses – you wait 450 years and then... This French recording clearly invites comparison with the recent highly successful account by I Fagiolini and friends (Decca 478 2734). I had a number of reservations about the Decca recording when it appeared, chiefly about the way in which the sound had been captured – having read the booklet notes about the complexity of recording, I went to the stunning Taverner Choir recording of the Florentine Intermedi (CDC 7 47998 2), noting that here the huge texture was captured with crystal clarity on three strategically placed microphones placed together behind the conductor! While I have a few reservations about the present recording, it is a much more satisfactory experience than the Decca recording. Firstly it is made in the cavernous acoustic of Notre Dame du Liban, Paris, which has a ten-second reverberation, a fact which the performers exploit to the full, but most crucially all of the vocal lines are occupied by singers, with instruments employed in doubling. Some of the instruments seem more suitable than others: the contribution of the brass instruments and the whole family of dulcians is exemplary, and the regal adds a delightful spice to the texture. However, the constant tinkling of a harpsichord and *spinetta ottavina* is less to my taste – we have clear indications that organs of various kinds were basic requirements at performances of this sort of music, but I am not aware of much evidence for the use of other keyboards. Also questionable is the use of a combination of violone and basse de violon on the BC line, fine in the tutti sections but rather overpowering in the reduced forces episodes.

This is a very impressive and intelligent account of the extraordinary Striggio Mass, thrillingly captured, and the programme scores over its English rival by its much more appropriate choice of fillers, drawn up in this case as a sort of liturgical

context for the mass. These include large-scale works by Orazio Benevoli and music by Francesco Corteccia, performed with a strong cantus line and hauntingly diaphanous polyphony.

D. James Ross

The Decca programme is closely knit in a different way, with Spem in alium appropriate as the main partner since the composers met and Tallis may well have been outvying Striggio; there are also smaller-scale pieces by Striggio.

CB

Catch As Catch Can Renaissance Flute and Harp Consort 49' 53"

Available from www.clairebeesley.info

Agricola, Arcadelt/Ortiz, Bourdon, Crequillon/Bassano, Dowland/van Eyck, Ghizeghem, Isaac, Lassus/Bassano, Rore/Rognoni, Ruffo, Senfl & anon

Catch as Catch Can is a consort of three renaissance flutes, two tenors and a bass, plus a harp with bray pins based on the Memling painting of Christ with Musician Angels. The renaissance flute is a simple-looking instrument with only six finger holes but its two-octave range allows for a good variety of sounds on this disc, both solo and in the beautifully blended consort pieces. The Consort has given us a programme of highlights from the European renaissance, with instrumental pieces and others originally for voices. Some of them come in versions by more than one composer. *De tous biens pleins*, for example, comes in three settings, by Ghizeghem, Bourdon and in a three part version with diminutions by Agricola. Diminutions based on well-known tunes were a popular renaissance genre and there are more lovely examples of this virtuoso repertoire here, played on solo flute with harp accompaniment. *Anchor che col partire* and *Flow my Tears* gave me particular pleasure, but the whole CD, a live recording, is delightful. Victoria Helby

The Earth Resounds: Josquin, Brumel, Lassus The Sixteen, Harry Christophers, Eamonn Dougan 61' 07"

CORO COR 16097

Brumel *Gloria & Sanctus* (Missa Et ecce terrae motus); **Josquin** *Huc me sydereo, O Virgo prudentissima, Praeter rerum seriem*; **Lassus** *Aurora lucis rutilat, 2 Magnificat II & VIII toni, Timor et tremor*

Recent years have seen Harry Christophers and The Sixteen successfully bring early choral music to widespread popular attention, and their annual Pilgrimage tour is now an eagerly awaited event. If just occasionally the profit-making aspect of this success has overstepped the mark – as in a recent 'concert' series where

audiences were expected to watch The Sixteen's DVDs with occasional live musical interludes – one cannot fail to be impressed with the phenomenal commercial success which has accompanied the group's ongoing exploration of early choral repertoire.

As the CD of the forthcoming 2012 Pilgrimage tour, the present recording has much to recommend it. Unfamiliar large-scale repertoire by Lassus rubs shoulders with some fine Josquin and two movements of the Brumel 'earthquake mass'. The Brumel raises more questions than it answers – how did Brumel come to compose it and what are the connections with the roughly contemporary ten-part Mass by Robert Carver and the lost nine-part Mass by his fellow Scot, Patrick Hamilton, both of whom trained in Louvain? Christophers' rather touchy-feely effusions on the music are usefully offset by a rigorous but accessible booklet note by John Milsom. As for the performances, it will be clear that the ideal time to record a programme would be after extensive touring rather than before, and there is a noticeably greater confidence about the works the group has previously recorded compared to the 'new' material. The Brumel has become a little tamer since they last visited it, and like many modern performances it sounds positively prim compared to David Munrow's quirky, choppy and thrilling reading of the Gloria from 1976 (CMS 7 64215 2).

D. James Ross

Sadly, David Munrow died before the complete performance scheduled for the Proms took place.

CB

La Musica a Milano al Tempo di Leonardo da Vinci Renata Fusco S, Massimo Lonardi lute 64' 15" (rec 2004)

Discantica 103

This is terrific. If what appears on this disc is in any way typical of that which was circulating in the Italian courts during Leonardo's relatively long lifetime, then it was clearly a time of much quality music. What is more, it was music that often sounds surprisingly forward-looking, quite the equal of the extraordinary things happening in painting, architecture, science and literature at the same time – something I had not previously considered. But this selection and particularly the warm performances has won me over. There are three stars to this disc – the singer the lutenist and the lute itself.

Re-released, presumably to coincide

with the Leonardo Exhibition in London (that proved so popular that everyone I have met who said they wanted to go, couldn't get in), this is a wonderful collection of the type of music that Leonardo may well have heard or even been involved with. If Leonardo played the lute himself, as seems likely for someone as universally smart and curious as he was, he would likely have built and strung it for left-handed playing, and I'm sure it would probably have looked unlike many lutes of the time. It probably didn't quite have wings or secret compartments, but I can imagine he would have fiddled with the design in some way in an attempt to improve it or make it significantly different! The reconstruction of a six course lute played here, based upon early 16th-century paintings (there are no surviving lutes from this date) sounds absolutely beautiful, with a very full sound for such a relatively small fellow, but more importantly, proves an ideal accompaniment and more than adequate support for Renaissance woman (actress, soprano and ballerina), Renata Fusco. A lovely voice, used intelligently, especially in the intabulations of motets! Even if your tastes in lute song and music lie in the later 16th and 17th centuries, do get this disc – it is truly excellent, even the pastiche *Rebus musicali* by lutenist Massimo Lonardi, based upon four tiny snippets of music in Leonardo's hand, reproduced in the booklet. I look forward to hearing more from Ms. Fusco and Sigr. Lonardi. *David Hill*

The Renaissance of Italian Music Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Timothy Brown; Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Sir David Willcocks; Gabrieli Consort & Players, Paul McCreesh; Taverner Consort, Choir & Players, Andrew Parrott 2 CDs EMI Classics 50999 0 88789 2/2

Allegri: *Miserere*; A. Gabrieli *Kyrie a12*, *Gloria a16*, *Sanctus a12*; G. Gabrieli *Dulcis Jesu*, *O Jesu mi dulcissime*, *Omnes gentes*; Monteverdi *Beatus vir*, *Jubilet tota civitas*, *Salve regina*, *Vespers* (extracts); Palestrina: *Beata es Virgo Maria*, *Hodie gloriosa*, *Magnificat VII toni*, *Missa Papae Marcelli*

This anthology of recordings dating from 1971 to 1996 is a collaborative venture of the National Gallery and EMI. A 62-page booklet includes an introduction to the music by Francis Knights, texts and translations, an introduction to and comments on the reproductions of paintings, and two CDs slipped into the covers. There's rather a lot of white print on brown for my liking. The Amazon price is currently £8.50 – this review is a bit late! Some of

the performances here are not my style, but all are classics of their type. There is a notable absence of secular music to relate to *Bacchus & Ariadne* and *Venus & Cupid*. It is also very difficult to feel the grandeur of the Gabrieli big pieces on disc – much better live (and from my point of view, even better to be playing!) But it's a good anthology, with two of my favourite G. Gabrieli pieces – *Dulcis Jesu* and the 1615 setting of *O Jesu mi dulcissime*. *CB*

Le Serpent imaginaire Volny Hostieu serpent, Eva Dogard cnt, Thomas van Essen B, François Ménessier org, 60' 24"

Hybrid Music H1827

(contact@lesmelanges.org)

G. Bassano, Boeddecker, Byrd, Cabézon, Correa de Arauxo, L. Couperin, Du Courroy, Frescobaldi, Ortiz, Titelouze, Valente

A marvellous recording: I look forward to Stephen Cassidy's review in the next issue – he has the advantage of playing cornett and serpent, while I'm a mere organist! *CB*

17th CENTURY

Buxtehude VII Suonate, Op. 2 The Purcell Quartet 62' 55"

Chandos Chaconne CHAN0784

Seems an odd idea, doesn't it? A quartet doing a recording of trio sonatas... I suppose it gives both violinists a turn, but there will still always be one person sitting about twiddling their thumbs. Of course, this is marvellous music and these are wonderful musicians, so there is no question of the disc being anything but delightful. The recorded sound is rather dry, as if one were in a wood-panelled room in an old castle – just as originally would have been the case, of course. I tried the disc on various machines with the same effect. For people who like that kind of information, Catherine Mackintosh plays sonatas 1, 2, 4 and 5, while the remainder are played by Catherine Weiss. I wish, though, that the Purcells would occasionally let their hair down à la *Alessandrini* and record something a bit more off the well-beaten track... *BC*

Charpentier Musiques pour les comédies de Molière La Simphonie du Marais, Hugo Reyne 63' 33"

Musiques à la Chabotterie /Vendée 65010

Extracts from *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas*, *Le Dépit amoureux*, *Le Malade imaginaire*, *Le Mariage forcé*, *Le Sicilien & Bonus et bêtisier*

I'm sure this was an entertaining performance, but the inclusion of dialogue from

the plays will be an intrusion for those listeners whose interest is more in Charpentier than his colleague. This situation is not eased by the non-provision of a translation in the booklet, though the texts themselves are given in full. 'Silly' singing voices are also more effective live than on disc, I find. So I can't really recommend this disc unless it really is your thing, and even then the historically unlikely percussion may irritate. *David Hansell*

This is yet another disc on which unidiomatic translations (of information about the artists in this case) really jar. To give one example – French translators consistently render their word 'patrimoine' as 'patrimony'. Even the smallest of the dictionaries I have to hand gives the more appropriate and idiomatic English heritage. *DH*

Corkine Each Lovely Grace: songs, and pieces for Lyra viol from the Second Book of Ayres (1612) Cantar all Viola (Nadine Belbeisi S, Fernando Marin viol) 66' 45"

I looked forward to listening to this with great anticipation, having enjoyed the last recording by this duo. The soprano, Nadine Balbeisi, has a lovely voice, light, an easy upper register, and a very good technique, restricting her vibrato to very few notes. She is able to articulate the words with great clarity – using period pronunciation in a pleasingly unaffected way, and she sings with great intensity and control. Corkine's songs have received very little attention, despite their very high quality. They make great demands on any singer's technique throughout their range. Some, mostly in his first book, are given lute tablature accompaniment, most, but not all, in the second book, merely a bass line, to which the player, Fernando Marin, here adds simple chords. He plays two instruments: a bass viol for the songs, and a lyra viol strung in gut, but with metal sympathetic strings. The lyra viol has a lovely silvery quality on the upper strings, and he plays brilliantly, with great freedom, his effortless command making light of difficulties which mean that these pieces are rarely recorded.

The music is marvellously inventive, exploiting the sonorities of the instrument and undoubtedly some of the best of the music for lyra viol divisions on 'Monsieurs Almain', Dowland's 'If my complaints', 'Come live with me and be my love', 'The Punck's Delight' 'Walshingham' and various dances and preludes, and there are dances reminiscent of Ferrabosco's solo pieces, for the same tunings. The booklet describes the instruments, both modern copies, and provides the texts of

the songs in the original spellings. They perform every piece in the book that doesn't need a lute, which excludes six songs, and makes a total of 24 tracks. It makes enthralling listening, because of the beauty of the music, and the superb performances.

Robert Oliver

Frescobaldi Masterworks from a luminary of the early baroque Vol. 4 Richard Lester
Nimbus Records NI5874 78' 05"

This fourth volume in Lester's Frescobaldi series is particularly devoted to toccatas from the *Secondo Libro di Toccate, Canzone etc.*, interspersed with items from other publications such as the 1608 *Fantasia* and the *Fiori Musicali* and an effective toccata from the Chigi manuscripts. Once again Lester proves himself a sympathetic player, giving a straightforward account of the music. One might have wished for a bit more leeway and improvisatory quality in the more reflective toccatas but that said, there is much to commend here, especially in the intelligent registration and clear articulation. It is particularly exciting to hear the 1588 Costanzo Antegnati organ in S. Salvatore in Almenno in Milan which brings us the sound of the Italian organ of Frescobaldi's day. Its bright sonority on full organ is well used in the toccatas 'sopra i pedali'; the *principale* on its own, or with flute or *ottava*, speaks clearly and evenly; the canzonas show the variety of colours available. The recording ends with the *Follia* variations and a canzona played with intelligence and some verve on Alexander MacKenzie of Ord's Boni harpsichord.

Noel O'Regan

Frescobaldi Stylus fantasticus & the Art of Variation Luca Guglielmi (harpsichord and 1750 Landesio organ, San Giovanni, Luserna) 61' 53"
Accent ACC 24226

Frescobaldi is one of the pioneers of a true keyboard style, and his works deserve close study. Many of his keyboard pieces can be played on harpsichord or organ, but Luca Guglielmi chooses works that are particularly suited, or specifically indicated, for one or the other. The harpsichord and organ tracks were recorded in different churches, giving the harpsichord a very generous acoustic which, although seductive, is possibly some way from the sound world that Frescobaldi had in mind for such pieces. Curiously, the organ's acoustic is rather less generous. Sensibly, the two instruments are not interspersed, with the organ pieces taking up tracks 10-17. The com-

bination of the *Principale* and *Voce umana* ranks in the *Toccata IV Per l'organo da sonarsi alla levatione* produces one of the most distinctive and magical sounds of the historic Italian organ. Luca Guglielmi (the keyboard player to Jordi Savall's various groups) plays with an attractively fluid style, entirely appropriate, of course, for the *stylus fantasticus* pieces.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Fior e Fioretti del Frescobaldi Eduardo Bellotti (1696 G. B. Rejna organ in San Bernardo, Colorina, Sondrio) 71' 12"
Discantica 128

The explanation for the 'precious and rare flowers' of the title gives the author of the booklet note plenty to write about, in rather flowery language, the only relevant issue being that this CD includes some works that may not be authentic, or may be incomplete – 'fioretti'. These include the *canzoni* from the London manuscript (Add 40080) where the fledgling third part is to be completed by the performer. The Rejna organ was originally in another church, but was moved in 1876. It sounds well. The recording is relatively close, revealing some unobjectionable action noise but, perhaps, cutting out some of the acoustic of the space. Apart from the tin case pipes (of the *Ottava*), most of the remaining pipes are made of hammered lead, one of the aspects that gives the Italian organ its distinctive voice. The 1/6th comma meantone tuning is heard to good effect in the chromatic opening of the *Recercar post il Credo*. The combination of the *Principale* and *Voce umana* is heard in the *Tocata per le levatione*. One interesting inclusion is the *Cento Partite sopra Passacagli* played on the organ. This is comparatively rare in recordings but is something I have often done and have always felt it works well. Eduardo Bellotti gives scholarly and musical readings of the works.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Frescobaldi Liquide perle: Music by Frescobaldi and the Chigi manuscript Giovanna Pessi arpa doppia, Eduardo Egüez theorbo/guitar 49' 12"
Flora 1106

It is not often I am irritated by a CD before I even hear the first note. I had to fetch a magnifying glass to examine the cover in a strong light to be able to read what was there. Tiny black and yellow print on a brown background does not aid legibility. The title *Liquide perle* is meaningless, the name Frescobaldi appears once in the smallest font size imaginable on the

back of the cover, and the source is cited unhelpfully as "ms Chigi". The books of the Chigi family, most of which were collected in the 17th century by Fabio Chigi (later to become Pope Alexander VII), were given to the Vatican Library in 1923. There are some 3,500 Chigi MSS altogether. Presumably the *Liquide perle* material comes from Chigi Q.IV.

There is no accompanying booklet to explain what the list of 20 pieces is about. For further information one is referred to www.kelys.org/flora and www.giovannapessi.com. My attempt to reach the first website was met with the following message: "Unable to open <http://www.kelys.org/flora>. The Internet site reports that the item you requested could not be found. (HTTP/1.0 404)". However, I did manage to get through to Giovanna Pessi's website, where I was unable to access four extracts from the CD, and to the Label Flora website, where I learned that the CD was recorded nearly six years ago, and costs £18.

All this is such a shame, because the two musicians have actually done a good job. The CD begins with a short prelude on the harp based on the *Spagnoletto*, leading into an up-tempo arrangement of the piece, where Pessi is joined by Eduardo Egüez strumming his guitar. Together they switch to triplas, and finally Pessi reverts to her solo prelude. There are five Toccatas, nos II and VIII, two without a number, and a "Toccata per l'elevatione". In the first unnumbered Toccata, Pessi and Egüez play equal roles sharing phrases as they echo one another, and the contrasting timbres of harp and theorbo are most effective. Old warhorses include well-constructed variations on *La Monica* (aka *Une jeune fillette*) and the *Aria di Fiorenza* (aka *Aria del Gran Duca*). Ciacona (track 14) is a lively number with tasteful strumming from the guitar, but it has some extraordinary harmony early on, deviating so far from the ground bass that one wonders if it is correct. The gentle Gagliarda (track 4), and sparkling Saltarello (track 5) based on a canaries ground, like much of the music on this CD, are delightful.

Stewart McCoy

Hassler Missa octava Ensemble Octava
Dux 0750 38' 06"

+Ad Dominum cum tribularer, Cantate Domino, Dixit Maria, Ecce Sacerdos magnus, Laudate Dominum, Pater noster & Verbum caro factum est

This recording of the *Missa octava* presented in a polyphonic liturgical setting all by the German composer Hans Leo Hassler has several positive aspects. The

Polish vocal ensemble sing with a high degree of security and energy and it is good to see more of Hassler's music being committed to CD, particularly unfamiliar and powerful works such as Psalm 119 (*Ad dominum cum tribularer*). My only real problems with the whole production are its extreme brevity (under forty minutes) and the unfortunate acoustic. It is recorded in the Church of the Immaculate Conception of the blessed Virgin Mary in Cracow, but the recording engineers seem to have made very little use of the ambience, producing a rather brittle and immediate sound, which cruelly highlights the vocal imperfections and leaves any bloom very much in the distant background. The group's artistic director Zygmunt Magiera declares, 'We want early sacred music to go back to its roots. We want it to be played (performed?) in the context within which it was really created.' I feel that they could have done much more in this recording to allow their setting to assist them.

D James Ross

Jenkins *The Pleasing Slumber Aires for a treble, lyra, base and harpsichord* Sophie Gent vn, Romina Lischka & Philippe Pierlot lyra & bass viol, François Guerrier hpscd & org 68' 52"
Flora 1809

Although I am not a gamba player (my request to learn from one of the tutors at university, which had just taken delivery of a chest of the instruments, was politely declined), I have always enjoyed Jenkins' music – well, as much of it as I've ever had the chance to hear. There is an excellent virgin classics CD of fantasies, and Peter Holman's English Orpheus disc with the gorgeous suites that he chose to play on three violins is an all-time favourite. The music here is smaller in scale, but no less impressive for that. The dialogue between the upper voices is managed to perfection, and without too much of the English angularity and awkwardness which is typical of music of the period. That's not to say that one would not guess that this was English music on hearing it, but I don't think many listeners would correctly name the composer first time. The performances are captivating – this is one of the very few discs that have run their full duration in my equipment repeatedly this month. Just for once, though, I felt the lack of a booklet – there's just no pleasing some people!

BC

Marais *Charivary* Philippe Pierlot, Rainier Zipperling bass viols, Maude Gratton

hpscd, Eduardo Egüez theorbo & guitar
Flora 1507 78' 42"
Suites in C, D & G from Book III

Three suites from book III, published in 1711, make up this generous recording, nearly 80 minutes of some of the most attractive of Marais' large output. The suite in G, with its poignant *Prélude*, lively *Gigue angloise*, and its final, wonderfully humorous *La Guitare*, Pierlot plays with complete command and lovely tone. His Barak Norman has a beautiful clear sound, silvery bright on its top string. Particularly impressive is the 2nd Muzette and its very long final phrase which Marais stipulates 'must be played in a single bow stroke'. The Suite in C minor is quite different in its tone, set by the melancholy, elegiac *Prélude*, a particularly beautiful *Sarabande grave*, and somewhat restrained *Contrefaisseurs*, which Marais suggests can be played by just two viols. Here they elect to include also the harpsichord. It's a very attractive suite, not often recorded, and beautifully played.

The D Major Suite is the showiest of the three. Its brief opening *Prélude* leads to a brilliant *Fantaisie*, with a long melismatic flourish again on a single bow. The little movements – *La Folette* with its rapid triplets, the two *Gigues*, nicely contrasted in mood, the second with a wonderfully busy bass line, followed by the lively *Bouree Paysane* – bring a marvellous sense of fun and zest. These short movements are all very attractive, contrasting in texture and character. The *Rondeau* with its catchy theme of rising octave, rising 7th and a succession of 6^{ths} is one of his most brilliant, followed by the wistful *Plainte*, played here with beautifully restrained expressiveness, the swelling *enflées* showing off the unique sound of the top string. The stately *Chaconne* is followed by the aptly-named *La Brillante*, and the suite and the disc conclude with the bluster of *Charivary* – the brief booklet note prints an 18th century dictionary definition of this: the derisive noise made with pots and pans banged together outside the houses of those who have married inappropriately – perhaps on their second or third marriages, or even who have married someone of very unequal age to them. I like this player very much. He takes risks, but plays without mannerism or gimmick, always with complete control of the technical demands, allowing the music to speak with its clearest voice. Every aspect of Marais' style is represented here in an excellent recording in a crowded field.

Robert Oliver

Monteverdi *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* Birgitte Christensen *Poppea*, Jacek Laszczkowski *Nero*, Tim Mead *Ottone*, Marita Sølberg *Virtu/Drusilla*, Patricia Bardon *Ottavia*, Amelie Aldenheim *Amore*, Ina Kringelbott *Fortuna*, Tone Kruse *Nutrice*, Giovanni Battista Parodi *Seneca*, Emiliano Gonzalez-Toro *Arnalta*, David Fiedler *Valetto*, Magnus Staveland *Lucano*, Orchestra of the Norwegian National Opera, Alessandro Dei Marchi 180'
Euroarts 2058928

Although I have typeset all of Clifford's editions of Monteverdi's operas and even had *L'Orfeo* as a set work at university, I have never been a fan. Add to that a black and white production (well, there are increasing amounts of red on scene as the head count rises), tango-like instrumental improvisation and dancing on set, and a very minimalist set, and it's not exactly adding up to much of a HIP entertainment. And yet I found myself utterly captivated. The immediacy of television-like cameras and ready access to close-ups of facial expressions help make it all seem more real, somehow. The singing varies. Some, like Tim Mead's Ottone, is absolutely wonderful (and his acting is pretty good, too!) The brief booklet note makes all sorts of arguments about the possible hidden meanings of the libretto which sees desire (in all its guises) triumph over virtue as an allegory for Roman/Venetian rivalry, noting that contemporary audiences would have known what became of *Poppea* not long after the conclusion of the opera (it wasn't pretty!) It is interesting to hear HIP musicians jamming (the background music for the title sequence, for example), and frustrating that not a single member of the band is mentioned in the booklet. Blood and guts notwithstanding, this is a beautiful film of a very fine opera production that manages to combine elements of HIP with more modern techniques without damaging Monteverdi's music – a very rare achievement, indeed. You won't read these words very often in this context: this is my recording of the month.

BC

Purcell *Music for A While – Purcell Solo Songs* Maarten Koningsberger Bar, Fred Jacobs theorbo 61' 18" (rec 2008)
Quintone Q08006

This is a very pleasant disc. Hearing these often very familiar continuo songs performed with theorbo, as many of them may well have been performed in the home, is certainly a welcome change from

the previous domination of the harpsichord and/or gamba in this repertoire, and I'm glad that there seems to be a trend towards this practice. Most of these songs are sung in the versions from Orpheus Britannicus of 1698 – thus we again have the 'correct' notes in *Music for a While*, not those spurious flattened ones on the word 'Eternal' found in almost all recordings. Once, Koningsberger skates perilously close to the precipice of vocal overacting when delivering the early theatre song *I resolve against cringing and whining* (hardly the young Purcell's finest song, many would admit, but it lasts less than a minute), where one can almost see the swish of the Restoration fop's frilled cuffs and handkerchief. Fortunately, the recital has been constructed so well that such an absurd (to our modern ears) song is balanced by many better ones, and despite presenting a large number of quite short songs in much the same keys, all with a restrained and frugal plucked accompaniment, it never overstates its welcome.

It all sounds very 'human' and earthy when sung by a baritone, and not the ubiquitous, and almost certainly inappropriate, other-worldly countertenor as was once the norm for recordings. Not a great one, but a happy disc, nevertheless, and a good introduction to some of the byways of Purcell's solo songs, despite being completely overshadowed by the much greater variety on display in the Agnew disc discussed below. The crudely photo-shopped CD cover photo of the artists' heads floating in deep space probably won't help copies leap off the shelves, though.

David Hill

Purcell *The Food of Love* Paul Agnew T, Elizabeth Kenny theorbo & guitar, Anne-Marie Lasla bass viol, Blandine Rannou, hpacd & org 74'00" (rec 2009)
Ambrosie - Naïve Classique AM 185

Readers will be well aware that Paul Agnew is one of the very best early music tenors around, and this is certainly one of the best of his collections of early English songs – the previous discs released in the late 90s being devoted to three excellent selections of lute songs of Dowland and his close contemporaries, and a fourth devoted to the unjustly neglected Nicholas Lanier. Here he gives us some of the best of Purcell.

Unlike the otherwise excellent disc of similar material by Koningsberger and Jacobs reviewed above, this recital has been sensitively arranged with plenty of instrumental variety in the accompani-

ments to the songs themselves, and interspersed with welcome intermissions of instrumental music by Simpson, de Visée, and especially, a wonderful *Caprice de chacone* by Francisco Corbetta starring Liz Kenny, that is worth the price of admission alone, as they say. In *The Earth trembled*, the continuo accompaniment cannot fail to remind listeners of Bach's depiction of the same earthquake in the St. Matthew Passion, yet I've never heard this piece performed 'passionately' like that before, such are the typical polite chapel-trained restraints we English tend to apply to Purcell. It has taken a Scotsman and (mainly) French musicians to give it the extra *oomph* it calls out for.

This imaginative variety of accompaniment, and Agnew's assured style makes the music simply fizz with life throughout the disc, in every number, and it is an absolute gem of a disc. This CD originally came out in 2009, and we seem not to have reviewed it at the time – if you didn't get it then, do so now, since it's by far the best and most varied Purcell song recital I've ever heard, and I've heard an awful lot before – in both senses of that phrase! Enjoy also the bizarre CD cover design featuring a naked lady with a feathered carnival mask in a bathtub, wearily neglecting her ablative snack of pomegranates. I'm sure Henry would have approved.

David Hill

Mr Tomkins His Lessons of Worthe Bertrand Cuiller 58'
Mirare MIR137

Bull *Chromatic Pavan*, *Chromatic Galliard*, *In Nomine*, *Fantasi*; **Byrd** *Pavan & Galliard* Sir William Petre; **Tallis** *Felix Namque*; **Tomkins** *Ground*, *Offertory*, *Ut re mi fa sol la*; ?**Tomkins** *Robin Hood*

The title comes from the manuscript Paris BN Rés 1122, compiled by Tomkins and listing various 'lessons of worthe' in which the most prominent composers are Bull, Byrd and Tomkins himself. Cuiller has a clear affinity for early English keyboard music, playing with a strong sense of the overall pulse while distinguishing well between structural notes and ornamental ones. As a result, his playing is always easy to follow and satisfying to listen to. This is particularly true of the two longest tracks: Tallis' *Felix namque* and Tomkins' *Offertory*, each lasting more than 10 minutes. Both are considerable compositional achievements, suitably reflected in Cuiller's intelligent playing. He uses three different instruments: a Malcolm Rose copy of the Theeuwes harpsichord from the V&A, a small Italian

harpsichord by Philippe Humeau and a claviorganum made up from a Humeau harpsichord and an organ by Etienne Fouss. All are well recorded with good clarity and warmth in the sound. The claviorganum provides a useful contrast between long held notes on the organ and accompanying counterpoints on the harpsichord. Detailed notes by Alan Brown contribute to a very satisfying disc indeed.

Noel O'Regan

Zachow/Handel *Triumph, ihr Christen seid erfreut* Cantus Thuringia, Capella Thuringia, Bernhard Klapprott 62'54"
cpo 777 643-2

Handel: *Ach Herr mich armen Sünder, Triumph ihr Christen seid erfreut*; **Zachow** *Bei Gott ist mein Heil, Ich bin die Auferstehung*

The whole of the 17th century was once a 'black hole' between the Renaissance and Bach. Now we are more aware of Monteverdi, Schütz, Charpentier and Purcell the hole is smaller though the decade or so before Handel and Bach really got going is still a bit of a knowledge vacuum. So this disc is welcome as a further contribution to our understanding. The four works here are all very good, in fact I'd say that they are every bit as good as JSB's early cantatas and that *Ach Herr*, or whoever wrote it, can stand beside BWV4.* The singers are stronger in consort than as soloists – the alto and bass are tested by the range of their solos – but they still do a thoroughly acceptable job. Give the Passions a rest and make this your seasonal listening. You will be pleasantly surprised. David Hansell

*If anyone can offer copies, I'd be willing to test that claim at an EEMF day (15 April) with John Butt devoted to Cantata 4. Details for participation (at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge) from CB.

Amarante: *Airs de cour* Céline Scheen, Eduardo Egüez lute/theorbo, Philippe Pierlot gamba 59'04"

Flora 2210

Bésard, Huygens, Lambert, Richard, etc

It seems to be a policy of this recording company not to help the listener beyond the minimum. Flora 2110 (see below) offers nothing beyond a track and artist list. Here we get the French song texts in a booklet, but no reference to their track numbers and no translations. This is all a shame as the compilation of the recital is exemplary and the performances not far short. It was inspired to introduce the new sound of the obbligato viol in the final group of songs by Lambert, just when the

ear might have begun to tire of soprano and lute (though I must say that mine hadn't). Céline Scheen could be criticised for a slight over-reliance on portamento for expression but other than that her singing is stylish and sensitive. If you like Dowland you'll like these airs de cour, though you will need a bit more than basic French to get the most from them.

David Hansell

Musica Vaticana Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montréal, Christopher Jackson 56' 32"

Atma Classique ACD2 2508

Benevoli Juravit Dominum, Laudate pueri Dominum, O sacramentum pietatis; *Lassus* Domine quid multiplicati sunt; *Macque* Ave regina caelorum; *Pitoni* Dixit Dominus; *Soriano* In dedicatione templi; *Ugolini* Missa Beata es Virgo Maria

I provided the editions for two of these pieces but had no other role in the recording. It celebrates the polychoral tradition of the Cappella Giulia, the resident choir in St. Peter's, from the late 16th to the early 18th century. Lassus provided one prototype for the Roman polychoral idiom while his fellow-Fleming Macque pioneered triple-choir writing in the city. These are sung unaccompanied, which works well for Lassus but less so for Macque, whose quirky harmonies don't quite work in this recording. Soriano, Ugolini and Benevoli, major figures in what is often called the 'colossal Baroque', are well performed here with organ and violone accompaniment, as was often the case in St. Peter's. A harp is added to some tracks. Benevoli is particularly successful here with two small-scale motets for two sopranos sandwiching an impressive four-choir setting of the psalm *Laudate pueri Dominum*; Ugolini's Mass (oddly performed without Gloria and Credo incipits) works well too. Pitoni continued the tradition into the late baroque and the Montreal singers revel in the strong contrasts which characterise his extended *Dixit Dominus*. Well worth having for first modern recordings of some neglected Roman repertoire. Noel O'Regan

Un concert pour Madame de Sévigné Marc Hantaï & Georges Barthel flute, Eduardo Egüez theorbo, Philippe Pierlot gamba

Flora 2110 70' 10"

Hotteterre, Lully, Marais, de Visée, etc

Rather bizarrely, this mixed anthology of late 17th century gems come with no notes of any kind – about the music, the performers or the rationale of the programme. Madame de Sévigné was an aristocratic

lady famed for her letters and one can imagine that this survey of her presumed musical tastes makes a brilliant concert framed with readings to give a sense of context. As it is, the instrumental arrangements of songs just sound a bit strange. The programme is given some substance and a frame by the inclusion of suites by Hotteterre (for flutes *sans basse continue*) and Marais (for viol, reconstructed by Philippe Pierlot and played by him with a lofty nobility of style). I wasn't excited by this, but it was pleasant enough as a background to some tedious paperwork.

David Hansell

LATE BAROQUE

Albinoni *Trattenimenti da camera, Op. 6*

Sergio Balestracci rec, Silvia Rambaldi *hpscd* 122' 54" (2 CDs)

Newton Classics 8802098

The cover has a picture of a recorder but says that Sergio Balestracci is playing the flute. In fact two sizes of recorder, the alto in F and the voice flute in D, are used to play these sonatas, originally for violin, at the original pitch with occasional octave transposition. The music was published with the composer's authority as *Trattenimenti armonici per camera* by Roger in Amsterdam in about 1711; Walsh's reprint translates the title as *An entertainment of harmony*. Both players have a vigorous style of playing which I had got used to by the time I had listened to both CDs right through, but the harpsichord continuo is surprisingly percussive in some of the slow movements. This budget-priced double CD is a reissue of a recording made in Ravenna in 2003.

Victoria Helby

Bach *Johannes-Passion* Les Voix Baroques (Jan Kobow *Evangelist*, Stephan MacLeod *Jesus*, Joshua Hopkins *Peter*, Nathaniel Watson *Pilate*), Arion Orchestre Baroque, Alexander Weimann (2 CDs)

Atma Classique ACD2 2611

This is a Quebec-based recording of the first (surviving?) 1724 version of the *Johannespassion*, slightly larger in scale than Monica Huggett's Portland version (reviewed last issue) but very different in feel and recorded in a more generous acoustic. The twelve singers are robust and confident in the opening chorus, but as each is given an aria or small cameo part to sing, the very distinctive voices begin to emerge, each keen to impress us with their soloistic skills. The star for me is the soprano Agnes Zsigovics – icily

perfect in her grief in *Zerfliesse*; very different from the bass in *Mein teurer Heiland* with his unnecessarily close vibrato or his colleague in *Eilt, eilt*, who sometimes gets fractionally out with the strings. The Evangelist is in love with his lovely voice; so he sings the part rather than speaking it and the flow of the narrative sometimes is interrupted while we have a mini-operatic scenario. Other characters tend to follow suit, accompanied by a continuo section where the harpsichord is used to underscore the drama. This rather mannered style applies to the chorales too, where every syllable is invested with meaning. But singers and players are well-attuned to each other, able to give good breathing-spaces without appearing to interrupt the rhythmic flow.

So there is lots to commend, some very beautiful singing and playing with tempi nicely judged; but some will find it a rather over-dramatised performance where you long for them to just sing it: listen to the middle sections of *Ruht wohl* with single voices and a lot of 'feeling' to judge whether you like it. But don't miss Agnes – among the best ever.

David Stancliffe

Bach *Johannes-Passion* Machteld Baumanns, Maarten Engeltjes, Marcel Beekman, Mattijs van der Woerd, Frans Fiselier *Jesus*, Nico van der Meel *Evangelist & dir*, Concerto d'Amsterdam, La Furia (2 CDs)

Quintone Q08001/2

This John Passion is the second (1725) version, the most distinctively different with *O Mensch, bewein* as the opening chorus, three different arias and *Christe, du Lamm Gottes* at the end. In the *Johannes-Passion* industry, there are few thorough-going CDs of this version (Ricercar's version last year being a kind of hybrid, where you can programme your own), so it is welcome on that account at least.

The performance begins solidly, with the four to a part choir – quite distinct from all the soloists – singing the turba choruses rather slowly – especially *Bist du nicht*, where they don't seem to pick up the Evangelist's tempo; but the chorales are sensibly paced, and not over-done. Nico van der Meel, the director/Evangelist, sings unaffectedly with organ and cello the only continuo instruments. The Jesus is fine; the Alto is clean in both arias, but the Soprano is much more tremulous than I like (and they use a 16' in *Ich folge*) and her wobble is particularly unsuitable as the Magd: she's a real soloist. Interest quickens

in the arias distinctive to 1725. The Bass and the cello are fine in the jagged *Himmel reisse*, with soprano chorale and two flutes, but best of all are the tenor and strings in *Zerschmettert mich*, singing and playing equally cleanly and managing the frequent tempo changes splendidly.

In part 2, the chorus gets going slightly better, but I miss the bite and vivid interchange of one or two to a part, and it's still sluggish: too much double bass too. The tenor is again a star with the well-matched oboes and bassoon in *Ach windet*, which takes the place of *Betrachte and Erwäge*. The break between the discs comes after *Durch dein Gefangnis*, the centre of Bach's palindromic structure. The bass is outstanding – the 'cello too – in *Mein teurer Heiland*: poised and controlled, and always with time to breathe and listen too the others.

The booklet gives the text in German only, with the accompanying essay on the 1725 changes in English and Dutch. As a comparative rarity, this is a good performance with great arias and a fine Evangelist, if you can overlook the miscast soprano and the stodgy chorus.

David Stancliffe

Bach *Jesu meine Freude* (Bach in context)
Musica Amphion, Gesualdo Consort
Amsterdam 72' 46" (CD in a full-colour
hardback book)
Et'cetera KTC1440

This is a beautifully prepared, sung and played disc – a well thought-out programme presented as a handbook (in Dutch and English) with the disc in a pocket at the back. Framed by the Prelude and Fugue in e (BWV 548), the music includes two cantatas (64 & 81) interspersed by the motet (BWV 227) all on the chorale *Jesu, meine Freude*.

The stars of the show are the Gesualdo Consort, a Dutch-based quintet (SSATB) whose tenor is Charles Daniels, and they all sing with that degree of clarity. They are an excellent example of what one-to-a-part singing should deliver: a quintet, that is used to singing together so they listen well, and yet with the vocal skills to manage the sustained singing that is convincing in arias, as well as duets and the terzetto in the motet. The players are fine too: 3.2.1.1.1 strings, with the relevant woodwind and cornetto and trombones. The performers are photographed in the uppermost gallery of Bach's church at Arnstadt, grouped around the recently conserved 1699 Wender organ.

Not only is this a refreshing way of

hearing Bach's music in context; it is also a very convincing apologia for doing the cantatas and motets one-to-a-part. If you are not yet convinced that this is highly desirable musically as well as historically plausible, you must get this CD.

David Stancliffe

Bach *Brandenburg Concertos* Orchestra of
the Antipodes, Antony Walker 121' 55"
ABC Classics 476 1923 (2 CDs)

Although Antony Walker is listed on the cover as the director, in fact he is one among four people responsible for the first rate performances featured on these recordings; the others are Anna McDonald (concertos 3 and 4), Erin Helyard (concertos 5 and 6) and Neal Peres Da Costa (who marshalls the forces for most of the extra repertoire that makes this set all the more desirable). Some people might think that the six Brandenburgs are enough – and in sparkling performances such as these, they might be right – but the decision to supplement them with no fewer than eight cantata extracts strikes me as a good one. There is a slight risk of partial *déjà vu* at one point, but don't let that put you off. There is no star to this show, apart from the Orchestra of the Antipodes – oh, and someone called Bach... Something of a match made in heaven.

BC

Bach *Sci Suonate a Violino Solo & Cembalo Concertato* François Fernandez,
Benjamin Alard
Flora 1909
+ Sonata in G minor, BWV1021 (with Philippe
Pierlot, gamba)

I am puzzled that there does not seem to be a booklet with this release (Warwick Cole's review of Mozart quartets makes a similar comment) but then, reflecting upon it, I realised that it focusses your mind more on the music making. With repertoire this familiar, do we really need an essay to explain each work's history, or how they work as music? My usual quibble with this repertoire is the number of very good recordings that are already available. Only last issue, I was praising Ingrid Matthews and Byron Schenkman's almost improvisational readings. This pairing lounge around in the velvety surrounds of Bach's scores – ok, pretentious to a fault, but I hope you get the idea; this is neither a whistle-stop tour, emphasising virtuosity, but neither is it a guided tour with every detail of every movement perfectly captured in freeze-frame. These performances

are crafted with care, by musicians who have obviously spent a long time in one another's company. In case you have not already guessed, it has joined my other favourites on the shelf.

BC

Bach *Flute Sonatas* Elizabeth Walker with
Continuum 69' 42"
quartz QTZ 2086
BWV 1013, 1030, 1033-35

Although Elizabeth Walker studied the baroque flute she has chosen to record these four sonatas and the solo Partita on a modern wooden flute. She has a lovely warm tone without intrusive vibrato, and though I could hear her breathing this did not really detract from the performance. Her interesting notes describe how she has combined the advantages of the modern flute, particularly its wider range of dynamics, with baroque techniques and articulation. All three players – the other two are harpsichordist Michael Overbury and cellist Christopher Poffley – play in period ensembles, and this experience is evident in their stylish playing. The harpsichord is tuned to Vallotti rather than equal temperament with the intention of highlighting the individual keys, and all the movements are full of character with some particularly expressive playing in the slow ones. There is not much in the way of additional ornamentation but a touch of *inégalité* and some interesting variation on the repeats give life to the minuets of the C major sonata. It's good to hear this music played so elegantly on modern instruments.

Victoria Helby

Bach, *Concertos*, Xuefei Yang gtr, Elias
String Quartet.

EMI Classics 50999 6 79018 2 1

Inspired by Bach's sonatas and partitas for solo violin, which she had performed for many years in transcriptions for the guitar, Xuefei Yang has turned to transcribing other works by Bach, resulting in this excellent CD. It opens with the Concerto in D minor (BWV 1052), probably originally for violin, reused as virtual organ concerto movements in Cantata 146 & 188, and as a harpsichord concerto in the mid-1730s – so there is precedent for change of instrument! With unhurried excitement, the opening Allegro bustles along, pausing briefly for a super-fast cadenza. There follows the extraordinary, dissonant strains of the Adagio, the string quartet buzzing in the background almost like a *lirone*, with a long, haunting passage in unison to start and finish. The

Concerto ends with a sprightly Allegro played energetically by one and all. Yang's playing combines a consistently accurate technique with sensitivity of expression, and there is a nice balance between the guitar and the bowed instruments, as each takes its turn to dominate the texture.

Bach's evergreen Prelude in C (BWV 846) consists of a sequence of arpeggiated five-note chords – a daunting task to fit on a conventional 6-string guitar, but by using a 7-string guitar with a low A string and transposing down to A major, Yang's transcription is note-for-note the same as Bach's keyboard original. The effect is exquisite.

In transcribing the Concertos in A minor and E (BWV 1041 and 1042), which were originally for solo violin and strings, Yang referred Bach's harpsichord transcriptions, so that the guitar can do more than replicate the single-note melody line of the violin. The Allegro of the Concerto in E, reminiscent of the opening movement of Brandenburg no. 2, is a delight, and ends with the standard 6-note chord of E strummed triumphantly on the guitar.

Bach's solo violin Sonata in G minor (BWV 1001) is played as a guitar solo without the accompanying string quartet. Most impressive is Yang's performance of the fugue, familiar to lutenists as BWV 1000. The CD ends with Yang's transcription of "Air on the G string". Inevitably some compromises have to be met with only six strings at her disposal, but it is surprising how much of the polyphonic texture she manages to sustain.

Extracts from the actual recording of the CD can be seen on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-CTpRp_SQg (or search for Xuefei Bach) where Yang can be seen wearing headphones as she plays, and where she and members of the Elias Quartet talk enthusiastically about the music.

Stewart McCoy

Fiocco *Petits motets* Scherzi Musicali, Nicolas Achten 59' 14"
Musique en Wallonie MEW1054

Intermediate violinists may be more familiar with Fiocco's name than many of us as an arrangement of a keyboard *allegro* of his has long been a favourite repertoire-builder at that level. Here, however, we meet another side of this interesting composer (Venetian father, Belgian mother, spent his working life in Antwerp and Brussels). These motets date from the last phase of his short life (1703-41) and reveal a composer fluent in the

lingua franca of the day, able to write contrapuntal textures, attractive melodies and flowing melismas within a strong, if never over-dramatic, harmonic framework. They became well-known in his region and several of them appeared in the *Concert Spirituel* programmes in Paris. The familiar texts of the five motets on this disc (*Salve regina* a4; *Beatus vir* S solo; *Libera me* a4; *Jubilate Deo* T solo; *Benedicam Dominum* a2) are set as short cantatas, including some recitative sections. The gentlemen sing with a little more character than the ladies but all combine to provide an hour of rewarding listening. My only negative thought is that the continuo instrumentation is unnecessarily elaborate, and I can't entirely banish the notion that this is at least as much to do with the director's versatility as with any notions of musical appropriateness.

David Hansell

Galuppi *L'inimico delle donne* Anna Maria Panzarella Agnesina, Priscille Laplace Kam-Si, Liesbeth Devos Xunchia, Frederica Carnevale Zyda, Filippo Adami Zon-Zon, Alberto Rinaldi Geminiano, Juri Gorodetski Ly-Lam, Daniele Zanfardino Si-Sin, Opéra Royal de Wallonie orchestra, Rinaldo Alessandrini 115'
Dynamic 33677 DVD

This is an everyday tale of 18th-century comic opera love – not so much the star-crossed lovers as two people who protest too much until there's nothing left to protest about and they just have to get married... Well, that's not quite the plot, but I wouldn't want to spoil *that*, now would I? Neither the orchestra nor the singers are particularly well known for being from the HIP stable, and yet Rinaldo Alessandrini (uninhibited by any of the stage antics many a director would have imposed upon such a work) draws very balanced and characterful performances from all concerned. There is an awful lot of stereotyping – the Chinese don't seem to be able to stop bowing, and the Italian anti-hero (that's a bit of a joke) eats like a pig... But this is, after all, a comic opera and the visuals have to reflect the ridiculousness of the plot. I enjoyed Galuppi's music, and I found him perfectly capable of sustaining my interest through nearly two hours of the film, with a rich variety of aria styles and ensemble work. BC

Graupner *Passionskantaten* Anton-Webern-Chor Freiburg, Ensemble Concerto Grosso, Hans Michael Beuerle 70' 46"
Carus 83.457

Freund warum bist du kommen, Mein Gott warum hast Du mich verlassen, Wir wissen dass Trübsal Geduld bringet, Wo gehet Jesus hin

Stop right there! I don't want ANYONE thinking "Oh no, not Graupner!" I defy anyone to put this into their CD machine blind and not be impressed. If you have friends (as I do) who think that Bach existed in a bubble and his cantatas are beyond comparison (already a slightly tarnished notion, given that several BWVs have been withdrawn when the true identity of the composer has been established), I dare you to play this CD to them and ask their honest opinion. Don't get me wrong – as a music publisher, I have dealt with – more than 100 works by the Darmstadt Kapellmeister and many's a time I've given up even trying to work out what he *thought* he was trying to do: some of his harmonic language is frankly nonsense, and his part writing would have any composition teacher tearing their hair out. Yet, he was employed in Hessen for almost 50 years, and the Landgrave refused to release him when he showed an interest in the Leipzig job in 1723, which must say something. My company is about to embark on a major project to publish all the cantatas that survive from two annual cycles, and I believe that his best music is in his cantatas and this very fine release from Carus confirms this theory. Don't be put off by the presence of a "choir" in the title information; there are actually only 12 singers, and most of them have a turn at singing the solo movements. The band consists of a string quintet (violone on the bottom) with organ and harpsichord. I seriously urge anyone interested in cantatas from the 1730s and 1740s to buy this and play it to all your friends – it is time for a balanced re-appraisal of Graupner the church composer. BC

Handel *Il Pastor Fido* Lucy Crowe Amarilli, Anna Dennis Mirtillo, Katharine Manley Eurilla, Madeleine Shaw Dorinda, Clint van der Linde Silvio, Lisandro Abadie Tirenio La Nuova Musica, David Bates 145' 00"
Harmonia Mundi 907585.86

Composed in 1712, *Il Pastor Fido* was Handel's second operatic offering for the London stage. His first, *Rinaldo*, has been premiered the year before, during Handel's first visit to London and its flamboyant extrovert nature may have been designed to catch the public's attention in preparation for a return by the young German composer. By contrast, *Il Pastor Fido* is a very gentle work, with a rather dull 25-

minute overture. David Vickers suggests in his (excellent) sleeve notes that Handel may have intended it as a contrast to the other new opera for the 1712-13 season (*Teseo*). Handel may also have been making allowances for his singers and rehearsal time, especially as he was unfamiliar with the London musicians, singers and audiences. Parts of the opera sound more like Handel's pre-London style but this is due in part to his recycling of some of his pastoral cantatas composed in Italy (1707-09). Aside from the largely-dull overture, the music is pleasantly tuneful. However, *Il Pastor Fido* was not hugely successful with the London audience and lay abandoned until 1734 when Handel revived it with such substantial alterations as to render it an almost entirely new work. Comparing the two versions, the later one benefits from Handel's added experience (though it too borrows heavily from his other works). However, the original does bear scrutiny as a work worth hearing, and, as modern performances (and recordings) of *Il Pastor Fido* tend to be of the later version, it is definitely having this 'world premiere' recording of the original version as a recording in its own right.

The navigation of the complexities of a Handel opera plot can sometimes be helped by the use of a suitably weighty voice for the male characters and Anne Dennis's voice is well suited to a trouser role. However, her first aria, *Fate Crudo*, rather undersells her as an experienced singer of this repertoire. Her over-ornamentation in this recitative-like aria pushes the register higher than the average castrato range and the exaggerated rubato makes it sound more like Monteverdi than Handel.* In addition, her propensity to swoop off an appoggiatura is not enjoyable to this listener. However, first impressions are misplaced, for her style in subsequent arias is much more successful. By contrast, Lucy Crowe is instantly recognizable as being at home in this repertoire, every recitative and aria delivered with an easy aplomb. Katharine Manley shines as Eurilla, although her high notes occasionally exceed the volume of the accompaniment (possibly a recording issue). Clint van der Linde's first aria, *Casta dea*, also suffers from a slight imbalance in recording. Here, the ensemble's full texture should provide something of a dense accompaniment over which van der Linde's voice would easily rise, but instead his rich clear tone is left a little high and dry by the (manufactured) muting of the orchestra. This is

really splitting hairs, for Harmonia Mundi's sound engineers and producers really lead the field in the subtleties of how best to balance voices and early instruments, but even they slip up sometimes. Madeleine Shaw copes extremely well with a rather slow tempo in her first aria (*Mi lascia, mi fuggi*) and Lisandro Abadie makes a pleasant Tirenio (who only appears in the final scene in this version).

Though relatively young as an ensemble, the musicians of *La Nuove Musica* are obviously very much at home in this repertoire. The bassi 'team' delivers the most complex of interlocking recitatives with an ease and understanding sometimes lacking in much 'older' established ensembles, perhaps suggesting a familiarity with each other's playing as well as the repertoire. The extension of this tone into the obbligato numbers (with particularly enjoyable 'cello' obbligatos from Henrik Persson) further suggests that the musicians agreed on their approach prior to recording (or were perhaps selected because of their similarity of style). As a result, the listener is (beneficially) more aware of the music than of the player(s). My only slight bugbear was that the oboe sound was too present in the recording mix, which meant that some of the passages of suspensions with violins could not be appreciated. David Bates's choices of tempi and pacing of scenes are generally excellent, perhaps belying his training as a singer? Insider experience of vocal repertoire surely cannot but help when faced with conducting a whole opera.

Violet Greene

I presume this refers to bad Monteverdi singing; exaggerated rubato is even worse when applied to a composer whose rhythmic notation is so precise. CB

Handel *Xerxes* Ann Murray *Xerxes*, Valerie Masterton *Romilda*, Christopher Robson *Arsamenes*, Jean Rigby *Amastris*, Lesley Garrett *Atalanta*, Christopher Booth-Jones *Elviro*, Rodney Macann, *Ariodates*, English National Opera, Charles Mackerras **Arthaus Musik 100 077 DVD 186'**

At the other end of the scale to *Il Pastor Fido*, *Xerxes* (1738) is a show case not just of Handel's more mature style but also of his personal journey in the intervening years, through the highs and lows of London opera productions and theatre management. Unlike *Il Pastor Fido*, *Serse/Xerxes* has been recorded several times and arias from it feature on many compilation cds. In 1985 (Handel's 300th anniversary year), English National Opera

put on a new production of the opera at the Coliseum Theatre. This featured a new English translation by Nicholas Hytner, and Mackerras conducted from his own new edition. The production was repeated in 1995 and recorded for DVD and (for reasons not explained) has just been re-released by Arthaus Musik. The original production won several prizes for its interpretation, and Charles Mackerras's interpretations of Handel are still valued for their insight. He certainly achieved a great deal in enabling the musicians of ENO to play with what we now regard as an 'authentic' general sound (despite using modern instruments). The wind timbre is not too thick and the strings at least start without vibrato (although it increases throughout the opera). The plastic recorders onstage in Act I are a little unfortunate but in general there is still much to enjoy from the orchestra.

The production itself is still amazing and rightly earned its place in ENO history. Any aspiring Handel opera director would do well to study it. The ENO chorus are effective commentators and Ann Murray is almost convincing as a slightly effeminate Xerxes (with a rather Puccini-esque tone). Unfortunately the other singers all experience problems with what are admittedly very challenging roles and Hytner's translation has not withstood the passage of time, sounding at best comical and at worse downright annoying. Despite these features, however, the place of this production in the canon of Handel opera productions makes it worth re-releasing.

Violet Greene

Handel, *Theodora* Christina Wieland *Theodora*, Diana Schmid *Irene*, Franz Vitzthum *Didymus*, Knut Schoch *Septimius*, Klaus Mertens *Valens* Junge Kantorei, Frankfurt Baroque Orchestra, Joachim Carlos Martini 171' 14" **Naxos, 8.572700-02**

In a surprising contrast, Frankfurt Baroque Orchestra sound almost less historically-informed at times than ENO under Mackerras. With intonation issues in both strings and wind adding to their rather thick tone, the overture is not the easiest to enjoy. A certain heaviness pervades some of the tempi and phrasing within movements too. However, there are lovely moments (such as in Septimius's aria *Descend, kind pity*) and the interpretation as a whole is harmless and free from eccentricities. *Theodora* was, like *Il Pastor Fido*, something of a flop at its first performance, and so underwent two revisions

(1755 and 1759). Joachim Carlos Martini has tried to return as much as possible to the original version and, from his brief paragraph in the booklet notes, can be judged to have the best interests of the music at heart in this recording. Of further interest in the sleeve notes is Christoph Heyl's article, 'Theodora and the London Public'.

Of the singers, Franz Vitzthum and Klaus Mertens shine particularly. Both exhibit a lovely steady tone and timbre across their range, apparently unaffected by some of the orchestra's vagaries. Knut Schoch is also highly accomplished but occasionally struggles at the top of his voice, while Christina Wieland's voice sounds rather uncertain (in both pitch and quality) in her slower arias. Diana Schmid, however, has a warm striking tone that descends into the lower registers of Irene's arias without any audible break. Not a challenger to existing recordings of the work but rather endearing despite its (small) shortcomings. Violet Greene

Handel The Complete Italian Cantatas for Bass Raimund Nolte, Batzdorfer Hofkapelle
Accent Acc 24249 65' 33"

Handel's Italian Cantatas are relatively well-covered by recordings but I was unable to find another disc devoted solely to those composed for bass. The cantatas featured are: *Cuopre tal volta il cielo* (HWV 98), *Dalla Guerra amorosa* (HWV 102a), *Nell'Africane selve* (HWV 136a) and *Spande ancor a mio dispetto* (HWV 165). The cantatas are renowned for their extremely wide register and research has suggested that they were composed for the same bass singer (Domenico Antonio Manna) who sang the equally challenging role of Polifemo in *Aci, Galatea, e Polifemo*. Startling changes of register and huge leaps feature throughout all of the cantatas and although Raimund Nolte's voice by no means reduces every challenge to an unbroken line of sound, his evident mastery of each difficult moment is all the more enjoyable for the different sonorities that he employs in the different registers. Nolte's experience and professionalism is matched by all of the players, making the whole disc a real pleasure to listen to and Karl Böhmer's comprehensive notes add to the enjoyment. A proper recital disc. Violet Greene

Handel Concerto Grossi op. 3 Concerto Copenhagen, Lars Ulrik Mortensen dir
cpo 777488-2 58'35"

With the number of period instrument recordings of the Op. 3 set available, Lars

Ulrik Mortensen has some competition. Here is a straightforward performance of the set, with no gimmicks – clean, spirited playing, always thoughtfully phrased, with sensitive (but never over the top or unstylistic) ornamentation. The minuet, normally printed as one of the middle movements of No. 2, is interestingly placed as the final (fourth) movement of No. 1, thus balancing out the first two concertos and avoiding two consecutive dance movements in the latter. (It was a pity that the writer of the booklet notes was unaware of this, and refers to the first concerto as being in three movements and the second in five).* No. 3, often performed with the solo line on transverse flute, is here on recorder (I suspect an English voice flute, as it goes down to low E), its gentle tone never being drowned by the strings. In contrast, the strong, lively playing in concertos 4 and 5 always has careful attention to phrasing, thankfully with no strong varying of dynamics or instrumentation in the repeats, all of which are observed. In No. 6 Mortensen has chosen to use an additional slow movement for organ solo between the movements, making for a more balanced work in this unusual two-movement concerto. I would not hesitate to recommend this excellent recording – though not the notes! Ian Graham-Jones

It is by no means unusual for the note-writer not to have heard the recording. I recently had an out-of-the-blue request to prepare some music for Alison Balsam and confessed that I'd written notes on her baroque concerto disk without hearing the performance. She seemed not to mind! CB

Handel Die acht grossen Suiten Lisa Smirnova piano 105' 21" (2 CDs)
ECM New Series 476 4107

Being used to hearing these suites on the harpsichord, I was initially suspicious of them on the piano, but this recording has grown on me. Smirnova makes a rather sweeping claim in the booklet that 'the modern concert grand, with its fantastic timbral potential, can add marvellous depth to an understanding of this music'. This goes a bit far, but the piano can certainly give weight to fugal movements, showing the direction and distinguishing between the lines. On the other hand, continuous figuration can sound a bit trivial on the piano and slow movements a bit affected – the E minor Sarabande, for instance, with some slow trilling here. But the piano allows a variety of timbres to be exploited and brings out new things in the music; there is also some nice *sotto*

voce playing. Smirnova doesn't quite bring off what Angela Hewitt manages with J.S. Bach, but she does come close and she shows a good sense of the rhetorical expression of Handel's music which does not always come across on the harpsichord. Some excellent booklet notes by Uwe Schweikert help make up a package which is well worth hearing. Noel O'Regan

Hasse Reloaded Valer Barda-Sabadus cT, Hofkapelle München, Michael Hofstetter 62' 28"

Oehms Classics OC 830

Music from Didone abbandonata & the cantata La Gelosia and an insert-aria by Porpora for a London pasticcio based on Hasse's *Artaserse*

Regular readers of these pages will know that I am no signed-up member of the International Counter-Tenor Appreciation Society, so there will be mutterings in the gallery about my enthusiasm for the present recording. To be fair, he is more a male soprano in the Philippe Jaroussky mould than an alto. Like the Frenchman, he has an astonishing range, but he has perhaps an even greater ability to pluck notes of extraordinary purity out of thin air; he is equally capable of drawing those out into longer, shaped notes, coloured without loss of accuracy, and of extraordinary coloratura (as only a composer like Hasse can demand). Michael Hofstetter draws equally virtuosic performances from the Hofkapelle München, especially the pair of horns. Depending on the mood of the aria, the strings vary between a warm supporting colour to a more edgy, exciting timbre, with lots of air between the hair of the bow and gut. The overall winner here, though, is Hasse. The considerable abilities of the young Romanian/German soloist will ultimately serve to show that in the hands of experts like this, Hasse was a force to be reckoned with, not some insipid wannabe halfway between Bach and Mozart – what a pity that more singers do not take up the challenge. Do yourself a favour, though, and don't watch any of the YouTube videos that promote the CD. BC

Knecht Grande Symphonie, Orchesterwerke und Arien Sarah Wegener S, Hofkapelle Stuttgart, Frieder Bernius 48' 18"
Carus 83.228

Le Portrait musical de la Nature ou Grande Symphonie, 3 Arias from *Der Schulz im Dorfe* oder *Der verliebte Herr Doktor*, two overtures, Bravour-Aria from a royal ode

A recurring theme in *EMR* is the dominance of any particular period by a certain composers: Monteverdi around 1600, Bach

and Handel in the high baroque, and so on. In the late classical, early Romantic zone, the colossus is Beethoven -- incomparable in every possible way. Carus and Frieder Bernius continue to explore the music of the fairly obscure Justin Heinrich Knecht and the present recording (just like his opera *Die Geisterinsel* a few issues ago) reveal a very capable composer, with a keen ear for orchestral colour, a definite gift for melodic invention, and quite a few original ideas -- most importantly his very own five-movement pastoral symphony of 1783, complete with a programmatic note detailing the arrival of a storm, its passing, and the general air of rejoicing afterwards. Sounds a little familiar? I don't know what it is that makes me still want to write something about lacking the profundity of Beethoven, but that is how I genuinely feel. The remainder of the disc is comprised of extract from other large works. Sarah Wegener has a very beautiful voice -- full, yet flexible, pitch perfect throughout, and agile through Knecht's most ornate lines. As on previous outings, the Hofkapelle Stuttgart (especially those beautiful winds!) are on excellent form. All in all this disc is a revelation on a number of levels, and I hope Carus continue to support these performers in their advocacy of Knecht's music. BC

Marchand / Rameau Christophe Rousset
hpsc4 69' 20"

Ambronay AMY032

Marchand Suites in d (1699), g (1702) & 3 pieces; **Rameau**: Suite in a (1706)

This recital is as much about the instrument -- one of the first to be built in France with a full five octave chromatic compass -- as about the music. The maker, Pierre Donzelague, was working in Lyon at the same time as Rameau and the note suggests that they may have collaborated on the design of this harpsichord, built in 1716. Marchand (1669-1732) was born in Lyon, so the city serves as the link binding the programme together. The harpsichord has two manuals and a truly sumptuous sound which Rousset exploits to the full in this admirably chosen programme. He avoids the big showpieces in favour of the more restrained side of Rameau as represented in his relatively early suite. The words 'nobility and gravity' that the player uses to describe this music might also be applied to his playing of it. Even the plethora of ornaments has a certain grandeur. Every harpsichord lover should hear this.

David Hansell

Pisendel Violin concertos from Dresden
Johannes Pramsohler, International Baroque Players. 58'08"

Raumklang RK3105

I have reviewed violinist Johannes Pramsohler several times in his role as concertmaster and director of the International Baroque Players and have always been impressed as much for his sensitive and unassuming direction as for his impressive playing. He thoroughly deserves a CD that focuses on his ability as a violin soloist, and who better to accompany him than the talented young players of IBP. The programme is an attractive group of four Concertos and one Sonata by Fasch, Heinichen, Handel, Telemann and Pisendel, all but one represented by world premiere recordings. Pisendel gains the prominence of the CD's title, not just on the basis of the being the world premiere recording of his Concerto in G for violin, horns, oboes, bassoon and strings, but more for his role as concertmaster of the Dresden Court orchestra and his consequent links with the other composers represented. Bach almost certainly had him in mind in the violin solo of *Laudamus te* of the B minor Mass, and Telemann was also well aware of his skills. As well as his undoubted skills as a virtuoso performer, Johannes Pramsohler also shows himself as capable of an outstanding delicacy of tone and musical use of gentle rhetoric. Listen, for example, to the *Affettuoso* of Heinichen's Vivaldian Concerto (track 6) for musical interpretation that really does reaches the parts. Pramsohler is aided by excellent contributions from Joel Raymond and Leo Duarte, oboes, Anneke Scott and Gilbert Cami Farràa, horns, Eva Caballero and Marto Gonçalves, flutes, and Rebecca Stockwell, bassoon. Andrew Benson-Wilson

Porpora Vespro per la Festività dell'Assunta Le Parlement de Musique, La Maîtrise de Bretagne, Martin Gester
ambronay AMY030 64' 04"

Ambronay recordings are always interesting -- the festival explores unfamiliar repertoire, generally works that one reads about in journals but never hears. This is definitely the case here: I have seen editions of Porpora's music for services in the Venice ospedali, but this is the first time I have actually heard any of it. Much has been made of Vivaldi's singing girls giving sacred concerts from behind the grilles high in the church balconies but, as I wrote of Bach above, Vivaldi did not live

in a bubble and he was far from the only major composer writing for such forces. Martin Gester, the director of this project, is also not someone who fears stepping into the unknown -- his fabulous recording of music by Capricornus may be almost 20 years old, but it is still a regular visitor to my CD player! Here, three soloists (sopranos Marilia Vargas and Michiko Takahashi with Delphine Galou, alto) join a "choir" of 12 (SSAA), and a string orchestra (33111) with two theorbos and organ in three psalms (*Laudate pueri*, *Laetatus sum* and *Lauda Jerusalem* -- so not quite a complete Vespers) and a setting for alto and strings of the Marian antiphon, *Salve regina*. My fussy Spanish visitor was not keen on Porpora's filigree and "lack of substance". I, on the other hand, was quite happy to let what was basically a sequence of operatic movements wash over me, nowhere more so than in the *Salve regina*, which I am very surprised has not become a far more regular on concert programmes. What is all the more remarkable about these performances is that they were just that -- the audiences in Ambronay enjoyed these live gems in the wonderful abbey setting. That must have been about as close as it is possible to get to experiencing something of Porpora's world. And quite a wonderful evening! BC

Rameau, Balbastre, Royer Aires d'opéra accommodés pour le clavecin Catherine Zimmer 76'

L'Encelade ECL1001

French harpsichordist Catherine Zimmer has the measure of this collection of arrangements by Balbastre of show tunes from Louis XV's reign. Most are taken from the operas of Rameau and Mondonville, together with airs based on music by Scarlatti, Balbastre himself and others. There is quite a bit of light-hearted flummery here but also more serious *airs tendres* and three more extended pieces by Pancrace Royer which show Zimmer to have both a formidable technique (in the well-known *Marche des Scythes*) and the stamina for longer pieces of musical expression. She plays on a harpsichord by Martine Argellies, after Goujon, and makes good use of its variety of colours with some sensitive registration. A good introduction to the late stages of French harpsichord music, played with a sense of fun and on its own terms.

Noel O'Regan

Seixas Harpsichord Sonatas 2 Débora Halász 73' 38"

Naxos 8.570216

Sonatas 1, 3, 16, 20, 28, 33, 35, 38, 39, 40, 45, 47, 53, 58, 60, 65 & 78

This second volume presents a further 17 sonatas by the Portuguese Carlos de Seixas, who studied with Scarlatti before enjoying a successful career with the court in Lisbon. It starts with a blaze of notes and most tracks here stress the virtuosic side of Seixas oeuvre; there is less of the balance between showmanship and reflection than on Volume 1 and even the second-movement minuets tend to be played quickly and do not give much respite. Halász is primarily a pianist and, while her playing has great confidence and élan, it lacks something in the subtlety of expression and agogic rubato which this music needs if it is to really work on the harpsichord. She plays on the same Haas copy by Lutz Werum as on Volume 1 and it again shows itself an appropriate instrument for this repertoire. An enjoyable recital, certainly, but one which is perhaps best taken in small doses. *Noel O'Regan*

Seixas Sonatas Nicolau de Figueiredo *hpscd* 73' 49"

Passacaille 971

Sonatas 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 21*, 25*, 42, 43 & 44* (*these are not followed by a minuet in the same key; Sonata 42's minuet also has a *glosa*)

The first nine of these sonatas come from those published by Santiago Kastner in 1980, having come to light subsequent to his major publication of Seixas sonatas of 1965; the final three are from the early collection. Most are followed by a minuet, in Seixas's common two-movement form, and the sonatas chosen here show the variety of approaches to form and motivic structure used by the composer in both types of movement. The Brazilian harpsichordist Figueiredo is a very sympathetic exponent, showing the necessary rhythmic flexibility and an understanding of where the music is going, as well as plenty of virtuosity when needed. He plays a harpsichord by Emile Jobin after Goujon of 1749. The emphasis is firmly on the music, which can show some real depth – try the pair 7-8 in d minor! *Noel O'Regan*

Soler Harpsichord Sonatas Anna-Maria Oramo *hpscd* 66'

Alba ABCD 328

Sonatas 5, 6, 18, 24, 34, 37, 61, 69, 71, 84, 106 & 107

The Finnish harpsichordist Anna-Maria Oramo has self-confessedly swapped her native snow and dark winters for the sun

and sparkle of Spain in this selection of sonatas, which she plays with both virtuosity and a clear understanding of their various moods. Soler's world seems at ease with itself, and his music does not make great emotional demands, but there is considerable challenge in making the many repeated phrases and sequences work without becoming banal. Oramo achieves this very well with the right balance between rhythmic precision and swing. The result, played on a copy by Keith Hill of the Russell Collection 1769 Taskin, is a satisfying and varied recital which also shows off the harpsichord's brilliance and tonal variety. *Noel O'Regan*

Telemann Cantatas [Stefanie Wüst, Angela Froemer, Georg Poplutz, Jens Hamann SATB], Collegium vocale Siegen, Hannoversche Hofkapelle, Ulrich Stötzl *Hänssler CD98.624* 48' 51"

Daran ist erschienen die Liebe Gottes TVWV 1:165, *Gott fährt auf mit Jauchzen* TVWV 1:642 & *Ich weiß daß mein Erlöser lebt* TVWV 1:873

In many ways, I could just copy and paste my Graupner review into this space and simply change the names! Although Telemann's instrumental music (well, his chamber music at least) has a serious footing in the repertoire of most baroque ensembles, his vocal music remains little known outside Magdeburg, Frankfurt, Washington and Chicago (for anyone surprised by the last two names, google will prove useful!) and when it is performed, it's either in combination with a similarly scored piece by Bach (because the "big name" will bring in the audience) or in the context of a festival (like the Telemann-Festtage in Magdeburg). The three cantatas on this CD would easily stand comparison to Bach – it's not that one composer is "better" than the other; they have contrasting aesthetic goals – one is interested in word painting and conveying the meaning of the text through music, while the other has his formidable armoury of musical complexities, drawing emotion in an altogether different way. These lively performances and bright, crisp recordings perfectly capture the essence of each cantata, and if the disc does not sell as well as it deserves to, that can only be our fault for choosing not to explore rich new sources of musical pleasure. *BC*

Vivaldi Orlando Furioso Marie-Nicole Lemieux *Orlando*, Jennifer Larmore *Alcina*, Verónica Cangemi *Angelica*, Philippe Jaroussky *Ruggiero*, Christian Senn *Astolfo*, Kristina Hammarström *Bradamante*,

Romina Basso *Medoro*, Choeur du Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Ensemble Matheus, Jean-Christophe Spinosi 190' DVD naïve DF2148

I reviewed this when it appeared on CD. I'm not sure that seeing the action has altered my opinion. If anything, I'm pretty certain I would avoid the DVD were I to want to listen to it again. There is nothing especially outlandish about the video (no distracting dancers twitching their way through robotic choreography, for example) but there are too many oversized pieces of furniture which find their way around the set at various points. As far as the music goes, well, there are some stunning arias (as there are in all Vivaldi operas), and just a little too much recitative. The singing is mostly top notch – what else would you expect from such a cast list? – and the orchestra plays very well. If you did miss the original release and you enjoy watching operas, I am sure this will be more successful for you than for me! *BC*

Vivaldi La Porta delle Muse Concerti & Sinfonie Florian Deuter, Mónica Waisman *vlns*, Harmonie Universelle 61' 31"

Accent ACC 24266

RV125,* 128, 138, 157, 246,* 330,* 508* & 510 [*=world premiere recording*]

It is astonishing that this CD includes four premieres – how can this be in a world where we have Four Seasons and the Gloria coming out of our ears? The simple answer is economics; it takes a proudly pioneering record company like Accent to sign up a young, enthusiastic group like Harmonie Universelle and let them perform and record the material and, *quel surprise!* it's not half bad... Apart from the repertoire novelty, this disc also features too unfamiliar sounds in an 18th-century band, namely the harp and the psaltery. Whether or not you imagine their presence to be accurate historically, they enrich the timbre of the few pieces they each play in. The ensemble's sound is bright and forthright – and the ripieno are absolutely unanimous in accompaniment. Florian Deuter's premiere performance of the fiendish-sounding RV 330 is very impressive, as is his neat duetting with Mónica Waisman in RV508. I hope this is the first of many Accent outings for them. *BC*

Vivaldi The Four Seasons op. 8 Nos 1-4, Violin Concertos RV 271, 277, 375 Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra Elizabeth Blumenstock *vl* Nicholas McGegan *cond* 75'30" PBP-03

Having reviewed the Avison Ensemble's recording of *The Seasons* with Beznosiuk in the last issue, it was interesting to compare these two versions side by side. Whereas the Avisons offer a chamber-like period sound, McGegan's version comes over as the more orchestral in texture, although the plucked continuo is well to the fore. The sizes of the bands in each recording, as listed in the booklets, however, are roughly similar. Overall, I found McGegan's interpretation the more dramatic and Beznosiuk's the more sensitive and intimate. At times the Philharmonia's bass line (even though there was only one double bass listed as playing) sounded somewhat thunderous, the dynamic contrasts somewhat too artificial, and the staccato style (what some baroque players have described as 'picky') a little too overdone – at least for my taste. Having said that, one cannot fault Elizabeth Blumenstocks's performance in all these concerti. It is good to have these three additional concertos, all unfamiliar to me, recorded, though I suspect that *The Seasons* is already in most people's library. Whereas the Avisons offer all eight concerti from the Op. 8 set on 2 CDs, McGegan supplements the disc with three virtuosic miscellaneous concerti on the single disc; excellent value per minute!

Ian Graham-Jones

Vivaldi *The Return of Angels* Ensemble Caprice, Matthias Maute, Gabriele Hierdeis & Shannon Mercer S, Laura Pudwell mezzos 57'46"

Analekta AN 2 9995

RV563 & 566; *In exitu Israel, Laudate Dominum; O qui coeli terraeque serenitas*; Extracts from *Juditha triumphans* & *Gloria*; Zelenka: Extracts from *Gesù al calvario* ZWV 62

I associate Ensemble Caprice and Matthias Maute with exciting and innovative recordings of instrumental music, but this is a sequel to their recording 'Gloria! Vivaldi's Angels' and returns to Vivaldi's Venice and the Ospedale della Pietà orphanage with a programme of mainly vocal music for female voices with orchestra. The disc starts with a warlike opening in extracts from the oratorio *Juditha triumphans*, composed when Venice was at war with the Ottoman Empire, and ends with a plea for peace in the chorus *Et in terra pax* from the Gloria. A recitative and tragically beautiful chorus for female voices from Zelenka's oratorio *Gesù al calvario* is the one piece not by Vivaldi and depicts Mary's suffering at the foot of the cross. In between the vocal works we are treated to two concerti, RV 566 for two

recorders, two oboes and two violins, and RV 563 for trumpet and oboe. For me the highlight of the programme is Vivaldi's motet *O qui coeli terraeque serenitas* for solo soprano (Gabriele Hierdeis) with strings and continuo, but everything on this disc, more serious than Ensemble Caprice's usual offerings, is well worth hearing.

Victoria Helby

The current Early Music America (18/1 pp.27-30) has an article on the two "Angels" discs, including comments on how the tenor and bass problem is dealt with.

CB

Weiss, *Lute Sonatas, Volume 11 Nos. 30, 39 and 96* Robert Barto (lute) 65'40"
Naxos 8.572680

Here are three more Sonatas by Silvius Leopold Weiss played by Robert Barto. Sonata no. 39 in C major 'Partita grande' begins with a long Overture in the French style, breaking into a well-paced fugue. Surprising sevenths help to guide us through various keys as the theme is developed, now high up the neck, now low on the diapasons. There follows quite a lengthy Courante, unrushed but with lots of forward movement, and a delightfully delicate ending. The Bourrée seems a little ponderous as it explores the lower reaches of the lute, but sudden little bursts of very fast arpeggios require a well-moderated tempo overall. Brief shifts from major to minor and back, and short passages in octaves, add to the variety. The Sarabande, like so many by Weiss, is extremely beautiful, exploiting the whole range of the instrument, with some surprising harmonies. The Menuet lacks much of its characteristic rhythmic pull of 2s and 3s, and sounds more like Courante. The Presto rattles along for over six minutes, with shock modulations as it explores various keys, and satisfying sequences as it moves on from one peak to another.

Sonata no. 96 in G major is described on the CD cover as "an elegant work probably conceived for teaching purposes". Certainly it is less substantial than Sonata no. 39, with much shorter movements, and although it has a movement more than Sonata no. 39, the overall timing (15' 36") is roughly half that of no. 39 (27' 56"). Nevertheless it is a fine piece with an overall feeling of optimism. A graceful, well-poised Prelude, is followed by the longest movement of the suite, a non-dance-based Andante. A short Courante is followed by a cheerful Bourrée, a bright Sarabande, and a chirpy Menuet, with a graceful Presto to finish.

Sonata no. 30 in E flat major has a

different feel to the other Sonatas, perhaps because of its key, but also because four of its movements are different. There is an Allemande, which is by far the longest movement of this Sonata, a lively Rigaudon and Gavotte, and *Le Sans Souci* to finish. *Sans Souci* seems to refer to the summer palace of the flute-playing King Frederick the Great of Prussia, but as Michel Cardin has pointed out (search online for Cardin Weiss London Sonata 24 [sic]), the palace was built at least 20 years after Weiss's *Sans Souci* had been written.

Barto's playing is always exceptionally fine. He shows a deep understanding of the overall picture, and gives constant attention to detail. This, his eleventh CD of music by Weiss, could well be the best so far.

Stewart McCoy

1700 *The century of the Portuguese* Gemma Bertagnolli S, Divino Sospiro dir Enrico Onofri 64'12"

Dynamic CDS 709

PA Avondano, PG Avondano, FA de Almeida

A few issues ago I reviewed an attractive disc of Catalan sacred music. Now comes a disc from the western side of the Iberian peninsula which offers an equally appealing insight into the musical life of mid-18th century Lisbon. The varied programme (an operatic *scena*, a cantata, an aria, two sinfonias and a harpsichord concerto) keeps the listener's interest though with such a consistently high standard of performance this is never an issue anyway. For me the vocal music is more engaging than the instrumental items, though there are some inventive textures in those. However, Gemma Bertagnolli absolutely throws herself at the opening *Scena de Berenice* and any slight losses of complete vocal control are easily forgiven in the overall context. The booklet essay is comprehensive though not immune from some passages of lumpy English. However, there are no texts or translations even though they could have been accommodated without extra pages.

David Hansell

Affettuoso Emilio Percan vn, Oriol Aymat Fusté vlc, Luca Quintavalle hpscd 74' 52"

Onyx Classics ONYX 4099

Music by Geminiani (op 1/7 & 8), Handel (op 1/13) & Piani (op 1/2, 4, 8 & 10)

The young Macedonian violinist Emilio Percan is clearly someone to look out for. Alongside four world premiere recordings (of sonatas by the little-known Neapolitan composer, Giovanni Antonio Piani –

though they were actually published under his French name Desplantes, having later taken that nationality), he gives commanding performances of two pieces from Geminiani's Op. 1 and the ever-popular Sonata in D by Handel. The cello bassline is equally eloquent and shaped; the harpsichordist is partial to counter melodies in the Ton Koopman style, which is generally fine, though at times I felt his cadential flourishes rather took attention away from the violin; this was most noticeable in the Handel, where the cellist drops out. In any case, I hope Percan will go on to record the remainder of Piani's Op. 1. He is a fine young fiddler and we will surely hear more from him. BC

Baroque Masterpieces for Harpsichord
Trevor Pinnock 73' 18"

Regis RRC1332

Arne Sonata 6 in G; Greene Overture in D;
Handel Suite 5; Rameau *L'Agacante*,
L'Indiscrete, *La Livri*, *La Pantomime*, *La Timide*;
D. Scarlatti Kk. 46, 87, 124, 490-2

This is a compilation CD, abstracted and remastered from other recordings. The booklet notes, though informative about the music, give no information about dates of recording or the harpsichords played. Trevor Pinnock is on his usual stylish form in a recital which mixes well-known favourites with convincing performances of two English pieces: Arne's simple but effective two-movement Sonata, which includes his well-known Presto, and Greene's three-movement Italianate overture. These stand up well against the competition on this CD. Pinnock's Handel Suite brings out its mixed stylistic background with an easy virtuosity. The Rameau pieces here may not be the most sparkling in Pinnock's Rameau repertoire but they do show the composer's more reflective side. The six Scarlatti sonatas produce both stately and scintillating performances. As a taster of the very wide range of music which Pinnock has recorded, this is a useful and welcome CD. Noel O'Regan

Il Vero Orfeo Sonatas for viola da Gamba
by Corelli, Schenck, Händel Friederike
Heumann viola da gamba 58' 29"

Corelli's Opus V for violin were transcribed for viola da gamba early in the 18th century. The MS is, or should be, well-known to viol players since its publication over 30 years ago in an excellent Alamire facsimile. It's beautifully written, in a professional hand, a more or less literal transcription of the original. Friederike Heumann plays the opening Adagio of

the unaccompanied Sonata V in E minor from Schenck's *L'Echo du Danube* as a prelude to Corelli's sonata VIII in the same key, in which she is accompanied at first by the cellist (Patrick Sepec), who realises the harmonies in simple chords and arpeggios, to be joined on the repeat by harpsichord (Dirk Börner) and theorbo (Eduardo Egüez) while she embellishes. It's beautifully played, with great intensity. They do the same with the Allemanda, its repeats embellished by all members of the team, with hers particularly brilliant and idiomatic. They repeat this pattern for the Sarabanda, and the gigue which completes the sonata is played throughout in full by all. It's an atmospheric opening to the recital, and although it would be nice to have heard her play the full Schenck sonata – it's got a particularly engaging gavotte and giga – the point of the recording is to demonstrate the influence of Corelli on his contemporaries, as well as to demonstrate how viol players of the time, notably Forqueray and Schenck, wanted to be able to play Italian sonatas on the viola da gamba. Forqueray achieved it reportedly by transcribing Italian compositions, Schenck by writing in that style.

Corelli and Handel worked together extensively during Handel's Italian period, and his G-minor sonata shows the effect this relationship had on him. This is followed by Corelli's Sonata III in C, in turn followed by two movements only from Schenck's Sonata II in A minor from *L'Echo du Danube*. The final movement of this, the second that she plays, has an obbligato bass part, here played on the cello, in addition to the continuo line, played on organ and lute. Schenck employs almost every possible combination in a concert-type movement, including a solo passage for the cello with continuo and a haunting section for unaccompanied viol, before a playful tutti close. It's a beautiful piece, and I wonder why they didn't record the intervening three dance movements. The recording concludes with the Corelli no VI in G (A in the original). This is the most taxing piece, with the chords typical of Corelli's fugal movements. She plays it, as she does throughout, brilliantly, with that extra energy, intensity and virtuosity this music demands. All the players join in the improvisational approach, which makes it compelling listening throughout. Highly recommended.

Robert Oliver

Musicalisches Vielerley: Keyboard Music of the German Baroque Marcin Swiatkiewicz
Polskie Radio Katowice PRK091 66' 02"
JSBach BWV910, 1080/1; CPEBach Wq 48/2;

Buxtehude BuxWV163; Froberger FbWV 407, 603; Handel: HWV430 Weckmann Toccata in a

This is a somewhat eclectic mix of music by German composers united by their use, in one form or other, of the stylus fantasticus which is traced from Froberger and Weckmann through to CPE Bach. Swiatkiewicz shows a real empathy for this highly rhetorical music, making the logic of each composer's different approach clear to the listener. He plays on a harpsichord by Christian Fuchs of 2008 which is very clearly recorded; this is matched by great clarity in the playing. At the centre of this recording are two extended pieces: a Preludium in G by Buxtehude and J. S. Bach's Toccata in F sharp, which Swiatkiewicz sees as composed in homage to Buxtehude. In both pieces he makes convincing use of the harpsichord as a rhetorical instrument as well as showing real virtuosity in his playing. Noel O'Regan

Affectuoso - Virtuoso Guitar Music from the Eighteenth Century, Taro Takeuchi
baroque guitar and English guitar, with Judy
Tarling vln and Terence Charlston hpscd.
Deux-Elles DXL 1146.

J.C. Bach, Geminiani Handel Merchi,, Straube

The music on this extremely interesting and entertaining CD involves two very different instruments: a wire-strung 6-course English guitar, usually spelt with an extra 't', and tuned to a chord of C major (g', e', c', g, e, c); a 5-course baroque guitar with gut strings (nowadays often synthetic), and tuned like a modern guitar without a 6th course (e', b, g, d, A). Taro Takeuchi's three instruments are originals: a guitar with an ivory fingerboard made by Thomas Perry of Dublin (c.1760); a smaller guitar with a tortoiseshell fingerboard by John Preston of London (c. 1770); and a baroque guitar from the Jean Nicolas Lambert workshop in Paris c.1765. His accompanists also play originals: a violin by Benoît Fleury of Paris c. 1759, and a harpsichord by Jacob Kirkman of London c. 1766.

The CD opens with three pieces for Guittar by Rudolf Straube, published in London in 1768, and available (still?) in facsimile by Chanterelle: first, a dreamy, prelude-like *Fantasie*, the notation of which invites some freedom in interpretation: static semibreve chords (the first with a trill), rising arpeggios in semiquavers, a plentiful supply of thirds (typical of so much guittar music), many ornaments, louds and softs, a few triplets, lots of pause signs, and even a sign for

vibrato (dots as used for a clavichord *Bebung*); second, a Tempo di Minuet with a lengthy second section littered with arpeggios involving the first two open courses, and a few post-baroque flattened thirds; and third, a slow Largo with much rhythmic variety. All are played sympathetically on the Perry guitar.

The baroque guitar is used for an extraordinary set of contrasting variations on *La Folia* by Giacomo Merchi. Variations include a sparse single line of comparatively slow notes, triplets, tremolos, and a quite extraordinary sequence of harsh discordant notes with a dotted rhythm, before super-fast arpeggios kick in.

Takeuchi is joined by Judy Tarling for a quaint Sonata for Guittar and Violin by J. C. Bach. Both share melodic material, and although some of the harmonies are fairly banal, their interpretation and the contrast in timbre of plucked metal and bowed gut strings are most gratifying.

The English guitar was fashionable in England with well-to-do young ladies, until the harpsichord-maker Kirkman allegedly gave a few away to women of a lower social standing. One can imagine Anne Ford (famously holding a guittar in a painting by Gainsborough) playing arrangements of well-known pieces like Handel's Minuet from the Water Music (track 8), with its liberal dose of parallel thirds.

Takeuchi is ably accompanied by Terence Charlston for Straube's substantial Sonata 1. Inevitably the harpsichord has a tendency to drown the guittar, but the guittar's faster note-values aid audibility. The CD ends with Geminiani's extrovert *Menuet Affectuoso* played on the baroque guitar. The CD is dedicated to the late James Tyler. *Stewart McCoy*

Verses and Voluntaries William Whitehead (1723 Jordon organ, St George's, Southall) Regent REGCD366 68' 25"
Music by Arne, Blow, Greene, Hart, Pepusch, Purcell, Roseingrave, Walond,

The 1723 Jordon organ in Southall is the latest in a series of intelligent restorations of English historic organs from the 18th century, in this case by the distinguished firm of Mander Organs (2009). Originally built for Wren's St George's, Botolph Lane, it was opened by Maurice Greene, a sign of its importance. It was moved to Southall when that church was demolished in 1904 (a decision apparently made in the presence of Edward VII in Council). As well as its splendid case, it includes much original pipework and one of the oldest surviving windchests from any British

organ builder. It has been returned to its 1723 state, with long compass Great and short compass Swell/Echo division (the latter with the Nags head swell typical of the period). The programme opens with music from the end of the 17th century with Blow and Purcell et al. With track 4 we first hear the distinctive, and so English, sound of the combined Open and Stopt Diapasons in the slow opening to the 'Voluntary in d', a foretaste of the early 18th century style that takes up the rest of the CD. Maurice Greene is represented by a transcription (by WW) of the three-movement Overture to *Phoebe*. After some of Roseingrave's rather anarchic and Scarlatti-inspired pieces (showing the 1/6 comma meantone temperament to interesting effect), the CD ends with eight movements from Pepusch's curious 12-movement Voluntary, a work possibly intended for the opening of an organ. William Whitehead is normally associated with a much later repertoire, but this foray into the earlier English repertoire shows an understanding of and empathy with this fascinating music. His commendable un-mannered playing will repay repeated listening. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *Die Israeliten in der Wüste* Gudrun Sidonie Otto, Nele Gramß, Hermann Oswald, Michael Schopper, Salzburger Hofmusik, Wolfgang Brunner cpo 777 560-2 75' 46"

The oratorio *The Israelites in the Desert*, composed in 1768-9, is the work with which Emanuel Bach introduced himself to his Hamburg audience following his appointment as director of music in the wake of Telemann. The great and good of the city that attended the first performance must have been pleased to find their choice vindicated not only by a fine work, but also one that recognisably followed in the footsteps of the dramatic oratorios of Bach's great predecessor. It is cast in the usual two parts, the first telling of the miserable plight of the Israelites as they wander the desert after the exit from Egypt, the second their praise of God after Moses miraculously strikes water from the rock. The first part in particular frequently exploits a strong dramatic imagery brought vividly alive in this splendid new recording, the aspect that most clearly distinguishes it from the more liturgically inclined 1988 version under William Christie. Employing smaller forces than Christie, Wolfgang Brunner draws

from all his singers a vital, communicative response to the text. All four soloists are excellent, with the two sopranos who sing the parts of the First and Second Israelite nicely differentiated in tonal colour and a commanding Moses from the experienced bass Michael Schopper, imperious in his anger with the whingeing Israelites, humble in the face of his God. His "Gott, sieh dein Volk" (God, behold thy people lying in the dust"), with its heavy-laden bassoon obbligato, is one of the highlights of the performance. While I would not like to be without Christie – not least because he has the divine Barbara Schlick among his soloists – I'm inclined to think that this fresh, strongly characterised performance is now the one to have. *Brian Robins*

Boccherini Armonie dello Spirito Gemma Bertagnolli, Ensemble Aurora 49'
Unitel Classica 2072558 DVD
Boccherini Stabat mater G. 532 (1st version with string quintet); *Mozart Adagio & Fugue* K. 546

Subtitled 'Musical Meditations for Italian Basilicas', this is a thoroughly rum do that never quite decides whether it is trying to be a guide to two wonderful Italian basilicas – those of Santa Casa, Loreto and San Lorenzo in Florence – or present valid performances of Mozart's *Adagio and Fugue*, K.546 and the original 1781 string quintet version of Boccherini's *Stabat Mater*. On both counts it fails spectacularly. The production standards are utterly shoddy; we are never told which basilica is which – I can tell you that when you see Bartagnolli in her green and black dress we are in Santa Casa. As that suggests, the Boccherini alternates between performances split between the two venues, which of course have distractingly differing acoustics. As if that wasn't enough, the leaflet gives a total timing of 2' 08" for the Mozart; in fact the 4' 34" devoted to the 'Opening' also includes the Adagio. To complete a depressing saga, the camera is so torn between the choice of showing us the beauties of the buildings and focussing on the performers that it is never still for more than a few moments, thus achieving the worst of all worlds.

Lurking beneath this nonsense there are extremely good performances trying to make an impression. Gemma Bertagnolli brings an affecting mixture of passionate interiority and lustrous tone, being sympathetically supported by Enrico Gatti and his Ensemble Aurora. But it's all too much of an uphill struggle. By the end of the film, I felt more distracted and irritated than uplifted or soothed. *Brian Robins*

Boccherini String Trios op. 1, Symphonies op. 35 Trio Arcophon; I Philharmonici di Bologna, Angelo Ephrikan cond. 3 CD set (trios 70'30", symphonies 46'47", 42'44") Newton Classics 8802102

These works are performed on modern instruments, and therefore may not be to the taste of some *EMR* clientele. Nevertheless, at least for Boccherini aficionados, it is good to have a recording of the complete sets of these works. One assumes that the rationale for offering a set of three CDs is that the symphonies on their own may not have been seen as good value considering the short length of these two discs. Although non-period performances are often stylistically aware and may be seen to be as satisfactory as those performed on period instruments, one cannot say this of Trio Arcophon, where the vibrato (and indeed the occasional portamento) may to some seem off-putting. The three-movement symphonies, however, are more interesting works, and the playing lets the music speak for itself. Ian Graham-Jones

Giacinto & Vincenzo Calderara e la musica a tastieristica sebauda del XVIII secolo Mario Stephano Tonda fp 54'34" TACTUS TC 720001

At first sight, this is a really interesting disc: late 18th-century Italian keyboard sonatas, all transcribed from MS sources and recorded here for the first time. For his effort in bringing this repertoire to light, Mario Stephano Tonda deserves the utmost credit. The music presented here forms an intriguing foil to the more familiar works by other contemporary Italian composers such as Baldassare Galuppi or Padre Martini. That said, however, these sonatas are of varying quality. The best – particularly the sonatas by the Calderaras – are well conceived; but some of the other pieces descend into rapid note spinning that makes one want to reach for the 'skip' button. Undoubtedly the finest is the opening sonata by Vincenzo Calderara, which has a sure sense of development and in its minor-key slow movement a sense of drama reminiscent of early Haydn. The booklet notes are packed full of general and specific information about the music and the composers. They do seem to be designed only for the most determined of readers, though, since in both the Italian and English the sentence construction is strewn with sub-clauses. Following the sense of what is written is actually quite

challenging. As for the performances, the Tonda gives convincing accounts of the works, and at all times his playing is clean and tidy. His instrument, a Walther copy by McNulty, is well recorded and perfectly voiced, though clearly a different instrument might have proved a better medium for the music. Certainly, some of the pieces sound rather insipid on an instrument designed for the likes of Beethoven. In sum, this is an enterprising project and worth hearing, but not one that will provide a particularly deep or lasting musical experience. Warwick Cole

Cherubini Arias and Overtures from Florence to Paris Maria Grazia Schiavo, Auser Musici, Carlo Ipata 58'07" Hyperion CDA67893

Music from *Armida abbandonata* (overture & *Qual da venti combattuta*), *Démophon* (overture), *Il Giulio Sabino* (overture & *I mesti affetti miei*), *Ifigenia in Aulide* (Turbata ai dubbi accenti), *Mesenzio re d'Etruria* (sinfonia) & *Scena e rondeau* (*Ti lascio adorato mio ben*) & *D'un dolce ardor la face* (for Salieri's *La grotta di Trofonio*)

It was Berlioz who, with malicious delight, recorded that Louis XVIII's Director of Fine Arts reputedly mischievously once asked Cherubini why he had never composed any operas. While never having felt anything like as cruel as that about Cherubini, I must admit that he is a composer I can sometimes admire, but rarely warm to. So I turned to this disc hoping for enlightenment, if hardly expecting an epiphany. It is mainly concerned with operas composed in the 1780s, the first decade Cherubini devoted extensively to opera, but there is also a big recitative and scena written in 1789 for the Parisian star Mademoiselle Baletti. All the operas featured here are late examples of the *seria* form, a genre in which Cherubini had relatively little success. The arias are predominantly bravura in character, but to a mind honed on earlier *seria* operas they significantly fail to express the emotional state suggested by the text. It is music that might have been expected to be grist to the mill of Maria Grazia Schiavo, but she is above all a singing actress at her best in more vivacious and characterful music – she remains the best Handel Partenope I have heard. Here, although the coloratura is despatched with enviable agility, she seems relatively uninvolved and some of her upper notes come perilously close to screaming. The overtures are perhaps more interesting, particularly as regards to orchestration. That for *Il Giulio Sabino* (London, 1786) especially is an impressive three-movement structure,

with some nice concertante writing in the central Adagio. But I continue to await my Damascene moment. Brian Robins

Eberl Piano Concertos op. 32 & op. 40 - cpo 62'03"

Mozartians will probably be familiar with the name of Viennese-born Anton Eberl, if less likely to have encountered his music. Nine years Mozart's junior and like him a child prodigy, it has been suggested that the young Eberl had lessons with Mozart, though there is no evidence to support the idea. Later some of Eberl's works were misattributed to Mozart, and his connections with the Mozart family continued after the death of the latter, Eberl undertaking a tour with Constanze and Aloysia in 1795-6.

Unsurprisingly, then, these two piano concertos dating from around 1805 are fully-fledged Mozartian concertos, each in three movements, the first a large-scale 'sonata form' structure. Indeed, one might look to Mozart's K.467 and K.482 for a parallel, since they share the same key (C major, op. 32 and E flat, op. 40) and full scoring with trumpets and drums, with both Mozart and Eberl including clarinets in their E flat concertos. Similar, too, are the felicitous use of the wind band and the limpid arpeggiated cantabiles of the central movements. But Eberl was no Mozart. To hear why one need go no further than the development of the opening Allegro of op. 42, overall much the most impressive movement in these concertos. Here, instead of the rich contrasts of tonality and chromatically heightened tension routinely experienced in the developments of the mature Mozart, there is only disappointingly bland drifting and a lessening of tension.

Notwithstanding such weaknesses (and there are others), these are accomplished pieces that give considerable pleasure, especially in these well-executed performances. Paolo Giacometti is the more accomplished fortepianist, but Riko Fukuda, the wife of the owner of the fine Matthias Müller (Vienna, c.1810) instrument, is only marginally less fluent and poetic. Brian Robins

Joseph Haydn, Haydn à l'anglaise, Café Mozart, with Emma Kirkby S, Rogers Covey-Crump T, Jenny Thomas fl, Ian Gammie gtr, Alastair Ross square piano Nimbus Alliance N16174

Café Mozart was founded by Derek McCulloch in 1985 with the aim of

exploring the music of Haydn in England towards the end of the 18th century. The present CD consists of three elements: songs by Haydn from collections first published in 1781 and 1784, and published with English words in England in 1786 and 1789 respectively; ballads published in England in 1786 and 1787 with English words added to instrumental music by Haydn; and canzonettas by Haydn published in England in 1794 and 1795, and arranged as piano solos by Thomas Haigh, who had been a pupil of Haydn in the early 1790s. The English words for the songs in the 1781/1786 collection were supplied by William Shield, some as more or less straight translations from the original German, some as paraphrases of the German text, and some with completely different words. The English words for the ballads published in 1787 were written by Dr Samuel Arnold. The accompaniment for the songs was originally for keyboard (piano or harpsichord) or harp, but Café Mozart have added a guitar in line with performance practice in Germany. Introductions and interjections on the flute create a welcome extra dimension.

Many of the songs deal with aspects of love, whether it be Molly (having had Colin at her side) telling her mother she is too late, or Phyllis who, without a frown or smile, sat and knotted all the while. Rogers Covey-Crump sings the *Sailor's Song* with passion, clearly enjoying the alliteration of "rattling ropes and rolling seas", and a "raging main" echoed by low thumping chords on the piano. It is light-hearted stuff, but with a serious patriotic note that, "The roaring cannon loudly speaks, 'Tis Britain's glory we maintain". Emma Kirkby's interpretation of the nostalgic "My mother bids me bind my hair" is particularly touching. It is followed by variations on the same song charmingly performed by Alastair Ross. The CD ends with the thoughtful "What's Life? It is a dream", fading to gentle, well-placed notes on the guitar.

All the instruments are appropriate for the period: the square piano is an original by William Southwell of London dated c.1798; the four-keyed flute is a copy of one by August Grenser c.1790; and the guitar is a copy of René Lacote c.1820. The pitch is A=430, and the temperament (presumably only for the piano) is given as Vallotti. There is a slight out-of-tuneness here and there, but which for me merely adds character to the proceedings. What does trouble me about the recording is the balance between the singers and the instruments. It sounds as if the singers

were close-miked, with big-sounding voices and some vibrato, while the instruments, particularly the guitar, seem to be playing in another room.* This loses some of the cosy, small-scale, domestic atmosphere Café Mozart were aiming at.

Stewart McCoy

*This is particularly odd, since both singers are highly skilful at creating their own balance. CB

Hummel Sonatas for Fortepiano and Violin/Viola, op. 5 Paul Luchkow *vn/va*, Michael Jarvis *fp* 62' 53"

Marquis 7 74718 14192 7

Sonatas I & II (violin), III (viola)

I so wanted to give this a positive write-up. Hummel's music has long been a favourite - one of my earliest memories of listening to Radio 3 (possibly in my late teens) was a piano rondo brilliant in B minor, of which I eventually wore out the cassette recording I had made. With my hand on my heart, though, without wishing to turn uncharacteristically (I hope!) precious about my reviewing reputation (whatever that is - I see these things merely as a record on one person's opinion), I feel that it just is not what it might be. In the first place, the focus of the works is on the keyboard instrument, so it should be at the front of the sound picture - here it sounds slightly muddy and in the background; by contrast, the string player is under the constant unforgiving scrutiny of a very close microphone - this is particularly unfortunate in the case of the Sonata II's *con sordino* "Andantino con grand' espressione (Sotto voce e legato assai)" which sounds rather as if the strings had been covered in a thin layer of cooking foil. The viola fairs rather better - and for some reason the balance with the fortepiano is much better. I am sure both of the performers are much better than this recording suggests - perhaps recording the programme in a private residence was not the best of ideas? BC

An edition of the viola sonata is reviewed on p.5.

Mozart Klavierquartette Boyan Vodenitcharov *fp*, Ryo Terakado *vln*, François Fernandez *Va*, Rainer Zipperling *vc* 66' 24"

Flora 1607

K 478 & 493

Reviewing this disc poses a conundrum: what is there to say about a new recording of such familiar mainstream repertoire? Do we need another recording? There is, after all, no shortage of polished performances of both works already available on disc. And as if to underline the point that there is little to say, this CD comes with no

booklet notes, and only the bare minimum of information about the recording - the players' names and a track list (and that Fanfy, Henry, Brigitte and Philippe - whoever they are - are commended for their 'sensations culinaires'). So, here it is: the performance is very competent, much as one would expect; the pianism tidy, well phrased, the tempi neither outlandishly fast or slow, the string playing well executed. The fortepiano is the ubiquitous Walther copy. The recording is clear, though occasionally a bit muddy for the strings. In fact, the disc is rather unremarkable for its very competence. I still prefer my 1980s Saydisc recording from Richard Burnett and the Salomon Quartet. It has much more character.

Warwick Cole

Die Orgel der Prinzessin Anna Amalia von Preussen Roland Münch (1756 Migend organ, Berlin-Karlshorst - Crystal Classics N67 088

The organ was built in 1756 for the Princess Anna Amalia of Prussia, a pupil of CPE Bach. After the usual complicated history, it has ended in a church in the south western Berlin suburb of Karlshorst where it has been restored to its original state. This compilation of 1987 recordings was made before the latest restoration and includes 19th century works and some registrational oddities (use of pedals in the CPE Bach Sonatas, for example) that will limit its interest for *EMR* readers.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

19th CENTURY

von Herzogenberg An Mutter Natur Works for Mixed Choir a cappella Rheinische Kantorei, Hermann Max 65' 15" cpo 777 728-2

Given the period during which he composed, readers of *EMR* are unlikely to be surprised if I confess that the name of Herzogenberg is not only new to me, but is also I suspect making his debut in these pages. For those similarly disadvantaged, Heinrich von Herzogenberg (1843-1900) was the son of an Austrian court official born in Graz. He studied both law and music in Vienna, where he became a lifelong devotee of Brahms, who seems to have returned Herzogenberg's unquestioning admiration with reserve, if not rudeness. Later, he moved to Leipzig, where he co-founded the Bach-Verein with Philipp Spitta. The final part of his career was spent in Berlin, where in 1885 he

became professor of composition at the Hochschule für Musik'

As Herzogenberg's devotion to Brahms and academic career might suggest, his substantial body of works are largely conservative in character, which is certainly true of the *a cappella* works for mixed choir recorded here. Included are both secular and sacred pieces, the former often in the folk-style of the part-songs of Schubert, Mendelssohn and, of course, Brahms. Occasionally charming, at other times rather self-consciously artless, they make for unexceptionable if unexceptional listening. More interesting to my mind are the sacred pieces, in particular the *Vier Choralemotetten*, op. 102, which belong squarely in the Protestant motet tradition that stretches back to Bach and beyond, and which demonstrate Herzogenberg's undoubted mastery of contrapuntal techniques at its best. The performances strike me as being as reliable and idiomatic as you would expect from Max and his experienced vocal ensemble. *Brian Robins*

VARIOUS

Abel en Norvège (an imaginary voyage of a violist) Nils Økland *hardinger fiddle*, Elisabeth Seitz *tympaanon*), Phillipe Pierlot *bass viol* 60'20"
Flora 1307

This is indeed an interesting oddity. Without an accompanying explanatory booklet, it is not feasible to give an informed review of the 19 short pieces comprising a mixture of popular renaissance and baroque arrangements with some Norwegian folk music that constitute this disc. Besides the titles, all in Norwegian, and two short Norwegian poems on the back cover (with no translation), there is no indication of the style or content of the music. The longest track is a sonata by Carl Friedrich Abel for unaccompanied bass viol, thankfully not adorned, like other items, by additions from the other two instruments, and a truly musical performance it is. I suspect, however, that the likes of William Brade, J.K.F. Fischer, Johann Mattheson and J.S. Bach (a great arranger himself) might well turn in their graves at the liberties and adornments in these arrangements. Bach's 'Gavottes I & II' with no source given and no *da capo* done, I recognised as being from French Suite V and English Suite III respectively. Pieces titled 'Nørringen' and 'Fanitullen' are for hardanger fiddle with a quiet drumbeat, and one would not be expected to know that what appears to be their composers

'Voss' and 'Hallingdal' are in fact place names – I've been there! Surely it is not too much to ask – if these performers want their efforts to be promoted – to provide a booklet and translation to explain the rationale of this disc.

Ian Graham-Jones

A Festival of Psalms The Choir of the Temple Church, Sally Price *harp*, Robert Millett *perc*, Greg Morris *org*, James Vivian *dir* 70'20"
Signum SIGCD279

This is more ecclesiastical in approach than the McCreesh anthology reviewed below. It begins with the work most foreign to an Anglican choir, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* – though it was, of course, written for one, its commissioner, John Birch, later moving to The Temple Church. I would have preferred it to have ended the programme, since it makes some of the other pieces seem a bit fusty. And I'd rather have had a more interesting alternatim setting of a Latin psalm than the hybrid concoction that is the ubiquitous Allegri *Miserere*, and perhaps a not-too-long Anglican chant. The best pieces are Byrd's *Teach me O Lord*, Purcell's *Thy word is a lantern* and S.S. Wesley's *Ascribe unto the Lord*, though none of them are complete psalms – S Wesley's *In exitu Israel* would have been a whole psalm. The disc ends with a piece designed for massive forces – 2000 voices of the Salisbury Diocesan Choral Association's Festival in 1894 with the band of Portsmouth Royal Marines by Parry. Sadly, the band isn't here, and the setting overstretches it's welcome – but at least there's a tune you will recognise. An interesting idea, and well performed. But the best way to get the feel for complete psalms is to buy one of the innumerable Vesper services – after Monteverdi and Mozart, try Rigatti, Cavalli, Biber, for instance. I seem a bit too critical; as an anthology, it's has a good programme, is well sung, and worth buying; but it could have been more closely focussed to its title. *CB*

Madrigali Fire & Roses Con Anima Chamber Choir, Paul Mealer 65'24"
Divine Art ddaz5094

Barry, Gesualdo, Monteverdi, Ruffo, Schaffn, Scotto, Ward & Wilbye + Lauridsen, Mealer, Holst & MacMillan & anon

This CD combines madrigals from the golden age of the 16th century with contemporary works by Morten Lauridsen, James MacMillan, and Paul Mealer, the group's

director. The largish ensemble of nineteen voices is used in its entirety for the modern works, and one voice to a part for the early material. Unfortunately, while this decision is undoubtedly a wise one, in the case of the early material it lays bare a lack of unanimity in vocal production, with some warbling in the alto range which is hidden in the larger choir. It is unfortunate for *EMR* readers that the pieces which will probably be of most interest are the weaker component of this CD. However, if you are interested in choral music in general, this CD is worth investing in for the impressive showcase it gives to contemporary choral singing, and in particular Paul Mealer's vision of his own compositions. *D. James Ross*

A Song of Farewell: Music of Mourning & Consolation Gabrieli Consort, Paul McCreesh 75'56"
Winged Lion SIGCD 281

I could easily have passed this over, since it is not primarily an "early music" programme. In fact, 20'40" are devoted to early music, the most substantial being Morley's funeral sentences (without Purcell's substitution). The singing struck me as a bit overstated for their function in an Anglican funeral: Paul writes in the booklet (no page number to quote) "I am constantly imploring singers not to be frightened of expressing the emotions of the text", but some music (both early and late) needs the decorum of a formal reading of a lesson. Maybe, though, a different quality is needed when the music is removed from the liturgy. I wondered if the style and sound was intended not to contrast with that of the "modern" music (from Parry to Dove). The *raison d'être* of the disc is Howell's *Requiem* and it is impressive as the core of a powerful programme. Going back to the opening Gibbons hymn "Drop, drop slow tears", it then seemed right. Some discs are built out of contrast: this glories in its breadth of tone, matching the sombre consolation of the words and music. It is certainly impressive! *CB*

LETTERS

Dear Clifford

In his excellent broadside against using the countertenor voice as the norm for English lute songs, David Hill refers to Robert Hales's "O eyes leave off your weeping" to show that a soprano voice is intended in the Turpyn book of lute songs, and a tenor voice in *A Musicall Banquet*. It is a fair point, but in making it he misinterprets the lute tablature. In the Turpyn book the singer's note to be given by the lutenist before starting the song is letter h on the 1st course, which is the 7th fret (not the 6th), and which gives the note d" (not c"). In *A Musicall Banquet* the singer's note is letter d on the 3rd course, which gives c', a ninth (not an octave) lower than Turpyn. Assuming a lute in G, the Turpyn setting is in D minor, with voice and lute notated at the same pitch. Although the singer's part in both sources looks the same on the page (in D minor), the setting in *A Musicall Banquet* sounds a tone lower in C minor, confirmed by the pitch of the bass part printed on the opposite page. This means that the singer's part in *A Musicall Banquet* is a transposing part, notated without a block of flats in the key signature to make it easier to read, and it sounds a tone lower than written. The bass part in *A Musicall Banquet* has a text so it may be sung, but it is notated at the real pitch (C minor) in case it is played on a bass viol instead.

Most English lute songs appear to have been conceived primarily as solo songs, which allows them to be sung by a tenor an octave lower than written. John Dowland's "His golden locks" was famously sung three times to Queen Elizabeth by the tenor soloist, Robert Hales. Although the lute song books of Dowland and others often include parts available for extra voices – usually Altus, Tenor and Bassus – they are bolt-on extras allowing the songs to be sung as part-songs, and do not always seem to be the composer's original conception of the piece. These parts are sometimes clumsily written (e.g. the Altus in Dowland's "Now oh now"). Dowland's "Can she excuse", sung by an angry Earl of Essex, works well as a tenor solo, but less well when sung as a part-song by four angry Earl of Essexes, one of which is a soprano. An angry countertenor in this context would be ridiculous.

Songs composed earlier in the 16th century were conceived as polyphony, so if the lowest voices are intabulated for the lute, the Cantus must be sung by a soprano at the notated pitch. Examples would be the lute songs arranged by Bossinensis and published by Petrucci in 1509 and 1511, where it simply doesn't work having the cantus sung an octave lower. As with Turpyn, Bossinensis has the lute give the singer's first note at soprano pitch. There are a few examples elsewhere of songs arranged for one low voice accompanied by a lute or vihuela, but for these the soloist sings the part appropriate for his voice, e.g. the Bassus, not the Cantus down an octave. *Stewart McCoy*

Dear Clifford,

David Hill is absolutely right that there is no historical evidence that the lutenist composers had the falsetto voice in mind for their songs. The only real quibble I would make with his argument is that he uses the term 'the countertenor voice' as a historical constant: he assumes it to have always referred to a falsetto voice, whereas before the last century it denoted a modal (or primarily modal) voice. So, when Butler and Campion referred to the countertenor they were thinking of what we would describe as the tenor voice: their tenor was our baritone. I addressed the nature of Butler's countertenor in my 1994 'Sweet Shriill Voice' article in *Early Music*.

And while I'm at it, I know what he thinks he means, but I wonder whether Andrew Benson-Wilson knows what he literally means in tautologically describing a voice as an 'almost haute contre tenor'? I don't think that Andrew Parrott's 2002 article 'Falsetto and the French' could have left anyone in much doubt that the haute contre was a full-throated modal voice. *Simon Ravens*

P.S. My own 'Supernatural Voice' book should see the light of day within the next year.

Dear Clifford,

I am glad that Andrew Benson-Wilson finds my insights 'valid, valuable and thought-provoking', (*EMR* 144) but I would like to make some comments about his review of my book 'Organ Music in the Reign of Louis XIV'.

Whilst most (but not all) of the chapter on *notes inégales* was taken from my PhD dissertation, the rest of the book was freshly conceived. My PhD was indeed on the subject of *notes inégales*, but the main thrust of my book is the stylistic analysis of French Baroque organ genres as a guide to performance practice. To imply that the book is a rehashed PhD dissertation is very far from the truth (and somewhat disparaging).

The book is not intended as a 'complete guide' to all aspects of performing this repertory (what book could?). Also, I had to adhere to a word limit. Hence, I do not go into questions of touch and timing. Surely these are better taught by example in private lessons?

In books of this sort, there is always a real danger of over-indexing. The object of an index is to enable the reader to find their way around easily. If I had indexed every mention of *notes inégales* (for example), the number of entries would have militated against this object. Also, 'passing references' were not encouraged by the publishers. However, the book's chapters are laid out as logically as possible. A reader who wishes to discover my arguments about a certain piece needs only to look up the

chapter on the relevant genre (*Plein jeu*, etc), followed by the composer (organised chronologically), for the relevant argument to be accessed. And I would draw Mr Benson-Wilson's attention to the List of Illustrations on pp. viii-ix, which would have solved his problem of locating Illustration 4 very much more quickly.

The book is an attempt to cut through all the prejudices and loose thinking associated with 21st-century 'bon gout' applied to French 17th-century organ music. Logical argument based on scholarship is the best means we have of re-evaluating both the repertory and its performance practice. The prefaces to the original publications, whilst of inestimable value, often inspire more questions than answers, and mention of Mr Benson-Wilson's own 'musical emotions' and recourse to 'brandy' as a panacea is not helpful, and trivialises the subject. *David Ponsford*

Dear Clifford and Brian,

David Hansell's review of Rameau's great comedy *Platée* gives perhaps occasion to place a cautionary spoke in the wheel of routine opera productions. These have often made the nymph into a froggy creature, because she rules over assorted pond-life. Yet it must be accepted that since nowhere do the authors refer to *Platée* as 'ugly', their jokes are never made simply at the expense of her supposed ugliness. The nymph could certainly be represented as someone (or something) like the Duchesse de Ruffec, because Autreau's humour targets the vanity of super-annuated love-affairs, perhaps even those known in Paris. Casanova encounters her in Volume Three, Chapter 9 of *History of My Life*: 'Come and sit here, young man', she says, aged about sixty, he thinks. 'I obey [...] and am immediately repelled by an unbearable stench of musk. I see a hideous bosom, which the virago displayed in its entirety, and pimples' etc. (Willard Trask's translation, p. 148). Indeed Autreau's original character *Platée* should be thought of (in human terms) as a minor aristocrat, because her father was Asopus, a river god and son of Poseidon, as she proudly observes in Act I sc. 2 of the original libretto.

David Charlton

Dear Clifford,

I've just realised that Ian Spink has died (29 October 2011), and no doubt you'll have many people to choose from to write something on his wide influence on the scholarship of 17th century English music.

It was Ian who first inspired my love of early music and musicology as Senior Lecturer at Sydney University in the 60's. Later specialisation led me to his paleography and historical counterpoint classes, which involved among other things singing through *Spem* with 7 students. With Ian the practical was never far away, and neither was his insistence on clear and stylish writing.

What may not be revealed by a consideration of his work since his return to England in 1969 was his talent as a

synthesiser. Like many mathematicians and scientists, I'm sure that he believed that the elegant solution was by definition the one most likely to be right. I remember a lecture in my second year in which the history of the 19th-century symphony was laid before our eyes in 55 minutes – every important strand of its development being revealed, examined and expertly knitted back together into an intelligible whole.

No doubt it was one of many dry runs for his early book, *An Historical Approach to Musical Form* (1967), which broke new ground in bringing together historical musicology and musical analysis, thus offering a uniquely intelligent overview of the how and why of musical evolution.

Graham O'Reilly

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APOLOGIES

We are sorry that this issue will be posted on April 2nd or 3rd. We have had a very distracted month. Apart from legal matters (see box opposite), we suffered one weekend without broadband, then on the following Tuesday workmen constructing a cycle path across the road cut through the phone cable at 8.00 am, and we were without phone and broadband until the following Saturday at noon. BT insisted that our lines were working, so we had to spend hours convincing them that they weren't. So putting *EMR* together was delayed. The last straw was a power cut on Thursday 29th – enough to make us abandon trying to get it finished and into the post on the 31st. Running off a single copy is by no means the end of the process. EB and I then have to copy, stuff and post it. I also had to abandon some record booklet notes: I hope that the commissioner is equally happy that Brian Clark is writing them.

Another consequence of the delay is that I haven't managed to get through all my CDs. I hope I will be able to catch up before June, although there are three musical events to distract us: – EEMF's Bach Cantata on April 15th, a Poppea in Devon on the first of the May bank-holiday weekends, and the joint EEMF/TVEMF event at Waltham Abbey on the following Saturday.

With the short time-span, it isn't impossible that the number of misprints might be larger than usual!

MUSIC & DRAMA

I was hooked on a programme about Jonathan Miller on TV on 31 March (when I should have been doing the final proof-reading). The previous evening, I'd seen bits of the Glyndebourne *Rinaldo*, which infuriated me. Whether or not there was any conceptual relationship which made it appropriate to set it in a public school, it bore no relationship to what was being sung and the jokes of incongruity must have worn off quite quickly. What sort of conductor takes an aria faster than the singer could manage? Seeing a few bits of Miller's *Rigoletto* showed how his updating enhanced the meaning, and I did enjoy the snippets of his de-japanified *The Mikado*. The outstanding example was his televised *Matthew Passion*. We watched it when it was first shown, and were impressed: the close shots brought the action to a personal level, the movements were restrained but powerful, and the playing itself utterly convincing – perhaps it helped that we knew so many of the performers! Readers will know that I'm suspicious of the now-standard abandoning of the original story in many stagings. But when the music is understood and is the basis for imaginative interpretation, then it's worth doing. But I reckon that any operatic director should be tested on his understanding of the music before he gets the job.

The BARTLETT'S CASE

First, the good news. The trial resumed on 5th March and on the 15th our fraudsters (after nearly four years) pleaded guilty: Gary Stephen Carr was sentenced to 4 years 8 months and Mark Headley Carmichael to 1 year 3 months. Legal activities were conducted variously at Hertford, St Albans and finally Luton Crown Court. For the only official information, google Bedford Police and search for "Bartlett Fraud".

The story was printed in *The Times* (Monday 26 March); the headline "Classical stars orchestrate help for defrauded family" and the inclusion of the appeal address revived donations after a quiet period.

But this is only the first stage towards recovery (or perhaps the second: the first is the support we have had from the musical world). We may get something out of the "confiscation hearing", though the police have told us not to be too optimistic. We suspect that our money has either been spent or well hidden. Our chief remaining problem is that there is a second mortgage on our property set up by Carr to pay off the other leases. Our original mortgage is an interest-only one and expires in a couple of years, but until then it blocks the challenges of the second mortgager and the charges of the other leasing companies. Now all depends on what the lawyers can do for us. The dubious involvement of the children in the arrangements for the consolidating mortgage was raised in court: the Judge, counsel of both sides and the police were appalled that a solicitor had agreed that our mentally-handicapped children understood the arrangements and were competent to sign. The Judge's comment was that they were not...

We are still under post-bankruptcy restrictions: the Receiver was not prepared to accept the detective's assertion that we had not colluded with Carr. We have a further two years to serve. But wonder whether the guilt of the criminals might enable the decision to be changed.

We must apologise to several people who offered legal and other help which was overtaken by bankruptcy. We repeat our thanks to those who have put on concerts on our behalf in aid of the fund and all who have offered sympathy. It appears that we still have a long way to go!

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