

Early Music

REVIEW

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"I happened to..." What? I opened this page hoping to have a sentence or two to remind me what I intended to write about, not just three words: I had no idea where that was going. So I'll reflect upon an early-summer post-term concert that was entirely based on *Madrigals and Part Songs*, one of John Rutter's *Choral Classics* series published by Oxford University Press in 2001. My first connection with John Rutter was at the annual Epiphany Party that took place at the appropriate weekend (usually coinciding with Eastern Early Music Forum's renaissance party in Beccles) at the house of Lydia Smallwood in Great Shelford, who had been involved in various musical activities in Cambridge. John was introduced to me, and was very complimentary about the recent *New Oxford Book of Carols*. He asked me to help in the first of his new series, *Opera Choruses*, an enormous success (not owing much to me), then he asked me to take the main editorial responsibility for *Madrigals and Part Songs*.

Curiously, I find that when I've devoted a lot of effort to a project, I seem to get it out of my system. I've only played *Messiah* once since Oxford published my edition (though I did go to Israel for a series of Millennium performances) and I don't think I've sung a madrigal since the OUP volume was published. But I did go to two concerts in Cambridge in the last few months, one a Saturday afternoon relief-from-shopping concert conducted by Christopher Brown which included some items from *Madrigals and Partsongs*, and another on the evening of Saturday 29th June at Queens' College Chapel by the Erasmus Chamber Choir, which works on the principle that it never has more than three rehearsals and its members are either post-graduate or pre-retirement. All the items came from *M&P*, with a better-than-expected audience (perhaps 50-80).

It was a fine concert, despite the usual compromise of having too many voices for the early madrigals and not enough for part-songs aimed at choral societies (who have mostly abandoned them). This choir had 17 named singers. Alas, I still haven't heard Elgar's *There is sweet music* for double choir, each in a different key (I couldn't resist including it!) But what disappointed me was the concentration on English music. There are several substantial and exceptionally fine foreign pieces (e.g. Debussy's *Trois chansons de Charles d'Orléans* and Monteverdi's *Lamento d' Arianna*) and a good mixture of single items, chiefly in Italian and German. The volume contains 59 items (some quite long), working out at about 25p each if you sing them all! CB

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

REVISED LASSUS

Orlando di Lasso *Sämtliche Werke... Band 11. Motetten VI (Magnum opus musicum, Teile VI): Motetten für 5 und 6 Stimmen neu herausgegeben von Bernhold Schmid*. Breitkopf & Härtel (SON 341), 2012. cxlii + 213 pp €219.00

The last volume of the Motets that I reviewed was, I think, vol. IV, alternatively vol. 7, odd numbers being devoted to the posthumous *Magnum Opus Musicum* compiled by Lasso's sons. The advert for this edition encouraged purchase by drawing attention to the faults of the 1900 edition which resulted in "a great number of sometimes harmless, and sometimes serious errors", to quote the editor of the revision. Without going into details, the size of the introductory material is enormous – and, incidentally, should be studied by the designer who made the Pasquini cantatas reviewed in the last edition so unmanageable. Admittedly, this is heavy too (1.750 kg), but it isn't intended to be held by choristers! I am personally in favour of making academic editions usable by most singers, and am not convinced that the original clefs are significant provided that they are shown at the beginning of each motet – and a strong case could be made for transposing high-clef pieces – which are as common as standard C1C3C4F4 motets (with the tenor duplicated more often than the treble).

This collection has the end of the a5 sequence, nos. 290–315, and the opening of the a6, 316–334. The first thing that struck me in glancing through the pages was the nature of the texts: all in Latin, but few liturgical, with some classical rather than Christian, some in mensural rhythm, others stressed (though in effect, if long syllables are twice the length of short ones, the music sounds stressed anyway). Some are drinking songs, some are moral sentiments. No. 326 is a setting of Matthew 2, 1–12 – the story of the Wise Men for SAATBB in three sections totalling 225 4-minim bars.

As the quantity of roman-numbered pages implies, there is a vast amount of information in the introduction. It includes a repetition of the 1900 sources and commentary – eight pages; the new volume has 25 pages of sources and 48 pages of critical commentary. For instance, *Dulces exuviae* (No. 305 – Dido's lament from Virgil *Aeneid* VI 651–660) has 16 lines in 1900 (ignoring the text, since that appears in another context in 2012) but over three columns in 2012.

I suspect that most singers associate "motet" with church music. This volume shows that the form (if that isn't too restrictive a word) has a variety of other uses. I hope that singers will draw on this repertoire, remembering that motets with G clefs should be transposed down a bit, depending on the comfort of the singers. I make a lot of fuss about the relationship between low and high clefs.

The issue is that, unless the singers are trying to recreate exact or approximate early pitches, when transposed, the tessitura between high and low clefs isn't too far apart, and that high clefs often come out lower if you use the theoretical transposition of a fourth or a fifth. Automatic transpositions often produce a key signature with an extra sharp, which looks and feels odd. Better to stick to flat keys. There is lots of fine music here: if you sing any motets in a concert or recording, do make sure that the texts are translated.

LUYTHON

Carolus Luython (1557–1620) *Orgelwerke* edited by Raimund Schächer Cornetto (CP1179), 2013. 40pp

Carolus Luython was born in Antwerp but spent most of his life, first as a singer and then organist, in the Hapsburg chapels in Vienna and Prague along with the likes of the Hasslers. Although awarded a lifetime pension, he had trouble collecting his due, and spent the last eight years in poverty, his possessions and musical instruments all sold, after a new Hapsburg cancelled all the musicians' pensions. The time spent studying in Italy is apparent in his keyboard music, most of which is imitative. The five short works from the Vienna MS are of little interest, but this is countered by three substantial pieces: a *Fuga suavissima*, of 117 bars and two *Ricercars* in G and e of 271 and 207 bars, the second solely based on the ascending and descending chromatic tetrachord. The other two large pieces move through several themes, in the style (but not quite the musical quality) of Byrd, Frescobaldi and Sweelinck. The chromatic *Ricercare* in E minor might reflect Luython's interest in temperaments and tuning, as evidenced by his *clavicimbalum universale seu perfectum* mentioned by Michael Praetorius, which split all the semitones. The introduction to Luython and the sources of these pieces is only in German, and there are no further notes, either within the text or as an appendix, nor an index. The editorial suggestions for accidentals are generally sound, but there are a few other editorial issues I could debate. For example, there seems to be to be a bar or two missing between bars 199 and 200 at the end of the *Ricercar* in e where the music jumps awkwardly to an A minor chord rather than the predicted D minor chord. And the second bass note in bar 150 of the *Ricercar* in e should, I suggest, be D natural, not D

Andrew Benson-Wilson

GAMBA SOCIETY

The three recent issues are of music that is accessible, at least in score, but not necessarily in convenient parts. I'll take them in chronological order.

238. Peter Philips *Three fantasias à 3* VdGS 35–37. These three pieces (described as modes 1, 3 & 5), the first two

with original clefs C1, C3 & C4, the third with C1, C2 & C4; the modern edition uses treble, alto and bass, which seems sensible, but the C4 clefs may be making a point that the bottom part should not be for a bass instrument. The music was published in keyboard layout in 1910, and I think I've played them somewhere on viols, so they must have been in circulation several decades ago. I haven't seen Salomon de Caus's 1615 publication (the only source), which presumably has the parts separated. The editor Virginia Brookes offers a thorough textual commentary, but says nothing about the source, and the title is curious: *Fantasia no. 1 [2 & 3]. Trio...* I suspect that *Trio* is the original title. The music looks attractive to play, satisfying but not too difficult. (£6.60)

236 Michael East *Eight Fantasies à 5*. East's *Third set of bookes* (1610) contains a group of eight instrumental pieces for five instruments. The editor Stephen Pegler normalises the music by naming the pieces *Fantasies* for Tr A T B. Rather more interesting is the fact that each piece has a single-word Latin title: *Desperavi, Peccavi, Vidi, Penitet, Credidi, Vixi, Triumphavi, Amavi*: those who are not good at remembering numbers can identify these by name! The editor translates the titles, but I have some doubts how their meaning is consistently relevant – at least Dowland provides a stronger general mood in his 7 *Lachrimae/Tears* (also unnumbered), and the individual pieces have a greater scope for relationship with the titles. All the pieces use high clefs, which may imply transposition down a fourth or fifth, though the music is playable as it stands: the topic crops up elsewhere in this issue. This is skilful music by a composer with an impressive variety of textures and imagination. Incidentally, if anyone has copied parts from Thurston Dart's revised edition of the whole book, beware, since his corrections are perhaps excessive (£25.30).

237. Matthew Locke *Consorts of Four Parts* edited by Ursula Schlapp. These six Suites have a modern history, with editions by Peter Warlock (d. 1930) and others. They were received, as far as I can remember, as early string quartets, though a few notes below G needed adjustment by violin II. The ranges are quite wide, the total compass running two octaves either side of middle C. The original clefs are G2, C2, C3 & F4, but the edition follows common practice in replacing C2 by C3. (A treble-clef alternative is available: the review set didn't include it, so you need to specify which you prefer.) Those happier with string quartet layout of the score may find *Musica Britannica* xxxii preferable. The 24 movements split into six suites – the editor brackets the usual titles [*Suite No. 1 in D minor*, etc.] which the more scholarly MB edition prints as if they are the original titles. That edition also has a variety of tempo marks added, which unnecessarily implies that sections, even within a *Fantazie*, need tempo changes. The new edition wisely leaves options open. No mention is made of theorbo or organ continuo. The sources are mostly scores, which may imply that at least some were intended for continuo; British Library Add. MS 31435 is a set of parts that includes a Bc part that isn't entirely accurate: the MB editor, Michael Tilmouth, is of course right to state that it can't be by Locke, but its presence

must imply a need, or at least an option. Not that it affects the edition (apart from the absence of a sentence permitting a Bc), since the score is available. This is a fine edition of music that should be more popular with both viol and violin family instruments as well as mixtures. (£33.60)

LA CALISTO

Cavalli *La Calisto*... Edited by Álvaro Torrente (Score) Nicola Badolato (Libretto)... Bärenreiter (TP891), 2012. xxxiii + 132pp, £31.00.

Were I writing this 50 years ago, the headline would have been meaningless without the composer's name. But its 1970 Glyndebourne performance (and later recording) established it in the modern opera repertoire in neither a modernised nor a plausible "original-style" reconstruction by Raymond Leppard. The publication reviewed here is based on a larger-format edition (BA 8901; £191.50 hb), which presumably includes more thorough introductory material and a critical commentary. The lengthy libretto follows the introduction and has 24 double-column pages in English only. From a singer's point of view, it's easier to have the texts in a separate pamphlet so that the words and music can be seen without keeping a finger in the libretto – it seemed to work fine in an amateur three-day workshop on Francesca Caccini's *La liberazione di Ruggiero*... (1625) recently. This had the Italian text in parallel, and the verse form was clear, not only from the layout, but from the capitals at the beginning of each line in the printed libretto and the published score. The main MS score, followed by the BA edition, does not capitalise, but with no Italian matching the English translation, a capital letter for each line would make finding ones way easier.¹ The alternative is to print the translation as literally as possible with the words in the right order and following the length of the stave so that singers can see exactly what the words mean – I used this system for *Poppea*, and it didn't need too much change to function as surtitles.

I can't compare the full Bärenreiter edition (BA) with the one by Jennifer Williams Brown, which has had several performances and was published in 2007 by A-R Editions as *Collegium Musicum Yale University, Second Series: Volume 16* (\$180.00), which converted to pounds is just under £120. I made a few critical comments in my review in *EMR* 119 pp. 4-5, but it's a fine edition with a vast quantity of information that any performer would benefit from reading. For singers learning their parts, the BA weight of 0.470kg is far easier to manage than A-R's 1.020kg. A-R has a more legible text, but singers are not going to be sight-reading it, and A-R also has the advantage of more (but not enough) sensible page-turns – essential for the continuo players.² BA's abbreviated introduction is fine as far as it goes, but cannot compete with A-R.

1. *La Calisto* is one of nine Cavalli opera MSS available online via IMSLP. The obsession that verses should only begin with an upper-case letter when it would do so in prose is an irrelevant modern Italian habit.

2. Don't overdo the number of continuo players: there were six players (2 violins and violone), Cavalli directing at a harpsichord, and two players (Martino & Francesco) who were probably also keyboard players or pluckers. (A-R p. xxv)

BA adopts their usual vocal score format, the content being reduced from the full score. This does make the notes and text slightly small. A-R only works for continuo playing if the score can lie flat. A-R clutters the bass with a vast number of editorial figures, most of which are redundant. The problem for players is that the more that figures are notated, the more players will assume that their absence is significant. The alternative is only to include the original figuring, which BA does. Both editions unnecessarily invent the natural: at this period, sharp is major, flat is minor. The tendency of BA's figuring policy is fine in general, but adding a few unobvious harmonies can avoid wasted time at rehearsal.

I'm happy with the compromise of A-R and BA. But I still haven't got over the horrors of Leppard's version some 40 years ago, and A-R has a table showing where his version came from: "He cut approximately 40 percent of the bars and presented only 10 of the 57 set pieces more or less as Cavalli wrote them. In 27 cases Leppard dismembered a set piece by cutting, transposing, or reordering just a portion of it; in addition, he cut 8 second stanzas and numerous ritornelli." (A-R p. 205) And that's the man who conducted the best performance of the *Enigma Variations* and middle-period Haydn symphonies that I can remember! Unless you are wealthy, you will almost certainly go for BA, but do read A-R's thorough introduction.

VOCE DIVINA

Two new vocal items in Walhall's *Voca Divina* series are edited by Jolando Scarpa. Legrenzi's *Confitebor* (Psalm 110/111) is for soprano, 2 violins, cello & organ; the specifications in the source are editorial, though "cello" depends a bit on time and place. The only source is a MS in Versailles, though the editor guesses that it was composed while Legrenzi was at Venice's Ospedale in 1670-76. The verses and ritornelli sometimes have a full close, sometimes not, but I assume that it should be performed as a single sequence, which is what the editor implies by running the bar numbers from 1 to 427. There is considerable variety, and interaction between voice and the trio. I look forward to playing it, but there are ambiguities at final chords of phrases where one is not sure whether they should be major or minor, and it would save a lot of guesses and discussion if editorial flats or sharps were added at ambiguous points (and also included in the *Canto e Organo* part). Until I play it (I'll try to assemble three strings and a soprano next week), I'm not sure how easily the Bc falls under the hands without too much thought! (EW 889; €18.50)

I must confess that I haven't come across Nicola Bonifacio Logroscino before. He was born in 1698, and in 1714 studied at the conservatory of S. Maria di Loreto in Naples. He and his brother were expelled "for bad traits of character" in 1727. Nicola became organist to the Bishop of Conza, then returned to Naples and married in 1731. By the end of the 1730s, he had become a specialist in opera buffa, chiefly in Naples, until his popularity was replaced by Niccolò Piccinini. He moved to Palermo, perhaps in 1748 but maybe later, and his fame seems to

have declined. His *Stabat Mater* was composed in 1760. The scoring is almost that of Pergolesi, except that there is no viola (which doesn't mean that it couldn't double the Bc at the octave if the violins were doubled). The work is varied and imaginative: I'm impressed, and hope it is recorded soon – but preferably better than the singer of "O quam tristis" on YouTube. Google came up with a variety of death dates around 1765! (EW 765 score, €29.80; EW 636 parts)

VIVALDI CELLO CONCERTOS

It is unfortunate that the series of 529 opere strumentali published by Ricordi has long ceased to be acceptable – not so much because of the basic editing, but the additions, which experts can generally not notice! At one stage, the Turin library was happy to send us photocopies, but that ceased a decade or so ago. So it is excellent that Walhall has managed to get permission to publish the 27 solo cello concertos RV 398-424 and the concerto for 2 cellos, RV 531. The solo concerto we have received is No. 13 in F, RV 410 (and also called no. 13 by the publisher, as well as EW 865 for the publisher's number.) The score costs €16.00. There is also a version for cello and keyboard, which includes the solo part with the continuo. It's not a concerto about which I have any particular knowledge, so I'll comment on the other score received, RV 531 (€17.50; EW 865). The musical text seems reliable, and there are minimal differences between the Walhall and the King's Music versions, except for layout. The convention of printing the solo part between the violins & viola and the cello/bass is quite old-fashioned. Vivaldi places cello solos (and the duet) thus, following the order of the clefs – so violin solos go above the tutti violins. Personally, I'm used to concertos in general being above the strings, and I don't think there is any problem either way. RV 531 is, however, easier to read because the bar lines are paired between violin I & II and the two cello solos, with no grouping of the viola and Bc. RV 410 is less easy to read at a glance, since the bar line run through the whole system: I'd prefer the upper three staves to be grouped and the cello solo and bc to be separate. Otherwise, no problem with the layout, and the editorial methods and execution is fine, though some pages go very close to the edge (a problem that I can sympathise with!). Congratulations on the series. Six concertos are promised in two years (as announced in 28-10-2011): I suppose that if all 28 were published, the result will probably be fewer sales of each, so six is a sensible number.

TELEMANN TWV 42:c4

I've lost track of the list of Telemann trio sonatas on which I noted those which I had copies of, so can't check whether I've not known or have forgotten TWV 42: c4. The cover is a bit misleading. It isn't unusual for editors to list instruments other than those which the composer (or copyist or publisher) favoured. In this case, a pair of oboes is given precedence, with bracketed flutes and violins. However, there are three MSS, none of them noted as authoritative. Two are from Darmstadt Mus.ms. 1042/28a & 28b, the third from Dresden Mus. 2392-Q-78

copied by Pisendal, who not surprisingly favoured violins. Of the Darmstadt MSS, 28b is marked for oboes, 28a for "hautbois ou violons". So where do the flutes come from? The editor, Klaus Hofmann the Herbigopolitan,³ has noticed that the lowest note is the D above middle C, which is the bottom note of the flute, and it would be odd for Telemann to have avoided the tonic note if he did not have the flute in mind. So why bracket two of the options? Sorry – that's a bit pedantic! The music is French in movement headings (*Lentement*, *Vite*, *Lentement avec douceur*, *Gai*), though the slow-quick-slow-quick pattern isn't particularly French and you could play it *égale* and it would probably sound equally acceptable. One editorial problem is the realisation of the *Lentement, avec douceur*, which has a keyboard part written out in four-note chords and is unsuited to the music unless you've got a soft register; but a decent player can diminish the number of chords and play only two notes for passing chords. (Walhall EW 902; £14.80)

CARUS CANTATAS

Four new editions of Bach cantatas are welcome. *Actus Tragicus* "*Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*" (BWV 106) is the one to which Carus's covering letter draws particular attention, and it is among the group of three early cantatas that were, in the mid-1960s, my first and last conducting attempts. The problem with *Actus Tragicus* is that Bach wrote the two recorder parts in F and the rest (4 voices, 2 gambas & Bc) in E flat. Who wins? The answer, of course, is that the recorders must be instruments a tone lower. The actual pitch can be determined on various criteria. The editor assumes that the standard organ pitch in Mühlhausen in Bach's period of office was between A=400 to 420, which isn't very helpful – but the organist can transpose so long as the recorder can match a suitable semitone. The two gambas and whatever string *fondamento* was used are probably easier at their normal pitch rather than retuning for the piece – apart from anything else, this is a cantata that is more effective without tuning gaps between movements, which would be necessary if they had recently been yanked up a tone or semitone. The simplest solution is to play at A=440 with the recorders a tone lower (which was how I managed it nearly 50 years ago, thanks to the loan of a couple of suitable instruments – then barely even heard of, but now common for French music). The voice parts do look awkwardly high for such chamber music, and I don't understand why the notation should be changed for the sake of the recorders. Perhaps Carus should keep a pair of tone-lower recorders for hire!

Carus previously issued an edition of the work in the same transposition in 1984, and that edition claims that the transposition has been "retained" from an earlier edition. The new edition is much better laid out, though it is not explicit whether the performance material includes a written Bc realisation. The sources being posthumous scores, there is no original figuring. I was aware that the

early cantatas were for solo voices (despite my choral performance) long before the one-a-part idea became acceptable, if not fully accepted. *Gottes Zeit* is among my half-dozen favourite cantatas, and perhaps it's not accidental that Cantata 4 *Christ lag in Todesbanden* is also among them.⁴ My solution would be to publish the whole score in E flat but print the recorder parts in F; exactly what pitch the notated E flat sounds is immaterial! It would be a lot easier when working out how to perform the work if the clef and opening notes of the recorder were printed at the beginning of the piece (there's room to have it small on one stave between the two Flauto headings), and it would be helpful if the total compass of each vocal part were shown: it makes it easier to check what type of voice you are looking for or what transpositions won't work. It is particularly frustrating that NBA/Bärenreiter also decided to notate the work in F: recorders down a tone are no longer a problem! I wouldn't ban small choirs (though large choirs would be incompatible with such delicate instrumentation), but I can't imagine it was written for them! Score €16.00, Vsc 6.00, wind €6.00, gamba I & II, vlc, d/bass each €2.80, org. €10.00. The Carus order number is 31.106, plus their standard suffixes. Prices for the three cantatas reviewed below are comparable.

I won't go into such detail for the remaining three works. It is an asset that thorough critical commentaries are included and that English texts are added to the German. The layout is excellent and there are no legibility problems – at least, not in the scores, though I haven't seen the parts. I don't order as much for our customers as I used to, but I can still get Carus music if required. Cantatas 42, 57 & 142 have not yet appeared as separate editions from Bärenreiter (and when they exist, they omit critical commentaries).

Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats (BWV 42) begins with a *da capo* Sinfonia for 2 oboes and bassoon and four-part strings, and is substantial enough to be performed separately – perhaps it would be worth issuing independently.⁵ It is surmised that it began life as a Köthen birthday serenata (1718). The cantata was written for the Sunday after Easter, 8 April 1725. Two movements have simplified parts for violone and organ added later. This (and the other two cantatas) derive from autograph scores and parts, and it is worth mentioning that players are more willing to play one-to-a-part (which was not Bach's normal practice) than have one-voice-to-a-part for choruses! All these three works have two copies each of the violin I and violin II parts, which is normal for Bach cantatas (and other composers as well). There's an alto solo with the Sinfonia's scoring, a duet (ST) with continuo – three instruments in 1725, with two more playing a simplified version in 1742 (the organ perhaps earlier), a bass aria with two violins (allocated to the two violin I parts) and a closing four-part chorale.

4. I persuaded John Butt to direct a workshop on Cantata 4 last year; I wanted to hear the piece with cornett and sackbuts, but the full quartet wasn't available. That was, however, trivial: it's an extraordinary piece, and was well worth spending a day with John and with Luther's Easter hymn!

5. I produced a cut-and-paste set before we had a music-setting computer, and score and parts are still occasionally purchased.

3. I assumed that the bracketed *Herbigopol* which always follows his name at the head of an edition is a Latin name for his birth or current abode, but for once I bothered to check it and found it to be Würzburg.

Selig ist der Mann (BWV 57) was written for 26 Dec 1725. Like Cantata 42, the four voices only come together for the final chorale, a slightly embellished version of what English hymnbooks set to "Praise to the Lord, the almighty, the king of creation". The opening solo requires a bass capable of singing long phrases. The text is a dialogue for Jesus (bass) and Anima (soprano). The scoring is for two oboes and *taille*, four-part strings and continuo; nos 3 & 5 are without wind and no. 7 has violin solo and continuo. Curiously (or deliberately?), all the movements are in triple time. Recits fill the even-numbered gaps.

Das neugeborne Kindelein (BWV 122) was written for the Sunday after Christmas, 31 December 1724, which encouraged the librettist to link Christmas and New Year. The scoring is as Cantata 57. The opening chorus is a cheerful setting with each line of the hymn sung by the soprano with fugal accompaniments from the lower parts. The bass sings to the continuo a paraphrase of the next hymn verse, with both voice and continuo exploiting a bold opening phrase – quaver G and crotchet high and low C for the voice but with the upbeat for the continuo being semiquaver G A B. Its opening words "O Menschen" are contrasted with the opening of a recit for Soprano "Die Engel", both with similar incipits, and the accompaniment is, surprisingly, three recorders, written in the oboe parts. Verse 4 is sung by an alto accompanied in unison by upper strings combined with a free text and different music for soprano and alto. The bass has an accompanied recit and the work ends with verse 4 of the chorale. Score €10.80, Vsc 6.00, wind £24.50, strings each £4.25, org. £8.60. (I couldn't find the prices of 42 & 57.)

BILINGUAL ACIS & GALATEA

Handel *Acis and Galatea Serenata in tre parti* (2nd version)... HWV 49b. German translation by Peter Brenner, piano reduction by Andreas Köhs Bärenreiter (BA 10700-90), 2013. xv + 205pp, £37.50.

This is based on the full score (HHA I 9/2, BA10700; £316.00) by Artie Heinrich. It puzzles me that Wolfram Windszus published a critical commentary on the cantata *Acis, Galatea, e Polifemo* (HWV 72, 1708), the masque *Acis and Galatea* (HWV 49a, 1718) and the extensively changed *Serenata* (HWV 49b, 1732+) in 1979 but only edited the Cannons setting. There are no acknowledgments in the vocal score, and I doubt if I will pass a library soon to check the full score with its detailed introduction and commentary. For the 1732 and subsequent performances, the 1718 libretto was adapted, with music borrowed from elsewhere, mostly with Italian texts; the leading singers were Italian, so it was more satisfactory to leave the chorus of English singers (by 1732, it probably was a chorus, not a quintet) and the few English soloists to retain the original text and have the rest in Italian. German listeners will probably not be aware of the language mixture if the second underlaid text (all in German) is used. It may be worth hearing the 1730s version once, but virtually any works that HHA has not yet published should have been given precedence. I find the work aggrandised and not improved by the expansion.

More useful would be a version that fits the common practice of performing the Cannons version with choir, with one addition: the chorus that closes Act I. (The Bärenreiter score has it in an appendix but the vocal score in sequence.) That is included in Chrysander's edition, as performed in 1742 and published the year later, with more modest scoring than its first airing in 1739 with added carillon, oboes and strings with viola – a version I don't remember hearing. It was presumably adapted instead of a *da capo* of the duet to give a more substantial close to the first act – the Cannons version had no interval. A consequence is the presence of a viola in just that one chorus, and also a four-part SATB choir. I can't imagine that Handel only used a viola in one item. The solution is to let the viola player double the bass up an octave for the choruses and for ritornelli unless marked *piano*.⁶ The same problem crops up in the 1732 *Serenata*. Perhaps Handel instructed his copyist to copy some numbers an octave above the continuo and others from a copy of an independent viola part that Handel would have quickly written out to be copied into a coherent part, which will have survived only among Handel's no-longer-extant orchestral material. Single strings (maybe with two violins – like Bach cantatas) are fine for the small-scale masque, but not for larger public events.

PERGOLESI SALVE REGINA

Pergolesi *Salve Regina in A minor*... edited by Giovanni Borrelli. Ut Orpheus (MS 49) xii + 28pp, £17.95.

This is for soprano, with 2 violins, viola & Bc, not to be confused with a different setting in C minor, also existing in F minor for alto. The only early MS comes from the middle of the 18th century. The editor argues that the work must be quite early (at least two years before Pergolesi's death), one argument being the frequency with which the viola doubles the cello – but that is not unusual in the *Stabat mater*, and there aren't any later works by him than that! There is a lot of research on Pergolesi's life, but there seems to be as much surmise as there is for the dates of motets around 1500 (cf p. 14). The introduction and annotations are a bit pedantic, but better than the opposite. This careful edition is well worth having. A vocal score is available at £14.95, set of parts £24.95, though I'm a bit suspicious of the price. I think the sign on the cover is €, yet the review copy comes from Universal Edition, London.

6. I was phoned one evening recently for a set of parts for a performance at St Andrews, so asked whether he was doing the chorus with viola – he was. I suggested adding it for the ritornelli throughout and asked if the player could read from the bass part – yes he could. The following evening, I was at Fitzwilliam College's annual musical dinner, and found myself sitting with two members of the Fitzwilliam String Quartet (named after the College, not the Museum) and it emerged that they were the relevant quartet, and the viola player had already agreed to play thus. A further coincidence was that the conductor at St Andrews was the previous musical director at Fitzwilliam. Our edition now has options of the chorus at the end of Act I either in sequence or as an appendix, and we'll mark up a copy of the bass part and put it up an octave in alto clef.

PERGOLESI STABAT MATER AGAIN

Pergolesi Stabat Mater... Facsimile des Autographs herausgegeben von Tineke Steenbrinck Walhall EW880, 88pp. €49.80

The editorial issues of this work are outlined in the review of the new Bärenreiter edition in *EMR* 154, p. 8. I had not then seen the facsimile reviewed here, but knew it existed. Editors have the problem of identifying various sources, and add some "improvements" from later sources. The composer's MS is fairly clear, though certainly not a presentation copy. The opening movements are written consecutively, but from movement 6, each section begins on a separate recto side, with unusual gaps at the end.⁷ The editor surmises that the sections were sent off separately for fair copies to be made for a patron; an alternative would be to get the parts copied as quickly as possible. I don't know whether a performance for two solos, strings and organ actually needed a score. The Bärenreiter commentary notes that some scores are copied from parts, so are less rather than more authoritative than scores (apart from the one in the facsimile). My instinct is to follow the autograph unless there is any oddity that is better elsewhere. It is certainly worth conductors studying the facsimile. "Corrections" from other sources may sometimes be necessary, but the autograph should be not lightly be corrected, especially to sources transmitted into score from partbooks.

The facsimile includes the whole document, including binding. However, there are no clues to its structure since each page seems to have been treated as an independent sheet. There is no table to indicate the gatherings of the sheets. The introduction contains just one page in German, one in English, the first sentence of the translation not quite reaching that language.

Pergolesi Stabat mater arranged for female choir SMA... Edited and arranged by Malcolm Bruno. Bärenreiter (BA 5692), 2013. iv + 47pp, £21.00. Vocal score (BA 5692-90), 2013. iv + 42pp, £8.50.

This is based on the edition reviewed in our last issue (p. 8), though curiously the female half of the joint editors is not involved in this version. The sections where there are three voice parts are achieved with some ingenuity. Often the viola part provides the extra strand, but No. 5 (*Quis est homo*) has a completely independent alto part for its first section and then from bar 20 doubles the bass up the octave (the composer, of course, leaves the viola stave blank, to be included when the parts are copied). I'm not particularly convinced by hearing the work sung chorally, though I haven't heard this version and it may work better with the addition of a third part, mostly borrowed from elsewhere in the texture.

MOZART MASSES FOR WOMEN

I haven't come across female-voice arrangements of

classical repertoire from Bärenreiter before, so it may be a new development. In addition to the Pergolesi, the current batch contained the Coronation Mass K. 317 (BA 5691, £26.00, Vsc BA 5691-90 £7.50, wind set £19.00). Trombones are omitted, though I wonder if trombones could play the tenor and bass voice parts – in fact, the earlier-style sackbut would sound better and more vocal, but there are also brass bands around with trombones. There is also the *Missa Brevis* in D, K 194 (BA 5690-90 £7.50). I puzzled that it is called a vocal score, since the two violin parts are given as full score as well as in a piano reduction. In fact, reducing two parts to one stave is probably more useful than separate staves, since the reader is almost seeing double with the same information twice. Parts are available from the standard edition (BA 5342).

The info leaflet and the introductions have the comment: "The choral scene is changing! On the one hand, more and more choirs are lacking male voices, yet at the same time, more and more female choirs are looking for high-quality repertoire beyond folksong and popular arrangements." The problem certainly exists, but there is also plenty of music that girls' schools must have been using for decades. I personally find bottomless choirs insubstantial – and that can apply to the sounds of some mixed ensembles! The girls need to use their charm (or whatever) to attract the boys rather than sing arrangements less satisfactory than the originals!

MUSICA RARA

We have received a couple of new Musica Rara editions under the Breitkopf imprint, which has been reprinting and extending the catalogue which lapsed for some years. MR 2274 completes Albinoni's op. 1 trio sonatas with nos. 10-12 (£23.95). These were the first trio sonatas I played after Corelli and Handel. That will have been from a rather less acceptable edition than this new one edited by Martin Lutz. If you don't need a realisation, our facsimile costs £15.00. (I found the UK price under Musicarara, but the Frederick II flute sonatas were not listed.)

Frederick II (the Great) wrote 121 flute sonatas. An edition of four of them (21, 40, 767 & 83 in Spitta's numbering) was published last year, the 300th anniversary of the King's birth. Price is £29.50. The editor is the well-known baroque flautist Mary Oleskiewicz, the continuo realisation by David Schulenberg. All have three movements, though the first movement in the first sonata unusually has a recit with an adagio as middle section. Keys are a, C, B flat & b. (Breitkopf & Härtel, MR 2266)

A-R EDITIONS

Daniel Eberlin *Four Sacred Cantatas* Edited by Michael William Nordbakke (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era*, 184) A-R Editions, 2013. xxiii + 69pp, \$72.00. Parts available for sale.

Considering the tiny repertoire that survives from him, Eberlin (1647-c.1715) is at least a familiar name – perhaps

7. Movements 1-5 are not numbered; the separate sections being numbered six onwards in modern editions, although in the MS score they are numbered from 5-12.

because of a connection with JS Bach's father Johann Ambrosius and his cousin Johann Christoph. Apart from three years in Rome, he worked in central Germany, though became involved in the Eisenach mint and was blamed for the loss of 16,000 silver thalers. He escaped to Hamburg in 1692, probably gave up music, and died in 1714/15. This volume contains all four of his sacred pieces. *Ich kan nicht mehr ertragen diesen Jammer* is for SB soli, 2 vlins, AATB viols & Bc. There's a short Sinfonia, then four pairs of verses with the soprano in misery and the bass asserting that Jesus will save her. The violins are silent, and there are thematic links for each character. The violins reappear for the final movement, as well as an alto and tenor, singing *So fahr ich hin zu Jesu Christ* (not the same tune as ends BWV 31) leading to a lively Amen.

Allmächtiger, heyliger, ewiger Gott has three stanzas for SATB, preceded by an introduction with ritornelli between verses, concluding with a tutti "Amen". Scoring is for 2 vlins, Tr A T viols and Bc. The mood is slightly less miserable than *Ich kan...*, but the music is probably more acceptable these days if you don't understand the German (as long as you pronounce it right!)

The remaining two pieces are very different. *Ich will, in aller Noht* is for double-stopping and virtuosic violin, a rather less active tenor and Bc. The setting isn't particularly expressive of the meaning of the text, but it's a powerful abstract composition. The editor wonders whether it inspired the solo section in J. Christoph Bach's wedding piece. *Vae misero*, the final piece, is for alto, bass and Bc, and is rather more expressive. Make sure you have a bass who can sing down to bottom C, but he only goes as high as a tone below middle C; the alto runs an octave and a fifth from the E flat below middle C. It too is virtuosic, both pieces being completely different from the first two. I hope to have a chance to play them (taking, of course the easiest part of the organist!) Should unfigured minor chords at cadences be sharpened? CB

Joseph Riepel Violin Concertos Edited by Stefan Eckert (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, 90), A-R Editions, 2013. xviii + 155pp, \$150.00 BC
Parts: 1 in Bb \$16.00, 2 in g \$18.00, 3 in G \$22.00, 4 in C \$28.00

This volume contains the four extant violin concertos by the German composer, Joseph Riepel (1709–1782). Three of them appeared in print and, as Eckert explains in his informative introduction, had been intended as part of a set of six, designed to demonstrate all the points he had made in the opening chapters of his compositional treatise, *Anfangsgründe zur musicalischen Setzkunst*, published (not quite completely) in instalments between 1752 and 1768.

The three concertos (in B flat, G minor and G) were published by Wagner at Ulm in 1756 and engraved again at Paris by Madame Vendôme in 1767 or 1768. They are all scored for solo violin and four-part string ensemble. MS copies of all three also survive, with the set for the third concerto (from the Fürst zu Bentheim-Tecklenburgische Bibliothek) also containing two oboes, while that for the first (in the Royal Conservatory library in Brussels) has an

Hautbo (!) Secundo part, so presumably also had a part for Oboe 1 at some stage in its history. In the preface to the first edition (which Eckert gives in full), we read "In the last concerto in G, transverse flutes might sound better than oboes, but both are *ad libitum*. They will serve you well instead of *Violini ripieni*." Make of that what you will!

Concertos 1 and 3 follow the standard three movement form, and conform to Riepel's own description of how the tuttis and solos of a concerto should be organised. Concerto 2 deviates from the norm somewhat by having two slower movements between the faster ones; the bass section drops out in the *Adagio*, then comes an *Andante* without solos – combining the two uppermost lines would have meant the movement would have fitted on two pages without the need to turn for a single system. Editorially, I wonder what the point of adding an ornament in the solo line is, if one does not also add it to the identical Violin 2 line? In the same music, there is a double bar after Bar 17, but no explanation of its purpose. The addition of figured bass is not consistent – if you are going to go down that line, every non-root-position chord needs some annotation (like Bar 18 in Concerto 1/1, for example).

The final concerto in the volume is more overtly virtuosic and the source material includes cadenzas, as well as ornamented versions. The scoring includes oboes, bassoons and horns (though the original cover says trumpets), but the music is actually very similar in style to the printed set. Riepel contrasts the tuttis with solo episodes over the two ripieno violins, or the three upper string parts, or dialoguing groupings of two violins versus viola and continuo. There is no figured bass in this work.

Riepel's music is tuneful and not without drama. The solo violin part has wide leaps with trills, double stopping, and a variety of articulation marks, all of which make it rewarding to play. With only string and keyboard accompaniment prescribed, the three printed concertos make an excellent addition to any chamber or even school orchestra's repertoire.

One very minor final point: the list of booksellers from which the first edition was available is also printed in full (p. 8); the penultimate entry is surely Zerbst, not Herbst, where Gottfried Zimmermann's book shop was in the lower portion of the "Dicke Turm" from 1701–1812. BC

Stanley Sadie Completions of Mozart Aria Fragments Edited by Dorothea Link with a foreword by Julie Anne Sadie (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, 88), A-R Editions, 2012. xix + 196pp, \$160.00 Includes music from K87, 119, 178, 435, 440, 492 & 580

I never knew that Stanley Sadie was another Mozart-*Ergänzer* – but here are his completions of nine arias that have, unfortunately, come down to us as fragments of one sort or another. They range in date from 1770 to 1789; two of them survive only as vocal scores with piano reduction, but for the others there are autograph scores that Mozart abandoned without fully orchestrating them, or that

break off before the end. Often, therefore, it is a matter of working up a complete orchestral score, but sometimes missing bits have to be composed afresh. The most ambitious project is the recitative and aria "Non tardar, amato bene", originally intended for Susanna in Act 4 of *Le nozze di Figaro* but later replaced by the familiar "Deh vieni, non tardar". Here, Sadie not only had to fill in much of the orchestration, but also had to supply a whole fast section at the end. His brilliantly ingenious solution to the problem was to adapt part of the finale of the Piano Quartet in Eb, K. 493, written immediately after *Figaro*. It might seem an improbable source for a soprano aria, but it fits the text and the sentiments remarkably well. Sadie's work throughout is highly competent and impeccably stylish, and makes performable some vintage but incomplete Mozart. The arias are a most welcome addition to the repertoire.

I hope Stanley's shade will forgive my presumption if I mention a few scholarly quibbles. Aria No. 3 is related to No. 14 in *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, which as printed in the *Neue Mozart Ausgabe* (the NMA) is of the rather unusual shape A-B-A'-B'; but Mozart had already composed and rejected an earlier version of A – let us call it \hat{A} . Sadie adds the printed B and B', separated by his own re-working of \hat{A} , to produce \hat{A} -B- \hat{A} -B' as a sort of conjectural first version: but it's a bit of a cheat since \hat{A} is nearly twice as long as A and heads towards F, not the D minor in which B starts (Sadie omits the last bar of \hat{A} in order to fudge the key-change). I wonder if Mozart was thinking of a more conventional \hat{A} -B- \hat{A} shape (probably with a different B), but then changed his mind? We'll never know! For Aria No. 7 there is an autograph single-line voice part, and an arrangement for voice and piano in the hand of the collector Aloys Fuchs (1799-1853). Dorothea Link suggests that Fuchs's piano part may be a copy of Mozart's own keyboard reduction, or alternatively may have been composed by Fuchs as an accompaniment to Mozart's voice part. But isn't it possible that it's Fuchs's reduction of a now lost Mozart score? In some ways Aria No. 9 is the biggest puzzle of all: the only source is Mozart's incomplete autograph score, which breaks off before the final ritornello and has only occasional indications of the upper string parts, the wind staves being blank throughout. Yet the composer entered the aria in his private catalogue as if it were complete, specifying the wind instruments as two clarinets, two bassoons and two horns. Surely the implication is that Mozart had by then written a fully-scored version? Why didn't he use the incomplete autograph for this purpose, as was his usual habit? I suspect the explanation is that he had second thoughts and wrote a revised version of the aria (with the same opening bars, as his catalogue entry shows), which has unfortunately not survived.

These are matters of detail, where there may be legitimate differences of opinion. But I have two rather more serious complaints. The first is that, even after piecing together the explanations in the Introduction (at the front of the volume) and the Critical Report (at the back), it is often difficult or impossible to tell exactly what was in the original autograph sketches and drafts and what was

added by Sadie. In No. 9, for example, the statement 'The parts for violins 1 and 2 and, to a lesser extent, violas are intermittently filled in at important junctures' is too vague: we need precise information about what Mozart left us. Again, in No. 8 the Critical Report correctly says that there is an earlier sketch of the melody only, but does not make clear that it has 26 bars of music, followed by the instruction 'da capo', followed by another 5 bars, which Sadie used for bars 70-75 of his completion, the rest of his Andante section being taken from a later, more fully worked-out draft which extends to the first note of bar 36. I had to consult the online NMA volumes for clarification on these and other similar points; this ought not to have been necessary, for a little more detail in the Critical Report, together with a few transcriptions of the sources, could have included all the necessary information without adding significantly to the length of the volume and its cost.

Which brings me to my second complaint. For the publisher to charge \$160 for a paperback volume of about 200 pages is outrageously extortionate. It is, I imagine, way beyond the reach of most readers of *EMR* (I wouldn't have dreamed of buying it if Clifford hadn't sent me a review copy), and is hardly likely to attract many performers. It's not even as if you get a set of parts as well as the score for your money; indeed, the statement in the score that 'Performance parts are available from the publisher' is not borne out by the A-R Editions website, which makes no mention of parts at all. A great pity, for I fear that this volume will languish on a few library shelves and Sadie's beautiful completions will remain unheard by the general public.

Richard Maunder

I've noticed that A-R editions have increased in price over the last few years somewhat more than expected. We'd been hoping to use their Gagliano La Flora next May but the price is \$215.00, so we'll use the facsimile instead. CB

Joseph Schubert Viola Concerto in E-flat Major Edited by Andrew Levin (Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era, 88), A-R Editions, 2013. xviii + 103 pp, \$144.00 Parts available from the publisher (2.2.2.2 2.1.0.0 timps str)

Viola concertos are fairly rare beasts. Before everyone gets overly excited, though, this is not by the Schubert (or, as far as Andrew Levin has been able to establish, even a known relative). Joseph Schubert was born in what was Bohemia in 1757 and died in Dresden, after almost 50 years of service at the Hofkapelle there, in 1837. In fact, this Schubert wrote two viola concertos, as well as dozens of similar works, most of which are now lost. Gerber said of Schubert, "he shows just as much artistry in the harmony, modulation, and the appropriate use of the various instruments, as he does good taste in the creation of beautiful melodies" (*Neues Lexikon der Tonkünstler*, Leipzig 1812-14, Levin's translation).

The present work is in three movements (*Allegro – Adagio – Rondeau: Allegro*). The first is a monstrous 345 bars long and I suspect it will struggle to support its own weight in performance, despite some nice melodies and some

impressive solo writing for the viola. The *Adagio* begins with a 10 bar introduction in common time, before the soloist enters with a melody in 3/4. The movement originally ended at the present Bar 86, but the composer later added four more bars – and an expansive, if rather harmonically unadventurous, “cadenza”, apparently as preparation for an *attacca* into the rondeau. Personally, I would have penned something that actually *did* lead in, rather than ending the former on the A flat above the treble clef and beginning the latter on the E at the bottom of it...

Unlike the composer's C major viola concerto – several renditions of which are available on youtube – the E flat concerto requires a full orchestra, with flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets and timpani. Schubert's orchestration is hardly revolutionary, but with such a full band at his disposal in Dresden, I suppose he had to give them all something to do. Levin includes a list of some of the players from 1880, which include a lutenist (!), four bassoonists, and as many copyists.

German-Jewish Organ Music: an anthology of works from the 1820s to the 1960s. Edited by Tina Frühauf. (Recent Researches in the Music of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries, 59.) A-R Editions, \$280.00. xxvi + 13 plates + 131pp.

I am not sure how, or why, this found its way to *EMR* for review, so will only give a passing mention of this volume from A-R Editions' 19th and early 20th century series. In my rare visits to synagogue services, I have been surprised at their acceptance, indeed, encouragement, of the most Christian (and usually) Protestant music, my first experience being a succession of Bach chorale preludes played in what I gather was a progressive synagogue. This edition is clearly a labour of love by Tina Frühauf and includes extensive background information of the composers and the pieces as well as critical notes. The works vary from the easily sight-readable to the almost impossible – one set of canonic variations demands such a wildly virtuosic pedal technique that I wonder if was written with no thought as to the performance implications. To be honest, I am not altogether surprised that none of these composers, or pieces, have become popular in the wider organ world, although it would clearly be of interest to the inner circle of organists to whom it is directed.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

SHEFFIELD & DERBYSHIRE CAROLS

The Sheffield Book of Village Carols. New edition. Edited by Ian Russell Village Carols, Sheffield, 2011. 202pp, £20.00 + post ISBN 0-9524871-3-6; pb £12.00 + post ISBN 0-9524871-4-4.

The Derbyshire Book of Village Carols. Edited by Ian Russell Village Carols, Sheffield, 2012. 250pp, £25.00 + post. ISBN 0 9524871 5 2; pb £15.00 + post ISBN 0 9524871 6 0 www.villagecarols.org.uk

It must have been nearly twenty years ago when Peter Holman assembled a committee to discuss all sorts of non-cathedral-style psalmody. A wide range of experts and enthusiasts attended and considerable tensions were generated – objection on principle to the use of the keyboard, for instance, when I was playing from a volume of music of the relevant repertoire that had a figured bass. Some discussions dealt with the conflict between “Whatever is, is right” and the desire to revive what is best. I've a feeling that it was Ian Russell who argued with me on that topic on the way to a pub. We're probably more mellow now – at least there's no objection to keyboard accompaniment in these volumes!

Singers of carols are more likely to use *Carols for Choirs* than either the more scholarly *New Oxford Book of Carols* or revived and adapted “village carols”, and all-new (or at least new music to old words) seem to be quite common. The original version of e.g. *Stille Nacht* which lacks the out-of-range “climax” (it should be a third lower) has not caught on, nor do we hear many of the tunes to which “While shepherds watched” was sung.⁸ *Cranbrook* survives chiefly with the secular *Ilkley Moor* text and sometimes appears in carol concerts, though Thomas Clark's first setting had the tune in the tenor; such versions didn't survive into the tradition shown here, which either wasn't customary in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire or didn't survive until later 19th-century sources. *Old Foster* is a genuine bit of art music (to a different text) which is transposed down a minor third from C to A. That implies a sound very different from the brighter one John Foster would have expected, while the low pitch is associated with a rougher sound. It would have been helpful to put that point in the notes and also mention that score and parts of the original publication are cheaply available from the reviewer and well worth performing in a concert with orchestra (strings, flute, 2 oboes, two horns, trumpet, tamps & organ/piano). Other carols can be played by such an ensemble as well. The other extreme is drunken, semi-improvised versions of the tune with vestigial remains of the harmony, which is fine *in situ*, but doesn't (in my limited experience) sound convincing in recordings!

The introductions are excellent (especially the Derbyshire volume), but I'd welcome a bit more detail in the commentaries. What were the original keys? The user would be interested if several sources as well as the usual pitch had different keys or show that there was a standard one different from the editorial key adopted. The editor notes that current pitches are lower than earlier (and some current) notations, which make the sound much coarser (using the word as description, not criticism). There is, however, some comment on the shrillness of the singers, and that would suggest high, not low. There is considerable information in the notes, though those in the Derbyshire books are arranged according to source, not the order of the music in the individual sources or alphabetically, so they are slow to find.

8. The Sheffield book has eight settings, the Derby book 13 (all numbered one page lower than they should be). Hymn and carol books are much more sensibly referred to by number. If someone has copied out a few string parts, giving a hypothetical page-number isn't much use.

The layout of the Sheffield book in particular is strange. This carol repertoire is hardly an independent form: rather, it is derived from the non-cathedral hymn style of the 18th- and 19th-centuries. These were generally presented as four-part settings, which in some cases have added "symphonies" – instrumental introductions or interludes. In the last century or so, the wider repertoire has faded and is only brought out at Christmas, with some new Christmas pieces composed in the old style. But the model for publication is surely the hymn-book. The vocal parts are essential, and can be doubled by instruments. These new editions follow the older style with four parts, which look like hymns with SATB parts, though performance practice often reduced the parts to two or three. Taking *Lyngham* as an example (Sheffield, p. 90), why should the vocal sections take up four pages? In the 1933 Methodist Hymnal, it takes up two-thirds of a much smaller page.⁹ The solution is to print the four parts on two staves. There is thus no need to print the text more than once, except for fuguing bits – in fact, the tune had no underlay at all, with repeat signs to indicate verbal repeats. There is thus no need for a piano reduction, except for the symphonies. I haven't done a carol-by-carol check, but I suspect that most pieces can fit one or two pages. Print size can be considerably smaller – though bigger than most hymn-books. The existing volumes are rather heavy, the Derbyshire paperbound volume weighing 940g, the Sheffield one is only 760g!¹⁰ slightly lighter, but rather heavy to hold if singing a whole programme!

The idea of including string parts in a separate score from the voice parts is ludicrous. It increases the length of the book sufficiently to affect the price. Players normally used parts – so remove all that the players need into parts for two violins, viola (when there is one, perhaps also including the same part in treble clef) and cello/bass – in fact, the tenor part might as well be included in alto clef since there could well be a player available.¹¹ The vocal sections should be included within the parts, but leave it to the players to add embellishments or passing notes: maybe print them above the plain notes: this shows the individual style of the copyist but also lets the player do what he wants to. The layout of the parts is an invitation to ignore the statement on copyright on the back of the title page: "No part of the publication may be reproduced... without the permission of the copyright owner and publisher". Fair enough for singers, but fiddlers will need to have their parts copied: they can't play from the score, since the books won't stay open flat and there are page-turns. (Parts only appear in the Sheffield book, but there's no reason why they shouldn't be added if you want to include a carol from the Derbyshirebook in a programme

with instruments – they are all from similar origins, and sinfonias could be composed or borrowed from existing ones.)

It has occurred to me that singers too might benefit from using parts, since that solves the problem of underlay of verses after the first. Assuming the singers rehearse at least once, they are likely to remind themselves of "While shepherds watch" fairly quickly, so there should be no need to print later verses. But not all carols are so familiar, and having the words makes it easier for players to know which is the last verse.

The survival line of much of the music is very thin, and I suspect that in some cases a new way of performing was put together without the thorough research someone reviving a style might, in a world of musicological research, have looked into the background of the music. I sense loss in the choir of 40 with no instruments to join them.¹²

JOHN CATCH

John Catch died on 30 April this year, aged 95. I didn't know him well, but he was fond of sending letters, some for publication, some for my information, or perhaps in hope of airing a controversy (which I tried to resist). I must have known him for most of my involvement in the Viola da Gamba Society. He was enthusiastic, and his discussions were very logical and scientific. I had a bit of a dispute with him over whether consort viol players would have practised scales. I was seeking for evidence whether they did or did not, while he assumed that they did. When did hexachords give way to scales?

John was one of the original subscribers to *EMR*. CB

Blame not my lute...

... because I don't play one. But I tried to identify the Dowland Fantasy which I mentioned in connection with Paul O'Dette; he gave me the number, but somehow it didn't match what I remembered. I'm grateful to Mike Ashley for confirming that I really did hear the right number – Poulton 73 (see *EMR* 154, p. 13, paragraph 1). Had I identified the score at once, I might have been more specific. CB

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9. Admittedly without words, since it survived in an appendix, though older Methodists still associate it with Charles Wesley's "O for a thousand tongues to sing". It began the crematorium service at my mother's funeral: all ten verses were sung with enthusiasm, helped by music as well as words on the service sheet. In the current Methodist Hymns and Psalms (1983), *Lyngham* is one of the tunes for "While shepherds watched".

10. The weight of my Oxford UP vocal score of *Messiah* which (as I have mentioned before) Emma Kirkby claimed was too heavy to hold.

11. The repertoire in the Sheffield book covers something like two centuries, and string parts are easily lost!

12. The Derbyshire Book, p. 9-10, sketches the traditions at Eyam: a MS of 24 carols dated 1795. No dates are given, but Russell claims support through the Methodists until the 1970s. The singers had a brass band between the wars. Christmas carolling was revived in 1997, but without instruments.

WHAT THE TALLIS SCHOLARS REALLY DO

Clifford Bartlett

Peter Phillips *What we really do: the Tallis Scholars*. Second edition. The Musical Times Publications, 2013. 344pp, £25.00. ISBN 978 0 9545777 2 8

Few performing bodies have produced a book of this nature. Peter Phillips and his choir has been in operation for 40 years, with mostly a gradual change in personnel and in performance style. And it is to his credit that Appendix I lists all the members of the choir and the number of concerts each has sung, ranging from one to over 1000 (Donald Grieg 1309, Francis Steele 1288, Caroline Trevor (PP's wife) 1265, Deborah Roberts 1244, Tessa Bonner 1110, Sally Dunkley 1051). They have made 60 CDs (three not yet issued) and toured extensively, though with rather fewer UK concerts than one might have expected.

What made the Tallis Scholars was their recording success, largely under the control of Gimell Records (Steve Smith). A period linked with larger companies was a disaster and Gimell returned. Chapter 2 is fascinating. The CDs (passing over some musicological doubts) are well sung, well recorded and are the basis of the choir's success: in particular, concerts would not have succeeded without them. But it seems from the book that no enormous amount of money is made.

Their programmes were to some extent limited by too fixed an ensemble. Lassus in particular suffers from this: there is only one Tallis Scholars recording of his music, on the grounds of his tendency to avoid double sopranos, though Palestrina fares better, despite suffering from the same inconvenience. The Tallis Scholars standard ensemble is two pairs of sopranos and six men who could be more flexible. Divided tenors are avoided when possible.¹ PP is prejudiced about German music in general (most of Lassus's life was spent in Germany). If PP wants to remedy that, he might try Schein's marvellous *Israelsbrunnlein* (1623) – polyphony doesn't stop at 1600 – and the addition of organ continuo, but he avoids instruments almost on principle. German ensembles are much more flexible in that respect.

One problem that PP seems to deliberately ignore is the difference between English and continental music. Despite his disagreement with David Wulstan, PP still seems to accept his unrelenting arguments on high English pitch (up a minor third), which now seems to have less authority – and I don't remember seeing any research by him on pitch outside Britain. However, PP isn't particularly interested in

scholarship on how music was performed, which came over clearly at the end of a TV programme in the early 1980s on The Tallis Scholars in a closing interview with Nicholas Kenyon. Nor does he think that there is any need for the use of instruments – he should consult Andrew Parrott on the use of sackbuts and cornetts in major English churches. Instruments were common in Spain (PP records Spanish church music without) and in Italy (the well-known publicity that the Sistine Chapel didn't have instruments surely implies that other churches did), and the Venetian style with sackbuts & cornetts was shared by much of Germany. I can understand that hiring instruments is expensive, but why create a musical style of your own that is so limited. For someone who is fond of Palestrina, it seems perverse to reject so much on the principle of having four sopranos (two per part) and six voices below, which doesn't allow for five-part music with two tenor parts (i.e. 4 tenor singers) unless two sopranos are left at home. Sopranos are easily heard anyway, and lower parts are clearer if not smothered by extra sopranos. I think that PP got caught in a particular period, a bit like those who set up chamber orchestras in the 1950s and 1960s and never moved forward: Raymond Leppard and Neville Marriner come to mind. But they moved on to wider ranges of music, while PP seems stuck in his own creation. In some ways it is very good, despite having no historical basis.

But they get good audiences. Most choir singers have been influenced by the transpositions of Fellowes and the like (on practical grounds) or Wulstan, whose study of clef relationships was important but whose acceptance of a minor-third-higher basic pitch has been strongly disputed. (The standard church pitch in Germany and North Italy was up a semitone from A-440, England perhaps a quarter-tone higher, Rome considerably lower.²) The Tallis Scholars are an excellent ensemble if you don't want to question details, and have recorded some 60 CDs. The voices make a good sound and blend well, and deserve their success. But I wish that PP could encompass rather more scholarship than he does. For a start, there is far more variety that could enliven polyphonic music.

The book is unlike any other I have read – a mixture of an ensemble's history, its commercial relationships with performers, recording, travel etc, and some attempts at musicology that any scholar would pull apart, starting with the Allegri *Miserere*! A large "family" of singers are mentioned, and the writing is easy to read. There are five appendices: the list of singers, a discography, sessions recorded for broadcast,

1. I've checked in the revised vol XI of Lasso's *Sämtliche Werke* XI, reviewed on p. 2. Of the 24 pieces a5, ten are for C1 C3 C4 C4 F4. High clefs are more varied, but it is not clear how PP treats *chiavette*. I also checked the quintus part of Palestrina's fifth *Motets* a5: there are only two pieces for 2nd soprano. (Examples chosen at random for ease of access!) It puzzles me that PP avoids indicating ranges by clef and using the word *chiavette*: it's almost impossible to give detailed information easily and concisely without doing so.

2. See Bruce Haynes *A history of performing pitch: the story of "A"* Scarecrow Press, 2002

voice ranges in Tallis (starts well but doesn't go where I hoped it might), and articles from the *Spectator*. There are lots of pictures.

We have been sent three fairly recent CDs of The Tallis Scholars from 2010 (Victoria), 2011 (Josquin) and Mouton (2012). It's a long time since I heard any of their recordings, and most of my CDs are packed away at present, so it gives an opportunity to sample them again. Josquin and Victoria are separated by a century, while Mouton was a contemporary of Josquin.

Josquin Masses: *De beata virgine, Ave maris stella, Credo quarti toni* The Tallis Scholars, Peter Philips 75' 58"
Gimell CDGIM 044

Mouton Missa *Dictes moy, etc.* The Tallis Scholars, Peter Philips 67' 54"
Gimell CDGIM 047

Ave Maria... benedicta tu, Ave Maria... virgo serena, Nesciens mater, Quis dabit oculias, Salve nos Domine + Compère Dictes moy

Victoria *Lamentations of Jeremiah* The Tallis Scholars, Peter Philips 64' 08"
Gimell CDGIM 043

Padilla Lamentation for Maundy Thursday

I was intrigued to see that my copy of Josquin's *De beata virgine* (*Das Chorwerk* 42) was bought at Dartington Summer School in 1964, and has markings showing that I mostly sang alto but sometimes moved to low soprano or tenor. The soprano part has a particularly wide range, down from top G to the A below middle C (at a quick glance – the other parts are less extreme, though I haven't strained my eyes checking them). The Mass is discussed in some detail by Alejandro Enrique Planchart in Richard Sherr's *The Josquin Companion* (Oxford UP, 2000) pp 120-130: the idea of transposing the Credo was not mentioned, though surely anyone looking at the soprano part would notice something odd.³ The interesting feature (for which a score is a useful companion to the CD) is the anthology of Lady Mass chants and the likelihood that the mass was put together from earlier partial settings. I've not investigated clef patterns in this period, but later in the century, it would be obvious that the change from the G2 C3 C3 C4 of the Kyrie and Gloria to the Credo for C2/C1 C3 C4 F4 would probably involve transposition. But the alternations of compass in individual parts is more complicated than that: compare the range of the soprano part in the three sections of the Kyrie. PP transposes the high clef Kyrie and Gloria down a tone, but the Credo up a third – i.e. preferring an effective pitch for the sopranos but giving less clarity to the lower men. The variety of chant gives good reason for getting hold of a score. A fascinating mass – I await a convincing explanation.

There is an extraordinary number of MS copies of *De beata virgine* – around 50. But it's a comparatively early work, while the later *Ave maris stella* was available in print from 1505. The manipulation of chant is more sophisticated than in the other mass, and is based on the familiar Marian hymn. *Werken van Josquin des Prés: Missa VI* uses G2 C3 C3

F4 clefs, though the notes show that some sources have sections in C2 for the alto and C4 for the bass. The edition I prepared in 1992 (I'm not sure whether it was for Andrew Parrott or for Westminster Abbey) is transposed down a fourth, whereas PP left it more-or-less as notated. Planchart (*loc cit.* 109-119) notes that the chant is transposed from its normal D up a fourth to G. Is it anachronistic to argue that the apparent high pitch notation is a clue to returning the music to the normal pitch of the chant? The notated pitch or thereabouts sounds well as in the other Mass. This is, indeed, beautiful music, well sung by the trebles, and fine until one starts questioning how choirs around 1500 might have thought about the music. In particular, might they have preferred proper basses. I may not be right, but modern performances follow too many assumptions. And if they *are* assumptions, it might be better to change them occasionally!

For many years, the BBC's Editor of Early Music, Basil Lam, liked the idea of a programme of Mouton edited by Lam, and I think that he eventually produced one. The rebus on the cover is by Holbein. Josquin may well be a better composer than Mouton (but perhaps not by as much as we presume), but he is definitely worth hearing. I imagine that the best-known work is the canonic double-choir *Nesciens mater* – it certainly deserves it.⁴ The programme is impressive. I won't go through the contents or comment on pitch! Buy it and enjoy – including the three gangsters' photo. PP's booklet introduction has just the right tone.

The Victoria programme is odd. There's some point in programming the Tallis Lamentations together, since they are two unrelated groups which don't have an appropriate liturgical context – though the idea of singing through both sets in unrelated transpositions from the Oxford UP/TCM edition (which is how I first encountered them in the late 1950s) makes no sense! But presenting three sets of three Lamentations, each set for different days, is an artificial creation. There would be some logic in following a set of Lamentations with the six responsoria, but PP has already recorded them, or in treating the programme as primarily musical and adding some contrast. It is also puzzling that the music is sung higher than notated, when Roman pitch was low; irrespective of Roman pitch, I feel that lower voices (or perhaps the existing singers in the lower part of their range) would be more appropriate for lamenting, unless the women really sounded shrilly distraught! If you don't believe in any current knowledge of the pitch the music was written for, why not be a bit more imaginative? The programme ends in Mexico with Padillo's Maundy Thursday set (verses 1-3, whereas Victoria set verses 1-2, then skipped to later verses), in a far more emotional style than Victoria's. But I suspect that a recording like this can easily fall into background music, however well sung.

3. I enjoyed Planchart's company at Early Music America's *400 Years of Vespers in Berkeley* three years ago, and he more than most academics of the older generation was involved in performance matters – but not in that article!

4. Older editions are set out as a single choir, but it seems easier to read sensibly and logically if the originally-notated four parts are treated as one choir and the resolution up a fifth as Choir II. Price £2.00: £1.50 each for eight or more copies from CB.

REVIEWS of BOOKS

Names after each review

MOTETS AROUND 1500

Thomas Schmidt-Beste *The Motet around 1500: On the relationship of imitation and text treatment?* Brepols: Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance, 2012. 565pp, €100.00. ISBN 978 2 503 52566-2

What struck me first when I opened this massive volume (1.900 kg) was the layout of the first article. I wondered whether it had been created for Joshua Rifkin, who is a master of the footnote. It reminds me of medieval MSS that surround a text by a commentary, with notes down the wide left margin and spreading along the bottom. These are substantial, and to some extent offer a parallel text of detail as well as extensive bibliographic references. A medieval MS, though, would have the footnotes for right-side pages in the right if not on both sides. The article also has extensive musical examples, tables and comments at the end that supplement the original contribution. Rifkin occupies 83 pages; the other 24 contributors have an average of 20 pages each! The format is of equal value to many of the other contributors, and there is a general policy of translating non-English texts.

The origin of the book was a conference in Bangor from 28 March to 1 April 2007. The editor's preface is dated July 2010. This is evidently not the sort of Proceedings that can be published quickly: I doubt if all the details in the published form were available at the conference, especially considering the extent of the notes, and the proof-reading of 25 complex contributions by busy academics must have needed a lot of chivvying. There is too much here to be able to digest each contribution separately. There are more overlaps in ideas than disagreements, and several contributors worked out systems of imitation that could form the basis of a motet. I like the idea of Rob. Wegman watching a DVD with his ten-year-old son and learning "that there are French scholars who have perfected the art of making flint arrow-heads, and have discovered vital clues about stone-age technology in the process." He was inspired to deduce how Richard Davy could compose *O Domine celi terree creator* in a day, as noted at the end of the work "Hanc antiphonam composuit Ricardus Davy uno die collegio magdalene Oxoniis" – "Richard Davy composed this antiphon in one day in Magdalen College, Oxford" (I haven't noted the abbreviations in the Latin text). This is a long piece, lasting around a quarter of an hour, copied on six large pages. Wegman wasn't experienced in composing in the Eton style, but nevertheless, despite his inexperience and working out the method from the basic principles he was using, he was able produce 17 bars in two and a half hours. With a bit of practice, he could probably speed up. The chosen cantus firmus is "God save our gracious Queen". I

hope Davy chose a long, bright day in midsummer. It's the only example in the Eton Choirbook, so was probably a special challenge. A flippant example, and I'm not going to try to give a summary of this or other devices. The theories are set out clearly and with adequate examples.

I'm more interested in how to underlay the texts than to learn how to write imitation motets – though at least some musicologists should have imitative skills in composition, if only to complete works with a part or two missing (as in the Gesualdo included in this edition). Several contributors drew attention to the lack of interest in setting the Latin either to mensural or accentual principles, and beyond that, it seems that writers about motets tend not to mention the words in any detail. Accenting the text in the right place, deciding which accented syllables matter more than others, using rhetorical principles in repetition, etc. derive from Willaert as much as anyone else. Warwick Edwards concludes: "humanistic thinkers around 1500 might have had an entirely different concept of how words and music might go together, or even no concept at all" (p. 138) and Leo Franc Holford-Strevens comments on incompetent poets by reassuring "musicologists with shaky Latin that it is not their fault if they do not understand the texts and very much their fault if they think they do" (p. 157).

I don't know how significant was the emergence of two Josquins in the late 1990s (see p. 232). John Milsom raises the issue (p. 232+), but I get the impression that scholars are not too concerned – and there is some sense in building arguments that motet B is so like motet A that it must be the same composer, and relationships work out from that (and beware of attributions in posthumous prints). A brief email from David Fallows was laid-back and implied "carrying on as usual". Rifkin mentions the "gorilla in the room" (p. 45).

A lot of effort is spent on dating individual motets. Scholars like to sort out chronologies, and singers too wonder whether, if they recognise resemblances between two pieces, which comes first. Despite most of the MS sources not having precise dates, individual motets can often be dated quite closely. Contrast with a century or so later, when Monteverdi's larger church music can only be dated somewhere between 1612 and 1638. I don't think we're yet at the stage of rearranging a hypothetical index by year! But an index of composers, motets and names of authors in notes would be most welcome. Compiling it would be time-consuming, but it could probably be done by tagging the three categories once the pagination was fixed: it would be a real key to the repertoire! CB

I was frustrated that my temporary revival of fluent reading lasted only a couple of weeks; the cataracts are now clear. I didn't have very long to digest it, but was glad to comment (if not thoroughly review) so majestic a volume.

1. *Eton Choirbook*, no. E30, f. k3v-k6r; *Musica Britannica* xi no. 23, p. 62-72.

MUSIC OF PICARDY

La musique en Picardie du xiv^e au xvii^e siècle sous la direction de Camille Cavicchi, Marie-Alexis Colin et Philippe Vendrix. Turnhout: Brepols, 2012. 455pp + CD, €100.00. ISBN 978 2 503 53666 8

Shortly after leaving Calais and heading down the motorway towards Paris, you pass a sign which says "Picardie – Terre des Cathédrales". Those of Abbeville, Laon, Amiens, Noyon, St Quentin, Soissons, Beauvais and Senlis – as well as *collégiales* such as St Riquier, Corbie and Royaumont – are among the greatest visible manifestations of Western Europe's architectural heritage, and in no way can Picardie's musical creations be considered poor relations. In the Middle Ages, Picardie was widely if somewhat lazily considered to be anywhere north of Paris where they still spoke French rather than Flemish, so it is very clearly the southern half of the Franco-Flemish polyphonic tradition. This lavish book is produced by and for the *Région de Picardie* as currently defined (the three départements of Somme, Aisne and Oise), but it intelligently spreads the net a little to include mentions of Cambrai and St Omer, where records have survived, to shed light on places such as St Quentin and Corbie where, for reasons of war, fire or revolution, they have not.

It is a truism that at the level of royal, ducal, imperial and papal courts, Europe from the 13th century onwards had much in common with the European Community of the 21st century. Picardie was, with Flanders, where the singers and musicians who filled these institutions nearly always came from, and the value of this book is to bring together in one place articles which give this assertion context. After a scene-setting tour of the situation from the 10th–13th centuries by Jean-François Goudesenne, which neatly brings together plainchant and the beginnings of polyphony with the widespread occurrence of liturgical plays and *fêtes des fous*, there follows a series of descriptions of music in the principal dioceses – Amiens, Abbeville, Beauvais, Laon, Senlis, Soissons and St Quentin. Each article has its own qualities and emphases. Among the best are those on Beauvais (Marie-Alexis Colin), which highlights the relationship between music and ecclesiastical and municipal politics, Laon (Yolanda Plumley) which shows the large number of musicians in the Chapter, as well as tracing the close relations of the Cathedral with the ducal court of Burgundy and the Papal court at Avignon, and St Quentin, in which David Fiala compensates for the complete absence of archives (destroyed by fire in 1669) to examine in detail its relationship with Machaut, Compère and Mouton (both of whose epitaphs are found there) and Josquin.

Subsequent articles look at Picardie through both ends of the telescope. Wider contexts are examined by Anne Ibos-Angé (medieval lyrics), Florence Alazard (celebratory music for royal and ecclesiastical dignitaries – between 1411 and 1598 Amiens saw 62 *entrées*, 7 for François 1st alone) and Annie Cœurdevey (manuscript and printed sources – Noyon, with its original Cathedral library building and contents miraculously in place, is especially

valuable for its complete sets); narrower ones by Gérard Gros (the *confrérie* of Puy Notre Dame in Amiens), Peter Christofferson (the *confrérie* of Saint Barbe in Corbie and its relation to Amiens MS 162) and Marcel Dégrutère on the organs of the region, who shows that despite their widespread use and the extensive sums lavished on them, Picardie in the Renaissance never became the centre of organ-building that Normandie or Paris did.

The culmination of the book comes in the final chapters, entitled *Formation et rayonnement*, which deals with the fortunes of Picard musicians *hors des murs*. Alice Tacaille deals with their comings and goings, particularly the Protestant ones (notably Paschal de l'Estocart), Agostino Magro examines the system of *bénéfices* that Picard musicians became so adept at using for their comfortable retirements, Marie-Alexis Colin and Camilla Calvicchi, in complementary contributions, follow their fortunes – particularly the lesser-known ones – throughout Europe and their reception and fortunes in the Savoy and Italy.

Finally, David Fiala entertains us with a chapter entitled *Monstres-chanteurs*, which confirms certain prejudices about the drunkenness and misbehaviour of jobbing singers, who roved from one cathedral to another spreading scandal and outrage. Musicianly misbehaviour finds a place also in the articles on Abbeville (Grantley Macdonald) and Amiens (Frédéric Billiet), which deal with fornicating *maîtres de chapelle* failing in their duties to the boys in their charge, either by feeding them too little, or by beating them too much (or both), and organists stealing pipes from their own instruments. The singers, though, secure in the knowledge that they were more or less irreplaceable, seem to have specially gloried in their reputations, giving themselves nicknames which exaggerate them. Shouting, or even throwing bits of meat, at each other across the choir during the office seems to have been the least of it. As they were frequently employed also as copyists, we have the caricatures that they drew of themselves, notably in Cambrai MSS 3, 4 and 17, and Musée Condé MS 564, which are liberally reproduced.

If the book occasionally seems hesitant about its audience (simple terms such as *concordances*, *chanson* and *unica* merit explanation, but more complex ones in Sandrine Dumont's detailed and valuable article on the chant-books of different orders in 17th century Picardie assume a fairly detailed knowledge of the liturgy and of the orders concerned), virtually all of it is accessible to the informed musician, looking for unknown gems and themed programmes. Even for those with only a nodding acquaintance with the language of Molière, the bibliographical list of 462 Picard musicians is very valuable; if the information on the best-known composers does not always add much to New Grove and/or the current state of the literature, it is useful to have it all in one place, and it includes hundreds of musicians who otherwise languish in obscurity, including some very interesting characters. There is a comprehensive index and some stunning reproductions, nearly all of which have some relationship with the text.

The book comes with a CD of works by Picard composers performed by *Odhecaton*, directed by Paolo da Col. Alongside well-known works by Mouton and Compère (which receive the best performances) is music by three composers associated with the cathedral of Noyon: *Missa O gente Brunete* by Nicolas de Marle (one time Master of the children) published in Paris in 1568, and motets by Mathieu Sohier and Antoine Bruhier, all of which fully merit their rediscovery. It is surprising, as David Fiala points out in his article, for a published mass to be based on a chanson, especially one with such a "suggestive" text, at this late date. The performances have much to recommend them – a relaxed and unfussy approach allied to mostly excellent tuning and some lovely bass sound. One could occasionally wish for a little more agreement about the underlying tempo between different parts, and more care with vowel sounds, especially from the top line of three male altos; their presence also takes the sound of the group rather a long way from a *maîtrise* with boys, as most Picardian ones were.

With its thirty articles, it is difficult to do justice to this publication – delightful to look at if heavy to hold – in a few paragraphs. It stands as a tribute to Jacques Bidart, director of the late lamented Festival des Cathédrales de Picardie.

Graham O'Reilly

MY LADYE NEVELLS BOOKE

Tihomir Popović *Mäzene – Manuskripte – Modi: Untersuchungen zu My Ladye Nevells Booke* (Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft, 71). Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013. 269pp, €52.00 ISBN 978 3 515 10214 8

My Ladye Nevells Booke may be the best known and most fully studied of all 16th-century music manuscripts apart from the *Medici Codex*. It contains what must be a more or less complete copy of Byrd's keyboard music up to the point of its copying, is precisely dated to 1591 and is all in the hand of the man who must count as one of Elizabethan England's best and most accurate music-copyists, John Baldwin. At the time of copying, Baldwin and Byrd were very closely associated, and it seems almost certain that the sequence of pieces as well as the exemplars came from Byrd himself. Most of all there is a series of corrections to the text in a single hand throughout, all but certainly the hand of Byrd himself. For those who find the notion of 'the English virginalists' totally misleading, since Byrd stands out so far above the others, this is obviously a key document, because it shows a fully-grown keyboard style appearing as though from nowhere, just as Athena was born fully armed from the head of Zeus.

So even though it was in private hands until 2006 (when it was bought by the British Library, who thoughtfully skipped a few numbers so they could label it MS Mus. 1591), studies of it abound. Hilda Andrews did a truly gorgeous edition of it, with extensive and well-informed commentary, in 1926, now on every music lover's shelf through the Dover reprint. Alan Brown studied it in detail and published about it prior to his masterly edition of all

Byrd's keyboard music (1969–71). Its music received thorough treatment in Oliver Neighbour's *The Consort and Keyboard Music of William Byrd* (1978), a book that some of us think of as the absolute model for a book on early music. And there is a mountain of peripheral literature on it, continuing to the brief but excellent statement in Kerry McCarthy's new book on Byrd published in July (not to mention the recent Bärenreiter facsimile with an introduction by Neighbour). It was also recorded complete by Christopher Hogwood in 1976, with characteristically trenchant insert-notes, and again by Elizabeth Farr in 2006. In the circumstances, then, the eyebrows are inclined to rise at the sight of a 250-page doctoral dissertation published in a highly respected German series (and with a 172-page Appendix, available only online, including all the plates, all the genealogical tables and all the musical examples: there's not a note of music in the book itself). The great subjects are always open to new study, but how do you go about it?

One answer is that you build it into the thinking of a French philosopher – in this case Bourdieu (d. 2002), in which context the preparation of the book for a member of the highest protestant aristocracy is a major consideration. While not disputing the received identity of Lady Nevell, Tihomir Popović adds much unpublished detail about the family and various modes of address; and he has much to say about the place of music in the aristocratic society of Elizabethan England.

But he does disagree with all Byrd scholarship on the matter of the proofreading adjustments found throughout the manuscript, which include a certain amount of actual recomposition. Until now, everyone has assumed that they could only have been written by Byrd. Popović, on the other hand, notes that we have no attested example of Byrd's musical hand and that there is no objective proof of his involvement. Since he has no alternative suggestion, it is hard to know what to do with this, apart from perhaps ignoring some of the rewritings. But at least it gives Popović the opportunity to list and briefly to evaluate every single adjustment in the manuscript (though this appears not in his book but in the online Appendix available on the public DIAMM site under 'Reference documents'), whereas Andrews and Brown had simply accepted these readings as the final readings in the manuscript and therefore printed them mostly without comment. This entire discussion could have benefited from a broader study of the other surviving manuscripts written by Baldwin. But instead he gets entangled in trying to discredit the attempts by Margaret Glyn (1924) to interpret these changes as stylistically in Byrd's manner. This he does by explaining that modern German musicology considers stylistic analysis unreliable in establishing authorship (p. 126). Inevitably Roland Barthes is now rolled out with his famous 1968 essay on 'La mort de l'auteur' (via an unpublished book of 2003 by Michele Calella, who is here credited with telling us that it is about time musicology took serious account of that essay).

One slightly annoying feature of the book is that Popović

tends to giggle at any uses of the word 'English', and he goes completely bananas at the word 'British' (so perhaps he should glance at John Caldwell's *Oxford History of English Music* for the clearest statement that English and Scottish music in the 16th century are surprisingly similar, despite the two countries having different monarchs and regular warfare before 1603). He'll really hate the book I'm writing about English carols in the 15th century.

The most musically satisfying part of the book is where he discusses modality and tonality in the pieces, reaching the conclusion that Byrd's music has a combination of the two – which will surprise nobody, even those who disagree with him. All the same, it is a touch saddening to see so much energy and intelligence deployed on such a well-studied manuscript when so many others lie all but neglected. There is no index.

David Fallows

BYRD INFORMATION UPDATED

Richard Turbet *William Byrd: A Research and Information Guide. Third Edition.* Routledge, 2012. xii + 286pp, £95.00 ISBN 978 0 415 87559 2

The book arrived, I browsed through it extensively, and then it vanished before I could write anything; in fact, I think I did ask someone else to review it, but didn't record a name, so I can't even chase the review. But I know the earlier editions well, and know the compiler's bibliographic pedantry (no – I'm not being rude: bibliographers must be pedantic!) The problem is the cost of updating. A high percentage of the book is unchanged. On the whole, little new music is thrown up, biographical discoveries are details, and studies of the music can generally be located online. I don't like reading "books" online, but I suspect that the only way for a fourth edition would be a downloadable, cumulative supplement. I reckon, in fact, that most thematic catalogues and composer bibliographies could be treated thus, with a standard key word in the title that summons such information easily. CB

HANDEL'S OPERATIC DANCE

Sarah McCleave *Dance in Handel's London Operas* (Eastman Studies in Music). University of Rochester Press, 2013. xiii + 266pp, £55.00., ISBN 978 1 58046 420 8

As something of a philistine when it comes to so-called classical ballet, I well remember the striking impact made on me by my first encounter with Baroque dance. If memory serves, this came courtesy of a 'Divertissement' evening given in the lavish surroundings of Inigo Jones' Banqueting House, a programme that was the brainchild of the redoubtable historic dance expert, Belinda Quirey. Given in the late 70s under the auspices of Lina Lalandi's adventurous English Bach Festival, such delightful programmes might have become the launch pad for a HIP revival of Baroque dance. Sadly, the subsequent inexorable rise of Regietheater meant that for today's opera director and his accomplices, the dances in, for instance, a Rameau opera, require little more than that the dancers (both male and female) jump up and down until their

trousers fall down round their ankles (cf. Graham Vick's *Les Boréades*, c.1993).

Notwithstanding such cutting-edge contemporary originality, dance has played an important part in opera since its inception, having made the transition from 16th century theatrical events such as the Florentine *intermedi*. It played a definite role in Venetian opera, a critical one in French opera and occupied a major place in English dramatic entertainment. Yet as Sarah McCleave demonstrates in this masterly study, perhaps at times against her will, Handel seems to have taken an ambivalent and pragmatic approach to dance in his London operas. This reflects the taste of a capital that was itself ambivalent about the import of most things foreign, which in the case of dance and dancers meant mostly the import of things French. The figures presented by McCleave hardly suggest Handel took an overwhelming interest in including dance in his Italian operas. Of a total of 53, 14 included dance scenes, 10 of them London operas. Frequently, as in *Rinaldo*, the first of the London operas, such scenes are brief, serving a specific purpose such as the seduction of a hero from his duty. As McCleave shows in one of a number of valuable tables dotted through the book that the device was not new, in England stretching back at least as far as to Purcell's *King Arthur*, where in act 4 Arthur is lured by the sight of naked sirens (presumably) dancing a passacaglia.

Not the least of the problems facing a scholar on the role played by dance in these operas is that so little information has survived. There are no surviving choreographies for Handel's London operas, and scant descriptive evidence of what the dances might have looked like. Indeed, there are times when it is not even known that episodes that seem to call for dance were even danced. On a number of occasions McCleave tells us that such and such a scene *may* have involved dancing (i.e. *Admeto* 1/9). When she gets something a little more substantial to chew on, such as the remarkable dream sequence that opens *Admeto*, McCleave brings rewarding insights into her narrative, as she does with the dream sequence from act 2 of *Ariodante*, although I would question her description, following in the wake of Ellen Harris, that *Ariodante* belongs to the pastoral genre; it surely rather has its pastoral 'oases' (to borrow McCleave's apt word). And here other questions beg answers. McCleave sees this sequence of dances as set apart from the dances of Handel's previous operas, the dark ending of the act tailored particularly closely to the dramatic action. Yet it is not known if this striking scene even made it to the opening night. And how are we to take its unchanged re-appearance in *Alcina* only months later, where the dances serve quite a different purpose? The answer is almost certainly an example of Handel the pragmatist. Handel's principal dancer in both operas was the great French dancer Marie Sallé, also the choreographer of the dances in both *Ariodante* and *Alcina*. There is little doubt that it was above all Sallé's great popularity that encouraged Handel to include dance in his operas when he did so; it is obviously not without significance that dances were usually dropped from revivals when she was not available.

Looking back over what I've written, it may give the impression that I am critical of McCleave's work. That is certainly not my intention. As I know from encountering her many years ago, Sarah McCleave has worked on the topic of Baroque dance for a long time. It is doubtful if anyone knows more about it on an academic level. The present book bears eloquent testimony to that, extending far beyond the remit its title may suggest to cover such topics as genre, *Affekt* in dance, social dance and dance included in a much broader range of theatrical entertainment in London. There are numerous musical examples, in addition to the tables already mentioned. It is not the author's fault if the book remains something of a curate's egg, since failing the discovery of presently unknown data, she has probably told us all there is to know. But it remains frustrating that conjecture must play such a major part of the story and that special pleading at times becomes transparently obvious.

Brian Robins

PÉCOUL, POTHIER, MACQUEREAU, TRADE UNIONS

Katherine Ellis *The Politics of Plainchant in fin-de-siècle France*. (Royal Musical Association Monographs, 20) Ashgate, xxiii + 137pp, £45.00. ISBN 978 1 4094 6373 3

In the sad tale of how over the past 150 years the Vatican has repeatedly shot itself in the foot on the matter of music, there is a man who so far has avoided notice. That is partly because his activity was in the main anonymous. He worked as a journalist under pseudonyms (which was common enough in the years around 1900); he acted as a lawyer drafting letters for those less able to do so; and he communicated privately with a host of leading and influential figures. This man was Auguste-Louis Pécoul (1837–1916), a Benedictine novice at Solesmes who was forced by his mother to leave the order to continue the line of his distinguished and wealthy family: his widow eventually built an elaborate Roman-style family tomb that can still be seen in his birth-town of Draveil. After Solesmes, he studied at the famous École des Chartes before joining the French embassy first at the Vatican and then in Spain. He was a man of enormous erudition and energy who actually published almost nothing (though he had long planned a replacement for Mansi's magisterial *Sacrorum conciliorum ... collectio*) but became increasingly concerned about the future of church music. The story Katharine Ellis tells in her new book is of his back-room attempts to steer the French government and the Vatican in what he passionately believed was the right direction. Code-names and various attempts at deception add spice to a tale that sometimes feels a little like a Dan Brown novel.

The backdrop to all this is the research at Solesmes to restore the 'original' version of the Gregorian chants and to stop the monopoly of chant books published by Pustet in Regensburg with the authority of the great Franz Xaver Haberl but based essentially on the 'Medicean' edition of 1614. The chants that had served so well for a quarter of a millennium were an early Baroque adaptation of something that was at least 700 years earlier, more elaborate and culturally richer. This is what the monks of Solesmes demonstrated by the most exhaustive and painstaking

research. But they needed to convince the world and particularly the Vatican. There were many people out there who felt that the pedantry of Solesmes was likely to replace the user-friendly chants of Regensburg with something far too hard for the normal churchman. Historical accuracy was up against practices that were demonstrably successful.

Here, of course, the figures of Dom Joseph Pothier and his successor Dom André Mocquereau come into the picture, the Moses and Aaron of chant reform. When Pothier was promoted in 1893 to become superior of another abbey he saw his former pupil Mocquereau as diluting the Solesmes research to make it more popular. Pécoul thought the same; and so does Katharine Ellis for reasons that she explains with spectacular clarity. In particular, Mocquereau added all the signs of rhythm and articulation that are present in today's chantbooks and have absolutely no source authority. At the same time Mocquereau enlisted the help of the very latest technology to establish the series of facsimiles *Paléographie musicale*, which conclusively made the case for Solesmes.

Another part of the backdrop is the centuries-old tension across the Rhine between France and Germany, pulled sharply into focus by the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and by the various national-identity movements of the later 19th century. But one of the oddest features of the story Katharine Ellis tells is that the core of the dispute concerned the print unions in France, fearful that the Bavarian monopoly for the printing of chantbooks would deprive their members of employment.

This all gives rise to an immensely complicated tale, all the more complicated if you wish to be scrupulously fair to all the parties, which Katharine Ellis does (though she doesn't have much sympathy for Pustet or poor Haberl). She is particularly good at describing her own misunderstandings and how she began to sort them out in her mind. As an illustration of how music, research, politics, religion, patriotism, economics, journalism and diplomacy can intertwine, the book is magical.

David Fallows

THE LEGEND OF PAGANINI

Mai Kawabata *Paganini: The 'Demonic' Virtuoso* The Boydell Press, 2013. xii + 291pp, £45.00. ISBN 978 1 84383 756 5

"Our inherited image of Nicolo Paganini as a 'demonic violinist' has never been analysed in depth. What really made him 'demonic'? This book investigates the legend of Paganini. Separating fact from fiction, it explains how the virtuoso violinist challenged the very notion of what it meant to be a musician." At least, that's what the back cover blurb would have us believe. This is a book of two halves; in the first, Mai Kawabata ruminates on the various themes of the study perhaps a little too thoroughly (for fear readers will lose track of the narrative during frequent visits to the dictionary?), while in the second "brings together late nineteenth-century British press and literary coverage of Paganini that contributed to the developing myth surrounding the now famous composer and performer." If I had read that description, I

would have expected dozens of extracts from concert reviews and other stories directly related to the subject of the book; instead, much of the material is fiction, with either a mysterious violin or super-talented violinist, possibly in some Faustian pact with a devilish power, and does nothing to debunk the myth at all – of course, it does reflect the enormous interest Paganini had on the British public, even decades after his visit, as indeed his presence had throughout the many countries he visited.

Essentially the book explains that Paganini's outlandish appearance was the result of his contracting syphilis – his sexual appetite is a sub-theme of the book – and it was exploited (if that is not too strong a term, since Paganini seems to have denied it) both by those who saw him as part of a continent-wide interest in the musical alchemy that his unrivalled virtuosity seemed to represent (he was frequently referred to as a magician, or the son of a witch) and by the musician himself. (No publicity is bad publicity, remember!)

Kawabata provides lots of documentary evidence (though most footnotes draw attention to its appearance in other secondary literature) on a range of topics such as contemporary comparisons with Mephistopheles, and the sexual connotations of the bow as man and the violin as woman. But musical examples are scarce; indeed, the music from both the perspective of Paganini the composer and Paganini the performer has barely any importance for the discussion. It's his personality that is of greater interest here and, although I did get to know a little more of him, I actually didn't find the book endeared me to him at all, and I felt no desire to go off and listen to his music. My loss, perhaps?

Brian Clark

Proportions: Science – Musique – Peinture & Architecture. Textes réunies et édités par Sabine Rommevaux, Philioppe Vendrix & Vasco Zara. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011. 461pp, €85.00. ISBN 978 2 503 54221-8

Ben Hebbert

Les Fées des forêts de Saint-Germain, 1625: un ballet royal de "bouffonesque humeur" édité par Thomas Leconte. Turnhout: Brepols, 2012. 425pp, €80.00. ISBN 9 782503 547930

Hugh Keyte

Claire Fontijn The Vision of Music in Saint Hildegard's Scivias: Image, Notation, and Theory. Custos, 2013, 84pp, \$34.50/£22.95. ISBN 978 1 99737 330217 or iPad ...330095

Jennie Cassidy

electronic version at www.musicwordmedia.net or iPad ...330095
Anthony R. DelDonna Opera, Theatrical Culture and Society in Later Eighteenth-Century Naples. Ashgate, 2012. xxi + 318pp, 65.00. ISBN 978 1 4094 2278 5

I've been trying to think of a reviewer for this and failed. (Brian Robins reviewed it for Opera.) Any volunteers or suggestions?

James B. Kopp The Bassoon Yale UP, 2012. xxviii + 297pp, £30.00. ISBN 978 0 300 11820 2

Peter Holman

We are very grateful for our new batch of reviewers. Not all have the idea of being on time, but I'm sure they will improve. The two reviews by David Fallows are particularly worth reading. Popović's *My Ladye Nevells Booke* is treated with a degree of humour that one rarely sees in academic reviews, while Ellis's study of Pécoul etc is a significant book but very complex to follow: I read half of it then passed it on to Hugh, who gave up, whereas David returned his review in a week: we must find some more retired, brilliant scholars.

A NOTE ON PHILIP VAN WILDER AND BYRD

In *EMR* 154 (June 2013), pages 31-32, there is an appreciative review of the disc by The Byrd Ensemble entitled *In the Company of William Byrd* (Scribe, SRCD3). The programme consists of five motets by Byrd, paired with works by his contemporaries. One such pairing is *Ne irascaris* from the first book of his *Cantiones sacrae* alongside the chanson *O doux regard* by Philip van Wilder (c. 1500-53), an immigrant from what is now Belgium who became what is now the Master of the King's Music under Henry VIII. In her elegant sleeve notes, Kerry McCarthy points out that Byrd "borrowed its first page as the beginning of *Ne irascaris*", the most durable, and among the most famous, of his motets. Her source for this information was a personal communication from John Milsom. Although Professor Milsom has not committed this discovery to print under his own name, it has been published, in an account of a meeting of the Viola da Gamba Society at which he imparted this information. It can be found in "William Byrd and his age", by Catherine Westover, *Viola da Gamba Society of Great Britain Newsletter* 82 (1993), pages 6-9. It has long been known that *Civitas sancti tui*, the second part of Byrd's *Ne irascaris*, is indebted to another work by Wilder, his setting in five parts of *Aspice Domine* (David Humphreys, "Philip van Wilder: a study of his works and its sources", *Soundings* 9 (1979/80), pages 13-36) and this article has often been cited down the years. It is surprising that Catherine Westover's article, albeit not by Milsom himself, which reveals the source of Byrd's inspiration for the actual opening of the entire motet, has never in two decades been cited. (Its only appearance in Byrd literature has been in the three editions of my *William Byrd: a guide to research*, retitled *William Byrd: a research and information guide* for the third, New York, 1984, 2006, 2012). Nor has there ever been an article delving into the implications of Byrd using material from two generically different pieces by the same composer in a single motet of his own.

It is worth adding that on the disc simply titled *Byrd* by the Vienna Vocal Consort (reviewed in *EMR* 154, p. 32) has first recordings of the songs *O Lord my God* and *How shall a young man*; *Prostrate O Lord I lie* has previously been available only on a disc of limited distribution; and *Lord make me to know* is a texted version of Byrd's keyboard *Pavana. The Earle of Salisbury* from *Parthenia*.

Richard Turbet.

For van Wilder's music, see J. Bernstein, (ed.) *Philip van Wilder Collected Works* (Masters and Monuments of the Renaissance 4, New York, 1991); Part I: Sacred Works; Part II: Secular works, Instrumental works, Appendices)

Following from the foot of p. 14, The Motet around 1500 is the first substantial book I've been able to read since Christmas. Cataracts have been moved from both eyes, and they are now free from drops: I've got temporary glasses and wait for the hospital prescription for a permanent pair – but there is still glaucoma to deal with, which is currently kept under control by a couple of pills a day – and I hope that is all that is needed!

CB

CONCERT REVIEWS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

LONDON

'Tis Nature's Voice Lufthansa Festival 10-18 May

... pour passer la Mélancolie

The theme of this year's Lufthansa Festival was 'Tis Nature's Voice, and it included performances by the Gabrieli Consort, Imaginarium Ensemble, Theatre of the Ayre, Ensemble Le Fenice, Le Jardin Secret and Freiburg Baroque with Carolyn Sampson. I could only manage to get to three concerts, starting with Andreas Staier playing Froberger, Louis Couperin, Fischer, D'Anglebert and Muffat (St Peter's Eaton Square, 12 May). The title of the first piece lent its name to the whole programme, "... pour passer la Mélancolie". After this, Staier gave us an extended exposition which ranged from the nature of melancholy and its influence on art and music to the fact that he had left his concert shoes in his hotel. The range of expression that he drew from the harpsichord (in a very resonant acoustic) was best shown in one of Louis Couperin's *Prélude non mesuré*, the tentative and exploratory opening soon dissolving into lively passagework. His *Tombeau de M. de Blancrocher*, a piece dedicated to a lutenist who died after falling down stairs, completed the sequence of Couperin's pieces. The first of two extended Passacaglias was by Johann Casper Ferdinand Fischer (from his *Uranie* suite), unusual in that the bass progression changes keys. After a further *Tombeau*, this time by D'Anglebert and in memory of M. de Chambonnières, Staier finished with Muffat's majestic Passacaglia from his *Apparatus musico-organisticus*.

Fresh-air Handel

Later on the same day, the European Union Baroque Orchestra opened their new residency as Associate Artists at St John's, Smith Square with music from different parts of Handel's career under the title 'Fresh-air Handel'. The violin soloist and concertmaster was Huw Daniel, an ex-member of EUBO himself, and the conductor was Lars Ulrik Mortensen. EUBO fielded their 2012 team (only four of whom were male), the auditions for the 2013 EUBO having only just been completed. Having already spent a year touring and performing with EUBO, the players will not have been fazed by the fact they only arrived that morning from Göttingen. Their opening Overture in B flat (HWV 336) led into *Ero e Leandro* with Swedish soprano, Maria Keohane (a frequent performer with EUBO) joining the orchestra. She also sang Tamerlano's aria *Cor di padre e cor d'amante* and *Silete venti*. In the meantime we heard Handel's Concerto Grosso in F (Op.6/2) and the Sonata a 5 in B flat (HWV 288), a violin concerto in all but name, played superbly by Huw Daniel. I think it is a shame when EUBO appear as an accompanying orchestra to a soloist, as I think the focus should be on the talented young players, rather than on

somebody already well established in their professional field. But accompanying is a frequent role for orchestras, and Maria Keohane certainly has a suitable voice for the early repertoire that EUBO specialise in. It is perhaps invidious to single out any one player, but continuo cellist Petr Hamouz deserves a mention – as, indeed, do most continuo cellists. The next time EUBO appear at St John's, Smith Square, the players will be completely new.

My beloved & 1691 & 1692 Odes

The traditional Westminster Abbey concert was devoted to the music of Purcell (15 May). As usual, the Abbey choir were joined by St James's Baroque, the Lufthansa Festival's house band, and conductor James O'Donnell, the current holder of the post that was once Purcell's. The first piece, *My beloved spake*, is one of Purcell's earliest known works, written when he was about 17, and seemingly intended to shock the musical establishment of the time, but possibly to delight Charles II. It was sung with soloists drawn from the Abbey choir. This was followed by *Welcome, welcome, glorious morn*, the 1691 Ode for Queen Mary's birthday, and *Hail, bright Cecilia*, the 1692 Ode for St Cecilia's Day, with Mary Bevan, Iestyn Davies, Charles Daniels, Andrew Tortoise, Jonathan Sells and Benjamin Bevan, all excellent. Perhaps by the very nature of the venue, the choir and the director, this was a well-behaved and conservative performance – dare I say, rather English. The detail of Purcell's often complex musical lines was explored with meticulous care, but I missed something of the drama, theatricality and emotional intensity. Only Charles Daniels let himself go, most successfully in "Tis Nature's voice", his stratospheric voice weaving magnificently around the twists and turns of the melodic line. The fine players of St James's Baroque were also kept carefully under control. Again, given the many instrumental interludes in these works, they could have been allowed a little more bravado. But there was bravado aplenty from the outstanding trumpeters, Fruszina Hara (an impressive Hungarian musician that I don't recall hearing before) and Simon Munday. Other important contributions came from leader Catherine Martin, fellow violinist Clare Salaman and Mark Caudle (viola da gamba). Incidentally, London has a Bach and a Handel Festival, but no Purcell Festival. Any takers?

Andrew Benson-Wilson was in Regensburg by 18 May, so the last concert of the Lufthansa Festival (St. John's, Smith Square) with Carolyn Sampson (soprano) and the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, leader-director Anne Katharina Schreiber is reviewed by Hugh Keyte.

Baroque Music on the High Seas

Such overarching themes can be more drag anchor than stimulus to programme planners, but here was a cleverly devised succession of works by Vivaldi, Handel and

Telemann that really worked. Carolyn Sampson demonstrated her creamy tone and vocal agility in three Handel operatic arias, each exploiting in its own way the image so favoured by baroque librettists: the singer as a little boat, at the mercy of the waves and longing for harbour. Metastasio rang the changes on the same simile in the aria from Vivaldi's *L'Olympiade* that began the concert, with Reason was a helmsman threatened by the storms of Pride. This was a bold choice of opener, and the tempo felt a little fast, giving the singer little opportunity to get into her stride.

Maritime imagery received a sacred twist in the closing item, Vivaldi's *Sum in medio tempestatum*. In his admirable programme note Simon Heighes averred that 'Vivaldi was surely the greatest Baroque naturalist. Not only interested in the seasons, he was also a great lover of the sea, tirelessly trawling the oceans for appropriate allegories of the human spirit'. Here the breathtaking virtuosity of the Freiburg players brought the routine imagery of the opening aria vividly to life, so that Sampson, now at full throttle, really did sound like a sin-wracked penitent 'caught in the eye of a storm, tossed about by frightful tempests'. This is a corker of a solo motet. The initial fireworks give way to calm after the storm in a recit and aria in which the sinner wins through from dejection to eventual assurance of the safe haven of salvation; and such is the coherence of the text and the psychological credibility of Vivaldi's setting that the customary concluding Alleluja for once sounds inevitable rather than routine.

The concert was part of the 25th-anniversary tour of the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, a female-dominated band that brought a fiery vigour to the depiction of the multitudinous tempests in their programme that many a male band might envy. Vivaldi's F major Concerto Grosso (RV572) that closed the first half is entitled *Il Proteo o sia il mondo al rovescio* and exploits the sea-god Proteus's shape-changing prowess in a world turned upside down. Hamburg-born Telemann's more familiar Suite in C, *Hamburger Ebb und Fluth* (Hamburg's Ebb and Flow) demonstrated the full extent of this orchestra's prowess, with quick-silver changes of mood and ear-tickling scoring, oboists Katharina Arfken and Saskia Fikentscher switching to recorders for one movement, flautists Karl and Susanna Kaiser to piccolos for another. I found myself almost ducking for cover at the way in which the tempestuous wind-god Aeolus kept retreating and then storming back upon us. Altogether, the concert was a splendid showcase for the twenty-five-year-old orchestra and a fitting conclusion to this year's Lufthansa Festival.

Spitalfields Festival 7-20 June

Although the enterprising Spitalfields Festival continues to expand its already enormous musical, educational and community base, their traditional focus, at least in part, on early music continues. This year's festival featured the Early Opera Company as one of the two Associate Artists, performing Handel's *Susanna*, Bach's 'Coffee Cantata' with coffee tastings, a collaboration with dance company Avant Garde Dance for *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, and a programme of Monteverdi aimed at the o-2's.

Other early music groups appearing including La Morra, Arte de Suonatore with soprano Ruby Hughes, The Cardinall's Musick, The Sixteen, The English Concert and the Orlando Consort, the latter as part of a 'Food, Wine & Song' restaurant promotion.

The Devil at the Crossroads

I fitted in a concentrated three-day burst of four concerts, starting with a curious event (at St Leonards Shoreditch, 10 June) that I almost missed because the advertising wasn't at all obvious as to what the event actually was. Under the title 'The Devil at the Crossroads', the Theatre of the Ayre and the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain combined (four members from each group) to form Lutes 'n' Ukes to contrast the music of two Robert Johnsons, the 17th-century lutenist and the 20th-century American blues guitarist. I am not sure how much rehearsal time the combined forces had before this concert, but it certainly sounded, and looked, somewhat experimental and is best described as work in progress. Despite the similarity between the Lutes and Ukulele's outlined during the introductory talk, the contrast couldn't have been stronger, both in sound, musical and singing quality and presentational style of the two sides. But despite that, and the 300 year's gap between the two composers, at times it was difficult to work out which Robert Johnson was being performed. The Lutes team let their hair down briefly for a performance of My Lord Chamberlain's Galliard (written for two to play upon one lute), on this occasion presented as for four to play on two lutes.

Charlotte Barbour-Condini

I am sure that many EMR readers will remember the final of last year's BBC Young Musician of the Year, which featured the young recorder player Charlotte Barbour-Condini (the final was on her 16th birthday), the very first time that any recorder player had made it to the final. Her accompanist on that occasion was the versatile harpsichord player David Gordon, and the pair of them gave an early evening concert in the intimate surroundings of the fascinating, and historic, Hoxton Hall – a venue Charlotte could probably have walked to from home (11 June). Hoxton Hall was built in 1863 to afford "the humbler classes an entertainment that shall combine instruction with amusement". Charlotte Barbour-Condini's wide-ranging programme moved from the 14th century to Bach and then to composers still very much alive, including Roxanna Panufnik. Although I could have done without most of the frequent percussion contributions from David Gordon, his occasionally jazzed-up continuo playing was good fun, as was his own composition, 'The Alchemist and the Catflap'. But the focus of the evening was Charlotte Barbour-Condini, her engaging stage persona and extraordinary musical ability shining through. The highlights were Philidor's Sonata in D minor (the gently lilting *bon gout* mood captured beautifully) and Bach's Sonata in G minor (BWV 1020), transposed to A minor. An amazing and talented young woman, and a concert of pure joy. I am sure that the audience came away humbled, entertained, instructed and amused.

Peyee Chen & John Potter

Later the same evening (at the Rich Mix cultural centre), the recorder group Consortium5, together with singers Peyee Chen and John Potter, featured in the world premiere of an experimental music-theatre-video work, combining music with “delicate, transcendent moments where seemingly simple actions and words expose the complex frailty and emotional resilience of human nature” drawn from the texts of three recent films. I can’t claim to have understood much of it, but it certainly showed the versatility of the recorder, and Consortium5.

Susanna

The highlight of the Early Opera Company’s residency was their performance of Handel’s oratorio *Susanna* on the Festival’s traditional home turf of Christ Church Spitalfields (12 June). Unlike many Handel overtures which, regardless of the mood of the forthcoming plot, seem to be jovial affairs, *Susanna* starts with an air of foreboding and suspense, picked up by the opening chorus of bemoaning Israelites. It seems that the Christian God is having one of his frequent bouts of Jew-hating. But then, rather like a disaster movie, the next scene is one of domestic bliss as Susanna and Joacim sing of their love for each other. You just know what is going to happen!

Tim Mead was a suitably honourable (but, as we would see, rather naïve) husband while Emilie Renard played Susanna as a gleefully beaming (and at one stage, almost giggling) teenage girl hearing her first compliments from some spotty youth. In fact, one of Joacim’s compliments is to call her “unspotted”. Her father Chelsias (Derek Welton, in one of his two very contrasting roles) praises the “bless’d pair”. Emilie Renard beautifully judged the change of mood in Scene 2 as she feels rather dramatic premonitions, not least of her own death, and begins to gain the enormous stature that she later reveals.

We then hear the two Elders telling of their passion for beautiful young things, and Susanna in particular (Thomas Walker, and a rather awkward change of character for Derek Welton who moved from being Susanna’s father to her abuser as the nastier Second Elder). A business trip sends Joacim away, while Susanna opts to go naked under a “softly trickling fountain” – something left to the imagination in this concert performance. The Elders spot her and, in their contrasting styles, attempt to seduce her, ultimately, when repulsed, falsely accusing her of being with another man, leading to Susanna’s centrepiece aria, “If guiltless blood be your intent”, an exquisite moment from Emilie Renard. In one of those improbable Biblical moments, Joacim arrives back to see Susanna condemned to death, only for a young boy to interject in the trial to not only save the day through a neat bit of interrogation of the Elders, but also giving himself the power to release Susanna.

This boy was the fledgling Daniel, sung beautifully by Emma Walshe, stepping out from the choir to produce the musical highlight of the evening with her aria “Chastity, thou cherub bright”; her clear-as-a-bell and totally unaffected voice and exquisite ornaments brought tears to my eyes. I wonder how long she will retain that voice. She was the only singer of the evening to produce

a proper trill, although Emilie Renard (who was smiling approvingly during Emma Walshe’s singing) had several fine attempts.

Although it is clear that Handel and his librettist were relating Susanna’s fate to that of the unfortunate Jews in general, the story by which he does this is very moving and well-paced in itself, particularly in the sensitive musical hands of Christian Curnyn. Key to the work are the contrasts between the pairs of Susanna/Joacim, First/Second Elder and Judge/Daniel and Curnyn reflected this through his direction. This is a little-performed Handel work that deserves to be much better known – and Christian Curnyn and this excellent cast are the ideal ambassadors. They should record it.

Imeneo at the Barbican

Another even rarer work by Handel came a couple of weeks later when the Academy of Ancient Music continued with their annual Barbican Handel opera outings directed by Christopher Hogwood, with a concert performance of *Imeneo* (Barbican, 29 May). *Imeneo* is a curious work. As Hogwood put it during his pre-concert talk, it’s “a bit of a mystery, emotionally”. Readers of my review of the London Handel Festival performance in the last issue of *EMR* may remember that *Imeneo* fancies Rosmene who loves Tirinto whilst Clomiri is in love with Imeneo. Rosmene can’t choose between Tirinto and Imeneo, so has a bit of a mad fit. After the rather silly London Handel Festival fully staged show earlier this year, it was a relief to hear Christopher Hogwood take the work seriously, without an irritating director getting their hands on it. As I wrote in the last issue, “most of the emotion and mood is in the music, and getting the singers to just sing what Handel wrote would have certainly worked for me”. And that is exactly what they did. That said, Handel rarely goes beyond surface emotions, and doesn’t delve into his characters as much as usual. Explanations include the fact that he was moving between opera and oratorio at this time (1740), and the libretto was also originally intended as a serenata rather than a full-length opera. But a concert performance was a very good way to appreciate the work’s inner strengths. The interactions between the singers was well done, staying on stage when being sung to, for example, and exchanging glances when appropriate although as the concert was being broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, there were apparently a few compromises. There was a strong vocal cast, with mezzo Renata Pokupić (replacing David Daniels) getting first honours, as Tirinto dominates the start of the opera. She was by far the most theatrically compelling singer, projecting some real emotion with fine acting. Rebecca Bottone sang the role of Rosmene, her rapid vibrato rather obstructing her vocal line, while Lucy Crowe (Clomiri) brought a refreshingly clean and agile voice to the proceedings. Vittorio Prato was Imeneo. As ever, Christopher Hogwood conducted in his elegant and economic style, doing his best to rescue this rather unloved work.

Rousset at the Wigmore

Christophe Rousset presented a rather short harpsichord recital at the Wigmore Hall (31 May), with works from Duphy, Balbastre, Rameau and Royer, played on a splendid 1711/16 Donzelague harpsichord. After he walked on stage, he opening a drawer in the side of the harpsichord to pull out his music – but then started too quickly while the applause was still continuing. This rather rushed approach continued throughout, with very noisy page turns (surprising as his finger release from the notes was usually very quiet). His playing also seemed far too aggressive and percussive, considering both the style of the pieces but also the sensitivity of the instrument. It was no surprise that it needed some repairs before the end of the concert. Moments of relief were few and far between. He finished after just over an hour, but then played four encores, his rather quick returns to the stage suggesting that these had all been carefully prepared as part of the programme. Whatever my own misgivings, he did seem popular with the audience, who clearly felt something that I didn't.

Tage Alter Musik, Regensburg

17 – 20 May 2013

Those who like their music presented in short but intense bursts would enjoy Regensburg's annual early music festival, *Tage Alter Musik*, with its 14 concerts in just four days. After the two concerts on the opening evening, there are four concerts a day, starting at 11 in the morning to the last daily concert at 10.45 or 11 at night, often running until well after midnight. One of the attractive aspects of the programming is that, apart from the ritual opening concert (in the sugar-icing baroque Basilica of St. Emmeram) with the Regensburg Cathedral Choir (the famed Domspatzen), there was no sense of the incestuous repeat bookings of performers connected with, or friends of, the festival itself, an issue with a number of such events. True, practically all the concerts were linked to a recent CD release, but I guess that is how groups find their way onto the invitation list of a really international festival.

Beethoven's 1st & Mozart's Requiem

The opening work of the festival would have appealed to those of the 'conductors do more harm than good' school, with Concerto Köln's performance of Beethoven's 1st Symphony, directed by the Markus Hoffmann. This was a well integrated and intense reading, with particularly good treatment of Beethoven's notorious transition passages and his '1001 things to do with a scale' string writing. Mozart's *Requiem* followed, conducted by the Domkapellmeister Roland Büchner, the highlight being the singing of soprano Dorothee Mields. I found myself sitting close to a large group of pubescent girls (a bit too young to be WAGS), which might have something to do with the presence of the 150 or so boys of the Domspatzen. The boys sang with clean and relatively pure voices, with little sign of the edgy chest voice traditionally associated with such German boys choirs – even the tenors (a tricky voice type at this age) were clean toned.

Capella Romana

For the late night concert we moved from the baroque frippery of St. Emmeram to the austere Gothic of the Dominikanerkirche for the American vocal group Cappella Romana and their fascinating concert of extracts from two services from MSS in the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai under the heading 'Byzantium at the end of the world'. Starting with the Vespers of St Catherine (with music from 1332-1469), the obviously professional singers were a refreshing change from the often bucolic style of some similar groups I have heard. The chant ranged within the span of a fifth, usually moving by step, with little ornaments (most often a pre-beat mordent) and occasional microtonal intervals, including a wavering between a major and minor third over a tonic or dominant drone. They followed this with the second part of the 14th/15th century liturgical drama of the three youths and the fiery furnace (MS Sinai 1527). The two most notable movements were 'The Angel of the Lord' (composed by Manuel Lampadarios of Gaza) and 'When the tyrant', by Angelos Gregoriou, with its catchy opening line of *anana.naneanetanena. Anetanen-nane-nanaatanennaneianenane*.

Fantasías, diferencias y glosas

The Saturday series of concerts opened in the historic Reichssaal with the Spanish group Accademia del Piacere. Their programme of *Fantasías, diferencias y glosas* included works by the Cabezones (Antonio and Hernando), Sanz, Arcadelt, Ortiz and de Selma y Salaverde, almost all 'arranged' in a rather formulaic manner by the group's director. Their playing seemed similarly formulaic, regardless of the composer or implied mood of the piece. Fine for a summer evening in a Seville bar, but not really appropriate in this setting. Their stage presence was also rather unwelcoming, one example being their reluctance to accept or acknowledge applause, immediately turning the pages to the next piece. They should have made it very much clearer as to whether they wanted applause or not; but, when it was given, they should at least have acknowledged it with rather more grace. I felt particularly sorry for the gamba player, Johanna Rose, seemingly taking the role of the token blonde and given very little to do. The guitar solo featured the irritating habit of moving from a bout of tuning straight into a composed piece with no indication of when the latter started.

Fiesta Criolla

The next concert, in the St-Oswald-Kirche, was from the Swiss-based (but, judging by their names, South American/Iberian populated) group Ensemble Elyma (with their Argentinean conductor Gabriel Garrido) honouring the Virgin of Guadalupe with their programme *Fiesta Criolla*, a reconstruction of an early 18th century grand musical "fiesta" from the Bolivian Cathedral of La Plata (now Sucre). This was clearly a lively occasion, if the whoops and yells and proliferation of rattly/shaky/bangy things was anything to go by – representing the "music for afternoons of comedy and bulls" that was part of the festival. The music included pieces from mainland Spain from the likes of Correa de Arauxo and Martin y Coll as well as by the Mestizo composer Roque Jacinto di

Chavarria and his Spanish teacher Juan de Araujo and the native Bolivian Andres Flores. There was a rich palette of instrumental and vocal sounds, notably from the lovely little Peruvian Chirimia (a gently-voiced shawm) played by Aline Chenaux. This was an exhilarating concert, the few unsettling moments probably caused by the problems of conducting whilst sitting down, making sight-lines tricky.

Fasch in D

The main Saturday evening concert (in the modern concert hall, Neuhaussaal) was devoted to concertos by Johann Friedrich Fasch given by the Belgian group Il Gardellino. Fasch needs championing, but I fear this was not the occasion. The programming of a succession of works nearly all in D major or minor, with predictable harmonies and formulaic writing drawn from a limited palette, was a bad start. But it was the insipid and uninspired playing of Il Gardellino that really did it for me. With little sense of light and shade, frequently poor intonation and rhythmic unsteadiness, this did more to bury poor old Fasch than praise him. His music does need, and deserve, a great deal more effort.

Ad modum tubae

Those expecting a quiet late-night lullaby were in for a shock at the 10.45pm concert by Les Haulz et les Bas, 'Ad modum tubae – The Alta Capella of the Middle Ages', given in the cavernous acoustic of the enormous Minoritenkirche, now part of a museum. Featuring a pair of unfeasibly long (around 3m), and very loud straight trumpets (known as Busine), a pair of Schalmey, a Pommer, a couple of Dudelsacks (bagpipes) and a battery of percussion (complete with a jovial percussionist), this was pure entertainment in a grand manner. What it lacked in delicacy it more than made up for in sheer bravado. A refreshing, if noisy, end to the day.

Melancholy Matteis & Purcell

Sunday also started in the Reichssaal, once the seat of the Holy Roman Empire's parliament – the Reichstag. Under the watchful eyes of a double-headed eagle, the French group Gli Incogniti, led by violinist Amandine Beyer, gave a programme demonstrating 'The false consonances of melancholy', contrasting Matteis's 1685 'Ayres for the Violin' with two of Purcell's 1683 Sonatas of Three Parts. In sharp contrast to the earlier Reichssaal concert, this was a group that immediately endeared themselves to the audience for their obvious enjoyment of the music and also in acknowledging the applause of the small group of people sitting behind them. John Evelyn wrote that Matteis had a "stroak so sweet" that he made the violin "speake like the Voice of a man", something instantly recognisable in Amandine Beyer's own inspired playing. I also liked Anna Fontana's performance of harpsichord works by Purcell and her simple but effective keyboard continuo playing.

Abendmusik

The Sunday afternoon concert at St Oswald's started by my being barged out of the way (along with several others) by a determined little woman who thought that she deserved to shelter from the rain before anybody else.

Hey ho! The concert we had come for came from the French group Les Cyclopes, directed by Thierry Maeder, with a programme of 'Abendmusik an St Jakobi in Hamburg' featuring music by Weckmann (organist of that church) alongside works by the Lübeck organists Tunder and Buxtehude. Three beautifully expressive Weckmann cantatas were performed, all rather melancholy as befits their date of 1663 when Hamburg was smitten with the plague. The excellent soprano Eugénie Warnier sang Tunder's cantata *Ach Herr, lass deine lieben Engelein*, with its meditative opening Sonata and its distinctive little rising phrase. Lucile Boulanger had an impressive and prominent role with her viola da gamba. It was a shame that none of Weckmann's organ music was included, as St Oswald's has an 18th-century west-end that I have never heard played during any of the Tage Alter Musik festivals that I have attended. Unfortunately the harpsichord playing was far too dominant, in this and in other pieces. Although admittedly listed as one of the two directors of Les Cyclopes, the harpsichord player played no part in the proceedings apart from her continuo playing. So I was surprised when she came over all prima-donnaish at the applause, leaping to the front, standing in front of the orchestra's leader and generally acting as though the whole thing was entirely her show, when it had very obviously been directed by Thierry Maeder and violinist Olivia Centurioni, both of whom deserved far more respect and recognition. I have also reviewed Les Cyclopes' CD of works by Weckmann.

Galuppi Jahel

The mid-evening Sunday concert was Galuppi's 1770 version (reworking?) of his 1747 oratorio *Jahel*, recently discovered in a Zurich library, given by the Barocca Orchestra di Bologna and the vocal group Cappella Artemisia. This opened with a pretty Rococo two-movement Sinfonia that was an organ concerto in all but name, organ played well by Miranda Aureli. There was another organ solo in Habar's *In valle, in monte*. The story is the biblical tale of Jael, whose hospitality to Sisera (a tormentor of the Israelites who rather stupidly seeks refuge in her tent) extends to driving a tent peg through his brain (as you do) thereby becoming a courageous Israelite heroine. The players of Barocca Orchestra di Bologna made a reasonable job of some rather dull music, the instrumental highlights being the solo organ contributions and the mandolin in Deborah's *Rosa, et lilio fronte ornate*. Writing of Galuppi's girls choir at the Incurabili, one of Venice's four *Ospedali*, Charles Burney opined that they "would have merited and received great applause in the first operas of Europe". Sadly this was not the case with the curious ladies group, Cappella Artemisia. With few exceptions, I don't think I have ever heard such dreadful singing on the professional stage or in concert. Excessive vibrato was just the start of it, and affected all six singers. None of them could manage a trill, relying on the usual device of landing on, or near, the note and then just wobbling for a bit. At least three of the singers had voices that could only be described as horrible, the ravages of age perhaps being an excuse for a couple of them. The younger singers showed some

promise, but had voices already ruined by the inability to control vibrato or hold a steady tone – or indeed, show any musical integrity towards the style of the work they were performing. They managed to get in three or four cadenzas for practically every aria, most unimaginative and predictable. Never have *da capos* been less welcome. Unfortunately for my sanity, Galuppi's music didn't impress either – this was an example of a work plucked from well-deserved obscurity. I am afraid that I couldn't face any more music that day, so missed the concert by Ensemble Syntagma (of Ockeghem's *Missa sine nomine* and motets by Johannes Cornago) that started at 11pm that night.

Shoot the photographer

Amandine Beyer, the French violinist who had impressed me so much with her group Gli Incogniti the day before, gave a very welcome solo violin recital on the Monday morning (20 May) in the Bruderhauskirche St Ignatius. Noisy cameras are one of the bugbears of this, and many other festivals. On this occasion the (official) photographer perched himself, distractingly, right in front of Amandine Beyer and waited for her to start her opening gentle Adagio before clicking away. Why? The rest of that work, Bach's Sonata No 3 in C, showed both Amandine Beyer's formidable technique and also her outstanding musical sensitivity. She followed this by Pisendel's Sonata in A minor, with its improvisatory opening prelude, flight of fancy Allegro and virtuosic final variations, and ended with Bach's Partite No 3 in E. It is fair to say that this might not have been her finest recital ever but it says something for her sheer professionalism and musicality that it was one of the finest of this festival.

Das Augsberger Liederbuch

The early afternoon Monday concert (back in the Reichssaal) was from the three singers and four players of the German group Per-Sonat with their programme *Das Augsberger Liederbuch – vocal and dance music of the early 16th century*. The Augsburg Songbook dates from around 1510, and includes works by Desprez, Hofhaimer, Agricola, Obrecht and Senfl. The voices of Per-Sonat perfectly matched this gentle, reflective, sophisticated courtly music. Attractive instrumental contributions from recorder, and renaissance gamba, fiddle and violone enhanced the mood. After some initial confusion as to when or whether we were expected to applaud (the group clearly indicated that the first applause was in the wrong place, which meant that when they got to the right place – after the next piece – nobody applauded), the programme continued in well thought-out groups.

Canadian Bach & Michael Chance

The penultimate concert was in the sumptuous baroque Alte Kapelle and featured Four Centuries of Bach (the awkward title of this Canadian group, not the name of the concert) with Bach concertos for oboe and violin, transcriptions of three organ chorale preludes and the cantata *Ich habe genug*, the latter with Michael Chance standing in for the indisposed Daniel Taylor. The group is led by oboe player John Abberger, and the oboe dominated the proceedings in more ways than one. The opening work was the Overture No. 2 BWV 1067,

reworked reworked for solo oboe rather than flute), given a far from accurate reading with a rather mannered and awkward grinding to a halt at phrase ends, notably in the Polonaise. The E flat Concerto (BWV 1053, but transcribed for oboe rather than harpsichord) was little better, the oboe again dominating even when the melodic interest has clearly been passed to the violin. The highlight was the Violin concerto in E (BWV 1042) with Adrian Butterfield as soloist, giving a fine demonstration of how Bach (and practically every other Baroque composer) constructs a musical line from a succession of little motifs, notably in the Adagio. It was also good to hear the important viola line in the Adagio. In the closing cantata, Michael Chance's voice wavered too much in tone, timbre and intonation for my taste, and was also too quiet in the lower register and too loud in the upper. There seemed to be a moment of uncertain direction within the group at the start of the final aria.

After Bach

The festival finished with *Une soirée au Concert Spirituel* with the orchestra Les Agréments (from the French-speaking bit of Belgium), with works by Grétry (his tiny and inoffensive little Symphony in D minor), Haydn, Vogel and Gossec, representing a typical programme of the Parisian concerts in the Salle des Cent Suisses in the Tuileries Palace. Johann Christoph Vogel was a member of the Hofkapelle of the princely Thurn und Taxis family, still resident in Regensburg (their fortune arose from delivering the Holy Roman Empire's mail, but is now dominated by marketing beer). His clarinet concerto (with Eric Hoeprich as soloist) explored both the lyrical and virtuosic aspects of what was then a relatively new instrument. The opening of the short Symphony in F (Op 8/2) by Gossec (one of the organisers of the Concert Spirituel) was hushed and rather mysterious before bouncing off into a lively Allegro. As is often the case with programmes like this, it quickly became apparent as to why Haydn is so much better known than Grétry, Vogel or Gossec, his two Paris Symphonies (in E flat and *La Reine*, a favourite of Marie-Antoinette while still in possession of her head) frankly just having so much more music in them. The playing and direction of Les Agréments seemed rather matter of fact, playing the notes but not really turning them into music.

As usual, the concerts were very well attended, with most sold out. Next year's festival is from 6-9 June 2014.

Leipzig Bachfest 14 – 23 June

BACHmosphäre

The overall theme (and the focus of a series of specific concerts) of the 2013 Leipzig Bachfest was *Vita Christi*, drawing together of works such as the Christmas Oratorio, the St John Passion and the Easter and Ascension Oratorios, along with the traditional closing performance of the B minor Mass alongside related works by Handel, CPE Bach, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert. The festival is an enormous undertaking, with a vast number of events aimed at all ages and all musical tastes, grouped under various headings such as *Vita Christi*,

Excellent, *Bach out and about*, *B@ch für Uns!*, *BACH-mosphäre*. For the first weekend it dominates Leipzig city life, with live relays of concerts into the Markt, and free late-night jazz and contemporary performances, all attended by a huge number of people alongside the sell-out concerts themselves. The theme of the first concert (in the Thomaskirche) was beginnings/ awakenings. It started with the traditional organ solo, the Thomasorganist Ullrich Böhme's powerful performance of Bach's youthful and exuberant *Fantasie in G* (the *Pièce d'Orgue*) ending with the 32' pedal reed and the two cimbels. After around 20 minutes of speeches, we heard the cantata *Wachet auf* and Mozart's version of Handel's *Messiah*, with the Thomanerchor and the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, not, unfortunately, playing period instruments or in period style, the vibrato of the violins, both solo and *en masse*, being particularly surprising to me. The late night concert was about as far from the opening concert as you could get, with three excellent musicians Susanne Scholz, Robert Ehrlich and Nicholas Parle (all teachers in the Leipzig Hochschule für Musik und Theatre), playing Corelli, Hotteterre, Handel, Bach and Telemann in splendid surroundings with the wonderfully Germanic name Bundesverwaltungsgericht. This concert was a real delight, with outstanding playing from all three with, perhaps, the honours going to violinist Susanne Scholz for her performance of Bach Sonata in G (BWV1021).

Freiburg Baroque

The Leipzig music scene nowadays is probably more Goth than Baroque, but in Bach's day the coffee houses resounded to the music by the Collegium Musicum of the sort that we heard in the concert by the Freiburger Barockorchester, the ensemble in residence of the festival, in the far from coffee-house venue of the Nikolaikirche (15 June). In Bach's day, most of the players would have been students, but we had Andreas Staier as soloist for the Concerto BWV 1052, his reading of the Adagio being languid to the point of self-indulgence. He also added a cadenza to the final Allegro that could easily have passed as a CPE Bach fantasia. There were solo opportunities aplenty for the players of Freiburg Baroque in the other concertos in the programme, all delivered with aplomb.

Biber & Bach violin sonatas

As with the previous night, the late concert (in the Evangelical-Reformed Church) was another gem, given by violinist Annegret Siedel and her Bell'arte Salzburg and alternating between four Sonatas from Biber's Rosary Sonatas (VI, VII IX and X) and Bach Violin Sonatas (in C minor, BWV1017, and E minor BWV 1023). Here was another example of outstanding violin playing. Annegret Siedel's delicate and sensitive tone was ideally suited to both the Biber and the Bach, bringing an emotional intensity to the former, and a musical sensitivity to the latter. Using five violins for the six pieces (instruments dating from 1670 to 1760), Siedel explored the complex tone colours that Biber intended through his scordatura tunings. Particularly sensitive accompaniment came from Margit Schulteiß playing organ, harpsichord and harp, alongside a theorbo and viola da gamba.

Dávid Szigetvári

Included amongst the festival concerts are prize-winners of the Leipzig Bach Competition and other similar competitions. One such was the Hungarian tenor Dávid Szigetvári, winner of the First Prize in the 2012 Leipzig Bach Competition – he had also impressed me when I heard him in the final of the Cesti Competition in Innsbruck in 2010. His concert (16 June, Alte Handelsbörse) included music by Purcell, Handel and Bach, with harpsichord solos by Muffat and Handel played by Robert Schröter. Dávid Szigetvári has an agile, light and unaffected voice that needs to be nurtured, not turned into an operatic voice. His use of ornaments and elaborations was most attractive, placing them in a subservient role to the melodic line. He also engages well with the audience, looking at, rather than above them. Later on the same day there was a further concert in the *Vita Christi* series with Haydn's Seven Last Words performed by the Minguet Quartett (Michaeliskirche). Each movement was introduced by an actor reading the full text of the Biblical verse in question, making for a rather long concert which, unfortunately, several people in the audience decided not to see through to the end. This is not a piece for equal instruments, with violinist Ulrich Isfort having by far the strongest role. The only downside of this fine concert was that the cellist was far too forceful, both aurally and visually, and had the disturbing and distracting habit of repeatedly glancing at the viola player sitting next to him – who, incidentally, was everything a viola player should be so deserves a mention – Aroa Sorin, a fine Hungarian player.

Goldberg & Musical Offering

The day finished with the Freiburg Baroque consort, a paired-down version of the ensemble in residence, with the *Musical Offering*, preceded by two four-movement Sonatas (in C minor and major) by Johann Gottlieb Goldberg – a composer better known through another composer's work. On this showing, he deserves to be better known as a composer himself. The C minor Sonata showed signs of the developing *Empfindsamer Stil* with its dramatic opening chords, immediately followed by a quiet lyrical passage, before continuing with a Bachian fugue. The C major Sonata includes a double fugue with the falling chromatic motif that was also integral to the Goldberg theme. It finishes with a witty Gigue, the rising arpeggio theme shared between the two violins. The *Musical Offering* was given colour and aural depth, with the key players standing at various depths on the stage. Harpsichord player Torsten Johann gave well-structured readings of the two complex three- and six-part Ricercars.

Christus am Ölberge & Stabat mater

The Bachfest certainly doesn't stick to Bach, or his era. There was a fair bit of Wagner, and also their traditional delving into little-known works of great composers. One such was Beethoven's dramatic 1802 oratorio *Christus am Ölberge* Op 65 (a work that both Beethoven and the critics considered below his best), performed in the concert given by the Monteverdi Choir Hamburg and the Mitteldeutsches Kammerorchester directed by Gothart Stier (Thomaskirche 17 June). It opens with an operatic orchestral introduction, the low brass intoning a slow

minor triad arpeggio before gentle strings lead to a trumpet call and low timpani beats that reinforce the mood of foreboding. The work includes some powerful moments, including the sequence of recitative, aria and choir, *Erzittre, Erde!* and the contrasting choirs of Guards and Youth. The work finishes with a rather out-of-place final fugal *Hallelujah* chorus and a determined major triad – a curiously up-beat ending, given the next stage of the story. It was followed by Schubert's *Stabat mater* in F (D383), set to a free German adaptation of the original text. This shows Schubert absorbing a musical heritage rather than striking out with a new voice. It sets a rather curious mood, the jovial and self-satisfied final chorus veering towards operetta in music and text terms – a mother might have just watched her son die, but we're OK! Playing on modern instruments, the orchestra was nonetheless aware of period style, although the opening Bach *Jesu, der du meine Seele* (Cantata 78) sounded rather like Bach as Beethoven or Schubert might have experienced it.

Johannes Lang (organ)

Another prize-winner's concert took place on 18 June with organist Johannes Lang, winner of the 2012 Leipzig Bach Competition, playing the 1969 neo-baroque organ in the Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche. I was only able to catch the last half of his recital but was impressed with his playing of Buxtehude and Bach and a 1975 work that concluded by switching the organ blower off. His imaginative phrasing and interesting elaborations on the written text were combined with some intelligent registrations and well articulated playing to bring a sense of vitality to the music.

Lazarus & Christ lag in Todes Banden

Later that evening came a work that was new to me, Schubert's only oratorio *Lazarus oder Die Faier der Auferstehung* (D689), first performed exactly 150 years ago (but written in 1820). Hailed by Brahms and sometimes seen as the precursor of through-composed opera that ultimately led to *Parsifal*, *Lazarus* stood in sharp contrast to the oratorio style of the period, with few choruses, no chorales or fugues and no recitatives in the accepted sense of the word. It was performed by the impressive Kammerchor Stuttgart and the Hofkapelle Stuttgart under Frieder Bernius (Nikolaikirche). Quite why *Lazarus* is incomplete has never been properly explained. It finishes (after about 75 minutes) just before the end of the second act, with Martha's powerful *Hebt mich der Stürme Flügel*, but on this occasion it was followed, very successfully, by Bach's Cantata 4, *Christ lag in Todes Banden*. The youthful upper voices of Kammerchor Stuttgart were particularly effective during the opening verse of the Bach, their voices gently emerging from the underlying movement.

Messiaen & Bach – Helsinki Baroque & Goebel

The headline organ recital of the festival was Olivier Latry (organist of Notre Dame since he was just 23), given in the Thomaskirche (19 June) on the 2000 'Bach' and the 1908 Sauer organs. He sandwiched Messiaen's *L'Ascension* between Bach, opening with his flamboyant D major Prelude and Fugue and closing with the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, contrasted with five chorale preludes. Latry brought a

touch of French sound with him, using largely reed-based registrations typical of the French baroque. The evening concert was one of the most curious that I have experienced. Featuring the excellent Helsinki Baroque Orchestra (in the Mendelssohn-Saal of the Gewandhaus) it included works by Fasch, Johann Bernard Bach, Locatelli and Bach. The main problem was the eccentric and bizarre conducting of Reinhard Goebel. Clad in a bright red bow tie, with matching cummerbund, watch strap and glasses, I am amazed that the orchestra managed to keep a straight face – he must have looked even funnier from the front. But that was just the start of it. His wild and extravagant gestures, with much finger pointing and aggressive use of the baton (on several occasions he thrust the baton within inches of the cellist's face and also rather threateningly pointed the baton directly at her) and audible humming along to the music were extraordinary to witness. He even managed to knock his spare baton onto the floor at one stage. This bombastic approach also impinged on the music, which was of ear-battering volume for most of the time. Perhaps it was asking for trouble to start with Fasch's Overture in G (FWV K:G5) with its four horns and three oboes – I'm not sure if this was written for outdoor performance, or for a very large space, but Goebel's direction certainly gave that impression. Violin soloist Isabelle Faust seemed to be cast from the same mould, as her readings of Johann Bernard Bach's Overture in G minor and Bach's Concerto in A minor were similarly loud and forceful, her furrowed brow and earnest expression balanced by a complete lack of subtlety or expression in her actual playing. She looked and played as if she was full of anger. Goebel probably didn't help by ostentatiously peering over her music at one stage. Despite Goebel's antics, the orchestra played well. Special mention must go to cellist Heidi Peltoniemi for managing to survive the evening unscathed.

Johannes Passion – JEG

Moving from the ridiculous to the sublime, the evening concert on 20 June featured the *Johannes Passion* in the Thomaskirche, with the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists, directed by the forthcoming President of the Bach Archive Foundation, John Eliot Gardiner. They obviously hadn't been warned about the much-predicted thunderstorms which arrived, exactly on cue, an hour before the concert started, resulting in a rather wet journey to the church for them and (I'm told) much re-doing of make up. The thunder and lightening flashes continued throughout the performance, nearly always at appropriate moments, adding a wonderful additional layer of drama to the occasion. This included a huge thunderclap as Jesus sang *Es ist vollbracht*, The instrumental opening of the first chorus always gives an indication of a conductor's approach to this work. On this occasion the mood was strong, urgent and driven, with the violins rather than the oboes prominent – although the hushed repeat brought out the sound of the violas and oboes. The Monteverdi Choir were on excellent form in their choruses, particularly when portraying the hushed gossipy whispers. Mark Padmore was outstanding as the Evangelist, as were Matthew Brook (Christus), Peter Harvey (Pilatus) and Nicholas Mulroy. Mezzo Meg Bragle's *Es ist vollbracht* was

moving, not least for the accompanying thunder, although I wasn't too convinced by the soprano soloist. Gardiner's direction was exemplary, notably for his pacing of the dialogue between Jesus and Pilatus, and the sense of momentum of the choruses. Musically he is walking on water at the moment – I wouldn't be surprised if he had laid on the thunder as well.

Johann Ludwig Krebs & Cantata

Leipzig's extraordinary Grassi Museum of Musical Instruments was the venue for a concert of music by Krebs (whose anniversary is this year) given by the small instrumental group, Merseburger Hofmusik, directed, in rather curious fashion, by Michael Schönheit (21 June). He sat at the harpsichord at the back of the group, out of eye-contact with most of them who were facing the front, and then started each piece by conducting with both hands before starting to play the harpsichord continuo, well after everybody else had started. During all of this, the players were looking at the lead violinist. When one of his hands was free, he used it to give little twiddles in the air, which none of the players could see. He then played a lengthy sequence of Krebs's rather dull organ chorale works on the Grassi's delightful little Silbermann organ. Indeed, listening to a composer like Krebs (and there were many like Krebs) makes one appreciate just how extraordinary Bach was. They finished with a more substantial, but no less inconsequential, Oboe Concerto, with Markus Müller as soloist. Some of Krebs's music can be most attractive, in a rather light and frothy manner, but he needs far better advocates than this.

Die Auferstehung & Himmelfahrt Jesu (CPEB) & BWV 67

Leipzig is keen on anniversaries, but managed to get in a year too early for CPE Bach's, with a performance of his oratorio *Die Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu* (Nikolaikirche, 21 June). This was first performed in 1774, by which time the 60-year old Bach was moving away from his *Empfindsamer Stil* phase and was grounded in the early classical idiom. Although he described it as a 'spiritual cantata', it appears to be designed more for the concert hall than the church. Low strings intone a sombre opening dirge before a chorus leads to the first dramatic accompanimento, *Judäa zittert!* (Judea trembles!). The three solo voices (there is no alto soloist) do not represent specific characters (although characters are referred to), and there is no sense of theatre, the story of the Resurrection and Ascension (the two separate parts of the oratorio) being told through reflections, often delivered in lengthy accompanied recitative that dissolve into arias. There is only one duet, *Vater deiner schwachen Kinder*, between soprano and tenor to a background of flutes and muted strings. The chorus has an extended and dramatic finale and the opening and closing of the first section, together with a short homophonic chorus, repeated three times to different words. The performers were Rheinische Kantorei (an excellent choir, with well-coordinated voices) and Das Kleine Konzert, sensitively directed (doing no more than is required) by the sprightly Hermann Max, recipient of the 2008 Leipzig Bach-Medal, with Veronka Winter, George Poplutz and Matthias Vieweg as soprano, tenor and bass soloists.

The concert opened with the thematically related Bach cantata *Halt im Gedächtnis Jesum Christ* (BWV 67), first performed exactly 50 years before *Die Auferstehung*, and one of the few Bach works that specify the Corno da tirasi. The core of this work is the central recit/choral/recit sequence. This featured the alto Margot Oitzinger, a past Leipzig prize-winner and a singer that I enthused about during her rare visit to the UK a few years ago (with the Dunedin Consort). Noticing that she had also been invited to take part in one of the prestigious *Bachgeflüster* discussion forums, I had assumed that she would have a much larger role in this concert than just these two recitatives. But it says something for the emotional power of Bach recitatives, combined with the extraordinary musical sensitivity and the sheer beauty of Margot Oitzinger's voice, that those two tiny little recitatives were the highlight of the evening for me. It was entirely appropriate that she was brought back on stage at the end of the CPE Bach work to join the other singers for well-deserved applause and flowers (incidentally, at this festival, sensibly given to both men and women).

Easter & Ascension Oratorios

The penultimate evening of the festival saw the return of the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists with John Eliot Gardiner, clearly something of a hero judging by the response of the Nikolaikirche audience (22 June). In a sharp contrast to the *Johannes Passion* a couple of days earlier, this concert featured the pastoral Easter (BWV 249) and triumphant Ascension (BWV 11) Oratorios. The former is one of those works that can test the credibility of the belief in Bach's skill at matching words and music, as this most sacred of cantatas started life as a totally secular birthday serenade for the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels. The four shepherds and shepherdesses who sang of the Goddess Flora and the health of the Duke were transformed into Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of Jesus and the disciples Peter and John singing at the grave of Jesus! The Ascension Oratorio includes music originally used in celebration of the opening of an extension to the St Thomas School, and the wedding of the daughter of a Leipzig university professor. Amongst the excellent instrumentalists, special mention is deserved by cellist Piroška Baranyay, flute/recorder players Rachel Beckett and Christine Garratt and oboist Michael Niesemann.

JS & CPE for flute

Under the 'Excellent' concert banner, the final day (23 June) started with a recital in the Alte Handelsbörse given by the extraordinary young Leipzig-born flautist Anne Freitag, a prize-winner at several international competitions, a past member of (and future soloist with) the European Union Baroque Orchestra and the recipient of their Development Trust Award, and currently a student in Basel, where her studies include historical improvisation. Her programme was the Bach Sonata in B minor (BWV 1030), CPE Bach's Sonata in E minor (Wq 84) and a central section which included improvisations and CPE Bach's four-movement Solo Sonata in A minor. This was some of the most musically sensitive playing that I have heard from any musician on any instrument. Anne Freitag played with a superb attention to the detail of the

little motifs that both Bachs use to build their melodic lines, with subtly varied tonguing, articulation and stresses, producing a melodic line that was brimming with musical life. She has learnt one of the key rules of performance – the quieter you play, the more people listen.

Sadly, this is a lesson that the harpsichord player (her Basel improvisation teacher, Rudolf Lutz) hasn't grasped. His playing was in complete contrast to that of Anne Freitag. Where she showed a total understanding of, for example, the difference in style between JS and CPE Bach, his playing was exactly the same during both composers' works. Where Anne Freitag brought an outstanding sense of light and shade to her playing, he just hammered away – far too loudly, clouding the sensitive shading of the flute. In their *Folia* improvisations, the flute was quickly forced into the role of providing a background to Lutz's increasingly showy efforts, always competing rather than complimenting his talented student's fine playing. I wondered if he had ever actually listened to the way that Anne Freitag was playing – he would learn a lot. During his own solo improvisation slot he made a great play of inviting somebody from the audience (that he clearly knew) to offer themes, keys etc, and then produced the sort of standard issue neo-baroque noodling based on hackneyed sequences that can be heard every Sunday played by half-competent German organists. He ended by descending into music-hall frivolity and showmanship of the most toe-curlingly embarrassing type. Apart from the extraordinary lack of musical sensitivity, this was an outrageous attempt to outshine and dominate an extremely gifted student, something I believe is unforgivable for any teacher. I wonder why he was accompanying anyway – there must be harpsichordists studying historic improvisation in Basel who could have done a far better, and far more appropriate, job. I would rather listen to a three-note phrase played by Anne Freitag than any amount of the unmusical ramblings of her accompanist.

Ensemble Cordia

Having come away with very mixed emotions from the previous concert, it was a relief to hear another very fine performance, this time by the impressive Ensemble Cordia, playing without a conductor (in the Altes Rathaus). Instrumental works by Telemann, Bach and Corelli contrasted with two Bach cantatas for solo Soprano (*Ich bin in mir vergnügt*, BWV 204, and *O holder Tag*, BWV 210) sung by the excellent Czech soprano Hana Blažiková, her focussed and unforced voice carrying well into the long narrow room, despite her refreshingly subdued volume. Her control and articulation of runs was spot on, as were her elaborations and ornaments. As with Margot Oitzinger in an earlier concert, Hana Blažiková demonstrated an outstanding understanding of the role of the recitative, with extended examples in both cantatas. This time it was members of the audience who were misbehaving with cameras, with several standing and firing off camera flashes within feet of the performers – do these idiots realise just how disturbing that is, not least to the eyesight of the players? I speak from experience – I once had to play the first piece of a recital entirely from a combination of peripheral vision and memory because somebody had hailed me and fired off a flash just as I went

on stage, leaving the flash image embedded at the centre of my vision for about 15 minutes.

The festival ended with the traditional performance of the B minor Mass in the Thomaskirche, given by the sailor-suited Thomanerchor Leipzig and the Freiburger Barockorchester conducted by Thomaskantor Georg Christoph Biller. A recording of this concert, and the opening concert, can be found online.

The whole festival fielded 115 events attended by 65,000 people, with many more attracted by the many free events around the city. There were also several trips out of town under the banner of Bach Out & About, which I will discuss in the next issue. Next year's festival is from 13-22 June 2014 and will feature the music of CPE Bach, Telemann and Handel – the outlines of the programme are already available online. My own time in Leipzig ended by playing the new (2000) 'Bach' organ in the Thomaskirche, an organ based on an instrument he knew when he was a young man, in a case that he would recognise based on the University (St Paul's) church, demolished during GDR times. It was a very moving experience to play Bach in Bach's own church, only a few feet from his grave.

York Early Music Festival 2013: 'The Eternal City'

Reviewed by David Vickers

The 300th anniversary of the death of Corelli and The Sixteen's choice of Palestrina and Allegri for this year's choral pilgrimage led to a natural theme of 'The Eternal City' for the York Early Music Festival. Naturally, a conceptual theme is only ever intended to be a useful coat-hanger upon which to drape musical entertainments by artists who are sympathetic to a festival's aims and priced within its budget – a practicality worth remembering when speculating about an array of missed possibilities for interesting Renaissance and Baroque repertoire connected to Rome. The Arcadian Academy was often mentioned in programme notes and especially lectures by John Bryan (on Corelli) and the present author (on Handel in Rome), so it would have been ideal to have reconstructed a *conversazione* featuring bona fide Arcadian cantatas. However, it is only fair to acknowledge that the festival's team of artistic advisors (John Bryan, Lindsay Kemp, Liz Kenny and Peter Seymour) and a host of guest musicians offered plenty of events that confirmed the extraordinary richness of Roman 'early' music.

Handel & Corelli: Arcadian Celebration

The opening concert by the York Bach Choir was entitled an 'Arcadian Celebration', but focussed predominantly upon Handel's Latin church music: Mhari Lawson's florid divisions, diction and charismatic delivery were flawless in the exuberant Carmelite-related psalm *Laudate pueri Dominum* and motet *Saeviat tellus*, and it was impressive that all the performers managed to shape the music coherently in the washy acoustic of the Minster. Bethany Seymour sang sweetly in Handel's *Salve Regina*, and also

performed two of Piacere's arias from the oratorio *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Seymour avoided the trap of making "Lascia la spina" seem just the same as its more familiar *Rinaldo* revision "Lascia ch'io pianga", but did not come over so well in the fierce coloratura of "Come nembo che fugge"). The Yorkshire Baroque Soloists, led capably by Lucy Russell and featuring three theorbos, produced a gorgeously sonorous performance of Corelli's concerto grosso Op. 6 No. 4; the airy splendour of the Minster may not look much like a baroque Roman church, but it seemed appropriate to hear Corelli's sublime concerto played magnificently yet also judged according to a tricky rich acoustic.

Singing trio sonatas

Corelli took more of the limelight in a concert of trio sonatas by violinist Riccardo Minasi and Musica Antiqua Roma, whereas La Risonanza provided a glimpse of what Corelli's lost sacred vocal works might have been like in their beguiling experiment 'Voicing Corelli'; they performed four intriguing adaptations of trio sonatas from Corelli's Op. 3 and Op. 4 by the itinerant cellist Antonio Tonelli (1686–1765) and collected in his MS *Corelli transformato in quattro Antifone ed otto Tantum Ergo*. Seemingly made as a teaching tool, these transformations were surprisingly effective and idiomatic for voices, with the original trio sonata parts retained to provide solemn ritornelli and concertizing instruments in dialogue with newly added voice parts (often but not always doubling the violins). The pick of the transformations was *Alma redemptoris mater*, in which Yetzabel Arias Fernandez (soprano) and Elena Biscuola (alto) sang with spellbinding subtlety. Fabio Bonizzoni also threw in two *echt* Corelli trio sonatas and a couple of less-than-obvious chamber duets by Handel, both written in London: *Se tu non lasci amore* (1720s) and *Beato in ver chi può* (early 1740s).

Dowland and abroad

Some concerts had tenuous connections to Rome. The most obvious conceptual spanner in the works was an entire day devoted to celebrating the 450th anniversary of Dowland's birth. Although no excuse is really necessary, John Bryan pointed out that the melancholic Elizabethan/Jacobean master got almost all the way to Rome to learn from Marenzio before getting cold feet on account of becoming mixed up with some exiled English recusants (we know he got as far as Florence). The Rose Consort of Viols and expert quartet of singers Grace Davidson, Clare Wilkinson, Jeremy Budd and Timothy Scott Whiteley combined sublimely in a programme entitled 'Teares of Sorrowe and Gladness'. The intelligently contoured set-list included not only music for viols from *Lachrimae*, but also Marenzio's madrigal *Ahi, dispietata morte* (published Rome, 1585, and which Dowland borrowed a dozen years later for *Would my conceit*), and Lassus's version of *Susanne un jour* followed by Dowland's galliard based upon it. We even heard music by Danish colleagues at the court of King Christian IV (Borchgrevinck and Pederson – both of whom studied in Venice with Gabrieli). Dowland's lute music was showcased by Paul O'Dette in a late night concert at the NCEM, and some of the most popular songs (*Flow my tears; In darkness let me dwell*) were

offered with poetic intimacy and musical sincerity by countertenor Iestyn Davies and lutenist Thomas Dunford at the ideally tiny church of St Olave's, Marygate.

The Sixteen's Choral Pilgrimage

From the evidence of events like these, the York Early Music Festival is in rude health artistically. So it was a pity that venue capacity was sometimes about half-full for some outstanding award-winning international artists. However, one guaranteed box-office smash was The Sixteen's packed-out Choral Pilgrimage appearance. This attracted several wildly enthusiastic audience members whose feverish applause started before the Minster's echo-drenched acoustic had quite finished off the concluding cadences; still, it's always good to hear people hungry for early music (and James MacMillan). Palestrina's famous double-choir *Stabat mater* was sung with the sort of refinement that one expects from The Sixteen, but no doubt many of the audience came to hear Allegri's *Miserere*. If so, their preconceptions might have been pleasantly thrown thanks to Harry Christophers' use of Ben Byram-Wigfield's recent scholarly edition based on original sources in the Vatican library and elsewhere. Established on principles of historically-plausible text, elements of embellishment and an avoidance of that editorial top C in the refrains, Byram-Wigfield's text reminds me of hypothetical versions recorded by The Taverner Choir, Ensemble William Byrd and A Sei Voci, but Christophers instead presented an evolving arrangement that morphed gradually from historically-informed Byram-Wigfield to the cosy familiar version, with precise top Cs floating from the distance (one wonders whether such ethereal spatial effects were really part of the plan in the boxy Sistine Chapel, but one cannot blame The Sixteen for milking the acoustic properties of English cathedrals for all their worth).

Young Artists Competition

Another event that attracted a good crowd was the epic all-day Young Artists Competition at the National Centre for Early Music. Chief adjudicator Laurence Cummings praised that the ensembles of young professional period-instrumentalists from across Europe were all winners – hardly surprising when their CVs reveal plenty of EUBO alumni, young players already working with top international baroque orchestras, and specialist training at prestigious conservatoires. No vocal ensembles made the final cut this year, and this also meant that this long day of competitive (but relaxed and friendly) music-making featured very little music written before the 17th century. The only group to play any 16th-century music was the Dutch recorder quintet Seldom Sene; they swapped between numerous sizes and types of instruments during their performance, using five bright voice flutes for Boismortier's Concerto in A minor, Op. 15 No. 2 (their only baroque piece), but swapping to a lower range of mellower instruments for Tallis's *O sacrum convivium*, and concluding with the full range of recorder types for a Pavan and two Almains by Anthony Holborne. Seldom Sene perceptively exploited a range of contrasting textures, and was the only ensemble of the day whose

memorisation of the dots enabled unbridled spontaneity. Most finalists presented mixed programmes, with the exception of Ensemble Versailles (confusingly named because they're from Trossingen): this quartet of flute, violin, gamba and harpsichord understandably devoted their slot to a solemn yet sweet performance of Telemann's Paris Quartet No. 6 in E minor; their playing was articulate without feeling forced, although it took a few movements for the players to warm up to the occasion and generate some interaction. I was astonished by the programme note's bold claim that Charpentier (d. 1704) subscribed to Telemann's Paris Quartets (pub. 1737) – I would have liked to have seen a better standard of programme note writing from almost all of the finalists.

The smallest ensembles of the event were Duo 1702 (Denmark), Repicco (UK) and Duo Domenico (UK). The first presented little-known Danish composers with an abundance of glee – I don't think I've ever seen quite as happy an organist as Katrine Kristiansen, and Louise Hjorth Hansen's virtuoso recorder work dazzled in Mealli's *La Biancuccia* (originally written for fiddle). The Danish duo had an exquisite understanding and a delightful lightness of touch in the galant conversational music of Raehs and Scheibe. Repicco offered a tantalising perspective into the friendship between Bach and Silvius Leopold Weiss, with violinist Kinga Ujszaszi and theorist Jadran Duncumb performing the Suite in A major (BWV 1025) with delicacy and passionate involvement; the intimate Sarabande was judged beautifully. However, the competition's most exciting players to watch were Duo Domenico. The spoken introductions by Vladimir Waltham (cello, fretted bass cello) and Jonathan Rees (5-string cello, 7-string bass viol) were mildly stilted but amiable, but there was no disputing the fluency of their playing of Boccherini's Sonata in A major ('L'Impératrice'); the duo achieved masterful pianissimo passages in the central Largo and exciting 'shredding' in the final Allegro of the sort some of us might admire in heavy metal guitar virtuosos. The physical commitment and energy of a canon by Domenico Gabrielli was a dynamic conclusion, and the combination of two musicians, four instruments and a liberal infusion of musical imagination caused a beguiling range of colourful sonorities and moods. It was unsurprising that Duo Domenico was awarded the Friends of the York Early Music Festival Prize (the closest thing to an audience prize).

In comparison, neither Ensemble Daimonion nor Der Musikalische Garten seemed to enjoy themselves all that much. Both groups of graduates from the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, each seemed severe in their comportment, although the music-making was technically astonishing. Ensemble Daimonion had the unfortunate position of having to be the first performers of the day; their playing of early 17th-century works by Picchi, Bassano and Castello was ardent and accomplished, although four continuo instruments (keyboard, theorbo, gamba and cello) sometimes felt like quite a lot, and there was no hiding from Anaïs Chen's bold violin flourishes in a sonata by Bøddecker. Der Musikalische Garten was similarly serious, but communicated more engagingly as the performance progressed, despite saying nothing and letting the music do all the talking. This quartet (two

violins, cello and harpsichord) seems to be going places, with a residency at the Ambronay Early Music Festival already under its belt; its members caught the shifting juxtaposition of melancholy and zestiness smoothly in Biber's Partita No. 1 from *Harmonia artificioso-ariosa*, and the group was awarded the EUBO Development Trust Prize. There was much more visible enthusiasm from On Air (an oboe band from Bremen), who looked as if they enjoy the act of music-making. The convivial interplay between a range of all kinds of oboes (and bassoon) was an entertaining breath of fresh air, and their playing had plenty of cantabile finesse. I admired how intelligently the short programme balanced sacred and secular, instrumental and vocal (a chorus from BWV 38 transferred to just woodwinds), and German and English music.

Les Mélomanes (roughly translated as 'Mad about music') is a British quartet formed at the RAM, and which has already appeared on Radio 3. They were the last performers of the day and the heat of the afternoon caused some problems with tuning, but it was worth the wait to hear their unforced inégales and lilting phrasing in a suite by Marais. Sincere and stylish but never merely saccharine, the Marais was finely contrasted with Telemann's Trio Sonata in D minor (TWV 42:d10), and it was fun to hear the quartet cut loose in the thrilling rustic Presto finale.

However, my favourite group of the day was Thalia Ensemble (named after the Muse of Comedy and Idyllic Poetry). A quintet of flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon that formed at the Conservatory of Amsterdam, their sophisticated and mature performances were a delectable advocacy of late classical wind quintets by Franz Ignaz Danzi and Antoine Reicha. All the most important virtues of a top-class ensemble were abundant: flowing physical movement, lots of amiable eye-contact between players, drawing the audience in to the music, rock-steady technique (the natural horn was spot-on), and masterful use of rhetoric to convey emotions artistically. After such a strong day of music-making, nobody could predict the result, but the audience in the NCEM was delighted when the eminent panel of judges announced Thalia as worthy winners of this year's first prize, handed them a useful cheque, and granted them the opportunity to make an album for Linn Records. It is a timely reminder – should one be needed – that classical and later repertoires remains vital and revelatory fields for new explorations in 'early' music.

A problem with our previous layout with each batch of reviews having a new page is that it produces a series of incomplete second columns, which look odd and are extravagant or need short items to fill the gaps. So we've tried in this issue to start with London then follow with other festivals etc, printing headings within a column rather than right across the page. Subheadings covering several concerts are centered in bold type of the same size as the main text, with space before and after. If there are headings to individual concerts (e.g. page 19 column 2), they are bold, aligned left and with no space after them. If a heading has several paragraphs, there is no line gap, just a short indentation. This will probably evolve over the next few issues.

CB

YOUTH, GENIUS AND FOLLY

Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF), June 9-16, 2013

Lowell Lindgren

This year's centerpiece was Handel's first opera, *Almira*, *Queen of Castile* (Hamburg, 1705), performed in Boston 4 times in 8 days, then in the Berkshires 3 times in 3 days. Handel composed and produced this opera when he was only 19, and he was in every way "the presiding young genius" of this festival (Robert Mealy, concertmaster, *Festival Booklet*, p. 245). Folly himself culminates *Almira*'s act III pageant with an aria: "Kommt, vermehrt der Thorheit Ruhm!" ("Come, magnify the fame of Folly!"). According to Stephen Stubbs (*Festival Booklet*, p. 321), this year's motto was: "Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry" (Ecclesiastes 8:15).

A "golden serpent" (which the MIT Music Section munificently awarded me when I retired) provided tickets to all main events: the opera, 17 concerts (at 2, 5, 8 or 11 p.m.), one symposium, four each of master classes, lecture-demonstrations, and pre-concert/opera talks, two dance workshops and scores of exhibits. The "serpent" did not pay for tickets to the 84 fringe events, each of which was, however, given a generous listing in the festival booklet.

A decade ago, the twelfth BEMF featured J. G. Conradi's *Beautiful and Faithful Ariadne* (Hamburg, 1691), performed in Boston 6 times in 7 days, then in the Berkshires 3 times in 3 days. The excellent Executive Director/Producer was and remains Kathleen Fay, the perspicacious President of the Board of Directors was and remains Bernice K. Chen and the astute Artistic Directors were and still are the lutenists/theorbists/guitarists Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs. During the past decade, the most notable downturns have been in symposia and master classes. There were 8 of each in 2003, but the former always feature musicologists, whose mirthless topics attract few performers, so they have been virtually eliminated. The latter have always garnered a full house, and the number 8 was maintained this year if lecture-demonstrations can be counted as master classes.

As CB informed us in the April 2013 issue of this *Review*, the composer of *Almira* was supposed to be Keiser, the 30-year-old director of the Goosemarket Theatre. He did set the Pancieri/Feustking libretto, but he must have secured a more lucrative commission from Johann Georg, Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels (1677-1712), so he produced his *Almira* at Weissenfels in August 1704. This provided our young genius with a golden opportunity. His *Almira*, premiered on 8 Jan 1705, was a huge success and received 20 performances at the Goosemarket.

Twenty-two excellent instrumentalists provided rollicking fun when playing the demisemiquaver Adagio scales and

the dotted-semiquaver Prestos of the French Overture in B flat. Two treble parts were played by 7 violins and 2 oboes/flutes, one viola part by 2 players, one continuo part by 10 players (3 cellos, 2 theorbos, 2 harpsichords [Michael Sponseller and Kristian Bezuidenhout], and one each of double bass, bassoon and baroque harp) plus one percussionist. The orchestra alone played 23 pieces, scored for at least TrB: the overture, 11 dances and 11 ritornellos. The vocal accompaniments were continuo alone for 21 pieces (11 + 7 + 3) and TrB to TrTr|TrTrAB for 32 (9 + 9 + 14). The principal cellist (Phoebe Carrai) vivified the continuo part with plenty of rubato and a multitude of ornaments, and sometimes the theorbos, bassoon or harp played it alone. Handel enlivened act II by requesting combinations of instruments not previously heard. Like most Baroque composers, he preferred minor keys for vocal pieces (29/53) and dances (9/11). B flat, which begins and ends the opera, is his favourite major key, while D and G are by far his favourite minor keys.

Listeners familiar with late 17th century Italian opera are accustomed to one villainous and seven heroic/comic characters (with only one bass and rarely a tenor), laments in minor keys, a prison scene, a total of 50-some vocal pieces, and numerous continuo arias (after many of which a four-voice ritornello allows for exits, entrances and – occasionally – scene changes). But they did not expect an opera to begin with an elderly bass/baritone, Consalvo (Christian Immler), who crowns the queen and praises her in an aria. Throughout the opera, Consalvo plots to obtain Almira's hand for his son Osman, which makes him almost as villainous as his father. The German text is likewise unexpected, but even more so are the 13 arias sung in the original Italian: 6 by Almira, 2 each by Princess Edilia and King Raymondo (a bass), and one each by Princess Bellante, Fernando and Osman (both of whom are tenors and sons of Prince Consalvo). None are for the villainous Consalvo or the tenor Tabarco (Fernando's comic servant). *Almira* thus has two basses and three tenors, who almost eclipse the three sopranos. Ellen T. Harris made many excellent points in her pre-opera lecture. One was her contrast of flowing vowels in Italian with obstructed consonants in German. As an example, she cited the rhyming words in the duet for Edilia and Osman:

*Ich will gar von nichts wissen,
Daß mich noch gefangen hält,
Fahre wohl and laß dich küssen,
Wie es deiner Lust gefällt:
Meine Banden sind zerrissen,
Ich will gar von nichts wissen. (I:10).*

Surprisingly, only Almira and Consalvo were portrayed by Germans. Ulrike Hofbauer had been contracted to portray

Bellante, who sings only three rather inconspicuous arias and one duet. Since the singer contracted to portray the queen did not arrive, Hofbauer agreed to learn eight significant arias and one duet in short order. Her first four arias, all in minor, are in Act I. In the first two, she mournfully wonders whether Fernando still loves her. In the last two, she is furious, because she has ostensibly found evidence that he loves her rival, Edilia. In the first performance, she could not control the coloratura in the last two or in the subsequent arias, but by the last performance she had mastered them all.

In Handel's score and in the BEMF performance, the leading singers were the American Amanda Forsythe as Princess Edilia and the Canadian Colin Balzer as a foundling called Fernando. Edilia, like Almira, sang four pieces in act I. In the first, a pastoral Adagio in G major accompanied by violins, flutes and continuo, she mellifluously kissed roses and narcissi and viewed tall lindens, while imagining them to be Osman. He then insulted her, which led to her C major aria filled with coloratura roulades, "You will see with what fierce arrows," which she performed superbly, rousing the audience to its first ovation with bravos. In her next aria, "I no longer want to be tossed betwixt yes and no," she lamented in G minor. Then Osman, who planned to marry Almira, further insulted her, so they reviled one another in the duet "I don't want to know anything more," in A minor (German text given above). In act II, Edilia addressed Osman once again, in an act-ending, coloratura outburst in B flat. Immediately after the opening pageant in act III, she sang her most impassioned lament, "Flow forth ye pent-up tears." It is the only aria in F minor and the only one featuring a vocal part filled with long-held high notes (on c², f, a^{b2}, f d^{b2}, g^{b2}) followed by descending scales, and one of only two with a continuo filled with dotted semiquavers (which recall the dotted quavers in the overture). In other words, our 19-year-old genius gave Edilia a most prominent role, and he would have been thrilled by Forsythe's brilliant interpretation of every piece.

In Italy, the role of Fernando, a foundling who is predestined to marry Almira, would have been given to a superb castrato. Here the "lyric tenor," Colin Balzer, performed it exceedingly well. Fernando's pastoral aria, "Lovely forests, shady trees," is in D minor, in which flute 1, violin 1 and voice echo each other's motives, while the other instruments usually play constant quarters. After his beloved Almira falsely berates him, Fernando replies with coloratura, "Let Fate, thunder and lightning," in E-flat. She makes a similar mistake in act II, after which he sings an Andante in G major, in which the continuo features alternate dotted 16ths. Then Osman challenges him to a duel. When Almira hears this, she steals both of their swords. Osman then blasts them both, which spurs Fernando to sing a coloratura aria in C major, "Though your mouth spews sulphur, fire, and poison," which is filled with martial arpeggios and repeated notes. At the beginning of act III, he portrays a Roman/ European in the pageant. His aria is in B^b, and its tuneful A section is followed by a coloratura B section. He sings it while "in a golden coach with horses. He bears crown, sceptre,

imperial orb and princely hats in his lap. In front of him is a choir of oboists along with the retinue of the nations belonging to this continent." His aria must have been *ff*, because its TrB accompaniment is marked "tutti unisoni." In III:7 we reach the climax of the drama. Consalvo orders Fernando's imprisonment, after which he sings in G minor: "What is favour at court? A vapour," which is portrayed by arpeggios and 16th note scales performed imitatively by a solo violin, [solo?] cello, and voice. Consalvo then tells Almira that Fernando loves Edilia "with extraordinary passion ... and desecrates your castle with lechery." She then sings a militaristic, coloratura aria that reaches c³ four times during arpeggios within its A section. Fernando's two extended accompanied recitatives are in F minor and B flat minor. These keys are the furthest to the flat side that a Baroque composer goes, and the young genius employs them to greatly intensify the dramatic climax of his very first opera. In the first 39 bars, we learn that "his courage is not daunted even in the wild din of the elements." His servant, Tabarco, tells him that the queen "sends you the death warrant," then asks "where do you keep your money?" The 2nd accompagnato and its ensuing aria (55 bars) most closely resemble sorrow-filled passages composed by Bach. The agony is finally interrupted by Almira, who has discovered Fernando's true feelings while hiding in the prison. She has now been assured that he has always been faithful, so she unchains him, and they unite in a florid B-flat duet, accompanied by TrTrB (violins in unison, oboes in unison and continuo). This is followed by a very long TrB "tutti unisoni" ritornello in B flat. It must have been loud enough to conceal the sound of the final set change in Hamburg. Fernando now reveals his necklace, which Consalvo recognizes as the one he gave his wife (also named Almira). Fernando is therefore his son Floraldo! Three couples then pair off, and all sing the closing choruses in (guess what!) B flat!

Almira is the 9th BEMF production directed by Gilbert Blin, who has been a leading stage designer throughout Europe for 22 years and the BEMF stage director in residence for 5. In order to fully fathom the political context of 1705 and the insinuations made by each character, one must read his ten-page introduction to "the small art-world of *Almira*," which is vividly illustrated with six etchings, one engraving, and one mezzotint from his own collection. He also reveals how the detailed stage directions provided clues for his designing of 11 sets within a castle in Castile, and how Spanish codes of behaviour determined his stage direction. The costumes, designed by Anna Watkins, are unmistakably Spanish because of their dark colour palette and archaic features, such as large Renaissance ruffs.

The formality and dignity of a Spanish court were represented not only by the noble characters, but also by the 16 attendants: 2 ladies for each of the 2 princesses, 4 ladies and 4 bodyguards for the queen, 2 fencing masters for Osman, and 2 sons for Consalvo. Their poise was undoubtedly learned from their BEMF experience: 8 are in the festival dance ensemble, and 8 are in the young artists training program.

Dances occur between the acts of most French Baroque operas, but rarely in any Italian Baroque opera. In *Almira* they were very well choreographed (by Caroline Copeland and Carlos Fittante) and impeccably performed, but bizarrely placed. Two solemn dances in G minor ended the opening scene: a chaconne in which 5- to 7-bar phrases predominate, and a saraband which features the rhythms of *Lascia ch'io pianga* in *Rinaldo* (London, 1711). Near the end of act I, an assembly is held at the queen's command. Everyone plays ombre or basset, after which five dances appear in Handel's score: courante, bourée, menuet, rigaudon and rondeau. Four are in binary form, with a rondeau in abaca form. Four are in G minor, with a rigaudon in B flat. The next scene ends act I. In it, Almira's fury leads Fernando, then Edilia, then Osman and Bellante, then Consalvo to exit. Thus Almira is alone when she ends the act with "Ingrate, ruthless man."

In order to entertain the Mauretanian King Raymondo (who arrived in Castile in II:8), act III opens with a festive pageant. Each entrée is followed by an aria sung by a man who represents Europe, Africa or Asia, then by a dance that relates to the specific continent. The final dance, for Asia, is a saraband that resembles the later version of *Lascia ch'io pianga* in terms of melody and key (both are in F major). On the basis of these songs and dances, the characters are asked to determine which is the greatest continent.

Their discussion is, however, interrupted by the entrance of ridiculous Folly (portrayed by Tabarco) upon a wooden horse, accompanied by jesters, fools, bagpipes and a barrel organ. He claims to be the greatest of all. Oboes and bassoon accompany his G minor aria (line 1 of the text is given above, in the first paragraph). The ensuing dance is a gigue in G minor for charlatans, who join the jesters and fools in order to disperse the continents and make a mess of the stage. This was a noisy and mirthful scene in Boston, and was presumably far more so in Hamburg.

"Kommt" is the fifth aria for Tabarco (Jason McStoots), who mirthfully ridicules the behaviour of the nobility in each one. First is the fashionable card games played mainly to invite or deter love, second is the delusional love of the old fool Consalvo, third the love-lorn irascibility of young Osman, fourth the love-craziness of the whole court, and fifth the triumph of Folly. The fourth aria culminates an Intermezzo for Tabarco alone, placed between acts II and III. In order to maximize the mirth, Blin expanded Tabarco's role enormously. He is almost always onstage, telling the seated nobles by means of extravagant hand gesturings that they must rise or impeding their movement by getting in their way. Since he is a servant of Fernando, who is a mere foundling until the final scene, he should be onstage only as an attendant to his master or as a singer of his five arias.

Almira is an excellent libretto, because the arias of each character precisely describe the mood of the singer, which was caused by a character who is named in the text of the aria. This would not remain true for more than a few years, because singers soon began to insert their favourite

arias into pasticcios, and everyone began to borrow texts (and sometimes music as well) from favourite librettists, especially Metastasio (and composers like Scarlatti, Gasparini and Vivaldi). It is a far stronger drama because Almira and Fernando are always fixated upon one another, Consalvo upon Osman and Almira, Edilia upon Osman, Bellante upon Osman, Osman upon Almira and Fernando, Raymondo ultimately upon Edilia, and Tabarco upon himself and – for his own entertainment – all the others. Since the presiding young genius well understood the format of a 17th-century Italian opera, he knew that audiences relished profound laments, pastoral reflections, and ebullient or enraged prestos, so he provided (perhaps too) many adagio laments, a few pastoral andantes, and as many prestos as his cast could handle. The arias are not nearly as long as those he wrote twenty years later for The Royal Academy of Music. This is a virtue, because seven characters (all save Bellante) sing five to nine arias. But it is a disadvantage, because some of us need to hear more than two performances of *Almira* for arias to remain indelible. All of the BEMF singers, dancers, attendants and orchestral players were well chosen for their roles, which they executed splendidly, because they were well prepared and the production was well rehearsed. From the moment the curtain rose, the audience knew that this production would be historically accurate, and it grew more and more enthralling as it progressed. Bravissimo to the presiding young genius and to BEMF!

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This happened to come my way, but is neither advert nor recommendation. It looks interesting, so it would be good to get feed-back!

VERMEER & MUSIC

Anne Tennant

Marjorie E. Wiseman *Vermeer and Music: the Art of Love and Leisure* National Gallery Company distributed by Yale UP. 80pp. £9.99. ISBN 978 1 85709 567

Exhibition: London, National Gallery, 26 June to 8 September 2013.

Go and see this exhibition if you can get to London, though it takes some imagination to justify the title. The couple of dozen paintings featuring music in some guise, are so well hung, you can see them as never before – worth the £7 entrance charge. Most are from the National Gallery's permanent collection, but you get in addition some wonderful 17-century instruments, contemporary song-books and an explanation of recent scientific investigation, microphotography of four Vermeers. Those who get to the exhibition on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday will have in situ live music, the Academy of Ancient Music playing on old-type instruments music of the period (I heard Dowland and northern-Netherlandish variations – lovely amongst these pictures).

This "Music Room" forms just a part of a clever and suggestive re-design of the lower-level NG exhibition space. Two waist-high wall-openings have been made, one enabling the V&A's ivory-covered Venetian lute to be shown in the round, but also to give a glimpse of the culmination of the show, four Vermeers (two NG, one Queen's collection, one from Kenwood). As you walk round the exhibition, you are stepping through spaces, catching glimpses, and perhaps hearing sounds, in a fresh evocation of art and music of the Dutch Republic.

Betsy Wieseman is Curator of Dutch and Flemish Painting at the National Gallery. This exhibition is sister to her 2011 Fitzwilliam, Cambridge, exhibition *Vermeer's Women: Secrets and Silence*, whose sumptuously illustrated catalogue, like this, was co-published by Yale University Press. In this catalogue we are given illustrative material demonstrating more forcibly than the exhibited items and their captions, that music had significance beyond our usual ways of thinking and feeling.

The Curator assures us that there is a blip in church liturgical music, no paid concerts, so music in these days before recording has to be domestic, or in inns or bordellos, and this is depicted in many paintings of the period. But, as we know in England from Shakespeare, Herbert and Pepys, music and music practice had resonances then which we do not always share in the twenty-first century. The emblem books are a guide, and powerfully clear engraved emblems of musical instruments by Claes Jansz. Visscher, "Not how many, but how well", are an example. More illustrations are included of the wide range of treatments in art of music,

from almost-banal narratives of inn-music and dance, to the serious music-making of bordello scenes under the *Prodigal Son* label. Is the lax posture of the hearers the only indication of improper use of music?

Also in the catalogue, not the exhibition, is a "Glossary" of instruments depicted in Dutch paintings. The illustrations taken from Michael Praetorius's 1619 *Syntagma Musicum De Organographia* are particularly welcome, and together with the exhibited instruments may help writers not confuse a viol da gamba with a cello, though historians of instruments know better than I that there are innumerable types in between.

The Curator rightly emphasises that the fleeting nature of the musical world before recording. As a sound-world, it existed in the here/hear and now. One may quibble with some of her readings of the *Vanitas* paintings, the significance of relations between skull, instruments, music, hour-glass, and straw for blowing bubbles, but her main suggestion holds good, that the appeal to painter and purchaser of painting, included the long-lasting capturing of the ephemeral.

One obvious advantage in having the contemporary instruments borrowed to accompany the paintings is to get clear identification. They also allow us to judge what the painter is up to. Vermeer's extraordinary *The Guitar Player* from Kenwood has almost graphic handling of the baroque guitar, a startling contrast to the softly-focussed, intimately smiling, turned head of the girl playing it. But nearby in the exhibition is a very similar French guitar of Voboam from the Ashmolean, Oxford, revealing the sharply-focussed, decorative details in the painting to be as close to verisimilitude as the wonderful white jug in the Queen's *The Music Lesson*. Another beautiful, and informative instrument is the Andreas Ruckers Muselar Virginal (motto on the raised lid: 'Music is the solace of labour') made in Antwerp and borrowed from Brussels. It is a wonderful experience to have this near the Queen's Vermeer with its similar instrument (motto: 'Music is the companion of joy, the medicine of sorrow').

In considering the society and culture in which this art was made, the instruments exemplify the rich and international nature of the Dutch republic. Of course, we know this from the maps, silks, table carpets and pearls of Vermeer, as well as from the repeated quotation of the great art of Italy and Persia in the earlier Rembrandt's work. The Netherlands were wealthy and centre of the European art trade, as well as having powerful music-lovers like Constantijn Huygens who purchased instruments from specialist makers throughout Europe, including the English viol. The instruments are beautifully illustrated in the catalogue, but to have them

next to you is to be struck by the international wealth of materials, ebony, ivory, maple, spruce, whalebone, mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell, as well as the craftsmanship of instrument- and music-maker.

There is a considerable literature on possible readings of these paintings, which are touched on rather blandly in this catalogue. We can enjoy our own resonances, such as music lessons and practice and jealousy in the contemporary diaries of Pepys. Perhaps we shall never know why respectable and affluent Dutch families owned images of courtesans and prostitutes playing music. We know that it in his classically cool *Woman weighing pearls* Vermeer juxtaposes the lovely woman with a Last Judgment. But what was Vermeer's mother-in-law doing with Baburen's great *Procuress* painting (the prostitute playing a lute)? And then, what are we to make of Vermeer including it in the background of the NG *Young Woman seated at the Virginals*?

The exhibition concludes with a section of photographs scientifically linking the multi-layered painting technique of the four Vermeers already mentioned. It does not provide such information on the small painting recently sold to a private collector for a vast sum. It looks like a clumsy fake, though borrowed to hang opposite the real and good Vermeers in this show. It is too painful to think this great painter might sink, before his early death, to such a travesty, when all else in this exhibition shows him compellingly engaged with light and space and music and all possibilities of human interaction and perception. Though few, his works here provide a fitting culmination to the exhibition, transcending even the best and most interesting of the rest, such as the mysterious *Fabritius* or suave *Metsu*.



WILLIAM BYRD ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

This year's concert took place on 2 July at the usual venue, the Church of SS Peter and Paul in Standon Massey, Essex, the village where Byrd lived for the final 28 years of his life. Also usual were the performers, The Standon Singers; the friendly atmosphere; and the full house. For this year's theme, Christopher Tinker, the choir's conductor, chose Byrd and Alfonso Ferrabosco the elder. The two men were contemporaries and were on friendly terms, according to Byrd's pupil Morley. Over the last half century, the researches of Joseph Kerman and others following him have revealed that in some of his earlier compositions, Byrd was indebted to Ferrabosco for cutting edge Continental ideas in structure and technique. We heard evidence of these in the two opening items, Byrd's *Emendemus in melius* and *Laudibus in sanctis*. Underlining the musical engagement of the two men, sometimes the work of one was misattributed to the other. Scholarly opinion and musical evidence suggest that Byrd composed *O praise our Lord*, a sacred song in both five parts and five sections, and the secular song also in five parts *Mount, Hope, above the skies*. Both have alternative attributions to Ferrabosco in contemporary sources. Meanwhile Ferrabosco's madrigal *Se pur e ver* picked up a misattribution to Byrd as the contrafactum *Penelope ever was praised*. All three of these were programmed. The two men also set the same text occasionally, so we were also treated to paired performances of *Susanna fair* and *The nightingale*. At Christopher's request I gave a talk entitled "Five minutes on Ferrabosco and Byrd" midway through the first half of the concert. This part of the proceedings featured a complete performance of Sheppard's *Western Wind* Mass. At a similar point during the second half, while Byrd and Ferrabosco held sway, Greg Camburn played half a dozen tunes by O'Carolan on the penny whistle. The concert ended with the diverting *Italian salad* by the 19th-century Prussian composer Richard Genée.

The choir has this music in its DNA and gave committed and thoughtful performances, led by Christopher Tinker's clear, judicious and perceptive conducting. Sheppard's mass in particular received a pensive, almost introspective, interpretation which was all the more welcome for shedding a different light upon this often exuberant composer. Christopher's choice of programme was ideal: not only did he combine serious and lighter music successfully, but also he selected two pieces by Byrd that even I had never heard before, and I get to hear few personal Byrd premieres these days. In my hearing a distinguished academic visiting from Australia not only commented favourably on the choir, but also on how wonderful it was that a concert in a relatively remote rural location, offering such a programme, could fill the venue. The Standon Singers, Christopher Tinker, and the composers deserved nothing less.

Richard Turbet.