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There are two related publications that have engaged me this issue: a new Bärenreiter Monteverdi *Vespers* (p. 2) and a study of scholarship on Cavalli operas (p. 10) relating to the Bärenreiter series of some of his operas (see the review of *La Calisto* in our last issue, p. 10). To some extent, there is similarity between the composers, the most explicit link being the scribe of the "Venice" score of *Poppea*: Cavalli's wife Maria copied the Prologue (but Francesco wrote the three-part opening Symphony), the Prologue and Acts I and III. The Francesco/Maria team worked from 1650-52, when Maria died and other helpers were found; there are no grounds for assuming that it represents a Venetian performance during Monteverdi's last months. I've summarised briefly aspects of the Cavalli essays (see p. 10). It is primarily for scholars, but good editions based on sound research are to be expected from study of it.

I have problems with the new *Vespers*. I am worried that the edition is unnecessarily academic, and where experience is needed (e.g. in the continuo realisation) there doesn't seem to be enough musicality – I hope most players can ignore what is printed for them. I mention some specific examples in my review, but there are many other similar ones. There seem to be very few amateurs who can manage the simplest of unrealised continuo parts. Now that the 1610 publication is available online, much of the critical report could be generalised: I was able to put my essential comments either on the relevant page or at the end of a movement in my edition. It would be helpful if the Bärenreiter score had some information on how the instrumental parts are presented. There are occasions when large choirs can sound best if they are doubled (preferably by strings, cornetts and sackbuts). But it is unlikely that many shops can answer the questions about pitch and scoring that we do, let alone more specific issues. *CB*

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

GLORIA & CREDO

Fifteenth-century liturgical music VIII: settings of the Gloria and Credo **transcribed and edited by Peter Wright.** (*Early English Church Music*, 55) Stainer & Bell, 2013. xxiv + 303pp, £95.00

This includes 7 complete Glorias and 11 Credos, plus 15 incomplete Glorias and 13 Credos, plus one dubious Gloria, all from the first half of the 15th century. Music from the Old Hall MS (CMM 46)[1] and the complete works of Dunstaple (MB 8) are not repeated here, and a few listed by previous authors are rejected. Most of the music is anonymous. The introduction describes the types of settings concisely. MB should probably include all surviving music up to the Reformation, unless published elsewhere, and maybe into the 17th century – this does, however, depend on whether there is a strong consensus over the years that some are not worth including. But I doubt whether incomplete works need hard copy. And there's another consideration for all these editions: should semi-transcriptions like the ones currently favoured by MB also be put online, along with facsimiles of the sources. That is a better compromise for the musical world than either the reduced note-values (and transpositions) of the time of Thurston Dart's hegemony or the more recent minimal modernisation: the former looks congested, and rhythms are made too explicit by the need to beam quavers and semiquavers, but the latter restricts use to academics and a few enthusiasts and also brings in features that have nothing to do with 15th-century presentation of scores.

It used to be said that *Tudor Church Music* left the notes disappearing into the gloom because of the lack of image given by unreduced notation in minims, semibreves and breves. There's no particular reason to print the notes as oblongs rather than normal modern notation: the shape of the note is immaterial – triangles could mean the same! The notes in Monteverdi's 1610 publication have the same shapes as the 15th century (though a wider range of note-values), but I don't think that anyone has thought it desirable to adopt the "authentic" note-shape. The other major problem is spacing. There are very few examples of bars copied or printed with equal length. however few or many notes they contain. Singers do not expect it, and with every bar as long as what would normally be the longest, the publication is uneconomic (at a rough guess, it could be shorter by at least a third). If the volume is sized according to an expectation that three singers could manage to use one volume (with a music stand – its weight is 1.890 kg), that might be an advantage, but one cannot hold it to sing: comments I have had suggest that about 0.750 kg is about the maximum comfortable weight for performance. MB 8 (Dunstaple) is OK as it stands (apart, of course, from any musicological changes needed), but the original rhythmic notation could be restored without affecting the amount of space it takes. (But how many music-setters confuse singers by spacing notes in triple-time to conform with duple, whatever the proportion?) And since not all singers of early music are as aware of tactus as they should be,[2] it does no harm to print barlines through each stave (but not through the system, since it might then be too obtrusive). I do, however, favour printing information before each piece, and the editor has more space than the customary compressed critical commentary at the end of the volume. As for making sense of the music, I find CMM 46 and MB 8 immeasurably superior to the layout of EECM 55.

Most of the complete Glorias are in three parts, five of the seven having C1 C3 C3 clefs (no. 2 is in four parts, but is a canon in unison so doesn't affect layout). The Credos are more varied with only four in the clefs noted above, while the others (like two of the Glorias) have C2 as the top line and slight variations in clefs below it, but no F clefs. Were basses not known at the time, or was most of the music transposed down something like a fourth?[3]

I've chatted to several people about the recent EECM volumes since the "revolution", and I fear that it was a mistake to produce so lavish an edition without more input from non-specialists. I thoroughly agree that something very close to the original notation be made available – but on computer and with facsimiles as well, unless a more pedantic transcription could replace the need for facsimiles except when there are alternative or barely legible sources. I don't think I would mind halving note-values, but if so, the committee would need to work out when there was some change of note values that would justify what probably would have been a gradual change. (Note-values in hymn books took centuries to change!) On the whole, the conventions for indicating black-notation cross-rhythms seems to work; it is generous to show red notation, but most publishers will need to footnote it or list it in the commentary – anyone who is interested will have checked the online source anyway. At least the forthcoming Tallis/Byrd *Cantiones*, EECM 56) doesn't need to be too recondite in appearance.

1. For a while in the mid-1960s while I was handling admin for the copying department of London University Library, a member of Old Hall School appeared with valuable documents, mostly lists of catholic martyrs, but on one occasion left the Old Hall MS, which resided in a filing cabinet in my office for several weeks. I was excited by it, but hadn't mastered how to read it.

2. *Tactus* is an anachronistic term for most of the 15th century, but the idea that singers had a regular beat irrespective of the passing cross-rhythms and only changed time when there was a mensuration change seems appropriate.

3. See Roger Bowers: 'The vocal scoring, choral balance and performing pitch of Latin church polyphony in England, c.1500-58', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 112 (1987), pp. 38-76.

COLLEGIATE VESPERS

Monteverdi Vespro della Beata Vergine... edited by Hendrik Schulze [with 10 co-editors]. Score. Bärenreiter (BA 8794), 2013. l + 297pp, £49.00.
... Piano Reduction based on the Urtext edition by Andreas Köhs. Bärenreiter (BA 8794-90), 2013. xiv 213pp, £16.00

I first heard Monteverdi's *Vespers* in a broadcast from York Minster in 1960, conducted by Walther Goehr, and then bought his edition, notable for the Second Viennese School time signatures and irregular barring (especially in the Hymn, which does at least give a clue to the rhythmic patterns).[4] It must have been about 15 years later before I played in it, and I've probably played it (in a mixture of professional and amateur concerts and workshops) at least a dozen times since. I have also edited it, culminating in a type-set version in 1990 and a revision in 2010. This has been widely used, and is probably the cheapest, but all editions have to make compromises. I thought hard about the best way to present it. The economic problem is the need to satisfy customers who put their head in the sand and ignore the significance of *chiavette*. Performing Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with eight singers doesn't require a different edition; the similarly revolutionary idea of performing the *Vespers* with ten singers doesn't need a new edition as such, but it does need some transpositions.

I'll refer to the Bärenreiter edition as **Ba** and will use mine (**CB**) as the usual comparison. **Ba** is an attempt to cover all likely possibilities, with *Lauda Jerusalem* and *Magnificat a7* transposed down a fourth in the main sequence and untransposed in the appendix; the *Magnificat a6* is also included at both pitches. **Ba**'s vocal score is only a pound more than **CB**, though that is a full score.[5] I will, however, comment chiefly on the full score.

The editorial process is interesting. It was undertaken by ten graduate students at the University of North Texas in autumn 2011: the names are given at the head of the critical notes for each piece. These are probably more detailed than is needed now that the source is online.

Layout

The score is very clearly printed, and looks good on the page. There are, however, problems. Some pages look as if they were based on 19th-century habits with instrumental parts grouped together by barlines running unbroken through all instrumental sections of the score. This is incredibly old fashioned, but not old enough to be authentic 17th-century.[6] Related to this is the distribution of the single-line parts – there are, as far as I know, no scorings of the Vespers until Winterfeld's edition of the *Sonata*, and grouping of vertical bars should be normal – in polychoral music it can be useful for vocal choirs as well (though it isn't needed for the Vespers), and the pattern of broken and unbroken barlines help the eye.

1. Domine ad adiuvandum The six voices and instruments are, sensibly, bracketed, but the breaking of the barlines does not correspond; they should follow | violins & cornetts | 3 lower strings | 3 trombones. The third part is headed *vuiola da brazzo* in C1 clef. Whether it's a violin or viola is immaterial, but since it doesn't go below the D string, it seems sensible to group it with the violins, and also to add a third cornett, since all the other parts have wind instruments and three cornetts are used elsewhere.

4. Laudate pueri. Ba sets this out as a single, eight-part choir. The editor notes: "There is a *slight* possibility that this movement was intended to be polychoral." In fact, the B II part is headed *Secundi Chori* on p. 3 of the Septimus part (though the commentary refers to p. 5). It becomes clear in the opening of the *Gloria*, which looks as well as sounds silly without division, that the choirs should be separated, and the duets are at least as effective on opposing sides as with pairs of singers next to each other. Most eight-part works are more effective if separated into two choirs anyway: that's how choirs were placed.

7. Duo Seraphim is strangely set out with the third Seraph printed on an extra stave above the first two half-way through the piece.[7]

9 Audi coelum. Again, the echo is placed above the solo, which strikes me (and clearly most other editors) as peculiar. The *partitura* [8] has the echo on the same stave as the main singer. The placing of Quintus and Tenor should also be reversed in the six-part section. There's no significant difference in compass between T & Q, despite T ending with a low D. I haven't analysed the relative positioning of *Cantus/Sextus* and *Tenor/Quintus* in the practice of the period, but that seems to be the usual order of printing.

11. Sonata sopra Santa Maria needs some grouping of instruments: 2 violins & *Vuiola da braccia*[9] | 2 cornetts | 3 trombones, each group bracketed.

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4. A few years ago, someone told me that the York Festival was held in odd years so that 1960 was wrong. I tried checking it on the www, but only found corroboration from myself! Around the time that the Bärenreiter review copy arrived, I received, as a belated but welcome follow-up to the Midlands Early Music Forum *Vespers* weekend in 2010, an off-air recording of the Walter Goehr performance in York Minster in 1960. The date was 2 July. I was intending to ask John Amis about *Vespers* at Morley College, but he had died a few weeks earlier.

5. The King's Music/Early Music Company edition can provide any combination of *Lauda* and *Magnificat*, though not usually in the same covers. We publish the *Magnificat a6* as a separate work, as we do the opening work in the 1610 publication, *Missa a6 In illo tempore*, both of which have the same key alternatives as *Lauda* & *Magnificat*.

6. To take random examples, Haydn's *Seasons* (1802) has no continuous bar-lines (like Monteverdi's *Orfeo*) whereas Mendelssohn's *St Paul* (1836) has unbroken lines, except for voices, and that practice was normal through the 19th century. One infuriating score with 55 staves has 9 bracketed groups but barlines going right though the page (DTO 20: Biber *Salzburg Mass*, pub. 1903).

7. The original *partitura* is set out in the usual modern way: indeed, a stave below Seraph II is left blank until Seraph III appears.

8. *Partitura* is what is provided as a sketch for the organist/director. When the music is straightforward, only a bass is printed; when there are cues as well on an additional stave or more, they give more information – though nothing like the modern use of the word in some languages as "score".

9 Not *Violoncello*, as the editor names it: it wasn't around in 1610.

13. **Magnificat** a7 should probably begin with a similar layout to the Sonata, though without trombones for the opening. At the end there should be: | 2 violins & bass | 3 cornetts | 3 trombones (adding a Trombone III to double the string bass). The two violas from No. 1 could play Quintus & Tenor if available: the Vespers can be played without them and only viola players would notice!

Barring

This isn't the first time that editors have thought that the barring of the *partitura* should be followed. In fact, I adapted my edition (with 2-minim bars) to follow the barring for Paul McCreesh (with 4-minim bars). But the 1610 *partitura* it is hardly systematic. The editor tells us: "In the mensuration of C, the tactus is measured at the semibreve, while in the mensuration ¢ the tactus is measured to the breve, therefore suggesting a faster tempo in cut time" the final clause bringing freedom (or confusion) to what might seem to be a logical system. It is even more confusing in some sections of **Magnificat** when the parts are in C but the *partitura* in ¢. Since the parts are in C (I won't complicate matters by involving triple times), the logic is that the bars should have two minims. This seems perfectly sensible to me, though it would be more helpful if the mensural signs had been included above the stave in any changes, since those in the edition are not always the original ones. But I see no point in pedantically following the erratic *partitura* barring and adding dotted barlines. For a start, there were no barlines at the ends of lines: sometimes the line ends after four minims, but with no barline, somtimes after only two minims. In 1610, barring wasn't dependable, and recording it seems more trouble than it's worth. Single-line parts for singers and players didn't have barlines. Monteverdi doesn't write his music by the bar anyway – there are some marvellous examples in *Laetatus sum,* such as the *Romanesca* in bars 28 -39 and later.[10] But the pattern of the tactus always works out, despite cross-rhythms. The occasionally barline usually has the function of a double-bar in modern notation. Bar numbers did not exist.

Basso continuo figuring and realisation

I'll keep to my normal abbreviation Bg (Bassus generalis).

I realised when I'd finished this section that it was disproportionate. But I've concentrated on the aspects that I'm particularly involved in, and the realisations in **Ba** are nothing like what I play: Monteverdi doesn't need the sort of organ accompaniment that Schütz recommended or copying the parts in tablature. There are remarkably few figures (though those familiar with sources of the period might think them surprisingly many) in the 1610 print, but the Bg part is helpful and Monteverdi's harmony is usually very clear – try playing Gabrieli from a continuo part! However, it's less scary playing from the bass if there are some editorial bass figures.

These days, a good player is aware of obvious points, especially with regard to cadences: a full close is always major, as is a preceding "dominant" (excuse the anachronism!) But if the next phrase begins with a minor chord, that is what is played. There are other patterns where figures are not needed. My edition is more thoroughly figured – fewer players were used to unfigured basses in 1990, so although skilled players have been annoyed by excessive figures, it is fully figured so that the player doesn't have to scan the page to watch out for accidentals. Consequently, the organist can be more aware of the singers and players – and maybe of the conductor as well.[11] **Ba** does give a fully-figured part, though it's against all normal editorial practice to use italics to identify original figures. I find that circling them clearly separates them from the editor's work. Since most of the figures are modern, it seems superfluous to precede a flat or sharp by "3", but commendations to **Ba** for using the 17th-century system of sharp = major, flat = minor, and no naturals. Thanks to Peter Holman, I've been using it for around 45 years and it is simpler – especially if you have to transpose.

What is extraordinary, though, is **Ba**'s addition of two staves of a realisation below the Bg. Is anyone going to book an organist who can't read from a figured bass? The harmony is so clear that all that is needed is a bit of confidence. Most of the books on continuo playing are aimed at music a century or so later. What is odd is that the edition offers two keyboard parts: the one in the score isn't ascribed to anyone so is probably by the relevant editor for each movement. If I used it as a lesson on what not to do, I'd go on for pages! The vocal score is by Andrew Köhs, a familiar Bärenreiter vocal-score expert. His realisations in movements that don't have piano reductions of instrumental accompaniments are generally better – though some amateur choirs will need help from the pianist in earlier stages of rehearsal – e.g. giving rhythmic impetus or doubling awkward parts. In fact, there's no problem in doubling some or all of the parts on an organ, though it doesn't work with a harpsichord. I've included some specific examples under the movement titles below.

*The sections below are mostly comments on Bg examples in **Ba** but also include other issues.*

1. Domine ad adiuvandum

Should the intonation be on D or A? The tenor is the obvious voice to sing it, since it has A for the response (on A) and its first phrase is A, avoiding the temptation to bellow "call to prayer". I wonder whether instrument III, bars 21-3, is somehow askew; elsewhere in the movement (bars 40-46), the semiquavers in instruments III & IV sound together, and the two minims in bar 24 are anomalous – the second minim in bar 47 is different, since it begins the next phrase.[12]

10. The version is used by Monteverdi's Mantuan colleague Salomone Rossi. I suspect that the introduction could have mentioned this, since many performers may have missed such points.

11. There's a problem in adding figures to bass parts that leave gaps on the assumption that the chords are obvious. It is easy to play according to the conventions of unfigured basses then realise that a different chord was intended, which explains why it's better either to keep the bass minimal or to figure it fully.

12. Unless there is any strong reason otherwise, I refer to the normal terms of the modern score.

2. Dixit Dominus.
This immediately raises the question: do instruments double the voices in the psalms? I'm inclined not to, especially when the work is performed by single voices, as strongly argued by Roger Bowers.[13] However, with a large-scale amateur choir, such support is helpful. The six unspecified instruments have three interludes placed in the six vocal parts, so the players could share the singers' parts. The obvious scoring would be three cornetts and three sackbuts, though part 3 is rather low. Doubling at "Sicut erat" is effective.

The German 1615 edition of this movement adds a texted bass to "Virgam virtutis..." and "Juravit Dominus" by splitting long notes in the Bg. The psalm could be performed *a cappella* if the opening of the *Gloria* is sung as simple chant without bass.

144. Cantus has a C sharp, quintus a C without sharp. All the other similar chords have only one sharpened note, so the solution of adding a sharp to the quintus is improbable. The problem was solved in the 1615 reprint by raising the quintus to E: perhaps there's a deliberate game with ABCDEDCB as the reciting notes of the quintus.

4. Laudate pueri
I don't think I'd play anything like the editor's organ part at the opening. The text obviously calls for a full sound from the singers right from the start (unlike **Dixit Dominus**) so there's no need give the organist two-note chords for bars 3-8: I'd double the voice parts. Bars 12-13 have a 2+3+3 rhythm (lau-da-|te pu-e-ri) entirely homophonic in eight parts so that the full chord at the beginning of 13 needs to be relieved of a note or two then a fuller chord on the second note. Continuo playing is a matter of rhythm as well as chords! It's also of keeping the organ below thinner solo sections, so at bar 32 play the chords lower (some organs make a clearer sound in the octave below middle C than others), and continue to give support but don't smother the two sopranos from 34-49.

5. Pulchra es
Page xii has an argument that the more elaborate setting of bars 3-5 in the Bg book was there to warn the director and continuo player to notice that it anticipated the second singer's entry. Maybe, but perhaps Monteverdi changed his mind – and it seems plausible to me that it's more sensible to keep the first statement simple in contrast with the second.

6. Laetatus sum
The characteristic feature here is the walking bass, and the realisation is a cop-out in the score, but not the vocal score. The simple right-hand, one-chord-per-bar of the score will do, but it's a bit dull, and there's no great problem in passing dissonances with such a strong bass. It is a pity that the *partitura* with two upper parts is suppressed here – or rather, is sometimes reproduced but not distinguished from editorial realisation.

Bars 84, 168 & 222: I reckon that the only occasion for playing a minor cadence is when the written notes have a minor third. Monteverdi wrote three Ds and nothing else, and now I'd play unison (though I'd marked major in my figuring.) 150 has an open fifth; there are only two voices singing, with no particular effect, so a major third is appropriate. I'm disappointed that the realisation of the walking bass is so slim. The player could be imaginative, but also in the sections where the *partitura* (though neither in this nor my edition) gives the upper part: it might be interesting to hear it played.

7. Duo Seraphim
Bars 28 & 29: there is no need for editorial sharpening of the Fs since it is not the end of the phrase. However, 78 must be sharp, but 79 & 80 can be sharp or natural.

8. Nisi Dominus
The opening and closing double-choir sections need full, loud chords. If doubling instruments are to be added, the double-choir sections are obvious choices. The first section of the Gloria is low-lying, which should be taken as a hint for a soft but firm entry, in which case the organ should not play higher than the vocal parts, but the instruments can join in softly. The mood changes at 176. Play chords for the minims in bars 178 & 190! The double-choir sections need to be shaped by the stress of the words and rhetoric of repetition.

9. Audi coelum
The note-values of the second half of bars 14 and 16 are inconsistent with four slightly different versions: voice and echo in solo part repeated in *partitura*. I think that **Ba** has it right, and indeed I pencilled it into my working copy in 2010, but somehow didn't correct it in the 2011 reprint – that does, however, have facsimiles of all four statements on the last page. Singers would benefit from mentally beaming patterns of three semiquavers and demisemi-quavers in threes in bars 14 & 16 cutting against the C bar. The organ part strikes me as too prominent: it doesn't matter much what it plays in tutti sections, but in solos it needs more discretion. Bars 14 & 16 don't need chords with a top note two octaves above the start of the phrase, though the placing of the Bg chord at the following bar (where the voice is tied) needs to be firm. Assuming that the player is using the score (whether full or vocal), the page-turn between the echo *Omnes* and the tutti is difficult. The organist can't come off early, since the chord needs to carry through the final crotchet, so only if there is a page-turner (which I find a distraction) or a chamber organ with pedals can the turn be effected – and not only is there a turn but a stop or two needs pulling for one chord. Six bars earlier, however, there is a silent bar – that's where the page turn should be.[14] The dynamics indicating the later echos are confusing, At bar 122, if you are playing from the score, you turn the page and see *f*. So you play something louder than what is needed for the last note of the tutti section, then realise that the meaning of that *f* is the solo entering half-way through the bar (on the

13. Roger Bowers 'Claudio Monteverdi and sacred music in the household of the Gonzaga Dukes of Mantua, 1590-1612', *Music & Letters*, 90 (2009), 331-71. He suggests that there were only ten singers at the Mantuan court chapel.

14. I must, however, confess that my edition falls into the same error, since it separates two- or three-stave systems from seven-staves ones. The 1960 performance (see note 1) has a massive break at the silent bar so that the choir could shuffle noisily to its feet!

same cause) singing *Consequamur,* the *f* there not requiring anything loud – the following echo is probably produced by distance, not volume. I find the closing *Benedicta es* section one of the most moving passages in the work, with every note having a point and expression – and don't be tempted to assume that the closing *longa* can be cut back to a two-minim bar: it needs careful shaping and might as well fill the four minims of the notation.

10. Lauda Jerusalem

I'm puzzled that the initial bracketing does not split the seven-part vocal writing into 3+1+3. The middle parts of each choir – altus & septimus – fit the stave better if printed up the octave for tenors: regular alto-singers of early repertoire are used to reading such notation.[15]

Bar 102 Altus: should be an octave lower.

Bar 124: Bg prints the third of the chord whereas the bass of choir I has the root of the chord, which I find more satisfactory.

11. Sonata sopra Santa Maria

All versions of the title are Italian, though the underlay is Latin. Some editions have retained the MS numbering of the statements of the text from the Bologna copy (familiar from the print-out I've had for some decades and the on-line version more recently available), and this strikes me as quite sensible and drops a hint that there is some numerical game involved in each statement being rhythmically different.[16] The layout of the Bg part is confusing: one expects the sections with an upper stave to be included, or at least shown as such in the editorial organ part. For the last few years, I've always played the slightly simplified doubling of the violin duet (from bar 37, though not necessarily following precisely the other doublings after the violin duet stops). Violinists seem happy, and no-one has yet complained.

12. Ave maris stella

Lavish layout! Is there any reason why verses 1 & 7 cannot be underlaid together, 2-3 together, 4-6 together and one statement of the ritornello? My score takes up 4 pages (1 & 7 on one opening, 2-6 on another), including 13 lines of critical commentary, while **Ba** needs 14 pages. There's a tendency to sing verse 7 quietly, which the text doesn't justify. Male choirs should note that this can (presumably was) sung by A T Bar B x2, and the ritornelli can be played without the C-clef parts. It would be helpful to include the verse numbers: in fact, with every section having four phrases, bar numbers are superfluous in rehearsal, if necessary for consulting the commentary!

13. Magnificat a7

I won't go through this verse by verse, but will pick out a few points – particularly the lack of numbering of the verses. Running continuous bar numbers right through the Magnificat is unhelpful: normally in rehearsal, the verse is identified by its number, the bars by a numbering that begins with 1 for each verse. In an edition that tends towards minimal modernisation, it is odd that **Quia respexit** (3) translates the instruments at bars 70/71 as *Traverso* and at 91/92 as *Recorder.* That may be the solution, but the 1610 edition has *Pifara* at 70, *Fifara* at 71 (one is presumably a misprint) and *Flauto* at 91-92. This is not mentioned in the obvious place for correcting misprints: under bar 70 and/or 71 in the commentary. The editor allocates an instrument to each part in **Sicut erat** (12) and prints them out, though they all double the voices so don't need separate staves. As it stands, the cornetti and trombones should be beamed, as should the three strings – and the bass trombone could also be included for the Septimus part.

Magnificat a6

The edition includes this transposed and untransposed. It's a marvellous piece, but is anyone going to end "The Monteverdi Vespers" with 12 movements without instruments? There are a variety of editions of the *Magnificat a6* available (including mine), and I may well have heard it before I heard the *Vespers* thanks to a French film: the music certainly impressed me.[17] It is possible to perform the Vespers without instruments,[18] but in view of the shortage of Magnficats, it might be sensible to assemble Vesper programmes from the 1641 or 1650 anthologies, since the only other Magnificats by Monteverdi are the a4 and a8 settings in *Selva morale*: it seems likely that Cavalli couldn't find another one for the 1650 publication, so he included one by himself. I can see some point from a musicological point of view in reproducing the whole 1610 publication, but the *Missa In illo tempore* a6 is not included (see below).

Pronunciation

It is essential that pronunciation of the text is understood. I'm no expert on the change from long/short syllables to accented/unaccented ones. The editor prints the eight phrases of falsobordone in *Dixit Dominus* and one phrase in *Laetatus sum* and marks both long and stressed syllables; I've never heard long syllables that are clearly not stressed sung other than as weak ones: I think this section is confusing. In fact, it usually works to take the classical rule of accenting the penultimate syllable if it is long, the antepenultimate if the penultimate is short, with accents added in the falsobordone sections.

Singers (or conductors) must be continually alert for patterns of three crotchets or minims crossing duple bars, and these are usually cued by strong syllables on weak notes (eg crotchet 2 and 4 or three minims crossing barlines). Good players, of course, can spot such shaping without the help of words! But phrases should not be congested by equal accents: there's a hierarchy, and one of the accents (often the last) is the strongest. It's particularly annoying to hear triple-time sections with no variety. The choral entry in **Audi caelum** for instance, is a common example. |*Om-nes hanc*|*er-go se-*|*qua-mur*| has a stress at the beginning of the bar, but we've had a big *omnes*, the first tutti entry on a full chord lasting two C bars, so that isn't

15. I've only heard of one female alto who couldn't adjust. Notated pitch is fine for the untransposed version.

16. The Bologna part does not number the final statement, which follows directly from 10.

17. Perhaps Jean-Luc Godard's 1960 *À bout de souffle.*

18. I can supply it without instruments (except bc) with the Magnificat a6.

news: the phrase leads to *se-QUA-mur.*

I've concentrated on practical issues that **Ba** doesn't serve well, especially layout and realisation, with a few musical comments. The *Vespers* is a well-known work, and I don't get the feeling that the editors have enough practical experience. The introduction gives less help to performers than I would like – not by adding information to the score itself, but by drawing attention to current ideas on performing practice. I can imagine singers buying the vocal score, but for study purposes, a complete score is needed. I haven't done a comparison between the 2013 and the 1610 editions, but I haven't noticed mistakes apart from editorial decisions. No doubt Bärenreiter will market it well, but I'm not convinced that another Vespers was necessary.

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What about the Mass!

As a postscript, I'd like to mention the *Missa In illo tempore,* the first work in the 1610 publication. I noticed a review in *The Consort* Summer 2013, Vol. 69, a publication well worth reading, of an edition edited by Melita Fontana published by Ut Orpheus Edition (MOS 1A) at €30.95. It is unfortunate that not only is the edition not clearly described in the review, but the reviewer seems not to have recognised the problems.

The third sentence is: "The layout is clear, with regular barlines (not original) to facilitate reading." Ut Orpheus Edizioni does not, in my experience, need to have their clear layout mentioned: what needs to be said about barlines is that, before Monteverdi, scores had barlines but parts had none. In fact, the original continuo line is generally divided into four semibreves, and I wouldn't put it past some editors to extend them through all the parts. One breve per bar is easier for singers, unless the notation is halved. "This edition adheres to the original notation, but using modern F and G clefs." Surely use of the two clefs is normal now, except for a few academic editions (e.g. Breitkopf's revised Lassus Motets). "The original, high clefs (*chiavette*) are shown in the prefatory material" is less clear that it should be. I assume that it means that the edition retained the high clefs (the "original notation" in the previous sentence implies it), even though it would be possible to print the high clefs in the prefatory material and print the Mass at a lower pitch (usually a fourth). That happens to be the pitch at which a couple of MSS from the late 17th-century are copied – by then, *chiavette* notation was out of date. In the next paragraph we are told "Fontana points out that a number of the seven editions listed are based on the original 1610 print... in Bologna": does he mean copies of the 1610 edition and the later MS scores? Variants between different copies of the 1610 print are worth noting, but the later MS copies can have little significance: differences are likely to be caused by careless transposition or misunderstanding Monteverdi's style.

I first played the Mass from Michael Procter's 1996 edition, which omitted the *Basso continuo.* What was immediately obvious was that the the chords fell so easily under the hand that I was convinced it couldn't be accidental; it is, however, easier if one doesn't have to check which stave has the bottom note at any point. The Mass is a demonstration of mixing Gombert's motifs from the mid 16th century with the most up-to-date harmonic procedure. I wonder how many editors have played from the bass and realised this.

The list of seven editions of the Mass omits mine (King's Music/The Early Music Company Ltd, £7.50): it is available untransposed, down a minor third, or down a fourth. Gombert's source motet *In illo tempore* is available at three pitches for £1.50. Most of Monteverdi's church music is also available from the same publisher (address as *EMR*).

PERGOLESI'S SEVEN LAST WORDS

Pergolesi *Septem verba a Christo in cruce moriente prolata... for Soloists and Orchestra...*edited by Reinhard Fehling. Breitkopf & Härtel (PB 5533), 2013.viii + 72pp, €42,00; Vocal score (EB 8845), 86pp. €19.80

This work has been erratically known about since around 1760; four MSS survive, though they were rejected by modern scholarship until the present editor championed it a few years ago. The existence of four fairly compatible sources isn't particularly strong evidence when there is a gap of a quarter-century between Pergolesi's death and the emergence of a set of parts with adaptations or mistakes. Three of the four sources are sets of parts – in English I wouldn't refer to a set of parts as *manuscript* in the singular.[19] The validation of the work isn't particularly strengthened by these MSS, so it can only be accepted by thorough analysis and experience by performers as well as musicologists.

The work comprises an aria for Christus and Anima for each of the Seven Words. There are introductory recitatives for Nos I, II, III, and VII (No III has two recits); nos I & VII are accompanied by two violas & Bc, the rest by 2 vlns & Bc. In addition, there are obbligato parts for 2 horns, trumpet, cello and harp. The editor is concerned about the absence of duplets, but if they were copied in Naples to send abroad, only single copies would have been produced. The music looks fascinating, but I haven't heard the recording yet (HMC 902155, conducted by René Jacobs) – the introduction implies that he didn't have confidence in all the da capos, though surely that's a fundamental feature of arias in serious music of Pergolesi's time. The Words themselves are not included in the sources, but the editor has added them as an appendix, but why does he use the Editione Vaticana, Tournai 1929/53? (In the vocal score, these are printed where they come in the performance.) What is needed is

19. And while I'm trying to get terms right, *stilkritischen* always seems odd to me when translated to English: on the first line of the second column of the English Preface, for instance, *stylistic* would be enough, since the previous word *detailed* implies that this isn't a casual guess! Both *chorales* and *hymns* near the end of the penultimate paragraph are inappropriate translations.

what was normal in the 18th century, and some performers might want what the Neapolitan usage was. Does the surviving libretto give any clue whether the Words were sung? Texts are printed in full with German and English translations, with variants of the sources quoted.

It strikes me as an impressive work, though 80 minutes is a bit long for just two singers. The instrumental contribution is impressive and with more variety (though the scoring is baroque, with a fixed and usually small ensemble per aria). Perhaps there should be a way of indicating a newly discovered work as being on probation. I'm not being particularly suspicious, but acceptability comes from experience as well as further study.

ENGLISH KEYBOARD CONCERTOS

English Keyboard Concertos 1740-1815 **edited by Peter Lynan** (Musica Britannica 94). Stainer & Bell, 2013. lvii + 374pp, £105.00

1740 assumes that all Handel's concertos were written (or at least in his head) by then; 1815, however, isn't so obvious, since there is a gap in the chronology between no 10 (Charles Wesley, 1778) and Crotch, Samuel Wesley and William Russell, from 1800 and 1810, which are on a much grander scale with accompaniments involving wind as well as strings. A few wind staves appear in the early concertos, but nothing like the approach to scoring of the post-1800 works. These three pieces also add 150 pages to the volume, which makes it among MB's largest. The bound volume weights 2.3 kg, which is an effort to manoeuvre on a high shelf, let alone carry for any distance![20]

Whether you want to play these particular works or not, the extensive introduction is essential for those interested in the repertoire. The influence of Handel diminishes and other influences are discussed. Bach produced keyboard concertos in the 1730s, but they did not travel abroad, and he only impinges on the late concertos in the volume, which relate to interest in the "48". Choice of instrument is flexible, though with a general trend from organ to harpsichord to pianoforte. The solo is always set out on two staves, with the exception of the third movement of William Russell's Concerto in G (1810), where a third stave appears.

Separate keyboard parts are available for each volume, with parts for nos. 1-10. With the ease of reproducing short runs, it seems odd that the larger 11-13 are only available on hire. I imagine that the first ten pieces can be played without score – 18th-century performers wouldn't expect one. The pieces are:

1. William Felton *Concerto in C* (1744)
2. Benjamin Cooke *Concerto in D* (1749)
3. W. Hayes *Concerto in D* (1755)
4. T. Arne *Concerto 5 in g* (by 1755?; publ 1793)
5. Chilcot *Concerto set 1 no. 2 in a* (1756)
6. P. Hayes *Concerto 3 in F* (1769)
7. Hook *Concerto 1 in C* (1771)
8. Rush *Concerto 3 in B flat* (1773)
9. Stanley *Concerto op. 10 no. 4 in c* (1775)
10. Charles Wesley *Concerto set 3 no. 3 in E* (1778)
11. Crotch *Concerto 2 in A* (1801?)
12. Samuel Wesley *Concerto in D* (1800, rev 1809/10)
13. Russell *Concerto in G* (1810)

The concerto that most appealed to me is the Stanley, for organ, 2 violins and basso. The first movement begins with a striking seven-bars unison, four bars duet for the violins, two bars of tutti. Turn the page and there's change again. I was puzzled why the pair of semiquaver grace notes in bar 2 are not slurred whereas a single quaver one in bar 8 has an editorial slur, and the opening dotted quaver + two demisemiquavers has an editorial slur. *The Andante affetuoso* is in E flat and the *Presto* in 6/8 leaves some option for hemiola patterns across the barline.

I think the Hook concerto needs a little more bibliographic clarification. *Grove Online* (and earlier reference works) are confusing. MB 94 contains an isolated Concerto I in C, intended to be the first of a set of six but no more were published. This is easily confused with the first concerto of a complete set of six, of which No. 1 is in C but is a completely different piece. The editorial dates of both publications vary from 1771 to 1774: the MB commentary gives [1771] with no explanation. It so happens that Hook's op. 1 is the only set I have played through, or rather played the keyboard part.[21] Admittedly this was in 1988, when Christopher Hogwood was planning a concert for the Cheltenham Festival and wanted me to choose a suitable concerto from the set. I think that the choice was restricted by the upper compass of the instrument, but I remember enjoying playing them.

Music reviews continued at page 14 & 29.

20. Perhaps I should move music awaiting reviews from a shelf about 6-foot high to a lower one!

21. I might have played some of the concertos through, but neither my harpsichord nor organ has a suitable support for the volume's weight.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Hugh Keyte, Clifford Bartlett, Barbara Sachs

FAIRIES OF SAINT-GERMAIN

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

The Ballet of the Fairies of the Saint-Germain Forest was a ripe piece of Gallic deadly-serious silliness, one of the satirical ballets de cour that flourished in the 1620s. As with the better-known (and unsatirical) *Ballet de la Déliverance de Renaud* of 1617, huge amounts of material survive: texts, musical settings, costume designs, and much else, allowing a credible overall picture of the event and its background to be posited. Team specialists under the editorship of Thomas Leconte have produced a sumptuously illustrated volume which, though paperback, would grace any coffee table. There are many black-and-white and colour illustrations, including all the costume designs, the music, texts and descriptions of action, with a glossary of technical terms, etc.

Where Italian Intermedi tended towards glorification of the rulers who mounted them, with a little politics thrown in, the typical *ballet de cour* of absolutist France was frankly political. With the monarch and favoured aristocrats as the lead dancers, they mingled dance, mime, and spoken and sung verse in sumptuous entertainments with a unified theme that carried a powerful, if only implicit, political message. The (unsatirical) *Ballet de la Déliverance de Renaud* had followed hard on the heels of a coup d'état, by which the young Louis XIII seized power from his regent mother, Marie de' Medici, and drew on an episode in Tasso's *Jerusalem Liberata* to celebrate the new king as true monarch delivered from foreign servitude. By 1625 the bellicose and bigoted Louis was embroiled in a bloody civil war with the Huguenots, and a simultaneous two-year struggle with his resurgent mother and her adherents, the so-called War of the Mother and Son, had just been brought to an unsatisfactory conclusion. The *Ballet des Fées des forêts de Saint-Germain* was mounted by the winning side in the Great Hall of the Louvre at the beginning of Carnival as a further demonstration of Louis as legitimate monarch and invincible champion of his country against Spain, which at this period (before France's entry into the Thirty Years' War in 1637) was seen as France's foremost enemy.

In the first section, *Le contexte socio-politique*, the political background is covered by three specialists.

The second section presents and discusses the album of wonderfully grotesque costume designs by Daniel Rabel (some of them redolent of Tenniel's designs for the Alice books), which is preserved in the Musée du Louvre, and assesses the contribution of Horace Morel, the king's 'artificier'.

The stage apparatus and its symbolism is the subject of Section Three.

Section Four is entitled *Danse, poésie et musique.* Eugénia Roucher-Kougioumtzoglou contributes *Chorus, Jocus, Ludus*, which considers the dance in this ballet as a dual-meaning *double-jeu*, and appended are lists of the aristocrats and the parts that they danced and of the royal *maîtres à danser.* Emmanuel Bury considers the author of the spoken and sung poetry of the ballet, the reformer René Bordier, as "un artisan du vers «classique» au service de la musique «baroque»". And Thomas Leconte contributes a very detailed chapter *La musique...quelque jalons pour une restitution?* (A 'jalon' is, among other things, a surveying rod, the phrase perhaps best rendered as "some indicators (or measures?) for a restoration".)

Section Five, finally, presents the documents: the costume designs (superbly reproduced in full colour); an extensive catalogue of extraordinary payments, mostly relevant to the costumes ("For the four drummers, four pairs of shoes of white morocco [leather], at 40 sols per pair..."); a most useful and detailed seven-page glossary of terms for the costumes, scenography and colours; and (of particular interest to most *EMR* readers) Thomas Leconte's *proposition de restitution musicale et poetique.*

Drawing on the previous material, this "suggestion" attempts to recover the overall scheme of the ballet, including the music: no easy task, given the scattering-abroad of the music and the ambiguities and lacunae in the textual department. The music comprises solo and concerted songs, and five-part string dances. Very little of this sets my juices flowing, I'm afraid, though French repertoire of the period that looks dullish on the page can prove surprisingly vibrant when given a spirited historically informed performance – and the considerable numbers of costumed lutenists who took part on stage will have added an appealing element.

The editing has too many of the irritating errors and infelicities that remain typical of so much French musicology. The first song, for example, "Un concert bien melodieux", sung (appropriately) by the Music Fairy and edited from Antoine Boesset's 13th book of *Airs de cour avec tablature de luth* of 1626 has two slips in the keyboard-style transcription of the lute part (was this really necessary?) and there is an odd mismatch of voice and lute in the lead-in into the final cadence that may indicate a wrong note (A for B?) in the vocal part. The *dessus* and *basse* parts of the many short dances are taken

from a manuscript copied by André Danican Philidor (the elder) in 1690. Workaday stuff for the most part, these have had their three inner parts editorially restored "closely respecting the rules and procedures of writing in force at the period", and taking as models music by Philidor for the King's Twenty-four Violins, Praetorius's, setting of French dances in *Terpsichore,* and a couple of 17th-century dance MSS in Kassel and Uppsala. Such *parties de remplissage* were often the work of assistants or hacks, but even so there are too many places here that, to my eye, marginally misunderstand the harmonic implications of the treble and bass or are just plain awkward – but they will no doubt come out in the wash of performance.

More to the point, I do wonder whether the dances have enough character to match the wonderful grotesqueries of the costumed dancers: a giant lady, her skirts hung about with lutes and followed by peasant lute- and horn-players sporting huge spectacles; a pair of lackeys who dance with man-size baboons and then have a game of tourniquet with the creatures on their backs; and a host of wild men and exotic humans and animals – fox and chickens, owl, outsize cat, tortoise, etc. The lute-playing Music Fairy who sings the opening number has a music-stand headdress with open music book and tambourines with jingles, Margery Proops spectacles, and a cornett for a nose. Given such giggle-inducing spectacle, perhaps the music didn't matter too much.

I doubt whether a complete revival of the ballet is either feasible or desirable, but it would be fascinating to see some of the dances staged – if some ballet-de-cour-mad Croesus could be found to fund them. But in the meantime this superbly produced and lavishly illustrated book should give pleasure to anyone with an interest in the music and drama (and politics) of early-17th-century France. *Hugh Keyte*

CAVALLI OPERA

Readying Cavalli's Operas for the Stage: Manuscript, Edition, Production **Edited by Ellen Rosand** Ashgate, 2013. xxviii + 412pp, £70.00. ISBN 978 1 4094 1218 2

I seem to have missed the musicological work on Cavalli's operas until recently – indeed, I was surprised that so many of the scores are online. But one score per opera isn't enough, and Table 4.1 (p. 59) is a clear outline of the process of composition to production – not that all the stages always survive. First come sketches, then a fairly complete autograph, but leaving blanks for instruments, prologue and "choruses". The autograph was then copied and proof-read, and missing texts were added. Partbooks were then copied for the singers. Incomplete sections of the score were filled in and parts provided for instruments. Cavalli presumably played from his autograph, with the complete score played by another harpsichordist.[22] Until her death, the main post-autograph work was done by or under the instruction of Cavalli's wife Maria until her death in 1652.[23]

The book is divided into five sections: Historiography of performances and editions, The MS scores, *Giasone*, Making librettos and Cavalli beyond Venice. I'll concentrate on the first two sections, especially since I don't know *Giasone.* Jane Glover was one of the first serious Cavalli scholar-performers – possibly the only one until the last decade.[24] Conductors just don't get the idea that "additional accompaniments" (to use a phrase attached to Handel) are superfluous. All one needs are a couple of harpsichords and theorbos, with a cello (or its predecessor) joining when there is a moving bass and playing when the violins do. She only writes four pages, but her penultimate paragraph (p. 16) about rehearsal is important. The relationship between singers and continuo has to be flexible and mutual. The players "learn to work as a team with the singers, breathing with them, emoting with them, coloring with them. It is one of the most sophisticated of musical disciplines, embodying as it does not just the duties of a pit musician, but the sensibilities and instincts of a chamber musician." I would, however, question the need for any significant re-barring. I've flipped through Act I of *La Didone*, and found very few irregular-length bars – most happen because they overrun the ends of lines, and sometimes bars are double length. Both of these can be adjusted without effort when producing a modern edition or using facsimile, though the latter requires the ability to read the text as well as the notes. Anyone who has sung hymns like *O Little town of Bethlehem* which start with an upbeat must be used to double bars before the fourth beat of each new line of verse, so double bars for changes of characters shouldn't be too problematic.

Álvaro Torrente speculates about fashion or necessity in the practice of editing Cavalli's operas, raising some interesting points on why they and other early opera composers were neglected by the academic and publishing world until recently. A few Scarlatti operas were published in a sensible way – but the project died with the series' editor. A major problem is that too much effort is spent on every possible version of an opera. What would you rather have – a basic version (usually representing the likely first performance) of all Cavalli's operas or much more elaborate (and fewer) scholarly editions with detailed critical commentaries and the inclusion of all alternative versions? These days, operas become new in the hands of directors, who can impose their own myths on the music, and incorporating bits of 17th-century

22. I find playing as one of a pair of harpsichordists extremely stimulating: alternating in close dialogue is exciting, but the main reason for having two of them is to create a rich sound – even richer with a pair of theorboes!

23. She also copied Acts I & III of *L'incoronazione di Poppea.* The fact that the Prologue was usually added after the main work was composed fits with the probability that it was added by someone other than Monteverdi, as was much of the end of Act III and the change of Ottone's clef.

24. I assume that the publisher of her *Cavalli* (Batsford, 1978) required the valuable musicological detail to be minimised. Otherwise, the most useful older book is Simon Towneley Worsthorne *Venetian Opera in the Seventeenth Century* (Clarendon Press, 1954), which is a very impressive volume for its date, with facsimiles supplying most of the extensive music examples.

changes will have far less impact than modern or outlandish settings! Producing a simple edition is comparatively easy now that we understand how an opera proceeds from librettist to performance; but with composers like Cavalli and Handel, there are quite enough operas to keep scholars and performers happy, and when they are exhausted, I reckon that it's more valuable to move on to other composers than to tinker with later versions, unless there is a worthwhile dramatic and musical improvement.

The nearest I've got to editing Cavalli's operas is Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, since the preparation of the score was probably very similar to Cavalli's operas.[25] A modern edition can be simple and all that is needed is a score.[26] Much as I admire Bärenreiter, Cavalli performances would be more widespread if such editions were not put through the major publishers – leave them to more complicated editions. "Collected Works" are rather expensive, so only major libraries can afford to buy them – how many public libraries will be buying the new Cavalli series? The capital cost of producing 17th-century opera is low. If major opera houses don't know how to perform such works, that's their fault; but professionals in the know, students and amateurs should be allowed to buy the music (including parts).[27]

Dinko Fabris offers a chapter on the use of alternative sources, questioning the primacy of the first version. I've no objection to research on the subject, but as mentioned above, are two versions, let alone more, worth worrying about until the "collected operas" are published? Jennifer Williams Brown writes on Cavalli's workshop – the first paragraph of this review abridges her diagram of how the music moved from sketches to performance. The next chapter, by Christine Jeanneret, argues convincingly that Maria Cavalli had a much more extensive role than producing fair copies. Hendrik Schulze is the overall editor of the Monteverdi *Vespers* edition reviewed above; he strikes me as a pedantic theorist. I don't know the opera the chapter is based on, *Artemisia*, but I'd be annoyed if I bought his score and found that it was not performable. As long as important alternatives are clearly marked on the page, not just in an appendix or commentary, an edition should offer a viable work.[28]

Much of the book is devoted to *Giasone* (1649).[29] This is not a work of which I have any knowledge, so I won't comment on it – but the details show the complexity of the editorial process for which a reviewer would require at least a basic score. I'm puzzled by the first word in the title "readying", which also occurs elsewhere in the book. "Preparing" seems to me to be the obvious word. *CB*

ESSAYS ON D. SCARLATTI

Domenico Scarlatti musica e storia **ed. Dinko Fabris – Paologiovanni Maione** Napoli, Turchini Edizioni, 2010. ix+395pp, €25.00. ISBN 978-88-89491-04-1

The Centro di Musica Antica Pietà dei Turchini (www.turchini.it) is a foundation that promotes events, research, publications, and masterclasses on Neapolitan music of the 17th-19th centuries. This long-awaited volume contains 17 ground-breaking papers (of which five are in English) delivered at the Centro's Scarlatti convention in 2007 (itself an achievement delayed by the incomprehensible disinterest of authorities). It follows Domenico's life, works, influence and legacy. It is prefaced by a short exhortation by **Joel Sheveloff** who could not attend. He expresses self-criticism and encouragement to those present to try to solve the mysteries surrounding Scarlatti's life, vocal works, and formal style.

Rosalind Halton writes about Domenico's stylistic relationship to his father, Alessandro, and hopefully this will inspire others to dedicate research to both Scarlattis. The task of identifying similarities in their works (in over 600 cantatas of the father, and in the 550 sonatas, and the tragically small number of surviving cantatas by the son) is objectively hard, but Halton's experience is such that her "impressions" were ready to be expressed. The reader may recognize her conclusions, too (and I mean this as a compliment), because once articulated they are strikingly 'obvious': the frequent use of 3/8 time, irregular barring or phrasing, harmonic surprises. But did anyone reflect on these similarities before and give due credit to Alessandro?

About the musical examples: in the last 3 bars of the first system of Example 3 all the notes start to get above their proper position, ending up a second too high; a few missing but necessary accidentals in other examples might have been missing in the manuscripts; in example 7, bar 76, a *sic* is warranted if the repeat of the vocal line by the continuo really crosses the normal 6/8 rhythm of bar 2 to 3/4. And example 3, from a serenata of Alessandro's, shares by coincidence something else in example 5 (Sonata K. 203): a ***tremulo***! In *Early Music* XIX no.1 of February 1991, p. 91-3, I observed that Domenico's *tremulo* might be precisely N. Pasquali's '*tremolato*, or quavering', defined in his book on fingering (1758) as a thrice-repeated note. Halton in fact describes the figure played here by the violins as 'shivering'.

25. I have, however, edited some of his church music: the *Missa concertata*, some smaller pieces, the Magnificat included in Monteverdi's 1650 posthumous collection, and two Vespers sets from the 1675 publication).
26. There is a separate string-only score, but there are no details of bars' rest or cues – it's far simpler for one player to follow the score and give a lead. Continuo players and conductors can have larger copies if required.
27. An amateur workshop (no performance) on early Italian opera takes place in May in Devon – a long bank-holiday weekend, with a run-through at the end. I see no reason why the publisher should receive any more than the score's price. As far as I can remember, Gagliano's *Dafne* cost £7.50, my edition of *Poppea*, was £30.00 (though I probably gave discount), Brian Clark's edition of Francesco Caccini's *La liberazione...* was £10.00 and next year's Gagliano's *La Flora* is from facsimile – there's no way the singers would spend $215.00 (£138.00 + US post) per copy. I've worked on *Poppea* several times (including recordings by Richard Hickox and John Eliot Gardiner), but it needs at least a revision to the introduction on the strength of the information about Maria Cavalli's way of working.
28. My *Poppea* edition includes all the music from both Venice and Naples in sequence, with Naples-only sections in smaller print, and makings for transpositions noted.
29. If you want to see a performance of *Giasone*, make sure you are in Sydney between 5 & 9 December for Pinchgut Opera's production.

Paologiovanni Maione documents how the royal chapel of the Neapolitan court functioned at the time that both Alessandro and Domenico were using their respective posts there to further their careers, availing themselves of its great prestige as well as all the licenses and suspensions of rules they enjoyed.

Francesco Nocerino describes the various types of keyboard instruments (even if in some cases no examples exist) known to have been in use during Domenico's youth, showing that a Neapolitan school of harpsichord building was developing. An interesting type was the *tiorbino*, a small spinet with gut strings.

Friedrich Lippmann, whose recent edition of selected keyboard works by Gaetano Greco was reviewed in *EMR* 148 [6/2012], confirms that the hearsay reports of Domenico being a pupil of Greco are unsubstantiated. And while those works are pleasant enough, such didactic material would have had little chance of producing such a keyboard genius.

Kate Eckersley, as a performer of Domenico's cantatas, distills and sensitively describes his uniquely expressive vocal language. She refers to aspects of his writing we know in the sonatas that we simply haven't yet found in the cantatas, due to the tragic loss of a vast portion of his vocal output, and the lack of work done on what we do have: the influence of the Andalusian gypsy *cante jondo*, the use of motifs, audacious harmony, poignant declamation, punchy rhythms, leaps, and such ineffable things as "exuberance, strangeness and rare beauty".

Again the typos in the musical examples will challenge the reader. In example 1, from bar 58 to 68, all the continuo figures appear a whole bar too early. In the Mancini example, no. 4, presumably the odd 67/5 in bar 2 should be flat7/5, as in bar 12. In ex. 10 bar 57 the continuo figure under c must also be a flat, as in 56 and 58, rather than a #.

'Le cantate "giovanili" di Domenico Scarlatti', jointly written by **Dinko Fabris** and **Giulia Veneziano**, follows an article of theirs from 2007 presenting the project to acquire and study 119 sources of Domenico's cantatas in collaboration with 19 other musicologists. Fabris covers the biographical evidence about Domenico before his move to Rome, especially the decade from the beginning of his career in 1701 (at the age of 16) until 1710, mostly centered around Naples, and lists 18 undated cantatas and possibly early cantatas, and the significant number of Domenico's cantatas conserved in France, making conclusions about their dates from their formal and stylistic traits. Veneziano describes the assortment of sources, some dated, some ambiguously attributed, but arguably before 1710, and proposes a method for giving hypothetical dates to 30 cantatas in this period. She provides details about sources that circulated throughout the 18th century, showing that Domenico had some later, if intermittent, activity in Naples. A new source (now in the Archivio di Montecassino) suggests that a large amount of music relating to the Scarlatti family is waiting to be recovered.

Giulio Convò's libretto for the 18 year-old Scarlatti's opera *Ottavia ristituita al trono* (Naples, 1703) is a sort of sequel to Busanello's for Monteverdi's *Incoronazione di Poppea* (Venice, 1643 and Naples, 1650): here Nero is forced by public outcry to bring Octavia back and strip Poppea of her crown. The libretto was based on *Agrippina Minore* (Venice, 1647-77) by Francesco Berardi, one of many historical novels popular in the first half of the 17th century. **Jean-François Lattarico** writes about such sources for melodramas in the transitional period before the establishment of the tragic heroism of *opera seria* (and its partner, *opera buffa*), often involving the same Roman figures, and about the definitions, methods and stylistic norms regarding fact and fiction, truth and verisimilitude, that this "noble" genre, according to its theorists, required. The seven chapters of *Agrippini Minore* cover the period from Claudius to Titus, II -VI on Nero, and a few lines of IV refer to the events of the operas: namely, that after the death of Octavia, again empress, Nero marries Poppea. Busanello suppressed the return of Octavia, Convò the subsequent marriage. In the novel *Ottavia*'s disguise as a shepherdess in order to seduce Nero is pure fantasy. The sympathy for the characters, which pervades Berardi's work, was carried into Convò's and Scarlatti's. It may be ironic that the humanity of Nero and the resignation of Poppea will surprise us, due to our far greater familiarity with Monteverdi's opera. Moral criticism as well as literary trends were in play, but indeed they had to start somewhere, and Lattarico outlines the beginning of the transition in the equivocal melodrama of the early 1700s in Naples.

Saverio Franchi and **Giancarlo Rostirolla** write about the years Domenico spent in Rome (1707-19), the positions he held, with speculations derived from the few remaining works from this period, which were significant enough to procure him support and recognition. The first paper shows how the War of the Spanish Succession affected the Scarlatti family, with both father and son dependent on the Church, the aristocracy, and the political vicissitudes of the Court, and how Domenico's international career was rooted in his successful activities in Rome. The second explains in fascinating detail what activities Domenico's various posts entailed, and why much documentation is lost (e.g. the lost archives of the Polish Queen Maria Casimira). Because of the relatively few surviving works we forget that Domenico was a maestro of the Cappella Giulia and a teacher of strict counterpoint at the Accademia di S. Cecilia, positions he obtained by proving his compositional prowess and by cultivating powerful patrons. His future career in Portugal and Spain resulted from his success in Rome. This study discusses the works of the period which we do have, offering conjectures about why there is so little: either he composed works that were lost, or he was exempted from producing them, or he took them away with him when he left Rome to go to Portugal, and they were subsequently lost. But it is fascinating to contemplate the kinds of works that Rostirolla, Kirkpatrick, Pagano, et al. thought he must have written, because future discoveries will fit into this masterly account. There is an appendix with the names of all the professional musicians active in Rome at

this time in categories, and the archival sources for this huge 32-page-long list.

Manuel Carlos de Brito sets the scene in Lisbon, according to manuscripts, chronicles, diaries and research by J. P. D'Alvarenga. What emerges is that Domenico was away from Lisbon more often than previously assumed, and that he was part of a great influx of Italian musicians to Portugal, starting with the plan of João V to have the music of his royal chapel emulate the Vatican's, and of the queen, Maria Anna of Austria, to have instrumental and secular music performed, also for the benefit of the local foreign aristocracy. It is ironic that so much secular music was imported from ecclesiastical Rome, and also that the chronicles are so biased in favour of foreign composers and performers (naming Portuguese musicians only to cite their jealousy of the Italians) who dominated the commercial scene.

Gerhard Doderer provides *'Some remarks on Domenico Scarlatti's Portuguese period (1719-1729)'*. Perhaps his spoken English is good, but his writing is riddled with wrong words and awkward or faulty constructions. It is readable, however, except for one sentence which I pondered to no avail. He documents Scarlatti's relationship to João V (King from 1706 to 1750) and then to José I, lists the serenatas, cantatas and sacred vocal works he composed for the royal chapel and palace, compares his works to those of the younger harpsichordist, Carlos Seixas, whose playing Scarlatti praised, describes what is known about keyboard instruments possessed by Maria Barbara or being built in Portugal, with pictures of harpsichords and a Portuguese Fortepiano of c. 1740. The characteristics and the compasses of these instruments are of interest to players of the sonatas, as are the more detailed descriptions of the few Portuguese sources containing them (for comparison to the Venice, Parma, Münster and Vienna manuscripts).

José María Domínguez's *'Copistas y encuadernaciones: nuevas perspectivas para el estudio de las sonatas de Scarlatti'* has a long appendix quoting 19 documents regarding a copyist, Don Lorenzo de Almón y Pereira, active from 1737 to 1742 at the Spanish court. The article notes how the physical attributes of manuscripts produced at court may yield information about their dating, and why Almón may have had a hand in copying Scarlatti's sonatas. The accounts themselves are of interest for the expenses ("light for working", lodging and transportation), and the role of Don "Carlos Brosque", i.e. Farinelli, in ordering copies of arias.

Finally we come to Scarlatti's keyboard style, in itself and as compared to that of Iberian keyboard composers: especially to Sebastián de Albero (1722-56), by **W. Dean Sutcliffe**, and regarding its oriental inheritance from Arabic-Andalusian song by **Emilia Fadini**. Sutcliffe describes in detail Scarlatti's Sonata K. 434 and Albero's Sonata 11, included in full, both in d minor, in 3/4, and in binary form – in short if one saw only single measures from either one they might seem to be from the same piece. But he points out substantial differences, and enumerates ten objective and effective aspects of Albero's keyboard works, a summary that goes far beyond the specific analysis of this paper and invites appreciation for his expressive, personal, intense and sometimes more galant style. Fadini's contribution is specific about where more detailed research, including hers, has been published, alluding to major questions of interest (on Arabic theory, modality, popular Andalusian practices, rhythms and structures) and generally about the necessity of separating the written elements of a composition from its musical expression. She does, however, itemize six characteristics shared by Arabic or flamenco music and Scarlatti's: feelings expressed as song or dance; internal versus external rhythms; preluding or vamping or improvisatory introductions before the actual tempo ensues; phrase or rhythmic repitition as a powerful rhetorical element; accelerations (rarely indicated, more often the prerogative of the performer); and ornamentation – fused into Scarlatti's keyboard style and indicated by signs to be interpreted by the player or written out in dense melodic lines, trapped by the graphic limitations of our notation. The amount of study to get into this topic is daunting, but I wonder if the essential thing might be to know what Arabic and Andalusian music to listen to!

In **Lucio Tufano's** contribution we read a moving letter of 1798 written in Venice by the Pistoian composer Vincenzo Manfredini (1737-1799), before his return to Russia, where he was shortly thereafter to die. He was asking a trusted friend for help selling his music library and the "Piano-Forte di Farinello": from the famous castrato, Carlo Broschi, he had also inherited 15 luxuriously bound volumes of manuscripts of Scarlatti's sonatas left by Maria Barbara. These are the "Venice" Scarlatti manuscripts, in the Biblioteca Marciana, and we now know that they belonged to Manfredini between 1786 and 1798, and it was he who brought them to Venice. It is not known what happened to them between 1798 and 1835, when they were acquired by the Venetian Contarini family.

Frederick Hammond provides personal memories of "Ralph Kirkpatrick 'da diverse distanze': the man and his archive". He studied harpsichord with Kirkpatrick from 1954-58, and accompanied him, then blind, on his European tour of 1976. He describes his broad culture, especially of languages and art history, his early use of period fingering and instruments, his writings and recordings, and his archives, left to Yale University, which include all the Scarlatti manuscripts on microfilm plus transcriptions by himself and others, as well as meticulous corrections and notes to his *Domenico Scarlatti*. He also shares Howard Schott's praise for Kirkpatrick's recording of the Well-Tempered Clavier on the clavichord, made without splicing.

A much longer retrospective by **Roberto Pagano** on the posthumous "fortune and misfortunes" of Scarlatti, passionate and dispassionate, bending over backwards to give the benefit of the doubt while being aggressive in his own defence, is also, like the preface by Sheveloff, addressed to the experts present at the convention. For the general reader the history of the abuse Scarlatti's

sonatas suffered at the hands of his editors is unexpectedly appalling, each generation accusing the editors of the previous one, some explicitly disparaging Scarlatti's pieces and admitting their desperate attempt to render them worth playing and, as sons of the pioneer researchers, perhaps acting out their "patricidal tendencies"! The reader may not always know what these duels were about, and Pagano's dense writing style makes it hard for an outsider to get in. But staggering as the "misfortunes" were (editorial crimes committed by great musicians) Pagano manages to explain also the generous intentions of Czerny and von Bülow – to salvage the little ingenuity they recognized in the Italian musical "dwarf" by cutting, correcting, inserting, adjusting, reordering, revising etc. the sonatas to make them "useful" didactically, discarding as much as possible to save the players' weary attention from inevitable boredom! Even Bartok and Granados were guilty of unqualifiable misrepresentations of essential aspects of the pairings of sonatas, of tempos, of technical details, of style. Later editors get more approval, of course, as they well deserve. And last but not least the reminder that any hypothesis will stand until new evidence makes it crash. This attitude is essential, because I have noticed that Italian musicology is becoming steadily more exciting: the more speculation is offered, the more scientific proof eventually gets applied to the hypotheses.

I hope I've done some justice to the life-long work reflected in these papers. The volume reads like a book - parallel paths in chronological order from different standpoints - and the stature of Scarlatti alongside the "other" composers born in 1685 is emerging (finally).

Barbara Sachs

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Review of* Paul Elie *Reinventing Bach on p. 48
Continuation of Music Reviews

G. HENLE VERLAG

I didn't have space for the previous batch, and don't think that single copies of sonatas by **D. Scarlatti** are particularly relevant to our readers, who would be likely to buy more substantial volumes. So I'll pass over briefly K.9, K.141, K.159 and K.380, based on 1985 editions. UK price is likely to be a bit under £5.00 each.

Bach ***Trio Sonata for Flute, Violin and Piano*** BWV 1038 (HN 445; €16.50) is edited by Peter Wollny. Its origin is BWV 1021, a sonata for violin and Bc. The editor surmises that the trio-sonata version was written by Bach for an amateur, and the bass part of BWV 1021 was retained to save thinking about the shape of the trio. (That poses the question whether Bach planned in advance or by instinct.) The violin part was written in scordatura, with the upper two strings down a tone You get for your €16.50 a normal score (with realisation) and parts (sounding pitch), plus a scordatura vioolin parts and a copy of the score without realisation and without page turns during movements.

J. B. Neruda is merely a name to me, so I'm pleased to receive a **Sonata in a for violin & Bc** (HN 1049; €9.00), taken from an anthology of Bohemian Violin Sonatas (HN 384), which gives you five sonatas by different composers for €24.00 (HN 334). I haven't seen the latter, but the Neruda sonata has an urtext and a separate fingered violin part, and there's an unfigured Bc part. There are three movements (*Allegro moderato, Andante & Presto*), of which the Andante, with the violin double-stopping almost throughout, seems the most interesting.

Mozart's early keyboard **Sonatas** are issued here in three volumes – K. 6-9 (HN1094; €15.00), K. 10-15 (HN 1095; €17.00) & K. 26-31 (HN 1096; €15.00) – all under the title *"Wunderkind" sonatas*. The first and third set were published for keyboard with violin ad lib; the second set with ad lib violin or flute and cello – though flautists need to make their own adaptations and the cello part was omitted after the first of the London editions. (Henle also issues the accompanied versions.) The publications use the word *clavecin*, which is translated as piano, though there aren't any markings of *piano* or *forte*. The Neue Mozart Ausgane publishes the music in its fuller version, and it's perfectly possible to play just the keyboard part without the "benefit" of excessive legato fingering. Perhaps there's some point in giving children music composed by a child.

Beethoven's Cadenzas and Lead-ins for the piano concertos is a useful collection for ambitious students. Editions may or may not have the ad-lib elements, but this includes all the insertions written out by Beethoven for Concertos 1-4, the piano arrangement of the Violin Concerto and Mozart's Concerto in d, K. 466. The most substantial cadenza, lasting 125 bars, is the one least likely to be heard: the first movements of the violin concerto: the piano version should be heard more often. (HN 1182; €18.00).

I don't think I'v got a copy of **Beethoven**'s early **Piano Concerto in E flat, WoO 4** (HN 567; €13.00), written, and probably performed, in 1784. The orchestral parts do not survive, though the keyboard part has the instruments fairly thoroughly included when the piano is tacet. The keyboard part has corrections and additions by the composer. The copy is described as *Direktionsstimme* (*Conductor's Part*), which reminds me of Strauss Waltzes and other light music. There are reconstructions of the score, though information on the middling parts have few clues. There's a reconstruction by Willy Hess (Alkor).

Beethoven's ***Piano Sonata no. 14 in C# minor, op. 27 no. 2 (Moonlight)*** is interesting, particularly his comments on the aeolian harp, though I'd be more sympathetic to the impossibility of keeping the foot down on the sustaining pedal (Beethoven's term is *senza sordino*) if the imported expert, Murray Perahia, had tried it on fortepianos of the time. It might not have made any difference, but his argument is invalid until he has. Meanwhile, perhaps *Mondschein* should be translated as Moonshine! (HN 10062; €6.50.)

NEVELL AND BYRD: PAINTINGS AND CONTRAFACTA

Richard Turbet

Readers might recall that for the ten years 1995-2004 *Annual Byrd Newsletter* was published as a supplement to *Early Music Review*, and in 2005 Clifford published the entire ten issues as a single monograph (which remains available for purchase via him). Subsequently I submitted an annual article entitled "Byrd on a wire" until Routledge published the third edition of my *William Byrd: a research and information guide* last year, briefly reviewed by Clifford in August's *EMR*, page 17.[1] I am still waiting to hear from the publisher about the future of Routledge Music Bibliographies, the series in which my book appears. Meanwhile Clifford has kindly undertaken to publish suitable articles concerning Byrd miscellanea which should be in the public domain; this is especially advantageous to Byrd scholarship as articles from *EMR* are noted in *RILM abstracts*.

The present brief article concerns four items which are relevant to Byrd but which have not hitherto been mentioned in Byrd literature. Three derive from a long weekend which I recently spent in Cambridge. On the Sunday I visited Audley End, the magnificent Jacobean stately home nearby in Essex which for a time was owned by the Neville family directly descended from the dedicatee of My Ladye Nevells Booke. Indeed, as John Harley pointed out in a letter to *Music & letters* 88 (2007), p. 193, the book itself spent some time in Audley End during the 19th century. Within Audley End, now the property of English Heritage, there are two paintings of Billingbear, the family seat of the Nevells/Nevilles, in Berkshire. It had been built by 1591 when Byrd dedicated MLNB to Elizabeth Nevell, who was resident there. Billingbear burned down in 1924, though one room was transported to New York and forms part of Pace University (Richard Turbet, "More about Nevell & Byrd", *EMR* 147 (April 2012), p. 21). While I was in Audley End, a knowledgeable and helpful steward took me to a part of the house not open to the public and showed me a painting of Billingbear from 1738 by the English artist Jan Griffier the Younger. It was owned by the Neville family. This has not appeared in Byrd literature. It is reproduced in *Audley End*, edited by Kate Jeffrey ([London]: English Heritage, 1997), p. 50.

Also at Audley End (though I did not get to see it) is a "View of Billingbear, Berkshire" by another English painter, Edmund John Niemann (1813-76). This was purchased by private treaty sale as recently as 1986. Not only has it not been reproduced in Byrd literature, but also it seems not to have been reproduced in any other literature, but is can be seen on the internet at http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/view-of-billingbear-berkshire-4273/print/info.

1. If I did pass the volume on to someone to review, I'd like to have some come-back! *CB*

The definitive piece of writing about contemporary Byrd contrafacta is Kerry McCarthy's article " 'Brought to speake English with the rest': Byrd's motet contrafacta", *Musical times* 148 (Autumn 2007), pp. 51-60. Of less significance, though still of some interest in the context of reception, are modern Byrd contrafacta, dating from the time of his revival during the 19th century. The few known previously to myself have been noted and are now listed below. The day after I visited Audley End, I was in the musical shop in Cambridge which then still bore the name of the legendary but now late Brian Jordan in Green Street. Browsing through a box of choral miscellany, I came across a STTB setting of "Tantum ergo" attributed to Byrd. It is not the setting in his first *Graduàlia* of 1605, which is *pars* 3 of *Pange lingua/Nobis datus, nobis natus*. For a reason or reasons unexplained, the verses "Tantum ergo" and "Genitori, genitoque" are set to the music of *pars* 2, "Verbum, caro", in the same work. It was published at Amstelveen by Muziekuitgeverij Annie Bank in 1977, publisher's number G 44.

Within the list below I include two contrafacta of Byrd's *Pavana: The Earle of Salisbury*. Well before my visit to Cambridge, something had led me to AMICUS, the catalogue of Library and Archives Canada. Here I discovered yet another contrafactum of the same piece: "O Jesu, blessed Lord, to thee:. S.A.T.B.", arranged by Allanson G.Y. Brown (Minneapolis: Schmitt, Hall & McCreary, 1950), publisher's number 1685. I am grateful to the Library for sending me, from Ottawa, a photocopy "for personal research use only" – a requirement to which I have conformed!

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Respice Domine as "Bless ye the Lord" and *Look down O Lord* as "Save me O God": see Richard Turbet, "The fall and rise of William Byrd", in *Sundry sorts of music books: essays on the British Library collections, presented to O.W. Neighbour on his 70th birthday*, edited by Chris Banks, Arthur Searle and Malcolm Turner (London: British Library, 1993), pp. 119-28, especially p. 124.

Pavana: The Earle of Salisbury as "I have longed for thy saving health", *idem*, "Miscellany", *Annual Byrd Newsletter* 5 (1999): 3; and the same pavan, as "Lord, make me to know", www.cpdl.org edited by Brian Marble, submitted 19 December 2003, *idem*, "A note on Philip van Wilder and Byrd", *Early Music Review* 155 (August 2013): 19. I have omitted pieces with cosmetic alterations to Byrd's texts such as Fellowes' bowdlerization of *Susanna fair*, and some minor 19th-century fiddlings. [2]

2. I'm intrigued at the expanding usage of *contrafactum* over the years. The 1987 Supplement to *The Oxford English Dictionary* (compact edition), which I happened to buy cheaply a few shops down the road from Brian Jordan's shop, gives 1940 (Reese: *Music in the Middle Ages*, 1940) as its earliest source, with the wider usage noted for 1968. The term felt wrong when I read it in connection with 19th-century *retextings*.On the grounds that it is a syllable shorter, has fewer letters, and has a plural in *s* not *a*, should we avoid it when anachronistic? *CB*

WILLIAM BYRD: RECUSANT AND REBEL.

The Mercian Consort, Alexander Berry *dir.* Queens' College Chapel, Cambridge, Saturday 17 August 2013, 12 noon. Cambridge Early Music concert series.

I live a bit of a way from Cambridge, and was in two minds about attending this concert. Certainly driving was not an option, given Cambridge's traffic, the time of year, and the day of the week. However, the noon start meant that I could go there and back in a day using public transport, and the programme looked most attractive on paper. If ever a concert proved the value of live performance and justified the effort of attending, it was this one.

The Mercian Consort consists of fourteen young singers (3S 4A 2T 2Bar 3B though I [mis?]counted only thirteen on the day) conducted by Alexander Berry, a former organ scholar of Queens' College, hence the connexion, and his familiarity with the chapel's slightly dry but supportive acoustic. The choir used the vibrant *Vigilate* as an overture during which to settle, and then plunged into the intense music that made up the rest of the programme. However, just because this music was indeed intense, and sung accordingly, this by no means meant that there was a lack of variety or animation in the performances.

The movements of Byrd's five-part mass were interspersed with two of his most committed motets from the first *Cantiones* of 1589 plus the unpublished setting of *O salutaris hostia*. The performance of the mass provided confirmation that, even if one is extremely familiar with a particular work of great distinction, it is always worth attending a live version in the hope of gaining extra insights and rewards. In this instance, besides the sheer pleasure of the sound made by the choir, there were the subtle variations of tempo made by the conductor to complement the text: for instance, passages where Byrd changes from duple to triple metre, such as at "Et in spiritum" in the Credo, positively danced, though within the bounds of liturgical propriety. Conversely, later on, the concert's concluding "dona nobis pacem" from the Agnus was calmly visionary.

Meanwhile the opening of *Tristitia et anxietas* was tense as well as intense. The choir sustained an admirable momentum throughout both sections without rushing, with the cumulative result that the final plea for mercy did ample justice to Byrd's sublime peroration – one of those passages that marks out the great composers from the merely good ones.

Early in my time as advisor to The Cardinall's Music Byrd Edition, I made a visit from Aberdeen, where I was then living, to Oxford, where David Skinner, still TCM's editor, was based at Christ Church. He had just received the advance tapes of the second disc in the series of thirteen. First of all he wanted me to hear the recording of *O salutaris hostia*; I soon found out why. This setting of the text had remained unpublished, and the surviving sources had given David no little trouble in editing them to a sufficiently scholarly standard for the recording, which to his everlasting credit he achieved. I remember being open mouthed then breaking out laughing with sheer enjoyment at Byrd's outrageous succession of dissonances, so well articulated by TCM. The greatest compliment I can pay The Mercian Consort is that their version of this piece sounded even more discordant than that of TCM, whom I have also heard singing it live. The Mercians did not play up to the dissonances, but such crystal clear singing enhanced their impact. What Byrd was up to remains a moot point. However, with the advantage of recent studies of his handwriting, especially his signatures, one suggestion might be that, given the sort of canon he chose to pursue throughout the piece, and given that he seemed to be a confident and ambitious man, he was determined to drive that canon to a conclusion regardless of how many dissonances it caused on the way. It is this seeming willingness to take things to the limit (and arguably beyond) that persuades me, unlike some other writers about Byrd, that he might well have composed another extreme work, the chromatic *Vide Domine quoniam tribulor*. Equally, he might just be "having a laugh". I may well be wrong about both the man and the motet, but how many movements of *The battle* would pass as Byrd's at a blind tasting?

Like the mass, *Ne irascaris* is a work of Byrd's that is very familiar to those who listen to and perform this music. So again all the more credit to The Mercian Consort that they brought it up fresh and new. The true glory of the piece is its passionate counterpoint, but critics tend to harp on about the chordal passage at "Sion deserta est"; the Mercians vindicated the harpers by making the homophony glacial and static at this point, like so many giant icebergs. Thinking about it later, I was reminded of the third movement of Vaughan Williams' *Sinfonia Antartica*.

At the conclusion of the mass, a prolonged ovation from a sell-out house brought forth an encore in the form of *Ave verum corpus* from their new, and indeed first, CD.

Alexander Berry will have used his knowledge of the chapel's acoustics to judge the choir's tempi judiciously. There is still a temptation nowadays to scurry through Glorias and Credos in Latin masses – and also the longer movements in Tudor Anglican Services – with no regard for the care which the composers put into their harmonies and melodies. To my ears Mr Berry did not miss a trick in Byrd's mass. The individual lines in his choir were always audible yet they blended beautifully, offering a grainy and unanimous entity, and leading to interpretations that were the opposite of bland but that still served the music and its composer primarily. It is also very encouraging to encounter a young ensemble: there is absolutely nothing wrong with those mature choirs which consist of the usual suspects, but it is essential that the "stock" of performers should keep renewing itself. In the words of another mature but rather different ensemble, The Who: "the kids are alright". *Richard Turbet*

LEIPZIG – INNSBRUCK – ANTWERP

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Leipzig Bachfest Part 2 - Bach Out and About

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Leipzig Festival (reviewed in the last issue of *EMR*) are the 'Bach Out and About' trips to places of interest within reach of Leipzig, mostly focussing on historic organs. I went on six of these trips, starting with two contrasted venues (15 June). The Dorfkirche Steinbech is a small 1717 country church with the organ forming part of the typical Saxon/Thuringian Lutheran architectural triple-decker layout, with the organ above the font and pulpit, in this case, tucked into a raised ceiling in a white and gold architectural unity. The 14-stop, 2 manual instrument was built in 1724 by Hähnel and has recently been restored. It produces a bold sound in the small space, although the second manual (an Unterwek) is much quieter and remote, tucked away as it is underneath the main case just behind the organist (who faces out into the church). The young organist Jonas Wilfert demonstrated the instrument in a range of improvisations, something he clearly enjoys, although the flexible winding of the organ very audibly didn't enjoy his staccato touch. The second organ of the day was in the enormous palace of Hubertusburg Castle in the village of Wermsdorf. Built in 1724 by Frederick Augustus I, Elector of Saxony, as a hunting lodge for his son is it most famed for the 1763 Treaty of Hubertusburg that concluded the German part of the Seven Years War. It includes a large baroque (and still Catholic) chapel, with a 1749 one manual Schramm organ on the top gallery above the altar, speaking into a very generous acoustic. The organ produces a very coherent sound with the mixture forming an integrated part of the chorus. After an organ demonstration by Jonas Wilfert, there was a concert in one of the palace's smaller rooms given by the Accordone Ensemble (Marco Beasley, tenor, and Guido Morini, harpsichord) of Italian music from the early 17th century.

The next trip started with a fascinating introduction to historic temperaments at Leipzig University's Grassi Museum of Musical Instruments presented by Veit Heller with Eckhart Kuper playing a portative, the little 1725 Silbermann organ, harpsichords, spinets and a copy of a 1726 Cristofori piano. We then moved on to one of the highlights of the week's visits, the delightful late Romanesque fortified Wehrkirche in Pomßen, south east of Leipzig. The recently restored one manual organ there was built in 1670 by an otherwise unknown organ builder, Gottfried Richter. It is at the west end of the church in a stunning little case, tucked just under the ceiling on the second gallery. Little is known of Richter, although he seems to have been a carpenter rather than an organ builder. Despite its date, the sound of the organ reflects that of an earlier time, giving it its local name as the "Renaissance organ". As I mention in the review of Roland Börger's CD of this organ (held over from the last to this issue of *EMR*), I wonder if Richter simply copied earlier organs that he knew, rather than keeping up with the latest organ building developments. But, whatever the reason, it is a fascinating instrument, tuned in quarter-comma meantone and at the Chorton pitch of a' 458. It was extremely well demonstrated in the recital by Roland Börger, one of the instigators of the organ's restoration, his performance of Böhm's Partita *Wer nur den lieben Gott* being particularly musical.

The third trip took us south-west of Leipzig, first to Frauenprießnitz and the ambitiously reconstructed organ in the Klosterkirche St Mauritius, and then to the sumptuous baroque Court Chapel of Eisenberg Palace, one of the seats of the Dukes of Saxony and Gotha. The two manual and pedal organ at Eisenberg was originally built by Christoph Donat in 1684, but developed faults and was rebuilt 50 years later by Heinrich Trost. It is in another triple-decker arrangement, with the organ above the altar and pulpit. Unfortunately it was badly out of tune, and the demonstration recital was also full of errors, so it didn't come over that well.

For a taste of organs at their grandest, a visit to Dresden can be recommended. When I first visited, pre-unification days, the Frauenkirkce (one of the finest examples of German baroque church architecture) was a pile of rubble, retained as a war memorial. It has now been splendidly rebuilt, complete with a rather controversial new organ based, only partially, on the famous Silbermann organ that existed pre-war. It is now an all purpose instrument capable (to a certain extent) of playing most of the organ repertoire, rather than playing a more specific part of the repertoire extremely well. Curiously, this goes against the aesthetic adopted for the rest of the church, which is based on original drawings. The organ case (another triple-decker arrangement above the altar), as with the rest of the church, is a pretty accurate reconstruction of the original architecture, despite the added accoutrements of its main function as a concert hall. It is an enormous space with a big acoustic, so any organ sounds pretty good in there. Much more important, from the organ point of view, is the 1755 organ in the former Hofkirche, now the Cathedral. This was Silbermann's last instrument, and was completed by his pupil Hildebrandt after his death. The demonstration included a number of pieces that weren't really suitable for the organ, although the one Bach piece certainly sounded magnificent.

The final organ trip visited two important small organs from the time of Bach, starting with Störmthal, an organ where Bach gave the dedication recital (in 1723), writing Cantata *Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest*, for the occasion. The bench he used is still in the church. It was also Bach's introduction to the organs of Hildebrandt, and Bach

became an active supporter of Hildebrandt's instruments. It is perfectly voiced for the small church, with a coherent chorus, nicely flexible winding and a colourful range of stops on its one manual. Curiously, Hildebrandt got the contract by default – Silbermann was originally invited but wasn't interested, leading to the start of the career of his main rival. We then visited the rather more complex instrument in the church of St. Kilian, Bad Lausick. This was originally built by Silbermann in 1722 for a church in Chemnitz, but was then moved to another church in 1772 and extended in 1791 by Trampeli, only arriving at St Kilian in 1957. Unfortunately it was suffering from several ciphers when we visited. The very fine Bach demonstration recitals on both these churches were given by the young Norwegian organist Espen Melbø, on both occasions including a partita to explore the different colours of the organ.

The last trip of the series was principally architectural, with no organs. We started by viewing the impeccably restored little church at Burgliebenau before moving on to Ermlitz Manor (a place that Weber and Wagner knew well) and is now being slowly restored after being requisitioned in 1945. While there, we heard a concert for harpsichord/fortepiano and viola da gamba given by Shalev Ad-El and Thomas Fritzsch, the former having by far the biggest task in works by Johann Christoph Bach and Andreas Lidl.

These trips were arranged by Mareile Bernard of the Bach Archive, with expert input from Klaus Gernhardt and Veit Heller of the Grassi Museum and programme notes by Bernhard Schrammek. Stefanie Heese and Franziska Hedrich provided historical information while Daniel Bintner and Erin Boggs provided much needed expert translations.

INNSBRUCKER FESTWOCHEN DER ALTEN MUSIK

This year's Innsbruck Festival of Early Music lasted from 7 to 25 August, attracting over 10,000 people to the paid concerts (contributing to a remarkable 98% capacity) and a further 20,000 to their wide range of free events. I was able to attend the last week of the festival, from 16 to 25 August, a period that included the final of the Cesti singing competition, the Barockoper:Jung production of *Venus and Adonis* and *Dido and Aeneas*, featuring many finalists from last year's Cesti competition, and the last of the festival's three fully staged operas, Caccini's *L'Euridice*.

International Singing Competition for Baroque Opera Pietro Antonio Cesti

I arrived just in time for the final of the 4th International Singing Competition for Baroque Opera Pietro Antonio Cesti (16 August). Cesti was an Italian organist, composer and singer, who came to the early attention of the Medici family. He is best known for the series of operas he wrote while in Innsbruck between 1652 to around 1660 in the Court of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, the son and husband of Medicis. As its title suggests, the competition is specifically geared towards Baroque opera and, as well as monetary prizes, competitors have the chance to appear in the 2014 Barockoper:Jung production of Cesti's most famous Innsbruck opera, L'Orontea, as well as bookings at venues represented by the judges, most of whom are from various opera or concert hall venues. From the many applications, 85 were invited to Innsbruck, with 25 making it through to the second round and 11 into the final, representing France, Great Britain, Italy, Austria, Poland, Portugal and the USA. They each had to sing an extract from L'Orontea as well as a piece of their choice, with Handel being the clear favourite choice, alongside three pieces by Purcell and one by Vivaldi.

As is so often the case in competitions geared towards early music, there were a few (but only very few) whose voices were far more suited to a much later repertoire, excellent though they might have been. But it soon became fairly clear who the prize-winners would be, particularly the Audience Prize which, as in the 2011 London Handel Singing Competition, went to the British/French mezzo Emilie Renard, her extraordinarily compelling stage presence immediately endearing her to the audience. The judges agreed with the audience, and Emilie also won the First Prize as well as one of the special prizes, in her case an engagement at the Theater an der Wien. Her singing was outstanding, full of expression (vocally and visually), an exquisite ability to get into the role of the piece and with an intelligent use of ornament and elaboration. Although she has a reasonably strong vibrato, she is capable of controlling it when she wants to as, for example, at the start of a long held note. Another singer to collect a handful of prizes was the young Austrian soprano, Christina Gansch, winning Second Prize, the Atle Vestersjø Young Talent Award and a special prize of a at the Vienna Konzerthaus. Her ability to sing clear and focussed runs was very evident, as was the purity of her voice and her engagement with the audience. The Third Prize went to the Portuguese tenor, Fernando Guimaraes, his solid voice and expressive gestures being noteworthy. He was also offered an engagement at the Theater an der Wien. The other special award, of a Concert at the Theater Heidelberg, went to the American countertenor Kim Kangmin Justin. Other finalists who impressed me were the young Italian mezzo, Aurora Faggioli whose extraordinary acting ability shone through in her opening aria from L'Oronte and the French soprano Samantha Louis-Jean. The orchestra for the final was the Academia Montis Regalis, led by Kinga Ujszaszi. They were conducted by the British conductor and harpsichord player Joseph McHardy, demonstrating a sensitive and intuitive connection with the singers and an obvious engagement with the music. It cannot be easy directing 11 singers and 22 pieces as well as a couple of instrumental introductions.

Venus & Adonis and Dido & Aeneas

The following evening I experienced several of the singers that I had heard in last year's Cesti competition in the Barockoper:Jung production of Venus & Adonis and Dido & Aeneas, directed by Laurence Dale and with The Pavillion Ensemble, conducted by Piers Maxim. Although separated by an interval, the two pieces were linked dramatically through the introduction of the character of

King Iarbas who, according to Virgil's *Aeneid,* was a North African King upon whose territory Dido (who he was madly in love with) had been allowed to build Carthage. His heartbreak (representing by a silent dancer) at Dido's preference for Adonis led to the Prologue of Venus and Adonis, and Cupid's reflections on the unpredictability of love – as in "Your women they continue true / But till they see another man". The continuing involvement of Iarbas (he becomes the target of the hunt in Dido), and the casting of the same singers in the dual roles of Venus, who transforms into the Sorceress (the South African soprano Kelebogile Boikanyo), Adonis/Aeneas (the British baritone Edward Grint) and Cupid, turned by Venus/Sorceress into the Spirit (an energetic Jake Arditti, also British), made for a very effective linking device. Indeed, were it not for the resulting length, it would have been tempting to run the two works together without an interval. At the close of Venus and Adonis, both Iarbas and Dido witness the death of Adonis. When Aeneas (also sung by the excellent Edward Grint) appears, Dido immediately sees the likeness of Adonis, and falls in love. Dido was sung by the striking Polish soprano, Natalia Kawalek-Plewniak (the third and audience prize winner in 2012), while last year's Young Artist winner, Einat Aronstein, sang the key roles of Shepherdess and Woman, The winner of the 2012 Cesti competition, Sophie Junker sang the role of Belinda beautifully, showing just how well-deserved her first prize was. Although this year I could only hear the final of the Cesti competition, in previous years I have also attended the preliminary rounds, giving me the chance to spot fine singers that, for whatever reason, do not make it to the final. Two that I specially mentioned last year were the mezzos Aurélle Frank and Danielle Nichole Rohr, so it was lovely to hear (and watch) their brilliant appearance as the two witches (making a very well matched pair) in Dido, although I wouldn't have recognised them, dressed as they were as outlandishly wild Goths with the addition of skater's knee pads and an enormous amount of lipstick covering much of their faces. Great fun! The chorus was provided by the very impressive local choir, NovoCanto, with soprano Eva Estermann being particularly noteworthy. This was an excellent production in every way, well directed, well lit, well conducted, well played and, most of all, well sung and acted by the young cast. Earlier that day I heard one of the lunchtime concerts held in the little Nokolauskapelle in the spectacular Schloss Ambras, nestling in the woods above Innsbruck. This was given by the theorbo player Simone Vallerontonda, performing music from Italy, France and Spain by the likes of Castaldi, de Visée, Kapsperger, Corbetta and Sanz.

Sätzl and Stams

The Sunday services in the Jesuitenkirche reflect the theme of the festival, on 18 August being based around the *Missae quatuor novae*, written by Christoph Sätzl in Innsbruck in 1661, together with his 1628 motet *Jubilate Deo* (with its bouncy descending motif), and the gently unravelling 1621 *Hoe est praeceptum,* performed from the Vokalensemble an der Jesuitenkirche and the Marini Consort Innsbruck from the rear gallery of the large church. The *Missae quatuor novae* was an interesting work, in a multi-sectional patchwork style with echo passages, and contrasts between the soloists and the full chorus. That evening, the RIAS Kammerchor, accompanied by a thunderstorm that echoed its way around the mountains enclosing the fantasy-baroque Stiftskirche Stams (a few miles west of Innsbruck), gave a concert based on Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* (18 August), interspersed with Gregorian chant and works by more recent composers, including Messiaen's *O sacrum convivium.* They opened with Reger's gentle *Nachtlied* sung while processing from the far end of the church, the thunder being perhaps more suited to one of Reger's more dramatic organ works. The concert was being filmed for a live stream, with lighting effects and much moving around of the singers, not always to best effect. But the choir, as its reputation should suggest, was on fine form with a nicely blended tone and effect interpretations of a wide repertoire.

Surge propera

Rinaldo Alessandrini was involved in a few festival events, including being a judge on the Cesti panel. He also presented a concert given by a paired-down version of his Concerto Italiano in the splendid Renaissance Spanisher Saal of Schloss Ambras, devoted to the music of Lassus. Many of the pieces were to the Archduke Ferdinand II, who had the Spanischer Saal built. The first half was the *Missa ad imitationen moduli "Surge propera",* preceded by the parodied motet, with its distinctive rising opening phrase that opens all the movements of the Mass. The gently decorated homophony that Lassus uses at *Et incarnates est* was particularly effective. A sequence of 6-part motets completed the concert, including *Timor et tremor,* with its frequent harmonic meanderings, an *alternatim* Te Deum setting and the lively *Respicit Dominus* with its excitable centre. Although the six singers produced a good consort sound, the vibrato of the upper soprano was a little too evident for my taste.

Andreas Scholl with a frog in his throat

The human voice is an extraordinarily delicate instrument, and it comes without any of the little knobs or buttons that can be used to resolve last minute issues on many other instruments. So it should not have been a surprise that, for the first time ever, I heard Andreas Scholl singing in less than top notch form. His voice remained a clear and focussed as ever, but the little coughs and throat clearings were clearly signs that all was not well. Many more diva-ish singers would retire to their bed and cancel, so all respect to him for continuing with the concert, of English works by the likes of Dowland, Campion and Johnson together with a series of anonymous folksongs (Spanisher Hall, Schloss Ambras, 21 August). Andreas Scholl has developed a far more natural and self-confident stage manner than was the case in his rather stiff early years, and he now physically projects the music as effectively as he sings it. He was accompanied by lutenist Edin Karamazov, who was about as far from the expected musically and physically unobtrusive presence as one could get. His rather odd "Oh, I'm so intense" facial expressions were distracting, but not so much as his eccentric playing, both in solos (which were very free

interpretations more appropriate to a late night jazz or folk club) and in his accompaniments, which included many distracting notes and sudden stresses in the wrong places. I'm not sure how often they have worked together, but there were several moments when Karamazov didn't seem to know what to do next. It is perhaps no surprise that my favourite piece was Scholl's singing of "I will give my love an apple" which, apart from one bizarre crash from the lute, at entirely the wrong moment, was accompanied by single bass notes.

Radio Antiqua

The fourth of the festival's lunchtime concerts given by young musicians in the Musikpavillon, an open-sided space in the centre of the delightful Innsbruck Hofgarten, featured the five members of Radio Antiqua, playing violin, recorder/bassoon, cello, theorbo and harpsichord (22 August). They were founded in 2012 in The Hague by musicians from Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Austria and gave a very impressive performance of works by Telemann, Bach, Schaffrath, Dieupart and Vivaldi. They showed an obvious insight into the musical structure and the give and take of the rhythmic pulse, producing very musical interpretations. I was particularly impressed with the solo recorder and bassoon playing of Isabel Favilla (particularly in Dieupart's 5th Suite for blockflöte and cello) as well as Tehila Lucia Giraudo, violin and Anna Tausch, cello. The continuo group of Giulio Quirici, theorbo, and Malano Boglioli, harpsichord, gave sensitively unobtrusive support. Christoph Schaffrath's trio for violin, bassoon and continuo was a fascinating piece, demonstrating the move towards the Galant style and including some virtuosic bassoon playing from Isabel Favilla. Schaffrath was a composer from Dresden who was pipped to post of organist of Dresden's Sophienkirche by Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. An excellent group.

Just one Prégardien

What was billed as a recital by father and son tenors Christoph and Julian Prégardien turned out to be solo affair by Julian as dad was poorly. The programme was pieces by Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, including Beethoven's influential 1816 song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte.* Beethoven noted that he was using the term 'circle' in the sense of a love token ring, and musically creates that ring by closing with the same theme that the segued sequence starts with. Julian Prégardien was a most impressive singer and interpreter, his light, lyrical and almost completely vibrato-free voice and gentle dramatisations of the pieces making for a very pleasant evening, albeit one that was a little out of my normal reviewing comfort zone. He was accompanied with some impressive playing by Michael Gees on a 1835 Conrad Graf Viennese piano that I had spotted the previous day in Innsbruck's Ferdinandeum State Museum.

Caccini's L'Euridice – Tirola Landestheatre, 23 August

Musicology might have moved on by the time that this review is published but, at the moment, Caccini's *L'Euridice,* is arguably the oldest published opera to have survived, Peri's earlier *Dafne* of 1597 having been lost, although Peri's version of the same *L'Euridice* was performed two years before Caccini's, in 1600. Caccini was a competitive rival of Peri and, despite working with Peri on his version of *L'Euridice,* managed to sneak his own version of the tale into publication a few weeks before Peri's version was performed, and then tried to prevent his own singers being involved in Peri's production. Caccini's version was eventually performed on 5 December 1602 in the Pitti Palace, Florence.

L'Euridice was intended for the wedding of Marie de Medici with the French King Henry IV in Florence. The pair are referred to directly in the prologue and, in this production, appear on stage with Sara Mingardo as Maria de Medici and Antonio Abete as Henry IV, both later reverting to their second act singing roles as Pluto (and Dafne) and Proserpina. Some writers have suggested that Henry and Maria are reflected in the roles of Orpheo and Euridice, although the love between that pair seems to have been rather stronger than that between Henry of Navarre and Marie – he didn't even bother to turn up at his own wedding! The music was one of the first appearances of the emerging *Stile recitative* of the *Seconda prattica,* something that Caccini claimed, with a degree of justification, to have invented. Based on the premise that ancient Greek tragedy was partly (or entirely, in the case of the chorus) sung, the text (which is really no more than story-telling, with little attempts at dialogue or character development) was set to the simplest of melodic lines over a relatively static harmonic structure, the occasional moves into what would later be termed Aria, being relatively short lived. It was only really the chorus that pushed the musical boundaries.

As I have become used to with Festwochen der Alten Musik operas over the past few years, the production was excellent – well directed, well designed, well dressed, well-lit (apart from it being too dark for the audience to read their programmes – always tricky for reviewers), well cast, well sung, well played and well conducted (on this occasion by Rinaldo Alessandrini). The generally stepwise melodic lines were enlivened by occasional flourishes and ornaments, and the sonorities drawn from the instruments of Concerto Italiano (3 theorbos, 2 harps, lirone/gamba and harpsichord/regal) were as varied as they were apt, although I could have done with hearing a bit more of the distinctive sound of the lirone. Plutone's regal was particularly attractive. The excellent Silvia Frigato opened the show as Tragedia before evolving into Euridice, while Furio Zanasi was her Orfeo, in this version of the tale ending up reunited with Euridice in twist to the normal ending. Tenors Luca Dordolo and Gian Paulo Fagotto had key roles as Aminta/Tirsi and Arcetro. Some of the supporting roles and the chorus were sung by members of Concerto Italiano that I had heard a few days earlier at Schloss Ambras. An excellent conclusion to my time in Innsbruck. Photographs of the production can be seen at http://www.altemusik.at/en/presse/leuridice-fotos/.

Tickets for the 2014 festival available from late November.

ANTWERP - *LAUS POLYPHONIAE* 2013. ELIZABETH I

Laus Polyphoniae, the flagship annual early music festival of AMUZ (Antwerp's Augustinus Music Centre), celebrated its 20th anniversary with a programme devoted to English music of the period of Elizabeth I – a rather apt dedication, as Antwerp was one of the places that several English catholic musicians moved to during this period. AMUZ is based around the baroque church of St Augustine and its neo-Byzantine Winter Chapel (now a bar) and is used year-round for concerts. The festival lasted from 23 August to 1 September, although I could only get to the last 7 days. An interesting departure from other festivals that I have been to was that, rather than having a Composer in Residence, they had a Composition in Residence – in this case Tallis's *Spem in alium.* The 400-page programme book included the complete score of *Spem,* line by line on every page. The opening concert (given by the Huelgas Ensemble, 23 August) featured no fewer than 3 performances of *Spem,* two *a capella,* and one with the addition of two sackbuts. The festival ended with another performance, with the voices joined by a wide range of instruments, of which more anon. The first Saturday included performances by members of the International Young Artists Presentation, the result of two days of tutoring and the chance for feedback (and, hopefully, concert offers) from a large collection of international festival organisers. The groups involved this year were Gesto Antico, L'Escadron Volant de la Reine, White Sparrow, Unikko Quartet, and Il Passaggio Segreto. Another event that I missed was the Sunday's performance of a complete day-long Divine Office given by The Tallis Scholars & Psallentes, starting with Matins at one in the morning, followed by Lauds at 4am, Prime at 6.30am, Tierce & Mass at 9.15am (with Byrd's Mass for four voices), Sext at midday, None at 3.30pm, Vespers at 6.45pm and Compline at 9.15.

My time in Antwerp started with the Monday evening concert (26 August, in the fabulous baroque church of St Paul's) given by Stile Antico. Their programme 'Heavenly Harmonies' alternated psalm tunes for Archbishop Parker's Psalter by Tallis with Latin motets by Byrd – a programme that might have cost them their heads in Elizabeth's time. The contrast between the haunting homophonic simplicity of Tallis's gorgeous little settings and the intricate imitative complexity of Byrd was striking. Standing in a circle in the middle of the church, the 12 singers produced their characteristic superbly blended sound, with a careful control of dynamics and a clear understanding of the texts of the pieces. As usual they sang without a conductor although, on this occasion (and for the first time in the many concerts that I have reviewed), one of the singers seemed to take on a more directorial role, with the facial expressions, physical movements and the gazing around his fellow singers that would normally only be seen by a choir facing a conductor. I hope this isn't going to be a regular thing, as I found it very distracting – one of the nicest, and most musically successful, things about Stile Antico is the strong interaction between individual singers (the voices of each part are spread around the group) as they look at each other at entries without any obvious director. Highlights included the joyous Byrd motet *Rorate caeli desuper* and the contrasting doleful and gently unravelling *Memento Domine.* Not only was their singing extremely professional, but they also proved to be one of the most professional in taking a bow at the end, carefully turning to each cardinal point before their encore of 'Never weather-beaten sail'.

Tuesday's events (27 August) started with a lunchtime concert (in AMUZ) by Phantasm playing consort music for three viols under the heading of 'Perilous polyphony', managing to fit in no fewer than 17 Fantasies into their one-hour programme. Starting with 'Elizabethan Visions' from Tomkins, Bevin and Byrd, they moved on to 'Jacobean Voices' courtesy of Orlando Gibbons, 'Commonwealth Vagaries' from Matthew Locke and finally, 'Restoration Venerations' with Purcell's extended essays in an earlier style. Locke's two Flat consorts provided a contrast to the fantasia format, each with their Courante, Saraband and lively Jigg. The three viols sounded ravishing in the acoustics of AMUZ, although the treble viol was occasionally rather too prominent in pieces where there should have been an equality of voices.

I first heard the vocal group Vox Luminis during a wonderful concert during a festival in Croatia in 2008, where they won the prize for the "highest interpretational achievement of an ensemble". My review referred to them as "extremely impressive" with "outstanding" singing. Fortunately, as a test of my own judgment, they have since gone on to win other international plaudits, including the 2012 Gramophone Record of the Year for their Schütz CD. For the first of two concerts they gave during the festival (27 August, AMUZ), their six singers were joined by the recorder consort Mezzaluna to share extracts from "The Triumphes of Oriana", the book of 24 madrigals published by Thomas Morley in 1601, togther with six additional pieces from other sources, five by Byrd. They are full of often predictable word-play, and Vox Luminis did well not to over emphasis these moments. Sensitively directed from within the choir by baritone Lionel Meunier, they produced an excellent consort sound, although there were moments when the countertenor was a little too prominent. There was a bit of a contrast in interpretation between the singers and recorder players, the latter playing with very long phrases, perhaps suggesting that they weren't following the word underlay of the pieces. As well as possible questions of period style, it did make their playing sound a bit relentless. They sounded much better in Byrd's Fantasia a 5, as they tossed its little phrases back and forth between them.

One of the most bizarre bits of programming came with the lunchtime concert (28 August, AMUZ) by Tasto Solo, a Spanish based group specialising in the medieval keyboard repertoire from the 14th to the mid 15th century, notably through the use of the portative organ (organetto) and hammered and plucked clavisimbalum. Despite their specialism in such a specific early repertoire, and the theme of the festival being the music of the time of Elizabeth I, they were invited to give a concert of music

from the Court of Henry VIII, despite there being no evidence that either the portative organ or clavisimbalum were ever part of his vast keyboard collection. Alongside music from the period of Henry VIII, they managed to fit in some pieces from the period that they (and their instruments) are more suited to, under their "very plausible" (but arguable) premise that the music of the likes of Du Fay would have been played in Henry's court on medieval instruments. Practically all the pieces were played in very free arrangements with a lot of improvisation. They produce an evocative sound, although I do wonder whether the likes of Landini managed to explore the potential of the portative quite as much. As it is hand-pumped by the player, the portative is capable of an enormous amount of expression and, on this occasion, notes were very rarely stable, with internal crescendos and diminuendos and a dying close to a note, all of which can affect pitch. The playing also used a rhythmic rhetoric that Chopin would have been proud of. also found the rather intense and precious approach of the portative player rather distracting, with long silences before a piece started as his hand almost imperceptibly moved towards the keyboard after a period of almost prayerful contemplation. Apart from being visually rather distracting, it also seemed rather at odds with the more usual perception of life and music at the Court of Henry VIII.

While I am on my high horse, I should mention another extraordinary aspect of the programming of this festival. The Elizabethan era was one of the key periods of the development of the English school of organ playing that was to prove so influential – most of the composers of the period were organists. But apart from this rather unusual concert by Tasti Solo, there was no other organ music at all, despite one of the festival's venues having an excellent organ dating from less than 50 years after the death of Byrd and Bull, and entirely suitable for the performance of music of this period. To add salt to the wound, 2013 is also the anniversary of the birth of Bull. Apart from his importance to Elizabethan music, he was also Cathedral organist in Antwerp, and is buried there. But the entire festival only included two works by him, both organ pieces, but both played by other instruments. Why?

After the tears and lamentations of this sorrowful organist, we come to the concert by the Ricercar Consort & countertenor Carlos Mena under the title of "Tears and Lamentations of a Sorrowful Soul", with consort songs and viol music by Brade, Holborne, Parsons, Tye, Dowland, Bennet, Byrd, Strogers, Brade and Parsons (28 August, AMUZ). For a concert billed as being for six viols and a singer, I was rather surprised to find a rather modern drum kit on stage, and even more surprised when it was used. I might be wrong, but I don't thing tabors, tambourines and a large bass drum were usual accompaniments to Elizabethan consort songs. Carlos Mena's pure clean tone was well suited to this repertoire, and he caught the rather melancholy mood well. As with an earlier viol group, the treble was a bit overpowering at times, considering the consort nature of the music. One of the loveliest pieces was Byrd's epitaph for his friend Tallis in 'Ye sacred muses' with its touching refrain "Tallis is dead and music dies". Several of the pieces suffered from rather doggerel verse.

After the opening night Tallis-fest, the Huelgas Ensemble returned in a smaller format (drawing from 12 singers) for some 'Elizabethan Night Music', with Sturton's *Gaude virgo mater Christi* sandwiched between five-part *Lamentations* by Ferrabosco and Robert White (28 August, St Pauluskerk). Like the early concert by Stile Antico, they stood in a circle in the middle of the church, but rotated through 90 degrees between each piece. Both the music, and their interpretation, was meditative, at times being sung so quietly as to be almost inaudible – unfortunately this occasionally made them sound a little tentative in their approach. Most of the pieces were set rather low, although we still had the occasionally slightly too prominent soprano voice. Sturton's *Gaude virgo mater Christi* took us back to an early period of English music, with its long intertwining melismas having a far more telling effect than the text, which was largely incomprehensible. White's setting of the *Lamentations*, proved to be the most moving and intense, notably in the *Lamed* verse *O vos omnes*, its final line building from the bass. Paul van Nevel conducted the small group in his own inimitable style, tuning fork in hand, and with a little wiggle of his hands to close each piece.

The following day (29 August) started with a lunchtime recital by Kenneth Weiss of pieces from My Ladye Nevells Booke by William Byrd, played on a harpsichord and a 'mother and child' virginal (the latter copies of 1620 Muselaar and 1626 Ruckers instruments), both separately and combined. The harpsichord was a copy of a 1697 Italian instrument, and had a very bright and bold voicing in contrast to the slightly muffled and intimate sound of the virginals. None of the Byrd fancies or voluntaries were featured, although we did have 3 pavan/galliard sets. Weiss played with a consistently applied articulation and rock solid pulse, avoiding any highlighting of Byrd's more extravagant wandering into the musical byways that are so characteristic of his keyboard music. The concert ended with 'The battell', not one of Byrd's greatest achievements in its demonstration of 1001 things to do in C major. It was played on the coupled viginals.

The ten singers of the Oxford-based group, Contrapunctus, conducted by Owen Rees, gave a concert of music from the Elizabethan Chapel Royal under the title 'For the comfort of such as delight in music' (St. Joriskerk). Their opening piece, Byrd's 'Sing Joyfully' rather set the mood for the evening – they did what it said on the tin, to coin a phrase. This was a wonderful example of forthright and bold singing, far removed from the rather English habit of twee vocal understatement. Having four sopranos was a bit excessive, particularly as they were not as free from vibrato as I might have expected – and all adopted the unfortunate soprano habit of singing louder as they got higher, when the opposite is really what is needed. That said, Esther Brazil was an effective soloist in several of the pieces. When the choir was more restrained in volume as, for example, in Mundy's 'O Lord, the maker of all things', they produced

a far more coherent, blended and, to my taste, a more attractive sound.

Chordophony, Lynda Sayce's consort of lutes, explored the little known repertoire for a consort of up to 20 lutes that we know existed in Elizabeth's time and lasted through to the execution of Charles I (30 August, AMUZ). Lynda's researches have led to her own reconstructions of the sorts of pieces they would have played, most from other version of pieces by the likes of Byrd, Allison, John Johnson, Bull, Philips, Holbourne and Dowland. This is fascinating repertoire, and the sound was exquisite from the group's beautifully made and matching set of lutes - ranging from the tiny treble down to a bass sounding an octave lower, with alto and tenor lute in between at intervals of a 4th and a 5th below the treble respectively. Lynda gave introductions to the instruments, the repertoire and the pieces.

Emma Kirkby joined fellow soprano Claron McFadden and The Spirit of Gambo (four viols and a lute) for a concert of pieces from Orlando Gibbons first set of madrigals and motets of 1612 (30 August, AMUZ). Each singer sang their own solos, but then joined for duets and, in one, shared the song 'Nay let me weep' between them before ending as a duet. When I saw the programme, I wondered how the four viols would cope with the *In Nomine a 5* – their solution was to have Claron McFadden sing the *In Nomine* chant line. Although this wasn't competitive soprano singing, I did find her a little out of keeping with the period, with her frequent swoops up to the start of notes and her swelling onto, and dying away from notes. Her upper register also seemed a little strained at times. Emma Kirkby was, as ever, extraordinarily expressive and tonally consistent, notable in her solo 'What is our life'. One aural oddity from the viol consort was their habit of all tuning up together – not a pleasant sound.

The late night concert saw the return of Vox Luminis, led by Lionel Meunier (St Andrieskerk) exploring the intense emotions surrounding birth and death. The programme included Thomas Morley's 'Funeral Sentences', sung at Elizabeth's funeral, and at all other royal funerals till Croft (with one Purcell sentence) took its place. And in a foretaste of the concert we were to hear the following day, we heard one of the many dirges written after the early death of the Stuart heir presumptive, Prince Henry, in 1612, with Tomkins' 'When David heard'. This was an outstanding concert.

1612 seems to have witnessed something of a Lady Diana moment, with the outpouring of grief on the death of the 18-year old Prince Henry, eldest son of James I. The seven singers of Gallicantus with lutenist David Miller, directed by baritone Gabriel Crouch, devoted a whole programme to the music written to commemorate his death. In a festival that had featured many choirs, this was amongst the finest, with a superbly blended and coherent sound. All the singers had solo opportunities, with particularly notable moments coming from soprano Katie Tretheway, countertenor David Allsopp and tenor Nick Todd. Although some of the texts were unlikely to win literary prizes, the music was always exquisite. Two of the pieces (by Thomas Ford and William Cranford) had been reconstructed by Francis Steele as their manuscript source lacked a bass part. Robert Ramsey wrote more laments than any other composer, although his pieces are rarely performed. His intense 'Sleep fleshly birth' was particularly moving, with its harmonic twists and turns. Richard Dering provided the only piece with a Latin text, presumably written while he was in exile in Antwerp.

As is their wont, Hespèrion XXI came and saw and conquered, attracting an enormous audience to their concert and a standing ovation at the end (31 August, St Carolus Borromeus). As well as their five viols and lute, they included a violone, something I don't think I have heard before as part of a viol consort. I am not sure how authentic that might be, but the sub-octave doubling of the lowest bass viol certainly took a while to get used to. Although the playing was very professional, the players seemed strangely detached from the music and with little or no facial contact with the audience; there was no attempt to instigate or even really to acknowledge applause. It turned out that the pieces were grouped into four very similar sections, generally of segued pieces, and each ending with a bit of bravado – but at the end of the first one, there was no indication from the players that they had reached the end of a section, meaning that the applause, when it eventually came, was muted and hesitant. And when they did stand and bow, only a couple of them managed a smile. I don't know why I felt this was strange, but it did come over as though this was just another stop on some grand tour of a concert they had played many times and they were just getting through it, with no real attempt at selling the music to the audience. But the audience clearly loved them. Do some groups or performers get to the point when they have no need to endear themselves to audiences and are happy just to turn up, play, and go home again? The pieces all revolved around Jordi Savall's playing of the treble viol, with the other players having very little chance for divisions or other embellishments, let alone solo spots.

The last day of the festival featured two very contrasting concerts, starting with the five voices of Capilla Flamenca singing Lamentations by Byrd, Tallis and Parsley interspersed with the five section of the a composed piece, *Incipits* by the young composer Daan Janssens producing an extraordinary range of sounds from the HERMESensemble on flute, clarinet, viola, cello, double bass, piano and percussion. As with many of the all-male groups we had heard during the week, much was down to the vocal character of the countertenor, in this case one with an attractive and gentle voice that suited the consort well. The concert ended with the *ficta* crunches of Tallis's *Salvator mundi.*

If you want your festival to go out with a bang, then booking I Fagiolini is a pretty sound option. Their concert, with Octopus Kamerkoor, The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble and The City Musick (1 September, St Paul's church), including two instrumental works, Malvezzi's *Sinfonia,* from his *Intermedio I,* and a Fantasia

by Coprario, and madrigals by Weelkes (his moving 'Noel adieu thou court's delight') and Striggio (*D'ogni gratia e d'amour*). But the real meat of the evening was Striggio's 40 part *Missa sopra Ecco si beato giorno*, with its 60-part final Agnus Dei. Far from being presented in any sort of liturgical format, Robert Hollingsworth milked the occasion as much as he could, stopping after the 2nd Agnus to dramatically remove the sizeable score he had being conducting from, to reveal the much larger score for the short final Agnus, with the comment "from this – to this!" as the additional 20 singers joined the existing five choirs. At the end of the 60-part bit, he gleefully announced that we had just heard a "very expensive two minutes", so he promptly repeated the final Agnus. I wonder what would have happened to Striggio if he had attempted such "what a clever boy am I" antics! This was the first time that I had heard I Fagiolin's version of this Mass live, and it certainly was an experience. But it was then topped by Tallis's *Spem in Alium*, performed, like the *Missa*, with a variety of combinations of singers and instrumentalists. After the relatively subdued splendour of the 60-part Agnus, *Spem* sounded a very much grander affair, both aurally and musically. As well as the 40 singers (15 from I Fagiolini and 25 from Octopus Kamerkoor) there were 10 strings and five continuo players (harp, lute, lirone and two organs) from I Fagiolini, nine members of The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble playing cornets, recorders and sackbuts, and seven members of The City Musick playing violin, viola, recorders, shawms and dulcians – a total of 26 plus 5 continuo instruments: what a wonderful array of colourful sounds! With so many performers there, it perhaps invidious to pick out individuals, but soprano Kirsty Hopkins had a particularly exposed role, and I also liked the singing of Anna Dennis and Renate Weytjens.

And so the festival ended as it had begun, with the Composition in Residence, *Spem in alium*, in one of the grandest performances I have ever heard. If my reviews suggest a lack of cuteness in the festival, that was solved on the penultimate day by *La Volta di Bess*, the showcase culmination of a week-long "music holiday" for children in the local music school. Following the Elizabethan theme of the festival, it featured about 40 6–15 years old demonstrating some very professional dancing by a small group of 15-year old girls as well as music, drama, more dance, singing (much of it in perfect English) and a bit of shouting and hitting things. And if that wasn't cute enough, there was also another delightful series of events, also linked to the festival theme, especially for 0-5 year olds, led by the Portuguese group Musicalmente and the recorder group Mezzaluna – a magical occasion.

THE LION of ST. MARK'S

A more specific title was *Monteverdi and his Venetian Followers*, with Judy Tarling and Julia Kuhn (vlns), Mark Caudle (bass violin), Peter Holman (organ) and Philippa Hyde (soprano) perhaps representing a tame lion – nothing grandiose, but none the worse for that. The concert was packed: at a rough guess, around 200 present – luckily, Mark's wife saved me a seat. The performers are a long-standing group, but interestingly the second violionist filled a sudden gap, and none of the players knew her: she was the choice of Selene Mills (who is in charge of the concert series and summer school) and she fitted in very well – no complaints!

Music isn't (or at least shouldn't be) evaluated according to size. All the vocal items were religious, if not necessarily liturgical music, beginning with the first of the Monteverdi's posthumous *Confitebor tibi Domine* settings – there's an alternative version with two voices. The violins alternate with the voice, only overlapping in the last dozen bars. *Laudate Dominum* (Psalm 150) is an exuberant piece for voice and continuo, with various versions of the *ciacona* – I had a period about a dozen years ago when I played it often. The dates of publication shouldn't be taken too seriously: Monteverdi died seven years before the first piece in the programme was published, and Fontana's collection of instrumental pieces was published in 1641 but he died of the plague in 1630 (and some of the music may have been somewhat earlier). The other instrumental piece in the first half, Marini's *Fuggi dolente cori*, is a memorable song fantasy whose A section is familiar in many different contexts, ranging from "I had a little nut-tree" to the Israeli national anthem (via Smetana). The half ended with two motets of the 1620s by Grandi, who died of the plague in Bergamo in 1630. (A considerable quantity of his motets have been edited by Denis Collins and are available for download from BC.)

The second half moves from Rigatti (*Nunc dimittis*, 1646) and Cavalli (*Canzon* a3, ending with a descending fourth ground) and a solo motet *O quam suavis*. The final three items were Schütz's *Paratum cor meum* (1629), Rosenmüller's *Sonata II in E minor* (1682), performed with only the organ on the bass, and Legrenzi's *O dilectissime Jesu* (1692), thus covering most of the 17th century. (Schütz studied in Venice and Rosenmüller and worked there when he was out of favour in Germany.)

The Chapel was about as big as the players could be comfortably heard – though I suspect that those in chairs in the centre of the church may have lost visual contact. The layout was that of the normal college chapel, with seats on each side side facing the centre, the second and third rows raised so that the visibility problem was mostly avoided. The layout was two violins on the left, cello and singer on the right, with the organ on the violin side, not quite in the semicircle. I meant to ask whether violin II had eye-contact with Peter at the organ, but there was no hint that she didn't. After many years of working together, the group sings and plays in what feels to me to be absolutely suitable in style – no overexaggerated embellishment, but the pacing dead right. All, even the surprise player, were following the same psalm/motet sheet, and the audience seemed delighted by this eloquent but not exaggerated performance. Those who had been at the concurrent course will have learnt from the concert as well as the daily tuition during the week, in which the ensemble participated. *CB*

EARLY NIGHTS AND LATE MORNINGS

D James Ross at the Edinburgh International Festival 2013

It would be good to be able to report that early music performances have finally become entirely integrated into the Edinburgh International Festival, and to an extent this is true. With a baroque orchestra accompanying *Dido and Aeneas* in the Festival Theatre being replaced at the interval by a large modern orchestra for Bluebeard's Castle, period instrument performances of the complete extant Schubert symphonies and Renaissance choral music in the Usher Hall, and a fair proportion of the chamber recitals in the Queen's Hall devoted to authentic performance, all would appear rosy in the early garden. But all is not quite what it seems.

The Sixteen

I was surprised to see The Sixteen scheduled for the Usher Hall for their concert of music by Carver, Tallis, Wylkynson and James MacMillan, as it struck me that one of Edinburgh's excellent ecclesiastical venues such as Greyfriars Kirk might have been more suitable. It is not as if Edinburgh is a city poor in fine church buildings, and as it turned out my misgivings regarding venue were largely confirmed. Harry Christophers has steered his choral ensemble very firmly down the road of popularisation, and his very showmanlike presentation and marketing of early music ensures huge audiences. So it was to a packed Usher Hall that he presented the Tallis Tunes for Archbishop Parker's Psalter, very simple fare but exquisitely packaged and of course beautifully sung. Already, the influence of the venue and its acoustic were apparent – this was to be very much a concert hall performance and the singers' vocal production reflected this.

Specially composed for the group in 2009, James MacMillan's *Miserere* is the work of a deeply religious Scottish composer with a exceptionally original approach to vocal composition. Nodding unmistakably in the direction of the ubiquitous Allegri setting, MacMillan's setting is strikingly individual and very effective. I remember singing Wylkynson's protracted canonic setting of *Jesus autem transiens* when I was a student at Aberdeen University, and marvelling at how a 13 part canon could build up to produce something recognisable as the Eton Choirbook sound. Later performances with my ensemble Musick Fyne revealed a number of performance options, of which the most effective has proved a cumulative canon involving male and female voices with one voice singing the cantus throughout. The Sixteen opted for the more vocally crowded option of a male voice rendition, which had the advantage of the cantus physically 'passing through' the ensemble but which made for a very packed sound at the high point when all thirteen solo singers were singing. The large tenor-and-bass vocal range brought all of the performers occasionally outside their comfort zones, but the sound was generally good. The first half concluded with Robert Carver's monumental nineteen-part motet *O bone Jesu*, a work in the Eton style but with the very distinctive voice of Scotland's finest Renaissance composer. Using twenty-four singers allowed for considerable vocal impact on the full-choir cadential sections, although perhaps again the building prevented Carver's music from ringing out as spectacularly as it should have.

The balance of Tallis's Psalm settings for the Parker Psalter opened the second half followed by the Credo from Robert Carver's ten-part Mass *Dum sacrum mysterium*. Using the fine edition by Sally Dunkley prepared in 1978 for a ground-breaking performance of the complete work by the BBC Singers, Harry Christophers showed that his understanding of Carver's music has been maturing over the years to produce a subtle and persuasive reading of this highly individual and powerful body of work. James MacMillan's powerful setting of *O bone Jesu* again would have benefited from a more resonant acoustic, particularly for the searingly beautiful conclusion. The oddly disappointing canonic setting by Tallis of the *Miserere*, a funny little piece in which one is constantly aware of the mechanics of the composition, prepared the ground for the perhaps inevitable *Spem in alium*. This is a work seriously in danger of overperformance, but as one of Tallis's finest achievements and a work of undeniable grandeur it does make for a powerful conclusion to a concert, and is one of the few works in the evening's programme which we know was performed in a relatively modest acoustic. Now this is a work with a theatrical dimension, and from the sombre bringing on of the stand-extension necessitated by the giant score, through the deployment of the forty voices and Christophers' now consummate reading of the work, the concert ended with high drama. As the core ensemble took their well-deserved bows, the 'extras' beetled off to the upper gallery, whence they delivered a haunting rendition of Tallis' *O nata lux*, begging the question as to whether a more inventive use of the performance space might addressed some of its short-comings.

Oper Frankfurt

Another ensemble forced to be inventive with space was Oper Frankfurt, whose presentation of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* had to take place in a narrow strip along the front of the stage of the Festival Theatre to allow the huge set for *Bluebeard's Castle* to be ready for the second half. Necessity became the mother of invention in Barrie Kosky's witty and original production of *Dido*, in which the performers, arranged along a giant park bench, occasionally spilled off into the space around the baroque orchestra. This was a reading in which the forces of evil (three rather camp cross-dressing male falsettists) were thoroughly in control of Dido's demise. A beautiful and dynamic reading of Purcell's score by conductor Constantinos Karidis brought stunning playing from the Opera's baroque orchestra and exquisite singing from a

convincing chorus and a wonderful line-up of soloists, especially a particularly fine Dido in the person of Paula Murrihy. If the two unaccountably naked actors, one of each sex, who followed the chorus around caused a few raised eyebrows, and Dido's protracted hyper-ventilation during the lovely final chorus outlived its dramatic impact, the gradual departure of the chorus and finally even the orchestra during this final item, leaving one violinist to play the last chord to the dead Dido, was strangely powerful.

Nicola Boud *clarinet*

Authentic Schubert symphonies from Les Musiciens du Louvre Grenoble had delighted audiences in the Usher Hall with their passion and precision, while a virtuosic tour-de-force from period clarinettist Nicola Boud in the Queen's Hall saw her bring the house down with her stunning playing of three generations of the clarinet in the same recital. My only reservation about this particular recital in the late morning Queen's Hall series was Boud's rather uncompromising tone in the Brahms second Sonata and Glinka's *Trio Pathetique* completely shorn of vibrato, particularly as in the latter piece her fellow performer on the romantic bassoon, Jane Gower, sported a broad vibrato throughout. However, Boud's breath-taking virtuosity on a classical clarinet in Schubert's *Shepherd on the Rock* and her musicality throughout, combined with lovely singing from Sabine Devieilhe and the impeccable playing of Kristian Bezuidenhout on two period pianos, brought an extended ovation from a capacity audience.

Rousset's dull talents

By contrast, the Queen's Hall recital by Christophe Rousset and Les Talens Lyriques was just a little dull. The star of the show was undoubtedly the magnificent Goermans/Taskin harpsichord from the Russell Collection, but even its charms failed to sustain this audience member though a programme of Couperin. Christophe Rousset gamely called out the titles of the different sections of L'Apothéoses of Corelli and Lully respectively, but this merely served to emphasise the 'bitty' nature of both works. The playing was impeccable, but Couperin's gallic wit left me cold on this occasion.

Andreas Scholl

My final concert for *EMR* at the Edinburgh Festival was also part of the excellent Queen's Hall morning recital series and featured the German falsettist Andreas Scholl. Famed for his accounts of the music of J S Bach, Scholl has also branched into Romantic Lieder repertoire with pianist Tamar Halperin, and this was the subject of the Edinburgh concert. It is ironic at the end of an EIF which had seen early music very much integrated into the mainstream programme, but sometimes being asked to compromise regarding venue, and a festival shorn completely of the stimulating and extremely popular authentic 'world music' concerts in Greyfriars Kirk which had often included some lovely early music, that I was attending a concert of 19th-century romantic music using a modern piano and a voice type for which it was certainly never intended.

Scholl's breath control and impeccable technique make his performances an absolute delight, and intelligent programming and a subtly beautiful contribution from Halperin as well as a few delightful solos ensured that this recital was thoroughly engaging. However, I did have some reservations about the fact that Scholl's naturally flutey lowest range sounded a little inadequate for some of the dramatic passages which the various composers had intended for a contralto's chest voice. However as a male alto, Scholl had a card up his sleeve when it came to Schubert's *Death and the Maiden*, dramatically singing Death's dialogue in his baritone voice! Particularly effective were Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh* and Mozart's *Veilchen* and *Abendempfindung*, which latter works may just have been attempted by a falsettist in Mozart's time. Meanwhile, Halperin's meltingly beautiful account of Brahms' A-major Intermezzo op 118 no 2 was exquisite.

So an Edinburgh International Festival in which early music had a place, and at which standards were exceptionally high; I felt that the huge attendances and the enthusiastic responses to all the early events suggested that this is an aspect of the festival which could be further developed.

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

Jennie & Stephen Cassidy

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

This attractively produced small book brings together the different facets of Hildegard's vision-driven creativity. The subject is the Saint's (she was canonised last year by her compatriot, the Pope emeritus) morality play *Scivias* and its relationship with other works, notably the better known and more elaborated *Ordo Virtutem*. A debate rages amongst academics about which of these was the precursor of the other. On the one hand, *Ordo* could be a development of the earlier *Scivias*, for the larger (female) forces available to Hildegard in the convent she founded in Rupertsberg after her time at the (male) monastery of Disibodenberg. On the other hand, for some reason the simplified version could have been created second. The book acts for one stance in this argument. To those whose interest is in Hildegard's visions – visual, textual, musical and philosophical – this debate adds but a modest amount. The leviathan that is this argument surfaces at times unexpectedly in the course of the book, but for the rest of the time we are given a useful tour through the different aspects of Hildegard's output. It is brief enough to condense the spread of those things we may have half-known about Hildegard into a useful handbook, explaining the chronology, modal structure, the source manuscripts, the structure of the *Scivias* drama, together with a clear transcription of the music and text of *Scivias*. Some principal recorded versions are referred to in order to illustrate different approaches to performance. (Two new recordings of Hildegard are reviewed below.) A version of the book is on the internet, and, in a fine use of this technology, references are also given to online excerpts from the recordings described. As a concise guide to Hildegard's intricate and beautifully executed illuminations, the use, extension and symbolism of musical modes, and her vehement poetry, this is a highly recommended handbook. The inclusion of a clear edition of *Scivias* makes readily accessible a musical morality play suitable for performance by smaller forces – a cast of seven plus chorus as opposed to the 23 required by *Ordo*. This therefore widens the possibilities for performance. Let's hope this is one happy result. *JC & SC*

Hildegard von Bingen *Kiss of Peace: Songs from the Dendermonde Manuscript* Sabine Lutzenberger
Per-Sonat CHR77376

This strikingly pure rendering of Hildegard's songs makes an immediate impact. For over ten minutes, the opening track comprises only the voice of Sabine Lutzenberger, which seizes and then holds your attention throughout. The integrity of the performance and the use of subtly varying richness of vocal tone seems to transmit directly the deeply visionary nature of the songs (a word that seems rather inadequate in these circumstances). We are then allowed to change mental gear for the second track – this time comprising the only other performer on the disc, Baptiste Romain (bowed strings) – in an extended instrumental rendition of a second antiphon. This likewise creates a one-voice universe of a different nature. Further tracks include familiar Gregorian chant, establishing the mode for the following song – which then explodes in range and colour by comparison. This approach, together with the juxtaposition of different modes, creates a sometimes startling and always dramatic effect. Much is written about Hildegard's daringly innovative use of range and the specific use of the different modes for effect and characterisation, but I have never experienced it as viscerally as on this recording. As the disc continues, we hear the more common performance practice of voice plus instrument. After the arresting bravery of the opening solo tracks and the intense focus this creates, the fiddle now comes over as a distraction from the purity of the revelation which inhabits the song, competing for attention and even sometimes straying beyond the mode. This is such a revelatory performance that I wish it had the confidence to continue with voice and instrument in spellbinding alternation. This disc has an appeal well beyond the normal cachet of Hildegard followers – as a wonderful example of magnetic performance. *SC*

Hildegard von Bingen *Ordo Virtutem* Ensemble Belcanto, Dietburg Spohr
ECM 2219 4764633

Unless a flock of starlings against a grey sky is code, nothing on the cover of this disc warns you that you will not hear the music of Hildegard. The opening track establishes close and evolving harmonies, rather like a distilled version of the Voix Bulgaires, eventually joined by the only Hildegard-derived melody I was able to detect on the disc, in a very low tessitura. Pushing the voice so far out of its natural range creates an intonation challenge which inevitably invites unfavourable comparison with the Bulgarian group, even if the intended effect had been entirely different. Having dissipated the reasonably promising opening to the first track, we move on to territory yet further from expectation. The music is the creation of Dietburg Spohr, we find out albeit obliquely on reaching for the booklet notes, as syllables are pulsed out singly in staccato jabs. Belatedly adjusting to the knowledge that this is a modern composition, a reassessment is called for. The story of Hildegard's morality play is full of powerful episode, within the dramatic arch of the struggle between the Devil and the Virtues. Spohr's musical settings and the performance of her ensemble respond very strongly to the episode, wearing the relevant emotion on its sleeve, as it were, but overall there is not the variety of musical pace to deliver the arch of the drama. There is something in the simple flow of language which needs to be given a vehicle for communication in music of any epoch, I would argue. In Hildegard above all, with her almost synaesthetic linkage between visual, aural and poetic forms of expression, surely any re-presentation of her vision would be sensitive to this aesthetic. These criticisms, though completely valid and overwhelming, may have been cushioned by a painstaking search for balancing comments, had the packaging been at all explicit about what to expect on the disc. *SC*

GESUALDO & VICTORIA *Tenebrae*

Hugh Keyte

Victoria *Tenebrae responsories* Tenebrae, Nigel Short *dir* Signum Classics **SIGCD344** 72' 01"

This comes hard on the heels of a fine recording by Nigel Short's choir which I reviewed in the last issue (p. 65) of music for Tenebrae of Holy Saturday: Gesualdo's responsories and Miserere plus Victoria's three Lamentations. I am a little puzzled that the choir seems almost simultaneously to have released this all-responsory disc (recorded in the spacious acoustic of St. Alban's, Holborn).

This is by no means the first recording of the complete Victoria *Tenebrae* responsories, the most celebrated still, I imagine, being the 1960s one by the choir of Westminster Cathedral directed by George Malcolm. Tenebrae's soprano line lacks the raw (and, to my mind, historically convincing) quality of Malcolm's boys, whose only English ecclesiastical rivals were Michael Fleming's Anglican choristers at All Saints', Margaret Street, and (after the closure of the Margaret Street choir school) Southwark Cathedral. But their timbre is clear and beguiling, the singing throughout the choir more gutsy than that of, say, The Tallis Scholars or the choir of King's Cambridge in the same repertoire, and the consistently high musical standard that we have come to expect from this small professional choir. Pronunciation is admirable. The recorded quality is excellent (though made in a far from easy acoustic: the vast volume of St. Alban's, Holborn, tends to pick up and amplify traffic noise from all over London, as we frequently found when making R3 recordings there). And there is a helpful and lucid sleeve note by Rupert Damerell.

A quibble: the verse sections are, very properly, taken by soloists, providing an intended contrast that also points up the characteristic repeat-structure of the responsories. But for some reason they are mostly sung in a withdrawn, tentative manner which here and there approaches uncomfortably close to the weedy verse sections of the average Anglican cathedral choir, and which certainly contrasts oddly with the much more forthright singing of the full sections. But in short, many subscribers to *EMR* will find this disc very much to their taste and will wish to add it to their collections.

I do wish I could leave it there, but there are features of these performances that require further comment. First of all (and in common with the other recordings mentioned above) they present what Andrew Parrott would call "arrangements" of these wonderful settings, since singing a chiavette (high-clef) setting at written pitch is as much "making an arrangement" as is presenting a stet-clef piece up that long-discredited minor third. It is,[2] of course, viscerally exciting to hear high voices, especially sopranos (witness the rave press reviews of The Tallis Scholars' Taverner mass at their recent Prom'), and there will undoubtedly have been choir directors of Victoria's time who couldn't resist hoiking pitches up for the sake of the thrill: hence Praetorius's anguished plea "Tief! Tief! Tief!"

The waters are further muddied by the decision to present the second responsory of the second nocturn of Good Friday, *Tenebrae factae sunt*, "appropriately" down an octave from written pitch, "following a Roman tradition of the 18th century". You bet it was an 18th-century tradition! This was the period when renaissance practice was forgotten and the Sistine Choir, for example, began to perform Palestrina's double-choir *Stabat Mater* (and other high-clef but low-sounding pieces) at something much closer to notated pitch, so that a low, dark-toned setting morphed into the ethereal, other-worldly item that Richard Wagner heard and edited with its full panoply of 19th-century expressive dynamics.[2] For the sake of contrast, Victoria always sets the second of each set of the three responsories for each nocturn for G2 G2 C2 C3 rather than the standard chiavette (G2 C1 C3 C4); but transposition down an octave will only have become feasible once the chiavette tradition had been lost.

The 'expressive' urge behind Roger Short's transposition here ties in with what is for me the most worryingly unhistorical aspect of these recordings, the attempt to beguile the listener's ear with a kind of imposed variety that can never have been envisaged by Victoria. Take, for example, a thrice-recurring phrase in *Seniores populi* (3rd responsory/3rd nocturn/Good Friday): *"ut Iesum dolo tenerunt et occiderunt"* (that they might by some crafty means apprehend Jesus and kill him). This is sung forte the first time, mezzo forte the second, and a hushed piano the third. That is to take the paint pot to the liturgical lily, and reminds me of the way Taverner's Easter responsory *Dum transisset* used to be sung in the bad old days, with the *Alleluia* intimidatingly inflated at each repetition. Are we to imagine the choir taking on the role of passionately-involved commentator here, first railing indignantly, then protesting less vehemently, finally muttering rebelliously to itself? If not, what are we to imagine? It would have been a gross exercise of *avant la lettre* Romantic hubris for Victoria's singers to take it upon themselves to "interpret" the biblically-derived text in this way, and there is nothing in Victoria's setting to justify it. His setting of one of the "four last words" of Christ in *Tenebrae factae sunt, "Pater, in manus tuas commendo*

1. But not such a rave in *EMR*: see pp. 31-32. *CB*

2. I'd love to get some people together to sing it as part of the Wagner anniversary! King's Music/EMC has the score in its catalogue! *CB*

spiritum meum" (Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit) absolutely precludes – perhaps deliberately – any literal portrayal of his loud-voiced cry (*"voce magna, dicens"*) and Tenebrae do not attempt one.

Interpretative expressiveness of this kind abounds in these performances, and though it never approaches outright vulgarity, it seems to me both to go against the writing and to represent a practical impossibility in the performing conditions of the period. This is not *musica reservata*. The not dissimilar writing of, say, Lassus's *Seven Penitential Psalms* will no doubt have been intensively rehearsed by his Munich singers and the import of each phrase carefully brought out. But these responsories are liturgical music, which would be sight-read in performance each year, directed by men who had no means of indicating 'expression'. (Wagner is said to have invented interpretative, as distinct from purely functional, conducting. Mendelssohn, by contrast, would often set an orchestral movement going and then lean back and take snuff until the final cadence hoved into view.)

We pride ourselves on the strides that the early-music movement has made in recent years, but in some ways there has been a regression. Boris Ord's direction of Gibbons with the King's College choir hit just the right historical balance between expressiveness and Jacobean concepts of ecclesiastical seemliness. The Von Trapp family singers hit a comparable balance with their recorded versions of 16th-century Lieder etc. Some admirable vocal ensembles (mostly French and Italian) carry on the calculatedly 'inexpressive' manner of Michael Morrow's and John Beckett's pioneering Musica Reservata, but too many of our professional English choirs approach church music in a way that remains essentially Victorian.

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I was intrigued by an advert for Verdi's *Otello* played by The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey. I've heard Tchaikovsky's *Pathetique Symphony* (Norrington), Wagner's *Das Rheingold* (Rattle) and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* (Jeffrey Skidmore) played by people I know. I doubt whether the cut-down band really worked, and the opening storm must have been disappointing, but such scorings can work. I remember a live "miniature" version of a quintet version (I think – I am remembering at least 40 years ago) of Richard Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* played at Dartington as a cabaret item, and was a real hoot, but it also made me actually enjoy the music – normally I only enjoy the *Four Last Songs*! *CB*

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EDITION HH

Martino Bitti *London Sonata No 3* edited by Alessandro Borin and Michael Talbot. Edition HH (24.330). £7.95.

Two editors and the advice and assistance of Antonio Frigé seems a bit excessive for five pages of music, a page each of English and German introduction and a brief critical commentary. However, this is part of a series and isn't just a retired scholar letting the young blood do the foot-work! Bitti was born in 1655/6 in Genoa, joined the Tuscan court in 1685 and soon became the lead violin. He retired in 1726 and died in 1743. There are 24 violin sonatas in three sets. Eight are called the London sonatas, probably brought over by Gasparo Visconti. Pisendel acquired four sonatas direct from Bitti, and a set of a dozen was copied by the composer for Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, and the set found its way to the Fitzwilliam Museum library. Information about Bitti is in *The Consort* 68, 2012, pp. 26-52, with an essay on the violin sonatas at the Edition HH website.

It is odd that you have to look at the opening to see that the piece is in G minor (an illiterate programme editor could easily be puzzled at the one flat). Accidentals are not as logical as we now expact. In I bar 5, for instance, the bass has a natural before the first note E; the previous bar begins with a E flat. The penultimate note is E: does this have the flat repeated or is it not marked? Reading the part, whichever principle you are using, the E is either flat because the editor has removed the "superfluous" accidental or because he didn't think there was any doubt. But if you are playing from a two-stave score, the bass is much more aware of the E natural beginning bar 5 and might wonder if the possibly ambiguous E really was so. I'm making a bit of a fuss about something trivial, but ambiguities shouldn't be introduced by the editor – this isn't complicated music, but it's safer to avoid unnecessary modernisations, and indicate accidentals as editorial rather than listing them in a merciful short list of minor corrections. The three movements are named editorially *Adagio*, *Allemanda* and *Giga*, of which the *Allemanda* is the liveliest.

Haydn *Twelve Ballads arrange by William Shield, edited by* Christopher Hogwood. Edition HH (21.292). £7.95.

This is based on the first set of *XII Lieder für das Clavier*, published by Artaria in 1781; Shield's English versions appeared in 1786. The new words are not translations: the title page notes "The Major part of the Poetry was written on purpose to suit the measure of these elegant Ballads". I suspect that German singers might prefer the English ones and English singers the German on the grounds that the poems might seem better if you are singing the language you know less! A couple of the German songs are based on earlier English poems, no. 7: *The Knotting Song* by Charles Sedley (1694) and no. 5, *The Cottagers* by George Wither (1615). They are not underlaid, but they can be made to fit. The layout is expanded from two staves to three. The landscape format of the facsimile of *The Knitting Girl* gets two pages on one, but makes it a bit small for reading, and there are several other facsimiles. As one expects, Hogwood is a meticulous editor. I was a bit disappointed with the music and text – the danger of having a gap to fill at once with not much chance to reconsider – but after a couple of days delay, I feel rather more positive. *CB*

CD REVIEWS

MEDIEVAL

Hildegard of Bingen *Kiss of Peace Songs from the Dendermonde Manuscript* Per-Sonat, Sabine Lutzenberg 65' 57"
Christophorus **CHR 77376**

Hildegard of Bingen *Ordo Virtutum* Ensemble Belcanto, Dietburg Spohr
ECM Records **476 4633** *see p. 27*

15th CENTURY

Dufay ***Missa Puisque je vis. Ave Regina caelorum*** **Compère** ***Omnium bonorum plena,*** **anon** ***Concede nobis Domine, Salve maris stella*** The Binchois Consort, Andrew Kirkman 68' 15"
Hyperion *Helios* **CDH55423** rec 2002

The Mass was a new attribution a decade ago (see *EMR* 92, p. 16): it would have been interesting if a brief comment (or perhaps a summary of acceptance in the Dufay literature: yes 8 points, no 2, perhaps – or should I have asked David Fallows to review and adjudicate? James Ross commended its first appearance with enthusiasm, and I concur. I haven't heard much Compère, but the item here is impressive: 12 four-part verses, the second half praying for composers of the time – you can download it from DTO if you can manage the clefs. Has anyone brought to life Donald Grieg's fictitious group "Beyond Compère"? *Time will tell.* If you think Josquin is above his boots, there are plenty of complaints about him there! *CB*

16th CENTURY

Francesco da Milano ***"Il divino"*** Paul O'Dette *lute* 77' 06"
harmonia mundi **HMU 907557**

Francesco da Milano (1497-1543) is generally considered to be the most important lutenist in the first half of the 16th century. His music continued to be played long after his death, and it survives in sources throughout Western Europe, in Italian, French, German, and Neapolitan tablature, as well as Spanish keyboard tablature.

Paul O'Dette's latest CD gets off to a cracking start with a blisteringly fast Fantasia (Ness No.3). This piece is one of two by Francesco which found its way into Francis Willoughby's lute Book, probably in the 1570s. Somehow I don't think gloomy old Sir Francis would have thrashed through it with quite such vitality and exuberance as does Paul O'Dette, but we shall never know.

There follows an extraordinary Ricercar (Ness Appendix 31) beginning with 2-, 3-, or is it 4-voice? polyphony, which has curious changes of tonality, suddenly interrupted by scales racing down to bottom G, and immediately working their way up three octaves to top g" (notated in German lute tablature as *k* with two little lines on top); a passage featuring fast pairs of quavers flitting from voice to voice is followed by a more fluid passage of running quavers, and brief interjections of chords. The piece ends in a similar vein to the beginning, with the polyphony winding down under a tonic pedal. This is Renaissance lute music at its best, and O'Dette's virtuosity combined with his subtlety of expression gives an inkling into why Francesco was affectionately known as "Il Divino".

Scattered among the various ricercars and fantasias are intabulations Francesco made of popular songs, both sacred and secular. It is easy enough to intabulate a song note for note (more or less) for the lute, but Francesco and his contemporaries showed their skill in embellishing the original notes of the song so much, that there emerged a new, often flamboyant composition with its own special gloss, but which still maintained the overall character of the song. Francesco's contrasting intabulations of Josquin Desprez' "Si j'ay perdu mon amy", Antonio de Ribera's introspective "O bone Jesu", Claudin de Sermisy's yearning "Las je my plains" and his lively "Vignon vignette" invigorated by fast downward scales, and Jacques Arcadelt's evergreen "Quand'io penso al martire", are some of those represented on this CD. Particularly touching is Francesco's intabulation of Jean Richafort's "De mon triste desplaisir" on which he creates the beautiful *Fantasia de mon triste*, ending with what sounds like several voices entering one after the other in close succession.

The 36 tracks are arranged roughly into suites, with the intabulations interspersed amongst the ricercars and fantasias, but there is so much variety that virtually any order would have been fine. There are many favourites, including a rollicking Fantasia 40 played through twice, with presumably O'Dette's own divisions for the repeat. Not all O'Dette's speeds are fast: his interpretation of Ricercar 4, for example, is slow and with a surprising freedom of rhythm, and Ricercar 8 rolls on gently as if in a dream. The exploratory nature of the ricercar is much in evidence in Ricercar 51, where a variety of contrasting musical ideas are developed. The flourishes at the end of Fantasias 16, 38 and 58, are presumably O'Dette's own way of signing off. This excellent CD ends with two fantasias which share the same thematic material: Fantasia 33 and its companion, Fantasia 34 "La Compagna", played with O'Dette's characteristic dexterity, panache and cleanness of tone.

Francesco spent much of his life playing for popes and other church leaders, and some now say that this might explain why he has left us virtually no dance compositions. (There is a setting of *la Spagna* for two lutes, but nothing else.) In his notes, O'Dette suggests that Francesco may have simply improvised dances when necessary and never felt the need to write them down. I suspect one reason may be that Francesco was seeking a more elevated style, where dances would have lowered the tone. Certainly, having listened to O'Dette's recording, I am not in the mood for endless passamezzos or the mundane pleasures of the saltarello. Francesco is in another world. *Stewart McCoy*

Hassler ***In dulci jubilo*** Peñalosa-Ensemble (Susan Eitrich, Sebastian Mory, Jörg Deutschewitz, Pierre Funck *SATB* 70' 30"
Carus **83.396**

Ten of the 23 tracks are chorales – I haven't checked the normal number of verses, but there are enough for the listener to be aware that the texts are stanzaic and they are rightly sung in simple versions without imposing expression. The longest work is the *Missa super Dixit Maria*, but that is concise – 15' 56" – with no attempt to expand the sections with few words to the length of the Gloria and Credo. The theme is Christmas, and as well as chorales there are seasonable motets (such as the source material for the mass – though strictly it's for the Annunciation). The quartet is excellent, with no accompanying or contrasting instruments. The German texts have an English translation, but when the texts are in Latin, a German translation is given as well. An attractive recording, though I wouldn't listen to it with full attention in one sitting. *CB*

Ludford *Missa Inclina cor meum*, John Mason *Ave fuit prima salus: Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks, vol. 3* Blue Heron, Scott Metcalfe 59' 58"
Blue Heron **BHCD 1004**

John Mason's career can be traced though the first half of the 16th century, but only four works survive, all with the tenor missing as well as sections of the treble. Fortunately, Nick Sandon has published skilful reconstructions of the Peterhouse set of partbooks, which also includes the Ludford Mass. Mason comes first: a setting of a troped *Ave Maria gracia plena*, expanded so that each word begins a four-line stanza, each line with eight syllables; the 17 verses are not organised by either length or stress, though with rhymes of varying precision. There are also continental settings of the text. It takes up a third of the CD. I was very impressed, as I was by the Mass, on an unlikely cantus firmus (*Inclina cor meum Deus...*), which isn't in the normal cantus firmus style (as explained in the excellent booklet by Scott). The 13 singers make an impressive sound: compared with The Tallis Scholars and to a lesser extent The Sixteen, Blue Heron makes much more of the lower voices, and they have a sound that one might liken more to Esau than Jacob. (I can't remember now what satirist adopted the comparison from Genesis.) If there are any criticisms it might be that the dynamic variety goes just a bit too far – it sounds imposed rather than natural – and I'd rather ends of sections didn't slow down but that the penultimate and closing chords were shaped (unless you take the Praetorius suggestion of holding the penultimate chord at the end of a piece as long as you like).

The booklet deserves praise, not only for Scott's notes, but for six pages on pitch and voice types, which should be placed on large placards in places where singers will see it. It's boring when I go on about pitch levels, but Scott agrees that a pedantic A=473-8 isn't very useful while the cornett/sackbut A=465 is: there's as lot of sense in having pitch-standards arranged by semitones (so should the classical A-430 be reconsidered?) Scott makes the point (that I don't remember seeing before) that professional singers do have pitch in their heads (without necessarily having "perfect pitch"). He argues that vocal pitch comes first, and instruments in church were designed to play at voice pitch – though that's probably not an issue in early Tudor church music. *CB*

Padovano *Missa a 24* Huelgas Ensemble, Paul Van Nevel 54' 17"
Harmonia Mundi **HMA 1951727**

This bargain reissue of a 2001 recording of Annibale Padovano's 24-voice mass firmly adds the composer's name to those of Adrian Willaert and Andrea Gabrieli as a founder of the distinctive Venetian polychoral tradition. Padovano later moved from San Marco to Graz in Austria, providing a further influence to Lassus, who was based in Munich, and it is in an Austrian archive that the manuscript of the present mass was located. As a polychoral piece, the work is unusual in using three eight-part choirs – in such works of the time larger numbers of smaller choirs were the norm – and unusually, this recording incorporates two complete performances of the mass, one for choral forces with obbligato wind instruments, the other for massed wind instruments with reduced voices. Both performances are sumptuous, revealing the rich textures and melodic inventiveness of Padovano's music. In the budget version of the CD the notes are curtailed, and the explanation of the two versions is unfortunately omitted. However, I have been puzzled ever since I bought the original CD with the full notes about the two performance versions. The first, which purports to be for choir with two cornets and sackbut clearly has many more wind instruments involved, whereas the second, billed as for three sung parts and 21 instruments has two very prominent and highly decorated cornet parts and what sounds like one sackbut. Is it possible that the two versions are the wrong way round on the CD? If so, the error has been repeated on the re-issue, although listeners deprived of the vital performance information will spend less time worrying than I did! This mystery aside, these are powerfully effective accounts of Padovano's music, which argue strongly for his reinstatement in the history of composition. *D. James Ross*

If anyone has a complete score and parts of the work that could be borrowed for two events next year, please let me know. (We have the Kyrie, Credo and Agnus) *CB*

Palestrina *Canticum Salomonis* (*Song of Songs with Gregorian antiphons*) Palestrina Ensemble Munich, Venanz Schubert *dir*,
Naxos **8.573096-97** 127' 26" (2 CDs)

This is a lengthy offering by the 19-year-old student choir associated with the Catholic University Chaplaincy and Academic Centre of Munich University. The 29 five-part *Song of Songs* motets are presented in the published order of his Fourth Book (1584), each preceded by a supposedly appropriate plainchant antiphon, and the second disc ends with two motets from the First Book (1568, dedicated to his patron Ippolito d'Este) preceded, respectively, by a plainchant Marian Tract and Gradual

The performances are best described as worthy. Each short office antiphon is sung by the female voices, first by a soloist, then tutti – in the latter case with a curious mid-stream hiatus that to my ear sounds like a misjudged edit. (Could this be a local tradition, or is it a misunderstanding of the pauses traditionally made at the half-verses of psalms and canticles?) The solo soprano always sounds a little strained, the full choir much better, with a doctrinaire Solesmes rhythmic interpretation. The polyphony, alas, sounds like a competent but rather stolid Catholic parish choir. The female voices are quite impressive, but the tenors lack bite and the basses are rather weak and woofly. I cannot quite imagine at whom the recording is directed, apart from friends of the choir, since so many better recordings of the *Song of Songs* motets are readily available. *Hugh Keyte*

Tallis *Salve intemerata* The Cardinall's Music, Andrew Carwood 68' 49"
Hyperion **CDA67994**
Mass & Motet *Salve intemerata virgo, A new commandment, Alleluia: Ora pro nobis, Domine quis habitavit, I call and cry to thee, If ye love me, Let God arise, Man blest no doubt*

I have one slight worry – the music often seems a touch rapid, and then needs an exaggerated brake. But it is conveyed powerfully and is perhaps midway between The Tallis Scholars and Blue Heron. Vocal forces are not too different: there are 14 cardinals, 13 herons and (in one piece only) 14 Tallis Scholars – the Mass has only 12. I haven't thought about pitch, which is the best reaction – I only raise it when the music sounds wrong. This is hardly a programme of popular favourites, which makes it more worthy of purchase. I must have heard all of Tallis's output on disc, but it was good to hear again music I had forgotten. And full marks for including more than one verse of two of Archbishop Parker's psalms. *CB*

Taverner *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas; 3 Magnificats* The Tallis Scholars, directed by Peter Phillips 79' 03"
Gimell **CDGIM 045**

Peter Phillips' note begins with a claim that this mass "counts as one of the greatest pieces of music ever to have been written in England". Without necessarily agreeing – it doesn't ring in my memory as does its *In nomine* section that inspired so much viol music – it is a work that I know better than any other mass of the period, and have sung it with two entirely different *ad hoc* groups liturgically (minus *Credo*) with enormous satisfaction. The music is beautifully sung here, but it does sound a bit like an accompanied melody in the tuttis, with the movements of the lower parts difficult to distinguish below the trebles. Peter Phillips seems more concerned with homogeneity than clarity, and some listeners may prefer that. Taverner's Magnificats a 4, 5 & 6 – in reverse order from *Early English Church Music* 30 – require some editorial filling: this is ascribed to Tim Symons, but there are borrowings from the EECM edition that remain in the version performed. The Magnificat a4 is in TTTB clefs and shouldn't need falsettists – surely it's a basic principle of most early vocal music that, whatever the theory about clefs, three identical clefs imply three voices of the same range – go by the clefs, not the part-name. I enjoyed the Magnificats – maybe not as outstanding as the Mass, but well worth hearing. I resolved not to write about pitch this time. I found that the annoyance of trebles up a minor third was less when listening quietly to speakers rather than more fully with headphones – perhaps it's OK in suitable acoustics! But I recommend following up the second paragraph in the Ludford recording reviewed above. *CB*

The Phoenix Rising *Tudor Church Music* stile antico 74' 34"
harmonia mundi USA **HMU 807572**
Byrd *Ave verum corpus, Mass for five voices* **Gibbons** *Almighty and everlasting God, O clap your hands* **Morley** *Nolo mortem peccatoris* **Tallis** *In ieiunio et fletu, Salvator mundi (I)* **Taverner** *O splendor gloriæ* **White** *Christe qui lux es (IV), Portio mea*

Financed by the Carnegie Trust UK and issued to mark its centenary and more specifically the 1922-9 project of issuing the ten volumes of Tudor Church Music, this utterly transformed our understanding of English musical culture. Focussed on works which appeared in these publications, the recording is by definition an account of some very familiar material, and one is moved to give a passing thought to those composers who often due to a fluke missed the bus and had to wait often seventy years to be given the attention they deserved. This is a mark of the enormous impact and cultural importance of the TCM volumes and how their patient and pioneering scholarship changed the cultural landscape of England – truly a phoenix rising again. The movements of Byrd's five-part mass intersperse music by Tallis, Morley, Gibbons, White and Taverner in a festival of the familiar, but beautifully sung by Stilo antico, while the booklet notes manage both to comment on the music and also on the original TCM project and its impact. A careful choice of repertoire and inventive programming ensures that interest in maintained, and the CD will provide a useful general introduction to those coming fresh to the treasures of Tudor Church music. The CD is billed as a 'super audio CD' and indeed the sound is particularly crisp and burnished. *D. James Ross*

Sadly, the second series of TCM was never published, but the transcriptions (and also facsimiles of sources) were available on open shelves when I worked at London University's Senate House Library in the 1960s. *CB*

Time Stands Still: Lute songs by John Dowland and his contemporaries Emma Kirkby *S*, Anthony Rooley *lute* 46' 04"
Hperion Helios **CDH55462**
Music by Campion, Danyel, Dowland, Ferrabosco, Ford, Handford, Rosseter & anon

Sparkling. This is a welcome re-issue of a (never actually deleted) 1985 recital, given at Forde Abbey, Dorset, recorded in front of a respectfully hushed, enraptured audience. Not a cough anywhere. But who would dare, when attending such a wonderful concert of near-perfect singing, for you can sense that the audience must be on the edge of their seats, hanging on her every perfectly-articulated word for the entire, all-too-short concert. The original box of the CD bore the subtitle: "Lute songs on the theme of mutability and metamorphosis...', and a themed programme such as this was seen, then, as a departure from the usual archival, 'complete-book-in-published-order'way of presenting lute songs that had always been the rule on record, after the Consort of Musicke's many Oiseau-Lyre recordings from the 70s onwards.

On its release, one critic remarked that unlike those studio recordings, this recital gave a much better picture of what Emma really sounded like, and I must agree. At the time it was amazing how different, how much more natural she sounded from the (seemingly) smaller and 'whiter' voice we had become used to from all those white-sleeved LPs. This is partly due to the tremendous number of 'air miles' of performances of lute songs she performed in the decade between those classic Decca discs and this one, but a lot of the difference is from the sense of immediacy that comes across from performing in front of the audience. One can hear Emma bursting with love of life and enthusiasm for communication – to put these songs across, to 'sell' them and their messages to the audience – and it is infectious. At the time I thought it the best lute song recital ever, and there are few even now that can match this for quality, on every level (and *they're* nearly all by Emma, anyway).

The original CD says ADD, i.e. analogue recording re-mastered for CD, but, presumably magically, in this Helios re-issue, it now claims to be DDD (pure digital), though I could not detect any difference in sound between them in any case. Anyone who puts this CD into the player needs to set aside the full time of the programme, because once you start it, you just have to listen to the whole thing – it's that good. One 'sun-spot' – the re-hashed booklet now omits the English translation of the Ronsard poem that ends the programme. Some listeners will have an amazing grasp of 16th-century French, but the rest of us need this, because Emma and Tony chose to end their recital with this simple song for good reason; so perhaps Hyperion can add it to the website? *David Hill*

17th CENTURY

Biber ***Vespro della Beata Vergine*** **Kerll** ***Missa in fletu solatium obsidionis Viennensis*** Cantus Cölln, Konrad Junghänel 73' 38"
Accent **ACC 24286**
+Kerll Music from *Delectus sacrarum cantionum op. 1 (Ave Regina, Exulta corda devota, Salve Regina* (no. 3 & 26)

We normally get advance notice of which recordings are due out imminently but this month the lovely harmonia mundi lady just boxed up the things she knew we would be interested in, so this came as a wonderful surprise! Music by two of my favourite composers performed by one of my favourite groups, of whom I have heard precious little for too long! Though given second place on the packaging, it is Kerll's remarkable mass that comes first on the disc – a magnificent monster it is, too; not quite in 53 parts, but grand in

every sense – the criss-crossing chromatic scales in the Amen of both the *Gloria* and the *Credo* are especially striking. Padding out a Vespers service by Biber is not the easiest thing to do; Junghänel has chosen four pieces by Kerll which function more as diversions than antiphon substitutes. I think my solution for Simon Carrington (a hymn by Leopold I, *Deus ad adiuvandum* by Rupert Ignaz Mayr) was neater. One thing that is not in doubt is the high quality of the performances (with one very audible exception in the second portion of *Dixit Dominus*) – the singing is fabulous and the instrumental contributions are precise and stylish in equal measure. Don't miss it! *BC*

Charpentier *Litanies de la Vierge* *Motets pour la Maison de Guise* Ensemble Correspondances, Sébastien Daucé 60' 33"
Harmonia Mundi **HMC 902169**
Annunciate superi H333, Antienne H526, Litanies de la Vierge H83, *Miserere* H193, Overture H536

I'd be tempted to make this my disc of the month just because the recorders are played at the correct (8') pitch, but there lots of other reasons so to honour it. The programming is good, three substantial six-part motets being separated by seldom-heard instrumental works; the instrumentation is appropriate and unfussy and all the performers really know what they're doing both as individuals and as ensemble members. Sébastien Daucé's comments in the booklet make it clear that he values highly the six-part pieces that Charpentier composed for the resident ensemble of the Duchesse de Guise and his performances demonstrate both this affection and the music's many fine qualities, not least the rich suspensions which are gently leaned on to just the right degree. At a time when Charpentier releases are less frequent than they once were this is one to treasure. *David Hansell*

Corelli *Opus 2 & 4 Chamber Sonatas* The Avison Ensemble 151' (2 CDs)
Linn **CKD413**

Corelli's trios have long had a place in my musical world – they were the staple diet of my keyboard harmony classes at St Andrews, with weekly torture sessions of figured bass realizations. They were also, of course, key in my understanding of baroque harmony and counterpoint before moving on the to the heady heights of daring to compose in the style of Bach! I am quite sure that none of the pieces on this wonderful recording ever sounded as marvellous when I was the performer! Each of the sonatas has a slightly different colouring, depending on the continuo instrument(s) used, and as much on the brilliance or otherwise of the key. The two violinists balance beautifully (I remember writing much the same many years ago, when the Purcell Quartet recordings on Chandos came out), and their bass line colleagues are less accompanists as fellows in the dialogue (exactly as it ought to be). The tendency in playing such simple-looking music must be to decorate it, but recording such improvisations is always a risk; will they tire after repeated hearings? While I think the Avisons have – judiciously – struck a perfect balance, some things did not quite ring true; why play most of a movement on stringed instruments, only for the harpsichordist to decorate the final cadence? That said, this recording will definitely lurk on my desk for weeks and months to come – there are many worse things in life than a daily dose of Corelli, especially when it is so well played! *BC*

Grandi *Sospiro* *Complete Arias, 1626* Bud Roach *T & guitar* 70' 34"
Musica Omnia **mo0506**

Grandi's arias blend recitative and more melodic writing with elements of dance and folksiness and brought him his greatest commercial success. The title page specifically mentions and the notation style provides for guitar accompaniment and it seems likely that self-accompanied performances such as these were very much the norm when the music was first published. Such an approach facilitates the subtlest expressive nuances and Bud Roach is a very impressive performer in this manner. His is a light tenor voice perfectly suited to the repertoire and he also has the technique and the judgement to add suitable ornamentation. Probably only a reviewer would listen to the disc all in one go, but it wasn't in any way a hardship and I did go back for more. *David Hansell*

Guédron *Airs de cour* Claudine Ansermet *S*, Paolo Cherici *lute* 70' 22"
Glossa **GCD C80007**

This is yet another Glossa re-release (from 1997) of lovely repertoire imaginatively programmed, each song being preceded by a lute prelude (from the works of Ballard, Vallet, Mertel and Francisque). Guédron (c1565-c1620) was, for want of a better phrase, the French Dowland and Claudine Ansermet sings with a strong sense of style (some very good ornaments) and a clear tone. But – and there is a but – she also has a tendency to pitch initial consonants slightly lower than the succeeding vowel and for me this potentially expressive device soon crossed the line to irritating mannerism. How much you enjoy this in every other way exemplary recital may well be determined by where you draw this line. The useful booklet essay is in three languages (Eng/Fr/Ger) though the sung texts are given in French only. *David Hansell*

Monteverdi *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* Benjamin Luxon *Ulisse*, Robert Lloyd *Nettuno*, Janet Baker *Penelope*, Anne Howells *Minerva*, Brian Burrows *Giove*, Virginia Popova *Ericlea*, Ian Caley *Telemaco*, Glyndebourne Chorus, The London Philharmonic Orchestra, Raymond Leppard (rec. 1973) 148'
Arthaus Musik **102 308** **(DVD)**

Originally intended for Clifford's attentions, this stayed with me on the grounds that I would write about it as entertainment rather than be disparaging about early attempts to stage Monteverdi opera. All I can truly say about the video is that it is a gallant attempt to capture some fairly ropey television images of the Glyndebourne production, which had minimal on-stage nonsense and much beefy singing – even the shortest note of the most ornate diminution is given 100% of its value at 100% volume – and acting as rigid as Penelope's wig. There is much written about directors spoiling early opera; at least here such interference is minimal. I cannot in all honesty recommend *any* version of this opera I have seen on DVD, but at least this one has historical significance on its side. *BC*

Monteverdi *Heaven on Earth* The King's Consort, Robert King 68' 15"
Vivat 104

This is an anthology recorded for a private sponsor a decade ago. It starts with the opening fanfare of *Orfeo* and the Prologue (Carolyn Sampson); track 10 has *Possente spirto* (Charles Daniels, a decade before Andrew Parrot chose him for the role). Sarah Connolly was a surprise visitor for *A Dio, Roma* – a bit more vibrato than the other singers, but intensely moving (tr 6). Was it worth recording merely the first section of *Ariadne's Lament* (a5), but it was redeemed by the *Lamento della Ninfa* (Sampson again, + the three men – tr 12). *Zefiro torna* (tr 3) seemed to be aiming for a speed record, which made the change of

mood less rather than more effective – particular congratulations to the pluckers! My other disappointment was the very end of *Hor ch'el ciel*: the rising phrase (the inversion of the previous downwards version) wasn't trumped by the climax – perhaps because I was waiting for it. The so-far unnamed excellent singers also deserve a mention: Rebecca Outram and Julie Cooper *S*, Diana Moore *mS*, James Gilchrist & John Bowen *T* and Robert Evans & Michael George *B*. The 19 superb players are too numerous to mention. A fine Monteverdi sampler. *CB*

Pachelbel ***Complete Organ Works I***
Christian Schmitt, Jürgen Essl, James David Christie, Michael Belotti 350' 06"
cpo 777 556-2 (5 CDs)

Although this is billed as Volume 1 of the complete Pachelbel organ works, it still covers five CDs with four organists playing six historic organs from Pachelbel's time in Switzerland, Southern Germany and Austria. The performances are all based on the new edition of Pachelbel's keyboard works edited by Michael Belotti, with its fresh look at sources and some well known transmission issues. Each CD is a complete programme in itself, although each has a substantive theme – CD1 Easter to Michaelmas; CD2 Psalm Songs 1; CD3 Catechism Songs 1; CD4 Catechism Songs 2; CD5 *Hexachordum Apollinis*. The free works are spread over each of the CDs, alongside the main theme pieces. The organs are all well suited to the pieces, and the registrations chosen are apt. Perhaps because of the nature of some of his music in comparison with the North German style, Pachelbel is often played on light, delicate registrations, so it is refreshing to hear them interpreted in a more powerful, and more accurate style. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Canta la Serenissima *Music from 17th century Venice* Argo (Kajsa Dahlbäck *S*, Tuomo Suni, Dora Astersad *vln*, Heidi Peltoniemi *vlc*, Jani Sunnarborg *dulcian*, Anna-Maaria Oramo *hpscd*) 65' 58"
Alba **ABCD 360**
Castello Undecima sonata, Sonata prima **Grandi** *Jesu mi dulcissime, O quam speciosa* **T. Merula** *Gaudeamus omnes* **C. Merulo** La Cortese **Monferrato** *Alma redemptoris mater* **Monteverdi** *Confitebor primo, Laudate Dominum* **Picchi** Pass'e mezzo **Riccio** *Ave regina caelorum*

This is not just another "17th-century Venice – the greatest hits". Although there are popular pieces on the programme (none more so than the two pieces of Monteverdi and Grandi's delightful *O quam speciosa*), there are many beautiful less-well-known pieces, like the Riccio *Ave regina caelorum* that ends the disc slightly surprisingly without the violins. Two very nifty fiddlers they are, too, strutting their virtuosic stuff in pieces by Castello and Marini, perfectly matched for dexterity by the dulcian player! I think I was slightly surprised at the choice of harpsichord to accompany sacred music from this period, though that is not to say that it is inappropriate historically; it just *felt* odd. Believe me that I am not also criticising the player for the dullest piece in the recital being Picchi's *Pass'e mezzo*; I suppose it was included for variety's sake, but I could have done without it. I could have done *with* some more Grandi with violins and some Rigatti or Rovetta. Perhaps that's already scheduled for the group's next disc – I *do* hope so! *BC*

German Baroque Cantatas Hana Blaziková *S*, CordArte 73' 37"
Pan Classics **PC 10293**
Biber *O dulcis Jesu* **Buxtehude** *Gen Himmel zu dem Vater mein* **Capricornus** *Jesu nostra Redemptio* **Ebart** *Miserere Christe mei* **Förtsch** *Aus der Tiefe* **Krieger** Sonata VII **Pachelbel** Ciacona in f, *Mein Fleisch ist die rechte Speise*

This was another disc from the parcel that arrived unexpectedly. Hana Blaziková has long been one of my favourite singers; she is equally at home in front of an orchestra, or in the middle of a choir, or sitting alone with a harp musing on medieval monody. In this recital, she is beautifully partnered by Daniel Deuter on violin, Heike Johanna Lindner on viola da gamba and keyboardist Markus Märkl. The lovely programme combines some little-known music with even more obscure novelties, all of them strong works, well worthy of recording, especially in the hands of these performers. The Biber and Pachelbel motets were written for scordatura violin. The texts are provided in English and the original language. Another don't miss! *BC*

Il Giardino Armonico *Music of the Italian Baroque* 59'
Arthaus Musik 100 011 (DVD)
Castello Sonatas op. 2/4 & 10 **Marini** Sonata sopra la Monica **Merula** Ciaccona a3 **Spadi** Diminuzioni sopra *Ancor che col partire* **Vivaldi** RV 90, 93 & 103

Il Giardino Armonico *Music of the French baroque* 60'
Arthaus Musik 100 395 (DVD)
Dieupart Cinquième Suite **Forqueray** La Couperin **Marais** L'Arabesque **Rameau** extracts from 3rd and 5th *Pièces de clavecin en concert* **Telemann** Chaconne from "Paris quartet" **de Visée** La Grotte de Versailles **Vivaldi/Chédeville** Sonata 6 *(Pastor Fido)*

Music of the Italian Baroque is a reissue of a DVD which first appeared in 1999. It's a strange mixture – some really good performances of an interesting selection of music with what appears at first, with sinister dark figures lurking near a Roman temple, to be the first baroque Mafia video. The locations are near Palermo in Sicily but this is certainly not a travelogue. Some rather confrontational Castello is played at night against a graffiti covered wall and the director (Paul Fenkart) has gone over the top with atmospheric shots and flashing images (there should be a health warning for the Merula Ciaccona). Nevertheless I really enjoyed the music and will be listening again without watching the video. It should be possible to set it up so that the players' spoken introductions are left out. The *French Baroque* DVD, made three years later by the same director, is much less visually exciting though the music is again very well performed. The players have turned themselves into well-dressed 18th-century Frenchmen who arrive at a palace (actually Hellbrunn in Salzburg) in a coach and horses, though they leave at the end in modern dress and a Rolls Royce. The truly terrible English of the Italian DVD notes has been cleaned up too. The video is much easier on the eyes as the musicians play in a number of picturesque parts of the palace and gardens, and some pieces are performed by costumed dancers from Musica et Saltatoria. Visually, the most interesting track for me was the one where the director allows us to see all the recording and filming paraphernalia while the recording is going on in front of an audience of interested tourists. There is a nice mixture of music and a particularly good performance of the last movement of Telemann's Paris Quartet no. 12 in E minor. This is not the usual EMR fare but both DVDs could make excellent Christmas presents for your non-specialist friends and relations. *Victoria Helby*

The Golden Age of the Cornett Le Concert Brisé, William Dongois 133' 08"
Accent **ACC 24261**
CD1 Bovicello, Castello, Pandolfi-Mealli, F & R Rognoni + traditional **CD2** Castello, Fontana, Grandi, Monteverdi, Scarani

William Dongois takes effortless flights through the virtuoso repertoire of Castello, Pandolfi-Mealli and the division repertoire

in the first of two discs. His predilection for straight cornets (both mute and otherwise) makes for an open direct tone, variously modified by his soft technique. The divisions (which including some of his own) make the elaborations subservient to the fundamental melody. The result is a flow and a journey, rather than an exhaustion of notes. He has an extraordinary freedom on the instrument. Of particular note is the Pandolfi-Mealli. This is music more obviously conceived for the violin, as opposed to Castello, Fontana and others, where the two instruments can be freely interchanged in much of their work. Nevertheless, in the hands of William Dongois, the Pandolfi-Mealli is given a further frisson by the cornett. Dongois completely transcends the instrument and one listens solely to the music, occasionally breaking out of time and re-entering the flow without ever raising a question. Listen especially to the slow movement, a sort of cross between chaconne and saraband in structure but sung over with wonderful independence. I must also mention the imaginative (and sometimes deliciously wicked) continuo, which creates a real conversation with the soloist.

The soprano Julie Hassler joins for the second disc, in chronologically overlapping repertoire associated with San Marco. A violin joins the cornett for more Castello and some Fontana. The songs by Grandi are beautifully performed, but seem just slightly detached from the passion of the texts. However, when we are treated to Monteverdi's *Pianto della Madonna*, the pain and despair are delivered fully, being clearly audible in the tone of the voice without a hint of an "act", and reserved for just the appropriate points. The difference in performing style from the Grandi might therefore have been a conscious choice. In a sensitive piece of programming, the Monteverdi is followed by Fontana's sonata undecima, which both mirrors and relieves the mood of the previous piece. I can't think of another that would have worked so well. The disc is then rounded off with Grandi's *Regina coeli* to send us on our way. A thoroughly recommended pair of discs. *Stephen Cassidy*

Memento Mori **Monteverdi • Rossi** Les Cris de Paris, Geoffroy Jourdain 63'
Aparte **AP059**
Monteverdi *Chi vol che m'innamori* **Rossi** *Disperar di se stesso, O Cecità* **Anon after Monteverdi** *Lamento de la Maddelena*

The two "Rossi" oratorios were amongst the very first HIP recordings I ever owned; I remember being blown away in equal measure by Agnès Mellon's meltingly innocent tones, and the terror brought by American bass, Gregory Reinhart. This new recording gets through them four minutes quicker than William Christie took, and – although I concede that it could be familiarity clouding objectivity – his slightly more relaxed pacing seems neater; good as the singing on this version is, sometimes the forward drive is just too much for comfort and it *feels* as if the five singers are forced to merge what would work better as separate phrases into one. The biggest difference between the two performances, though, is the choice of the middle singer of the consort: Les Cris de Paris have opted for a tenor, as the director feels "it gives the polyphonic construction greater coherence and homogeneity". I have no problem with the part being taken by a tenor, but I'm not sure that means *any* tenor – when you oblige him to sing very high notes, it's only to be expected that there will be moments of strain in his voice; there are tenors out there who can comfortably sing higher than a', so why not enlist one of them for the project? Surely homogeneity is totally undermined if four out of five voices sing (for the most part) in their comfort zone, and you ask the fifth not to.

The other works on the programme, the spiritual madrigal from the very start of Monteverdi's *Selva morale* printed set, and an incomplete anonymous lamento after that written for Arianna (from a Roman manuscript of laments now in Bologna) is sung by solo soprano with continuo – as elsewhere on the recording, gamba, lirone, keyboards and pluckers (hand-held and free-standing). I found the voice a little too plummy for my liking. The continuo playing was mostly excellent (there were a couple of times I felt my eyebrows rise during "links" and very occasionally I felt there was a bit too much to distract from the singers – who are, of course, the most important parts of a vocal piece), and the fiddles are fine. Something of a curate's egg, but great to hear more Rossi! *BC*

Mille consigli: 17th-century Italian violin sonatas Enrico Gatti *vln*, Elena Bianchi *dulcian*, Gabriele Palomba *theorbo*, Fabio Ciofini *org* 78' 54"
Glossa **GCD 921208**
Music by Bertali, Bertoli, Castello, Fontana, Legrenzi, Merula, Palestrina (arr.), Piccinini, Michelangelo Rossi & Uccellini

Of the many CDs I have enjoyed over the past couple of months, this is one of the highlights. The very distinctive feature of the sound is the recently restored 1647 Luca Neri organ in San Niccolò in Collescipoli (a complete listing of the organ is provided, including the very specific indication of pitch: A=438 Hz at 16° C.) The recording engineers at Glossa have done a typically fine job in capturing the sounds of the different instruments. In the bright acoustic of the church that is no mean feat. The programme includes four works for violin, dulcian and continuo, as well as works without dulcian, and both of the continuo players have solo turns, too. The theorbist must have loved the rich reverberation! I had never actually heard a Legrenzi soprano/bass sonata – a rather odd confession for someone who edited them all years ago – so that was a special treat. In fact, there are many delights on this disc! *BC*

LATE BAROQUE

Über Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke Forkel's 1802 biography ("revised and augmented for the year 2012 by Bernhard Trebuch") read by Bernhard Drobig 222' (+ PDF of the original)
Fra Bernardo records **1 206 552**

This disc came in a batch from the distributor of this label, which I previously only knew from its presence on a facebook page. Although the other two discs were of music, this is simply a reading of the 1802 biography by Forkel (why?) which has been updated (though to what extent and – again – why) is not divulged in the packaging. The differences would only become evident to those who followed the recording while actually *reading* the book, surely defeating the object of the enterprise! There are also two extracts from other Fra Bernardo recordings of Bach's music, though tagged on at the end as an after-thought (*pace* the label's description of them as a bonus!) rather than more sensibly used as breaks in the rather monotonous soundscape. All a slightly bizarre experience. I should have thought snippets of music throughout would have been more relevant? *BC*

Bach ***Wie freudig ist mein Herz*** Ruby Hughes *S*, Musica Saeculorum, Philipp von Steinaecker 47' 22"
Fra Bernardo records **FB 1 209 132**
Ich habe genug, Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut

Nowhere on the much folded packaging is it made crystal-clear that this is a recording of BWV 199 and 82a, both of

them outstanding works which the composer performed several times in their various versions. The performers are all well-schooled in this repertoire and Ruby Hughes gives a finely-controlled account of the vocal lines, combining tastefully with her woodwind partners. The orchestra is larger than we often hear in these pieces which gives a lush feel in places, and the famous slumber aria in BWV 82 does get slower. This may be deliberate, though I personally do not find it effective. Full texts with English translations are given.

David Hansell

Bach *L'orgue concertant Sinfonias, sonates & concertos* André Isoir, Le Parlement de Musique, Martin Gester (3 CDs)
La Dolce Volta **LDV118D** (remastering of original Calliope recordings)

André Isoir is an influential French organist, who introduced many English organists to the French baroque repertoire through his frequent appearances at the "Wednesday at 5.55" Royal Festival Hall recitals. He had a particularly sparkling way of interpreting music of this period, as is evident from these recordings, originally released in 1979, 1988 and 1993 and have been successfully re-mastered for this release. As well as the six Trio Sonatas and Vivaldi transcriptions for solo organs, these CDs also include several constructed concertos drawn from movements for organ and orchestra from various cantatas. Although aspects of the performances could be considered somewhat dated nowadays, these are inspiring performances, not least for introducing new repertoire for organ and orchestra. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach *Six Sonatas for Violin and Piano* Michelle Makarski, Keith Jarrett
ECM Records **476 4582**

I'm afraid this merits little more than a mention in these pages. No matter that it is the first classical recording by Jarrett in many years, or how talented his colleague is, this simply is not for *HIP*sters – the tempi oscillate between way too slow (I almost heard myself count the eight in a bar during track 1) to the absurdly quick. All credit to them for being able to play that way, but it is not Bach as I wish to hear it. If anyone wants to listen to it and write a more balanced review, feel free to send us your address. *BC*

Bach *The Flute Sonatas* Wilbert Hazelzet, Jacques Ogg, Jaap ter Linden
Glossa GCD C80807 117' 29" (2 CDs)

For the last issue I reviewed a recording of Bach's 'authentic' flute sonatas. Here the approach is the complementary one of including anything that's ever been described as a flute sonata by Bach, though not the unaccompanied suite in A minor. In the continuo sonatas a cello is added to the bass line though the *obligato* keyboard parts are just that. An original touch is the use of a Silbermann fortepiano for three of the more *galant* sonatas including a version for flute and keyboard of the monumental sonata from the *Musical Offering* in which the admittedly limited dynamic range of the instrument is used to give the royal theme a subtle prominence in the second movement. This is another extremely rewarding re-release (from 2002) in Glossa's current series. *David Hansell*

Bach *Concerti à Cembalo concertato vol. 1* Aapo Häkkinen *hpscd*, Helsinki Baroque Orchestra 65' 17"
Aeolus **AE-10057**
BWV1052, 1053, 1056 + 971
vol. 2 Aeolus **AE-10067** 62' 30"
BWV906, 1054, 1055, 1057 + WFB Fk40

I have never played any of these concertos in their harpsichord incarnations and have actually never had much to do with them. Of course I have listened to previous recordings, but this is the first that has inspired me enough to listen *again*. For one thing, they follow Richard Maunder's advice in playing one-to-a-part and without 16' string bass (a G violone is used for vol. 2 and cello alone on vol. 1), though *with* 16' harpsichord! Continuo is provided by chamber organ, and it is really nice to catch the brief sound of reedy chords through the texture. One of the true delights is the *beautiful* phrasing of the upper strings – Bach's part-writing rarely gets this kind of exposure, though I expect most ensembles spend hours working on it, so kudos to the engineers for highlighting it. The three "bonus tracks" (if that is what they are) are unexpected but none the less welcome for all that – solo pieces for harpsichord (one of them a concerto by Wilhelm Friedemann). With a soloist of Häkkinen's stature, who is going to complain? Will they go on to record the other works with solo harpsichord? *BC*

Bach *Der Ewigkeit saphirnes Haus* Le Petit Concert Baroque (Chani & Nadja Lesaulnier *hpscd*) 69'
Fra Bernardo records **1 205 172**
Arrangements for harpsichord duo of BWV530, 639, 648 & 1051 + movements from BWV5, 12, 20, 21, 76, 88, 132, 147 & 198

Since Bach was such a regular transcriber and general re-cycler of music it is hard on principle to criticise others for doing the same, though to my ear not all of these new arrangements (for two harpsichords) work. Take Brandenburg 6 for example. A two harpsichord version of this isn't at all a bad idea but wouldn't it make more idiomatic keyboard music if it were transposed up? On these French style harpsichords at A415 it sounds rather thick and growly to me. The organ trio (no. 6 in G) is a much happier experience. And, even though we are, strangely, given the aria texts, I find that without the clear sonic differentiation of the vocal line these are little more than a nice background noise. Programme planning is also not perhaps the best – twice we are given successive slow pieces in the same key. There are some positives though. The sisters can play and are not devoid of ideas but do need to do a bit more thinking about what they are trying to achieve and how this might best be done. *David Hansell*

Bach *The Orchestral Suites* La Petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 79' 17"
Accent **ACC 24279**

Kuijken's aim in this recording is to recreate the performance that Bach might have intended at his Collegium Musicum's 'concerts' – in the 18th-century meaning of the word. What is immediately noticeable is the lack of the usual 16-foot bass sound to which we are accustomed in so-called historical instrument performances of these works. La Petite Bande compensate for this in some way by using 8ft violones (which Kuijken calls 'basse de violons' in the booklet). In fact the total string section is just seven players – two each on 1st and 2nd violins, one viola and two violones, reduced to single strings for Suite No. 2. Contemporary illustrations of the Collegium Musicum reveal that, with the wind players, Bach couldn't have got many more players into Zimmerman's coffee house room in any case! The resulting chamber music quality of these performances is refreshing, enabling one to hear the detail of the contrapuntal inner parts that is so lacking in many recordings. The other pleasurable feature in Suites 3 and 4 is how the trumpets blend in with, rather than dominate, the overall texture. Keen listeners may notice some 'out of tune' upper G#s in the first trumpet part, caused by Kuijken's deliberate use of natural trumpets without the fake holes that too many modern baroque trumpeters now use. Enjoy these moments!

Much detailed work has gone into the preparation of this recording – notice for example the bass line in the Air of Suite 3, not the plodding quavers that one so often hears, but a subtle line where each note has a harmonic and rhythmic function. Even if you have another recording of these suites, do get this one.

Ian Graham-Jones

Couperin *Concerts Royaux* Claudio Rufa, Paolo Pandolfo, Rinaldo Alessandrini
Tactus **TB660302** (52' 49")

This re-issue (*rec.*1988) from artists then comparatively little known offers three contrasting *concerts* in stylish performances with good balance and effective interplay between the instruments. Many ensembles seize on Couperin's rubric suggesting alternative instrumentations and change timbre at every double bar. Here the sound is unchanged, allowing us to savour without distraction the composer's endless melodic invention and the textural variety afforded by the viol's *contre-parties*. There are some minor misprints in the English note. *David Hansell*

Graupner *Bass-Kantaten* Klaus Mertens, Accademia Daniel 72' 19" (rec. 2000)
Pan Classics **PC 10292**
Fahre auf in die Höhe, Jesu edles Hoher Priester, Wie wunderbar ist Gottes Güt + Ouverture in Bb f

The three cantatas on this disc are from various points in the composer's long Darmstadt career – he was employed there for over 50 years! The ordering is slightly odd, beginning with the latest (and, for me at least, that means the oddest), ending with the earliest (whose claim to fame is the fact that it is the first church cantata involving the oboe d'amore). The band plays one to a part, and balances well with Mertens' voice. The fourth work is a suite with chalumeau; as there are no surviving parts for *any* of Graupner's "orchestral" music, it is impossible to say how literally his scores are to be interpreted. Often in cantatas, when there *are* parts as well as scores, what look in the latter like violin lines turn out to have been doubled by oboes, which were not even listed on the title-page. In the present case, the absence of the chalumeau in the opening seems odd; perhaps he was deliberately holding back the instrumental sound to delight his listeners at its sudden appearance? But I remain puzzled. Even more so in the last movement, when he leaves a blank staff above the violins (and even numbers it when he confuses the top three lines), but the performers decide this means the wind player is tacet, so the piece ends strings only, too. On a normal day, I would just dismiss this as typical consternation when confronted by Graupner's music – and I edit lots of it, so I do know what I'm talking about. Once again, though, music that looks dull on the page really comes to life in live performance – so all credit to Mertens and Accademia David for their fine work in bringing it back to life. *BC*

Handel *Serse* Anna Stéophany *Serse*, David Daniels *Arsamene*, Hilary Summers *Amastre*, Brindley Sherratt *Ariodante*, Rosemary Joshua *Romilda*, Joélle Harvey *Atalanta*, Andreas Wolf *Elviro*, Early Opera Company, Christian Curnyn
Chandos **CHAN0797(3)** 166' 29" (3 CDs)

The sixth of Early Opera Company's discs for Chandos, *Serse* has all of the hallmarks of the previous recordings: stellar cast, stylish interpretation and a well-blended band. So why am I not more excited by it? Part of the explanation might lie with the music of course. *Serse* takes a while to get going dramatically and 'Ombra mai fu' is (as I have discovered) sleep-inducing even in a live performance. The fault does not lie with the dramatic pacing though. As always, Curnyn judges perfectly the ebb and flow between arias. And the singers individually and collectively are anything but bland. Which leaves the orchestra. I have wondered before how much of the Early Opera Company orchestra's sound is affected by recording balance and one can never really tell. The blend in the strings is particularly to be admired but I came to the conclusion while listening to this recording that it could do with more tonal variety. There is plenty of dynamic variety but it sounds as if the upper strings in particularly never quite dare to take their feet off the ground. In fact, in arias such as 'Se cangio spoglia', where a certain heaviness of passion is required, the sound is great. But 'Sento un soave concento' is crying out for some lightness and air in its long runs (from both recorders and strings) and even in 'Và godendo vezzoso e bello' the strings are a little butch in their interjections (and the recorders are by no means overly delicate). The odd jarring moment of off-intonation in the violins also occurs (something I haven't noticed in the other EOC recordings).

The disc is still a beautiful creation and a worthy addition to EOC's catalogue but I hope the string sound is reassessed for the next recording. For the moment I shall stick to my old favourite, the 2006 *Les Arts Florissants* recording. *Violet Greene*

Handel *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* Roberta Invernizzi *Acis*, Blandine Staskiewicz *Galatea*, Lisandro Abadie *Polifemo*, La Risonanza, Fabio Bonizzoni 90' 21" (2 CDs)
Glossa **GCD 921515**

The only serenata that Handel composed in Italy, *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* (1708), is a real gem for the listener and in some ways preferable to the more extremely varied later 'version' of the story, *Acis and Galatea* (1718). Composed in a period during which Handel was still consolidating and exploring his style, the musical 'canvas' is superbly painted with a wide range of colours so that the listener is drawn through the drama almost more in the style of a Monteverdi madrigal than Handel's later offerings. My favourite recording so far has been that of Marco Vitale and Contrasto Armonico for Brilliant Classics but this new recording might just pip the other to the post. There are moments where the singers slightly over-exaggerate the phrasing but overall they form a superb (and dramatically believable) team. Ornaments are very classy, contributing to the impression that they both understand and enjoy the fine music. Fabio Bonizzoni and La Risonanza provide the delicate tonal palette required by the subtleties of the score but prevent it from becoming colourless by the odd injection of personality (in the form of stunning playing). An excellent addition to La Risonanza's full set of recordings of Handel's Italian cantatas. *Violet Greene*

Leclair *Violin Sonatas Book 2, Nos. 6-7 and 9-12* Adrian Butterfield *vln*, Jonathan Manson *gamba*, Laurence Cummings *hpcsd*
Naxos **8.572867** 77' 23"

Not that it shows, but Adrian Butterfield must have been very tired at the end of the recording sessions of which this release is the product. Even when the notes are not that difficult (in the 7th sonata for example) the soloist can never allow his musicianship to coast or he will be mugged by one of Leclair's unexpected turns of phrase or changes of direction. And, of course, the virtuoso sonatas such as no. 9 with its pre-echoes (by 20 years) of Handel's *Fireworks* are unrelenting in their demands. Yes, being picky, there are a few moments that the ensemble may have liked to do again and I still think, as with the previous release, that the harpsichord could be a bit less recessed in the overall

sound but I'm still looking forward to Books 3 and 4 and hoping that the series will extend to include the violin duets.

David Hansell

Mizler ***20 Lieder & Oden*** Klaus Mertens *Bar*, Sibylla Rubens *S*, Rudolf Lutz *hpscd*, Maya Amrein *vlc* 61' 54"
cpo 777 803-2

Lorenz Christoph Mizler (1711-78) was something of a polymath, with a strong musical strand – his Wikipedia entry is worth reading. This recording is the result of a joint project between a radio company, a music publisher and the CD label. Once the music had been collected together and carefully edited, the singers chose which of the songs they wished to record (and how many verses of each, there being rather too many of them even for live performance!) So far so good! But although Mizler did have some musical talent, his songs and odes tend, perhaps inevitably, to sound like hymns with interludes (here the harspichordist tends to link the verses, while the cellist plays along during the verses – one person too many in my humble opinion!) Rubens and Mertens are well-known singers; I find her voice a little over-powering, especially as I have an image of Mary Bennett sitting at her piano working through these at social soirées, rather than them forming part of a full-blown recital, and whenever there is scope of vibrato, it is not always an enhancement of the music. In short, I see this recording as having a very limited audience, but cpo are to be lauded as ever for championing unknown repertoire. *BC*

Pepusch ***Concertos and Overtures for London*** The Harmonious Society of Tickle-Fiddle Gentlemen 59' 16"
Ramée **RAM1109**
Overtures to *The Beggar's Opera, Venus and Adonis*, Concertos for oboe (g), violin (A, A minor & B flat), cello & bassoon (F), and trumpet (D)

Even if the title of this CD may not immediately attract the casual browser, then perhaps the name that these players have chosen to use may tickle the punters to make a purchase of what is an interesting collection of concertos. Pepusch was by no means a second-rate composer. Although there is nothing harmonically or contrapuntally individual in these works, they show a level of competence well above the average, and Pepusch certainly was not the "Dr Pushpin" of composing – as a satirical pamphlet of the time referred to him. The most interesting works I found to be the A major violin concerto and the double concerto grosso for cello and bassoon. All the soloists in this ensemble are excellent – Mark Baigent (oboe), with his fluid ornamentation in the slow movements, Tassilo Erhardt in the two virtuoso violin concertos, Crispian-Steele Perkins (trumpet), with Kinga Gaborjani (cello) and Sally Holman (bassoon) in two concerti grossi. *Ian Graham-Jones*

Platti ***Concerti grossi after Corelli*** Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin 53' 22"
harmonia mundi **HMA 1951996**
Nos. 4, 5 & 10 + Cello concerto 8 in D, Oboe concerto in g

If you thought Platti only wrote "nice" sonatas and concertos for his cello-playing employer, this is the disc to change your opinion of him; of the several re-workings of Corelli's music, I find these versions the most daring, and most satisfying – in one case, he even adds horns and oboes, and it suddenly sounds like Handel! The two solo concerti are entirely different in nature, and neatly played by Xenia Löffler and Sebastian Hess. At under an hour, this budget-price release looks like a mini LP, but comes with no booklet. The music is gorgeous, though! *BC*

Telemann ***Klingende Geographie*** Musica Fiorita, Daniela Dolci 70' 15"
Pan Classics **PC 10291**
Assemblage of movements from various works by Telemann + Concerto in d TWV43: d2

Klingende Geographie was a compilation of 38 short movements of Telemann which were representative of different European countries or areas collected and arranged by one Adolf Hoffman in 1959 for descant recorders and orchestra, which have been given a historical performance make-over by this ensemble, using one-to-a-part strings with plucked continuo. The concept, according to the booklet notes, derives from a collection of verses of 1708, some of which were set to music by Telemann – all attractive, but nothing too serious. The fine concerto in D Minor for 2 violins, viola and continuo is the filler at the end of this disc. If you are looking for enjoyable background music try the first 38 tracks, otherwise go straight to track 39.

Ian Graham-Jones

Vivaldi ***Catone in Utica*** Topi Lehtipuu *Catone*, Roberta Mameli *Cesare*, Ann Hallenberg *Emilia*, Sonia Prina *Marzia*, Romina Basso *Fulvio*, Emoke Baráth *Arsace*, Il Complesso Barocco, Alan Curtis naïve **OP 30545** (160' 3 CDs)

I imagine I would have enjoyed this much more in the theatre than I did listening to it in my study or in the car. Scene after scene of recitative (be they by Vivaldi or by Alessandro Ciccolini, who is credited with the reconstruction, as well as all the Da Capo ornamentation and cadenzas) is just a little too tough on the ears. The arias (five of them composed afresh, based on instrumental movements by Vivaldi) are all worth hearing once we get to them, though – here he goes again – all these through-composed versions lack any sense of spontaneity and although a couple of the cadenzas were rather better, I remain unconvinced that the singers themselves should not improvise, since they more than any composer known precisely the strengths of their own voices. The 43221 band (led by Boris Begelman on a 1723 Venetian violin) has two harpsichords and one plucker, all of whom provide support to the singers without drawing attention to themselves. Attentive readers will notice that I haven't actually commented on the singing; there are some big names in the line-up and they undoubtedly deserve the reputations they have, but I am unconvinced by many of them in the roles they play here. *BC*

Vivaldi ***Operas vol. 2*** Various singers & ensembles 75'
naïve **OP 30547**
Music from *Argippo, Armida, Atenaide, Farnace, La fida ninfa, Griselda, Orlando (1714), Orlando furioso, Ottone in villa & Teuzzone*

It may make me sound like an utter heathen, but I'm going to write it anyway – why can't all Vivaldi operas be packaged this way? On one hand, I understand that it is important that works are resurrected in their entirety, but – seriously – who wants to sit and listen to minute after minute of, let's be honest, pretty dull secco recitative? It's one thing to be sat in the theatre watching the action unfold (hopefully with none of the The Director Knows Best nonsense) and then be struck by the beauty of the aria, and most of these *are* just that – a mixture of virtuoso bravura set pieces, touching love songs, and pathetic laments. Then again, as I listened, that other bug-bear of mine reared its ugly head once more – the composed *Da Capo* decorations; this is Vivaldi we're listening too, not some 21st-century "let's liven things up" – the whole point, I thought, was spontaneity? These

sound pre-fabricated and are ultimately every bit as offensive as the silly costumes (or lack of them)! Singers of this calibre cannot improvise embellishments? *BC*

Vivaldi ***Concerti per violino*** Insieme strumentale di Roma, Giorgio Sasso *vln/dir* 68' 09"
Stradivarius **STR 33944**
RV113, 123, 240, 287,* 321, 508 & 517 (*=World premiere recording)

The title of this disc is slightly misleading; the programme is actually a mix of concertos for one or two violins, as well as string concerti without soloists. The band plays one to a part (soloist(s), two ripieno violins, viola, cello, bass, harpsichord or organ) in a clean, not overly-reverberant acoustic. The premiered concerto is unusual in having a middle movement in the mediant rather than the relative minor. This is fine minimalist Vivaldi, and neatly recorded. *BC*

Vivaldi ***Violins Sonatas*** Baltic Baroque, Grigori Maltizov 65' 43"
Estonian Record Productions **ERP6613**
RV13, 24, 35a, 776, 785 & 809 (World premiere recordings)

From the details given above, you might be surprised to learn that Maltizov seems not actually to play on this CD. Instead, four violinists (Maria Krestinskaya RV24 & 776, Evgeny Sviridov RV35a, Andrei Reshetin RV13 & 785 and Marina Katazhnova RV809), accompanied by Sofia Maltizova and Imbi Tarum (cello & harpsichord respectively), give fine performances of six sonatas that were previously unavailable on CD. There are reasons why most of them have been ignored until now – they are either inferior versions of known works, or are also attributed to other composers in the sources (RV13 to Roman, RV776 to Tartini, RV785 to Zani – and here given in a Stockholm version that omits a *Presto* that comes fourth in the standard version – and RV809 to Meneghetti). Be that as it may, these are enjoyable and stylish performances, given inside the House of the Blackheads in Tallinn, one of the most eye-catching places in that beautiful city, and church in Viimsi. For complete-ists, this is a must, as well as for all Vivaldi sonata players. *BC*

Vivaldi ***Concerto a due organi*** Silvio Celeghin, Margherita Gianola *org*, Accademia di San Rocco, Francesco Fanna (1732 Piaggia and 1796 Callido organs, Frari church, Venice) 57' 50"
Stradivarius **STR 33951**

This should really be entitled *Concerto a due organisti* as, although there are two organs, the only Vivaldi concerto actually intended for two organs is the single movement and possibly incomplete RV 584, plus a modern arrangement of *La Notte* for two organs. The other Vivaldi concertos are two for single organ and violin (RV 541/542) and two of the arrangements for solo organ that Bach made for the young Prince Johann Ernst. RV 584 may have been written around 1735 when a second organ was installed in the Pietà. It is a shame that we do not know whether any more was intended, apart from the 96 surviving bars. It has an intense opening before dissolving into antiphonal dialogue between the two organs and two solo violins. A fascinating piece. RV 541 and 542 are more traditionally Vivaldian with characteristically dreamy central movements. Eduardo Bellotti's version of *La Notte* is brilliantly conceived, the use of a pair of organs rather than the original flute and strings, adding an additionally evocative layer to this mood music. Try track 18, the *Il sonno* Largo, for example. The playing by Margherita Gianola and Silvio Celeghin is stylistically appropriate and musical, avoiding the temptation for empty showmanship that Vivaldi can produce in performers. The two 18th-century organs are the ones that many *EMR* readers will have seen while searching for Monteverdi's grave in the Frari Church, Venice. They face each other on either side of the central enclosed choir. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Vivaldi ***Concerti per Archi*** Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini 56' 13"
Tactus **TB 672258**
RV 124, 154, 302, 367, 522 & 578

Tactus has launched a discount series, *Serie Bianca*, with distinctive white covers, re-issues of important releases from their back catalogue. The present disc features Fabio Biondi as the soloist in RV 367, Adrian Chamorro in RV 302, the two combined in RV 522 & 578. The double bass (no, your eyes are not deceiving you!) is played by one Paolo Pandolfo. Dating from 1988, I must honestly confess that I cannot say whether or not they are using period instruments. In any case, they are several universes away from the way these guys play Vivaldi now. In many ways, that makes the recording more interesting and historically important, especially since they chose not to record the same old pieces over and over again. I am still unsure that I would actually *choose* to listen to it many times, though. *BC*

Zani ***Complete Cello Concertos*** Martin Rummel *vlc*, Die Kölner Akademie, Michael Alexander Willens
Capriccio C5145 (2 CDs)

The editions of Zani's 12 concertos for cello were made by Dr Jill Ward from the University of Auckland, which supported the venture financially – a great example of international cooperation, since the solo cellist, who is as at home with this repertoire as he is with contemporary music, also teaches a cello studio there (as well as in St Andrews! who knew?) Don't be fooled by the slightly unsettling image of him on the cover, setting his spike – these are sprightly accounts with 33111 strings and continuo supplied by either harpsichord or organ and / or guitar or theorbo. As usual, I'm not entirely sure why the 12 pieces have been presented in a variant order, when we all have the ability to re-programme if we're offended by foul juxtapositions of key, and we all have such short attention spans these days anyway, so who would even listen to 12 consecutive cello concertos anyway? Answer: Me. And, actually, more than once. It's not the best music I've ever heard, but it is melodious and entertaining, especially with this line-up – according to the booklet, these are all world premiere recordings, so all you keen cellists out there should start tracking down the editions! *BC*

amore e morte dell'amore Roberta Invernizzi, Sonia Prina, Ensemble Claudiana, Luca Pianca 68'
naïve **OP 30549**
Music by Durante, Handel, Lotti, Marcello, Monteverdi & D. Scarlatti

This is such a strong programme, in both concept and content, that I feel really guilty that I did not enjoy the performances more. A number of the pieces were written for equal voices so in these performances by individually excellent soprano and contralto singers one of them is often singing at a disadvantage with consequences for the balance of the parts. This tends to come and go in general – between the voices and instruments as well as the voices themselves. I also felt that the runs strayed too often from clarity into over-articulation with a consequent loss of direction and HIPpy fundamentalists may well not like the

sometimes elaborate accompaniments. A nice touch in the presentation is that the sung Italian texts are placed between the French and English translations in parallel columns. *David Hansell*

Arias for Caffarelli Franco Fagioli *cT*, Il Pomo d'Oro, Riccardo Minasi 78'
naïve **V533**
Arias from **Cafaro** *L'Ipermestra* **Hasse** *Siroe* **Leo** *Demofoonte* **Manna** *Lucio Vero, Lucio Papiro dittatore* **Pergolesi** *Adriano in Siria* **Porpora** *Semiramide riconosciuta* **Sarro** *Valdemaro* **Vinci** *Semiramide riconosciuta*

It seems that the countertenors of the world are rummaging through the archives in Cecilia Bartoli's wake, looking for the perfect vehicle to demonstrate the particular qualities of their voices. Fagioli, sensibly enough, has striven to explore repertoire written for a single singer – the Italian mezzo-soprano castrato Gaetano Majorano, who (amongst many first performances) created Handel's *Serse*. Strange then that Handel's name does not appear on the programme, though that of his teacher Porpora and at least one other major composer who composed for his voice, Hasse, do. I have never really been a fan of the countertenor voice; Fagioli's range is formidable (while most of his colleagues head skywards in cadenzas, he is wont to drop into much lower regions for dramatic effect – and some of his huge leaps *are* genuinely impressive), and his party trick is a *mezza da voce* lasting longer than most cathedral reverbs. The playing is certainly very exciting; horns, trumpets and woodwind instruments join the strings. The tempi seem to match the music. If you're a fan of this voice-type, you will love this recital, rich in high-class, novel repertoire. *BC*

Joy & Sorrow Unmasked Maria Keohane *S*, Sebastian Philpott *tpt*, European Union Baroque Orchestra, Lars Ulrik Mortensen
ERP Music **ERP 6412** **DVD**
Bach *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*, Brandenburg 3 **Ferrandini** *Il Pianto di Maria* **Handel** Op. 6/2, *Ah! Che troppo ineguali*, aria from *Il trionfo* **Torelli** Sonata in D

In contrast to CB's reactions to Maria Keohane in the last issue, I must confess that I was rather impressed by her singing – perhaps *seeing* her helped, since she does have quite a stage presence, and the drama of the text is conveyed as much in the virtuosic singing as in the wide range of expressions, here ranging from the despair of the Ferrandini to the bliss of the Bach. The orchestra is marvellous and while soloist and concertmaster are brought in from previous years, they by no means overshadow the present members; the balance between the two solo violins in the Handel is exemplary, and the cellists' happy faces show how clearly they love playing in such an ensemble. There were some telling moments in the video, in fact; more than once, you catch a smile from a background player while they watch the soloists – EUBO must be hard work, but clearly it has its rewards, as much for the players as for us. If they never happen to tour near you, this video is an excellent substitute – beautiful musical, stylishly player *and enjoyed*! *BC*

Johannes Pramsohler *[Violin sonatas with]* Philippe Grisvard *hpscd* 65' 22"
Audax records **ADX13700**
Albicastro op. 5/6 **Corelli** op. 5/1 **Handel** HWV371 **Leclair** op. 9/6 **Telemann** TWV 41:A4

When I last wrote about Johannes in these pages it was to lavish praise on his get-up-and-go and "can-do" attitude; having set up the International Baroque Players, he had put together a programme of fairly obscure violin concertos and convinced a well-known company to record them. Now he has gone one stop further and set up his own record company. Where vanity publishing has become something of a necessity for many HIPsters (and beyond – check out the number of ensembles trying to raise money on the internet to fund their latest project), the present disc is far more than *that*. I cannot think of a single CD that I have heard that holds together a wide range of repertoire with the huge musical understanding that perceptively exists between these two young musicians and by the genuine excitement captured in the sound recording. Ostensibly a tribute to Corelli and his influence on the history of solo violin music, it includes only two familiar pieces (by Corelli and Handel) and three that are far less well-known. So many times we are told that the continuo options for early sonatas were cello *or* keyboard instrument, but how many times have we actually *heard* them played thus? While it might seem like choosing between the two means removing an element, but the converse is actually true – having only one person playing the bass line allows them to communicate more freely with the violinist, without having to worry that the left hand plays exactly in time with the stringed bass. So Grisvard and Pramsohler are on an equal footing throughout the recital. Of course, it means the former has to find ways to sustain Corelli's extended bass notes, but it also gives him the freedom to adapt the part to his instrument.

No-one will be surprised to hear that Pramsohler's fiddle-playing blew me away again; the technical difficulties are swept aside (all the filigree of the Leclair and Albicastro's chordal writing included). He can be meltingly delicate in the slow movements (the third movement of the Telemann is an exercise in *Cantabile*), and even the familiar becomes fresh in his reading of Handel's D major sonata. The recording sessions for the label's second release have already been taking place, this time his Ensemble Diderot takes centre stage – I'm already excited to hear it! *BC*

Music from the age of Louis XIV John Kitchen (1755 Baillon hpscd) 77' 34"
Delphian **DCD34109**
d'Anglebert Tombeau de M. de Chambonnières **F. Couperin** Troisième Ordre (extracts) **L. Couperin** Pavane in F sharp minor **de la Guerre** Suite in F **Lully** d'Anglebert transcriptions **Marchand** Suite No 1 in D minor

Last October I reviewed in glowing terms this player's recital of slightly later music on 'the world's most famous harpsichord' (Edinburgh's 1769 Taskin). The only false note I struck was an observation that the booklet was rather amateurishly produced. This one is much better (and the content was never an issue anyway) and the journey through Edinburgh's Russell and Mirrey collections of keyboard instruments continues to be thrilling. This instrument (a rare survival from non-Parisian origins) lacks the rich 'audible chocolate' sonority of the Taskin but the sound is still very fine and its compensating clarity serves this programme very well. Its documentary aspects make this an important series of recordings and the excellence of the programmes and the playing raises its status to 'indispensable'. *David Hansell*

Nodebog Hans Olav Gorset & friends 52' 58" (SACD & BluRay pure audio discs)
EAN13 **7041888516927**

This is an anthology from various MSS containing domestic music of 18th-century Norway. Some items are familiar in non-Norwegian versions and some of the rest is hardly "national". This must be entertaining to play, and to dance as well. Gorset, the man behind the recording, is professor of Recorder, Baroque flute & performance practice at the Norwegian Academy of Music, and he is accompanied

by a soprano and five instruments. I suspect that its main use will be as background music – and there's no harm in that. *CB*

Orgelkonzert **Matthias Süß** (1883 Walcker organ, St Annenkirche, Annaberg-Buchholz) 69' 56"
Querstand **VKJK1309**
Bach BWV527, 564 & 768 **Böhm** Praeludium and Fugue in C **Bruhns** Praeludium in e **Buxtehude** Ein feste Burg **Krebs** Fantasia on *Herr Jesu Christ*

Although this CD will be of interest to organ buffs, the disconnect between the organ and the chosen repertoire is likely to put it beyond the pale for *EMR* readers. Walcker organs, fine though they are, are romantic orchestral instruments of the type championed in England by the likes of Willis (for example, at the Royal Albert Hall). Although not incapable of playing music of Bach and his ilk, the sound world they inhabit is far removed from that of the 17th/18th century. That said, Matthias Süß produces some fine playing with apt registrations. But a better choice for those interested might be his other CD (not sent for review) of music by Rheinberger, Reger, Guilmant and Franck.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Rivals: Arias for Farinelli & Co. David Hansen *cT*, Academia Montis Regalis, Alessandro De Marchi 76' 36"
deutsche harmonia mundi 8 **88837 44012 7**
Arias from **Bononcini** *Griselda* **Broschi** *Artaserse* **Leo** *Andromaca, Demetrio* **Vinci** *Alessandro, Il Medo, Semiramide riconosciuta*

David Hansen is an Australian singer who seems to be based in Norway. His "what should a countertenor do to draw a wider audience?" disc casts the net wider than many of his own rivals (as Franco Fagioli did) and has chosen a wide variety of arias to show off the qualities of his voice. Akin rather to Jaroussky's voice than Fagioli's, Hansen has a ringing top register, which very occasionally tends to sharpness (in pitch *and* tone), but his even triplets are beautiful and his embellishments finely conceived and executed. His opening aria (Vinci's "In braccio a mille furie") appears not to have been written for Caffarelli, but rather for Carlo Salzi (whom Metastasio described as "incomparable", according to Erin Helyard's booklet note); it is the only overlap on these two recital discs, and a big, martial number – Hansen tends to breathe more often, while Fagioli sings through the longer phrases without ever seeming to run out of steam. The colour of the voices, though, is *very* different. The instrumental support offered on this disc is also of the highest quality; the battle of the glossy booklets, though, is won hands-down by the naïve set. *BC*

Royal Recorder Concertos: Music from the Court of King Frederik IV Bolette Roed, Arte dei Suonatori 75' 34"
Da Capo **6.220630**
Graun Concerto for recorder & violin **Graupner** Ouverture in F, Concerto in F **Scheibe** Concerto a4 in B flat **Schickhardt** Sonata in C + **Anon** "The Princess's Suite"

The court of the music-loving Danish king Frederik IV (1671-1730) was a centre for visiting international musicians where music by French, Italian and German composers was performed by the court orchestra. The recorder was a popular instrument and players included the playwright Ludvig Holberg, a friend of the German composer Johann Adolph Scheibe who spent a large part of his life in Denmark during the reign of the next king Christian VI. Unfortunately the royal collection of music from Frederik's reign was almost totally destroyed in a fire at Christiansborg Castle in 1794 and later disasters, so the music here represents composers with Danish connections rather than actual pieces from the court.

A collection of music belonging to Frederik IV's daughter Princess Charlotte Amelie, who played the guitar, does survive. It includes dances arranged for guitar with a separate bass part by her teachers Johann Friedrich Fibiger and Nathanael Diesel, and a suite of these including variations on *La Folia* has been given an effective arrangement for recorder and orchestra by Maciej Prochaska. The final bonus track of a movement of a recorder sonata by Schickhardt is a bit of an anticlimax after the grand concertos which are given fine performances by Danish recorder player Bolette Roed and Polish orchestra Arte dei Suonatori. *Victoria Helby*

The Thistle & The Rose *Folk-inspired baroque music from Scotland and England* Fleuri (Laura Justice *recs*, Jennifer Bullock *viols*, Bridget Cunningham *hpscd*) 58' 47"
Rose Street Records **RSR 003**
Music by Farnaby, Hume, Johnson, Matteis, Oswald, Playford, Sancho, Tollet + anon and attrib. Burns (arr. Fleuri)

Perhaps because this was originally a programme for the Edinburgh Fringe, there is rather more thistle than rose in this recording. Even some of the music from English sources leans towards Scotland, with titles such as 'Edinburgh Town' from the *English Dancing Master* and 'Kate of Aberdeen' by Ignatius Sancho. In addition to well-known pieces such as 'Ground after the Scotch Humour' by Matteis and 'Greensleeves to a Ground' from *The Division Flute* there are several taken from the *Scots Musical Museum*, compiled by James Johnson and Robert Burns, and a pavan and galliard from Duncan Burnett's music book, a collection of keyboard pieces compiled in Scotland around 1615. This is definitely folk music for the drawing room – or perhaps even the bedroom. Although there are some toe-tapping fast movements, the speed of some of the slow movements is very slow indeed and the whole effect is rather restful. *Victoria Helby*

CLASSICAL

Cauciello ***Trii e Duetti per flauti, mandolini e basso continuo*** Tesoro Harmonico 77' 54"
Tactus **TC 740304**

OK, hands up anyone who has heard of Prospero Cauciello? Not many, it seems, since not even the date or place of birth is certain. He was listed among the violinists at Naples's Teatro San Carlo in the 1780s, and the title-page of at least one of his publications describes him as first flute to the King of Poland. This recording features the five trios for mandolins and basso continuo which survive in Milan Conservatory, thanks to the collector Gustavo Adolfo Noseda. Only one is played in its original line-up; the others are taken by one flute and one mandolin. The continuo is played on harpsichord. Duets (most likely written for didactic purposes) make up the rest of the recital, two for flutes and one for mandolins. The music is really tuneful, with some excellent playing from all six musicians (three on mandolin and two on flute taking turns about), and a lively, bright recorded sound – I enjoyed listening to it a lot. *BC*

Duphly / Mozart ***Pièces pour le clavecin avec accompagnement de violon*** Stéphanie-Marie Degand *vln*, Violaine Cochard *hpscd*
Agogique **AGO009** (63' 59")
Duphly Overture, La De Casaubon, La De May, La De Valmalette, La Du Tailly, La Madin **Mozart** Sonatas K. 6-9

Not obvious bedfellows, these composers, but here they are linked by dates, context and genre. Duphly published his third book of keyboard pieces, including these

six pieces 'with violin accompaniment' in the year in which Mozart was born. Duphly had previously dedicated his second book to Victoire of France and it was she who warmly received the seven-year-old Mozart when he visited Paris with the rest of the family. In return he dedicated two of these early sonatas to her. Although one does not wish to hear recordings which are too artificially engineered, it is a shame, given the relative status accorded to the instruments by the composers, that the harpsichord is not a little more forward in the sound. On the other hand, this does make it easy to appreciate some brilliant violin playing which impressively does make the two composers sound quite different from each other in ways which go far beyond using a different bow. Approaches to and performance of ornamentation are quite distinct, as are more nebulous factors such as melodic shaping. Overall this was impressive and unexpectedly delightful.

David Hansell

Dussek ***Four Symphonies*** Helsinki Baroque Orchestra, Aapo Häkkinen 53' 52"
Naxos **8.572683**
Altner G4, A3, B@ 2 & 3

This is not the first time I have heard this Finnish group in non-Baroque repertoire; I really enjoyed their Richter symphonies, also on Naxos. These four symphonies by Mozart's Bohemian friend are here played by pairs of oboes and horns with bassoon, 43221 strings with fortepiano continuo; Riccardo Minasi occupies the *Konzertmeister*'s seat. They are lively pieces with either three or four movements – the last one adds a *Minuetto e Trio* to the structure – and they make use of solo stringed instruments as well as occasionally highlighting the winds. If you are looking for enjoyable, little-known, well-played classical music, this could be precisely what you are looking for – high quality need not break the bank! *BC*

Haydn ***Symphony No. 6 Le matin, Symphony No. 82 L'ours, Violin Concerto in G major*** Aisslinn Nosky *vln*, Handel and Haydn Society, Harry Christophers
CORO **COR16113** (69' 19")

This is live recording of three works from two different periods in Haydn's career, made earlier this year in Symphony Hall, Boston. Although this makes for a good concert programme, it is always interesting to hear the three symphonies *Le Matin*, *Le Midi* and *Le Soir* as a group, as they were designed in part to show off the prowess of his players when he first arrived at Esterhazy, giving difficult solos to most of the players – including the double bass. The Handel and Haydn Society orchestra is a large period instrument group, somewhat larger than Haydn would have had for the two earlier works, with a string line-up of 7.7.4.4.2. I also was aware that the recording quality lacks the immediacy that could be achieved in the recording studio. The concertos of Haydn are less well-known than his symphonies, and this G major work dating from the 1760s is for strings only; but unlike the symphony of the same period, there is nothing novel in its writing. Aisslinn Nosky's sensitive playing is always assured, though not without the odd portamento. The Paris symphony, like *Le matin*, has many Haydn-esque surprises and Harry Christophers' interpretation does Haydn's inventiveness proud. *Ian Graham-Jones*

Monsigny ***Le Roi et le fermier (1762)*** Thomas Michael Allen *Le Roi*, William Sharp *Richard (le fermier)*, Dominique Labelle *Jenny*, Thomas Dolié *Rustaut*, Jeffrey Thompson *Lurewel*, Delores Ziegler *La Mère*, Yulia Van Doren *Betsy*, David Newman *Charlot*, Tony Boutté *Le Courtisan*, Opera Lafayette, Ryan Brown 72' 12"
Naxos **8.660322**

When this opera was performed at Versailles in 1780, the part of Jenny was sung by no less than Marie-Antoinette, and these artists were able to use the restored sets from that production for their performance in the same venue. So where's the DVD? The libretto is based on an English play and is set in Sherwood Forest (yes, that Sherwood Forest) and contains both the expected romantic and amusing elements as well as a very pointed piece of political commentary that apparently had to be toned down for performance at the French court. Musically, the composer speaks the *lingua franca* of early classicism. I found the ensembles and the orchestral movements to be the most engaging. The notes assure us that, in the full opera, the integration of dialogue/recitative with the set-piece numbers is exceptional, but the dialogue is omitted from the recording. We do, however have a full summary of the plot and the dialogue can be down-loaded. But I'd still like to see the show. *David Hansell*

Müthel ***Bach's last pupil*** Zane Stradyna *piano* 73' 52"
Christophorus CHE 0190-2 (c. 2002)
Sonatas in B flat and C + 2 Ariosos with 12 variations in c and G

This one is at the very outer limits of our reader's interest, I would say – that the music is played on a modern piano would not necessarily put some of them off, but when it is played in such a pianistic way, then I think some aficionados will then start to wonder *why*? We know that Bach was inquisitive enough to explore the possibilities of Silbermann's piano, but I doubt if he would have expected even his last pupil to play like Stradyna – she is an excellent pianist, no doubt, but perhaps she should either broaden her own horizons by trying a period keyboard, or maybe just stick to the Martinu, etc., which she performs wonderfully on many a YouTube video. *BC*

Witt ***Chamber Music for Winds & Strings***
Consortium Classicum 79' 27"
cpo 777 486-2
Quartets in E flat (hn+str)* & and F (bsn+str), Septet in F (cl, hn, bsn+str) Carl Friedrich zu Löwenstein Quintet in D (fl+str)*

I requested this disc as it includes two first recordings* of works from a period in which our readers might be interested. The "velvety" string playing might be enough to put them off again, but there is much to enjoy in the music, be it the virtuosity of the horn and bassoon players in their respective quartet, or just the sumptuous harmonies of Witt's four movement septet and the lighter tunefulness of the even more obscure von Löwenstein's flute quintet. Not one for the period instrument fan; nor really for those who like some profundity to their music. Still, a pleasant summer's afternoon. *BC*

19th CENTURY

Clementi ***Symphonies Nos. 3 and 4, Overture in C*** Orchestral Sinfonica di Roma, Francesco La Vecchia 71' 32"
Naxos **8.573112**

These performances could not possibly be more unlike those by Dussek reviewed above if they tried. Of course, there is no reason why a full-scale orchestra should not tackle this repertoire, especially when it is more 20th-century reconstruction. None of the four symphonies that have survived at all has done so intact; we read in the notes that the person responsible for the work dismissed Clementi's plan to place the minuet and trio second in the running order, so who knows what other

liberties he took? So, now that you know what is involved, I leave it to you to decide. The music is definitely worth hearing, if only because of its novelty – you don't hear many Italian Viennese symphonies! I won't give the second movement of the third symphony's secret away. *BC*

de Grassi ***Sei Sonate per organo*** Manuel Tomadin 65' 19"
Tactus **TC 760401**

This is one of a number of "if you think organ music is boring" CDs I am reviewing this month, with its delightfully attractive, light-hearted and rather theatrical late Classical Italian pieces by the little know composer Luigi de Grassi (1760-1831). He was born in Grado, on the coast between Venice and Triest and became cathedral organist in Cividale. These six sonatas are from a manuscript in Udine, not far from Cividale, dating from a few years after de Grassi's death. The sixth sonata is incomplete; the others are all in three-movements with a sonata-form first movement and a central Andante. The organ, S. Stefano, Palazzolo dello Stella (not far from Udine and Cividale) dates from 1857, but speaks with something of the voice of an earlier period. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Morandi ***Sonate per organo a quattro mani*** Chiara Cassin, Federica Iannella (1792 Callido organ, San Paolo Apostolo, Civitanova Marche Alta, Macerata, Italy)
Tactus **TC 771302** (51' 12")

And another in the "organ music isn't boring" series, with an insight into the compositions of Giovanni Morandi. It is thanks to the 1967 arrival of a new Abbess of the convent of Santa Christina and Senigalla on the eastern coast of central Italy that we owe the rediscovery of the music of Morandi, son of the more famous Pietro Morandi. He was a singing teacher and organist who married his famous pupil, singer Rosa Paolina Morolli and spent 19 years travelling and accompanying her in her concerts. When she died, he settled in Senigalla until his own death, teaching singing to the nuns in the convent and composing for them – with some rather up-to-date instructions about chaperones, etc. A special permit allowed him to teach organ to one of the talented nuns, and many of his pieces are dedicated to her. These pieces, composed between 1830 and 1843, are in the distinctively theatrical style of early 19th-century Italy with the unusual feature of being composed for two players on one organ. Federica Iannella, who also plays on the Atmosfere Teatrali CD reviewed below, is an excellent interpreter of the little-known music of this period. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Schubert ***Symphonies Nos. 3 & 4*** Freiburger Barockorchester, Pablo Heras-Casado 54' 33"
Harmonia Mundi **HMC902154**

Roughly half the 20,000 bars of music Schubert composed in 1815 were for orchestra; the 3rd Symphony was among them, with the 4th following in the Spring of 1816. They are not traditionally accorded 'masterwork' status but as is so often the case an uninhibited period instrument performance manages to suggest that there is more here than may traditionally have met the ear. To be sure, there are regular derivative echoes of Haydn, Mozart and, above all and inevitably, Beethoven, but the music overall is no less interesting than, say, the last-named's 1st Symphony. The Freiburgers are encouraged to throw everything they have at the score and the result is performances which, if you have always passed over these pieces in favour of the sweetness of Schubert's 5th and the perhaps greater glories of the 8th and 9th, might just make you think again. *David Hansell*

Spontini ***L'opera vocale da camera completa*** Patrizia Cigna, Elisa Morelli, Ashley Slater, Alessio Tosi *SSST*, Sabina Belei *fp/early piano*, Gianni Fabbrini *piano*, Filippo Farinelli *fp/early piano*, Marianne Gubri *early & modern harps*, Fabiano Merlante *early guitar*, Chiara Sidoli *fp*
Tactus **TC 771960** 355' 10" (5 CDs)

This is another huge undertaking. Four singers and six accompanists on a range of instruments fill five CDs (some very generously indeed) with the complete known salon music (which I suppose is the best English translation of this genre – music intended for private entertainment or, at best, performance among polite company). Much of it was published by his wife's company "Mlles. Erard", based in the same building where pianos and harps (such as the ones used for the recordings) were made. Spontini's reputation is as an opera composer, so it should come as no surprise that he writes very well for the voice. I have to say that I far prefer the tenor from this group of four (though he seems to have problems pitching with the harp on CD1 Track 9). The sopranos occasionally astonished me with some wonderfully accurate chromatic singing, the general approach is vibrato when possible: to be fair, many of the texts – which are not given in the box, but will be made available online – are the pathetic (in the original sense of that word) and distraught outpourings of separated lovers and the like, but I should have thought that women of that period might sooner have swooned than bellowed! Like the Sarti boxed set, this is a marvellous piece of documentation – as complete a collection of part of a fairly important composer's output performed on instruments of the period as one is ever likely to come upon. It is strange that while p. 15 of the booklet tells us which instruments play on which track, there are no such indications to identify the singers. That apart, well done, Tactus! *BC*

Deutsche Motette: German Romantic choral music from Schubert to Strauss Choirs of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge (Geoffrey Webber) & King's College, London (David Trendell) 61' 30"
Delphian **DCD34124**
Brahms *O Heiland, reiss die Himmel auf* op. 74/2 **Cornelius** *Liebe* op. 18, **Rheinberger** *Abendlied* op. 69/3, **Schubert** *Gott ist mein Hirt* D706, **Schumann** *Vier doppelchörige Gesänge* op. 141, **Strauss** *Deutsche Motette* op. 62

At the end of a day in St Petersburg I fell into conversation with an American visitor who remarked that he'd seen 'a lot of opulence' that day. Well, there's a lot of opulence to be heard on this disc even if you stop after track 1 (Strauss's op. 62). Combining these two excellent choirs produces the kind of sonority that these composers expected, though I suspect they could only have hoped to hear performances as good as these. There are around 60 singers, plus three guest low basses and a guest solo quartet (two of whom are choir alumni) for the Strauss. A welcome bonus, and perfectly placed for the listener in the middle of the programme, is David Ward's exquisite accompaniment (on fortepiano) of the Schubert. A high standard of phrasing and dynamic shading and just sheer energy is maintained throughout. Quite frankly, these are the kind of performances that just make you want to stand up and cheer even if you're the only person in the room. And yes, I did. *David Hansell*

ORGAN ANTHOLOGIES

Historische Tasteninstrumente aus dem Museum für Musikinstrumente der Universität Leipzig Various instruments and artistes 65' 13"
Querstand **VKJK1240**
C P E Bach Fantasia Wq 63/6 **J S Bach** Three menuets BWV841–843 **Beethoven** Sonata in c Op 10/1 **Galuppi** Sonata in C **Gardane** Passamezzo **Paladini** Divertimento in G D. **Scarlatti** Three sonatas, K3, 9, 33 & **Anon** Four dances from an English tablature book

This is reissue of a recording made in 1995 of eight of the many keyboard instruments in Leipzig University's superb musical instrument collection, part of the large Grassi museum complex. Represented are two examples of clavichords, positive organs, harpsichords and early pianos (Hammerflügel) with clavichords by Dominicus Pisaurensis (1543) and Johann Augustin Straube (Berlin 1787); positive organs from the Tyrol (1614) and by Manderscheidt Cuntz (Nuremberg 1716); harpsichords by Antonio Migliai (Florence 1702) and an anonymous early 17th-century German builder; and fortepianos by Bartolomeo Cristofori (Florence 1726) and Nanette Streicher née Stein (Vienna 1800). Of these, the 1543 Pisaurensis is probably the most famous, and the tiny Tirolean positive organ the most interesting, somehow cramming 6 separate stops (4' 4' 2' 2' Zimbel 1½' and Regal 8') with 270 pipes into a horizontal box not much wider than the keyboard, with two hand-pumped bellows on top. Photos and brief descriptions of each instrument are included and the playing (by Christine Schornsheim, Walter Heinz Bernstein, Winfried Schrammek, Roland Götz and Armin Thalheim) and choice of pieces is well suited to each instrument, although the pianos get rather more of their fair share of the CD's time, ending with a complete 19-minute Beethoven sonata.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Ángels o Calandrias *Cantar al órgano en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII.* Mark Chambers cT, Andrés Cea, *claviórgano*
Lindoro **NL-3017**

The CD's title, "Angels or Larks – singing with the organ in 16th and 17th century Spain", says it all. The CD notes reveal the contemporary references to singing with the organ, and to the use of the claviorganum in Spanish churches. The opening and closing pieces are Bovicelli's 1594 ornamented versions of motets by Victoria and Palestrina. Two examples of the *alternatim* tradition are included, Coelho's *Magnificat* and the *Lamentations* by Torres, the latter including the bassoon, a regular contributor to church music of this period in Spain and Portugal. The featured countertenor, Mark Chambers, has a beautiful direct and clean tone which works extremely well in this repertoire. On two occasions (Guerrero's gentle *Ave Virgo Sanctissima* and Lobo's *Versa est in luctum*) he is joined by that most human-toned instruments, the cornett, played here by Arnau Rodón. The claviórgano used on this recording is a remarkably versatile instrument, made up of a copy of the mid-17th-century harpsichord in the Courtauld Gallery (quite understandably misspelt in the notes) which sits atop a new *di legno* organ made for the organist Andrés Cea. The combined instrument produces a wide array of sounds from its three organ stops (which include a 16' regal and a tremulant), and the harpsichord's two (divided) 8' stops. The two instruments are played from three manuals, the middle one a coupler manual, with a useful (but possibly not authentic) pull-down pedal board attached. For an example of this versatility, listen to track 5, Correa de Arauxo's *Tiento de medio registro de triple de octavo tono,* one of the three Correa keyboard solos. Andrés Cea plays with an outstanding sensitivity to Correa's sometimes anarchic melodic flow – showing just how well the organ can sing all on its own. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Atmosfere Teatrali *per organo a quattro mani* Federica Ianella, Giuliana Maccaroni
Tactus **TC 750001** (61'45")
Music by Bellini, Donizetti, Mozart & Rossini

Theatrical Atmospheres is an apt title for this, another in the "organ music need not be boring" genre. Indeed, if you have friends of the "organ music has to be serious" school, play them the first few seconds of this CD just to see the look on their face when the bass drum and cymbals come crashing in. This CD casts some light on the school of organ playing and composition in Italy in the early to mid 19th century when the sounds of the theatre invaded the church with organs specifically built or adapted to recreate the effects of a theatre orchestra. Of course, this also happened in France during the Revolution and in England during the age of orchestral transcriptions and theatre organs. But the Italians really took to it with gusto, as this CD, with two organists playing an organ of the period, attest. The playing is excellent, and resists the temptation to ham it up. I love it!

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Organum Antiquum Helga Schauerte (1555/1599/1717/2002 Klausing Organ, Klosterkirche, Oelinghausen, Arnsberg)
Syrius **SYR 141459**
Music by Aston, J. S. Bach, Böhm, Bruhns, Buxtehude, Decker, Hassler, Milán, Neusidler, Nörmiger, Othmayr, Pachelbel, J. Praetorius, Telemann & anon

The organ in Oelinghausen (between Dortmund and Hannover) is a fascinating one, with pipework dating back to 1599 (and, in one case, to 1555) in a case dating from the 1717 Klausing organ. It has been restored back to its 1717 state, with the addition of some pedal stops. The programme is based around the two dates of 1599 and 1717, therefore exploring mostly pre-Bach organ music. There are several misunderstandings of the nature of the pieces, starting with the two Robertsbridge *Estampies* where only the *'overt'* sections are played without the repeats to the *'clos'*, resulting in some awkward transitions between sections – which, incidentally, also use registrations that are very far from those likely to have been used at the time. There are also several moments of rhythmic awkwardness interrupting the flow of these, and other pieces on the CD, along with a few wrong notes. Half the CD is devoted to versions of the chorale *Vater unser im Himmelreich,* ending with three from Bach.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Orgeln in Sachsen 4 Richter-Orgel in Pomssen Roland Börger (1671 Richter/2006 Wegscheider organ, Pomssen, Saxony)
Querstand **VKJK 0716**
Correa de Arauxo, Bach, Buxtehude, Cabanilles, Gabrieli, Hassler, Aguila de Heredia, Pellegrini, M Praetorius, Scheidt, Tunder

Pomssen was one of the organs that I visited and played during my time at the 2013 Leipzig Bachfest. It is a fascinating one-manual-and-pedal instrument in a delightful little baroque church, with a double layer of galleries. Although built in 1671, it has the feel, sound, voicing and look of an organ from much earlier times, and is referred to as the "Renaissance organ". Little is known about the organ builder, but he was apparently a carpenter by trade. My own, completely unresearched, theory is that he may have copied earlier instruments that he knew – there is no record of him having studied with any other organ builders. It has now

been extremely well restored by the Dresden firm of Wegscheider. Roland Börger founded the organisation that supported the work on the organ, and gives an extremely good demonstration of its capabilities on this CD. The programme is eclectic, rather than concentrating on Saxon music of the period of the organ, but shows just how versatile a small organ sounds, ranging from the Spanish music of Correa de Arauxo to the North German Tunder and Buxtehude. More information on the organ can be found at http://orgelpomssen.de/cms/index.php?article_id=11. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

***La Tarantella nel Salento** played on organs and traditional instruments* Liuwe Tamminga *org*, Fabio Tricomi, Luigi Mangiocavallo 65' 56"
Accent **ACC 24236**

An historically male-dominated society has offered up many 'explanations' for the wilder examples of the sexual passions of woman, one of the more musically relevant being the belief that this behaviour is the result of a bite from a tarantula spider, named after the city of Taranto in Puglia (coincidentally in the 'heel' of Italy, which is presumably the part of the body where the spider is likely to bite). This led to the belief in Puglia that obsessive and hypnotic music was a possible cure, leading to the tradition of the Tarantella. An alternative explanation is that local people, male and female, when bitten, danced in order to sweat out the venom. This CD offers a delightful series of examples of the Tarantello, all, curiously, based around the use of historic Puglian organs with an exotic range of string and percussion instruments in attendance. The three main organs used are the anonymous 1558 instrument in Galatina's Basicila di S. Caterina d'Alessandria, the late 17th-century organ in Corigliano d'Otranto's S. Nicola church, attributed to Simone & Pietro Kircher and the 1771 organ in Casarano's Maria SS Annunziata church. If you ever thought organ music was boring, then this is the CD to correct that thought, although I doubt whether it will calm the passions of any aroused woman of your acquaintance.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

ANTHOLOGIES

Balkan Spirit Mihailo Blam, Gyula Csik, Vilmos Csikos, Valeri Dimchev, Bara Dugić, Teha Limberger, Nedyalko Nedyalkov, Sloboban Prodanovič, Dimitri Psonis, Moslem Rahal, Zacharias Spyridakis, Hespèrion XXI, Jordi Savall
AliaVox **AVSA9898** (79' 15")

I have taken to filing most of the recent Alia Vox recordings to come my way on a special shelf between my early music shelves and my world music section, and this is symptomatic of the direction that Jordi Savall and Hesperion XXI have recently taken. Collaborating with musicians from the eastern Mediterranean and eastern Europe playing a variety of traditional and modern instruments, Hesperion XXI's early instruments and Savall's scholarly approach have led to something of a new genre. Increasingly the term 'utopian' springs to mind as the programme notes yearn for a time when many cultures cross-fertilized freely, and the performances seem to want to make this happen in the studio with a free blending of the historical, the traditional and the contemporary. As long as this is made clear, I suppose there is no harm in it – I did resent having to find out that the duduks on his recent Armenian disk were modern keyed instruments by detailed scrutiny of a studio photo – but this recording makes no bones about its eclectic mix of old and new. And the translation of the notes into all the languages of the participating musicians, resulting in a lavish hard-bound mini-book of accompanying information, seems very much to be putting your money where your mouth is.

Having seemed to gripe slightly, let me be much more generous in my praise of the stunning virtuosity and musicianship of the star line-up of instrumentalists Savall has drawn together from Macedonia, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Greece and Bosnia. So often nowadays these superlative musicians are let down by recordings which either electronically alter the sounds they produce or blend them with synthetic effects of one kind or another, and it is a delight to hear them 'unplugged' and working with a sensitive and truly international collaborator in the person of Savall. After some time in the company of such consummate musicianship we can allow them the indulgence of occasional rather 'westernised' harmonic progressions and even a sentimental concluding elegy – this is, after all, a lament for happier times in a war-ravaged region. Having commented on my special shelving regime, I have to say I find myself taking down Alia vox recordings very frequently for listening for pleasure. *D. James Ross*

***David Starkey's Music & Monarchy** Music from the BBC series* 152' 31" (2 CDs)
Warner Classics 50999 4 32824 2 8
Music by Byrd, Dowland, Elgar, Gibbons, Handel, W. Lawes, Holst, Parry, Purcell, Stanford, Mendelssohn, Tallis, Vaughan Williams & Walton

'Music featured in the BBC TV series' says the outside. This isn't untrue, but only on page 6 of the booklet do we get the full story. 'These are not the performances heard in the BBC TV series' and in one instance there is only just a connection with the monarchy. Disc 2 includes a fine performance of the *Credo* from Vaughan Williams's *Mass in G minor* in the original Latin (King's/Willcocks) but at the Queen's coronation this was sung in an English adaptation. So what we have here is a collection of fairly aged recordings from Warner's back catalogue most of which, to be fair, still sound good. In the earlier repertoire this includes tracks from Fretwork and the Taverners and quite a lot of King's College, Cambridge. For me the big disappointments were the use of an organ version of Parry's *I was glad* (especially when there's an orchestral version on the LP from which Elgar's *Coronation Ode* extracts were taken) and, because no recording was available, the truly charming song written by Prince Albert for Victoria is missing. So if you're tempted by this because you enjoyed the programmes do be aware of what you're (not) getting. *David Hansell*

I did see at least part of all the programmes, which were visually sumptuous, despite being irritated beyond measure by the presenter's habit of asking questions that contained their own answers, leaving the interviewee only the options of saying 'Yes' or 'No'. Even when a proper question was asked, the answer was frequently interrupted so we still were denied the experts' insights. And I remember several of the TV music performances being better than those on the discs. *DH*

***The Passion of Reason** Five centuries of 'scientific' music* Sour Cream (rec. 1993/94)
Glossa **GCD P31102** 114' 54" (2 CDs)
Music by Bach, Bedyngham, Brumel, Cornysh, Fayrfax, Giles, Isaac, Janequin, Machaut, Newark, Preston, Trebor, Tye, Walter & anon

Sour Cream were the stellar recorder trio of Frans Brüggen, Kees Boeke and Walter van Hauwe and it did occur to me while listening to this re-issue that FB may by now have many admirers who are but dimly aware of his past as an iconic wind player. The ensemble came together in the

early 1970s, went their separate ways after a while but then re-convened in the early 90s to record this programme. I don't want to say too much about it, but here are a few thoughts and hints. Disc 1 begins with a fade-up of Machaut's famous palindrome and Disc 2 ends with a fade-out of a JSB canon. Between them come a rich selection of wrestling matches between the art and science of music including a performance of Solage's notorious *Fumeux fume* on almost impossibly low pitched recorders and Kees Boeke's imaginative realisation of JSB's *Canon per tonos* from the Musical Offering. If you've never heard this recital you really should, in much the same way that you really should hear The Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper.* *David Hansell*

Seson Bardos Band 52' 06"
Barn Cottage Records **bcroo8**

Apologies for delay. The CD arrived with a postcard dated 19 February – at least 2013! I'm embarrassed because the card was signed by Robin Bigwood, of Barn Cottage Records, who used to review for us, and the group's leader (at least, the player of the largest number of instruments – ten: the other three players offer another ten between them) is Rebecca Austen-Brown, whom I knew a decade or two ago as a baroque violinist and with whom I've played continuo in various events with Philip Thorby. She plays fiddles, recorders, gemshorns and a psaltery. Jon Banks plays harp and dulcimer, Arngeir Haukkson plays two gitterns, a lute and an oud, and Corrina Silvester is a discreet percussionist who doesn't smother the other instruments, and sounds all the better for playing in less than half the 17 pieces. The singer is Sophia Brumfitt, who fits well with the players. The programme is a mixture of well-known pieces and some I didn't recognise. It's not too difficult to guess the title: add an A is the clue. But unlike Vivaldi, this starts and ends with winter, suggesting continuity. There's no pretentious commentary – just two short paragraphs, then each piece given a brief introduction followed by texts and translations. The programme works well. The range of the music covers several centuries, extended by less dateable folk pieces, and one song composed in by Rebecca in an effective, timeless style. Well worth buying as an anthology, with a variety of performance styles. *CB*

21ST CENTURY

Uwe Steinmetz *Absolutely! Music for jazz soloists + string quartet* Uwe Steinmetz *sax*, Mads Tolling *vln*, Fitzwilliam String Quartet (Lucy Russell, Colin Scobie, Alan George, Heather Tuach) 62' 41"
Divina Art **dda 25112**
Steinmetz *Absolutely, Chaconne for Steve Lacy,*; Purcell/Steinmetz *Fantasias*; Bach/Russell/Steinmetz *Partita 2: Cicconne*

I think that the entirely original pieces are more successful than hybrids, but I leave reviews of them to experts. The problem with imposing a saxophone above early music isn't new. Most enthusiasts for Renaissance singers encountered it with the Hilliards, and quite a lot of listeners were intrigued, if not more; others were offended! Peter Holman told me about a student concert at King's College, London (around 1970) when the final tutti of *Spem in alium* was performed with a saxophone accompaniment (or vice versa). Having links with Lucy Russell and the rest of the quartet drew my interest (both the quartet and I have attachments to Fitzwilliam College), I was intrigued by the Purcell and Bach. There were two of Purcell's Fantazias (Z 738 & 742) and one composed by the saxophonist. The problem for the listener is that the saxophone is too loud, and anyway there isn't space in Purcell's tight counterpoint for much of a relationship with the strings even if they are individually distinguishable. Curiously, not having looked at the Bach facsimile for several years, I've compared it with an arrangement of the *Chaconne* twice in a few days – the other occasion being for a programme note on Busoni's version. I have very few complaints about the latter: it is far enough from the original to be worth hearing, but near enough for virtually every note to be justified. But the saxophone is the wrong instrument – a clarinet might have made the balance work. I would have been very interested if Duncan Druce and Alan Hacker ever thought of making a duet version (or asking Peter Maxwell Davies to help them out!) It's an interesting recording, but I'm not convinced. *CB*

CAROLS FROM CLEVELAND & BOSTON

Carols for Quire from the Old & New Worlds 2 Quire Cleveland, Ross W. Duffin
Quire QC 102 71' 39"

This is taken from live concerts in 2010 and 2011. The number of singers listed is 8 5 5 6, but the members may not have been identical for each recording. I'm not fully convinced by the group of English medieval carols. I first encountered them with John Stevens, their editor (*Musica Britannica* 4), and there was a tendency to treat the editorial bar-lines as intended to be regularly audible; but the more the movement is regular, the more the need to decide which are the major stresses. *Quid petis* is a bit of a hybrid, with the chorus in renaissance style, the verses having elements of the medieval and needing a more direct sound. The cadential rallentandos here and elsewhere are tedious – you can phrase a cadence by shaping the penultimate chord rather than by slowing down. The two Spanish pieces are better. There's an alternatim setting of a Christmas morning hymn *A solis ortis cardine* by Palestrina and Byrd's sophisticated version of the carol form, *This day Christ was born*, though how many people would now call either a carol?

The three 17th-century French pieces don't sound very French, and semi-silent final "e"s can sound awkward. The chronology slips back to the 16th century for Handl's brief *Canite tuba* (motet rather than carol) followed by four *Pie cantiones* (1582), a source that was first popularised by John Mason Neale in the 1850s, often with unrelated words. Here Duffin provides his own arrangements. It's difficult to adjust when the existing versions are so familiar, especially Holst's *Personet hodie*: I've played it since my early teens, including about 20 years for John Stevens' annual non-musicological carol gathering.

The final four items are a pleasant recent setting *Quiet promise* by Jennifer Conner, who won a competition, together with Holst's *In a bleak midwinter* (not all odd-numbered lines need a break at the end) and Howells' *A spotless rose* (I agree thoroughly with Duffin's enthusiasm) and Walford Davies less inspired arrangement of *The holly and the ivy.*

Reviewers of carol discs when one knows most of the music so well are likely to be super-critical, and listening while driving about 2,000 miles for a three-day holiday at a temperature of 35C, we were probably not at our most receptive. There is also the problem that I've been so absorbed in carols (however defined – *The New Oxford Book of Carols* accepts Christmas and strophic, but rejects more complex settings like *A spotless rose*) that my tastes are different. One omission (was it covered in vol. 1?) is the American shape-note repertoire. I suspect that the concerts

were excellent, but not quite up to the professional mark. I'd happily have bought it as a souvenir of a concert, but live recordings are a bit dangerous. *CB*

Joy to the World: An American Christmas
Handel and Haydn Society, Harry Christophers 63' 02
Coro COR16117

Harry consulted informally for the most popular carols in Boston, but didn't realise that some texts had different tunes to the ones we know. So *It came upon midnight clear* isn't the folksong arranged by Sullivan (the *New Oxford Book of Carols* includes both) but both tunes are sung for O little town of Bethlehem (also both in NOBC). Unlike Ross Duffin's programme, there are a couple of Billings tunes. The contemporary pieces work: I needed a second hearing for Morten Laudidsen's *O magnum mysterium*, but John Rutter's *There is a flower* needed no second hearing. (Harry says that notable organists and choirmasters favoured Rutter and Howells – I imagine Howells is mostly the one setting, but Rutter is prolific. I don't talk carols with John, except for a casual first meeting at an epiphany party at which he praised *NOBC*.) The singing is excellent, but I don't feel entirely comfortable with hymns sung without congregational input. The choir strength is 6.6.6.6. I wish they could vary their style a bit more: anthologies over the centuries need more variety of sound. But it's an interesting anthology, and the final piece, Leontovich's "Carol of the Bells" rounds the programme off brilliantly in 1' 25": apparently, if I watched more films, it wouldn't have been such a surprise. *CB*

GESTER DOWNLOADS
www.qobuz.com

As the music business changes and record companies are forced to find ways to lower the cost of production, and musicians seek new avenues to get attention, and in turn finance for future projects, so more and more programmes are only made available through digital downloads. This new section in the magazine will undoubtedly grow, as we will also include material that *is* available through the normal channels, but is more efficient for the distributors. We will always download the highest available quality sound files (some reviewers on Apple equipment and some on PCs) so there will be no compromise on *that* score.

The five releases to be reviewed in this edition of the magazine are all from the same company and essentially the same musicians: Le Parlement de musique, directed by Martin Gester. First things first: the site named above is the internet address you have to go to in order to gain access, It helps if you speak French! Set up a username and password and then the actual process of obtaining the music should just be the same as buying from any other website, where the purchased item is a download. Within minutes, the five recordings, with links to PDF versions of the booklets, etc., were in my folder, and I was able to listen online or download the pieces using iTunes (which works on both types of computer). I have gone no further than this, but it should be a simple task to transfer them onto iPods and other audio players – you should probably think carefully about how you will store the files before you commit yourself to a particular file format.

Froberger *En passant le Rhin* (69' 46") highlights the keyboard playing of Aline Zylberajch in four suites by the eponymous composer and one by the Strasbourg-based Michael Bulyovsky, alongside sonatas by Rosenmüller (op. 2/1), Krieger, an anonymous *ciaccona*, a violin sonata by Bödekker and a suite for lute by Johann Gumprecht; 29 tracks, selling at €11.99 with the option to cherry-pick the tracks you are interested in.

The second of the batch is **Bach *Six Concerts en trio pour divers instruments.*** These are, of course, the six organ trios; no. 1 appears for flute, violin and continuo, no. 2 in D for two violins (I was struck by how incredibly clean the lines are drawn here!), no. 3 is a D minor duet for violin and harpsichord, no. 4 is cast as a duet between organ and harpsichord in E minor, no. 5 uses organ and viol with continuo (C major), while no. 6 in G has flute, violin, viol and continuo. 18 tracks (73') for the same price. I have heard several very good recordings of this sequence, sometimes with a constant line-up, sometimes with a rich palette of instrumental colours. This one certainly ranks amongst the best and I will return to it often.

Salomé Haller and Kirsten Blase are the soloists in **Couperin *Leçons de ténèbres.*** These are among the very brightest jewels of the French baroque and are lovingly performed here with just the right amount of bloom in the voices to convey the drama of the texts without losing any of the precision of Couperin's mesmerising lines. The accompaniments are stylishly realized, the perfect backdrop for some glorious singing. The programme (7 tracks, 58' 28" – four of the tracks are not downloadable separately) is completed by a setting of the *Miserere*.

Clérambault *La Muse de l'Opéra* also features the stunning voice of Salomé Haller. The opening air *Au son des trompettes* is a lively, rousing affair with plenty of dialogue between the voice and the trumpet, as well as with the strings. There's a tempest and a *sommeil* (sleep scene), an aria about birds (cue the flute) and concludes with another aria, though without the trumpets. The work is followed by the *Huitième Concert Dans le Goût Théatral* from Couperin's *Les Goûts re-unis*, 11 instrumental movements ending with an *Air des Bacchantes*, and then a second cantata, Montéclair's Italian *Morte di Lucrezia*. Interestingly, the only Italian thing about it is the text! If you closed your ears to the language (which is not as easy as it sounds, as this is one singer who does know how to carry the words), you would know instantly that it was by a French composer. 24 tracks (53' 55").

The final release in this batch is **François Couperin *Le Portrait de l'Amour*** (31 tracks, one of them not available separately, 69' 46"), again showcasing Aline Zylberajch. The four movements of the title-piece (*Il Ritratto D'amore*) and the trio sonata *La Superbe* are framed by extracts from the various *ordres* of Couperin's output, played on a Ruckers harpsichord. As I never had piano lessons as a child, and only learned to play harpsichord at university as part of my keyboard harmony lessons, I have no real knowledge of this repertoire, but I know excellent playing on any instrument when I hear it, and musicality is everywhere on this disc, as indeed it is on all five of these highly recommendable releases.

If you have never downloaded music before and you love French baroque music, now could be the time to start. *BC*

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More than usual CDs remain unreviewed this issue. I was getting on well early in September, but had too many distractions as the deadline drew near and some reviewers were away (hence the smaller than usual list of reviewers). We hope we can catch up for the next issue, and reviewers, please send reviews in early! *CB/BC*

BOOK REVIEW

Paul Elie ***Reinventing Bach*** Union Books, 2012. 498pp, £25.00 (also p/b) ISBN 978 1908526397

My brother gave me this book for Christmas. I read two-thirds of it quite quickly but then got distracted by other things until more recently, when I finally finished it.

This is a 'big' hardback (over 400 pages of main text + another 100 packed with copious notes and an index), and it's unusual in many ways. Starting from the premise that Johann Sebastian Bach was always interested in the technology of his own time (especially where organ-building or the development of new musical instruments were concerned) Elie explores how the introduction and gradual improvement of recording technology impacted Bach performance throughout the 20th century and on into our own – from phonograph-cylinders to 78s, from LPs and cassettes to CDs, and on into i-Pods and downloads of all kinds.

At the outset Elie explains that his book 'is a story of invention – a series of variations about inventions in different media, if you like. The musicians who figure in the story, all of them steeped in the music of Bach, deliberately or intuitively worked out patterns of invention through their encounter with the music of Bach by way of new technology.'

He goes on: 'Albert Schweitzer, Pablo Casals, Glenn Gould and Yo-Yo Ma; Leopold Stokowski, Rosalyn Tureck, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Dinu Lipatti; Wendy Carlos, Joshua Rifkin, Masaaki Suzuki and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson: all in their different ways made music in the aural space that one of them *[Gould, of course]* in a celebrated set of sleeve notes, called "the realm of technical transcendence." They were not technicians only. No, they were artists who were inventive in the way of Bach: leaving the invention itself intact, they developed it through technology, completing it by taking it to unexpected places. From invention they fashioned a particular kind of transcendence, at once faithful to Bach and distinctly contemporary.'

An interesting and unusual concept, then – thoroughly researched, and extremely well-written. The list of those whose names Elie quotes above is by no means exhaustive, of course (he's as interesting about Wanda Landowska as he is about John Eliot Gardiner); but they do give you a flavour of where he wants to go. Schweitzer, Casals, Gould – a book could be written just about those three, and about their relationship to the music of Bach; so it's not too surprising that this is quite a 'big read'.

By way of example, let's take just Albert Schweitzer. Elie uses him as a jumping-off point, picturing him in the African jungle in the early years of the 20th century after a day's work as a medical doctor at Lambaréné, steadily committing to memory all of Bach's organ works on a zinc-lined pedal-piano in a corrugated-iron shed. Already world-famous, not only through his life-choices but through his books (about Jesus Christ, and about Bach) Columbia Records knew that they were backing a winner when in 1935 they invited him to come back to London to make an 'album' (several 12" 78s, in card folders bound together into book-format) of Bach's organ-music. Their decision was much influenced by the development in the late 1920s of electrical recording, using the new-fangled microphone; the limited sensitivity of the old acoustic equipment had previously made such recordings impracticable.

A reporter was there for one of those night-time recording sessions in All Hallows by the Tower, as Schweitzer recorded the Toccata and Fugue in D minor: 'He supports himself on the organ bench with both hands, and plays with assurance and energy the difficult foot pedals once or twice through. Then he telephones the sacristy that he is ready. The man in charge of the reception puts on a new disc and lowers the needle. Now a muffled bell beside the console gives the signal ...' Just one small example, then, but hopefully it gives you a flavour, at least, of what this book is all about.

Running in parallel with all this innovative technical exploration is a biography of Bach himself. For a reader not already fully conversant with the details of Bach's life and career, this will be helpful – essential, indeed – and these narrative sections are written in an easy-going, approachable style. Paul Elie is quite open about his indebtedness to Christoph Wolff [*'Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician'*, *2001*] so don't expect anything too groundbreaking in those sections.

'Unusual in many ways', I said – important, too, I think, for amongst other things it picks up on just how seminal Bach's music has been in the last century-or-so in building bridges, whether we're talking cross-cultural bridges (*e.g.* Keith Jarrett's superb harpsichord-playing, or perhaps The Beatles) or talking political bridges (*e.g.* the central rôle played by Leipzig's Nikolaikirche – so closely linked to JSB – in bringing down the Berlin Wall, or perhaps Rostropovich, flying in to play unaccompanied Bach at the Wall itself).*

I found Paul Elie's book most stimulating, and I can heartily recommend it. Currently you can find 'Reinventing Bach' on offer at amazon.co.uk for £21.25 (or in Kindle format, if that's your thing, for £14.50). *Beresford King-Smith*

* *This reminded me of the cellist Vedran Smailović who played every day in Sarajevo during the war – he later wrote a book about it. By coincidence, I saw bits of a TV biography of Joan Baez, which included a shot of her taking over from the cellist for a while: both musicians had risked the other sort of shot many times.* CB

PRAETORIUS & EBERLIN

I was intrigued by the two small-scale items in the Eberlin volume reviewed in our previous issue and I took it down to the new site for what seems to have retained the name of the Beauchamp Summer School a few miles furter west of Gloucester than before. It is primarily concerned with polychoral music for voices, cornetts, sackbuts, curtals and strings, with a few recorders and is usually devoted to a singe composer or a theme. This year was Michael Praetorius again – and he really deserves it: a grossly underestimated composer. There was very little overlap with what we had encountered previously, and much of the music was outstanding. Although best-known for a few carols and dances (the latter French melodies scored for strings), the larger chorale settings can be magnificent, with the melodies treated with imagination and a sophisticated skill in applying modal harmony for earlier Lutheran pieces. There is some brilliant soloistic writing (mostly for cornetti and violins), and there are often very beautiful short introductions. Most recordings have been based on Christmas, but that is an oversimplification. Philipp Nicolai's two famous hymns *Wachet auf!* and *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (the author was almost certainly the the composer of the melodies at least) were published in 1599 and are far more literary than Luther's straight-forward theology. Praetorius's settings, especially the large-scale *Wachet auf*, were obviously intended to be up-to-date, with brilliant elaborations that Praetorius he notated in full. (They were not, incidentally, intended for the Christmas period, though that is what they became.) We were fortunate to have amateur players capable of the music.

I was intending to expand slightly my review on Eberlin's *Four Sacred Cantatas* (see *EMR* 155, pp. 7-8), the link with the previous paragraph being my hope that I might have a chance to hear them. The most likely tenor happened to be one of the cornetti, Wayne Plummer, with violinist Sarah Dodds and myself. This is virtuoso music from much later in the 17th century – probably the 1680s. Most of the elaboration is for the violinist, with extensive semi- and demisimiquavers and some double stopping. The tenor has fewer complexities, but it would have made an impact on the audience had there been one and we had done more than just played it through. The text by Anton Ulrich was published in 1665 and set by at least two other composers. We didn't have voices for the duet *Vae misero* (another fairly miserable text) with awkward ranges, as stated in the review, but I'd love to try it! *CB*

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Composer John Altman, who has written and conducted in almost every style, including ours, on lunch-time Test Match Special has said : "the most important thing is to be authentic in each style".

Is it time that the HIP brigade cast off the shadow of Taruskin and went back to calling a spade a spade?

Graham O'Reilly

MEMORABLE COMMENTS ON EARLY MUSIC

I was intrigued by a snippet in the on-line The Strad. If readers would like to offer their own early-music suggestions, do send them in – they can intrigue, amuse, horrify or delight readers and would be useful for filling gaps at the ends of pages.

Giovanni Battista Draghi 'What Passion cannot Musick raise and quell?' (from Odes to Saint Cecilia)
Parley of Instruments/Peter Holman

This is my top 17th-century listen, with the wonderful countertenor Michael Chance singing. The settings by Purcell and Handel of this text are well known, but Draghi is another world: the harmonic turns are extra-ordinary. This is one of the great discoveries of Hyperion's monumental and highly acclaimed 'English Orpheus' series, which the Parley recorded in the 1980s and 90s.

Judy Tarling

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MONICA HALL & STEWART McCOY

De Visée: Baroque lute music played by Toyohiko Satoh

I was very surprised to read in the review of this recording in *EMR* 155 (August 2013) p.43:

[De Visée] was born in a little village called Viseu (hence De Visée in French) near Coimbra, where he learnt the guitar. After leaving university he moved to Paris where he studied the guitar with Corbetta and the viol with Forqueray; in 1719 he was appointed guitar teacher to Louis XIV.

Louis XIV died in 1715 and was succeeded by his great-grand son Louis XV.

More importantly, De Visée's place and even approximate date of birth are currently unknown and there is no reason to suppose that he was Portuguese.

The earliest mention of him is 1680 when he is referred to "Maître pour le théorbe et la guitare" in a letter and was evidently established in Paris.

He may have known Corbetta and would have been familiar with his music but there is no proof that he studied the guitar with him. Forqueray was at least ten years younger than De Visée and is therefore hardly likely to have been his teacher although they did take part in a concert together in 1702.

Presumably the reviewer has copied all this from the liner notes of the CD without checking whether any of it is true. Satoh does at least have the grace to admit that his "biography" of De Visée is "all my imagination and conjecture" and most of it is little more than moonshine. It is not very helpful to have it repeated as if it were established fact.

The most detailed account of De Visée's life is included in

the Éditions Transatlantiques edition of his two guitar books "Les deux livres de guitare" edited by Helene Charnasse, Rafael Andia and Gerard Rebours.

Monica Hall

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Toyohiko Satoh and Robert de Visée

"What is truth?", said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer." (Francis Bacon)

Our shared passion for early music involves a search for truth. That is what scholarship is about. By sharing our discoveries, by arguing over contentious issues, we increase our knowledge, and gain further insight into what happened in the past. Universities, and other places of learning, foster scholarship; we trust their professors, as we do the contents of their academic books and journals. The system works reasonably well, but it can so easily be undermined by the cancer of hoax.

In the booklet notes to his latest CD, the Japanese lutenist Toyohiko Satoh tells us that Robert de Visée was born in Viseu, Portugal, that he studied the viol with Forqueray, and that he was appointed guitar teacher to Louis XIV in 1719. I should have smelt a rat, because that last piece of nonsense also appeared in the notes to *Les goûts accordés* (Atma Classique ACD2 2623), which I reviewed in *EMR*, October 2012, page 30. There I pointed out that Louis XIV died in 1715. De Visée's connection with Viseu and Forqueray certainly came as a surprise to me, and although I inwardly raised a sceptical eyebrow, I mistakenly trusted Satoh's pedigree, and accepted that what he wrote about De Visée was true.

According to Carpe Diem's website, Toyohiko Satoh is "one of the most important and influential lute players of the last century", who "plays on this recording the largely unknown late works of French baroque composer and lutenist Robert De Visée, guitar teacher to the King Luis XIV" [sic]. Satoh certainly has a world-wide reputation as a lutenist. According to Wikipedia (can we believe anything on the internet?) Satoh studied the lute with Eugen Dombois in 1968 at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Basel, Switzerland; he has been making recordings of lute music since 1970; from 1973 to 2004 he was professor at the Royal Conservatory at The Hague, Holland; in 1987 Tree Edition published his *Method for the Baroque Lute*. One would normally expect such an eminent luminary to be a reliable source of information.

I am grateful to Monica Hall for pointing out that some of Satoh's biography of Robert de Visée is fanciful conjecture: there is no evidence to show that De Visée came from Portugal, and none to suggest that he learned the viol with Forqueray. To make a genuine mistake is forgivable – we all make mistakes from time to time – but to spread disinformation deliberately is totally reprehensible. It brings discredit not only to Satoh, but also to the Royal Conservatory at The Hague and anyone else associated with him who may have added to his credibility.

Stewart McCoy

JIM RICH
(11 February 1945 – 3 June 2013)

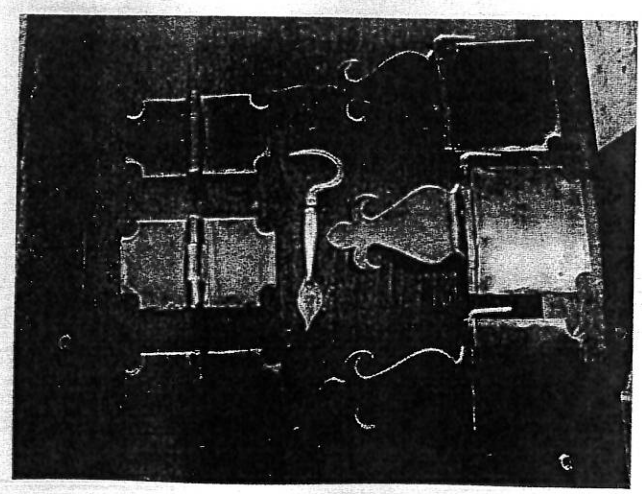
Jim was one of our initial subscribers. His address at Takilma Forge & Wagon Works, 9345 Takilma Road, Cave Junction always appealed: we imagined it to be in the middle of nowhere. Twelve years ago, when visiting Oregon, we decided to satisfy our curiosity and delivered a new issue of *EMR* by hand. In this case, it was more complicated than we expected – a minor road petering out a few miles from the Oregon/California border with a sparse population and very few signs of house numbers. We found what seemed to be the house, confirmed by finding a couple of CB's editions of *Messiah* on the seat of a wagon parked next to it. Nobody seemed to be at home; it was, of course, unlocked. We wandered round the workshop and upstairs into the house, the number of instruments, music books and scores confirming that we must have found the right place though we seem to have been discrete enough not to wake his wife, who was in bed! A neighbour (half a mile away) thought that he would be back soon, and he was when when we returned, and we were made very welcome. Some years later he visited us in Wyton – Sunday lunch at a pub on the Ouse and chat at our house. Despite such limited contact (we exchanged a number of emails) and we always felt friends, In the 1960s and early 1970s he had produced LPs for the Musical Heritage Society. He then moved to Oregon and set himself up as a blacksmith. In his later years, he became an enthusiast at manning tall ships. It was appropriate that he linked two of his enthusiasms by being blacksmith for *The Pirates of the Carribean*. He was a founder member of the Jefferson Baroque Orchestra. He died on a Sunday evening reading a book.

CB & EB

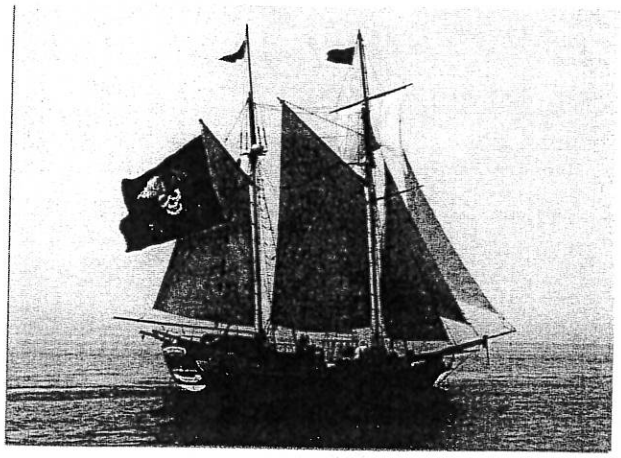
Sometimes it is difficult to find information on the web, but not in this case. I emailed Margret Gries, Musical Director of the Jefferson Baroque Orchestra, and a vast amount of information appeared, including the fact that we had met at Vancouver in 1996. The rest of this comes from her. It's longer than our usual obituaries, but Jim seemed such an interesting man.

James Brooking Rich, artistic director of the Jefferson Baroque Orchestra, died suddenly on June 23, 2013 at his home in Takilma, Oregon at the age of 68. The Jefferson Baroque Orchestra community mourns his death, and will carry on his vision of historically informed music making, dedicating the Twentieth Anniversary Season to his memory.

Jim's skills as blacksmith, tall ship sailor and early music musician all reflected his deep interest in the culture of the 18th century and the recovery of the artistic goals of the period. A graduate of Northwestern University and Hunter College of CUNY, Jim produced numerous recordings for the Musical Heritage Society in the 1960s and early '70s, before moving to southern Oregon to establish himself as a blacksmith. Many of the recordings produced for MHS represented his interest in bringing the riches of early music to the public. Jim applied these same "period-performance" intentions to his work on tall ships, including as crew on the Lady Washington, the Bill of Rights, the Lynx, and most recently as Captain of the Royaliste. Inspired by the historical novels of Patrick O'Brian, Jim studied everything about tall ships, about historical gunnery, about everything connected with the royal navy and was generous in sharing all of his knowledge with others. As a farrier and blacksmith for almost forty years at his Takilma Forge and Wagon Works, he recreated a one-man historically designed workplace. Jim made durable hand-forged wrought-iron ware using the traditional tools of the craft: bellows-blown coal fired forge, hammer and tongs. Jim also provided exquisite hand-forged hardware for a number of contemporary harpsichord makers.



A founding member of Early Music America, Jim eagerly looked for opportunities to sing and play. After moving to Takilma, Jim developed several small period-performance ensembles in the Illinois Valley, eventually founding his Jefferson Baroque Orchestra in 1994 as a means of presenting larger-scale works by well-known composers. The success of the Jefferson Baroque Orchestra revealed his skill in developing a community that would share his enthusiasm for early music. Jim's kindness, his humor, his gentlemanly demeanor, and his ability to tell the contextual history behind the music brought us all into his world of delight. Of course, setting up JBO concerts always involved a whirlwind of driving, moving harpsichords and music stands and seeing to all of the details of a self-produced performance. Yet Jim always appeared calm and focused on his goal. His broad smile and elegant carriage, even when dressed in his sailor's slops, set the tone for all of us. In his extemporaneous



introductions to our programs he amazed us all with his instant recall of dates, names, places and events. More than that, he performed beautifully both as a singer and instrumentalist.

The day of Jim's sudden death he had been rehearsing and planning JBO events, including writing the program notes for the first concert of the Twentieth Anniversary season. He had taken a walk up the mountains usual, then worked at the forge in the morning and practiced both voice and oboe in the afternoon. Our last phone conversation – the third of the day – was around 7.30 pm and he told me he was going to read a book in the evening. A friend stopped by to see him next morning and found him upstairs in his reading chair. There was absolutely no hint of any physical problem, and he recently had a physical exam needed for his captain's license. He was buried at sea on 2 August.

His broad-ranging intellectual acumen, and unaffected and contagious joy in all aspects of early music will be deeply missed. We intend to carry forth his vision for our ensemble, maintaining Jim's commitment to historically informed performances of the music he loved.

Margret Gries

The paintings on Jim's harpsichord by Elisabetta Lanzoni illustrate his tall-ship enthusiasm brilliantly: see http://www.elisabettalanzoni.com/rich_eng.htm

There are memorial photos of Captain Jim on facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TallShipRoyaliste

Jim's workshop and its output https://www.Facebook.com/pages/Takilma-Forge-Wagon-Works

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Stephen Willis

We were very sorry to receive an email on Sept. 27th from Doris Willis that her husband Stephen died on the 25th. I had no information at hand to produce a short biography, but I know he had a long history in singing early music. Doris has kindly offered to write about him for the next issue.

PORTUGUESE POLYPHONY

De Profundis, conductor David Allinson.
Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge. 28 Sept, 2013.

Cambridge is full of church concerts. An oriental lady in the sort of black dress singers sometimes wear asked in hesitant English where the concert was. "Was it polyphonic church music?" She said "Yes". So I walked a few yards with her, and it turned out that it was the United Reform Church she was singing at. I was a bit worried about acoustic interference at Little St Mary's next door – some years ago, I was accompanying Jennie Cassidy for an audition recording to the background of *Pictures at an Exhibition* in what sounded like a brass arrangement and was very audible, but at this event I only registered brass noises when the concert ended.

Had I thought, I'd have remembered that the Portuguese programme was an affair of men only – 18 of them. This was the third of a series of Iberian Renaissance Masterpieces. The choir has visiting conductors, which must be interesting for the singers. The main work was Duarte Lobo's *Requiem a8*, an impressive piece that certainly justified a couple of hours break on my way from London to Huntingdon. The *Requiem* was interspersed with other Portugues composers from the late 16th and the first half of the 17th century – Manuel Cardoso, Filipe de Magalhes and Aires Fernandez. The style was to some extent retrospective, but the music is often suprisingly expressive and imaginative.

The first and last pieces were sung in the round. The last was conducted from within the circle; I had assumed that the first wasn't, and I was impressed by the excellence of the ensemble singing, but perhaps David *was* conducting, concealed by a more substantial singer. The rest of the programme was delivered in a curved line (I'm not skilled in guessing the more exact way of measuring an arc at sight!) What seemed very odd was the need to re-form between nearly every piece. I can't imagine that happening in a Requiem mass. I've been considering lately whether 8-part music was always sung in two choirs. In England, a piece like the Lobo would have parts 1 on one side, parts 2 on the other, even if the geographical spacing is minimal; surely, most churches split sides, especially when (as in the *Requiem*) the two basses were barely independent. I can't believe that this hasn't been studied. When BC and I edited the Biber *Brussels Mass* for a Prom, the conductor wanted it in one choir. Philip Thorby did a day's course at Waltham Abbey with that score, but the singers had chorus scores, and for the performance in Nov. 3, Philip too has the split score. The *Requiem* has only a few places where Choir 1 and Choir 2 operate independently, but that is enough to imply the layout. (BC rolled off a few continental MSS where the choir parts sometimes had the same music, a bit like *cantores* and *decani*).

A more specifically musical weakness was a tendency of the middle voices to push their voices too hard: I gather that it was an Allison feature, not part of the choir's style; perhaps it was to make the middle parts have some shape in an acoustic that couldn't project eight parts clearly. I'm impressed with the choir, as was Hugh Keyte for a previous concert (with no pushy voices). Future conductors are Andrew Parrott, Jeremy Summerly, Edward Wickham and Andrew Carwood. *CB*