Early Music REVIEW

Number 160 June 2014

ISSN 1355-3437 Price £2.50

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

tel +44 (0)1480 452076 fax +44(0)1480 450821
clifford.bartlett@btopenworld.com
elaine.bartlett2@btopenworld.com
Contact for CD reviews bc16661@hotmail.com

Annual subscription
UK: £22.50 Europe £27.50
Rest of World: £40.00 (air) £27.50 (surface)
(foreign rates £5 cheaper without Concert Diary)
Sterling cheques payable to
The Early Music Company Ltd
Subscribers from abroad:
Payment information on renewal invoices

One Sunday in 1988, Emma Kirkby and a friend had been talking over lunch about computers for setting music; so she phoned me and the idea was planted. King's Music already existed with editions prepared by correcting out-of-copyright scores and cutting strips for parts. We still have several Handel oratorios done in that way, but the most widely sold work is Blow's *Venus and Adonis*. The concept of producing proper music-setting with a computer was exciting, but it took a while to find a suitable programme for Archimedes/ Acorn. The main problem was sensible page-turns – easy on Sibelius a decade later, but not on any programme we found then. Garland produced several substantial series of scored 16th-century music on computer, but it was by no means unusual to have a single bar running over a page-turn.

We found one system that solved that problem. Philip Hazel, a member of Cambridge's computer department, had designed a coding system (PMS) which permitted horizontal control. Other aspects became more and more complicated, and developments ceased after about ten years. The input appeared as a series of letters and signs on a qwerty keyboard. The basic code was simple. This is part of a simple hymn with halved note-values (clue on page 3):

|| Ccc|fgaa|ggF|| raab|c'cfe|ddC||

but a wide range of note-values, variety of adjustments and underlay added. The problem was that the music could only be seen at the next stage – on screen. It can show wrong notes, but the note-lengths must be accurate. It did us well till after 2000 – we were fortunate at BC's skill. Sibelius took over, but we still need to keep PMS going, and that involves retaining Acorn equipment.

We went to an Acorn exhibition about six years ago, but the equipment there wasn't compatible with computers and printers from the mid 1990s. Our first laser printer (bought on the strength of the royalties for Andrew Parrott's *Messiah*) lasted from 1988 till a few years ago. Its successor has now died.

However, Jon Dixon (Joed Music) took up Acorn & PMS (for details see *EMR* 1), passing on typesetting to BC who, now that Jon is aging, is carrying on Joed. Brian suggested that we might make an offer for Jon's more recent Acorn equipment, so that, apart from having a compatible printer, it should give us back-up for adjusting our Acorn masters, of which there are over 900.

We collected the equipment on the Spring Bank Holiday saturday – now we have to try to reassemble it and make it work... *CB/EB*

MUSIC REVIEWS

Clifford Bartlett

PARTICULAR MUSIC

I know Stephen Pegler from his circulation of the Viola da Gamba Society publications. I hadn't realised that he was also producing his own editions under the name *Particular Music*. The main emphasis is 16th-century vocal music, with more exceptions from earlier than later. *Introduction & Waltz Rondo for Piano Forte* (DP1: £1.60) is by an ancestor of the editor, Daniel Pegler (1799-1869): the printed original edition is available on Petrucci/IMSPL. He also published two piano pieces by a friend, David Pennent: *Fair Ground Suite for Piano* (DFP2: £5.50) and *The Book of Daniel* (DFP2: £3.50) – they can be heard at www.pennantpublishing.co.uk.

I'll place the selection I made from Stephen's catalogue in order of the composers' births. All praises for the score and set of parts, which seem underpriced now the editor is retired. I'd probably charge the first item below £10.00 – and that would be cheap for a small run. I've received viol parts, but not recorder: I should have checked if the recorder parts were convenient for singers.

Heinrich Isaac *Motets in 4 parts, vol. 1* (HI1: £6.00)

The speed at which Isaac's reputation is progressing is slow: I suspect that most musicians still know him just from *Innsbruck ich muss dich lassen* sung as a hymnn tune or as various Bach settings. His best-known motet is *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam* (C2C3C4F4 – Tr T T B) written for Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492 – no doubt for many years thought more important than Columbus's voyage! The only study I could find at hand[1] shows the complexity of the motet, which is most obvious in the third section, when the tenor is tacet and the bass provides a series of a varied descending fourth – and that is by no means all! *Sustinuimus pacem* (C1C2C3C4 – Tr T T B) has a rather miserable text, yet it is much more mobile than the previous motet, and was also used as a chanson *En l'ombre d'ung buissonet*, though only the opening words are given. The music feels rather more congenial than the Latin text. Finally, another *Quis dabit* continuing with *pacem populo timenti?* (C1C3C3F3 – transposed down a 4th to Tr T T B). This is a secular text from Seneca's (or anon) play *Hercules Oetaeus* with six anonymous lines to conclude.[2] The performance I heard on the web went quickly along, which probably benefits Seneca (if he be the author). The vocal range is ATBarB. The parts for instruments have second and third parts in alto clef, recorders as the vocal parts. There are another four editions a4 and one a6. For the next two items, the low treble clefs: need no warning!

1. Richard Taruslin in "Current Musicology" 21, 1976, pp. 83-92 – most editions treat the first two parts as an entity.

2. Lucius Annaeus Seneca (BC4-AD 65) followed the rhetorical and political career of his father. His musical "fame" comes from Monteverdi's *L'incoronatione di Poppea*, where most singers taking that role tend to take him at his own expectation.

Ludwig Senfl *Four pieces based on "Fortunata desperata" in 5 parts.* (LS1; £7.00)

Fortunata desperata often comes along with less common texts, and that is true here. The four songs (omitting the common title) are:

1. *Nasci pati mori*
2. *Ich stünd an einem Morgen*
3. *Helena desiderio plena*
4. *Virgo prudentissima*

Nos. 1-2 are for C1 C3 C3 C4 F4 – Tr T T T B
Nos 3-4 are for C1 C1 C3 C4 F4 – Tr Tr T T B
The cantus firmus occupies stave 2 in nos 1-2, stave 3 in 3-4.

I first encountered Senfl as music primarily for instruments, whether texted or not, so the pieces are have considerable flexibility. If you are concerned with text, leave the cantus firmus to an instrument and sing the rest. No. 1, however, comprises only three words, and the others are quite gnomic. Helena (no. 3), the mother of Constantine the Great, by myth if not fact discovered the cross, not a wood! Well worth investigating.

Johannes Ghiselin *5 Motets in four parts* (JG1; £11.00)

1. *Anima mea liquefacta est* (G2 C3 C3 C4 – Tr T T B) down a 4th
2. *Inviolata, integra et casta* (G2 C1 C2 C4 – Tr T T B) -4th
3. *O gloriosa Dominum* (C1 C4 C4 F4 – Tr T T B)
4. *Maria virgo semper laetare* (C3 C4 F3 F4 – Tr T B B)
5. *Regina coeli laetare* (C1 C2 C4 C4 – Tr T B B)

These five motets a4 come from Petrucci prints in 1502 and 1505. All are Marian, with No. 3 in two parts having 284 bars. His dates are unknown; his works come from the last decade of the 15th century and the first of the 16th. He was rewarded with wide circulation by the first polyphonic publisher. This probably is intended for singing in church, with domestic instrumental playing fine at home! He's really only a name to me: I'd love to hear some.

Andrea Gabrieli *9 Madrigals in 3 parts* (AG1; £18.00)

We now come onto more familiar territory. It's easy to pass over three-part pieces, and I suspect that I concentrated on the bigger pieces when I reviewed A-R's complete edition of his madrigals: it's somehow easier to digest them in small batches. His *Libro Primo de Madrigali a Tre Voci* (1575) appeared more of less in the centre of his madrigalian output. His first book a5 dates from 1566, he died in 1585 (with two posthumous madrigal books to follow).[3] These can be much lighter in some respects, but the lengthy *Ella non sa* has seven sections running to 251 bars. Nos. 2-8 are from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, framed by Tansillo and

3. If you still use the printed edition of *The New Grove* and older reference works, you'll get the wrong dates. He was born in 1533, NOT 1510. He died on 30 Aug 1585.

Bembo – using all the best poets. There are three range patterns, but there is room for flexibility. The three-part pieces seem far more suitable to skilled (but not necessarily professional) solo singers who can work out what level of dramatic action is appropriate; if there is an audience, texts need to be available to the audience. Congratulations to Emma Tristram for her translation.

Lassus *Penitential Psalms I-III* (OL1; £24.00)

1. Psalm 6: *Domine in furore*
   (C1 C3 C4 C4 F4 – Tr Tr T T B) up minor 3rd
2. Psalm 31: *Beati quorum remissae sunt iniquitates*
   (G2 C3 C4 C4 F2 – Tr Tr T T B) up a tone
3. Psalm 37: *Domine, ne in furore*
   (C1 C3 C4 C4 F4 – Tr Tr T T B) up a 4th

A sixth part (additional treble) is added in the last movement – *sicut erat* – of each Psalm. The score includes a compromise for playing without an extra treble instrument, but singers should try to find the necessary voice. Unlike the other issues I have seen, this has a page of preface and commentary. This score also includes parts as well These psalms are Lassus at his best. and it is good value, especially if singers will read from single parts, which is what every renaissance singer would have done. The editor, however, aims it primarily towards instruments, and I suspect that these pieces are rather longer than viols or recorders expect. Vol. 2 (nos 4-7) is available for £28 and the concluding *Laudate Dominum* is £7.00.

Translations of each section are printed in the score and each part, as in the other items I have seen. There does seem to be an unnecessary emphasis on playing rather than singing music which is primarily vocal: there's no objection to using only instruments, but the presence of even one confident singer who can also pronounce the language gives clues as to how the music is shaped.

ORAZIO VECCHI MOTETS

Orazio Vecchi *Motecta (1590)* Edited by William R. Martin and Eric J. Harbeson (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance*, 160). A-R Editions, 2013. xxi pp, 4 facs, 194pp, $160.00

I'm hardly aware of Vecchi's church music, though his secular, especially dramatic madrigals are quite well known. There are 33 motets, 1-7 a4, 8-13 a5, 14-19 a6, 20-32 a8 and no. 33 a10 – a surprising number of polychoral pieces. The music looks attractive: it would be worth getting eight people together and try them. They don't look too difficult to sing, but getting copies together would be expensive. In most respects this is well-edited – but there is absolutely no mention of the significance of clefs. Have the editors no awareness of high and untransposed clefs. Anyone who knows the conventions will glance at the clefs and immediately be aware that G-clefs usually have C4 or F3 clefs as the lowest part, and that is transposed to match (roughly) the C1/F4 standard clefs. The table almost gives the evidence at a glance merely by listing G2 or C1, but that is confused when, in the double-choir pieces, sometimes the lower choir is placed above the upper one, where the lower choir is labelled Choir I, so is shown as C1 rather than G2. (nos 20, 22, 24, 28). The double-choir pieces usually fit the standard compass. It seems a pity that the series editor didn't inspect it: not many people can transpose by a fourth from score – though they can adjust more easily if they are reading single original parts. There is no great alternation of high and low choirs, nor two choirs of identical range – both common elsewhere. The single-choir pieces also need pitch adjustment.

No, 22 has a strange clash at bars 43 and 64, where one choir ends with an A major breve chord and the other choir enters with a C major chord after the first semibreve of A major chord. One does see in some composers such chords cut short to avoid the problem, but Vecchi doesn't bother. The second C can't be editorially sharpened, since it is followed by three more Cs with no accidental: no-one would expect two editorial C sharps followed by two C naturals.

No. 10 (pars I of *Ave Virgo gratiosa*) has *Ave maris stella* included as an elaborated cantus firmus. The editor comments that it is transposed a fourth higher than usual: in fact, it isn't, since the clefs (G2 C2 C3 C3 F3) implies performance down a fourth.

I've concentrated on one main point. Choirs of A T Bar B can manage the standard clefs, but the chiavette pieces lack a bass sound. Even if there were two different choral bodies, the result would be odd.

THE GIBBONS HYMNAL

***The Gibbons Hymnal: Hymns and Anthems* edited by David Skinner** Novello (NOV294360), 2014. [xii] + 159pp, £8.95.

This is a follow-up to the similar Tallis volume by David Skinner (and apologies for not complimenting him at a marvellous concert last night: see p.16). Unlike Tallis, Gibbons produced only settings for tune and bass. George Wither's *Hymns and Songs of the Church* (1623) contains a large number of verses based on biblical texts and his own liturgical hymns. Gibbons cued 17 "songs" to 90 poems, each set to treble and bass at the end of the volume, with no words in sight. Some are still well-established in hymnbooks. The volume is supplemented by ten anthems for choir, needing no solos.

The relationship between the two sections of the book is less obvious than the Tallis one, where the hymns at least had four parts. The Gibbons has only two, the upper part either treble or soprano (G2 or C1), though without enormous differences in the compass. The bass is always the normal bass clef (F4). Is there evidence that the tunes were meant to be sung in four parts? I would rather expect the accompaniment to be on virginalls, chamber organ or lute. A pity amateur English players were probably not yet accustomed to figured bass, which would have simplified use. The inner parts added by the editor work well, and there is the advantage of all or a reasonable number of

verses without recourse to adding more elaborate middle parts to make once verse seem adequate.[4] However, with a variety of verses, there couldd be alternation between solo and chorus.

Editorial practice is different for the anthems. The anthems have two, three or four flats (all implying significant upward transposition), except for no. 7 & 8 in one sharp, just a tone higher. Alternative untransposed versions can be obtained online, though I puzzled what my password was. I often wonder why transpositions tend to go up a minor third, when a tone is easier to read and nearer the right pitch-level – but the altos suffer a bit more. Unlike the hymns, the anthems show the ranges of each part as transposed, as well as original clef. No. 6 (*O clap your hands*) is a marvellous piece, but takes 47 pages, rather a large proportion of the book. I guessed from the difference in range between Alto I & II that there was probably only one awkward descent. Yes: it's alto I bars 45-6, going down to E flat: however improper, it would have been worth making some adjustment! I wonder whether it might have been more useful to assemble a booklet of double-choir anthems from a wider range, either geographic or chronological. But it's there, so make the most use all the anthems in the book. Some are known to members of any church choir, others need more thorough rehearsal.

MASSES AT SAN MARCO

Natale Monferrato *Complete Masses Edited by Jonathan R. J. Drennan (Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, 186)* A-R Editions, 2014, xviii + 13 plates + 237pp, $160.00

Monferrato was born in 1609/10.[5] He began his San Marco career in 1639, failing to become the second organist (Cavalli got the job) but became a member of the Cappella Marciana. Monteverdi died in 1643, and Rovetta succeeded him the following year. He was appointed vice-maestro in 1647 and succeeded Cavalli in 1676. He died in 1685. His musical style was very different from familiar San Marcans. Rather than the style of composers named above, he was primarily interested in more simple mass settings in four parts with continuo, such as Monteverdi's 1641 and 1650 publications. This volume contains 6 masses from op. 13 (all for four voices except no. 6 is a5) and two masses a4 from op. 19; op. 13 was published in 1677, op. 19 in 1681/2. In fact, this sort of Venetian music is familiar with such simplicity in Cavalli's 1675 double-choir Vespers, with one choir having an amazingly narrow compass. Personally, I'd rather spend time on Vecchi, and I reckon that there's rather too much routine music here: if you've read through eight masses, you'll probably go for something more exciting, whereas with just one or two samples, they may at least try one through. Perhaps a CD of a Monferrato mass and some freer church music by Rosenmüller and Legrenzi might be worth recording.

4. The presiding cleric at Great St Mary's, Cambridge, when I was a student claimed that the best hymn was one with two verses, one of which could be omitted.

5. Was he born on Christmas Day or named after a less distinguished figure?

A. SCARLATTI QUARTETS

Alessandro Scarlatti *Four Sonate a quattro* edited by Rosalind Halton Edition HH (40 361), 2014. xii + 35pp + 4 parts, £28.00

I've known for many years that Benjamin Cooke's 1740 edition of *Six Concertos in Seven Parts* is an expansion of the four-part versions which Alessandro wrote. I was aware that more authentic editions survived in Charles Avison's extensive workbooks, though I haven't followed the discovery in any detail. Avison seems to have been responsible for the *Six Concertos a7*. They have been widely used, and we sell facsimiles at £35.00, but it is good now to have a fine edition of the quartets. The remaining two concertos are based on Scarlatti's lesser-known son Francesco. Further discussion on the relationship between the two versions is forthcoming from the editor and Michael Talbot, which I look forward to seeing.

This is not, however, treated as the main MS, despite the opening of the introduction concentrating on Avison. Münster Santini-Bibliothek Hs. 3957A is earlier (c.1705-10) than the Avison MS and differs not just in textual details, but in the explicit indication in both Santini & Avison that the quartets are not intended to have a continuo accompaniment – yet the Santini MS is erratically figured. (It's a pity that the single page of cello facsimile doesn't include any figures.) The editor leaves what is notated but doesn't expand on them. Is the 17th-century convention of only flat and sharp accidentals/figures retained or as the edition prints them?

Interestingly, a series of transcriptions aimed at helping poor musicians during the 1930s included two of A. Scarlatti's 1740 Concerti grossi, headed *Sonate a Quattro* in g and in d, as the opening of vol. 2. They were copied in four instrumental staves with an added keyboard realisation. I assume that the music wasn't modernised, but the updated introduction for Garland's publication in 1988 was by Kenneth Cooper.

The substance of the music is the same, so there's no need to praise the music. My playing (as keyboardist) would undermine the point, and I don't think I've played a string quartet since the mid-1960s! The idea of a string quartet might seem anachronistic as a term – but I hope the article mentioned above will place the music within some keyboardless quartet concept. The edition itself is typical of HH's excellent standard, clearly legible.

BOISMORTIER op. 18

Boismortier *Six trio sonatas op. 18 . Volume 1 (nos. 1-3)* edited by Michael Elphinstone. Edition HH (34 364), 2014. 30pp + 3 parts, £25.00

Boismortier is one of those composers who published a wide range of instrumental music. He issued nine sets of trio sonatas. Op. 4 and 7 show him moving out of the French manner into the Italian, a journey that is fully effective in op. 18, published in 1726. It is music that is

hardly beginners' repertoire, but can be played with pleasure by reasonably competent amateurs. It sounds well, and is attractive to listeners – maybe not up to Handel or Telemann, but useful for both public and private use. Much of his music allows for flexibility in the choice of instrument, but this set is for two violins and continuo. The violin parts lack the virtuosity that later chamber music developed, but the compass is wider than wind instruments could manage. The bass is labelled *Organo*, which might be intended to imply that specific instrument, though more likely it is just a standard word for continuo. Nos. 4-6 will no doubt follow soon.

BAROQUE VIOLIN FOR BEGINNERS

***Baroque Violin Anthology I...* Selected and edited by Walter Reiter. Schott** (ED 13447), 2013. 64pp + CD, £11.99

There are 38 short pieces here, with crucial but no automatic bowings and no dynamics. I've no experience of how Walter Reiter teaches beginners, but he's certainly excellent at inspiring the more experienced players. I was puzzled why the keyboard accompaniment doubled the violin – it looks wrong, but the recordings actually sounded rather better than I expected. However, if the accompanist is trying to recall how to play the piano, it is unlikely to be helpful. It's odd that the keyboard arranger, Robin Bigwood, is acknowledged above each piece as arranger, but not on the title page. I reckon that concentrating on all 38 pieces might be tedious rather than exciting, but could be useful for refreshment when students think they have passed on a bit!

SONGS FOR CHILDREN

***Liedersammlung für Kinder und Kinderfreunde am Clavier (1791): Frühlingslieder and Winterlieder* Edited by David J. Buch** (RRMCE 95) A-R Editions, 2014. lxxi + 167pp, $220.00

These contains two volumes of music for children – though probably for singing by adults (parents, servants, teachers, etc) rather than by children themselves. The two extant volumes are *Frühlingslieder* and *Winterlieder,* edited by Placidus Partsch, scholar, priest and schoolteacher, whose function was not known until the A-R editor identified him in 2012. It is possible that other volumes also existed, since they are listed, without detail, in a catalogue of the imperial music collection, but no trace survives. The background is that of enlightenment Philanthropismus: I was puzzled by the apparently superfluous *-in-*, presumably to avoid the broader term *philanthropism*. The date of the songs is fairly certain, chiefly because the dates of the three Mozart songs in the anthologies can be placed around the beginning of 1791. Footnotes are thorough and informative. The texts are, as usual with A-R, printed in the original language (German) and English. The layout of the music is modernised quite extensively: the original settings have only two staves, the upper one being mostly devoted to the sung sections, with piano parts only shown when voices are not included. The pianist doubled the voice, as well as playing the extra notes sometimes included. This is a common layout through the 18th century, but is here expanded to three staves. Is that really necessary for a series that is only accessible in academic libraries.

I feel that a selection of the material here would be useful separately. The songs are often attractive, simple though not naïve, but would fare better if they were prepared for school use. Now that a foreign language is being encouraged in the UK across key-stage 2 (aged 7-11), some of these songs could be selected. Printing on two staves would probably save space, but singing translations need to be created, perhaps with some freedom to update the meanings, but with fewer verses. As it stands, the existing volume is thoroughly researched, but I doubt if teachers and schools could afford it.

HENLE VERLAG

Telemann *Zwölf Fantasien für Flöte solo* Herausgegeben von... Marion Beyer... Notes on performance practice by Rachel Brown Henle (556), 2014. vii + 46pp, £13.03

One crucial element of the publication is not mentioned on the cover – the inclusion of a complete facsimile as well as introduction, modern edition, commentary and Rachel's performance notes. There is a certain linguistic inconsistency: the Vorwort/Preface appears in German, English and French, but the information at the end of the volume leaves out the French. Only one copy survives, and this has a title page *Fantasie per il Violiono senza Basso*. It seems that each piece was written (by Telemann himself) on a single side of 12-stave sheets of paper. – only No. 1 has a blank 12th stave. This might imply that the violin solos were earlier and the wrong title was added, but the editor thinks the flute pieces were composed in the late 1720s, before the violin solos appeared in 1735.

Use of the facsimile is facilitated by marking the movements and bar numbers in the margin. The movement headings are not difficult to read, but do take the player to the right place with minimum thought; the only oddity is Fantasy 11, where *Adagio/Vivace* are cued on one line when *Vivace* is on the next line. There are few problems in editing the music itself, and anyone concerned in historical styles of flute-playing will find this edition invaluable, unless the player is content with just the facsimile. I reckon that the most important remark on performance practice is for the performer to ascertain the harmony to make sure that the embellishments make sense (paraphrase of p. 45 column 1).

Mozart *Divertimenti für Bläsersextett* Herausgegeben von Felix Loy. Henle (HN 1191), 2014. 8 parts, €42.00
Studien-Edition (HN 7191), 2014. viii + 55pp

A quick glance might make one wonder why some of the sextets were quintets, but that is following Mozart's practice in placing two horns on one stave when there is no confusion. In reverse, there are four parts for two horns: the publisher issues horn parts in F and in the original notation. The score retains the standard practice of printing the horn parts in C, whether the key is F, B flat or E flat. The other

instruments are two oboes and two bassoons.
There are five sextets here: K 213, 240, 240a/252, 253 and 270, written between July 1775 and January 1777 – only K252 lacks a specific date. This is evidently a coherent group, written for entertainment – no explicit function is hinted, but the prince-archbishop no doubt called on the ensemble when appropriate. The autographs were numbered and bound by Leopold Mozart, then after Wolfgang's death his wife sold the volume to Johann André, who published the parts around 1801. So there are no serious editorial problems. I reckon that the music deserves more than background status, but I wouldn't object to a sextet playing it outdoors at a College summer afternoon tea.

Dragonetti "The Famous Solo": *Fassung für Kontrabass und Streichquartett* Herausgegeben von Tobias Glöcker. Henle (HN 1198), 2014. 7 parts £25.49
Studien-Edition (HN 7198), 2014, vi + 29pp, £11.84

Domenico Dragonetti (1763-1846) is still remembered as one of the most virtuosic bassplayer of his time. Much of his music has been published by Yorke Edition, so I wrote almost out-of-the blue to Rodney Slatford, himself no mean bassist, editor of the repertoire, teacher at the Royal Manchester College and organiser musical events in Norfolk, in addition, to being a Governor of the Royal Society of Musicians. I was surprised that the three strings were A-d-g, which current practice refers to the A a tenth below middle C, and the D and G below middle C. When bassists define pitch levels, do they use the terms for the apparent notation or the sounding pitch and octave lower? If at the notated pitch, I imagine that hiscello partner, Robert Lindley, famous for their performance of recitatives, would have to play at times below the bass: perhaps Dragonetti played the chords above! But I presume that the pitch is that which is shown in the stave, not the pitch at which it was sounded. This is certainly a virtuoso piece, but the very high notes bring the fingers closer together. The large-format edition contains a version for bass and piano, two copies of the bass part (one with fingering etc). The strings are E A d g (or a semitone higher), though the lowest note is B. The quartet is Urtext with some footnotes. Is the bottom A (whichever octave) not used? The critical commentary appears in the piano reduction as well as the study score, with comments as footnotes in both as well.

THE MIRROR OF ARCADIA

Süssmayr *Der Spiegel von Arkadien (Vienna, 1794). Part 1: Introductory Materials and Act I, Part 2: Act 2 and Critical Report* Edited by David J. Buch (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, 93 & 94). lxxix [+ 5 facsimiles], 540 pp in 2 vols; vol. 1 $325.00, vol. 2 $200.00 .

This was one of the most successful operas following on from Mozart. Su:ssmayr (1766-1803) is best known for completing Mozart's *Requiem* (rather more approved than usual in John Butt's recording, so I read – I haven't heard it yet). The first performance was in the Theater auf der Wieden on 14 November 1794. It had enormous success, and survived in the same theatre until 1814: there were also performances in German-speaking areas, Paris, Amsterdam, Warsaw, St Petersburg and Moscow (with translations in Italian, Czech and Russian) – no, the languages do not match the names the final appearance being in Magdeburg in 1833. It has not, as far as I know, had a modern revival, though a facsimile was published in Garland's series *German Opera, 1770-1800* vol. 17 (score) and 22 (libretto) – not the main source, but apparently quite near. The libretto by Schikaneder (librettist of *The Magic Flute*) was disapproved by some for its various innuendos. It is printed in full, in German and English, preceded by the preface and cast-list, on pp. xx-lxxix.

One very strange aspect of the list of sources is that the main source is placed in alphabetical order of the libraries involved: surely the main source should be listed first, followed by sources that have influenced the edition then sources that add nothing to the commentary. Considering the score has 530 pages, the commentary takes merely four columns. The score is set out in modern order, but the original order is noted at the head of each number in the commentary. Overall scoring is 2-2-2-2 2-2-0-0 timp harp strings, with a *dreschl* (thresher/flail used for loosening husks from the grains during harvest) in the opening of Act II. There are solo singers and chorus SSTB. The *Final* of each act takes up roughly as much space as the rest of each volume.

This must have been a mammoth editorial task: one wonders how thoroughly each source was checked – or only if there was a problem with the main source. In such cases, the more sources one sees, providing there is some self-evident hierarchy (which isn't argued here), the number of alternative readings of any value rapidly diminishes.

I could manage to react to the music of David Buch's edition of children's songs , reviewed above. I did try to get a reviewer who would take on the *Mirror*, but failed. So my comments are general, and I haven't made any musical evaluation – I didn't have time. There is no explicit mention of the availability of orchestral material or cut-down versions for singers. I presume parts can be run off (yes – I know it is rather more complex a procedure than the jargon!) But if it is being performed, is the 1795 vocal score worth reproducing as a facsimile, or else taking from the full-score file the bottom line, the voice part(s) and the top instrumental line or two, with perhaps a figuring of the bass to show un-obvious chords. It would seem a waste to produce only the score when there's a facsimile available. Whether we like the music or not, it is clearly a work of historic significance.

ARRANGEMENTS BY THEODORE THOMAS

A-R Editions has produced arrangements by Theodore Thomas (1835-1905) of items played in his arrangements in New York, Chicago and elsewhere. **No. 1** is Mendelssohn's *Spring Song* – Song without Words op. 62, no. 6 – scored for strings and harp ($12.00): quite pretty, but no better than a piano. **No. 2** ($21.00) contains three songs by Beethoven: *In questa tomba oscura* WoO 133, *Die Liebe des Nächsten*, op. 48/2, and *Die Ehre Gottes der Natur*, op. 48/4. Scorings are

hardly Beethoven-like. *In questa* is for 0-0-2-2 2-0-3-0, strings with divided violas; the voice is in bass clef and the original key of A flat is retained. *Die Liebe* is for 2-2-2-2 2-0-3-0, strings, transposed from E flat to D flat. *Die Ehre Gottes* is for 0-2-2-2 4-2-3-1, strings, transposed down a minor third. Apart from other aspects of scoring, the presence of three trombones in each song is odd and I imagine that the arrangements would sound somewhat weighed down. **No. 3** ($58.00) contains Bach's third violin and harpsichord sonata in E (the key is retained in the arrangement) orchestrated for 3-2-2-2 4-0-0-0, timps & strings. It seems weird to avoid the solo element. Thomas was a Bach enthusiast, judging by his subscription to the Collected Works.

There is no information about performance material, which is a pity. However, my guess is that conductors would be more interested in recent adaptations rather than ones from the later 19th century. The three volumes are edited by Paul Luongo: ref numbers 35, 36 & 37.

ORTUS VERLAG
reviewed by Brian Clark

Albinoni *Violinkonzert D-Dur* Violin and piano version by Nicola Schneider. ortus verlag (om121/2) ISMN M-700296-80-3 [viii] + 8pp + part. €10.50.

This piece is fortunate to have survived at all, having been microfilmed during WW2 for Reno Giazotto's pioneering study on the composer, only for the original (a score in Georg Pisendel's hand) to be destroyed in the fateful bombing of Dresden right at the end of the war. The editor of this edition (a full score and performing materials are also available) located the film in the Library of Congress. None of the three movements will pose any difficulty even to young violinists, who are most likely the target audience. The keyboard part (by Ekkehard Krüger, one half of the ortus team) is more short score than idiomatic keyboard accompaniment, and is all the better for that.

Johann Wilhelm Hertel *Konzert für Oboe, Streicher und Basso continuo C-Dur.* Herausgegeben von Karl Heller. (om149/1) ISMN 979-700317-66-9 [xiv] + 45pp. •19.50 Again in three movements, but in altogether more sophisticated musical language, this piece is a welcome addition to the range of such works available to oboists, who do not really have *that much* to get there teeth into between Vivaldi and Telemann then Mozart Hertel's concerti open with long introductions – almost like the exposition of a sonata form movement – but they are always rich in musical invention, and full of ideas ripe for development by the soloist. The central *Affettuoso* is in C minor, while the 2/4 finale is a living affair, though typically the oboist is silent for the last 50 bars or so! Performing parts and a version with keyboard are also available.

Schaffrath *Ouverture E-Dur CSWV:A:2.* Herausgegeben von Reinhard Oestreich. (om151) IMSN 979-0-700317-87-4 [xiv] + 16pp + 4 parts. €19.90

The first of two Schaffrath pieces is a French ouverture followed by a binary Allegro for strings and continuo, surviving uniquely as a set of autograph parts. There are no surprises in the music – dotted rhythms to open, a neatly constructed fugue (in which the viola sometimes doubles violin 2, sometimes the bass, but also has passages of independence), and a bold arpeggio theme lends the Allegro a dramatic edge. There is an introduction to the Berlin Classical Period by Christoph Henzel which is well worth reading (it is also printed in the next two volumes in this review, which are part of ortus's *Berliner Klassik* series), then a ridiculously verbose critical commentary by the editor (for example, he makes exactly the same comment about each of three notes in the same bar, taking up a total of six lines; the list for the Allegro comprise 16 identical entries – eight of them consecutive!) The parts are crisply printed, but the viola player will need to be nifty at turning pages.

Schaffrath *Konzert für Cembalo und Streicher G-Dur CSWV:C:41.* Herausgegeben von Reinhard Oestreich. (om164/1) ISMN 979-0-502340-10-1 [xvi] + 65pp. €29.50

This is a far more substantial work than the preceding, with three extensive movements. There are two sources, both autograph: one is a complete set of parts from the Sing-Akademie library, and the other a decorated version of the keyboard part from a convolute volume of "Clavier-Sonaten" in the Amalien-Bibliothek. The latter is incorporated into the present score, and the facsimile printed on p. XVI allows comparison with Oestreich's transcription. Personally, I find the explicit printing of tuplets as a solution to a bar that has too many notes (according to modern notational practice) unsatisfactory – it compels players to follow the editor's interpretation, where hiding the numeral would surely just encourage each performance to be different, as a string of very fast notes just filled the available space. Once again the critical notes are too heavy handed; surely bracketing added accidentals would be sufficient – it would have saved at least 20 lines, and finding a way to distinguish editorial dynamic markings would have spared another dozen. The very first instance, in fact, is odd – as the bass part has C sharps, Oestrich opts to make the treble part's Cs explicitly natural, but he adds his accidental to the *second* instance in the bar, rather than the first. I also find it odd that in the Tutti sections where the keyboard's bass part is figured, rather than leaving empty bars above for the keyboardist to write out a continuo part if they need to, the editor opts to add bars' rest symbols; to non-specialists, this might suggest they *shouldn't* play, which is completely wrong. Schaffrath's music is still too little known, so it would be nice if someone would programme these pieces.

Nichelmann *Konzert für Cembalo und Streicher d-Moll.* Herausgegeben von Ullrich Scheideler. (om153/1) ISMN 979-0-700317-91-1 [xvi] + 73pp. €29.50

The introduction to this even more substantial piece (the last of the composer's known concertos, dating from 1759, three years before he died) is by Tobias Schwinger and sadly not translated into English. There are three

substantial movements – Allegro, Adagio (in D major, but ending on A) and Presto – and it is self evident from the easy flow of the solo part that Nichelmann was a gifted keyboardist. Scheideler opts to fill the empty bars of the tuttis with small-note versions of the Violin 1 part; a solution of sorts, but not much help to players who are not confident of their figured bass skills.

Jean Gaspard Weiss ***Grands Préludes & Solos für eine und zwei Flöten*** **Herausgegeben von Tobias Bonz.** ortus verlag (om158) ISMN 979-0-700317-95-9 [x] + 35pp. €15.50

I don't really understand the logic of the layout chosen for this. Most of the Preludes for two flutes would neatly fit two pages, while the solos only need one, so deciding to place the solo after the prelude in the relevant key means that some of the latter involve page turns at points where both flautists are busy. So you fix that by buying two copies and bringing two music stands together. Why, though, would two flutes play a prelude for a one-flute solo? That makes no sense to me at all. The music is everything one would expect from a late 18th-century composer – tuneful and harmonious, without a great deal of profundity.

Carl Heinrich Graun ***Arienalbum für Sopran.*** **Herausgegeben von Anne-Katrin Schenck.** (om119/1) ISMN M-700296-75-9. 104pp. €19.90

There are 13 arias (five with preceding recitatives) from nine operas written between 1742 (*Cleopatra e Cesare*) and 1756 (*Merope*). Each is preceded by details of the original performance (and performer, if known), as well as the name of the librettist and, after a summary of the plot up to that point (and, most importantly, a note of the vocal range), the Italian text is printed in poetic form with a line-for-line German translation. The arias themselves are challenging with ranges up to a''–c''' and often with demanding coloratura – Graun writes well for the voice, but he doesn't pull his punches. Schenck provides suggestions for ornamentation in several works (but not all), and Agrippina's already daunting *Mi pavento il figlio indegno* features a cadenza including an e'''. I think the next print run of the volume should add French and English introductions to boost sales outside Germany – these are very worthwhile arias that deserve to be in the repertoire of any HIP soprano. I also hope there will be companion volumes for other voices. *BC*

PRIMA LA MUSICA

I've followed a batch of reviews by BC by some items by him as publisher, the editor being Niels Danielsen. There are three Concertos by **Christoph Graupner** (1683-1760) with different instrumentations. The numbering system stands for Graupner, not the compiler, the distinguished German librarian Oswald Bill.

GWV 311 in D is for flute, 2 violins, viola and cembalo. I assume that "cembalo" refers to part that is placed in front of the keyboard player, but a melodic bass instrument can stand behind and red it too. In movement m2, bar 168, *Fagotto* is written above the cembalo. The editor adds [*tutti*] at bar 197, but it seems more likely to me that the bassoon alone plays when there are semiquavers, tutti returns when the viola reappears at bar 183, with another bassoon solo at 208-215. Subsequently, the variable number of instruments comes in shorter passages: it may be fussy to be more elaborate, but would be worth trying. The ***pp*** for the viola at 249 must have some implications. There are four movements, none with any heading: the score is probably a draft, and Graupner may have added tempo/character titles. The first movement must have a slowish tempo judging buy the appearance of dotted semiquavers slurred to two hemidemisemiquavers. The second is lively in 2/4 – the longest movement. The third is a shortish link, followed by what I expected to be a minuet and trio format. I wonder if it was a double trio. The absence of the soloist after the trio seems a bit odd and a rest for the final section is an anticlimax.

GWV 317, also in D, is for viola d'amore and viola soli with 2 violins, viola and cembalo [+ cello or bassoon]. Here we have some movement headings: Grave e staccato (in 3 time, with an unexpected 2 bars in C at the end). The *Vivace* has the same time signature, but with a quaver rest at the beginning of the bar. The two bars ending the first movement are likely to be played with some slow-down, but that probably isn't helpful in starting the movement, in which case the two bars (with a dominant close) can either be followed by a pause (a bit old-fashioned now) or straight in. There is a *Grave* and an *Allegro*. The viola d'amore part is mostly in C3 clef, but sometimes changes to C1: the practical solution seems to be to play a string higher as if the d'amore was a five-stringed viola with an E string (soprano clef) – continue to read alto clef but play on the top string. It works!

GWV 725 in D minor is for flute and viola d'amore soli with 2 violins, viola and "Fagotto e Cembalo" – the source is a score,with just one bass stave, which is probably shared with cello as well. Movement 1 *Largo* has pizzicato in bars 15-19, so there has to be a cello. In movement 2 *Vivace* *Fagotto* is mentioned several times, with *tutti* to return to full Bc. Movement 3 *Largo* might seem odd to be noted (or rather for cello not to be played!) in a ***pp*** movement that requires the sort of playing that could easily be too obtrusive. Movement 4 *Vivace* is marked (as seem normal) for the bassoon to accompoany the solo sections – and I wonder if the harpsichord might also be tacet. I'm not sure if I would want three cocnertos in D played in the same concert.

Johann Melchior Molter (1696-1765) produced 24 duetti for flutes, in 4 groups of 6. The first two have an auitograph score and two parts copied from it, the other two groups lack separate parts. This edition can be easily read from one copy: the need for parts may be a need to produce something more legible than the autograph. They are entertaining in short batches, and perhaps useful for busking! *CB*

Breitkopf new Bach organ edition. We received the new Vol. 1 earlier this year, with a recommendation to wait for the imminent vol.2 It still hasn't arrived.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Clifford Bartlett, Brian Clark & Beresford King-Smith

Benjamin Wardhaugh ***Thomas Salmon Writings on Music*** Volume I: *An Essay to the Advancement of Musick* and the Ensuing Controversy, 1672-3. Volume II: *A Proposal to Perform Musick* and related writings 2 vols, 2013. ISBN 978-1-4094-6503-4 £90.00

I wrote in the last issue that I'd better review this myself, so I took it with me on a cruise early in April, which gave me time to read it, but I was thwarted by writing a month later with few notes. What puzzles me is why anyone should show much interest in Thomas Salmon(1647-1706). His attempt at reforming the gamut seems to me to be considerably less useful than even the most primitive attempt at home-made music fonts for cheap computers. He was lucky in that Matthew Locke tried to be far too clever and didn't produce simple, plain responses. I made some notes on Vol. I, containing the first three publications of 1672 and the last publications of 1673, but couldn't find much worth saying. Those who want to pursue the controversy can do so quite easily. 27 copies of Salmon's major work (*An Essay...*) survive. It is also available in facsimile in the *Early English Books* microfilm series, in hard copy from Broude, and in *Early English Books Online*. Nine copies survive of Locke's *Observations*. There are ten copies of Salmon's A *Vindication...* available in *Early English Books* (microfilm) & *Early English Books Online* and 12 copies of Locke's *The present Practice...* available in *Early English Books* microfilm, in hard copy from Broude, and in *Early English Books Online*. (There are copies in Cambridge, London and Oxford.) Anyone studying the sources would find the annotations of last year's publication very helpful – the number of footnotes is enormous and none are in sight of the page they refer to, so even if I wanted to study the matter, I'd prefer to look at a screen and only have hard copy for the footnotes, which would enable one to scrible noptes on them. To publish these volumes when not all Locke's compositions are available seems to me to be favouring very dull print rather than very fine music! *CB*

ROSENMÜLLER PSALMS

Holger Eichhorn Johann Rosenmüller Vesperpsalmen. Verlag Klaus-Jürgen Kampard, 2014. 424pp, €39.80 ISBN 978-3-930550-77-7

Holger Eichhorn is the driving force behind a complete edition of Rosenmüller's music (Rosenmüller-Gesamtausgabe, 30 volumes of which have been appearing since 2010 in Cologne), and this book is perhaps intended as a guide to a very large portion of that œuvre, since psalm settings seem to have dominated the time he spent in Italy after falling into disgrace in the mid 1650s. After thirty pages of preamble, the book is divided into five chapters whose titles do little to reflect the fact that they are devoted to sections of the Book of Psalms (109-111, 112, 114/116/119-121, 126/127/129 and 137/138/147), followed by the usual niceties of such a book – a postlude with a glossary of terminology, an extensive bibliography, an index, a draft version of the catalogue of Rosenmüller's output, and then 130 pages of music "published for the first time".

Unfortunately that is where the first problem occurs. *Puer natus est nobis* is not even a psalm setting, so a slightly odd choice given the book's title. It is excused by the fact that the *Versus* "Sing unto the Lord a new song" was published by Carus Verlag (10.370); I wrote the introduction, in which I strongly argued that the wording of the title page suggested that only the Amen section (for soprano, tenor, trumpet, cornetto and two violins in the context of a work for SATB with doubling ripieno singers and strings) was by Rosenmüller, while the remainder (mostly in *stile antico* with the Introit plainsong in the bass) was by some other composer, as yet unknown. Like the other pieces here, it is hand copied and with all the doubling parts written out in full, so it takes 29 pages, where the entire Carus volume with introduction and translations took only 24.

The in-depth descriptions of the sources of all of Rosenmüller's psalm settings are valuable. Eichhorn raises points of interest in each of the works. There is little point in criticizing the catalogue as it stands since, although parts of it seem slightly illogical, they may all change when the volume (hopefully thematic) is published. I found the chapter introductions hard going; having expected to learn lots of new information about Rosenmüller's life as well as his music, I was left disappointed – these portions are heavy on the philosophy, but light on musicological revelation.

Ultimately I was left wondering to what purpose this book had been published. The catalogue is essentially all but useless, since the author himself describes it as work in progress; there can be no point in quoting RWV numbers on publications or recordings if they are likely to change. Slightly confusingly each work currently has an E (presumably for Eichhorn) number, or in some cases possibly two; works re-discovered since 2001 (mostly as a result of the return of the Sing-Akademie library from Kiev to Berlin) have not all been double checked against previously known sources (musical and literary), so while they may be the same piece, they might equally be new discoveries altogether. While "Hymns, meditations and free prayers" are listed alphabetically, "Epistle, Evangelical and Bible texts" are not, and Psalm settings are listed in their Biblical order (except *Jubilate Deo* which comes after two settings of Psalm 100). Printed music is listed chronologically with the works in collections (the two

volumes of *Kern-Sprüche*) listed in their original printed order rather than alphabetically, making it not very easy to find a piece if you don't know anything about it apart from the title – and there are over 400 entries! *Brian Clark*

MUSIC AT GERA

Bernd Koska ***Die Geraer Hofkapelle zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts.*** (Forum Mitteldeutsche Barockmusik 3, om168) ortus musikverlag (om168), 2013. vi + 173pp. €24.50 ISBN 978-3-937788-31-9

Gera is another of those minor German courts which at various points in its history maintained a musical establishment. Important composers were associated with it, including Stölzel, Fasch and J. S. Bach. The first was musical director for a couple of years, Fasch supplied music for various festivities but his main employment was as the town clerk, and Bach visited at least twice, and may have seriously considered an offer of the position as Kapellmeister.

Bernd Koska's book is relatively thin, but it is packed with information, ranging from lists of every name he found in the surviving court documents relating to musical activities as well as all the choir boys (two of whom performed in the court chapel on Sundays, and two others who sang in the town church, then alternated the next week). He prints a facsimile of an inventory of the court's music collection (including sonatas by Albinoni, Bonporti and Biber, ouvertures by Pez, Stölzel – none of which have survived – and Telemann, as well as arias by Keiser and Erlebach), and dates it to around 1714, arguing that Fasch's absence among the composers listed must indicate it pre-dates his arrival in 1715. Amongst his most interesting discoveries were two librettos, one for a 1714 serenata (composer unknown) and the other for a musical drama, set the next year by court clerk Fasch. He had been writing operas for some time before then, but the text of *Die vergnügte Blumen-Feld- und Wald-Lust der angenehmen Sommer-Zeit* is a real discovery.

Perhaps the weakest chapter is devoted to music by members of a Kegel family, several of whom held influential positions on the Gera music scene; given that so much of the surviving music (of which there is not a great deal) is attributed only to "Kegel", there is little of serious impact on our understanding of its importance.

This is a thorough study, with – as I said at the beginning – a wealth of real information. Its importance will only become clear when more such volumes become available and the pieces of the jigsaw begin to slot into place. Typically of ortus, this is a beautifully laid-out book, printed in a clear sans serif font that makes reading a real pleasure. Koska has already secured himself a place at next year's Fasch Festtage in Zerbst, so I hope he will be able then to reveal yet more discoveries. *Brian Clark*

THE NOTATION IS NOT THE MUSIC

Barthold Kuijken ***The Notation is not the music: reflections on early music practice and performance*** Indiana UP, 2013. xii + 124pp, $30.00

Here is another confused title (cf issue 159, p.8). There's a difference between Early Music Practice and the period of the baroque & classical flute. The first part of the title is stimulating, the second part needs more precision. Most valuable are the detailed information and ideas in chapter 4, which takes up 96 pages with a separate series of numbers, 1-18, whereas chapters 1-3 and 5 require only 7 pages altogether: it would be more sensible for 1-3 to be Introduction and 5 Envoi, leaving the subnumbers to be the only section numbers – much less confusing.

The book is full of useful ideas – though singers will have to make their own interpretations on a cart-before-horse basis: renaissance music is primarily word-based, especially in terms of stress. The tendency to get stress from barlines rather than the music itself increased enormously between the 17th and the 19th centuries: the 16th-century held the tactus as a measure, not an indication of accents, except for dance music. How long has it taken to realise that in triple time the first bar often starts with an off beat, the stress being the beginning of bar 2. One is tempted, for instance, to start "God save the Queen" on an up beat!

p. 13. I wonder to what extent players were concerned with scores for chamber music: in my younger days, players didn't buy miniature scores, and I think that only in the last few decades have many players had scores at hand.

p. 23. My recollection is that A=430 was used in England before the Kuijkens adopted it in 1981.

p. 27-31 (on temperament) is as subtle as it can be, though it has to be continually varied according to the tunings – and even without chords, unaccompanied players have options. Some coaches get string players to tune their fifths to a triad so that the third can modify the pure fifth.

p. 51. Those beginning early-music performance tended to play rigidly by the bar: players are now more sensitive, with a hierarchy of accents within a phrase. It isn't always obvious, so other criteria (or even arbitrary ones) have to be chosen.

p. 75. The last paragraph on basso continuo is a deserved warning about too many continuo players. It's fine in 16/17th-century polychoral music – Richard Charteris has unearthed some Gabrieli with four continuo parts, and bodies of pluckers were common as well. Corelli figured both the solo and the ripieno bass. Handel had two keyboard players for his operas, but the current addition of theorbo as well is dubious. (One modern theorbist said that the money was good while it lasted – and it still does.)

p. 78. Geminiani's comments on string vibrato may have been rare – when *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (1751) was

reprinted by his pupil and publisher Robert Bremner, he deleted a passage on vibrato. Soloists developed its use, but it seems that orchestras didn't play a continuous vibrato till the 20th century.

93-4. Scholars used to favour scores rather than parts, whereas, if the parts are in the hands of the composer or his regular amanuensis, both need consideration. Earlier Handel editions tended to ignore the fair copy, though Handel then used it as his own. As I've mentioned before, the main text in *Saul* is based on the autograph, whereas significant information about the keyboard players (as well as other matters) was added by Handel in the fair copy. So that (and much other information) was only available in the HHA edition if you had the critical commentary at hand.

pp. 97-99. Irrespective of the relationship to the audience, much serious if amateur early music takes place. On the whole, forces are variable, but most course leaders are top-rate musicians. On the day I read this book, members of the Thames Valley Early Music Forum sang and played three first-rate psalms by Rosenmüller (edited by BC) while I relaxed abroad – I knew the quality of the music, since I'd played organ several times, most recently the previous Saturday. Much to my surprise, some singers chose to pay extra to keep the scores. Choirs sing widely around the country, and some employ professional orchestras. The top-level player or listener can scorn such activity, but many people can adjust their ears and minds to the competence of the performers.

p. 113. The author writes "I am convinced that questions are more important and more interesting than answers." Coincidentally, I was talking the day before I wrote this about the leading mid-20th-century English literary scholar, F. R. Leavis: his response to a statement would be: "yes but..." This is a stimulating book, but don't hesitate to consider your "yes buts...". *CB*

MUSIC IN THE CASTLE OF HEAVEN

John Eliot Gardiner *Music in the Castle of Heaven – A Portrait of Johann Sebastian Bach* Allen Lane, 2013. 629pp, £26.00

This is a big book (over 550 pages, with many high-quality colour illustrations) and it's an important book, too, which every true Bach-lover will want to read, I think.

Don't be put off by the contents of Chapter 1. Promised (by the subtitle) 'a portrait' of JSB, we are treated initially to a portrait of JEG, but there is some justification for this. As he explains, through a curious set of events, John Eliot Gardiner grew up 'Under the Cantor's Gaze' – the later (and better-preserved) of the two famous Haussmann portraits of the composer (rescued during the Anschluss and brought to England before World War II) hung for many years in his family home; and Bach's music has, of course, been a pervasive influence on his life, culminating in the hugely important international 'Bach Pilgrimage' of 2000.

The book's title – *Music in the Castle of Heaven* – also raises some questions. The reference is overtly to the Himmelsburg, where Bach will often have played the organ for Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar – not something of sufficient consequence to justify the title, one would have thought, though the book's final paragraph does also allow itself the thought of the composer making music in heaven! The title also seems rather too close to that of James Gaines' absorbing 2005 book about Bach and Frederick the Great: *Evening in the Palace of Reason*[1]. Never mind; the job of a book's title is to catch the eye, and that Gardiner's book certainly does.

His style is erudite (you are as likely to encounter a quote from Cicero or Michel de Montaigne as you are from one of the recognized Bach authorities, from Forkel and Spitta to Wolff and Butt) but not unduly academic. He writes lucidly and holds one's attention throughout. Nevertheless, I took my time in reading this book – there is much to think about here, and the author explores every avenue available in an attempt to get beneath the skin of this great (but far from easily understood) genius. Where JSB is concerned, we don't have a lot of personal correspondence or descriptive material to go on, so an author does need to be able to 'read between the lines', to some extent.

To fulfil its function as a 'portrait', the book covers Bach's life chronologically, of course, and in considerable detail, but Gardiner often finds insights which have escaped earlier writers. Predictably, it's when he writes about the music – and the sacred vocal music in particular – that we find him at his very best. Each of the two great Passion settings and the *B Minor Mass* get a chapter to themselves and many of the Church Cantatas are dealt with in considerable detail, often reflecting insights derived from the author's own performances of these works. Not, I suppose, since William Gillies Whittaker has anyone written so well about the Cantatas[2] after the experience of performing them in public himself.

One example of Gardiner's thoroughness is a series of circular colour-charts which set out very clearly the way in which the Lutheran Liturgical Year 'worked' in relation to the passing of the months, and the way in which the two great collections of Bach's Church Cantatas comprising the first two Leipzig Cycles 'fitted' into it.

Gardiner waxes lyrical about the use of period instruments in the performance of Bach's music and what we

---

1. James Gaines *Evening in the Palace of Reason* Fourth Estate, 2005. 352pp; paperback due July.2014 @ £10.99

2. I thought this note should be removed and replaced by Alfred Dürr *The Cantatas of Bach with their librettos in German-English parallel text* revised and translated by Richard D.P. Jones. Oxford UP, 2005. But it must be out of print. Currently, Amazon has 15 old or new copies ranging from £126.55. Dürr, of course, is the expert, ably translated by Jones. Failing that, W.G. Whittaker's two posthumous volumes *The Cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach – Sacred and Secular* are perceptive and translate virtually every word within the descriptions of the music, but most of the dating of the cantatas are wrong – not surprising, since he died in 1944 but his book wasn't published until 1959. But I do still refer to Whittaker. Amazon recently sold a copy at under £100. *CB*

can learn from the way in which Bach writes for them (he picks out examples like the *violoncello piccolo*, the *oboe da caccia* and the natural trumpet), but he seems to have chosen not to discuss the thorny parallel problem of the inauthentic use of women's voices in modern-day professional Bach Cantata performances (after all, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Gustav Leonhardt were using boys' voices for solos and choruses in their complete recordings, more than 40 years ago, even if boys today might not sound too much like those of Bach's day).

Gardiner also avoids any discussion of the problem raised by the fact that, by and large, only one of each voice part (SATB) survives in those many sets of original performing material which have come down to us. Joshua Rifkin is mentioned only in a couple of footnotes; Andrew Parrott not at all. This seems a pity, for their ideas are significant ones which hugely affect the way in which we actually hear this wonderful music.

A chapter which I enjoyed especially is the one Gardiner calls 'Bach at His Workbench'. It starts out with a highly critical quote from Claude Debussy (of all people! – clearly, he understood Bach's music just about as well as JSB would have understood *his!*) Gardiner explores the mechanics of the composer's creative processes, describing how the music found its way from his aural imagination onto the final sheet of manuscript paper. Here's a fascinating example – he's talking here about Cantata 135: *Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder* –

'Here he is composing directly into score on consecutive folded sheets of a fascicle of ruled paper. At this point he still doesn't know how it will develop or how much space or paper he is going to need. Arriving at the foot of a page he is in full flow. Now he has a dilemma: manuscript paper being so expensive, he cannot just use a spare sheet to notate the continuation of his thought, so he has to wait for the ink to dry... His solution is there at the foot of the page: a little mnemonic in tablature – an *aide-mémoire*, squeezed into the bottom-right-hand corner of the page, the immediate sequel of the aria he is composing.'

And there indeed is the excerpt for us to see, in Bach's characteristic hand, on the printed page – on p. 213, in fact. The book is full of nice little touches like that.

The documentation is admirable, too; at the end of the book, we get a 12-page Chronology, an 8-page Glossary, 21 pages of Notes and an exhaustive Index. As I remarked at the beginning of this review, this is a big book. Strongly recommended. *Beresford King-Smith*

PLAYERS PER PARTICIPANTS

Richard Maunder ***The Scoring of Early Classical Concertos 1750-01780.*** Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014. vii + 300 pp, £60.00. ISBN 978 1 84383 893 7

This follows on from *The Scoring of Baroque Concertos* (same publisher, 2004), which was a revelation to many readers, whom I hope followed his research. Those who play across the late baroque/early classical periods will be aware that the sizes of "orchestral" performing bodies are surprisingly small. Those who have concentrated on the classical will probably not have read about baroque concertos, and there was a difference of emphasis when concertos were more common than the other orchestral work, the Overture. On the whole, most concertos (and overtures) used rather small forces right through to the 1780s, and any expansion seem to apply merely to an extra pair of violins and perhaps a violone (sometimes tuned down to low E). Mozart normally had two to a part. The main detail, apart from chasing hundreds of sets of parts, is the logical implication of the scores. Curiously, the necessary clarity is often not clear if playing from parts – and there is unlikely to be a conductor! I remember in school days that only a few string players accompanied the soloist, following guides in the Breitkopf parts, but the normal size with the solos was normally larger than estimates of Mozart's full ensemble.

The information here is vast, and one can study Richard's deductions and learn from them for concertos he hasn't found yet (if any!) First check the index, which will save a lot of time (and economize on the number of players you need to pay). He hasn't yet written a book on the size of non-concerto orchestras. *CB*

ROYAL MUSICAL ASSOCIATION...

Research Chronicle 45, 2014 RMA/Routeledge. 163 pp.

I subscribed from the first issue (1961) for around the first 25 issues, but the prices seem to increase excessively so I abandoned it. This issue at least is early-music oriented. Don Harran b. 1936) has been producing musicological editions and writings for nearly as long as I can remember. Here, he is exploring the titles of Uccellini's op. 3, 4 & 8. He divides them into various categories, though one one presentation, he is opening a filed of research rather than fulfilling it. The format (US rather than the similar UK A4) is awkward, because of the need to hop between main text (just about OK in itself) and footnotes (much smaller): I reckon that double-columns wouild be easier to hop from text to notes.

Jóhannes Ágústsson & Janice Stockigt (from Reykjavík and Melbourne – surely no direct flights there!) list the musicians buried in the Catholic Cemetry of Dresden, with a useful alphabetical list of names. Were the ensemmbles all catholic or mixed with protestants?

Amanda Babington produces an introduction to the Jennens-Holdsworth correspondence (1729-46), following it with substantial quotations and an index of names, Handel naturally having the most extensive.

I hadn't come across Joseph Merlin (1735-1803) – though I presume the Gainsborough portrait was visible when I used to visit Kenwood House in my youth. Margaret Debenham (who appropriately lives in Suffolk) has been studying Merlin, and has also appeared in the Research Chronicle in 2009 and 2013. It is probably worth reading those first.

RULE, BRITANNIA!

Brian Robins

As most *EMR* readers are surely aware, during the spring the BBC mounted an ambitious season devoted to the 18th century in general and the Georgians in particular. At the heart of the musical contribution was a three-part series devoted to music in Georgian Britain, *Rule Britannia! Music, Mischief and Morals* (BBC 4; 7, 14 & 21 April).

Before proceeding further, I must lay my cards firmly on the table. On the strength of my book on glee and catch culture,[1] I was approached by the BBC and subsequently filmed an interview for the series. Shortly before it was shown I discovered after making enquiries that mine was one of several 'very good interviews' that had been omitted on the grounds of making the films 'a little simpler', to quote the series producer, David Jeffcock. Given what follows, I am conscious that I'm open to charges of 'sour grapes'. So be it.

The series was written and presented by Suzy Klein, one of the more intelligent and personable of the current crop of BBC arts presenters. That turned out to be a significant asset, since over the course of three hours we were to see an awful lot of Suzy. Having your presenter wandering around London at night is now a familiar cliché – the dire *Messiah at the Foundling Hospital* (BBC 2, 19 April) did the same thing. But we also saw Klein hitching a lift in a sedan chair to take minuet lessons, coyly seek an aristocratic husband, trying to sell her wares as a street ballad singer to bemused passers-by, participating in the Hallelujah Chorus and so on. While the script was informative in a generalised way, it suffered from over-use of hyperbole and being frequently pitched at the 'vox pop' level currently favoured by the BBC – 'gigs', 'Brits' – and, more seriously, much over-simplification that led to misleading conclusions.

Each part was given its own broad theme: the music of royalty and the aristocracy; music for pleasure and the increasing involvement of the developing middle class; and music serving a moral purpose. It didn't work. Among other things, it had the effect of separating Handel's operas from the oratorios by a time span of two weeks, so that while, for example, we heard about the Jacobite uprising of 1745 in part one, it was midway through the final film before it was linked properly with *Judas Maccabaeus*. This rigid demarcation led to other examples of this kind of fragmentation and poor structure. It also determined that the final programme was grossly overbalanced in favour of politically (and academically) correct ethnicity. You could almost sense the boxes being ticked off – 'Done Burns and Scottish folk music?' 'Yeah'. 'Music and slavery'? 'Yep, got that'. This does not to dismiss such topics, but musically they are thin stuff that did not warrant the time devoted to them, especially in the context of the glaring omissions. Ah, yes, those omissions, the series' single greatest sin.

Anyone coming to 18th-century music in England for the first time could be forgiven for being left with the conclusion that the only notable 'classical' composers the country produced were Arne and Avison; perhaps the programme's makers didn't go beyond the letter 'A' in their musical dictionary. Whatever the reason, for William Boyce, arguably England's finest composer of the era, to be unmentioned in such a series is as unforgivable as only the passing reference to Tom Linley the younger, who had he not died tragically young would surely have been one of our greatest composers of any era. Mention of Boyce reminds me that the great and continuing tradition of English cathedral music was totally ignored, as was the glee, the sole indigenous form of art music created in the 18th century and an important harbinger of sensibility and English Romanticism. It was rejected in favour of its bawdy cousin, the catch, solely one suspects to give a leering 'nudge, nudge' moment to Suzy and *two* 'talking heads' who should have known better. Also left unmentioned was the musical literature of the period, including the path-breaking histories of Hawkins and Burney, and the journals of John Marsh, today universally recognised as the single most important prime source relating to music and society in the later Georgian era. Even a passing acquaintance with Marsh might have avoided the silly suggestion that young women played only pretty tunes on their new fortepianos.

With few exceptions, the music used was desperately predictable along the lines of 'here's a tune you'll all know' – 'Rule Britannia' (of course), the Water Music and so forth. It was largely in the efficient hands of the Early Opera Orchestra under their director Christian Curnyn, who contributed little of substance in his spoken interjections. Other expert 'talking heads' such as Ruth Smith naturally made more meaningful contributions, while those of 'linkman' historian Jeremy Black were one of the few outright successes of the series.

In the final analysis, I find it difficult to determine who this series was aimed at. Its manifold flaws mean that it is unlikely to have satisfied more than the most indulgent enthusiast for the period, while it seems unlikely the less committed spent three hours watching it on BBC 4. Possibly it has interested some to investigate further this misunderstood period of British musical history. But there in a sense is the pity of it. As one who has spent more than 35 years engrossed in the period and trying to correct misconceptions, it is frustrating to find comprehensive TV coverage of it – now it has finally come – so misleading and inadequate. Tony Hall, the new Director-General of the BBC recently put out an important mission-statement about the bright future for the arts under his watch. Dare one hope that quality will be given as important a role as quantity?

1. *Catch and Glee Culture in Eighteenth-Century England*, Woodbridge, 2006.

CAMBRIDGE CONCERTS

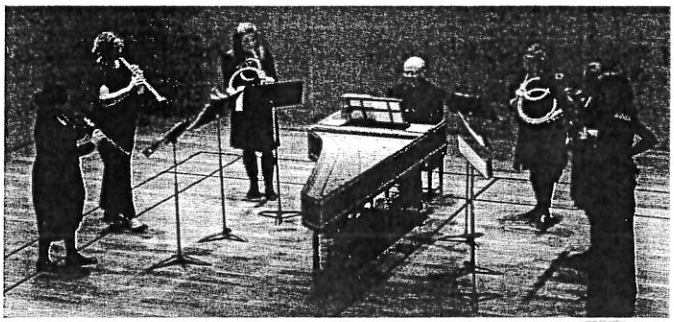
Clifford Bartlett & Hugh Keyte

LA CHASSE

Telemann for wind

Belinda Paul & Ann Allen *oboe*, Hanna Giesel *taille*, Anneke Scott, Kate Goldsmith *horn*, Sally Holman, Inge Maria Klaucke *bassoon*, Dan Tidhar *harpsichord*

Fitzwilliam College, 27 April 2014



It's a long time (if ever) since I've been to an all-Telemann programme, and I was delighted by the result, despite the ensemble being all wind – except the harpsichord. I was encouraged that I knew two of the players. I've known the parents of Sally Holman and of Ann Allen from the 1960s I was pleased to see Ann's parents at the concert.

The programme would have had two balancing halves – Overture and Concerto twice, with an interval between them – had not the classification of the last piece been changed between two categories. The classification system for Telemann's enormous output required complicated catalogues: TWV (the equivalent of BWV for Bach) separates the works into different types. TWV 55 is for Overtures, with the indvidual pieces identified by key and (if more than one in the key) by number. The first two pieces were TWV55:c3 and B3 (B is the German for B flat: lower case means minor, capitals mean major). A glance of the scoring in the catalogue shows that these were written for strings. But they worked very well for wind, and the two bassoons seemed to be in unison. (I was interested that the five Mozart wind *Divertimenti* reviewed on p. 5 sometimes played in unison, but more often not.) The Overtures had no horns – it is very difficult to find a consistent use of natural horns if no musical space had been made from them by the composer.

The Concerto a5 in D TWV 44:2 that follows the Overture in C minor is a quintet, as is the closing Concerto/ Overture currently identified as TWV 44:14 but previously TWV 55:F18. In both pieces, the bassoon is not explicit but plausible as continuo. What did worry me a bit was the harpsichord. At least some if not all the works had figured basses, but I was puzzled by the relationship between wind and keyboard. I sat half-way up the auditorium (until I started coughing so found a glass of water and sat in the back row). From either position, the wind were well balanced and sounded marvellous but the harpsichord was a bit feeble. However, the players definitely wanted to relate to it.

None of these pieces were familiar, and I don't have scores, so I won't go into any details. The music is clear enough not to demand any particular analysis. The playing was delightful, and despite the number of movements in three of the pieces – only TWV 44:2 had a pattern of four movements.

I don't know why this group was there, but it was well worth hearing them. I'm not worried about the change of instrumentation, provided that it works, which it did. *CB*

ANNUAL POLYCHORAL GATHERING

Echoes of Venice

St John's College, 2 May 2014
Girton College, 3 May 2014

This is the third such concert, and as with the second (I wasn't aware of the first), it featured large-scale works edited by Hugh Keyte. It is the culmination of a course for the splendidly named Historic Brass of the Combined Conservatoires, led and inspired by Jeremy West, who brings together students from the Royal College of Music and Drama at Cardiff and London's Guildhall School of Music – this year an awe-inspiring line-up of six cornetts and eleven sackbuts.[1] Maggie Faultless directed the period string players of her CU Collegium Musicum (2 violins, viola and cello with organ and harpsichord), with a delicate sackbut borrowed for a Schein dance suite. Martin Ennis conducted the CU Chamber Choir and the more grandiose works in which everyone was involved.

The concert began and ended with 33-part Gabrieli, a *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*. Catholic composers don't usually pair the two canticles: his only *Nunc*, in 14 parts, was published in his first major collection in 1597, whereas he published three Magnificats in 1597 and another three in the posthumous publication of 1615. Paul McCreesh was the first to call in question the authenticity of some of the 1615 items, and Hugh Keyte agrees with him. He has completed what he describes as two obviously defective motets, *Quem vidistis, pastores?* for a recording by McCreesh and *In ecclesiis* for another by Robert Hollingworth. The 17-part 4-choir 1615 *Magnificat* he sees not as defective but as demonstrably an expanded arrangement by a Gabrieli pupil or follower. The original,

1. It used to be argued that it was difficult for trumpeters and trombonists to swap with cornetts and sackbuts, but these young players seemed to have mastered both.

he argues, will have matched the 3-choir scoring of the 1597 *Nunc*, since the two settings were given virtually identical doxologies, having presumably been composed for a joint service of Vespers and Compline. Hugh has made a conjectural restoration of this lost 3-choir *Magnificat* (as yet unperformed) but long ago completed another anonymous expanded arrangement of the same work for seven choirs, of which only Choirs I and II survive, in choir books copied for the archducal chapel at Graz – this was another McCreesh commission, and involved careful comparison with the 4-choir arrangement and the doxology of the companion *Nunc dimittis*. It was Martin Ennis's performance of the seven-choir Magnificat at last year's Girton concert that led Hugh to make a matching expansion of the *Nunc*: with no historical justification whatever, but allowing (he hopes) the two mammoth canticles to feature in some no-expense-spared Anglican Evensong. Whether the Graz version was composed for there or for San Rocco is anybody's guess. Nor am I in a position to guess how close Hugh's reconstruction of the five missing Magnificat choirs gets to the original, but the Cambridge forces pulled out all the stops, and the big tuttis were the nearest thing to a musical Niagara that an early-music lover might hope to hear.

The confraternity of San Rocco spared no expense at the lavish concerts that it mounted each year on the afternoon of its patronal feast (August 16) with rich multi-choral pieces mixed with small-scale vocal and string pieces – why else would Gabrieli have composed a sonata for three violins and continuo, as hinted by Coryat.[2] The occasion had up to eight organs, probably for continuo playing. Space and cost in 2014, however, prevented so lavish a layout. St John's has space, but with fixed furniture; Girton has flexible space, but not enough of it – the number of seats would have to be substantially reduced, and that isn't a good idea when concerts are sold out!

"Echoes of Venice" may not have been an entirely suitable title. If there was multi-choral activity in Venice in the 1560s and -70s, I don't know where it exists – certainly nothing like the 40-part motet and mass by Striggio the elder (his son was the librettist of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*). The first half of the concert ended with his *Ecce beatam lucem*, which probably dates from 1561: a multipart, not polychoral, work, which subdivides the forces into endless combinations of mostly adjacent parts. During his visit to England in 1567, Striggio seems to have performed his motet and/or the genuinely polychoral 40-/60-part mass for five choirs that is partly based on it. There he will have encountered Tallis, no doubt inspiring him to write his own 40-part *Spem in alium* for four ten-part choirs a few years later. This began the second half. Both works are texted in every part, but Martin Ennis followed overwhelmingly likely historical practice by scoring them for voices and instruments – either one or the other per part, with no doubling. The rather dry acoustic of Girton hall allowed every detail of the counterpoint to make its mark in both works, with the Striggio receiving a particularly impressive interpretation, the contrasts between sections carefully brought out and a moderate tempo allowing the off-beat parts in the great tuttis to sound calculated rather than (as in so many performances) bordering on the frenetic. I gather that the more generous acoustic of John's chapel added a sprinkling of fairy dust to both works at the Friday concert, and I have to say that my seat at one side of the Girton audience gave me a distinctly unbalanced impression of the antiphony, the performers being spread out in a wide arc round the sides and front of the hall. No doubt those more centrally placed fared better.

Schütz was a double Venetian scholar, first with Gabrieli, later with Monteverdi. The performance of *Musikalisches Exequien* (parts II & III) was simpler in layout, and I'm told that it worked magically in St John's, with the three angelic soloists placed in the organ loft but wasn't at its best at Girton. Schein's Suite No. 5 (*Banchetto Musicale*, 1617) was competing with the English dance compositions from English immigrants, and was a step in advance. Schein's *Da Jakob vollendet hatte* from *Israels Brünnlein* (1623), a set of sacred madrigals, is a piece I have sung several times, and it is incredibly powerful, though has an accidental suggestion of humour! I'm sure it would have been better with five voices rather than a choir, as shown on recent recordings, but it worked pretty well. Grillo, an organist at San Rocco, published a collection of instrumental pieces in 1618 – attractive music that players and audience enjoyed.

Polish contributions to the second half were a canzona a3 by Mielczewski, a motet in honour of St Stanislaus by Mikolaj Zielinski, and an extraordinary transformation by Adam Jarzebsky of a motet by Palestrina in which Jeremy West's cornett, Maggie Faultless's violin and Joel Sandelson's cello wove an entrancing web of trio-sonata-like counterpoint in which scarcely a trace of the five-part vocal original could be discerned. The Danish Mogens Pedersøn was a pupil of Gabrieli who wrote a madrigal book in his honour, as did Schütz. His deeply-felt penitential motet *Ad te levavi* was new to me and a real find.

Martin Ennis is to be congratulated on a masterly piece of programme-planning, bringing together radically disparate items in a coherent and satisfying sequence. Both concerts were packed out, despite rival early-music concerts elsewhere in town, and these annual get-togethers seem already to have established themselves as a Cambridge institution. *CB*

2. Virtually any writings on Gabrieli mention the annual Feast of San Rocco, usually that of 1608, since Thomas Coryat, who had walked from England, happened to arrive in Venice for the August celebration and wrote an account in his *Crudities* (London, 1611). Jonathan Glixon *Music in the Venetian Confraternities, 1260-1807* (Oxford UP, 2003, pb 2008) quotes Coryat on pp. 157-8 and tabulates the performing forces for the Feast of San Rocco from 1595 to 1644 on pp.284-287. The use of multi-organs was normal for a decade or so, with slightly varying numbers: "seven" is usually quoted because of Coryat. One assumes that there was an organ for each choir. Although the event was religious, it wasn't liturgical, and the layout on a large but uncluttered floor was probably more effective than in San Marco. Those who didn't like music could admire the Tintorettos!

"WEEPING IN SHARPS AND FLATS"
Music by Bernardino de Ribera

De Profundis, dir. David Skinner
Church of St.Mary Minor, Cambridge
10th May 2014.

De Profundis goes from strength to strength. I first encountered this sizeable Cambridge-based choir of amateur ATB voices soon after its formation, when I (alongside Robert Hollingworth) was permitted to join the ranks to sing the plainchant items in the I Fagiolini *1612 Vespers* recording. In polyphonic mode I first heard them last year in a concert of Victoria's church music in St. John's College chapel, [3] when I was instantly attracted by the singers' clear, vibrato-free timbre and convincingly Latin expressiveness. The one weakness then was in the solo sections, which didn't always live up to the high general standard of singing. That was emphatically not the case in this concert of music by the till-now shadowy figure of Bernadino de Ribera, whose first major post, from 1559, was maestro at Ávila Cathedral, where both Victoria and Sebastian de Vivanco were under his tutelage as choirboys. He later moved to Toledo, where a large, resplendently illuminated choir book copied in 1570, the last year of his tenure, contains almost all of his surviving music – though much has been lost through wilful damage. Five other motets have survived in a set of partbooks in Valencia, three of which were included in this concert.[4]

A founding principle of De Profundis was to bring in different guest conductors for individual concerts, each encouraged to showcase particular areas of expertise and personal enthusiasm. David Skinner, tutor and director of music at Sidney Sussex College, conducted the Victoria concert, and returned to champion Ribera: future conductors are Edward Wickham and Andrew Parrott.

A mere handful of Ribera's motets have been published in modern times, but that indefatigable doyen of 16th-century Spanish church music, Bruno Turner, has edited as much of the surviving oeuvre as can be retrieved, and he was the *éminence grise* behind this enterprising and most enjoyable concert. Now in his early eighties but looking and sounding a spry 60-year-old, Bruno had the audience eating out of his hand as he described his discovery of the Toledo Codex and the problems encountered during the lengthy process of transcription and editing: not least the need to apply what he modestly dubbed "musical polyfilla" in the many places where 18th-century vandals, not content with tearing out twelve folios (48 pages), had cut out decorative initial letters with no regard for the music on the reverse: never for a moment were his interventions detectable. For the double-choir motet encore he went one step further and provided a neat solution to a problem that so often bugs editors: where some 15 bars were irretrievably lost at the opening, he simply substituted the appropriate Spanish plainchant, which segued so seamlessly into the polyphony as to sound like what the composer intended.

Ribera was hardly a first-rank composer like his choirboy pupils, but all the music that we heard was technically impeccable, the idiom recalling John Bull's concept of "doric music": grave, masculine, and determinedly unsensual – very much in tune with the church in recently-reunited catholic Spain, which anticipated the Tridentine reforms by half-a-century or more. Bruno's programme note cited the influence of Morales, compared Ribera to Gombert, and suggested that we could see him as 'a link between the era of the Josquin emulators and that of Guerrero'. Sensibly, David and Bruno made no attempt to sugar the pill with more obviously accessible settings by other composers, and the large and enthusiastic audience was able settle back to enjoy an extended musical bath of soul-easing polyphony. Three *alternatim* Magnificat settings formed the backbone of the programme, all that remain performable of the original eight – those vandals again!

Between came motets, the more obviously appealing of which set penitential texts. Most striking of all was *Rex autem David*, a biblical lament on the death of Jonathan, which contains an astonishing passage in which a descending chromatic motive is worked fifteen times, to powerful expressive effect. It was this that had first aroused Bruno's interest in Ribera, but – as he explained to the audience – he was taken aback to re-encounter it in the Toledo choir book in fustian guise, with all the chromatics carefully scraped out to leave a perfectly acceptable if comparatively anodyne diatonic reduction. Bruno put this down to clerical puritanism, but I wonder whether the technical demands of the chromatics (effortlessly negotiated by De Profundis) tripped up the Toledo singers in service one day, provoking a chromatics ban by outraged canons.[5] This passage alone justified the 'weeping in sharps and flats' of the concert's title – which in fact refers to Spanish musicians in general in a well-known and much-misunderstood 16th-century description of different national styles of singing. The choir will have been recording all the music in the week following the concert, and I wish them every success with this, their first CD.

Hugh Keyte

* * * * * * * * *

3. 20 March 2013: review *EMR* 154 p. 17

4. There are also editions of motets on the www edited by Jorge Martín and published by Ars Subtilior available for download at a fee.

5. A comparable reaction to a disliked passage of music was Sam Goldwyn's ban on all minor chords in subsequent film music, which the young André Previn found recorded on a wall plaque by the composing-room piano when he began work at MGM studios.

LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

LONDON HANDEL FESTIVAL

Handel Singing Competition

One of the problems with the London Handel Festival's Handel Singing Competition is that it takes an entire month from the first round (18 February) to the final (18 March), thereby making it hard for potential competitors who do not live or study in the London or the UK. Although they do get a reasonable number of applications it can by no means be seen as an international competition. Innsbruck's Cesti International Singing Competition for Baroque Opera, for example, is done and dusted within five days. But all competitions, whatever their status, are peculiar things – I have heard singers win one and get nowhere in another. But they do give young musicians experience of doing what they will be expected to do throughout their professional life – to perform to the best of their ability on the day, whatever their mood or current circumstances, in front of an audience who will, in some way or another, judge them. It's tough being a performer, but we wouldn't do without them.

As in some previous years, I attended the semi-final (6 March) rather than the final, on the grounds that I often really like singers who don't make it to the final. There were 12 singers: 9 sopranos, 1 mezzo and 2 baritones. As in previous years, there was the inevitable issue of vibrato – not just its presence, but the question of an appropriate singing style for the repertoire. This is, after all, a Handel competition. Mezzo Ewa Gubanska won the first prize (£5000); I had also thought that she was the best in the semi-final. I particularly liked her 'Where shall I fly' from *Hercules*. She was also one of the few singers who could produce a proper trill rather than just a wobble. The Second and Audience Prizes (£2000 and £300) went to Maria Valdmaa. Her *Verdi piante, erbette liete* (from *Orlando*) impressed me in the semi-final. The remaining three finalists were Susanna Fairbairn, Edward Grint and Timothy Nelson, each getting a £30 prize. Of the semi-finalists that didn't make it, I particularly liked Elizabeth Drury and Maria Veretenina. A special prize of £2000 was apparently offered for countertenors, the same as for the second prize winner. This is a curious notion – there is unlikely to ever be more than one or two countertenors in the five/six strong Finals, and one that fell on its own sword this year by the fact that no countertenors even got through to the semi-final. Referring back to my opening sentence, I should record that the First Prize winner is Polish and currently studying in Bologna.

Handel on the organ

The new organ in St George's, Hanover Square was put through its paces by the American organist, Kimberly Marshall (10 March) in a programme of Handel, Guilmant and Bach. A programme note error muddled up the first piece (a five Handel movement organ concerto, that got separated into two separate pieces), causing some confusion to the audience. Rather than play from the surviving Walsh keyboard versions of the Handel concertos, Kimberly Marshall played versions that veered towards the romantic interpretations of a much later era, with harmonic infilling of Handel's sparse notation, and the use of pedals, something that Handel might have liked, but very rarely (if ever?) experienced in England. The *Largo* from *Serse* was given an out-and-out romantic interpretation, the true romantic era finally being represented by the adaptations of Handel works by Guilmant (a pioneer in the early music revival) and Dupré's flamboyant transcription of Bach's Sinfonia from Cantata 29 – another confusion for listeners as it was listed in the programme as an original work by Bach.

Ensemble Cafébaum

The concert by Ensemble Cafébaum (St George's, Hanover Square, 14 March) was a rare appearance at the London Handel Festival of a group from over the channel. They met during the European Union Baroque Orchestra's 2009 incarnation and subsequently studied in Amsterdam and Basel, eventually leading to a first prize at the 2013 Göttingen Handel competition. Their line-up of violin, oboe/recorder, bassoon, cello and harpsichord makes for a flexible array of colour which they used to advantage in their Handel programme. Two fascinating features of their programme were their instrumental arrangements of opera arias and the inclusion of John Cage's *Ryoanij*. Their presentation and playing was imaginative, not least in the use of an upturned metal bucket and harpsichord tuning key for percussion. I was impressed by the playing of Ivan Liev *violin*, Philipp Wagner *oboe/recorder*. Anna Flumiani *bassoon* and Federica Bianchi *harpsichord*, but less so by their cellist who seemed set on dominating proceedings both aurally and visually. His playing was generally aggressive, with over-strong initial transients giving an unpleasant sound to the start of notes, and the forced playing causing many intonation problems. They also fielded a very energetic narrator who popped up in unexpected places to set the various pieces in context, give jazz-style introductions to the players and, at the end, to bounce around in a rather distracting little 'drunk uncle at a wedding' dance. But it all added to an entertaining evening.

The Ghost in the Machine

The Musicians of London Wall gave a fascinating concert of music based on continuing research by Emily Baines on surviving English mechanical musical instruments such as

barrel organs and organ clocks (Grosvenor Chapel, 27 March). Three such examples were used as sources for the programme, one of Charles Clay's organ clocks from the 1730s, the Henry Holland barrel organ (c.1790) in the Colt Collection and a Longman & Co barrel organ from around 1810 that was taken to entertain the crew on the voyage to traverse the Northwest Passage. Appropriately it is now in the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge. Handel was the composer most often represented on these English examples, with pieces ranging from the Dead March in *Saul* (with added twiddles) to the four-movement Recorder Sonata in F for recorder, found on the Holland barrel organ and based on the Organ Concerto version of the Sonata. To contrast with the instrumental pieces, tenor Michael Solomon Williams sang several of the song transcriptions found on these barrel organs. One of the fascinating aspects of the pinning on these mechanical organs is the knowledge they give us on articulation and ornamentation – including (although not represented in this concert) French examples of differing styles of *notes inegales.* My only disappointment was that, since the origin of most of these pieces would have been heard on an organ, however tiny, none were played on the Grosvenor Chapel organ. And recordings of some of the original versions would have made a fascinating addition to the concert.

Israel in Egypt

With 42 choruses and no *da capo* arias, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* is not Handel as we normally know it – indeed, a lot of it isn't Handel at all, but 'borrowed' from other, sometimes much earlier, composers[1]. And this performance (St George's, Hanover Square, 2 April) was not *Israel in Egypt* as we normally know it, complete as it was with the usually omitted first Part, 'The Lamentation of the Israelites for the death of Joseph'. This is a barely untouched version of Handel's 1739 *Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline* and is as rarely heard nowadays as it was in Handel's time – he only performed it twice. Clearly it is not a bundle of fun, but it does form an appropriately desolate and intense prelude to the two following Parts, representing the Exodus and the jubilant Song of Moses. The orchestration is curious, even by Handel's standards. In several movements he includes trombones, by then an archaic instrument that might have used visiting German players. The orchestra also featured some extra-large kettle drums on loan from the Tower of London. As Dr Ruth Smith's notes and pre-concert talk revealed, there are some remarkable harmonic and musical twists, notable in the Song of Moses, alongside some rather old-fashioned fugal writing. The homely space of St George's gave clarity to the musical texture, the London Handel Orchestra relishing the exposure rather more than the Pegasus Choir, who struggled particularly during exposed entries. Alexandra Gibson had more of the occasional solo spots than her fellow soloists. Adrian Butterfield's conducting could have made rather more of the inherent drama of the piece, but he kept the momentum going well.

1. including part of a motet by Gallus/Handl (c.600) that survived as funeral music in 18th century Germany; it followed directly on Bach;s

ROYAL ACADEMY OPERA'S *ARIODANTE*

The Royal Academy of Music's production of Handel's 1735 *Ariodante* coincided with the London Handel Festival but although it was given a minimal listing in the LHF programme book as a Festival event, there was no evidence of that affiliation at the event itself -- so I will review it separately from the other LHF events. The plot is standard Handelian tosh, based on *Orlando furioso,* with the usual intrigues and plot twists, all resolved by the inevitable *deux ex machine.* Paul Curren's staging was minimalist, a large 'black box' space enlivened by various combinations of Mackintosh-style chairs (the opera is set in Scotland), a seemingly endless supply of tulips, and an enormous tilting mirror hovering over the stage. The latter reinforced Jake Wiltshire's very effective lighting effects, and allowed us to see glimpses of the orchestra pit and the occasional goings-on on the floor of the stage. This was not just a sensibly economic staging, but also was seen as setting a challenge to the young singers by allowing the focus to be on their development of the characters – a nice approach. The performance was based on Handel's later revision, without the original dances and with Dalinda shifted up from a contralto to a soprano role. As is usual with RAM operas, there were two casts, which makes it slightly unfair to name individuals from one of the casts and not the other. But I will, as there were some very promising singers in the cast I saw on opening night (20 March). Anna Harvey was excellent in her sparkling trouser-role as Ariodante, demonstrating clear articulation, clean leaps and fine acting skills – her *Dopo notte* (the musical highlight of the opera) was perfect. Ross Scanlon played Ariodante's brother, Lurcanio with similar aplomb, his clean lyrical tenor voice combining with effective acting. Angharad Lyddon also impressed in the other trouser-role of the principal baddy, Polinesso, her boyish stage persona making it more of a shorts-role. As well as fine singing, she also demonstrated very impressive acting skills. It was good to have the Academy Baroque Orchestra in the pit rather than more usual RAM modern instrument orchestra. They were directed by Jane Glover.

COMPLINE FOR PASSIONTIDE AT ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT

Those who had absorbed the programme notes before the start of this concert would have been prepared what was probably the key moment in the concert given by the Tenebrae Consort in the spectacular surroundings of Smithfield's St Bartholomew the Great (13 March). The programme was based on their CD, Medieval Chant and Tallis Lamentations. After Sheppard's *In manus tuas* (sung out of sight) and the plainchant Hymn for Passiontide, sung as the five-strong choir processed to the choir stalls at the back of the church, we heard the enormous evening plainchant Compline for Passiontide from the Sarum rite, lasting nearly half an hour. As this was 'chant by candlelight', it was more a time for reflection and contemplation rather than serious analysis, the latter not helped by it being too dark to read the programme. The sequence includes three prescribed psalms, the appropriate hymn for

the hour followed by the lesson, versicle, Kyrie, blessing and Collect. The often hypnotic repetitions sounded magical in this evocative atmosphere. Then followed Tallis's two Maundy Thursday Lamentations, with two of the choral responds that would have been included had the Lamentations been performed liturgically, rather than for private devotion. Having spent most of the concert with evening music, the penultimate piece was the plainchant dawn office of the Litany after Lauds for Maundy Thursday, a moving sequence that ends with a boy (or, in this case, a countertenor) singing *Mortem autem crucis*. And finally, we reverted to slumber-time with John Blitheman's *In pace in idipsum*. As long as you knew what to expect (which many in the audience clearly didn't), this was a moving and very well presented evening of devotional music.

A VIOLINCELLO DA SPALLA VISITS BASINGSTOKE

As a prelude to their Queen Elizabeth Hall concert, the Orchestra of Age of Enlightenment brought their guest director Sigiswald Kuijken and his violoncello da spalla to Basingstoke (21 March) for their concert of Corelli, Vivaldi and Bach. The excellent acoustics of The Anvil were a perfect match for this intimate and revealing event, where instrumental colour was paramount – not just the compelling sound of the violoncello da spalla, but the variety of other bass instruments used, ranging from 16' and 8' violones, a basse de violon and violas da gamba. As well as a solo role, notably in Vivaldi's Concerto RV403, the violoncello da spalla also featured as the bass instrument in a number of works, including Bach's Concerto in D minor for Two Violins and Vivaldi's *La Folia* variations, bringing an incisive clarity to the bass line and a sense of close harmony within the consort. Two further violoncellos da spalla joined Kuijken for the final Brandenburg 3. Unfortunately late-comers were allowed to enter during pieces – a very disturbing practice, particularly in a concert as sensitive to sound as this, and unknown in most other concert venues.

NOT THE RETROCHOIR!

The Merbecke Choir was founded in 2003 to give an opportunity for young singers to continue singing after leaving the Southwark Cathedral choir. They are named after the Tudor composer John Merbecke who, in 1543, was sentenced in Southwark's retrochoir to be burned at the stake, a sentence later commuted as he was a mere musician and therefore 'knew no better'. In their concert on 22 March in the Cathedral, they stayed well clear of the retrochoir to join forces with the Monteverdi String Band to perform Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu nostri* interspersed with Jacob Handl's much earlier *Jesu dulcis memoria* (a piece in a similar tradition), the closely wrought imitative writing of Kuhnau's *Tristis est anima mea* and Becker's multi-sectional instrumental Sonata 15. The Merbecke Choir are not professional singers, so it would be unfair to review them as such. Despite that, their singing as a consort was very good – it was only in the solo passages that confidence, volume and pitch occasionally began to waiver. Several solo passages were sung by small groups, to much more successful effect as they pulled each other into tune. This is an ideal repertoire for these young singers, and Huw Morgan was an encouraging and supportive director.

BRESCIANELLO IN BERKSHIRE

New Century Baroque is one of the groups that have formed out of the 2009 incarnation of EUBO (the European Union Baroque Orchestra). Their launch concert was in 2010 in the little Berkshire church of East Woodhay, and they returned there on 30 March for a concert of Handel (*Judas Maccadeus* overture), Brescianello, Rebel (*Les elemens*) and Telemann (the *Don Quixote suite*). Brescianello was a new composer to me. He was born in Bologna c.1690, but spent most of his rather troubled musical career in the ducal courts in Munich and Stuttgart. His concerto for violin and bassoon was beautifully demonstrated by Irma Niskanen, violin, and Anna Flumiani, bassoon, the former making a very effective leader of this otherwise cooperative orchestra, the latter also making a very distinctive contribution as a bird in the Rossignolo from Telemann's *Don Quixote*. Brescianello's stirring Chaconne in A concluded the concert. New Century Baroque had spent the earlier part of the day (and the day before) at the National Portrait Gallery as part of a "multi-sensory event" exploring the loneliness, isolation and destructive nature of war.

EUROPEAN UNION BAROQUE ORCHESTRA 2014

Like New Century Baroque, many of the excellent young groups that I review have been members of EUBO. The European Union funding stream that has been keeping EUBO on the road for the past few years has changed but, in an extraordinary bit of bureaucratic nonsense, the timetable of the move to the new funding programme has resulted in there being no EU funding for any EUBO events before October 2014. Sadly this has meant that EUBO's entire 2014 programme of auditions and tours have been cancelled with the inevitable result that one entire cohort of young players will miss the extraordinary experience of these annual learning and performing opportunities. EUBO are planning some events during 2014, but badly need sponsorship and financial support. This can be done via http://www.eubo.eu/Support-us/donate.htm.

THE SAM WANAMAKER PLAYHOUSE

Cavalli's *L'Ormindo*

The first opera to be staged in the new Sam Wanamaker Playhouse (part of the Shakespeare Globe Theatre) was Cavalli's 1644 *L'Ormindo*, the start of an ongoing collaboration between the Globe and the Royal Opera House (4 April). It is difficult to imagine a better space for small scale opera – despite the all-wooden structure and fabric, the acoustics are excellent, and the audience are all within a few rows of the stage. The impossibility of arranging displayed translations meant that the opera was, sensibly in my view, performed in English in a neat translation by Christopher Cowell. As we entered, the performers was

already on stage getting prepared, a useful introduction for singers and audience alike to the fact that in this theatre there is no 'fourth wall'. The audience are an integral part of the setting, and are always visible as part of the action from wherever you sit in the auditorium. Like the setting for Iford Opera, this totally changes the relationship between performer and audience. They can touch each other – and in this show, did so. The opera itself opened with a display of sheer bravado, as *La Musica* was lowered from the ceiling to the set, and indeed, bless, the stage. *La Musica* was the excellent Susanna Hurrell, who also took the role of Erisbe, her first appearance being in one of the most extraordinary get-ups (as a vertical bed) I have seen in opera. The plot concerns the usual pairs of apparent lovers and various bit parts (including the standard issue drag nurse portrayed with evident relish by Harry Nicoll) and ends with the inevitable reconciliation, this time using the 'long-lost son' twist. The dress was, not surprisingly, period, the direction and design attractively conservative. The director was Kasper Holten, the first time he has worked with early opera. But I also detected the very strong influence of conductor Christian Curnyn (an excellent director whose star has been justifiably rising dramatically in recent years), notably in the way in which the singers delivered the text and in the integration between the musical and theatrical interpretations. This was a more restrained interpretation than Curnyn's recent ENO conducting, and suited the ambience and the music perfectly. The eight players of Curnyn's own Orchestra of the Early Opera Company were on a gallery above and behind the stage, with only Christian Curnyn being able to see anything of the stage – something akin to playing from a pit. Samuel Boden played Ormindo, his attractive light high tenor voice being spot on. Joélle Harvey was Sicle/Lady Luck with Graeme Broadbent bringing vocal gravitas to the role of King Ariademus and Ed Lyon bringing a darker foil as Amidas. This was broadcast on Radio 3, but it was a shame that it wasn't filmed as well – it was stunning, musically and presentationally.

The Boat from Venice to Padua

Two days after the outstanding *L'Ormindo* came early music's regular comedy act, I Fagiolini, with a programme built around Peter Wilson's clever staging of Banchieri's rumbustuous 1623 musical theatre piece *Barca di Venetia per Padova*. The opening calm before Banchieri's storm came with the intense harmonies of Piccinini's *Cromatica* Toccata, exquisitely played by Paula Chateauneuf, before she was joined by tenor Matthew Long for a moving performance of Monteverdi's *Si dolce é'l tormento*, Matthew Long's attractively light upper register beautifully portraying the anguish of love. The Banchieri was delivered with inevitable humour and brilliant acting combined with outstanding voices, notably, on this occasion, those of Clare Wilkinson and William Purefoy. Robert Hollingworth delivered the toe-curlingly clever commentary with a nice line in several Italian accents. The second half of the concert return to more serious stuff, with four madrigals from Monteverdi's 1614 *sesto libro*, Gesualdo's *Mille volte il di more*, finishing with a return to lost love with Monteverdi's *Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata*. This was a concert of emotional contrasts, t summed up by the encore – Robert Hollingworth's take on "When I'm cleaning windows".

Rachel Podger

As attractive as it has been to hear a range of different types of early music at the Sam Wannamaker Theatre, the last of this current group perhaps came closest to the ideal choice for this intimate space, with a solo violin recital by Rachel Podger (28 April). The immediate interaction between the stage and the audience suited her performing style perfectly, her engaging stage presence being immediately apparent, not least in the way she dealt with the owner of a mobile phone that went off a few feet to her left. Taking her programme from her 'Guardian Angel' CD, she include her own transcription (and transposition) of Bach's Flute Partita (1013), along with pieces by Pisendel, Tartini, Roman, Matteis and Biber – the stunning *Passacaglia* from the Rosary Sonatas. The beeswax candles that light the theatre are aided by some very subtle electric lighting for the stage area (secreted away in a panel in the ceiling), but Rachel's music desk had two candles attached to it, leading to some deft negotiations at page turns to avoid danger to sleeves or hair. A delightful evening of music at its most intimate.

A FORGOTTEN RIVALRY

The current series of events at the National Trust's Fenton House in Hampstead included a delightful sell-out concert "A Forgotten rivalry: the viola da gamba and cello in the eighteenth century" given by Ibrahim Aziz, gamba, Poppy Walshaw, cello, and Katie De La Matter, harpsichord. The first round of the rivalry went to the gamba, with the Gamba Sonata in E by Abel, one of the last of the 18th century viol performers, with the cello firmly in continuo role. A more musically successful piece, and one that treated the instruments far more equally, was Corrette's Sonata 6 in D, with its attractively lilting central *Affettuoso* Aria. Boismortier's Sonata 3 in D minor (op.14) has a curious structure, with two opening Allemandes, one marked *Gravement*, the other *Gayment*. Again, it was the slow movement (*Lentement*) that impressed. They finished with Schenck's Sonata 2 in a, with the viola da gamba in the lead until a series of solos gave the cello a penalty goal in extra time, taking it to the top of the league in this friendly contest. It was to be another two centuries before the viola da gamba managed to return to the musical premiere league. My only issue was that performers at Fenton House are required to use the Benton Fletcher collection's enormous 1770 Broadwood harpsichord, an instrument that is far too late and far too dominant for most of the concerts that use it. Notwithstanding the issues of moving keyboard instruments around, particularly from upper floors, it would be good to have a slightly more sympathetic harpsichord available.

RAMEAU'S 250th - THE RAMEAU PROJECT'S ZAÏS

One of the early results of the impressive Rameau Project (a collaboration between Oxford University, the Orchestra

of the Age of Enlightenment, scholars, musicians and dancers) was the production of Rameau's 1748 opera Zaïs. The OAE was conducted by the project's director, Jonathan Williams, Director of College Music at St Hilda's College, Oxford (Queen Elizabeth Hall, 27 April). The plot is unusual, with none of the normal operatic twists and turns and sub-plots. It is the story of Zaïs (King of the Sylphs but disguised as a shepherd) and his love for Zélidie who, rather to her surprise, is whisked off to a celestial palace for a long sequence of ordeals to test her love – quite something for a shepherd to concoct. Having passed the tests, she learns that Zaïs is an immortal, something he promptly renounces as Zélidie would much prefer a simple shepherd. However, after some impressive thunder claps, the Gods make them both immortal which, judging by the final chorus, seems to be a good thing.

Although billed as a concert performance, in many ways this had all that was needed for an understanding of the music without the intervention of the personal views of an opera director. The orchestra sat in a shallow arc at the very back of the large QEH stage (which extends much further back than is usually evident), with a large space left for the dancers of *Les Plaisirs des Nations* – a space also used by the singers, notably in the moments when they interacted directly with the dancers. One of the most interesting aspects of this performance was the inclusion of the many dance sequences so integral to this work, originally billed as a *Ballet Héroique*. These were directed (and reconstructed) by choreographer Edith Lalonger, whose joint studies in dance and music were much in evidence. Although I am far from an expert, this was one of the finest examples of baroque dance that I have experienced; graceful, stylish, communicative, rhythmically integrated and beautifully dressed in period garb. Sadly, the audience lights were reduced to more-or-less pitch darkness, making it impossible for anybody to follow Edith Lalonger's excellent descriptions in the programmes to follow the interpretations of the dancers (or the plot), or indeed for me to take notes. This was particularly unfortunate in this case, as the dancers were specifically reflecting Zélidie's ordeals and the emotions emanating from the text. The singers were in normal concert dress, with many singing from scores, inevitable for a one-off concert. Hints of scenic changes came from subtle projections above the orchestra. Unfortunately, particularly for this performance, my usual OAE press seats close to the front were replaced by ones a few rows from the back, making it very difficult to compare the balance of the orchestra to that in previous QEH concerts – an important aspect of this event. But assuming that my position didn't unduly change the aural perspective, this seemed to be a particularly delicate and well-balanced use of the orchestral forces, in appropriate restrained *bon goût*. Jonathan Williams impressed as a conductor – he has clearly put a lot of thought into interpretation and there were some fascinating aspects (for example) of ornamentation that are a little beyond the scope of the review. The singing was impressive, notably from David Stout as Oromazès, Katherine Watson as Amour and Louise Adleras Zélidie. The next event in the Rameau Project is a performance of *Pigmalion* and *Anacréon*at the QEH on 9 Oct.

MORE CAVALLI – *LA CALISTO* IN HIGHGATE

Hampstead Garden Opera's occasional forays into the early opera repertoire came up trumps again with their performance of Cavalli's 22nd opera, *La Calisto,* directed by Joe Austin, with Oliver-John Ruthven conducting Musica Poetica London, and performed in the upper room theatre of the historic Gatehouse pub in Highgate Village. First performed in carnival Venice in 1651 at a time of experimentation and development in the Italian opera world (first inhabited by the likes of Caccini, Peri and Monteverdi), *La Calisto* demonstrates Cavalli's use of livelier moving bass lines and semi-independent arias that were later to be seen as transitional between those earlier pioneers and fully formed Baroque opera. The post-apocalyptic set owed its providence to the original story, which is post-Jove's destruction of earth. The subsequent plot is centred on an ever-randy Jove who seduces the virginal nymph Calisto by appearing in the form of Diana, the leader of her chastity-bound sect. Calisto's resulting schoolgirl crush on the Diana-in-disguise leads to some awkward moments with the real Diana and her fellow nymphs, but Diana herself then falls for Endymion, a wandering philosopher/shepherd. Meanwhile, another of the young nymphs (Linfea) decides that being chaste, virginal and a nymph is not quite as exciting as life might be with a man. Meanwhile Pan and assorted Satyrs also have goatish eyes on Diana. Jove's long-suffering wife Juno takes exception to Jove's behaviour and turns Calisto into a bear, although Jove and Mercury then reveal that Calisto will become a star – a real one, appropriately in the constellation Ursa Major.

La Calisto is an ideal vehicle for young singers to get their teeth into, with many contrasting roles. This show ran with two casts, meaning that more than 20 singers were involved – an excellent opportunity for them to gain professional experience. In the cast that I saw (on 30 April), I was particularly impressed with the singing of Peter Brook (Jove), Philippa Boyle as a formidably ferocious Juno, James Hall's countertenor Endymion, Madeleine Sexton displaying real vocal and acting talent as the lustful Satirino, David Fearn as Mercury and Emily Armour as Linfea. The original production had an orchestra of six,[2] expanded on this occasion by the addition of two recorder players, one (Keith McGowan) doubling on harp. Oliver-John Ruthven was the musical director, and showed an impressive grasp of period style, notably in his use of the various continuo instruments. Key instrumentalists were Kate Conway playing gamba, violinist Claudia Norz, Alex McCartney, theorbo, with Oliver-John Ruthven and Simon Lloyd providing supportive harpsichord continuo. There were several clever directorial moments, not least when Juno tries to sing falsetto as Diana, fails, and calls on Mercury's assistant to help him out by singing just behind him. The translation was slightly clumpy in parts but the cuts were sensible, bring it in at less than two hours.

2. Presumably in accord with recent discussions on the size of Cavalli's orchestra: Cavalli on a harpsichord and 6 other players.[CB]

The 22nd Telemann Festage – March 2014

Mark Windisch

Georg Philipp Telemann was born in Magdeburg in 1681, although he spent most of his life elsewhere. Nevertheless, Magdeburg is the city where there is a Telemann Festival every two years.

The latest one took place, mostly over two weekends, in March 2014. The established format is that they produce one opera, performed three times, at least one major religious work, and several chamber concerts. Magdeburg is not a large city so venues are all within easy reach of the centre. They have a fine opera house which is attached to their music school and some good, baroque sized religious and secular rooms where they perform. The programme book, sadly only in German, is a real bargain at 10 Euros and very full of information.

This year's opera was *Otto* which is an adaptation of Handel's opera *Ottone* (HWV15). Handel and Telemann were lifelong friends. Telemann adapted this for a German audience so the recitatives were in German, and as he did not have Handel's castrati or prima donnas, several new arias were composed. Some of the well known arias have been retained but everything has been transposed down with the hero sung by a tenor (Handel's hero was sung by Senesino). Somehow this changes the whole setting to a more Errol Flynn swashbuckling production. An overhead projector illuminated watercolour-painted scenarios over the action, which I found a little confusing. Simon Robinson made a convincing Otto and his bride-by-correspondence Theophane was played with much pathos by Kirsten Blaise. Ruby Hughes should have played the scheming Gismonda but was indisposed and replaced by the ever versatile Romelia Lichtenstein. Her supposedly weak son Adelberto (also pitched to tenor from Berenstadt's alto castrato in the Handel) was here played with considerably more spirit than usual by Colin Balzer. Emirenus the pirate was played by bass David John Pike at the same pitch as Handel's singer and the pivotal character Matilda, his sister, was played by Sophie Harmsen. Certainly it was an enjoyable performance without the practice often adopted in Germany of using every stage trick to frustrate the singers efforts to project the emotion of their characters.

There were two major sacred pieces. The first was a *Lukas Passion* (1771), a composite work with sections by C. P. E. Bach (1714-1788), Telemann (1681-1767), G. A. Benda (1722-1795), Homilius (1714-1785) and Stölzel (1690-1749), the whole put together by C. P. E. Bach. It was performed in the Pauluskirche by 17 soloists, the Dresdener Barock-orchester and the RIAS Kammerchor, conducted by Hans-Christoph Rademann. It was a superb performance of a very interesting work. The second large-scale work was a *Johannespassion* by Telemann but I was unfortunately unable to attend this.

The other concerts attend were, first, *Obligat!*, a chamber concert with Stephanie Schacht (flute and recorder), Omar Zoboli (oboe), Rebeka Rusó (gamba) Thomas Platzgummer (cello) and Eva Maria Pollerus and Jesper Christensen (harpsichord). This featured music by Telemann and C. P. E. Bach was beautifully played in the *Schinkelsaal*, a baroque room within the Magdeburg Telemann Society's headquarters. Secondly we heard two Kapitänsmusiken, or oratorios in honour of the Hamburg seafaring guild, the first *Hebt an, ihr Chöre der Freuden* by C. P. E. Bach, the second *So kömmt die kuhne Tapferkeit* by Telemann, performed by La Stagione Frankfurt with Michael Schneider conducting – another very satisfying concert, which was one of several broadcast live on German radio stations. Finally, I enjoyed the competition winners' concert by a group called Camerata Bachiensis, with flute, violin, viola, cello and harpsichord. Music was once again by C. P. E. Bach and Telemann. Next year's competition is for woodwind instrument and continuo, to be judged by a jury under Jesper Christiansen from 7–15 March 2015.

All in all, a very fulfilling long weekend. Do look out for 11-20 March 2016, where the subject is to be "Telemann and the Concert". For further information, consult the website: www.telemann.org.

CD REVIEWS

After the chronological sequence there are two sections covering wider chronological ranges.

A batch of **Downloads** *from* ***www.outhere.com*** *are reviewed on p. 37. The sign-up process was simple and the downloading of music and booklets painless. Check out the beautiful website, where you can listen to samples before you decide to buy.*

These are followed on p. 38 by **musik museum**, *a series of recordings from the Tiroler Landesmuseen, with a wide range of repertoire, all thoroughly deserving of investigation. Those marked with * booklets in German only; those marked thus° have an English version of the notes, but the sung texts are not translated.* *BC*

MEDIEVAL

Marie et Marion *Motets & Chansons from 13th-century France* Anonymous 4 56' 02"
harmonia mundi **HMU 807524**

Anon 4 has been recording for 21 years, with minimal changes of singers: they are currently Ruth Cunningham, Marsha Genensky, Susan Hellauer and Jacqueline Horner-Kwiatek. I was surprised to see that the recordings continued nearly as frequently in the 2000s as in the 1990s: perhaps they were not marketed so well here. It is refreshing to hear them, and after (for me at least) a gap, I'm more the enthusiast than I was. I was pleased to hear a friend listening a bit and commenting that this disc is rather better than he remembered, though probably not as converted as I was. I'm more familiar with the Montpellier Codex than most. I'm not an expert, but do have a photocopy of the Rokseth edition (1935-9) and my review copies of the A-R edition somewhere, but not at hand. It's a vast MS, with the programme concentrating on, not Robin and Marion, but Marie and Marion – the heavenly and earthly Marys (or is it Maries?) The programme has enough variety of repertoire and the singing is impressive. I can't discuss 24 pieces in half a column or so, but I can recommend it strongly. Texts are in the original (Latin or 13th-century French), modern French, German and English. *CB*

Cohors leta ducat chorum The Women Cantors & Choir of the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge and the Bristol University Schola Cantorum 66' 22"
Herald **HAVPCD387**

Drawing on the Fontevraud and Las Huelgas music books, this CD presents a sequence of chants and simple polyphony for a variety of liturgical contexts as they might have been sung in convents in the Middle Ages. Accompanied occasionally by chime bells and organistrum played by Dr Mary Remnant, the scholas use authentic pronunciation as they sing the chant in a variety of acoustic spaces. These range from the uncomfortably close to the very distant and resonant and do not always present the ladies' voices in a flattering way. The voices vary quite widely in tone and vibrato in a way which is no doubt quite authentic to the original context, but which I found a little off-putting on repeated listening to the CD. Generally the solo voices in the chant and singing the polyphonic episodes blend quite well, but the larger groupings tend to be dominated by a couple of voices and gel less successfully. There is also a fair amount of wobbling and scooping, no doubt also prevalent in Medieval convents but really not desirable. This is an interesting CD, but unfortunately this sort of repertoire has already been presented much more professionally by groups such as Anonymous 4 and other specialist female voice ensembles. *D. James Ross*

15th CENTURY

Piffarissimo: Instrumental music at the Council of Constance 1414-1418 Capella de la Torre, Katharina Bäuml 61' 54"
Challenge Classics **CC72631**
Music by Bedingham, Binchois, Cornanzo, Dufay, Ebreo, da Piacenza, de Vitry, von Wolkenstein & anon

The Council of Constance attracted an extraordinary 50,000 participants speaking 30 languages according to the contemporary accounts. These also refer explicitly to standard and extended *alta capella* groups, mixed or interspersed with strings and voices. Carte blanche therefore to include on this CD a taster menu of the music from different European nations from the early 15th century. It is very well played with tight ensemble, the shawm sound characteristic of wide low pressure reeds. This produces a fluid and flexible flow with the possibility of very light articulation, clear-toned upper registers and a coloured low register. It suits the vocally-based pieces and works especially well where there is equal interplay with the trombones. In these pieces the musical narrative is carried by the melody, implying as it does the arc of the words. However, in the purely instrumental pieces, which in this era tend to be based on formal patterns, the musical tension needs to come from somewhere else. It could be from a tauter sound, a greater use of dynamic, pacing, or some other idea. Otherwise there is a danger of the performances becoming too passive and allowing the listener's attention to drift off. The presence of England at the Council is represented in part by the famous Agincourt carol, which is given a rather reverent rendition introduced by a lovely shawm and sackbut duet (complete with a holy bell). We know, though, that as the burden develops, the words become rather jingoistic – to a degree that may even embarrass some modern sensibilities – and it is difficult to imagine that the piece was not intended to carry an element of thrill. The instrumental approach of this ensemble feels convincing as a basis, but would carry more conviction if it allowed for more variation. This is one of a group of CDs which is being released over a short time, and I look forward to hearing the others. *Stephen Cassidy*

16th CENTURY

Dowland ***The Art of Melancholy*** Iestyn Davies *cT*, Thomas Dunford *lute* 76' 33"
Hyperion **CDA68007**
All ye whom love or fortune, Behold a wonder here, Burst forth my tears, Can she excuse, Come again sweet love, Come away come sweet love, Come heavy sleep, Flow my tears, Fortune my foe, *Go crystal tears, I saw my lady weep, In darkness let me dwell,* Lachrimae, Mrs Winter's Jump, *Now oh now I needs must part* (with The Frog Galliard), *Say love if ever,* Semper Dowland semper dolens, *Shall I strive with words to move, Sorrow stay, Time stands still*

Another month, yet another disc of lute songs sung by a countertenor. This is no ordinary alto, of course, but the rising star of British falsetto singing, Iestyn Davies, currently enjoys well-deserved rave reviews for his performances in Handel opera and oratorio. His latest project is this exploration of Dowland, which has been well received in the duo's recent tour of North America, and there are numerous clips of their performances to be seen on YouTube. I will, once again, repeat my objection to falsettists presenting lute songs in transposition (they are mostly down a whole tone here, not the usual third or fourth) when there is no evidence that these 'chapel' voices ever tackled this repertoire before 1952.* Nevetheless, I admire Davies enormously, and, well – if you like that modern invention, what we now call 'the countertenor' singing to the lute, then this is an excellent selection of the best songs. It's beautifully sung by a man with one of the best falsetto techniques I have ever heard. Good old St.

John's. He is a national treasure, and he'll be around for a long time, I'm sure. Countertenors have to have some solo repertoire to perform, and it looks as though they are here to stay. But do question it. Do question whether or not falsettists express the emotions of the songs as far as you, the listener are concerned – something that we know the lute song composers expected. Is making a lovely silky sound really enough? This really is a lovely record – but is it 'right?'

Special praise, however, for his lutenist, another rising star, young Thomas Dunford, for some of the best accompaniment, and excellent playing of his solo pieces. He too is one to watch. *David Hill*

* *See p. 44 for questioning the plausability of altos in church music of the period as well.*

Luca Marenzio e il suo tempo: Madrigali, villanelle, danze, fantasie di fine '500 Angela Alesci *S*, Domenico Cerasani & Massimo Lonardi *lutes* 56' 04"
Tactus **TC531302**
Music by Caroso, Galilei, Gorzanis, di Lasso, Lorenzino del liuto, Marenzio, Negri + anon

This is exquisite chamber music from 16th-century Italy. As the excellent notes inform us, arrangements of madrigals and other vocal works for solo voice and lute have a long and distinguished history. This recording presents a selection of Marenzio's madrigals, *canzonette* and *villanelle*, performed thus, interspersed with a dazzling array of lute pieces, ranging from simple dance variations to long and contrapuntally complex *ricercares* and fantasias. Soprano Angela Alesci sings sensitively, with fine regard for the wide range of emotions portrayed; listen, for example, to the contrast between the light-hearted "Fuggero tant'amore" (track 14) and the searing "Dolorosi martir." She is ably partnered by Cerasani and Lonardi, who in their turn get to shine, notably in the fine Lasso and Galilei fantasias. An interesting disc – one slightly misses Marenzio's matchless counterpoint of voices in a couple of the more serious madrigals, but the *villanelle* and *canzonette* are a delight, and the lute solos ravishing.

Alastair Harper

Ferdinando Richardson *Complete Works for Harpsichord* Glen Wilson 69' 10"
Naxos **8.572997**
+ music by Byrd, Alfonso Ferrabosco I, Harding, Holborne, El. Kiderminster (?Bull) Morley, Paradiso, Strogers & anon

Naxos and Wilson are to be complimented on this attractive recording which explores some of the byways of the English virginal repertory. Richardson was a minor aristocrat, groom of the privy chamber to Elizabeth I and James I, and writer of one of the laudatory poems at the start of Byrd and Tallis' 1575 *Sacrae Cantiones*. There are just seven surviving works plus his keyboard arrangement of Morley's Pavane and Galliard written for lute. The disc is filled out with five anonymous arrangements of music by Byrd (his *Lullaby, my sweet little baby*) and others, taken from the so-called Weelkes MS, and five other earlier pieces from different sources. These last include the Praeludium ascribed in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* to "El. Kiderminster" which Wilson speculates may be by the young John Bull, whose influence on Richardson seems clear. He also suggests that the Fitzwilliam book was intended as a wedding present for James I's daughter Elizabeth, and might well have been organised by Richardson. Wilson plays with clarity and is well up to the considerable virtuosity required in the Bull-like figurations. These generally flow well but can occasionally come across in an over-literal fashion. We are not told what instrument he is playing on but it sounds well in this music and is well recorded with a good bass sound. *Noel O'Regan*

Schlick *The first printed organ music* Kimberly Marshall (1991 Paul Fritts organ, Arizona State University) 55'38"
Loft **LRCD-1124**
Schlick Salve regina, Pete quid vis, Hoe losteleck, Benedictus, Primi Toni, Maria zart, Christe, Da Pacem, Ascendo ad patrem **Kotter** Salve regina; **Hofhaimer** Was ich durch Glück, Zucht, Her und Lob **Isaac** Benedictus **Paumann** Incipit Fundamentum, Sequuntur Redeuntes, Redeuntes in idem **Kleber** Maria zart **Buchner** Agnus Dei primum, ad festum trium regum, Agnus Dei secundum

The CD was released in 2012 to mark the 500th anniversary of the first ever volume of printed organ music, Schlick's 1512 *Tabulatur etlicher Lobgesang und lidlein*. This volume, and his book *Spiegel der Orgelmacher und Organisten* published a year earlier, marks Schlick as one of the most important pioneers of organ composition and performance. Kimberley Marshall sets his music in context by including works by Schlick's predecessor, Paumann, contemporaries Hofhaimer and Isaac and successors Kotter and Buchner. She plays on her own organ in Arizona, an instrument with some very effective early Germanic sounds – a practical as well as musically sensible decision, as historic organs of this period are rare and all come with interpretation problems, notably in tuning, for which Schlick had very specific requirements. The CD ends with one of the most complex organ pieces ever written – the 10-part *Ascendo ad patrem meum*, with four independent voices played with the feet and six with the hands. This was one of two compositions sent to the Bishop of Trent around 1521 in honour of the election of Charles V as Holy Roman King (later to be upped to HR Emperor), and there has to be some doubt as to whether it was ever intended to be performed – and, indeed, whether life is too short to even attempt it. But its dense texture comes over well in this interpretation and, for those who like such things, there is a picture of Kimberly Marshall's bright red shoes behind the CD.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Luther's wedding day Capella de la Torre, Katharina Bäuml 69' 02"
Challenge Classics **CC72598**
Music by Isaac, Josquin, M. Praetorius, Senfl, Sermisy, Walter & anon

This mixed consort of voices and wind instruments presents a pleasing programme of music from the early 16th century on the peg of being music that could have been performed at Luther's wedding on the 13th June 1530. In fact while there is no precise documentary evidence as to what Luther's wedding guests would have heard, the choice of simple settings by Senfl of the Kyrie and Gloria, and a setting of the Creed by Johann Walter, director of the Torgau Stadtkantorei, interspersed with motets and chorales by the same composers and Isaac and Josquin, is probably representative of the choices which would have been made by the religiously relatively moderate and musically sensitive reformer. Things hot up a bit for his wedding feast, with some 16th-century dance standards rubbing shoulders with less familiar material by Isaac. The Capella de la Torre, who take their name from the tower musicians who provided entertainment music for renaissance burghs, play with energy but also refinement – this has to be some of the most tastefully controlled extended playing of shawms and dulcians that I have heard recently. This is an entertaining CD providing a convincing snapshot of provincial German music in the early 16th century. *D. James Ross*

Thomas Tallis *Missa Puer natus est nobis & other sacred music* The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood 67' 35"
Hyperion **CDA 58026**

I have been waiting for some years now for this performance of Tallis' *Mass Puer natus est*, not because there have not been previous excellent recordings, but because none of them have been at the pitch intended by the composer. The all-pervading influence of Professor David Wulstan, whose theories on clef configurations and transpositions in 16th-century music are now fairly comprehensively discredited, still have a widespread effect in the performance of Renaissance choral music, with many specialist choirs

sticking to the practice of transposing most music up a minor third. The result is that this is the first recording of the Tallis *Mass Puer natus est* at the 'correct' untransposed pitch (those interested in all the ins and outs of performance pitch and voice types could do worse than read Roger Bowers' excellent 'Chains of Rehabilitated Gold' in *EMR* 159. Singing a piece a minor third lower may not seem to make an earth-shattering difference, but in fact it has a fundamental effect on the sound because of the new voice distribution. A work hitherto for 2 means, 2 altos, tenor (cantus) and 2 basses is transformed into a work for 2 altos, 2 tenors, baritone (cantus) and 2 basses. Instead of two altos often struggling in their lowest ranges, the melodically intricate third and fourth lines pass to tenors, while the deep bass parts enrich the sonority immensely. In addition to reinforcing the theory that the work was composed for a joint performance by the English and Spanish Chapels Royal on the occasion of a visit by Philip II to his wife Mary Tudor, and the associated rumours that she might be pregnant, it makes for a much more satisfactory account of Tallis' superb score. The Cardinall's Musick give a superb account of the Mass although it seems to me that they dilute the all-male texture by using women's voices on one of the alto lines, and it would have been nice to have heard the albeit fragmentary setting of the Creed. Having said that, Andrew Carwood directs the work with insightful musicality, and the resulting performance combines magnificence and dignity. It might have been really interesting to have had a 'low' performance of *Loquebantur variis linguis* which shares its scoring with the Mass on the same CD to allow a comparison – the Cardinall's Musick's recent recording of it on Hyperion CDA 67548 seems to be at 'high' pitch. Of the other works on the present CD, also sung at the 'correct' pitch, *Videte miraculum* and *Salvator mundi* are particularly interesting as the main focus moves from the hitherto stellar treble part to the inner voices. As with the other motets and the Magnificat on the CD, the singing is effortlessly idiomatic and expressive. *D. James Ross*

Medieval Chant and Tallis Lamentations: A sequence of chant and polyphony for Holy Week Tenebrae Consort, Nigel Short
Tenebrae Records **SIGCD901** 65' 23"
Sheppard *In manus tuus I* **Tallis** *Lamentations*

The velvety tones of the Tenebrae Consort singing Sarum chant associated with Compline for Passiontide made me wonder just how this music actually sounded in the Middle Ages. There is no reason to suppose that our Medieval forebears had any other concept of vocal perfection than we have nowadays, and they would certainly have striven towards perfection in the music they were presenting before God. What they would have found odd is our use of liturgical plainchant as a sort of intellectual prozac, to lull our senses and help us relax. It is clear from Nigel Short's touchy-feely introduction to the CD that he is very much playing for this modern market – i.e. the Classic FM listener rather than the *EMR* reader. This is echoed in the group's cv at the end of the booklet where, to help us enjoy their singing, they identify themselves as "an outstanding group of musicians"! However, this is a CD which covers all cases, and the informative notes by John Rowlands-Pritchard will satisfy the needs of the most demanding *EMR* reader, and the singing on the CD is very lovely indeed. I felt that the Tallis lingered just a little too indulgently at points – the big licks given to the initial letters were a bit much, if understandable – but then again the programme notes mentioned that while they were aware that the work was probably written for domestic performance, they were providing chant responds as if they were being sung liturgically. *D. James Ross*

Oluf Strangesøns Dystridt/Oluf Strangesøns Joust Keah Stuttard, Agnethe Christensen 57' 08"
Modern Roots 001

This has similarity with *Marie and Marion* CD (see p. 22), but is in some ways less sophisticated – and that isn't a criticism! The title song begins the sequence and lasts 13'38" minutes, with 25 stanzas from Karen Brahes Folio (c.1580). Other repertoire comes from the Lochamer Lieder-buch (c.1452-55), the Rostock Liederbuch (c.1465), the Buxheim Orgelbuch (c.1460-70) and *Piae cantiones* (1582), their familiarity increasing from the less to the well known. The texts are mostly germanic, with a few Latin pieces and one French. The opening song was fine for a first hearing, despite its length, but a translation would have been helpful; but it would need a more expensive production to have it – perhaps a website, or a request for an email might help. But one doesn't always need the translation: a long chunk of Beowulf heard perhaps in the 1990s in Utrecht Cathedral (I think) crypt was amazingly powerful, even though I did only recognize the names and a few words surviving from student days. This CD is well worth hearing anyway. *CB*

Tabulatures de Guiterne Michael Craddock *ren. guitar* 66' 11"
Cantus **C9632**
Music by Brayssing, Morlaye, Le Roy

During the 1550s in France there was what might be described as a craze for the small renaissance guitar. At least nine different books of music were published in that decade, some containing songs, and others solos. The instrument is tuned a fourth higher than the modern guitar, and it has just four courses, producing high, clear, and delicate notes. Inevitably, with so few courses, many chords are not in root position as they would be on a 6-course lute. Although some polyphony is successfully sustained, the overall texture consists mainly of a single melody line (often very elaborate), with chords giving harmonic support. This is the case even for the fantasies, which one might have expected to be more polyphonic. There is much variety – fantasies, song intabulations, variations over a ground (e.g. *Conde claros*), and dances (some with written-out divisions for repeats) – which James Tyler describes in his facsimile edition as "a wonderful cross-section of music from the contemporary repertoire".

The present CD begins with a set of pieces attributed to Guillaume Morlaye, although how much credit he can have for composing them is open to doubt: the last part of Fantasie II is a pretty much exact copy of a Ricercar by Francesco da Milano (Ness, no. 2, passage up to bar 78); *Pleurez mes yeux* is an intabulation of a song by Pierre Sandrin; *Villanesque* is similar to The Hay (Dallis lute book, p. 77), but I don't know where it is from originally; Gaillarde "Les cinq pas" is a rather nice setting of the well-known *La Rocha el fuso*. Craddock does well to get his hands round Adrian Le Roy's Pavane and Gaillarde based on "Si je m'en vois", music derived from "L'ennuy qui me tourmente" by Pierre Certon; the repeats marked "plus diminuee" involve exceptionally fast quavers. For the meekest of string instruments are two Pavane and Gaillarde settings by Le Roy of *La guerre*, derived from Jannequin's popular battle chanson. The mood changes from serious fantasies, including the delightful *Fantasie des Grues* by Gregor Brayssing, to a gently rumpty tumpty suite of *Bransles de Bourgogne* arranged by Le Roy. The CD ends with a long, rambling Fantasie by Albert da Rippe, which requires the fourth course tuned a tone lower, and includes an unbelievable augmented sixth. There are extensive liner notes by José Cabello, 18 pages in total. Craddock's guitar was made by Lawrence Brown in 1989, and the recording was made in Switzerland in 2005. *Stewart McCoy*

The Tudors at prayer Magnificat, Philip Cave 79'
Linn **CKD 447**
Byrd *Tribue Domine*; **Mundy** *Adhaesit pavimento, Vox patris caelestis*; **Tallis** *Suscipe quaeso*; **Taverner** *Quemadmodum*; **White** *Domine quis habitabit, Tota pulchra es*

Vox patris coelestis is an amazing work. There's something disarming when the

whole first page has only two staves and the first entry of all six parts is in bar 68 of a work lasting 21'41" in the recording. Some performances are not so heavily shaped: this is just about the limit in which expression can be imposed. I bought *Early English Church Music* vol. 2 (William Mundy Latin Antiphons and Psalms) in 1963 and it took me a long time to realise what to make of it. I'd never heard his *Adhaevit pavimento anima mea* (not translated "My soul is stuck to the pavement"!) If you like vocal manner of the opening piece, there is no need for me to describe the others, though I will mention *Quemadmodum*, of which only the opening word survived but is underlaid in full here. Its opening stress depends on whether it is one word or three: here the first four notes compromise by lacking stress. A fine selection of sombre mid-century music. *CB*

Vigilate! English polyphony in dangerous times Monteverdi Choir, John Eliot Gardiner 77' 33"
Soli Deo Gloria **SDG720**
Music by Byrd, Morley, Philips, Tallis, Tomkins & White

After a recent live performance by the Monteverdi Choir and the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* which I had the pleasure of attending in Vienna, the reaction of the musically highly literate audience was striking. While the orchestral forces were politely received – Vienna has its own superb period instrument ensembles – the choir was greeted with rapturous applause and cheers. Indeed the Monteverdi Choir is widely recognised as the finest choral ensemble in the world at the moment, renowned for the breadth of their repertoire. However it is many years since I have heard them sing the music of Renaissance England, and I approached this CD with high expectations. A programme built upon music springing from the religious divisions of the time offers plenty of scope for drama and passion, but I was bowled over by the original spotlight the singers under their hugely experienced conductor brought to bear on this familiar repertoire. So often sung for the sheer beauty of sound, here was an exploration of the music's very soul – it is almost as if the beauty and technical excellence are taken for granted and the reading is taken to a whole new level. Gardiner also brings a Baroque fastidiousness to his interpretations crescendoing and fading on a single syllable, with his singers moving in perfect synchronicity. A particular revelation was the music of William Byrd, so often sung as a pretty wash of sound, but here being relentlessly worked for dramatic effect exactly as Byrd would undoubtedly have wanted. But these performances also find the magnificent sweep in this music, and Tomkins' *Almighty God the fountain of all Wisdom*, described by Gardiner as "the final drawing of the curtains on Elizabethan music", receives a reading of towering stature. I would thoroughly recommend this CD as an antidote to the too many recordings of Renaissance choral music, which simply coast elegantly through polyphony, which deserves so much more attention. *D. James Ross*

17th CENTURY

Buxtehude ***Membra Jesu nostri*** Robin Blaze *cT*, John Mark Ainsley *T*, Giles Underwood *B*, Choir of Magdalen College Oxford, Phantasm, Daniel Hyde 62'
Opus Arte **OA CD9023 D**

This is the second English men-and-boys recording of Buxtehude's gem to be released recently and like the previous one doesn't really work for me. The issue is mainly one of performance practice. I can just about go with a traditional choral sound in the tutti sections, but the groups of trebles who take the arias too often do not achieve the high degree of unanimity that such exposure requires. Both here and sometimes in the full sections they are not quite together after rests or in more florid passages, so the whole effect lacks the focussed intensity that top consorts have brought to this music. There is some fine solo singing (from starry choir alumni) and instrumental playing, but I would prefer to hear the choir in repertoire to which it can bring greater authority and, dare I say it, authenticity. *David Hansell*

Caccini ***L'Euridice*** Silvia Frigato *Euridice & La Tragedia*, Furio Zanasi *Orfeo*, Gianpaolo Fagotto *Arcetro*, Luca Dordolo *Tirsi & Aminta*, Sara Mingardo *Dafne & Proserpina*, Monica Piccinini *Venere*, Antonio Abete *Plutone*, Matteo Bellotto *Radamanto*, Mauro Borgioni *Caronte*, Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini
naïve **OP 30552** 79'

Often cited in the ongoing and rather fruitless debate about the invention of opera, it is good to hear a first-class performance of Caccini's take on the Orpheus legend, *L'Euridice*. Recorded live at the Innsbrucker Festwochen der alten Musik, this is a suitably small-scale performance employing twelve singers and eight players. The latter are predominantly pluckers, with a few viols very much in the background, producing a delightfully bright sound splendidly evocative of the operatic world of this early period. Although history has condemned Caccini to a very bad press, painting him as petty, grudging and self-seeking, his gift for felicitous melody is undeniable and his sheer confidence in this split new medium is breathtaking. That this piece was shortly to be overshadowed by Monteverdi's Orpheus opera does not in any way diminish Caccini's achievement, which is indeed considerable. It is clear from the CD booklet that Concerto Italiano staged their reading of *L'Euridice*, and while the 'live' recording was clearly made in a concert context without stage noises or positioning issues, the drama of a staged performance is captured perfectly. Concerto Italiano, as impressive live as they are on CD, have carved out a considerable reputation with the Italian music of this period, and there is an authority and supreme musicality to this performance in which the vocal ornamentation and instrumental elaboration sound truly second nature to the performers.

D. James Ross

Charpentier ***La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers, La Couronne de Fleurs*** Aaron Sheehan *Orphée*, Amanda Forsythe *Euridice*, Teresa Wakim *Flore*, Jesse Blumberg *Pan*, Boston Early Music Festival Vocal & Chamber Ensembles, Paul O'Dette, Stephen Stubbs 79' 11"
cpo 777 876-2

This excellent double bill is a product of the 2011 Boston Early Music Festival, though the recording was actually made in Bremen in 2013. *La Couronne de Fleurs* is a charming pastorale to a text by Molière which had only a short original performing life thanks to Lully's machinations. Charpentier's setting of the Orpheus legend may well have done rather better, as it was probably written for the Dauphin. However, we now have only two of what must have been three intended acts (there is evidence that this was the plan, though none that Act 3 ever existed) so we end with Euridice being given permission to leave the underworld but not starting the journey back to the Elysian groves. The cast all sound well versed in the idiom, but what impresses above all, in this as in other Boston performances, is not individual achievements but the strong sense of collective purpose and understanding that propels the project. The notes are substantial (if sometimes lumpily translated) and there are full libretti and translations in the booklet. *David Hansell*

Corelli ***Opus 1 & 3: Church Sonatas*** The Avison Ensemble 147' 53" (2 CDs)
Linn **CKD414**

Of all the releases in this wonderful series, this has been my favourite. I suspect that has a lot to do with the fact that they are as near perfect realisations of the pieces I was made to work through at keyboard

harmony classes at university as I could ever imagine, but there is also no denying either the consummate skill of Corelli the ever-inventive and ever-melodic contrapuntalist or the beauty and precision of the Avison Ensemble's interpretations of these 24 mini masterpieces. I can think of no better compliment than to quote Sir John Hawkins (as quoted in Simon Fleming's excellent booklet note): "the whole is so excellent, that, exclusive of mere fancy, there is scarce any motive for preference" – this is a set to which I shall return very often. To what wonderful repertoire will the Avisons next turn their attentions? Whatever it is, it will doubtless be worth seeking out! *BC*

Franck ***Choral Works*** Norddeutscher Kammerchor, Maria Jürgensen 68' 37"
MDG 902 1829-6

Spending his working life at the court of Coburg, like so many other provincial German composers Franck composed vast amounts of music – some 1500 works – including this compendious set of motets, setting the German Gospels and designed to cover the entire liturgical year. It is the same instinct for the comprehensive which we find later in J. S. Bach. Franck's settings are generally simple, direct, homophonic and written for a narrow vocal range. Rather than a question of taste, this may well have been occasioned by the privations of war and its negative effects on the budgets of German rulers. On the other hand, complete competence and the regular use of word painting prevent the sort of ennui that can creep into such simple settings. The Norddeutsche Kammerchor sing with a pleasantly youthful insouciance, perfect for this sort of naïve repertoire. There are just occasional moments where we might have hoped for more creative use of dynamic variation (for example, in the strings of textual repetition). In acknowledgement of Franck's adoption elsewhere of the latest Italian fashions in the form of basso continuo and *concertato* elements, some motets are sung by a solo voice with lute accompaniment. *D. James Ross*

Locke ***The Broken Consort, Part I*** **[&] *Tripla Concordia*** Wayward Sisters 67' 43"
Naxos **8.573020**
Suites 1-6 of TBC, Suites in G & e from TC

Musicke from the Ayre Tripla Concordia Cantus C9614 (56' 40")
Music by Jenkins, Locke + Purcell

These two discs cover the relatively neglected period of English music between the end of the great flourishing of Renaissance polyphony and the early baroque. The Wayward Sisters provide a good introduction to Matthew Locke, the most important composer of the era, whilst *Tripla Concordia* fills out the gaps by adding music by John Jenkins, whose long life overlapped with both Byrd and Purcell, and by Purcell himself. Both focus on the idea of the broken consort, employing mixtures of strings, harpsichord and recorders.

The Wayward Sisters, using strings and a single recorder, bring a distinctive freshness to their recording of Locke's suites, in which the simple rustic origins of the dances can still be detected behind the courtly polish of Locke's music. The elegant flourishes of Anne Timberlake's unfussy recorder playing give a carefree sense of improvisation, particularly in the fantasia movements, and the contrasting instrumental timbres bring clarity to each individual line. This lively CD is an excellent introduction to Locke's music.

Tripla Concordia's disc is weightier in style and comes with extensive notes (including an interesting but ponderously written essay on 17th-century metaphysics). The group makes a strong case for using two recorders instead of strings, and they deploy a richly coloured tonal palette, albeit a little too heavy on the vibrato at times. The expressivity of Purcell's Sonata VI Chaconne Z807 is a highlight, and the serious mood of this disc is lightened by Locke's charming Suite VI from *The Little Consort*, particularly its final movement, a vigorous and quirky Sarabande. *Jane Shuttleworth*

Monteverdi ***Vespro della Beata Vergine (1610)*** Chœur de Chambre de Namur, Cappella Mediterranea, Leonardo Gracía Alarcón 87' 36" (2 CDs in a box)
Ambronay **AMY041**

Any modern recording of the Monteverdi Vespers takes a huge mantle on its shoulders, not only of previous recordings but also of the huge amount of scholarly research into their context, purpose and even their existence in any meaningful sense. While the programme note by Denis Morrier seems to emphasise the Mantuan/St Barbara context of the composition, it also fairly questions whether the publication can really be regarded as a single work or as a random selection of pieces, never intended for performance together. The existence of the recording illustrates that the performers have ultimately not gone with this suggestion, but instead as a performance note by Lionel Desmeules makes clear they have 'back composed' a series of Antiphons to create a rite which fits all the Psalms set by Monteverdi and inserted the remaining elements at suitable points. While making it clear that this is something of a 'fantasy' solution to the persisting problem of fitting the Vespers into any existing rite, it has to be said that this pragmatic solution works rather well in practice. Having created their context, the performers also feel free to present the chant in a rather imaginative way, adopting a sort of jogging rhythm with regular acciaccatura-type ornaments. Similarly they take a creative approach to vocal the forces employed, bringing in the full choral forces to bolster the solo sound whenever appropriate, in support of which they cite the famous Preface to Schütz's 1619 Psalms of David with its account of the deployment of contrasting *Cori Favoriti* and *Capellen*. But what of the performance? The singing of both Favoriti and Capelle is impassioned and incisive, well supported by the requisite instruments, and the interpretation of the polyphony generally intelligent and impressive. If there are odd sections where interest slightly flags, and I found myself longing for the sheer sparkle of my favourite recordings from the past, the most exciting episodes are gripping and highly atmospheric. *D. James Ross*

I saw Pulchra es *in video, and was appalled that two singers and pluckers needed a conductor imposing himself on the music in a piece that should function, like any duet with accompaniment, without such arm-waving – indeed, the conductor doesn't need to take any part in the movement at all! Monteverdi only had about ten singers, so may not have conducted anyway! Cf* Alarcón *below conducting* Zamponi's *Ulisse... (see pp 28-29). CB*

Charles Mouton Anders Ericson *Baroque lute* 53' 43"
Daphne **1049**

Charles Mouton (c.1626–c.1699) was one of the most significant French lutenists from the 17th century, who lived at a time when the 11-course lute was going out of fashion in France. The well-known painting of him by François de Troy appears inside the liner notes, although I would have preferred it on the cover, instead of a picture of a sheep: the pun isd a bit obvious.

There are four suites altogether: two from *Pieces de Luth Premier Livre* (c. 1680), and two from one of the Lobkowicz manuscripts in Prague, Ms II Kk 80. The suite in C minor from the *Premier Livre* begins unsurprisingly with a Prelude. Quite how it should be performed is a moot point, and Ericson writes at length in the booklet notes about interpretation: 'There are many ways to adapt and personalize a performance and movements such as the *préludes non mesuré* is an invitation to do this ... When it comes to dance movements we can vary the tempo...'. This Prelude is *non-mesuré*, meaning that it has no bar lines, not that notes have an arbitrary value. A prelude is not a dance, so one can reasonably expect

some freedom in its interpretation, but there are rhythm signs showing that some notes are faster than others. Ericson ignores these signs (for example, the first four semiquavers are played slower than two of the preceding four quavers), as he staggers jerkily from note to note. In this piece there are little motifs, short imitative phrases, but it is hard to identify them as such if they have a different rhythm.

There follow an Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Courante-Double, Tombeau, and Gigue, none of which is played in strict time, although the faster movements fare better than the slower ones. Dance music without a steady pulse is, at least for me, unsettling, and there is a risk that, without their characteristic rhythm clearly stated, movements become indistinguishable one from the other. I think it is a shame, because Ericson can play well in time – after all, he also plays heavy metal music on an electric guitar – but his dreamy interpretations arise from what I believe to be a misconception of how French music should be played. He is a good player, he makes a pleasing tone (his 11-course lute, built by Lars Jönsson, is based on the Warwick Frei, and is strung entirely in gut), and he copes effortlessly with some tricky music. There will be many who do not share my quibbles about rhythm, and they will certainly enjoy Ericson's CD. *Stewart McCoy*

PS The collected edition of Mouton's music published by CNRS in 1992 is still in print.

Pasquini ***Sonate per gravecembalo*** Luca Guglielmi *hpscd, org* 54' 55"
Stradivarius **STR 33959**

Pasquini spent most of his life in the Roman palace of his principal patron Prince Giambattista Borghese, although his music was known throughout Europe. Another patron, Queen Christina of Sweden, referred to him as her "Prince of Music". He published four manuscript books of *Sonate per gravecembalo* between 1691 and 1705, when he was at the height of his musical powers. The pieces chosen for this CD are representative of the vast array of musical forms found in his books of Sonatas – resulting in something of a misnomer for the CD, as none of the pieces are actually Sonatas. His music passes effortlessly from the more formal Frescobaldi-influenced pieces to the abandon of the high baroque harpsichord suite, here represented by *Per l'Inglese di Scozia* and *Per lo Scozze*. The first (lasting a mere 59 seconds) and last pieces were used by Respighi in the *Gli Uccelli* Suite. Luca Guglielmi plays a copy of a late 17th century Giusti harpsichord. It is not clear if this is a reissue – all but one of the pieces were recorded in 2003. There is a bonus track (recorded in 2008) of Pasquini's well known organ Pastorale, played on the 1752 Concone organ in the Chiesa di San Genesia Martire, in Corio/Turin. The playing is committed and musically sensitive, with clear articulation and an attractive sense of the ebb and flow of the musical texture.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Purcell ***Ten sonatas in four parts*** The King's Consort: Cecilia Bernardini & Huw Daniel *vln*, Susanne Heinrich *b. viol*, Lynda Sayce *theorbo*, Robert King *kbd* 77' 56"
Vivat **106**

I thoroughly enjoyed this recording: there are other ways of playing it, but there's no reason to decide that one version must be better than another. I was reading one of the exhaustive comparisons of all the current recordings in Gramophone (not Purcell); it would be interesting to try them a few weeks later and see if the choices were recognised! We can listen for different aspects, be in a different mood, feel like hurrying on relaxing, etc. There are, obviously, recordings that don't work for any critic. This is a neat performance – I'm not offering faint praise. I'm not sure if it would always be my first choice, but at present I'm happy with it. It is good that the original order of sonatas isn't followed: in particular, ending with no. 6, the ground in G minor, is so characteristically Purcell – thank goodness Christina Pluhar wasn't booked instead of Lynda Sayce! *CB*

A Purcell Collection voces8 – Les Inventions 70' 18"
Signum Records **SIGCD375**
Behold O mightiest of the gods, Bid the virtues, By beauteous softness, 'Cold Song', Fairest Isle, Full fathom five, Hail bright Cecilia, How happy the lover, My heart is inditing, O God thou art my God, Praise the Lord O Jerusalem, Strike the viol, Thou knowest Lord, To the hills and the vales + **Morley** *Second Dirge Anthem*

This CD very much "does what is says on the tin" – it promises a "stroll through the world of one of England's greatest composers" and that is what we get. Anthems alternate with songs and choruses from operas and odes in a rich demonstration of Purcell's extraordinary versatility. Although this "bleeding chunks" approach to early repertoire has become deeply unfashionable, it definitely has its merits, and when the music is as well sung and played as it is here, it needs no apology. The opening coronation anthem "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem" with its portentous instrumental introduction is particularly impressive, but there is also some exquisite solo singing, most strikingly from alto Barnaby Smith, and the instrumental contributions are consistently beautiful, with tasteful phrasing and subtle and expressive ornamentation. The chilly accompa-niment to the "Cold Song" from *King Arthur* is original and memorable, while "Strike the Viol" from *Come, ye sons of Art* fairly dances along with its infectious strumming accompaniment. One of my favourite tracks is Andrea Haines' account of "Fairest Isle" from *King Arthur* in which the strophic structure allows for some delicious ornamentation and some subtle flirting with inégal phrasing. This is a lovely collection, reflective of the composer's eclectic talents, and beautifully performed.

D. James Ross

Music for a while *Improvisations on Purcell* L'Arpeggiata, Christina Pluhar 76' 21"
Erato **0825646337507** (+20' bonus DVD)
with Raquel Andueza, Vincenzo Capezzuto, Philippe Jaroussky, Dominique Visse

I wander between brilliance and tastelessness. There is some excellent singing, and since the music is freely arranged, one can't object on principle to a countertenor and the comic singing of "Man is for a woman made" was a *tour de force* by Dominique Visse. Most of the pieces are grounds, a form I generally enjoy, but not if they are distorted – what's the point? I suspect that some of the more outlandish versions might work better live: the time I actually saw *L'Arpeggiata* performed, I was vastly impressed. But it does seem a waste for so marvellous a player and director not to respect the composer. I prefer music that makes sense. Some Purcell grounds would be marvellous mixed with more exotic repertoire, but the balance here is wrong. I think the group needs to find more suitable music to play with, preferably music that demands elaboration and chutzpah They are, however, still an amazing ensemble. *CB*

Gioseffo Zamponi ***Ulisse all'isola di Circe*** Cappella Mediterranea, Choeur de Chambre de Namur, García Alarcón 138' 11" 2 CDs
Ricercar **342** *149 pp in a bound booklet*

I've nothing but praise for the booklet, with introductory essays and texts in Italian, French and English. But a glance at, for instance, the instrumental forces makes one wonder. There are tiny reproductions of the opening pages of the Prologue and Acts I, II & III, which comprise just one vocal stave with a contino line beneath – just the way Monteverdi's last three operas and Cavalli's were written. However, there are still people surviving who assume that such operas are open to modern elaboration. The current theory is that, while Mrs Cavalli was alive, she prepared the material (as in much of *Poppea*) while Cavalli was director. Both Cavallis played harpsichord, and there were 2 violins, whatever the current string bass was (Cavalli had an early violoncino for his 1656 church music

collection), and maybe a theorbo or two. Compare his seven instruments (one also in charge) with Alarcón's 9 violins, 2 violas, a cello and a double bass, 11 wind and timps, 2 keyboards, two theorbo/guitars, a harp, a bass viol and another bass viol doubling lira. (Cavalli was the leading opera composer into the 1660, Maria Cavalli died in 1652.) Opera elsewhere may not have been quite so spartan, but generally voices lacked additional accompaniments to recit. The singing is variably appropriate, especially excess tempo irregularities.

Venetian opera was for commercial profit, and instruments were cut to the minimum. Performances sponsored by the wealthy were more generous, though I'm suspicious of too much instrumental cover of vocal sections. My impulse is that the these should be essentially separate, and the drama left to singers and the skill of the continuo – four continuo players can make a very powerful noise if placed suitably! I need to know more about opera and formal celebration in Belgium in 1650. It would be good to have a facsimile or a simple transcription: any publication is likely to be more use than anyone's "realisation". The problem with the CD is that there are too many interruptions. *CB*

PS *I didn't know anything about Alarcón till I proofread the review of his Monteverdi Vespers and heard* Pulchra es *(see note at the end of the Vespers review). He strikes me as far too interfering!* *CB*

The Blossoming Vine *Italian Maestri in Poland* The Sixteen, Eamonn Dougan Coro **COR16123** (61' 48")
Anerio *Missa Pulchra es, Salve Regina* **Bertolusi** *Ego flos campi, Osculetur me osculo, Regina Caeli* **Pacelli** *Beata es Virgo Maria, Dum esset rex, Veni Sponsa Christi*

If I'm honest, I'm not a great fan of hype, so becoming "the voice of Classic fm" was something of a turn-off for me regarding The Sixteen. That has never stopped me writing positive reviews of their previous recordings, but now I really must dust that particular chip off my shoulder, because this most recent release – featuring music by, let's face it, composers whose names are hidden in the *minutiae* of the footnotes of the odd chapter on Renaissance polyphony – is gorgeous! Of course, the choice of repertoire helps, and in opting for settings of Marian texts (a very particular focus of worship in the Polish catholic church), Eamonn Dougan has struck gold several times – Anerio's parody mass on Palestrina's *Pulchra es* is well worth hearing (and performing – let's not let these be one-offs!), and Pacelli's *Dum esset rex* is a welcome addition to the polychoral repertoire (20 voices in five choirs...); surely also a reflection of how accomplished Polish ensembles were. *BC*

Jacobean Lute Music Jakob Lindberg (*lute by Sixtus Rauwolf, c.1590*) 81' 12"
BIS **BIS-2055 SACD**
Music by Bacheler, Dowland, Jacques Gaultier, Hely, Johnson, Robinson + anon

This excellent anthology of solo lute music from the time of James I begins with an anonymous Fancy from Dd.9.33, attributed by Diana Poulton to John Dowland on stylistic grounds. The opening theme is similar to "All in a garden green", and after various musical ideas have been developed there is an extraordinary tremolo passage more akin to flamenco than the lute, ending with Dowland's characteristic alternation of subdominant and tonic chords and a final six-note chord of G major.

There are two groups of pieces by Thomas Robinson taken from *The Schoole of Musicke* published in 1603, the year James became King of England. They include the oxymoronic, yet aptly named Merry Melancholy.

In contrast to these short, light-weight tunes is Robert Johnson's Pavan in F minor. Lindberg opts for the version from the Cherbury lute book (soon to be published in facsimile by the Lute Society) which has written-out divisions for repeated sections, but lacks ornaments. He adds in his own, some of which concur with those in the ML lute book. He succeeds in combining two opposing elements: exciting virtuosity with fast notes covering the full range of the instrument, and calming tranquillity from the slow-moving pavan pulse.

A group of five short Scottish pieces remind us that James was also King of Scotland. There is much variety, from the increasing intensity of "Hence to me Molly Gray" over a recurrent bass, to the tender "Scottish Tune" (track 10).

There are five pieces by Daniel Bacheler, including his variations on Mounsiers Almain from Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute-lessons* (1610). Following Besard's advice in the "Necessary Observations", Lindberg adds ornaments here and there, as would "a cunning player". However, something seems to have gone wrong in bar 13, where the first crotchet is reduced to a quaver, probably the result of careless editing by the sound engineer. Bacheler's Pavan is a fine piece, with extensive divisions for the repeats.

From the Cherbury lute book are a pleasantly gloomy Fantasia and Saraband by Cuthbert Hely, which explore the lower reaches of the 10-course lute. There are three pieces by the so-called English Gaultier, Jacques, who fled to England in 1617. His sedate Courante has characteristic *style brisé* divisions, and one hears the sound of church bells in Cloches.

The CD ends with John Dowland's beautiful Sir John Langton's Pavan from Varietie. Lindberg's lute was built by Sixtus Rauwolf towards the end of the 16th century, and remarkably it still has its original soundboard. It is a joy to hear.

Stewart McCoy

Lady Maggie's Lilt – *Music from the Lute Book of Lady Margaret Wemyss* (1629-1648), Martin Eastwell *lutes*
Music and Media Consulting Limited **MMC 104**

Lady Margaret Wemyss began copying music into her lute book on 5th June 1643, when she was only 12 years old. Seven years later she was dead, possibly from tuberculosis. Her MS was discovered in the early 1980s, and a description by Matthew Spring appears in the Lute Society Journal, vol. 27 (1987), pp. 5-29. Margaret's dates are given as 1629-1648 on the cover of the CD, but as 1630-1649 in the booklet notes. Spring gives her dates as 24th September 1630 to some time between 17th May 1648 and 10th November 1649.

About half the 91 pieces in Margaret's book are Scots tunes, and the rest are French. The first group of pieces are nearly all in her hand and require a 10-course lute in renaissance tuning; many of those in the second group are in a more mature hand (her teacher's?), and require an 11-course lute in sharp and flat transitional tunings. Extant sources of Scottish lute music are thin on the ground, so it is frustrating that there are so many errors in Margaret's book, particularly with regard to rhythm. Martin Eastwell has prepared his own edition for this recording, and accepts that others may come up with a different interpretation. The jolly "Corant" (track 5, f.22r) needs virtually no editorial intervention, but the rambling, incoherent notes of "I left my tru love" is more of a challenge, and he interprets it quite freely. In choosing which pieces to include, he has struck a fair balance between Scots and French music, and the two genres complement each other nicely.

Many of the Scots pieces are extremely short. "The day dawes in the morning" is the longest track of them at 3' 37", but it really consists of five or six little pieces strung together. The 12 bars of "I wish I wer there", with its haunting melody and unexpected dissonance, lasts a mere 1' 10", even though it is played very slowly, with twice through with repeats. Eastwell tastefully adds some extra notes here and there for variety. Some pieces are quite extraordinary. "Port Robart", for example, has a walking bass reminiscent of Meade Lux Lewis, and as so often happens with Scots tunes, the bass tracks the melody, producing consecutive octaves virtually throughout the piece. There is much variety, from a sensuously inviting "Ladie lie ner me" to a spirited Tom o' Bedlam, a soporific "Ruthven's Lilt", the familiar

Spanish Pavan, a foot-tapping "Shooting Dance", a rollicking unicum "Ane currant" (track 25, f. 21v), a serene "Broom of Cardenowes", a mixolydian "Fair and Louky", and the beautiful "Flowers of the Fores" lamenting those who died at the Battle of Flodden in 1513 (including Margaret's ancestor, Sir David de Wemyss). Eastwell adds his own divisions to three pieces, which are marked with an asterisk in the table of contents.

The French pieces which are ascribed to Gaultier are probably by Jacques rather than Ennemond, apart from a setting of "Old Gaultier's Nightingale". They comprise two almandes, two courantes and a sarabande. There is much strumming in Nicholas de Merville's lively Sarabande. Other composers represented are René Mesangeau, Charles de Lespine, François Dufault, and François de Chancy.

Not from Margaret's MS are seven rather attractive preludes in the French style composed by Martin Eastwell to introduce groups of pieces on the CD and to set the tonality and mood. His playing is neat and expressive, and the warm, clean sound of gut strings on his lutes – a 10-course and a 12-course lute both by Martin Haycock after Hans Frei – is most satisfying. *Stewart McCoy*

Mortale, che pensi? Reliquie di Roma III Katherine Watson, Nadine Balbeisi, Theodora Baka, Samuel Boden, Julian Podger, Christian Immler, Atalante, Erin Headley 66' 30"
Nimbus Alliance **NI6266**
Music by Carissimi, Leone, Marazzoli, Mazzocchi, Luigi Rossi, Stradella & anon

This latest offering in a series of recordings exploring music in 17th-century Rome presents a series of dramatic solo cantatas interspersed by arias and instrumental music. The very high standard of music by such hazy names as Domenico Mazzochi, Marco Marazzoli and Giovani Antonio Leone is chastening, and while Carissimi, Stradella and Rossi have begun to regain some of the celebrity they once enjoyed, they still have a lot of ground to make up. This beautiful CD, with exquisitely recorded performances by the singers and players of Atalante directed by Erin Headley, makes an irresistible case for the wider dissemination of this very fine music. In addition to the lovely and dramatic singing, there is some superb viol playing, supported by arpa doppia, chitarrone and harpsichord and the plaintive voice of the lirone, an instrument whose days were even then numbered. With the generous acoustic of St John's Hackney, we are transported to a Baroque Roman Academy to enjoy some of the most refined music of the period as did the great Roman aristocratic families of the time. *D. James Ross*

Music of the Kingdom The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 75' 14"
Coro **COR16122**
Music by Blow, Britten, Byrd, Carver, Gibbons, Handel, Humfrey, Purcell, Ramsey, Tallis, Tomkins, Turges & Turner

This 'remix' of music with royal associations draws on the Sixteen's sizeable and impressive back-catalogue with a programme that spans the centuries from the 15th to the 20th. It opens with their splendid account of *Zadok the Priest*, perhaps the definitive modern recording of the work, and continues with a string of works by English composers with royal connections. Byrd's "O Lord make thy Servant Elizabeth" is the only new recording and makes an interesting juxtaposition with the vintage ones, and serves to point up that the current recorded sound of the ensemble is not up to the earlier superlative standard. This also goes for the Britten track from their recent recording of the *Dances from Gloriana* which never really settles. 'From stormy windes' by Edmund Turges is one of the more dreary early-16th-century carols, but by contrast they boldly include the Sanctus from Robert Carver's magnificent ten-part Mass *Dum sacrum mysterium*, performed five hundred years ago at the Coronation of James V of Scotland. There is much to enjoy here from a 'high pitch' account of the Sanctus from Tallis' *Missa Puer natus est* (so last year!) through the 'Club' anthem allowing three composers, Humphreys, Blow and Turner, to be referenced, to the two great Handel Coronation anthems which open and close the programme. This CD would serve as a useful introduction to the Sixteen's rich and varied discography and serves as a reminder of their glory days. *D. James Ross*

Tears: harpsichord Laments of the Seventeenth Century Ewald Demeyere *hpscd & virginals* (57' 33")
Challenge Classics **CC72617**
Byrd *Lachrimae Pavan* **L. Couperin** Suite in F **Froberger** Fantasia VI, Partita VI **Schildt** *Paduana Lagrima* **Tomkins** *A Sad Pavan for these Distracted Tymes*

Despite the title, not all this music is characterised by weeping. The Froberger and Couperin suites contain the well-known *Lamento* and *Tombeau* respectively but otherwise have the usual collection of stylised dances. Demeyere has made his own choice of Couperin to make up a pleasing Suite in F major which includes the *Tombeau*. This and the Froberger Partita provide satisfying performances, as do the arrangements of Dowland's *Lachrimae Pavan* by Byrd and Schildt. The Froberger *Fantasia* and the Tomkins are a bit slow and stilted for my taste but these are all very thoughtful performances with lots of nuance. Demeyere plays on a virginals by Jef Van Boven after Andreas Ruckers and on a copy by Alan Gotto of an anonymous Austrian harpsichord of 1680 in the Courtauld Institute, both beautifully recorded. The virginals has a lovely bell-like tone – maybe a bit bright for the music for which it is used here.
Noel O'Regan

Upon a Ground Tabea Debus *rec* 77' 32"
ClassicClips **CLCL 124**
de la Barre Chaconne from the Sonata *L'Inconnue* **Barsanti** Sonata V in F **Bellinzani** Sonata Op 3/12 **Blavet** Sonata Secunda **Dornel** Première Suite **Finger** A Division on a ground **Pandolfi Mealli** Sonata Quarta "La Castella" **Purcell** A New Ground in e **Taeggio** Vestiva i colli + **Anon** Durham Ground

The Hülsta Woodwinds competition (in Münster, Westphalia) awards two first prizes, and Tabea Debus was one of them in 2011. This CD is one of the elements of her prize. And it certainly shows that the competition judges were on to a good thing. Tabea Debus's playing is an absolute delight. She plays with a beautiful sense of musical line and phrasing, wearing her obvious virtuosity lightly, and producing results that are first and foremost musical. Another excellent feature of this recording is the imaginative interpretations of the accompanying continuo instrumental players, Lea Rahel Bader (cello), Johannes Lang (harpsichord), Kohei Ota (theorbo & baroque guitar) and Jan Croonenbroeck (organ). Taeggio's 1620 diminutions on Palestrina's Vestiva i colli are preceded by the original piece played on a very attractive little chamber organ (by Johannes Rohlf, based on Näser, 1734). Bellinzani's Sonata opens with a delightfully Handelian Largo with wide leaps for the solo line. After an Allegro (also with leaps and with a lovely dialogue between recorder and organ) and a harpsichord solo (to give the soloist a rest), it ends with a lively Folia. Although the Pandolfi Mealli La Castella Sonata is performed in pure meantone, the other pieces in either fifth-comma meantone or the so called 'Bach' tuning proposed by Robert Hill. And, as if to prove that recorder players do have a life, when you take the CD out of its case, you are greeted on the inside of the rear cover a photograph of Miss Debus apparently leaping over a fence. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

There are a variety of CDs held over for the next issue. My normal plea of getting EMR out very early for August is no longer relevant, but reviewers, please make sure that all CD reviews reach Brian before July 15th, which gives him time to reach me on Friday 18th July. CB

LATE BAROQUE

Bach *Cantatas for Epiphany* Monika Mauch, Franziska Gottwald, Charles Daniels, Harry Van Der Kamp *SATB*, Montréal Baroque, Eric Milnes
Atma Classique **ACD2 2404**
BWV72, 81, 155, 156

This release is one of series that focuses as much on liturgical seasons as specific Sundays or Feasts. Thus this disc offers a cantata for Epiphany 2, two for Epiphany 3 and one for the following Sunday. The performance order is the reverse of this and single voices per part are used throughout. There is some extremely virtuosic music in these cantatas and even Charles Daniels sounds under pressure in BWV 81. Actually, the single voice approach seems sometimes to tempt performers to just assume that it will come out right, in contrast to the advice/drilling a choir might receive. I find the opening tutti of BWV72 a little bland, for example. Overall, and despite the consistent excellence of Franziska Gottwald (alto), this disc doesn't quite cut the mustard in an increasingly competitive field. *David Hansell*

Bach *Easter Oratorio, Actus tragicus* Hannah Morrison, Meg Bragle, Nicholas Mulroy, Peter Harvey *SATB*, The Monteverdi Choir, The English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 60' 15"
Soli Deo Gloria **SDG 719**

BWV 106 and 249 make a good pairing, and they can seldom have sounded as contrasting as they do here. Performance practice is a big issue in 106 of course, with the chamber ensemble of recorders, gambas and organ liable to be swamped by anything more than the minimum essential number of singers. Many *EMR* readers will probably feel that if there ever was a vocal work of JSB requiring single voices this is it, and JEG does make something of a move towards them by reducing The Monteverdi Choir to 12 singers (including the soloists); in the central fugue ATB sing tutti, with the rhapsodic soprano line assigned to a soloist; and in the final fugue the first section is sung by the soloists only. It still takes some very quiet singing and, one suspects, a bit of engineering to achieve a good balance between the parts but on its own terms this is a very fine performance. With BWV249, a magnificent work too rarely performed, we are back with typical JEG Big Band Bach and, again on its own terms, it is magnificent: 24 in the choir, an orchestra based on 11 violins (though only one double bass, which sometimes isn't quite enough) and the conductor's feel for Bach's dances to the fore. The approach to performance practice is again pragmatic, with the violin flourishes in the sinfonia and the duet section in the middle of the first chorus given to soloists. All three arias are wonderful music (and very demanding) but come off well and the choir scampers through the closing chorus (no chorale in this piece) with predictable aplomb. *David Hansell*

Bach *Matthäus-Passion* Karina Gauvin *S*, Gerhild Romberger *A*, Maximilian Schmitt *T*, Julian Prégardien *Evangelist*, Michael Nagy *B*, Karl Magnus Frederiksson *Jesus*, Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Regensburger Domspatzen, Concerto Köln, Peter Dijkstra 163' 23" (3 CDs)
BR Klassik **900508**

This recording is said to be a live take – though it gives 12th-17th February 2013 as the dates: did they really sing six consecutive performances? – so while it is remarkably clean, it has the disadvantages of the live performance – over-singing by the Christus being one. He is recorded rather close, as are all the four soloists of the arias. The lack of distinction between the adjacently placed choirs and orchestras makes it easy for the soloists to sing with each band, as does the omnipresence of the (single) harpsichord, though it is listed in the first orchestra. The soloists have rather large voices, as do the soloists drawn from the choir, and the choral sound from this radio chorus is very much a large modern choral society in tone and volume though they are capable of fast and very accurate singing as well as the occasional pianissimo, as in the (unaccompanied) chorale as Jesus dies.

That tells you what you need to know about this recording: it is faultless, samey in sound, and feels as if it is played and sung in a modern equal temperament for all that the players are Concerto Köln. The drama is important to the conductor, and he orchestrates the continuo part vigorously. The Evangelist is skilled, and gives the choirs splendidly rhythmical leads into their turba choruses. Most tempi are pretty brisk, though it runs to 3 CDs. The booklet gives everyone's names, though no details of instruments, pitch and temperament. It offers 2 DVDs of the same performance.

There is nothing wrong with it, if you like that kind of performance, and for people who are still suspicious of period instruments and unequal temperaments this would be a good choice, as it sounds like a traditional 20th-century performance with a large choir and rather developed soloistic soloists accompanied by an orchestra, who only occasionally (like the strings of orchestra 2 in 51) emerge from a subservient role to give us characterful playing as equal partners. *David Stancliffe*

Bach *Die Kunst der Fuge* Peter Kofler, *hpscd* and *organo di legno* 77'58
Raumklang **3004**

The harpsichord is the 1782 Karl August Gräbner instrument in Nuremberg's Germanisches Nationalmuseum, where it was recorded in an attractively resonant acoustic. Although a rather late example for Bach interpretation, it works well, particular in the mid and bass registers, although there is a little pinching of the very highest notes. There is also a noticeable thud as the key hits the key bed, ameliorated by adjusting the bass levels. The organ (used in seven tracks) is a delightful 1998 replica (by Schiegnitz) of the Italian *organo di legno* in the Silberne Kapelle of Innsbruck's Hofkirche, its distinctively vocal voicing and delicate little chiffs adding a wonderful clarity to the polyphony. The playing is fluid and musical, and the combination of harpsichord and organ works well.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

Bach *Oeuvres pour clavecin-luth* Olivier Baumont 54'
Euromusic **LY054**
BWV903, 996-9 Polonaise after 1067

The real star of this recording is Willard Martin's gut-strung *Lautenwerck*, which is captivating from the first notes of the opening lute Prelude. The recording is close and clear, with the bass notes in particular coming across strongly and resonantly. Baumont is well-known for his recordings of French music and the French side of Bach comes off best here, with the *style brisé* influences clearly brought out and using appropriate and subtle ornamentation. The E minor Suite designated 'aufs lautenwerck' by Krebs is particularly compelling. So is the *Chromatic Fantasy* which suits this instrument well. I was less convinced by its Fugue, indeed by fugal movements generally here, where Baumont rushes through rather frenetically without letting the voices articulate sufficiently. This is also true of the Gigue Double in the C minor Suite. That apart, there is much to admire in this recording which ends with a delightful transposed arrangement of the Polonaise from the B minor Orchestral Suite made by the young J. C. Bach. *Noel O'Regan*

Bach *Italian Concerto, French Overture and Other Works for harpsichord* Steven Devine *hpscd* 71' 58"
Chandos Chaconne **CHAN 0802**
BWV831, 903, 906, 971 & 989

Although most of this CD will be familiar territory for *EMR* readers, there is a delightful freshness to the interpretations that will encourage you to listen over and over again. Steven Devine plays with an

evident sense of humour, his sparkling and approachable interpretations getting beneath the usual rather stodgy image of Bach. He seems to delight in subtle aspects of articulation and momentum, giving an attractive sense of freedom, adventure and occasional unpredictability to his playing. There is more than a sense of a live performance, a refreshing approach to the usual all-too-careful studio recordings, and one that is entirely appropriate for this repertoire, most of which probably started life as improvisations. Alongside such favourites as the Italian and French overtures, the *Chromatic Fantasia* and the equally chromatic Fantasia in g (BWV906) is a lesser known work – the fascinating *Aria variata 'alla maniera italiana'* (BWV989) – a work possibly conceived for the pedal harpsichord which Devine gets around by some judicious redistribution of notes. The harpsichord is a Colin Booth copy of a 1710 Fleischer and suits the chosen repertoire well, sounding good in the attractive acoustic of the studio at Potton Hall in Dunwich, Suffolk.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Bach *Concertos for Two Harpsichords* Masaaki and Masato Suzuki, Bach Collegium Japan 71' 08"
BIS-2051 SACD
BWV1060-62, BWV1066 *arr.* Masata Suzuki

Father and son Suzukis team up for this recording of Bach's three double harpsichord concertos, all dating from 1736 and written for the Leipzig Collegium Musicum. The CD also includes Masato Suzuki's arrangement of the Orchestral Suite No 1 for two harpsichords, in a style that Bach might have adopted if he had transcribed the work himself – as, arguably, he might have done for one of the Collegium Musicum events. It works well. The Suzukis adopt a democratic approach to the apportioning of parts and the two harpsichords, copies by Kroesbergen of Couchet and enlarged Ruckers originals. The recording is made in a large concert hall (in Saitama, Japan), with an attractive background acoustic, although the microphone positioning seems to be fairly close, giving the violins (in particular) a degree of prominence that might not have been evident to an audience, particularly in the many little interjection passages. The stereo spread of the two harpsichords is well handled by the sound engineers. The harpsichord playing is energetic and focussed, the orchestral support is similarly strong, but stops just short of being relentless.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Handel *Agrippina* Susanne Geb *Agrippina*, Hiroshi Matsui *Claudio*, Judith Braun *Nerone*, Elizabeth Wiles *Poppea*, David Cordier *Ottone*, Patrick Simper *Pallante*, Steve Wächter *Narciso*, Guido Baehr *Lesbo*, Saarländisches Staatsorchester, Konrad Junghänel 162' 57" (**2 DVDs**)
Intergroove Classics **IGC004-9**

The second (and last) of Handel's operas written in Italy, *Agrippina's* premiere at the Venice carnival was so successful that it ran for a further 26 performances. Handel's first Agrippina was soprano Margherita Durastanti, who had already sung for him in Rome and was to follow him to London where she became his prima donna at the first Royal Academy of Music in 1720. The music in *Agrippina* is some of Handel's finest, in part due to the fact that much of it was lifted from works that he had honed in the preceding three years, such as *La Resurrezione*, *Rodrigo* and countless cantatas.

The libretto, written by Vincenzo Grimani, is witty and relatively fast-paced. This does not make the story any easier to follow, once the intrigues of Agrippina and Poppea get going, but at least the drama is apparent even if one cannot understand the whys and wherefores. I could not manage to locate any subtitles but thanks to the libretto, the carefully detailed dramaturgy and excellent acting ability of each of the singers, the narrative is easily followed. In each case, the singers' vocal abilities match their acting, and together the cast make up one of the most impressive I have seen in Handel opera, particularly as they are well matched to the effect that no-one stands out as the "star".

The DVD comes with very little information regarding the production, but as is often the case with European opera house productions, the set is minimal but well-used and the costumes (and wigs) – at least in comparison with their poorer British neighbours – are quite voluptuous and highly effective. Costumes should not perhaps influence the success of a production but quite frankly they do help clarify who is who and what their character is meant to represent in many a confusing opera scenario.

And finally, the music – or rather its interpretation. The Saarland State Orchestra is a modern orchestra that not only plays for ballets and operas, but also has an annual symphony orchestra concert programme, and holds regular chamber concerts, in addition to education work. Despite this, however, they still appear to have found time to hone a tight-knit "sound" appropriate for this period. Most symphony orchestras have by now developed some sort of period style, usually consisting of a lack of vibrato and some attempt to adhere to the shorter phrase lengths of early music. However, the Saarland State Orchestra presents a very flexible approach, with a sound that is unified within the orchestra but varied according to the demands of the music (or occasionally the slightly exaggerated style of the production).

Overall, a thoroughly enjoyable and recommended production. *Violet Greene*

Handel *Siroe* Yosemeh Adjei *Siroe*, Anna Dennis *Emira*, Aleksandra Zamojska *Laodice*, Antonio Giovannini *Medarse*, Lisandro Abadie *Cosroe*, Ross Ramgobin *Arasse*, FestspielOrchester Göttingen, *dir.* Lawrence Cummings 184' (3 CDs)
Accent **ACC26401**

Premiered at the King's Theatre on 17 February 1728, *Siroe* was composed for the Royal Academy of Music's last season and the cast featured a stellar line up of Francesca Cuzzoni, Faustina Bordoni and Senesino. Though it failed to save the fortunes of the Royal Academy of Music (which folded at the end of the 1728 season), *Siroe* had the second longest run of any opera production in a single Royal Academy of Music season. Set to a libretto originally by Metastasio, adapted for the Royal Academy by Nicola Haym, the plot combines the usual strong female leads battling for political and amorous supremacy with a warring and divided ruling family. The adapted libretto is rather recitative-heavy but the original had almost twice the amount so one should be thankful. Written in something of a hurry, Handel's music is surprisingly fresh and has moments of real beauty and imagination. The arias are without exception quite stunning and it is surprising that the opera was – and continues to be – rather neglected after its 1728 run.

The recording was taken live from the 2013 Göttingen Handel Festival, and from the photographs in the booklet, the production looks as if it was an interesting one, set in the 20th century though with a mixture of decades judging by the combination of suits, wallpaper and dresses. The singers on the recording illustrate just how high the standard is internationally amongst (potential) Handel-opera singers. Aside from Anna Dennis and Lisandro Abadie, the cast was unfamiliar to me but their biographies are impressive and while their voices are balanced enough together, it is nice to be able to recognize each voice, especially as one cannot see them!

The only slight downside to the recording is that the playing is not of the highest caliber at all times. The FestspielOrchester draws players from several leading international period orchestras, and so should by rights be extremely good. Of course there are always moments in a live recording where slips occur, mistakes are made and ensemble suffers. But my main complaint is that the phrasing, particularly in the

oboes, can be quite boring at times, even shapeless on the odd occasion. Also, I wonder if there was a slight recording issue near the beginning of the performance, for it sounds either as if Laurence Cummings has inserted a rather odd and sudden decrescendo or as if the volume on one's stereo has dropped. Given Cummings's usual impeccable taste I like to think that it was a technical glitch.

Only a pedant like myself would probably notice orchestral phrasing and so do not let this put you off from buying this excellent recording. It is a real treat to be able to hear a live recording of an entire opera and, though I complain about the number of recitatives, bear in my mind that this is after all a recording – one can always do the washing-up and return to leisure for the arias. *Violet Greene*

Handel ***Tamerlano*** Xavier Sabata *Tamerlano,* Max Emanuel Cencic *Andronico,* John Mark Ainsley *Bajazet*, Karina Gauvin *Asteria*, Ruxandra Donose *Irene*, Pavel Kudinov *Leone*, Il Pomo d'oro, Riccardo Minasi 183' (3 CDs)
naïve **V5373**

This *Tamerlano* is nearly an absolute winner. It is one of Handel's greatest operatic masterpieces, a taut and claustro-phobic drama which culminates in the on-stage suicide of the defeated emperor, Bajazet. Its musical structure is unusually varied, with several extended scenes freely combining secco and accompagnato recitative, arioso and aria to overwhelming effect. The characters are all strongly drawn and develop convincingly as the opera unfolds.

Naïve has assembled a modern Handelian's dream cast, all of whom acquit themselves nobly. Cencic in the Senesino role of Andronico is particularly fine, bringing what can be a rather passive part to splendid life in "Piu d'una tigre altero", and closing the first act with matchless bel canto. Sabata as Tamerlano is similarly convincing – his (justifiably) furious "A dispetto" in Act 3 is thrillingly done. Gauvin, as Asteria (Cuzzoni), is superb in the great banquet scene of Act 3: her accompagnato and arioso "Folle sei" is most moving. Ainsley's Bajazet, (written originally for the great tenor Borosini), is completely convincing, from the opera's opening, as he steps forth from his prison to its conclusion in his great and extended death scene. Kudinov as Leone blusters boldly in "Nel mondo e nell'abisso" (added in 1731 for Montagnana). Donose performs the spurned and spirited princess Irene with gusto – though her lovely arietta "No, che sei tanto costante" in the great throne room scene at the end of Act 2 is inexplicably declaimed like melodrama, before being sung – why?

Minasi conducts – and Il Pomo d'Oro responds – with much passion; the recitatives, and especially the accompagnatos (and there are many!), are thrillingly paced. Occasionally one could wish for a little more expansiveness – Asteria's "Se potessi" at the end of Act 2 sounds more rushed than relieved, and Andronico's "Se non mi rendi" in Act 3 is also rather breathlessly fast. Handel's deliberately spare orchestration is sometimes tinkered with – neither the *pizzicato* in Irene's arietta, mentioned above, nor the *concertino* accompaniment in Asteria's "Folle sei" in Act 3 are in the score. Overall a most worthy achievement – the singing especially is as good as it gets!

Alastair Harper

Handel ***Teseo*** *(highlights)* Dominique Labelle *Medea*, Amanda Forsythe *Teseo*, Amy Freston *Agilea*, Drew Minter *Egeo*, Robin Blaze *Argane*, Céline Ricci *Glizia*, [Jeffrey Fields *Priest*], Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Nicholas McGegan 77' 59"
Philharmonia Baroque **PBP-07**

This is a fine live memento of what must have been a thoroughly enjoyable evening. McGegan and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra need no introduction – they have a string of highly distinguished Handel recordings to their credit, to which this is an excellent addition.

Teseo is Handel's only opera in five acts; the libretto was adapted by Haym from Quinault's *Thesée*, set originally by Lully. Despite the title, its most memorable role is that of Medea, whom Handel endows with some superbly dramatic music. Dominique Labelle rises magnificently to the challenge, with two great *accompagnatos* followed by virtuoso arias, their dazzling coloratura thrown off with huge aplomb. (not so sure about the eldritch cackles in "Sibilando, ululando", though no doubt this was highly effective live.) Her last appearance foreshadows the introduction to Orlando's mad scene, still twenty years in the future, but here the continuo's stark G minor as she rushes off is succeeded by the radiant G major sinfonia for the Priest of Minerva's final sorting-out of the plot. The other characters are not neglected, however. Teseo (Amanda Forsythe) has a magical 'awakening' aria (track 18) with detached string chords and a lovely oboe obbligato (reminiscent of Medoro and Angelica's opening duet, again from Orlando) which is followed by a searing continuo sarabande for Agilea (Amy Freston) – Handel typically encompassing huge emotion with minimal musical means.

The 'secondary' lovers Arcane (Robin Blaze) and Clizia (Celine Ricci) are skilfully depicted – Arcane has a lovely pastorale with recorders at the beginning of Act 3 (track 10) and Clizia an appropriately lighthearted love song in Act 1 (track 4) What a pity we could not have the whole opera this time! *Alastair Harper*

Handel ***Water Music, Concerto grosso***
Hannoversche Hofkapelle, Anne Röhrig
MDG 905 1828-6 (65' 07")

Do we need another recording of Handel's Water Music? Or his Op. 6 concerti? Probably not, but that is no reason for not recording either set of works. And in fact this turned out to be a rather endearing disc, in which the players' claim to have enjoyed 'nearly fifteen years of undiminished pleasure in making music together' can well be believed. The playing is unassuming, and has a warmth to it that makes it appear as if the musicians really are responding to each other. As if this is not rare enough, they are helped by a fantastic set of recording engineers. According to the CD booklet, "all MDG recordings are produced in the natural acoustics of specially chosen halls." Furthermore, MGD believes that "genuine reproduction" of the sound allows each work to acquire "its musically appropriate spatial dimension and that the artistic interpretation attains to the greatest possible naturalness and vividness". Yes, this sounds very pretentious, but even on a rapidly-dying sound system, the difference between this and most other recent discs is immediately apparent. One can hear the exchange between different instruments because they are each placed uniquely according to the recording equipment, so sensitive that millimetres can make a difference if they are left unaltered.

Aside from the technicalities of the recording, the playing and interpretation is very decent. One might not agree with all aspects of interpretation but *c'est la vie* and when the sound is as good as on this recording one can forgive little foibles of interpretation. If you want to recreate the enjoyable ambience of live music from the comfort of your own sofa then this is definitely a disc for you. *Violet Greene*

Mancini ***Solos for a Flute*** Gwyn Roberts *rec/fl*, Tempesta di Mare Chamber Players (Richard Stone *archlute/theorbo/guitar*, Adam Pearl *hpscd/org*, Lisa Terry *vlc*) 68' 01"
Candos **Chaconne CHAN0801**
Sonatas 1, 2, 4-6, 10-12

If I'd been playing this in a shop I'd have put it back on the shelf after less than a minute. This would have been a pity as these sonatas are well worth hearing. Mancini was an opera composer and maestro di capella in Naples who knew how to write a good tune and there is plenty of variety in the eight sonatas on this disc. *XII solos for a flute with a thorough*

bass for the harpsicord or bass violin was published in London in 1724. It's interesting to note the use of the word "or" here as the use of all the continuo instruments together in the first track is just too much, in a largo movement which somehow manages to be both too fast and plodding at the same time. Things do improve after the first sonata, with the remaining ones having a lighter continuo of various combinations of the available instruments. Some of the slow movements still feel a bit fast, though, particularly the *amoroso* of sonata 1 (and some of the fast movements seem a bit on the slow side). Gwyn Roberts's fluent recorder playing has plenty of Italian style ornaments, and continuo players will appreciate the melodic interest of the bass line. If you are inspired to try these sonatas yourself there is a very clear facsimile on Petrucci. There are good notes in the booklet by Guido Olivieri.

Victoria Helby

Le Jardin de Monsieur Rameau: A wander through the heart of French vocal art from the Enlightenment Daniela Skorka *S*, Emilie Renard *mS*, Benedetta Mazzucato *A*, Zachary Wilder *T*, Victor Sicard *Bar*, Cyril Costanzo *B*, Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 81'
Éditions Arts Florissants **AF002**
Music by Campra, Dauvergne, de Grandval, Gluck, Montéclair & Rameau

This is the second release on LAF's own label, following Handel's *Belshazzar*. The ingenious programme, devised by Paul Agnew, is "a wander through the heart of French vocal art from the Enlightenment" and ranges chronologically from the 1690s (Campra) to the 1760s (Gluck and Dauvergne). In this anniversary year there are extracts from three major Rameau works – *Les Fêtes d'Hébé, Dardanus*, and *Les Indes galants*. The singers are the members of the LAF 2013 academy Le Jardin des Voix, who have the opportunity to show their skills in both solo and ensemble singing. For my tastes, they are more successful in the former than the latter, especially the ladies, for the usual reason – vibrato. There is one passage of soprano duet in which the harmony is all but incomprehensible as the core pitches are so hard to discern. But the music itself is varied in style and all top drawer, and the performance has a strong dramatic sweep with no sense of "extracts from". The booklets (yes, plural) are exemplary and original in their concept and content.

David Hansell

Telemann ***Violin Sonatas Frankfurt 1715*** Stephan Schardt *vln*, Elisabeth Wand *vlc*, Sonja Kemnitzer *hpscd* 70' 32"
MDG 903 1835-6
+ Ouverture in g TWV 41:g4

Stephan Schardt plays all sorts of violin music – he was leader of Musica Antiqua Köln for five years (having guested in such a role with the Bamberg SO and Camerata Salzburg previously) – and his discography is wide enough to include salon music by Ferdinand David. In other words, he is a formidable player, with a wide range of approaches in his repertoire. In this, the first complete recording of Telemann's 1715 sonatas on period instruments, it was disappointing therefore that the recorded sound is rather brusque and the degree of attack in performance sometimes seems too much for the instrument. Now I am not suggesting that all performances of Telemann should default to some anodyne *suavità*, but even if you do want to focus on the inner drama and bring a wider range of colours than we might be used to hearing in this repertoire (perhaps to disprove the "Telemann is what kids play on recorder, right?" theory), you have to recognise that there are limits and if the beauty of your instrument's tone is lost as a by-product, then there is a problem. All of that said, there is much extremely fine music here; for me, it just needed a little more tender care. *BC*

Vivaldi ***L'incoronazione di Dario*** Anders Dahlin *Dario*, Sara Mingardo *Statira*, Delphine Galou *Argene*, Riccardo Novaro *Niceno*, Roberta Mameli *Alinda*, Lucia Cirillo *Oronte*, Sofia Soloviy *Arpago*, Giuseppina Bridelli *Flora*, Accademia Bizantina, Ottavio Dantone 177' (3 CDs)
naïve **OP 30553**
Tesori del Piemonte Vol. 58

This latest offering from the Vivaldi opera edition tells the tale of three suitors of the late king of Persia's eldest daughter. Dario, the ultimate victor, is led astray by he sister, whom he thinks is his friend but – of course, it's opera! – she's in love with him herself. The libretto, with its parallel plots, served Vivaldi well, although there is (as I have written in these pages before) little if any dramatic development in the characters, as reflected in the arias they are given, barring the obligatory furious outbursts. It is slightly odd to have so many trouser roles, in this age of plenty as far as falsettists are concerned; strange, too, to have a tenor "hero". But Anders Dahlin is well suited to the arias Vivaldi wrote for his original Dario. The other singers all fulfil their parts well, with *Da Capo* ornamentation that sounds less like the freshly composed material of previous issues in this series. Do we know that oboes only played in arias where they have solos? Is there really evidence that they did not double the violins, as they did elsewhere? *BC*

Vivaldi ***Solo Concertos*** Barocksolisten München 63' 24"
Hänssler **CD 98.034**
RV99, 106, 107, 417, 429, 450 & 504

Framed by two concertos for flute, oboe, violin, bassoon and continuo, this recital also includes a solo concerto for the three woodwind instruments and another for cello, while the programme is filled out by RV106, another of the smaller works, this time without oboe. Playing one-to-a-part throughout (bassoon continuo in the cello concerto, though not in the oboe piece), the Barocksolisten are clearly a bunch of virtuosi on their respective instruments, and this disc is interesting in combining such a wide range of works, rather than devoting the entire schedule to one or other instrument or player. That said, it makes buying this as a gift for anyone other than a Vivaldi devotee difficult. *BC*

Gloria Dresdensis *Schätze der Hofkapelle aus "Schranck No: II."* Dresdner Barockorchester 70' 52"
cpo **777 782-2**
Music by Brescianello, Caldara, Fasch, Handel, Hasse, Pisendel & G. B. Sammartini

The track listing of this CD includes two sinfonias to operas, two more without any known link to stage works, a sonata which might have served as an introduction to a church service, and two overtures (one to Handel's *Occasional Oratorio* with an otherwise unknown Violin 3 part, and a suite almost certainly by Fasch, though it is anonymous in the source material). They are all well played by the Dresdner Barockorchester (54321 strings with double winds, 3 trumpets and timps, as well as theorbo and harpsichord continuo) under the guidance of their alternating *Konzertmeisterinnen*, Ulrike Titze and Margret Baumgartl. Much as I enjoyed the other music, it was the Fasch that stood out for me; unique among his surviving suites in being scored for 2 flutes and strings only, each of the six movements is memorably tuneful, and his deft control of harmonic rhythm drives the music along. If I seem a little underwhelmed by the whole experience, though, then that is about right – nice music, but so much more could have been made of it, I think. *BC*

An Italian in Paris The Bach Players
Hyphen Press Music **HPM007** (68' 35")
Bartolotti Chaconne in C **Charpentier** Sonata in C **Clérambault** Chaconne in D F. **Couperin** La Pucelle **Duval** Suite no. 1 **J. de la Guerre** Sonata no. 4 **Lully** (attrib) Chaconne in C **Marais** Prélude in e **Rebel** Sonata no. 4

This is a fascinating collection of music, composed largely by French composers but under Italian stylistic influence and exploiting the sound of the violin both on

its own and in a duo. It starts with Couperin's *La Pucelle*, his first exercise in combining the Italian and French styles, and ends with Charpentier's large-scale Sonata for eight instruments. In between we have fine sonatas by de La Guerre and Rebel, chaconnes by Bartolotti, Lully and Clérembault, and a suite by Duval. Listeners can amuse themselves spotting Italianate and French idioms but ultimately it is the synthesis of the two which is strikingly brought out here. In the course of the disc's preparation a chaconne-like Prélude traditionally attributed to Lully was recognised as actually composed by Marais *'pour le coucher du Roy'*. Played here on two flutes, it symbolises the marriage of the two traditions. Everything is beautifully performed and recorded by a variety of combinations taken from the eight instruments so well characterised and exploited by Charpentier is his fine sonata. As always The Bach Players perform with a real sense of commitment to the music and with great unanimity of purpose. Highly recommended indeed. *Noel O'Regan*

El Maestro Farinelli Concerto Köln, Bejun Mehta,* Pablo Heras-Casado 68' 31"
DG Archiv Produktion **479 2050 2**
Music by C. P. E. Bach, Conforto, Corradini, Hasse, Jommelli, Marcolini, Nebra*, Porpora* & Traetta

The basic idea behind this disc is an excellent and little-explored one – mid 18th-century theatre music from Spanish sources, around the time that Farinelli was impresario to the court. In addition to several splendid Italianate operatic sinfonias, we have dances by the Spaniard Jose de Nebra, along with a couple of fine vocal contributions from Bejun Mehta; he sings Porpora's "Alto Giove" from *Polifemo* with truly Farinellian grace and subtlety. The programme is completed (and to my mind a little unbalanced) by a CPE Bach sinfonia, whose scale and harmonic and contrapuntal complexity rather overshadows the tonic/dominant bustle of the others. The performances, as one might expect from such a distinguished line-up, are exemplary; the fast movements fairly crackle with energy, and the slower ones are suavely beautiful, especially the lovely Jommelli Chaconne (track 19). I hope there may be moreof this fascinating repertoire! *Alastair Harper*

La Prima Diva: Arie per Faustina Bordoni Agata Bienkowska *mS*, barockwerk hamburg, Ira Hochman 52'
Tactus **TC 670003**
Music by Giovanni Bononcini, Caldara, Handel, Hasse, Sarro & Torri

Some real rarities here, though not quite all world premiere recordings, as advertised on the box. Domenico Sarro would appear to be most unjustifiably neglected – his sinfonia from *Didone Abbandonata* makes an arresting and lively start to the disc, and the two arias from *Partenope* (the same libretto that Handel later set) are finely wrought – the second, "Begl'occhi" is a particularly lovely lullaby with recorders cooing seductively over the strings and surprising harmonic depth. The other, "Per abbattere il mio core" has a striking trumpet obbligato, agilely (and anonymously) played here. Hasse is better represented on disc, but the two arias here are new to me. "Non sdegnarti" is a treasure – suave triple-time *bel canto* with luscious flute and bassoon colouring. "Si, quei ferri", by contrast, is a dramatic *aria parlante*, with short pithy phrases for the voice alternating with busy string figuration. The most extended piece is Handel's "Alla su gabbia d'oro" from *Alessandro*, with an elaborate solo violin obbligato. The slightest is the short sinfonia from Bononcini's *Griselda* (last heard on an old vinyl disc from Richard Bonynge and Joan Sutherland).

barockwerk hamburg respond to Ira Hochman's lively tempi with verve and precision – their various sinfonias are highlights, with fine brass and woodwind contributions. Agata Bienkowska is an accomplished singer, but her voice has a slightly Callas-like edge and sometimes sounds rather too large for the music, though she negotiates her divisions with gusto. Overall an interesting disc – devotees of early 18th-century opera need not hesitate. *Alastair Harper*

CLASSICAL

Kraus *Symphonies & Violin Concerto* Zsolt Kallo *vln*, Capella Savaria, Nicholas McGegan 58' 23"
Hungaroton **HCD32733**
VB138, 140 & 151

I have only one complaint about this CD – it is too short! Despite various efforts by other ensembles previously, Kraus's music continues to languish in that oh-so-boring "not quite Mozart" obscurity, even though *everyone* rates the symphony in C sharp minor as among the ultimate *Sturm und Drang* repertoire! This performance is a cracker – the clear recording and gossamer-like textures allow you to hear Kraus's harmonically charged lines perfectly, as McGegan draws beautiful playing from this fine band. Kallo once again brings energy and beauty to the solo line in the concerto. While the other symphony might not quite have the same degree of originality, there is still lots to admire, especially when played with such conviction, not to say obvious enjoyment. I recently edited two short pieces for a concert (devoted *exclusively* to Kraus!) in Warsaw, so I hope there may be more recordings in the pipeline. *BC*

Mozart *Complete Clavier Sonatas* Arthur Schoonerwoerd *fp, clavichord, tangent piano*
Accent **ACC 24254** (346' 41", 6 CDs)
K279-284, 309-311, 330-333, 457, 475, 494, 533, 545, 570 & 576

This is certainly Mozart with a difference, Mozart with attitude, one might say. The six earliest sonatas are played on a Tangentenflügel by William Jurgenson after Spaeth & Schmahl c. 1775. The instrument is bright and clear and in slow movements like the *Andante amoroso* from KV280, or the first movement of KV282, the playing is beautifully judged. In the fast movements, however, I find Schoonderwoerd unnecessarily aggressive: Mozart cannot have always played the bad boy! Movements like the Menuets of KV282 lose all their grace here. This is partly a result of the recording which makes the instrument sound unnecessarily harsh and jangly. It also results from Schoonderwoerd's manner of playing apoggiaturas which are shorter than usual and accented on the second rather than the first note. This is explained and justified in the liner-note essay by Ulrich Blees, particularly in the context of the *Rondo alla Turca*, where it is convincing and alters the way one perceives that piece for the better. But would Mozart have played them this way in all other contexts and so aggressively? I'm not in a position to judge the evidence but it would take a lot of getting used to as it changes the sound world so fundamentally.

The next five sonatas are played on a replica by Jurgenson of a Stein 1780 piano with bare wooden hammers. Not jangly like the tangent piano, this instrument allows for more of the *espressione* and *grazioso* called for in the movement titles of these sonatas, but I still find the player's touch too hard and aggressive and lacking in subtlety. I did, though, enjoy the A minor KV310 whose *Sturm und Drang* character suits Schoonderwoerd's approach. Next come four sonatas played on a North German clavichord c. 1780 copied by Joris Potvlieghe. This is the second clavichord by this maker I have heard recently and both are very fine instruments. Dare I say that this one has taught Schoonerwoerd something about expressive playing. These are much more subtle performances with more nuance and expressivity. This carries over into the final three sonatas, recorded on a copy by Paul Poletti and Gerard Tuinman of a Walter piano of c.1790 with leather-covered hammers. Now Schoonerwoerd comes into his own. He seems a totally different player here, dealing of course with more mature works, but bringing all the qualities of cantabile and subtlety of expression which were missing in the early CDs. Aggression has its place here, but now it is controlled and, when unleashed, is all the more

effective. His performance of the C minor *Fantasie* KV475 and the associated sonata KV457 is magical and very convincing. A bit of a mixed bag, then. Schoonderwoerd is a fine player and his approach to Mozart can be refreshing. His added ornamentation on repeats is welcome, as is the clavichord and Walter instruments. For me, however, his approach to playing Mozart on the Tangentenflügel and wooden-hammered Stein needs further thought. *Noel O'Regan*

Antonio Pio ***Gionata*** *Oratorio a 4 voci e orchestra* Ensemble I Luoghi dello Spirito, Maria Luisa Baldassari 97' 36" (2 CDs)
Tactus **TC 751690**

No, I hadn't heard of him either! Antonio Pio was born in Ravenna in 1735 and studied in Naples, returning to Ravenna as maestro di capella of the cathedral and occasional organist, singer and singing teacher. He composed this oratorio in 1779 and shortly afterwards moved to Venice, Vienna and finally St Petersburg, where he took up Cimarosa's old post and became music teacher to several Royal offspring. *Gionata* was written for the solemn feast of the Holy Image of the Virgin Mary called Our Lady of Sweat – honestly! Apparently it was a big thing at the end of May in Ravenna, and involved much music making. Contemporary records state that Pio's *Gionata* was performed at 11 in the evening, ending at 2 in the morning. The surviving score starts with elegant handwriting, but becomes increasingly muddled. It requires a sizeable orchestra with pairs of horns, oboes and trumpets and rather more string players than appear on this recording. This is a live recording, although the only real evidence of this is the applause at the end. Sadly, the singing of the four soloists does not really do Pio justice, with intonation being one of the many issues. And, although Pio was clearly well respected in his day, his music doesn't really past the test of time. The lengthy recitatives become a little wearing after a while, and there are no texts or translations to assist understanding. Indeed, the piece starts with 5 minutes of recitative, something an inserted overture might have helped. And the arias, all *da capo*, do not really carry enough musical strength to lift this above the workaday.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

Pleyel ***Symphonies Concertantes / Bassoon Concerto*** Hanno Dönneweg *bsn*, Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart des SWR. Johannes Moesus 85' 19" (2 CDs)
cpo **777 606-2**
B107, 112, 113 & 115

This enjoyable double CD set is another of those "only here because the works are not available on period instruments, but what a shame it would be not to have the recording at all" releases. I'm not sure why only the bassoonist was given front cover status – he is a talented player, for sure, but no more so than his colleagues Gaby Pas-Van Riet, Anne Angerer, Wolfgang Wipfler, Mila Georgieva, Michael Salm, Gunter Teuffel, Manuel Fischer-Dieskau and Konstanze Brenner (flute, oboe, horn, 2 violins, viola, cello and double bass respectively), even if the majority of them only appear because B113 is essentially a concerto for two orchestras, one of them played by soloists. The bassoon is partnered by solo oboe in B112 and by flute, oboe and horn in B115. All are in three movements (though B113 has separate tracks for each of the seven variations), and very neatly played. I think there is a need to hear Pleyel on period instruments – although the orchestra here does its best to play in period style, there is still a little too little air between the notes for my taste. *BC*

von Schacht ***Symphonies Vol. 1*** Evergreen Symphony Orchestra, Gernot Schmalfuss
cpo **777 737-2** (79' 33")
Sinfonias in C, E@ and E@'con Eco'

One of my favourite *EMR* reviewing moments (to go along with another mentioned below) was when I received a disc of concertos for two and three clarinets, played on modern instruments, by the mysterious Theodore von Schacht. *CB* doubtless sent it to me because he did not know anyone else who would listen to it with forgiving ears. In fact, the music was a delight (especially the ultra-tuneful work for three clarinets, which lingers in the ear long after the CD has stopped playing). So when I saw von Schacht symphonies on offer from the enterprising cpo label, I jumped at the chance to order a review copy. I'm not going to lie; I have not found myself listening to these works over and over again. Yet, there is much to enjoy, and much to commend these performances by the Taipei-based orchestra. *BC*

19th CENTURY

Beethoven ***Sonata op. 111, Diabelli Variations op. 120, Six Bagatelles op. 126*** András Schiff *piano and fortepiano*
ECM **2294/5** 158' (2 CDs)

This is well outside my area but Schiff plays the Diabelli variations twice here, once on a 1921 Bechstein used by Wilhelm Backhaus and again on a Franz Brodman Hammerflügel of c. 1820. It may be heresy to say that I prefer the former performance. The Bechstein is Schiff's instrument in a way that the Brodman cannot be (even if he now owns it!), at least not without a more radical change in his approach. What we get from his Brodman set is a bit more contrast in registral sound (and even that is pretty subdued) and an occasional use of the bassoon stop and moderator, but not much other difference; Schiff still plays it like a Bechstein and the timings in both performances are almost the same. For a real sense of what a fortepiano performance can be like, one needs to listen to Andreas Staier's 2012 recording on a Graf copy. Of course Schiff is a very fine pianist and his attempts to resist the Steinway monopoly by recording on these instruments are very welcome. These are highly thoughtful performances, full of insight as one expects from this great pianist, and that applies equally to the sonata, and to the Bagatelles which have a lovely nostalgic (in the best sense) quality. *Noel O'Regan*

Elgar ***Music for Powick Asylum and other music*** Innovation Chamber Orchestra, Barry Collett 76' 59"
Somm **SOMMCD 252**

I had hoped to review this along with *Elgar's Trombone* played by Sue Addison, and requested the Asylum Music as a companion, not because of instruments of the time (which would be interesting) but for the reason for the music and sections of some of the pieces which turned up again in Elgar's music. The Worcester County and City Pauper Lunatic Asylum was opened in Powick, a couple of miles south-west of Worcester, in 1852. A brass band became a regular feature, and expanded to become a small orchestra of 19 players with piano. Elgar ran the band from 1879-1884, and composed for it. Had other Asylums acquired orchestras, perhaps the state of the inmates would have benefitted: the Worcester asylum was about a century in adavance! This disc brings together all the relevant music as edited in the Collected Works with some other early works: Andante and Allegro for oboe and string trio, Duet for trombone and double bass and Fugue in d for oboe & violin, the last two pieces running for a little over a minute each. *CB*

Reviving Song: Selected works by Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, Hélène Montgeroult, Louis Spohr Pamela Dellal *mS*, Diane Heffer *clarinet*, Vivian Montgomery *fp*
Oasis 700261394732 (58' 28")

I have long been a fan of the period clarinet, and of Spohr, so the chance to hear both (albeit in a context in which you would not find me) was a delight, and so – it turned out – was the disc. Spohr's *Six German Songs* cover a range of emotions and he captures them well, creating an interesting dialogue between the singer and the wind instrument, while the piano

is relegated pretty much to a background role. The two-movement piano sonata by Montgeroult provides Vivian Montgomery with more chances to shine, and she reveals herself to be a talented musician, carefully shaping both the *Maestoso con espressione* and the *Allegro agitato* (which last over nine minutes each) in such a way that neither outlasts its welcome. I can imagine the composer having been tremendously impressive at salons in her day. There is, however, no denying the dramatic gear change when she is joined once more by Pamela Dellal for an impressive assortment of songs by Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel. Hers is a slightly dark voice, well suited to some of the more serious texts. Personally, I would have reversed the order of pieces and ended with the Spohr – although Hensel's *Zauberkreis* is a lovely ending (one which Richard Strauss must have known!) *BC*

MISCELLANEOUS

Dictionary of Medieval & Renaissance Instruments 138' 59" (2 CDs)
Cantus **C 9705/6**

This ambitious project is an attempt to provide an introduction to the instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance used nowadays in period instrument performances. The limiting factor seems to have been the restriction of the performance tracks to 2 CDs, but having said that, José Carlos Cabello has assembled a stellar selection of musicians to record his examples – and unless I am misreading the introduction, these tracks have all been specially recorded. Inevitably in such an enterprise some instruments, particularly in the more obscure corners of the woodwind and keyboard families, have been omitted entirely, but on the other hand the examples rarely sound aridly academic or encyclopaedic. The inclusion of extensive essays on the subject is very informative, and Signor Cabello clearly has significant contacts in the musicological world – his notes contain the very latest research, including the bombshell that Josquin was born some thirty years later that hitherto assumed, that he never worked in Milan and that he was called Lebloitte! Perhaps inevitably with a work translated into English, there are some nomenclature issues, such as the use of modern instrument names (e.g. bassoon) alongside the period instrument name (e.g. dulcian) and the contrasting of 'wind' and 'brass' instruments. It is easy but ultimately unhelpful to find small faults in such a major project, and there is no doubt that this comprehensive and compact guide to authentic instruments and performance practice will prove very accessible and useful to general listeners planning to enjoy this area of music, and indeed to more expert listeners and performers who wish to hear early instruments expertly played. *D. James Ross*

A comparison with David Munrow's 1976 LP and Oxford book would be interesting.

A quattro cori *Benevoli, Fasch, Mendelssohn – Music for 16 voices* NDR Chor, Philipp Ahmann 74' 40"
Es Dur **ES2049**

The Fasch of the title is not Johann Friedrich, the composer of whom I am such a fanatic, but his son, Carl Friedrich Christian, who, having worked as second harpsichordist to the German monarch we call Frederick the Great, went on to lead a remarkably independent life as a musician and teacher. Apart from the completion of this remarkable 16-part mass, his most notable achievement was the formation of the group who would give the first performance, the Berlin Sing-Akademie. The inspiration for such a work was the score that Reichardt (who had replaced Fasch at the Berlin court in 1775, not 1755 as per the English translation of the booklet!) brought back from a trip to Italy of the Benevoli mass, here recorded for the first time. The score there today (in B@, not B, Mr(s) Booklet Translator!) is a tone lower than Benevoli's original, and this recording preserves the pitch of early performances by being another semitone lower. Even on my computer speakers, the sound is glorious – the singing is very fine indeed. The Fasch work is no clone of its model; rather, the composer juxtaposes long passages of virtuoso singing (listen to the three angelic sopranos who open the *Gloria*) with dramatic sections for the various choirs, both in dialogue and in conjunction with soloists singing across the top of the texture. Clearly he never intended a one-to-a-part performance, since there are 17 solo parts in the final *Cum Sancto Spiritu*. Mendelssohn's *Hora est* brings the CD to a glorious close. With his mother and sister, he was a member of the choir, which had reached 350 members by that time. His 16-part work (presented by the 19-year-old composer to his sister on her 23rd birthday) is in a different style again, but the NDR Chor clearly relish in letting their hair down a little after the Benevoli, and yet manage to retain both impeccable tuning and blend. This is a magnificent choral recital. *BC*

The Baroque Virtuoso Jeanne Lamon, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra
Tafelmusik **TMK1026CD**
Bach BWV1043, 1067 **Biber** Harmonia artificiosa-ariosa V **Geminiani** op. 2/3, conc. after Corelli op. 5/3 **Schmelzer** Sonatae unarum fidium 3 **Vivaldi** Summer

This CD is something a little special – the director of Tafelmusik, Jeanne Lamon, steps down at the end of this season, after more than three decades. As a celebration of her time in charge, she was asked to choose the repertoire for this wonderful CD, and the group's sponsors then financed the tracks which had to be acquired from other recording companies. The result is a delightful compilation of music ranging from the delicate filigree of the Schmelzer sonata to the sublime elegance of the Bach double concerto, from the esoteric violas d'amore of the Biber to the dazzling display of Vivaldi's *Summer*. The booklet is peppered by photos of Ms Lamon and her colleagues, smiling and laughing, yet retaining their poise – pretty much how one imagines a Tafelmusik concert! *BC*

★ ★ ★★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

DOWNLOADS

See notes on p. 23
Reviews by BC

Te Deum ***Settings by Charpentier & Lully*** La Poème Harmonique, Capella Cracoviensis, Vincent Dumestre 55' 34"
Alpha **952**

These performances were recorded in the chapel at Versailles. One of the three booklet essays (one on the castle, another on aspects of the performance and a third on the works themselves) explains that a strict beat has been maintained throughout both settings, since "conduction techniques and rehearsal time spans, often extremely short for sacred music, only allowed for tempo variations or the seeking of character within the frame of a precise, relatively stable tactus – at least when large numbers of musicians were involved". The net result (for me) is most unsettling – while the faster music (like the famous opening of the Charpentier) lacks time to breathe, the slow music feels laboured. Special mention is made of the use of older style trumpet mouthpieces (with a little too much reasoning, if you ask me), but no mention is made of the frequent (but not at all consistent) octave displacements of recorder parts, or various other things that caught my ear. If I sound negative, I have overdone it – the performances are exciting, with a great deal of very beautiful singing and stirring playing, befitting the words. I suppose I am just used to more flexibility, but that is perhaps something we need to reconsider?

Keiser ***Brockes-Passion*** Zsuzsi Tóth *Tochter Zion*, Jan Van Elsacker *Evangelist*, Peter Kooij *Jesus*, Vox Luminis, Less Muffatti, Peter Van Heyghen 120' 35" (2 CDs)
Ramée **RAM 1303**

This is a marvellous recording on every front – the music makes one wonder (not for the first time, of course) why Keiser's music is not better known, and the performance is first rate, with excellent singing (soli and tutti) and superb playing from all the instrumentalists (33221 strings with flute, recorders, oboes, bassoons and harpsichord & archlute continuo – why not organ?). Zsuzsi Tóth frequently reminded me here of Dorothee Mields (regular readers will know that is a *serious* compliment). The eight singers of Vox Lumini are an outstanding choir and they all get opportunities to sing solos (or ensembles) apart from the altos (why did Keiser neglect them?) The only failing I find in the music is the lack of substance to any of the movements – only one of the 97 tracks is longer than three minutes (it is a rapturous aria with solo flute and violin for the *Tochter Zion*) – although Keiser was a skilled contrapuntalist and wrote some gorgeous tunes, he seems to have had little interest in realising their full potential. The same most certainly cannot be said of the present performers.

Telemann ***Ouvertures à 8*** Zefiro, Alfredo Bernardini 73' 30"
Arcana **A 371**
TWV 55: D15, d3, B10

This is, without doubt, absolutely the best recording of Telemann orchestral suites I have ever heard; three oboes and bassoon are pitted against one-to-a-parts strings with theorbo and harpsichord. What struck me most from the very outset was how relaxed the players are, both in each other's company (allowing them to take a flexible though not mannered approach) and in Telemann's music – from the very opening track, there is a suaveness to their sound that I have never before heard in this repertoire, which is more traditionally rustic and edgy. That said, there are moments (the Hornepipe, Track 21, for example) where the oboes do sound a little raucous, but then the delightful sounds of the 2nd Menuet with viola bass line soon soothe the memory. I recommend this to Telemanniacs and Teleskeptics alike.

J. S. Bach ***Missæ Breves*** *Complete recording BWV232-236* Pygmalion, Raphaël Pichon
Alpha **816** (179' 36", 3CDs)

This set brings together three discs (BWV 235 in g, 234 in A – in that order – with Bach's arrangement of Kuhnau's *Der Gerechte kommt* um from 2008, 233 in F and 236 in G with *O Jesu Christ mein Lebens Licht* from 2009, and "Missa 1733", the brevis version of the B minor mass, from 2011). Whatever your take on the "one to a part" debate, I doubt if you would expect the three recordings to take different approaches – the choir in 2008 was 7445, a year later the middle parts were boosted to give 7555, while the latest of the three has equality across the board with 55555. Other strange aspects of the performance as described in the booklet (one is far less aware of it aurally) include the presence of tenor viol (playing what exactly?) The association of the B minor mass with the Hofkapelle in Dresden is seen as an excuse to include an (all-too-obtrusive) lute to the continuo team; irritating enough in choruses, enough to make me press "track forward" in arias. Is there even any real evidence the mass was performed in Dresden? Michael Maul postulated its first airing in Vienna c. 1749, I thought? Not a lutenist for miles around! Reservations aside, there is much to commend here – the choir sings very well, as do the soloists and the instrumental contributions can be electric (the horns in the Gloria in F are understated to start, but fairly get into their stride as the movement progresses).

Reutter ***Portus Felicitatis*** *Motets & Arias for the Pantaleon* Monika Mauch *S*, Stanislava Jirku *A*, Margit Übellacker *pantaleon*, La Gioia Armonica, Jürgen Banholzer
Ramée **RAM1302** (69' 36")

Damned by Burney's typical faint praise ("a composer capable in his own way, yet without spirit"), Reutter has rather languished in the musical backwaters since the sun set on what was quite an illustrious career (ennobled by Charles VI, he was court organist and *Kapellmeister* at St Stephen's). This CD is typical Ramée; a selection of interesting and entertaining repertoire with a particular focus and with top-rate performers. Nine of the 11 pieces on the programme are vocal, all of which clearly demonstrate the composer's understanding of the human voice. A particular highlight for me was *Dura legge a chi t'adora* from Reutter's 1727 "festa teatrale" *Archidamia*, in which Monika Mauch is partnered by obbligato lute and pantaleon with continuo. Stanislava Jirku's voice is a little darker (and wider?) but she negotiates Reutter's lines rather well. One-to-a-part Gioia Armonica play very well, and the recording is as bright as we always expect from this label.

Mozart – ***En harmonie: Arrangiamenti d'opera per 13 strumenti*** [by Bernardini] Zefiro, *dir.* Bernardini 61' 04"
Arcana **A374**

Zefiro must have had an absolutely hoot making this recording! The booklet is full of photographs of them in period garb (perhaps not what you might expect, though!), as well as an interesting essay on the genesis of these arrangements by the group's director. Seven movements each from *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, and eight from *Così* make up the programme; using the 13 instruments of the *Gran Partita*, the group is able to preserve more of the string writing and harmonic depth which 18th-century arrangements for wind do. The larger range of instruments also allows for some characterisation of roles allocated to various instruments. Dating from 2004, this recording is an hour of utter pleasure.

Haydn ***Die Jahreszeiten*** Christina Landshamer *Hanne*, Maximilian Schmitt *Lukas*, Florian Boesch *Simon*, Collegium Vocale Gent, Orchestre des Champs-Elysées, Philippe Herreweghe
PHI **LPH013** (129', 2CDs)

For many ensembles, Haydn's *The Seasons* might be a move forward in time from their usual repertoire, but Herreweghe and co. have been as far into the future as Bruckner, so one might describe Haydn as the middle of their considerable range. Not that there are no challenges to this work for *any* performers, though needless to say, the assembled forces are absolutely at the top of their game here – I will not be at all surprised to see this nominated for prize after prize. The choir is always as much a star in Herreweghe's recordings as the soloists or his very fine orchestra, and this is no exception. The three soloists are first rate, and the orchestra (with its many solo contributions, of course) outstanding. My only slight reservation again concerns continuo: this time, I find the fortepiano just a little too forward in the soundscape during the concerted numbers.

****

musik museum
See notes on p. 23

Musikmuseum 16° (**CD13015**, 72' 11") is entitled "A feast for Emperor Ferdinand I" and features Capella de la Torre (in this case, ATB, cornetto, pommer/dulcian, two sackbutts, bass dulcian and organ, all directed by shawm player Katharina Bäuml). The programme is built around Jacobus Vaet's beautiful Missa *Tityre, tu patulae*. After an intrada by Orologio we hear the 16th-century clock bells of the Innsbruck court chapel, then other music (vocal and instrumental) by von Bruck, Buus, Cabezon, Deiss (his lament on the death of the emperor), Hollande, Lassus (the motet upon which Vaet based his mass), and Maessins as well as an improvised canzona alternate and frame the movements of the mass. I really enjoyed the combination of male voices with the reedy instruments; and no, I'm afraid I really didn't miss the sopranos...

D. James Ross

Musikmuseum 15 (**CD13014**, 59' 56") is devoted to the music of Father Ingenuin Molitor (c. 1610–1669), a Franciscan monk who played organ and, on the evidence here, a gifted composer. Maria Erbacher, Gerlinde Sämann and Markus Flaig (SSB) are joined by La Dolcezza (violins, gamba and continuo) in seven vocal works and three canzonas, as well as one for organ solo, and two further canzonas by Johann Stadlmayr and the little-known Bernardin Wolk. Beautifully played and sung, this is a very welcome introduction to a composer who clearly merits further exploration.

The three instrumental canzonas by Molitor also feature on Musikmuseum 6* (**CD13005**, 64' 14") described as "motets and canzonas by Tirolean baroque composers", with vocal works by Leopold von Plawenn and Johann Stadlmayr. Sabine Neumann, Satoshi Mizukoshi and Peter Kooij (ATB) are joined by the instrumentalists of vita & anima. Three more canzonas by Molitor (two of them for violin, gamba and continuo) help vary the textures. *BC*

Johann Zach's music for Holy Week is the focus of Musikmuseum 17° (**CD13016**, 76' 21"). After the motet *O magnum martyrium* come the expected sets of settings of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* for mattins on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday before Easter, and the programme is rounded off by a C minor setting of the *Miserere*, featuring "2 viole violinizate" which the booklet notes tell us are "violas". The contrast between the plainsong and the rococo harmonies of the lamentations were initially quite shocking. I'm not quite sure why, since Zach travelled to Italy in the 1740s to study. If you are wondering why he is afforded a place in this series at all, it is because the composer spent his later life wandering from court to court in search of kindness (and presumably, work), and one of his favourite destinations was the Cistercian monastery at Stams, where the sources for the works on the disc are held. *BC*

Musikmuseum 5* is *Innsbrucker Klassik* (18th-century sinfonias from the archive of the Innsbruck Musikverein, 68' 05" **CD13004**). The composers range from J. C. Bach and Leopold Mozart to Kaspar Demmler and Johann Michael Malzat. Along with Joseph Anton Auffmann and poor Herr Müller, whose first names are not recorded, this live recording of Stella Matutina (22111 strings with pairs of flutes, oboes, horns and harpsichord) in the Tirolean conservatory concert hall gives a bright account of the music, and by no means are the obscure composers outdone by their more illustrious contemporaries. *BC*

I would be surprised if anyone's eyes lit up upon sighting Musikmuseum 10° in their local record shop (**CD13009**, 71' 01"). Neither the heading, roughly translating as *Sacred Windmusic*, nor the composer's names are likely to inspire much enthusiasm. Yet this is one of the discs in this set from which I derived most pleasure. There are two masses with wind band (*Harmonie* in German), and a rather grim sounding oratorio (*The Redeemer's Fear and Death*) make up the unpromising programme, but fortunately Jakob Schgraffer (1799–1859) and Johann Baptist Gänsbacher (1778–1844) were both very gifted composers, capable of writing beautiful melodies (and using just the right instrumental colour to get maximum effect from them), and skilful choral writing, but more than that with a sense of drama, or musical architecture – this is not music that just keeps going for the sake of it; rather, this music is going places. I was frequently reminded of one of the very few true exciting moments in my reviewing life, when Clifford sent me a CD of Michael Haydn masses performed (as the composer intended) with an oboe band. Never judge a book by its cover, as they say. *BC*

Musikmuseum 3* is "Wind music 1800–1850 on period instruments" (**CD13002**, 64' 01"), another live recording, this time dating from 2009. The repertoire runs from the Haydn brothers (Joseph rather outclassing Michael on this occasion) to Mendelssohn, via a wide range of composers from Schubert and Friedrich Witt to Gänsbacher and Pegger. The idea of hearing the instruments from the museum's own collection playing the very repertoire for which they were made is, of itself, a worthy undertaking; I doubt if the music will become mainstream repertoire, but it was interesting to hear music for winds before Richard Strauss. *BC*

The composer to whom the final disc in the batch is devoted, Joseph Netzer, died of smallpox in the year Strauss was born (1864). Musikmuseum 12 (**CD13011**, 67' 14") features 19 fine lieder beautifully sung by tenor, Paul Schweinester. He is very neatly accompanied by Annette Seiler on an 1835 Conrad Graf *Hammerflügel*, and is joined by hornist Johannes Hinterholzer in five of them. The trio is then joined by baritone Andreas Mattersberger for the longest offering of the recital, Netzer's setting of Johann and Jakob Janitschka's *Die Loreley*. If I were to confess that Edita Gruberova's Strauss interpretations are the only lieder I listen to by choice, it might come as a surprise if I venture to suggest I will return to this recital in a few months to see if my very positive impressions of both the music and the performers is confirmed. For now, I am happy to recommend this very fine disc to any of our readers.

The same is true of the other volumes in the series – if any the repertoire overlaps with your interests, do not hesitate to get hold of them. You will almost certainly not be disappointed. *BC*

COMPETITION

This month's music supplement on the following two pages is a little different. It is the second movement from the fourth of a set of six unusual flute duets that survive in a manuscript in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. Their novelty lies mainly in the choice of obscure, rather flute-unfriendly keys (B flat, C minor, E flat, F minor, B flat again and finally E) but there are other odd features such as angular melodies and wide leaps between cross-fingered notes.

For some reason the composer never published the pieces during his lifetime, but they clearly circulated quite widely, as Johann Joachim Quantz included extracts in his *Solfeggi*.

The competition is very simple: the first reader who can correctly identify the composer will receive a free copy of the finished edition of all six *duetti* when it is published by Prima la musica! later this year. Your solution to Brian Clark.

bc16661@hotmail.com


[2] Allegro
tr
6
10
15
19
p
f
p
22
26


30
tr
33
37
tr
tr
tr
42
tr
tr
46
p
p
50
f
f
54
tr

ANTHONY HOPKINS

21 March 1921 – 6 May 2014

I am one of the great host of musicians and music-lovers of a certain age who owe an incalculable debt to Antony Hopkins. His half-hour *Talking About Music* programmes, always about a work or works to be broadcast during the coming week, provided young people in the '50s and early '60s with the kind of entrée to classical music that they might find today in such admirable offerings as Donald Macleod's *This Week's Composer* (twice-daily on Radio 3) or Stephen Johnson's occasional *Discovering Music* (on 3, 4 and World Service). I have a vivid memory of just where the family car was – passing a well-swanned local pond – at the precise moment of an early-teenage epiphany, when I suddenly understood what word-setting was all about as Hopkins discoursed on *Nuits d'Été* via the car radio.

Despite the arch-patrician accent he had the gift of easy communication with listeners from every kind of background. As a kind of grace-and-favour junior exhibitioner at Trinity College of Music (then in Mandeville Place, near Manchester Square), I used to find myself passing the time between piano lesson and musicianship class each Saturday afternoon in the students' common room, where the latest *Talking About Music* was almost inevitably the major topic of conversation among the full-time students. Most of these were the school music teachers of the future, so Hopkins' influence will have extended far beyond his radio listeners.

But radio can be a fickle employer. Rather as Radio 3 came to the rescue of Choral Evensong when Radio 4 decided to dispense with it, Radio 4 saved the day when Radio 3 proposed axing Hopkins' long-running and still highly popular programme – no doubt as part of its ongoing and inexorable drive towards populist pseudo-matiness. Worse, he eventually had his contract terminated in a brief note from a Radio 4 secretary whom he had never met, with never a word of thanks. (I only heard this shocking information some years after the event from the then Head of Music Programmes, Radio: she, a close friend of Antony Hopkins, had had it from his own lips.) He did, however, broadcast his talks from 1954 to 1992.

Hugh Keyte

I too was a regular listener to his weekly talks. However, I was surprised that in his talk on Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* he got the beginning of the *Allegro* wrong. I wrote to him, but got a formal note that he didn't respond to letters. Most of those who knew him from his talks were unaware of the skill and variety of his compositions: perhaps now he is dead, there will be a revival of them! Although not particularly related to early music, he spoke sensibly about late baroque repertoire – I don't remember any renaissance polyphony, for instance. But I presume he was one of those who benefitted from Morley College, with it's broad approach at the time of Tippett & Walter Goehr.

CB

EDWIN GRIGGS

7 January 1947 – 14 April 2014

Everyone has been shocked by the most untimely death of our well-loved Chairman, Edwin Griggs. Edwin was just starting to fully enjoy his retirement and had so much more music to play and sing.

He was born and brought up in Hong Kong. His father and both grandfathers had fought to defend Hong Kong during the war. All three were captured in 1942 and amazingly all survived. Edwin had no opportunity to learn a musical instrument as his father, the son of a music teacher and who did enjoy music could not stand the sound of practising in his own home. In his mid-teens Edwin joined the choir of St John's Cathedral in Hong Kong and began his lifelong interest in early ecclesiastical music.

He came to England in 1968 and began to listen to and enjoy traditional jazz and English folk music. He joined the Blackheath Morris Dancers, playing the accordion and fiddle for them, as well as dancing. His fellow dancers christened him "rooster" – something to do with his limited capacity for consuming beer.

He was a late student going to Bristol University at the age of 27 and achieved a first class degree in "Social Administration and Sociology". He went on to take a Ph D from the University of York in 1985. After several academic positions around the country Edwin settled at Coventry University, in the Department of Health and Social Sciences. He was active in publishing and presenting academic papers in his chosen field.

After Edwin moved to the Midlands he attended an inspiring course on Renaissance dance in Birmingham and went on to join an active early dance group. Edwin took violin and singing lessons and joined MEMF in 1986. He later became a valuable member of the MEMF Committee and in 2010 was unanimously elected as Chairman of MEMF, following the retirement of Jim Rowley. He was busy in this position until ill health caught up with him. He sang bass with several choirs including the Birmingham Bach Choir, Divertimento and St Mary's Scholars.

Edwin will be sorely missed by all MEMF members, and by many others in the early music world who came to know, like and admire Edwin as much as we did.

Mike Ashley

Mike has also added a more informal tribute

Edwin had a deep appreciation of early music, from quite an early age. He joined MEMF 28 years ago, and was a strong supporter of its activities for most of those years.

I first met him about 10 years ago when I joined the MEMF Committee, and Edwin was already there. From those days I remember a quiet unassuming chap whose great knowledge of early music gradually became apparent to me.

I also remember him for often being late for meetings, and then after a refreshing cup of coffee in a comfortable chair he couldn't help but close his eyes and snatch a quick 40 winks. I don't think he was much interested in the administration side of the organisation, he just wanted to talk about the music.

We solved his lateness and sleeping problems by electing him Chairman of the Committee in 2010. He was then always early for meetings and showed an unexpected aggression in getting through the agenda with as few digressions or meanderings as possible. It worked. His time as Chairman was very successful and MEMF thrived.

I was Treasurer at the time, for which he was most grateful as he didn't really want to be bothered with such things as accounts – adding and subtracting. He just liked to know that we were solvent and then get quickly onto music matters. I'll never forget the look of sheer panic on his face when I told him I was to step down as Treasurer after 9 years. But we found an excellent replacement and Edwin calmed down.

Members of MEMF will remember him for all that he did for the organisation and early music in this area. My wife and I will remember him for being such a charming and lovely man who was a pleasure to have in our house.

****

MAJOR/ MINOR THIRD CADENCE RESOLUTIONS: TASTE OR RULE?

Rosalind Halton

A little-discussed question of figured bass practice is mentioned in the review of *Alessandro Scarlatti, 13 Cantatas before 1694, ed. Salvatore Carchiolo* (*EMR*, April 2014): "The final note of a vocal phrase with subsequent rests is usually not figured, but how often does it need to be sharpened? ... On the whole I favour major followed by minor, but there isn't much indication."

It is of course those who play the chords who decide the major/minor 3rd issue, sometimes influenced by the wishes of those they accompany. But is it only personal preference that can guide the player? The regular use of the major triad as punctuation between phrases and sections may be the a working rule in the early seventeenth century, but by at least the end of the 17th century it seems that this was no longer routinely observed. Many singers in my experience prefer 'sad' minor mode songs to be completed with a minor, not major 3rd, to maintain the perceived mood. And there are some situations where a bare 5th or simply the bass note can end a piece with suitable sound and mood.

My impression from study of Alessandro Scarlatti's autograph cantatas is that that the resolution of a cadence generally follows the key signature, unless otherwise indicated. The manuscript cantatas for solo voice and continuo held in the Santini Collection, D-MÜs3987, gives some clues about his practice regarding cadence resolutions within and closing a recitative, in a prevailing minor tonality. The cantatas are figured with the composer's customary meticulous care. From a (random) selection of seven autograph cantatas in this collection, I found only one example of the resolution being indicated - in this case, with flat 3rd giving a resolution in C minor (tonic, F major). To open the next phrase, the whole chord is sharpened – C# bass, underpinning a 1st inversion, with the previous e flat rising to E natural in the voice. The abrupt shift is clearly intended.

Other clues to Scarlatti's practice may be found in the13 *Cantatas* themselves: e.g. in the final *recitativo accompagnato* of the well-known and recorded 'Correa nel seno amato' (p.41), where Violin 2 carries the minor third, enabling a flow past the cadence towards the final thought. And in 'Da Sventura a Sventura' (A minor) the unique realization from the period shows that it is only the final cadence that carries the major 3rd: sections within the cantata are completed by a resolution with the minor 3rd. In each of these examples, Scarlatti shows flexibility in cadence and phrase structure – drawing on 'old' modal practices alongside a new sense of tonal perspective. The minor 3rd resolution gives continuity – the major 3rd resolution punctuates.

On another editorial issue, the appearance of coloration in 'Da sventura a sventura' may be in some ways a 'superfluous form of notation', but the survival of this archaic element in Scarlatti's usage is of interest and deserves to be documented: even if it makes the performer stop and think for a moment, the solution is not that difficult even for the mathematically challenged.

LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

I am delighted that Roger Bowers has been drawn into the open to show full workings of his beliefs about Elizabethan pitch and vocal scoring. My book 'The Supernatural Voice – a history of high male singing' is due out in November, and I'm happy to say that there is nothing in Roger's piece which I haven't dealt with in full there. I shall leave it to readers to compare our arguments then.

One thing, though. Roger writes of early 16th century England that 'Contemporary documentary sources identified as available the four timbres of boy treble, falsetto alto, tenor, and bass'. I wonder if I can challenge Roger again? – this time to provide details of these sources regarding the 'falsetto alto', since they're not mentioned in his article, or in his previous published work. I'm genuinely puzzled by this, because to my knowledge there are no references to the falsetto alto (or falsetto counter-tenor) in England before the start of the nineteenth century. In fact, between some disputed observations in the twelfth century and a first clear sighting (singing soprano in the Chapel Royal) in 1673, I am unaware of a single reference to falsetto in the English church.

My book will, I hope, reveal the gaping fault-lines in the traditional argument that Roger presents, whilst explaining how and why the falsetto voice, despite its antiquity on the Continent, is a remarkably recent phenomenon in England. *Simon Ravens*

Dear Clifford,

Roger Bowers complains that the 'sounding pitch' adopted for the workshop events in the 'Chains of Gold' conference (Cambridge, March 1 & 2, 2013) was "strikingly low". Having been the one who assembled the viols and supplied all the performing material, thereby influencing to a large degree the choice of voice types, I feel it necessary to point out that the pitch used was A465, not A440, as he appears to assume. This choice was in order to achieve a practical approximation to the pitch of A470 or thereabouts, suggested by Andrew Johnstone as a widely used choir pitch throughout the Tudor period.[1] So the pitch difference which troubles Roger is already some 30% less than he states – a tone rather than a minor third. But that is surely far less important than the timbre of voices that are used, in particular on the Contratenor lines of the music that we examined, and here I agree with the view expressed by Simon Ravens [2] that a falsettist negotiating these lines by seeking to extend the falsetto range downwards into the problematic 'break' area is simply unconvincing. The use of original key in combination with a pitch of about A465 makes those lines ideally suited to a light tenor, able to extend upwards into head-voice. Lightness is crucial – a heavy and overbearing tenor voice would indeed destroy both the subtlety of the lineand the overall balence, but I do not believe that that is what we heard, so, if Roger thought otherwise, I am disappointed. Cambridge and Oxford should be the ideal places in which to find young, light tenor voices of the right quality to sing such Contratenor lines, yet too many are no doubt seduced into inflating their sound by the lure of the bright lights that await Real Tenors on the opera stage. It is greatly to be regretted that the main choirs persist in forcing this repertoire through upwards transposition into the SATB mould, partly due to the need to give full employment to their falsettists on these lines. If more would invite the falsettists to take a day off occasionally, so that the choir could be reformed into a real Tudor scoring to sing this music, more of those tenors might see a future in retaining that precious (and, as Charles Butler says, 'too rare') quality.[3] *Bill Hunt*

1. ' "As it was in the beginning": organ and choir pitch in early Anglican church music', *Early Music*, 31 (2003)

2. ' "A sweet shrill voice": the countertenor and vocal scoring in Tudor England', *Early Music*, 26 (1998)

DIDO IN HAIFA

Lydia Peres describes a performance of Dido & Aeneas *in a school in Haifa. It is more letter than formal review. I met the family last year in Oxford, and I had visited them in Haifa for the millennium. With husband Assaf Hari and two children (one was born a little before 2000, the other a bit later), the family form a string quartet. Lydia and Assaf are maths teachers at Israel's Institute of Technology.*

The singing was in general very good, stylish, with hardly any American accent to be noticed; the ensembles were effective, the pianists did a good job, the staging was good too, but there were no dances. So on one hand this was the least "authentic" *Dido* performance I ever saw (especially due to the piano reduction accompaniment). But in reality, this was probably the most real *Dido* performance I ever saw. It was written for a school, and these high-school students met the work for the first time, and the enthusiasm was contagious. The last-minute drama of a singer falling ill (the Spirit) was solved by another girl singing two parts (and changing dress in between her two arias). The heroes were, of course, Dido (she's a good singer) and Aeneas (this boy plays the Bass Guitar and has his own Rock group with three more boys from his class, who sing their own music and lyrics: they won a local competition and have their debut CD.) The performance was very, very moving – mostly due to the personal feelings of the singers who were simply doing their very best. When we finally left the school into the cool night (after everybody helped put back all the chairs in place), we felt like we had had some enchanting experience. But then – isn't this what opera is all about?

3. I have been privileged over the last academic year to work a few times with the choir of Queens' College, Cambridge, at the invitation of their director Silas Woolston, who has reformed his choir on a number of occasions in exactly this way, in order to sing complete 'consort' services, consisting of metrical psalm, verse service and verse anthem. The results have proved revelatory, and it is hoped that the example may soon be followed.