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Some of our readers are particularly concerned with creating liturgical reconstructions, others enjoy listening to them. In a recent issue of *Plainsong & Medieval Music* (vol. 4/1) Richard Crocker asks about study of the liturgy 'How much more do we need to know?' and 'What do we need it for?' He points out that musicians over-emphasise the importance of music in the liturgy, summarising a critical view thus: 'What has the recitation by a small number of singers of snippets of scripture, arbitrarily excerpted and inexplicably assigned to an elaborate annual cycle commemorating the experience of the Church in the terrestrial world, have to do with the participation of God's faithful people in the sacrifice offered forever by Jesus the Christ as eternal High Priest in the celestial presence of God himself?' That articulates a modern condemnation of the medieval liturgy as such. But there is something in the approach of musico-liturgical enthusiasts which partakes more of the delight in understanding a complicated railway timetable than in worshipping Christ.

The more we find about detailed differences in the liturgy from place to place, the more we can be led down the avenue of demanding greater precision in reconstruction but the more we should wonder whether emphasis on the sound of the liturgy is a distortion. Most of what the music-lover wishes to hear is merely an adornment to the liturgy, and concerted vocal music might be classified with non-verbal music (Elevations, Epistle Sonatas, etc) as aids to devotion rather than as part of its essence. When we start creating virtual-reality reconstructions of particular buildings and place a liturgy within them, then absolute precision will matter; but for the CD listener how much further do we need to go than putting the music in the appropriate order and adding some chant to indicate when the music is not consecutive? [I look forward to correspondence.]

Michael Talbot touches on this issue in *The Sacred Vocal Music of Antonio Vivaldi* (see p. 6), and it recurs in my review of some 17th-century Italian Vesper recordings (see p. 10). *CB*

BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

SCHEIN & SCHÜTZ

Johann Hermann Schein *Cymbalum Sionium sive Cantipnes Sacrae, 1615. Teil 1.* Herausgegeben von Arno Forchert und Claudia Theis (*Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke* 3.1). Bärenreiter, 1994. £103.40. xiv + 208pp.
Heinrich Schütz *Psalmen Davids 1619 Nr. 23-26.* Herausgegeben von Werner Breig. (*Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke* 26). Bärenreiter, 1994. £117.50. xxvii + 220pp.

Two sturdy and elegant volumes offer us music from the second decade of the 17th century that has already received modern editions but which has been re-edited to accord with current ideas of how early music should be presented in collected editions. The previous complete Schein was a practical edition, in modern clefs with superfluous hairpins. It needed replacing, but there are problems with the new version. *Cymbalum Sionium* was Schein's first set of motets, with 8 for five voices, 10 for six, 9 for eight, one for ten and two for twelve, concluding with a canzon a5. The new volume contains nos. 1-18, the pieces for five and six voices; presumably the rest will fit into vol. 3.2 together, I hope, with a critical commentary, since there are no editorial comments in 3.1. Unlike that of the Schütz volume, the introduction, which does not touch on editorial matters, is only in German. Some of the motets have Latin texts, others German, the latter perhaps being a little more concerned with the audible declamation of the text. The level of interest is on the whole not quite up to that of the madrigalesque *Fontana d'Israel* of 1623, though there is plenty of material here to attract a small choir. There is a strange absence of editorial information. Amazingly, the user is not shown the original clefs and there is nothing in the volume to distinguish normal and high clefs. It is fairly obvious which pieces need transposing down, but the user needs reassurance that Schien doesn't use any odd combinations (in fact he doesn't, as the 1911 edition shows); but it shouldn't be necessary to refer back to the outmoded edition for essential information.

No such complaints about the Schütz. The Bärenreiter Collected Works has varied somewhat in editorial standards, but is now excellent. This completes the edition of the polychoral *Psalmen Davids*, with rather a long gap since vol. 25 of 1981. There is a helpful introduction which touches on various matters, including performance practice, and a critical commentary (covering the complete 1619 publication). There are only four pieces (SWV 44-47), but they are large-scale ones, including the reworking of Psalm 128 a18, a second setting of Psalm 45 a13 plus trumpet (the editor tells you how to reconstruct a trumpet choir but doesn't do the job for you), *Zion spricht* a20 and *Jauchzet dem Herren* a17. In this volume the basis on which earlier psalms in the set are laid out, with the Chori being essential but the Capelle optional, breaks down; the very first piece begins with 12 bars for one of its two Capelle and in the second all three choirs are essential. Unlike the Schein edition, which has relaxing four-minim bars, here they are only two-minims long; we are used to that for Schütz, since the policy of the rival Hänssler edition was the same. Original note values are retained in duple time, but halved in triple, stated rather curiously in the English version of the introduction; the translation of the section on editorial practice is clumsy. There is also a lovely howler in the passage on page xvii describing the addition of timpani to the trumpet choir: 'Usually drum rôles were played.' (I don't want to appear ungrateful: bad linguists like me welcome any translation.) The 1619 edition supplies texts for all parts, even those assigned to instruments (except the trumpet); this is not necessarily to allow for voices to substitute but so that the instrumentalists know how to phrase the music. I can't imagine many brass-players following Spitta's idea of using the words to fill their imagination with poetic ideas and getting themselves into the right mood (quoted in note 37). It is marvellous to have the *Psalmen Davids* completed; I hope performance material will follow for SWV 45 & 46 (SWV 44 & 47 are available from Carus).

CAMBRIDGE RECORDER

As promised last month, we include here an independent review by John Turner. Older readers will remember his recordings with David Munrow, those living in Manchester will be aware of his enthusiastic promotion of the recorder. His parallel review for Music & Letters *devotes more attention to the modern recorder.*

The Cambridge Companion to the Recorder, ed. John Mansfield Thomson, Cambridge University Press, 1955, xxiii + 238pp. £37.50 (US$54.95) hb, ISBN 0 521 35269 X, £13.95 (US$ 18.95) pb. ISBN 0521 35816 7

The illustrations in this happy bran-tub of the recorder are a delight – a potted history of the sweet flute in art. And the extensive captions by Anthony Rowland-Jones (who chose the pictures) are apt, revelatory, and healthily sceptic at the same time. You'll be getting out your magnifying glass to check on the detail – oh that they were larger and in colour (so don't throw away your 1995 charity Christmas cards with the trio of recorder playing angels who come joyfully from *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Munich Alte Pinakothek). Hopefully, these exuberant illustrations may serve as the touchpaper for an exhaustive study of a neglected aspect of the instrument.

The first chapter, by the late Howard Mayer Brown, deals with the history of the recorder in the Middle Ages and renaissance, and this is complemented by Anthony Rowland-Jones' chapter on the recorder's repertoire for these periods – 'probable', 'extended' and 'arranged' – this useful classification (supplemented by the term 'designated' for original recorder compositions) could well become standard nomenclature. Then follow four chapters surveying the baroque repertoire of the instrument - the solo sonata (Anthony Rowland-Jones), chamber music (again Anthony Rowland-Jones), the orchestral repertoire (Adrienne Simpson) and the concerto (David Lasocki and, yes, the indefatigable ARJ again!) A chapter by David Lasocki deals neatly with instruction books for the instrument (from Virdung to Vetter) – apart from incidentally in this chapter and in the later one on the recorder in education, matters of technique are, I think quite rightly, excluded from the volume – and this leads the book into the twentieth century. Two chapters deal with the recorder revival: first John Thomson weaves the Waterloo Station incident into the Dolmetsch family story from a delightfully eccentric viewpoint – that of George Bernard Shaw (an incentive to read again Margaret Campbell's intriguing biography of the old man) and Eve O'Kelly readably takes the story further on with a survey of the modern repertoire. After that, professional players are inspected – today's performers by Eve O'Kelly, and earlier ones (mainly English, drawing on his own meticulous research in the area) by David Lasocki. The final three chapters deal with the recorder in education (Eve O'Kelly), facsimiles and editing (your very own Clifford Bartlett), and Anthony Rowland Jones' Guide to Further Reading.

Readers of this review will need no prompting from me to realise that there are some fairly large gaps here – in particular in the development of the instrument through the ages (see the current issue of the *Recorder Magazine* for some cutting edge about this), the nature of the instrument itself, and recorder-makers old and new. Although Eve O'Kelly's chapter on modern recorder players does have a section on makers, only Tim Cranmore makes more than a passing entrance, and I am not sure that some fairly inconsequential off-the-cuff remarks by one (admittedly excellent) maker deserve reportage to the exclusion of the names of other equally eminent makers – even Friedrich von Huene is mentioned only because Peter Rose happens to play one of his tenors! And the repertoire for recorder and voice (surely throughout the history of the instrument of the utmost significance, whether in chamber an operatic or an orchestral context) is dealt with only *en passant*.

Coverage of the twentieth century in general is spotty, and I do wish Eve O'Kelly (a good writer) had been allotted enough space to be able to deal with her subject more comprehensively. After all the recorder has been used (granted, often only briefly) by composers such as Stravinsky, Lutoslawski, Nielsen, Martinu, Maxwell Davies, Krenek, Bernstein, Henry Cowell, amongst many other mainstream composers, and closely related fipple flutes have been used by e.g. Kodaly, Poulenc, Milhaud and Vaughan Williams. It is a loss that, although the well-known and readily available published standard repertoire (and much work by recorder-player-composers) is discussed, little mention is made of what is now a substantial British mainstream repertoire created over the last 25 years or so, the more so since developments in the music publishing industry have resulted in much of the repertoire being available (but usually easily available) only to special order. Here I must declare an interest, having been responsible for coaxing into existence a fair number of works in many genres, but I am by no means alone in this – Piers Adams, Alan Davies, Ross Edwards, and Evelyn Nallen, to name but four prominent players, are amongst energisers of distinguished new works. And what about the American and Australian (and other) mainstream repertoires? Which recorder players in the UK know of the existence of works by (or even the very names of) eminent composers such as Ingolf Dahl, Halsey Stevens, David Amram, Samul Adler, Ross Edwards, Brenton Broadstock, Peter Sculthorpe, David Lumsdaine and others? A few signposts in the sea would be more than welcome!

Modern *players*, too, would benefit from a wider trawl. Neither Michaela Petri nor David Munrow gets a mention, though so far as Joe Public is concerned these two players are probably *the* recorder household names of the second half of the twentieth century.

When we go back to the baroque repertoire surveys, these are in general thorough and helpful, but inevitably with different contributors the styles and approaches vary greatly. If you want to know which concertos to sharpen your teeth on, you will easily find the information, but if you are looking for a change from the staple diet of nourishing Handel and Telemann Sonatas, then the book will not give you detailed guidance. I for one would have preferred an in-depth commentary on the sonatas of say Sammartini, Wassenaer, and Paisible (works not so readily available or known) to the interpretational comments on playing sonatas, which are after all pertinent to *all* music of the period, and which could have been helpfully dealt with in a separate chapter (like Clifford Bartlett's excellent and practical but also non-recorder-specific notes on editorial matters). This diversity of approach also manifests itself in the fact that Adrienne Simpson's chapter on the orchestral recorder is the only chapter in the anthology with a free-standing bibliography – perhaps in any event the final chapter on 'further reading' is now otiose in the light of the comprehensive recent Griscom/Lasocki Guide.

You will still need Edgar Hunt's masterly (but now dated) volume *The Recorder and its Music* on your shelves (it has the merit of one author so no drip-tray is needed), but this new anthology will give hours of pleasure and instruction. I would buy it for Howard Mayer Brown's beautifully written and cogently argued first chapter alone – or indeed just to ogle at the pictures!

John Turner

MOECK RECORDER MUSIC

Moeck's *Zeitschrift für Spielmusik* began in 1932 and has now reached no. 679. There is much of value in the series, despite a certain amount of 'probable' and 'arranged' material, plus some in a category that should be added to those mentioned in John Turner's review: the improbable. I do not have English prices, so quote German marks.

The three pieces in *Three-part Instrumental Pieces from the English Renaissance* (Z.f.S. 677/688; DM 7.40) are somewhat disparate in style: *Ave sublime* (textless) by Hothby, Henry VIII's popular *T'aundernaken* and an arrangement of a keyboard setting by Byrd which the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book entitles *Miserere*. Moeck's editor, Martin Nitz, did not bother to check the standard edition of Byrd's keyboard music to find out the proper title of the cantus firmus, *Clarifica me Pater* (*Musica Britannica* vol. 28 no. 48). Since the print is so large that three players are clearly intended to play from one copy, it is odd that each piece has an impossible page-turn. Two of Pachelbel's Magnificat fugues (Z.f.S. 675; DM 4.80) arranged by Irmtraut Freiberg for SATB recorders are of interest; each is a little short to play independently, but they make a satisfying pair.

Rudolph Ewerhart has been editing music from the Santini MSS in Münster for many years, and has lately been working through 29 *Duetti* in Sant. 1382. copied in Italy in the mid-18th century. Nos. 23-25 (Z.f.S. 673; DM 4.80) are for two trebles, but need to be read up an octave. It is not clear what their original function was. Originally in alto clef, they would be interesting studies for violas; they are welcome additions to the recorder duet repertoire. *12 Ländler op. 8* by Ernest Krähmer continue Michaela Petri's revival of music for the csakan, in this case a set of dances with piano accompaniment (Z.f.S. 668/669; DM 7.40). The csakan was treated as a transposing instrument; here the piano part has been transposed, leaving the csakan part in its original notation, which fits the descant recorder. Musically, it's not outstanding, but anything for the recorder from 1824 is enough of a rarity to be worth the occasional airing and the accompaniment is rather easier than that of most baroque recorder music.

From even later (1864) come *12 Grands Caprices* by Narcisse Bousquet (by contra-analogy with Hyacinth, one hopes he pronounced his name 'Bucket'). Moeck has already published his 36 *Études*. Like them, the *Caprices* were originally written for a flageolet in G (the original title-page mentions flute as alternative), so have been transposed down a tone for treble recorder. They seem primarily educational in intent and are somewhat relentless (Moeck 1134; DM 25.00).

There is disappointingly little music for recorder by Purcell so an arrangement of *Sonata VI in four parts* (1697), the Chaconne in G minor, for two trebles with cello/gamba and keyboard by Paul Leenhouts in the series *Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet present* is useful. (Moeck 2818; DM 28.00). It will please our correspondents who have requested scores with a blank stave for the keyboard player to jot down his suggestions and the alternative of a separate realised part. There are problems with the figuring. It was probably added by the publisher so has no authority and isn't always correct. The editorial attempts to improve it are not always successful, e.g. the 7 5 added under an 8 6 chord in bar 11. The sonata fits recorders well up a fourth with very little adjustment. The problem is the first group of semiquaver scales, which require top Gs and are likely to present problems to amateurs. Andreas Spering's keyboard part becomes obtrusive in the next section. Giving the sonata the title *Chacony* causes unnecessary confusion with the other work in the same key which really is spelt thus, both in the manuscript and in normal use: there is no reason to avoid the standard spelling *Chaconne*.

In view of the success of the Schott edition of Pepusch's cantata *Corydon* it is surprising that others have not been made available, apart from in the SPES facsimile. Franz Müller-Busch has edited two of them for Moeck (2565; DM 32.00). *Love frowns in beauteous Myra's eyes* and *Cleora sat beneath a shade*, both from Book II, are for soprano, treble recorder and continuo; for your money (about £15.00) you get a score, two copies of a part containing the voice and recorder parts, and an unfigured bass part; both parts have voice and bass for the recits. Were I a singer, I would find it more helpful to have the bass than the recorder part for the arias, but perhaps I have a continuo-player's approach to music. I copied out and performed *Myra* back in the 1960s before one expected to read direct from the original print (which is far more legible than my hand-writing) and can recommend it; *Cleora* also looks attractive. The underlaid text follows the capitalisation of the original edition, but the poems set out as verse should have had initial capitals for each line in accordance with the style of the period. John Slaughter's line

Hast gentle Shepherd hither move

would benefit from modernising the first word to *haste* and commas around *gentle shepherd*; I think I would have modernised the underlaid text and only preserved the original orthography and punctuation in the separate printing. An interesting feature of the original notation is corrected without note: Pepusch prints triplet crotchets in ¢ time as three quavers. Though illogical, it enables him to beam them, which is much tidier than the square brackets used by the modern printer. But quibbles are minor; this is a valuable addition to the available music for soprano and recorder.

PURCELL

Robert Thompson *The Glory of the Temple and the Stage: Henry Purcell 1659-1695* The British Library, 1995. 64pp + 8 colour plates, £9.95. ISBN 0 7123 0420 7

As warned in the last issue, the spate of Purcell books continued right until the end of last year. The 1959 anniversaries were commemorated by a joint exhibition at

the British Library which resulted in a severely bibliographical catalogue that was a reminder of what was visible but had little independent value. The catalogue of the 1995 exhibition is, on the contrary, a publication that anyone interested in Purcell should own, whether or not he can get to the British Library to see the exhibition (I am writing this before I have done so). The 1959 book had 3 Purcellian illustrations; this has 50 monochrome and 10 in colour, as well as endpaper maps (it is a pity they do not identify Purcell's addresses. The publication is presented, not primarily as a catalogue (the items on show are listed at the end), but as a well-illustrated account of the composer's life, times and work. There is, of course, an emphasis on the musical manuscripts, and even the odd piece of palaeographical detail (like the use of the form of 'e' for dating Purcell's hand). The facsimiles helpfully show his handwriting at various periods of his life. But this is a good general survey, and it is a pleasure to see how well a scholar whose publications have been severely technical can write so eloquently for the general public. I can now, too late to be much use, produce my recommendation of the tricentenary's Purcell books for the non-specialist: this for its general survey and pictures, Peter Holman's *Henry Purcell* (OUP) for its discussion of the music and Michael Burden's *Purcell Remembered* (Faber) for its documents.

GERMAN KEYBOARD

The Bärenreiter edition of Buxtehude's Free Organ Works (the title feels odd in English) is now completed with vol. 3 (BA 8223; £22.50). I wrote about vols. 1-2 last July (*EMR* 12 p. 4) and there is little to add here except to congratulate the publisher and point out that there is no contents list for the set. It doesn't take long to see that the order is by key, but it would help quick reference if the keys were mentioned on the covers.

Orgelchoräle aus der Rudorff-Sammlung (Bärenreiter; £9.50) comprises the contents of MS R 24 in the Musikbibliothek der Stadt, Leipzig, once owned by E. F. K. Rudorff (1840-1916), whose grandfather had acquired it early in the 19th century. There are seven chorale settings, surviving in a folder on which Mendelssohn wrote 'J. S. Bach Choralvorspiele, und Figurirte Choräle für die Orgel'. It is not clear whether they bear individual ascriptions. A version of BWV 743 (in itself of dubious authenticity) is presented in facsimile and has no composer's name; another piece is by J. P. Kellner, five are otherwise unknown. This well-edited publication enables organists to judge for themselves whether the music is by Bach or not: I'm suspicious.

Finally, a brief welcome to a separate, cheap edition of the *Klavierbüchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach* (£8.50) reprinted from NBA V/4, though omitting the earlier version of Partitas 1& 2 and French Suites 1 & 2, whose inclusion would suit a different type of user and double the price, but including the figured-bass instruction. It seems to be a reissue of a more lavish 1985 edition. It usefully presents music familiar to the Bach household.

HANDEL *ALMIRA*

Georg Friedrich Händel *Almira, Königin von Kastilien... HWV 1.* Herausgegeben von Dorothea Schröder. (*Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* II/1). Bärenreiter (BA 4050), 1994. £176.25. 1 + 255pp.

Almira is the earliest dated work of Handel to survive. It is his only opera to have been revived, if only in mangled form, in the 19th century, though in our century it has generally been passed over in favour of his more mature works. Its interest to musicologists is undeniable and for those studying the history of opera it is, thanks to the cheap reprints of Chrysander's edition, the most accessible work from a famous (perhaps over-famous) operatic centre, Hamburg. There are no startling new sources. Handel probably took his autograph score to Italy but lost it. Fortunately an authoritative copy that had been used for a revival in 1732 by Telemann survives in Berlin. This was Chrysander's source, so the differences between editions are mainly matters of editorial judgment.

It is immediately noticeable that, even excluding the introductory material and appendix, this is a rather fatter volume than HG55: indeed, the same music takes 119 pages in the older edition, 222 in the new one, even though the latter does not actually look particularly lavish in its allocation of space. This is partly because Chrysander's engraving is so compact (a style I like, as users of my editions will be aware, but which is against current ideas of good music typography and design) and partly because of the policy of giving the oboes separate stave(s) even when the only difference of their part from the violin(s) is an occasional *tacet*. I don't want to labour this point again (see *EMR* 2 p. 2 & 12 p. 4-6). The editorial nature of the instrument names given at the beginning of each movement combined with the reluctance of the average conductor to read a critical commentary, even if printed at the back of the score rather than in a separate volume, means that editorial decisions will be taken more seriously than they warrant. The presentation of No. 2 with staves for 3 trumpets, timps, strings & chorus followed by No. 3 with 2 oboes, bassoon and strings naturally leads to the assumption that oboes are unnecessary in No. 2, especially since the doubling of oboes and strings is stated in the headings of No. 1. But in fact the MS has no headings for Nos. 1 and 3 and one could argue that the relevant staves bear a heading in the MS for No. 2 merely because a 12-stave system needs more guidance than a four-stave one, and that *Violino 1* does not necessarily exclude *Hautboy 1*. The musicological practice of bracketing editorial interpretations needs to apply to the instrumental headings.

There is another way in which the editor has been unhelpful to the performer. An aria and half a chorus seem to have been removed from the MS at the Telemann revision. The words survive, and there is enough of the chorus to give some idea of what sort of music is needed. The aria is more difficult; it comes at the end of Act I and is evidently

intended to be powerfully dramatic. It can't just be left out. Does Keiser's setting survive? If not, editorial boldness is needed. Music students presumably still spend much of their time writing music in the style of great composers: such skills do have a practical use, and the addition of some fresh composition makes it easier for the publisher to track unauthorised performance. (The more subtle alternative is to insert a deliberate mistake that is plausible and readily audible.)

The bulkiness of the volume is in part due to valuable additional features. The 1704 libretto is reproduced in full, and there is a literal English translation by Anthony Hicks, consultation of which would have been easier if movement numbers had been included. An appendix includes a later autograph version of No. 22 and some 'improvements' by Telemann. There is also the first edition of an Ouverture in G minor that is included in the MS but has only recently, thanks to its inclusion with ascription in *Lord Danby's Lute Book*, been accepted as authentic. It shows Handel at an even earlier stage of development; either the composer or the copyist seems to have had difficulty getting the notes in the alto clef right.

Musically, the opera is more interesting for showing where Handel started from than for its own sake. Many items are short, and probably the better for it. Handel later used it as a quarry for ideas, which are striking, though he needed first-hand study in Italy to master not only his power of musical organisation but to gain the personal status that enabled him to exercise control over the dramatic shape of the libretti and the choice of performers.

SACRED VIVALDI

Michael Talbot *The Sacred Vocal Works of Antonio Vivaldi (Studi di Musica Veneta; Quaderni Vivaldiani, 8)* Florence, Leo S. Olschki, 1995. 565pp + 8 pl. ISBN 88 222 4361 7

This is a fat, and probably expensive book (I don't know the price), but it should be widely available. Apart from the ubiquitous *Gloria*, Vivaldi's church music has been on the fringes of the repertoire, never quite making it. At one stage it seemed that there were going to be two rival editions of it, from Universal and Ricordi; but only the latter has stayed the course, and the lack of competition has kept prices quite high and made performances sparser than one might expect for so popular a composer. Not the least virtue of this study is that its survey of the repertoire is absolutely honest about its uneven quality and makes it easy for anyone programming his music to know what to avoid and what to favour. There is intelligent enthusiasm for the best works, with sensible remarks on them.

We do not reach discussion of individual works until page 239. Before that there are eight preliminary chapters, most of whose content can be read with pleasure by non-specialists; even the sections on rastrology and Vivaldi's use of paper in the unpromisingly-titled chapter 'The works of the *Anhang*' are presented clearly. Indeed, those who want to know more about Vivaldi than is given in Talbot's *Master Musicians* book or about Italian baroque church music should make this their first point of reference; the chapter on Vivaldi the Priest is particularly interesting. (The 1730 description of Vivaldi as 'a topping man' perhaps needs a gloss: it is difficult to get any feeling of the tone of *topping* from the OED examples.) I quote from the remarks on church music and the liturgy elsewhere in this issue (see p. 14). The strength of the book is the skill with which the author balances the reader's need to know the liturgical function and other aspects of its context with his interest in the music itself.

Those interested in the use of seven organs in Venetian events (1608 was not unique) will find a reference from 1714 (p. 112). On p. 241 Talbot points out that orchestral players generally had a part each (agreeing with Rifkin's suggestion for Germany). I first read p. 318 as meaning that the inclusion of the word 'Credo' in the setting implied that it wasn't also sung by the priest; the sense would be clearer if *instead* were replaced by *'as well as* leaving it to be intoned separately by the priest'. I can't find the passage where Talbot states that the San Marco liturgy was used quite widely in Venice; my impression is the opposite, but I'd like to know. The list of Psalms sung at the *Ospedali grandi* (listed in a table on p. 71) certainly differs from those sung at San Marco in that, for instance, there is no mention of the *Cinque Laudate*.

Talbot argues persuasively that the women of the Pietà sang the tenor and bass parts mostly at the written pitch. A piece of anecdotal evidence may be relevant. Last night (or perhaps early this morning) I happened to be singing Lassus *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* at Peter Berg's house-warming party and his wife Kathleen joined me on the tenor part, which is quite a low one. On other occasions she sings soprano, and explained that her natural voice was low but that singing soprano was like singing falsetto; she could even manage English treble up-a-minor-third parts as a sort of double falsetto.

This book is a pleasure to read, a fine demonstration that formidable scholarship can have a friendly face. It deserves to circulate widely, and not just to academic libraries which subscribe to the series.

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Bruce Alan Brown *Così fan tutte* (Cambridge Opera Handbooks) Cambridge UP, 1995. 208pp. hb ISBN 0 521 43134 4 £30.00; pb ISBN 0 521 43735 0

Così is the last of the mature Mozart operas to reach this invaluable series, essential reading for those interested in understanding what an opera is really about. (I'll resist the temptation to be critical of modern directors again.) It is a one-man production, with no chapters from other authors as happened in earlier volumes, but the shape is familiar.

The core is a synopsis, which is far more helpful than a mere summary of the plot; it does, for instance, draw attention to the metrical implications of the libretto. One of the major differences of approach to 18th-century opera by academics and by opera-lovers is the greater interest of the former in the formal implications of the poem. The author shows that the plot has various sources, but that Da Ponte was more responsible than usual for creating the story-line and characterisation as well as performing so excellently the normal functions of librettist. Both he and Mozart evidently enjoyed the element of operatic parody that is one aspect of the complicated tension between tragedy and comedy that places this among the most difficult but most rewarding operas to perform. The suggestion (surely unthinkable in terms of the conventions of 1790) that the lovers remain with their new partners is firmly squashed. This is a sound and stimulating survey and explanation of an opera that is so charming that it is easy just to enjoy the music and not worry too much what it is about.

I was intrigued by a quotation from the *Schwäbische Kronik* of 14 December 1891: 'it would now seem to be necessary to support a troupe of Mozart singers alongside the Wagner singers, indeed, even a separate Mozart orchestra alongside the Wagner orchestra'.

RECENT ARTICLES

The belated vol. 4/1 (April 1995) issue of *Plainsong & Medieval Music* contains a lengthy and stimulating article by Richard Crocker on *Gregorian studies in the twenty-first century*, taking David Hiley's *Western Plainchant* as the epitome of 20th century research and considering different directions research might go. There are fundamental issues raised here; I touch briefly on one of them in the editorial. More than most musicologists, Crocker is writing about music to sing rather than just music to study and his scepticism about the energy that has been spent on the prehistory of Gregorian chant is also an encouragement to concentrate on real music. One literary feature annoys me: the use of 'Gregorian' as a noun; I find it even more objectionable than another usage that has crept into academic prose, the nounified 'other'. 'Gregorian' feels wrong because of its adjectival suffix. Perhaps next time there is a gathering of the leading scholars of Western chant they could spend a while at the bar discussing a name for what they are studying. Other articles discuss two trouvères, Thomas Herier and Hughes de Berzé.

Vol. 4/2 appeared soon after 4/1. This has a substantial article by Peter M. Lefferts on how 14th-century French chansons work tonally. Robert J. Mitchell offers a reconstruction of a Gloria from an anonymous *Missa Salve Regina* in Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek MS 3154 and David Howlett corrects the complex text of Busnois' *In hydraulis*, noting a few places where the music relates closely to the text. (For details of a recent recording, see p. 16.) Peter Jeffery's regular chant bibliography begins with comments on the chant on the internet.

I commented on one article in the latest *Brio* (32/2) in the last issue but left out another of equal interest by Teruhiko Naso on how it was possible for Byrd to publish such overtly catholic works as the *Gradualia*. The author points to the influence of Richard Bancroft. *Gradualia I* was licensed by the 'late Lord Bishop of London', *Gradualia II* by 'my lordes grace of CANTERBURY'. Bancroft moved from being Bishop of London to Archbishop of Canterbury at the end of 1604. Books were not normally licensed by the church authorities, but it does seem that one reason for so doing was if they were theologically controversial. Bancroft may have been sympathetic to catholicism; alternatively he may have been playing a more complicated game, isolating the Jesuits from the rest of the catholic community. The 1610 reissue was less clear in its legal status.

Vol. 12/4 of *Musica Antiqua*, Alamire's quarterly magazine, has a page from its Hildegard facsimile as a distinctive cover. There is an interview with Barbara Thornton in connection with her *Voices of the Blood* CD (brief review in *EMR* 16 p. 18) and a longer one with Konrad Junghänel on his Monteverdi *Vespers* CD (reviewed in this issue p. 14). There are other articles on Belgian musical history, frustrating for those of us who can't read Flemish (though the regulations for the choirboys of Antwerp cathedral in 1791 are in French). One wonders whether there is a market for translations of them.

The *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* vol. 120/2 (1995) begins with an account by Anne MacNeil, focussed on the actress Isabella Andreini, of the comedy that succeeded *La Pellegrina* as the play accompanying the famous *intermedi* given at the Florentine Wedding in 1589. Edward T. Corp discusses the music at the court of King James II and the pretender James III at St-Germain; it was a lavish establishment, with Innocenzo Fede as the leading composer and various musicians from Britain in attendance (including Paisible for a while). He argues its importance in introducing the Corellian style to France, and wonders whether Couperin's early trios were written under the influence of what he might have met there and whether his early motets were written for the Stuart court. Charles Dill points to the confusion that can be caused by using later terminology for stylistic description, the mid-18th-century classification of French recitative by Rousseau and others not fitting Lullian opera, though I suspect that replacement by literary terms is not the complete answer. Lionel Sawkins writes one of those useful long reviews that give a thorough summary of a book to whet the appetite for Denise Launay's *La musique religieuse en France du Council de Trente à 1804.*

The January 1996 Musical Times has an improved look. It has been in the doldrums for some years, a shadow of its distinguished period under Andrew Porter and Stanley Sadie. I hope the new owner, the Tallis teacher Peter Philips, can restore it to its former glory. Had the article by Peter Holman on Purcell's Orchestra been available a year ago, I would have enclosed a copy with every set of Purcell parts I sold.

A PROVOCATION

Michelene Wandor

Some of my best friends are music students.
Some of my best friends are amateur musicians
Some of my best friends are professional musicians.
What do they have in common – apart from music?

Some of my best friends who are music students fall madly in love with their teachers. Some merely lust after their teachers. Pretty well all of them simultaneously adore and fear the guru who has the power to give them access to their music, to its skills and techniques and expressions. They all know that their teacher has absolute power over them. Their lessons take place one to one, in private, and no-one else is privy to the teacher-student relationship. No student has first-hand knowledge of how the ways (s)he is taught compares to the way anyone else is taught.

Some of my best friends who are amateur musicians love playing music together in the privacy of their own homes. Some of them love going on music courses, because of the hermetic intensity of the musical experience, because of its enormous excitement as a contrast to much of their lives, because that is where they meet their old friends and make new ones. Some of them like the tutors at the same time for what they contribute because it reminds them that they lack technique or musical insight, and while it makes them feel uncomfortable to be reminded (however subtly), they do not really have the ambition or the time to do very much about it. Some of them absolutely adore one or more of the tutors, lap up every single thing (s)he says, long for his/her approval, and believe that as guru (s)he is the only one who can lead or show them the way to a satisfying musical experience. Almost everyone acknowledges that by definition the guru can always create something of a marvellous musical experience.

Some of my best friends who are professional musicians like getting jobs with important and successful bands, and then if there is musical director they will follow him or her. Some of them start groups, and really want to direct them but don't quite have the guts to say so because they are afraid that the others won't take any notice of them. Some of them are asked to join groups, and then, even if they don't have any, or very many, musical ideas themselves, they resent anyone who does, so they always have to have their say. Some of them are so grateful to be asked to join a group that they just keep as quiet as possible, and shake down with what appears to be wanted, because they are scared that if they make a fuss, they will be thrown out.

Leaders and led. Gurus and disciples. Power and obedience. That is what they have in common. Great when everyone is happy. Not so great when there is the odd discontent, or worry and no space to voice it and little support to do anything about it; and an inherent and problematic inequality between guru and supplicant, which in music goes beyond the simple matter of the relationship between the person and the knowledge and the person to whom it is imparted.

Remember the discussion a while back initiated by John Catch about the standard of playing among amateur viol players. Is it, on balance, lower than its equivalent among modern string players? If so, what should be done? And here I approach the delicacy of the power relations within both professional and amateur pre-classical music. Overwhelmingly, in this country (there may be exceptions, but I have yet to come across them) the approach to playing is essentially the amateur one, which is that the only thing that is important is doing what you can, rarely if ever working, or wanting to work hard to improve technique, and if you do, encountering mixed feelings (jealousy, admiration if you're lucky) among your fellow players. On the other side of the divide, there is virtually no support from professionals, and indeed, a great deal of arguing against those who take technique and learning too seriously. The argument goes (roughly) that you only need as much technique as you need to play the consort music you play. You don't need to play the instrument in funny keys that are not used for your repertoire, and you certainly don't need to practise boring things like scales, just little bits and pieces from real pieces of music. This, of course, gives you the illusion that you are a professional, because you are practising 'real music', but it has the ambiguous function, I believe, of diverting you from the real issues.

Do you really want to play the instrument? This is a very different matter from playing pieces of music – for which, as we all know, at one level you don't need to bother about your sound or technique, just enjoy the experience of ploughing through the notes with other like-minded persons. Music-making is then a truly social experience, but it is neither a musical one nor an aesthetic one, and the fact that the music is a work of art is never faced. This is a profound irony in comparison, for example, with the amateur dramatic and operatic movements, in which, whatever the final standard, every aspect of the whole thing is taken immensely seriously – sometimes to the point of bitchiness and pretension, of course, but fundamentally with passion. And while amateur musicians may be passionately engaged with the repertoire they play, they are not, by and large, passionately engaged in the way that they play it. Indeed, they run a mile from passion, real and shared ambitions, and the desire to do what you can do even better.

The consequences of this are multiple. On the one hand, there are an awful lot of people who are basically content with what they do. Fine. But even they, I am absolutely certain, could combine a more professional approach to their instrument (what does it do, how does it do it, what can I do with it, how do I do it all more effectively) with the continuing pleasure of the music that is available. The truth is, actually, that there is really no such thing as an 'easy' piece of music (even taking technical matters into account). The performance of a single note is an exciting thicket of complexity.

The professionals who say you don't need to become fluent on the instrument are often people who had a secure classical training first, where they did all the nuts and bolts; or they are careless and irresponsible, and don't really want others to learn (what a wicked thing to say about the gurus!) because that way the amateurs continue as supplicants (and sources of income) and the music students are kept in sufficient ignorance to make sure they don't become competition in an already over-crowded field (what a wicked thing to say about music education!) The situation is greatly exacerbated by the fact that none of the music colleges run a thorough early-music training course that is equivalent to classical training. For a teacher/tutor to be a genuinely good example of his/her kind, a fundamentally different approach is needed: teaching that is imbued with the real desire that the receivers find their own musical voice; that the amateur and professional consort finds a way to develop an ensemble voice and experience. In this way the learning experience is created on a territory where both parties are equally engaged in the process, even though one knows (temporarily) more than the other, and, of course, there is always a place for inspired individual musical direction.

'Pshaw!' I hear. 'Humph!' I detect. 'How on earth does she propose we go about it?' you retort. Well, if the attitude of the teacher is right, if (s)he is responsible to questioning and not patronising or contemptuous, then we are half way there. If the attitude of the teacher is questioning as well as acquisitive, we are on the way to the other half.

There is more I could say, but this is just a start. This is just a provocation.

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And please be provoked. I will resist the temptation for the moment, though some of her remarks are aimed at my comments at the Viola da Gamba society meeting in which John Catch and Michelene were members of a panel discussing some of the issues raised here. Michelene is well-known as a writer and broadcaster. Our first encounter a few years ago was a long phone call from which it emerged that we both read English at Cambridge at the same time, but did not knowingly meet. Michelene became a mature student and completed the full-time, full-length course at Trinity College of Music alongside students half her age and now plays the viol at a professional level. CB

ORCHESTRAL PASSION

We don't normally review novels; but publication of one by a subscriber is unusual so I am pleased to draw attention to the paper-back reissue of Alice McVeigh's *While the Music Lasts* (Phoenix, ISBN 1-85799 342 X; £5.99). It has already had beneficial musical results, in that Alice used royalties from the hardback to subsidise a concert related to her husband Simon's excellent book *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn*. Her book is set in a modern-, not an early-instrument orchestra (Alice free-lances in both), so I cannot comment whether it is a *roman à clef*. Some of the plotting is a bit contrived, and the tone is heavy (my wife says she only laughed once, but she missed the Webern joke and did not enjoy the tirade of the Aussie horn-player at an incompetent composer-conductor as much as I did). It is more subtle than the cover subtitle 'The secret life of an orchestra' might suggest. The amount of sexual activity is probably not too unrealistic for so closely-knit a community. The opening suicide of a violinist who turns out not to be the major character in the novel is misleadingly melodramatic, and the accidental death of the hornist is too pat. What I find interesting is the way the book is so essentially about musicians, people for whom music is business, pleasure and life. This comes over particularly clearly in the enjoyment of a group of players when they get together after a bad day to play Brahms quintets (even if expressed, through one of the players, in language one is tempted to send to Pseuds Corner) and the reaction when a performance of the *Enigma Variations* really goes well. The way she shows the strain and tension inherent in the life of the orchestral player should make this compulsory reading for students on arts management courses.

We happened to receive recently a copy of *Death at the Beggar's Opera* by Deryn Lake (Hodder & Staughton; £16.99. ISBN 0 340 64984 4) since the author (one doesn't have to read the blurb to spot a pseudonym) quoted a few lines of the text from our facsimile. It's an entertaining whodunnit set in London in 1754. Macheath is murdered at a performance of *The Beggar's Opera*; the cast and workers at the theatre are the likely suspects. The book gives a generally-convincing picture of London theatre and life of the time (indeed, sometimes it tries a bit too hard). The musical slip is ecclesiastical rather than theatrical: the singing of a hymn at an Anglican funeral is surely a much later practice. CB

KOOPMAN'S BACH CANTATAS

Stephen Daw

Bach *Cantatas vol. 1.* Barbara Schlick, Kai Wessel, Guy de Mey, Klaus Martens *SATB*, Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir, Ton Koopman 198' (3 CDs) Erato 6509 98536-2
BWV 4, 21, 31 (Weimar version), 71, 106, 131, 150, 185.
As well as the complete cantatas, there are alternative versions of movements from 4 & 21 with cornett & sackbut doublings.

The contract between Ton Koopman and Erato to forge ahead with a series of new CD recordings of all of Bach's cantatas, both sacred and secular, was reportedly made ten years ago. Perhaps one of the most promising things about this unique agreement is the ten-year silence that has succeeded it, time that has clearly been well-used in contemplation and preparation. It has resulted in some very interesting ingredients in this first three-disc set, which features some of the most challenging of Bach's early cantatas. Starting with the early works has meant facing some intractable problems early.

The 'complete' series of the sacred works issued by Teldec and Hänssler never covered alternative versions adequately, and despite the efforts by the North American label Dorian with Canada's *Les Violins du Roi* under Bernard Labadie[1], there is still no complete coverage on CD of Bach's secular cantata output. The secular cantatas, the second phase of Koopman's magnificent programme, are to be issued after the pre-Leipzig sacred cantatas.

The task of preparing this mammoth recording venture is colossal. Even the work necessary to produce definitive performing materials is considerable. If the intention was to include all performable versions, the treatment of the very first cantata of the whole series, *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* (BWV 21), is rather a disappointment. Only two versions are to be heard on disc 1. The first is orthodox, but it is odd that the second only presents one additional movement, a chorus rearranged in Leipzig with a doubling of cornett and 3 trombones – these are delightfully played, with just the appropriate discretion. There was apparently also a different earlier version of the final fanfare-chorus. The arias and recitative movements were at some stage between the Weimar and Leipzig versions allocated to the tenor (instead of the treble) and even possibly an alto (replacing the bass). When and where these intermediary versions were performed may be uncertain, although at least one seems to have been heard with the ensemble Bach conducted at Cöthen. A change of voice is perhaps even more important a textual variant than the addition of doubling instruments, so ideally the listener should have been offered these adjustments for consideration. even though Bach eventually returned to the original format.

The performers sing and play very well indeed. The music sounds adequately planned and thoughtfully rehearsed. The balances have evidently been considered with regard to the varying ensembles and the contrasting styles of movement and the surprising venue – Amsterdam's famous Waalse Kerk – has been well-used. Nearly all the music is extremely well sung. The solo singers have a breathtaking sensibility to style and the relationship between text and line. The players, gently and, despite the occasional technical imperfection, very sincerely led by Margaret Faultless, play with clear devotion to Bach and to his librettists' (and presumably his own) faith.

Ton Koopman's written commentaries make very great claims for the pitches chosen. We are told that Bach preferred high *Chorton* in his early works, and those cantatas are played a tone above the conventional 'baroque' pitch (i.e. at a=465). We are also told that great trouble was taken, special instruments were constructed and parts played variously so as to rediscover the exact sounds that Bach expected. But *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit* (BWV 106), notated with the strings in E$ and the recorders in F, sounds here just as it would from any performance on standard a=415 instruments from the NBA or Hänssler editions, which are notated in F so sound in modern E major. If Ton Koopman really thinks we are hearing Bach in his true colours for the first time here, he should give more precise and detailed information to explain this. The notes are inadequate for so important a project: Christoph Wolff, normally so good, has had his wings clipped here.

The instrumental lines sound less pleasing overall in *Gottes Zeit* than they do in the older Teldec recording under Gustav Leonhardt, where the recorders are played with consummate expressive poignancy by Frans Brüggen and Walther van Hauwe. When we contemplate the high vocal soloists, though, it must be admitted that Koopman's adult singers are, despite lacking timbral authenticity, preferable in style to the solo Hannover boys.

Perhaps there is just a little less of the spirit of excitement that was sometimes conveyed in the earlier volumes of the Vienna/Amsterdam Teldec records, but there are far fewer faults in tempo or in detail. But Ton Koopman has certainly started very auspiciously indeed and is to be congratulated on the production of so much that is excellent so early in this gigantic task.

[1] Labadie directs with style, using modern instruments at A=440, with excellent solo and choral singers; his reading of *Durchlauchster Leopold* BWV 173a, together with the better-known Coffee and Peasant Cantatas on Dorian DOR 90199 is a very interesting first CD, well worth the hunt; Dorian (based in Troy, near Albany NY) is distributed in the UK by Select.

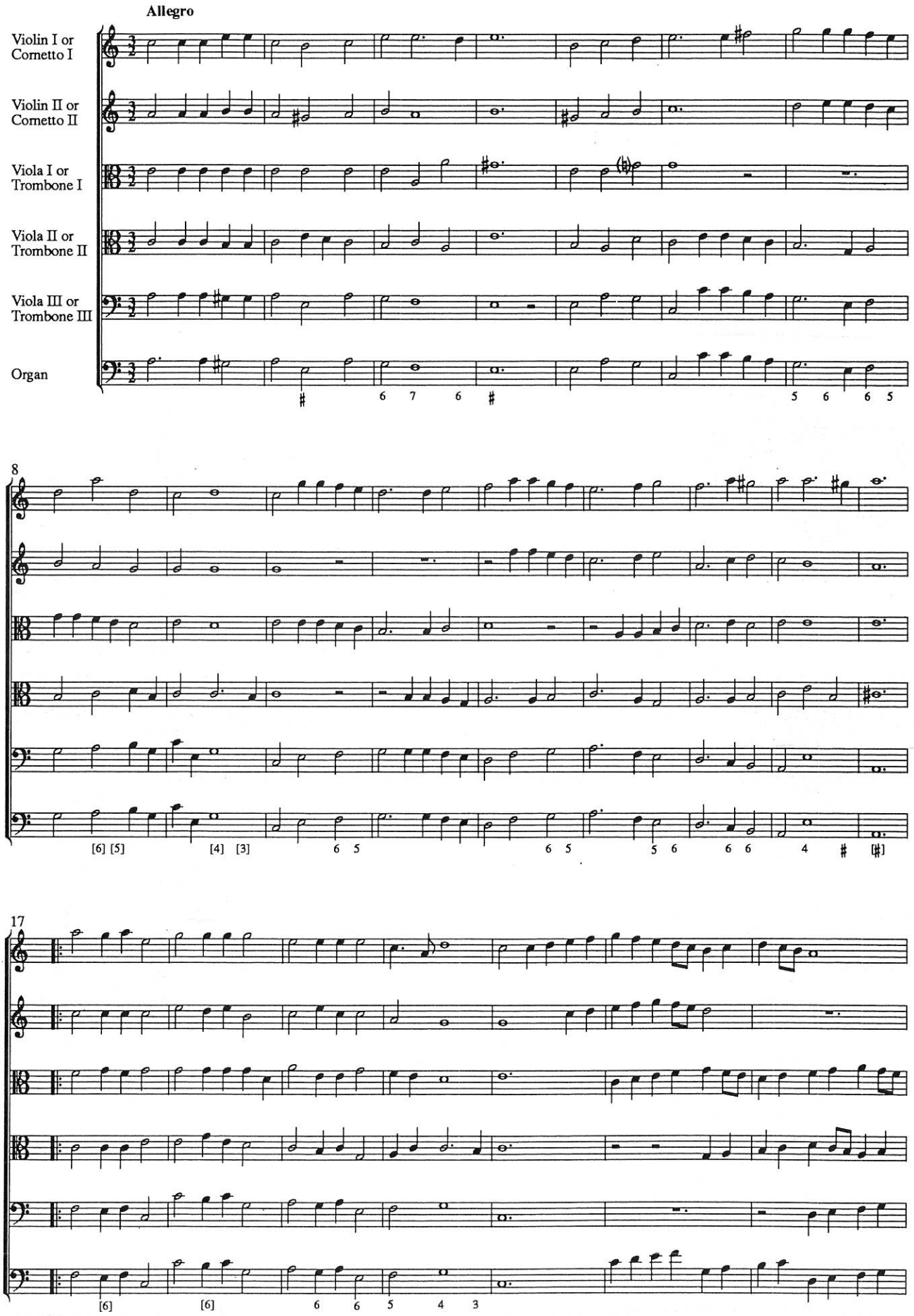
DIDO IN DAMASCUS

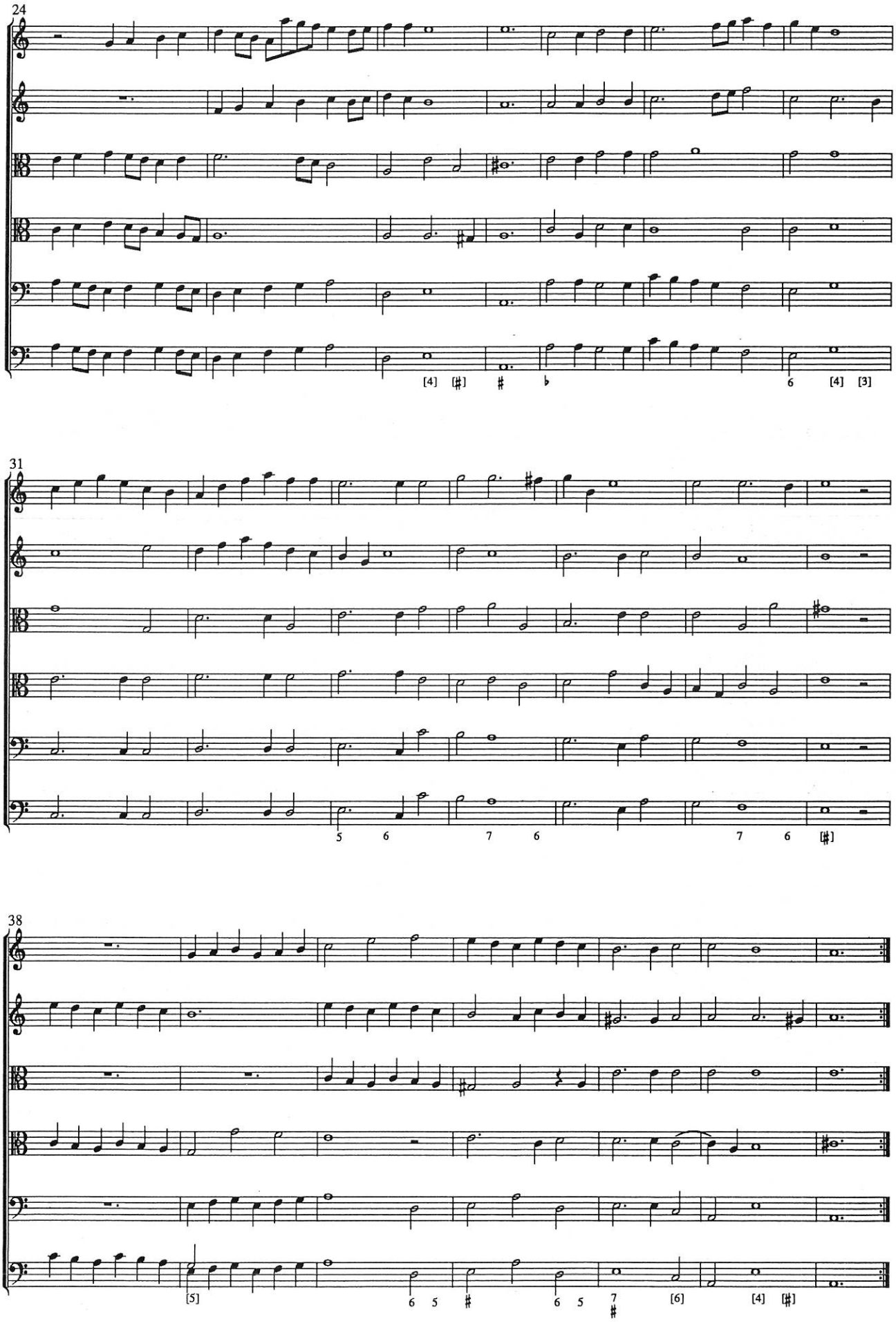
Our edition of *Dido and Aeneas* was heard by 25,000 people in Syria recently: there is no room for a report in this issue, so more on it next month.

DIOCLESIAN DISCUSSED

We were pleased to see this photograph in Chandos's publicity magazine: there is no doubt what edition of *Dioclesian* Simon Standage and Richard Hickox are consulting.

A. Bertali – Sonata No. 1





Original time signature 𝄵 3/2; Vla III, Organ: original clef C4; **Bar 8** Vla I: note 3 G; **Bar 40** Vln II: notes 4-6 ded; Vla III: note 2 E

MANTUAN & VENETIAN VESPERS

Clifford Bartlett

Cavalli ***Vespro della beata Vergine*** **(1656)** Concerto Palatino, dir Bruce Dickey, Charles Toet 120' 30"
Harmonia Mundi **HMC 905219.20** 2 CDs
+Canzonas a3, 4, 6, 8, 10 & 12. N Fontei *Deus ad adjutorium,* chant antiphons

Monteverdi ***Vespero della Beata Vergine (1610)*** Cantus Cölln, Concerto Palatino, Konrad Junghänel 90' 15 (2 CDs)
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi **05472 77332 2**

Monteverdi ***Vesperae in nativitate Sti. Joannis Baptistae*** Hassler Consort, Franz Raml 74' 04"
Dabringhaus und Grimm **MDG 605 0593-2**
Viadana *Deus in Adjutorium,* Monteverdi *Dixit* (1650 I), *Confitebor* (1640 III), *Beatus vir* (1640 II), *Laudate pueri* (1640 II), *Laudate Dominum* (1640 III), *Magnificat a4* (1640), *Cantate Domino* a6, *Currite populi* (1625), *Sancta Maria succurre miseris* (1627), *Salve Regina* (1625); Bazzino *Angelus Gabrieli descendit;* Bildstein *Hic est praecursor dilectus;* Hassler *Inter natos mulierum;* chant antiphons etc.

The Feast of San Rocco, Venice 1608 Musica Fiata Köln, Roland Wilson 124' 32"
Sony **S2K 66 254** (2 discs)
G. Gabrieli *Benedictus es* a8, *Buccinate* a19, *Dulcis Jesu* a20, *In ecclesiis* a14, *Cantate Domino* a8, *Jubilate Deo* a10, *Magnificat* a33, *Misericordia tua* a12, *Timor et tremor* a6; *Canzon I tono* a10, *Canzon in Ecco* a12, *Canzon* V a7, X a8, XVII a12, *Sonata* XVIII a14, XIX a15, *21 con 3 vln; Toccata I toni.*
Barbarino *O sacrum convivium;* Castaldi *Cappriccio detto svegliatoio;* Cima *Sonata* cnt trmbn, *sonata;* Grandi *Cantemus Domino, Heu mihi, O quam tu pulchra es, Salvum me fac deus;* Monteverdi *Salve o Regina*

It is no accident that the 'reconstructed' service has become a favourite format for the presentation, in live or recorded form alike, of early sacred music. It satisfies the desire for musicological correctness, for collection-forming and, to some extent, for variety. It also addresses the present-day fashion for what one could term, I hope not too unkindly, epicurean spirituality. Finally, it is compatible with a programme of works by a single composer or by several.
Michael Talbot *The Sacred Vocal Music of Antonio Vivaldi* Florence, 1995, p. 503 [reviewed on p. 4].

This is an expensive month for lovers of Italian church music of the first half of the 17th century: four new issues, three of them comprising 2 CDs, all of enormous interest, all well-performed. It is gratifying that at last the musical world is coming round to the view that it is primarily intended for one-to-a-part consorts. I have no objection to choirs singing the 1610 Vespers and the like for the amusement of themselves and their friends (I have participated in many such performances, and as a publisher, the more copies I sell of my editions the better). But so many problems vanish with a group of experienced soloists with a good sense of style. All the discs discussed here are sung by ensembles of soloists.

The easiest to throw out of the balloon first is the Junghänel 1610 Vespers, not because it is badly sung or incompetently conceived – it isn't – but because most readers are likely to have an acceptable 1610 Vespers already. It is the second recording in a few months using soloists rather than a choir. I passed on my copy of the Naxos version from The Scholars to Stephen Cassidy (we printed his review last September), so do not have it at hand for a direct comparison. But I remember the Naxos tempi seemed fine, while those of the new set are often very slow. Checking the durations revealed that *Dixit Dominus, Laetatus sum, Nisi Dominus, Lauda Jerusalem,* the Sonata and the Hymn are each nearly a minute longer from Cantus Cölln than the Scholars and that there is a total difference of running time of nine minutes; this may give the singers extra time for subtlety, but it also gives a pedestrian feel. The other main difference is that The Scholars (on my advice) transpose *Lauda Jerusalem* and the Magnificat down a fourth while Cantus Cölln, on Tim Carter's advice, doesn't. Over the years I have increasingly come to find the high version shrill and uncharacteristic of what I feel to be the sound of the period. (As the only publisher of the low version, I might be thought to have a commercial bias; but we sell both pitches and both recordings use my edition.) If you want an untransposed, non-choral set without any chant, this can be recommended, though I am happier with the motets than with the psalms. If you prefer *Lauda* and the Magnificat low, buy that and put what you save towards some of the other recordings listed above. (The Naxos set doesn't have quite the advantage in price you might expect, since the Cantus Cölln set is roughly the cost of a single full-price CD.)

Those planning performances of the Vespers often ask my advice about whether they should include plainsong. I have edited the music for various Marian feasts from sources of the period, but am getting increasingly wary of recommending their use. There is a liturgical reason: if, as is likely, only the antiphon incipit was sung before each psalm, and if it was replaced by an antiphon substitute after the psalm, the only chant required in close association with the polyphony has disappeared. If you include it, there is considerable difficulty in deciding the relative pitches of the antiphons; they don't match modally, so do you try to relate the reciting notes or the transitions? Might the incompatibility suggest that musicians (and congregations) of the time did not perceive a close relationship between the chant and polyphony?

A liturgical reconstruction presents an integration of musical and liturgical action. But, to quote Michael Talbot again, 'figural music comments on, rather than belongs to, the actions at the altar. [He is referring to Mass; the situation is less acute, but not inherently different, at Vespers.] This gives it the freedom to move slightly out of phase with the ritual... It is an approximately parallel, not a perfectly synchronised, event.' Liturgical reconstructions are valuable in reminding us that Vespers music has a context and in giving shape to a series of musical items, but give the music a liturgical importance that it may not have had. I have noticed that those old enough to have been brought up in the Tridentine liturgy, far from feeling nostalgically attracted by reconstructions, show little interest in them, and the impetus comes from a musicological, not a religious impulse. (Mary Berry might seem to be an exception; but she works within a catholic environment and tries whenever possible to sing actual services, not just concert versions.)

To perform a liturgical reconstruction of Vespers at San Marco requires some knowledge of what and how plainsong was sung. There is now less difficulty in finding out the former, thanks to Giulio Cattin's three massive volumes *Musica e Liturgia a San Marco* (Venice, 1990). This does not print many actual notes, but lists the texts and tells you where to find the music. A few melodic variations do not matter: more important is the manner of

singing, about which we are completely ignorant. There is some evidence that chant of the period was sung rhythmically, but was it sung slow or fast, boldly or reverently, loud or soft, high or low, in unison or in two or even three octaves? Who knows?

Both the Cavalli and the St John Vespers discs are reconstructions with chant. The latter makes an attempt at originality by allocating the hymn and the alternatim Magnificat verses to a falsettist. I find this puzzling, since surely a star soloist would have been singing polyphony, not chant; and we know that San Marco continued to sing hymns alternatim since Monteverdi's setting of the hymn for St John *Ut queant laxis* (not recorded since there are no violins on the CD) sets verses 1, 3 & 5. It is refreshing to hear a Vespers reconstruction that is not based on the biggest available pieces. It does have a grand *Dixit Dominus*, but even that takes the 1650 setting without violins. Particular congratulations to Mike Fentross for his brilliant chitarroning, with some vivid strumming that, in a holier age, should have led to instant excommunication.

In most respects, I thoroughly agree with the pre-performance decisions on who should sing and play. But there seems to me to be a tendency to over-weight the bass. I thought we had learnt not to assume the presence of a bowed string instrument on the continuo line and was frequently worried by too thick a bass and continuity when I expected lightness. There are some fussy changes of instrument and a very distracting dulcian at one point. The lirone seems to be the flavour of 1995. Apart from sometimes sounding a bit too similar to a harmonium, I wonder how effective it would have been in the galleries of San Marco? Its natural habitat was surely a more secular one, though its presence in the Scuola di San Rocco, with the instruments on the floor or perhaps low platforms, is more plausible.

The St John Vespers is performed by the Hassler Consort, a group new to me. Its director, Franz Raml, is credited with the conception of the disc. While not entirely immaculate, this is an impressive recording debut (at least, I presume this is its first record, since no other recordings are mentioned in their biog). There is some strong but sensitive singing. Highly recommended, especially since, as a single disc, it is cheaper than the San Rocco or Cavalli sets; it also makes better continuous listening than the San Rocco CDs and is musically on a higher level than the Cavalli.

Not that I scorn Cavalli. The first time I heard a Vespers programme by him I was bored. Bruce Dickie and his colleagues are considerably more successful than Roger Norrington was 20 years ago, though they still have to work quite hard to sustain the interest. It is easy for the attention to wander, but one can then return to the music and find that one is missing an interesting bit. It would certainly be a shame to doze through the ground at the end of the Canzon a3. The Psalms have grown rather long and straggle – tighter control is needed from the director to stop them falling apart – and sometimes the performances seem too grandiose for the musical substance. This is not a full liturgical reconstruction, but each Psalm and the Magnificat is preceded with the appropriate chant and followed as antiphon substitute by one of the 6 Canzonas or Sonatas which conclude the 1656 collection. These represent virtually the end of the tradition which reached its peak with Gabrieli and their presence is an excellent reason for acquiring the set (and that is not intended as a back-handed insult to the singing, which is good).

The remaining set is of earlier music and is not presented liturgically at all. From the tenor of my earlier remarks, I might be expected to praise that as a virtue. But the San Rocco programme suffers from a lack of shape. The list on the back of the box looks varied enough, but I did not feel it when listening. Not that there is a liturgical event to reconstruct – or is there? What was it that Coryat heard on 16 August 1608? He makes it sound like a concert, but his term 'feast' has religious connotations. This and the forthcoming San Rocco recording from Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli's (from a concert given in San Rocco on 16 August 1995 – Musica Fiata were recorded at St Osdag's Church, Mandelsloh in June 1994) are based on the plausible supposition that the seven organs Coryat mentions imply seven choirs. There is only one Gabrieli piece for seven choirs, the incompletely-preserved Magnificat a33. The Magnificat is part of Vespers, so is it possible that Coryat attended a Vespers service but reported it as a concert – a perfectly natural way for a Protestant to react to a catholic service in which the music had an independent existence. It is, however, a strange and unexplained fact that, while Monteverdi and other church composers of his time wrote chiefly Vespers music, Gabrieli wrote none except for Magnificats.

Roland Wilson, who is responsible for expanding the 10 parts of the Magnificat into 33 – not quite as difficult as it seems, since a 17-part version includes the essentials of the music – has assembled a fine collection of music here and secured impressive results from his array of singers and players. If you have ever thought that Gabrieli was over-rated, listen to virtually any of the pieces by him here. The performances are virtuosic and expressive, though with a tendency to make the more emotional items a little ponderous. Some of Gabrieli's semiquavers are surely intended to be written-out ornaments and should not be sung or played too emphatically. The main weakness (shared by the Hassler Consort) is the non-Italian sound of the Latin. I'm puzzled by the opening and closing numbers: nice though it is to hear four Venetian trumpets in F, I don't believe the penultimate chord, and would they have played with trombones anyway? And the frivolity of Bellerofonte Castaldi feels out of place. That apart, there are two hours of magnificent music here.

RECORD REVIEWS

CHANT

Canto Live Coro de monjes del Monasterio Benedictino de Santo Domingo de Silos, dir. Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta 54' 36"
EMI Classics 7243 **5 55504 2** 2

Although a recent release, this is in fact a digital remastering of a concert recorded by Spanish radio in a Madrid theatre in 1972. The CD's title is thus a touch unfortunate: how many of these monks are still alive? Certainly, their plainchant tradition is ongoing. The theatre acoustic, however, is dry and the monks are closely miked; one misses the resonance of a monastic church and there is a somewhat disembodied feel to these performances. The singing is very disciplined, as for a concert performance, but one senses that this was not their normal performing situation. However, it is impressive to hear Graduals sung so unanimously. For this CD Clifford Bartlett has provided texts, translations and some notes to aid orientation – very necessary since it is something of a liturgical ratbag of items from the Mass (proper and ordinary) and the Office. There are a number of well-known chants on this rather short CD, which will please the punters, but I personally preferred their gutsier recently-issued recording of Mozarabic chants.

Noel O'Regan

MEDIEVAL

Ecole de Notre-Dame de Paris ***Messe de la Nativité de la Vierge*** Ensemble Organum, Marcel Pérès 76' 30"
Harmonia Mundi **HMC 901538**

As usual, I'm puzzled by Pérès. Sometimes his ensemble produces an electrifying sound that feels utterly right, at others it fails to relate to the music. The CD begins with a striking and eventually mesmeric performance of Perotin's monophonic *Beata viscera*. But I rapidly became suspicious of the subsequent chant and organa by Leonin, Perotin and anon. Orthodox ideas on performance of Notre-Dame polyphony certainly need to be questioned, but this did not make me think 'That's what it really must have sounded like'; rather, much of it seemed bizarre. We need an enormous amount of experimentation in the sound of chant (and chant-based polyphony), and it is certainly worth a listen to open the mind about plausible styles. We know that chant was sung more slowly on major feasts; but was not organum, whether improvised or notated, in itself sufficient ornament to the slow chant above which it was sung? The idea that it too needs to be sung slowly to permit the added parts to be embellished needs more substantiation to be credible. This is music that really does benefit from some liturgical context, which it here receives. *CB*

RENAISSANCE

Busnois ***Missa O crux lignum*** Kapel van de Lage Landen, Harry van der Kamp 57' 53
Emergo Classics **EC 3954-2**
+ Anthoni usque limina, In hydraulis, Magnificat 6 toni, Regina caeli II

Busnois' complete sacred music has only recently been collected in print and this CD conveniently brings together about half of it. Scholars have taken great delight in attempting to unravel its complexity (see, for instance, p. 7), but the notes underplay this. So most listeners will miss the structural subtleties, as they probably did in the 15th century. Never mind, the music is impressive enough to the innocent ear, and is eloquently sung by a group of six singers, with a bell thrown in for good measure in *Anthoni usque limina*, making audible the illustration in the MS (reproduced in *New Grove* 3 p. 506). There is a section on tracks 7 & 8 where it sounds as if the engineer is trying to make us travel-sick. *CB*

Lluís del Milà (Milan) ***Fantasies, Pavanes & Gallardes*** (Valencia 1536) Jordi Savall, Sergi Casademunt, Eunice Brandão, Lorenz Duftschmid *viols*, Andrew Lawrence-King *harp, psaltery* 63' 15"
Astrée Auvidis **E 8535**

Lluis del Milà is better known as Luis Milan, composer of the earliest vihuela print, *El maestro* of 1536, the source for this recording. Originally printed in tablature for solo vihuela, many of these piece are polyphonic in style, and have been arranged here for harp (or psaltery) and/or a consort of four renaissance viols. I have known this music for years, and I confess I struggled to approach this recording with my best Renaissance attitude to the fore; as the *vihuelistas* freely arranged vocal music to fit the vihuela, their own music should be fair game for other instruments... shouldn't it? It's still a shock to hear one of the landmarks of the repertory so transformed, but I have to say this is the most successful project of this type I have heard. The arrangements are skilfully done with idiomatic embellishments, the sounds are magical and the music emerges with unexpected grandeur. When played on the vihuela the same music sounds like a pale imitation to me now. Game, set and match... *Lynda Sayce*

Monte ***Music in Rudolphian Prague*** Kühn Chamber Soloists & Symposium Musicum: Pavel Kühn
Panton **81 1401-2 231**

This recording has most of the virtues and vices of the growing stream of early music recordings issuing from the Czech Republic. The performers have unearthed some interesting and little-known repertoire and give it a more than adequate performance. Phillippe de Monte's church music has been unjustifiably neglected and the two masses and six motets recorded here show him to be an accomplished composer along the lines of Lassus. The performers seem to be aiming for a homogeneous blend of voices and instruments in the manner of Lassus' Bavarian 'orchestra', and on the whole this approach works quite well, although the instruments are rather submerged and the lack of printed details about instrumentation leaves one guessing what is actually there. I think I heard viols, crumhorns and shawms. The singing is adequate although just occasionally it sounds as if reading is a more urgent priority than interpretation.

D. James Ross

Palestrina ***Canticum canticorum*** Akademia, dir. Françoise Lasserre 73' 33"
Pierre Verany **PV795092**

This is the most interesting Palestrina recording I have heard for a long time. Forget any unaccompanied versions of this cycle you may have and get this. There is some unaccompanied singing here but there is also a kaleidoscope of sonorities, using various permutations of seven voices (solo or in groups) with viols, cornett, dulcian, lute and harp. Add to this the cornett diminutions published by Bassano for three of the pieces and you have what must come close to an authentic reconstruction of a Roman prelate's *musica secreta* and finally shows how this music can be made the equivalent of that produced in Ferrara or Venice. This recording brings the music to life in a way I have not previously experienced. My only complaint is that the miking of the singers is a bit distant and the words are not as clear as they should be in music where, above all else, the text should predominate. Occasionally, too, the tempo is misjudged and is too rushed to let the texts speak properly; otherwise the singing is committed, beautifully in tune and often passionate; ornamentation is aptly but discreetly applied by the singers.

Incidentally,while in Palestrina this summer I spotted a local-election poster for a new 'Let's revive the town of Palestrina' party. Its logo was the *surge* topos which Palestrina uses to begin three of these pieces, written in old notation. We are often dismissive of Italian politics but it will, I imagine, be a long time before any party in this country shows the same level of musical awareness.

Noel O'Regan

Victoria ***Officium defunctorum (1605)*** Gabrieli Consort, Paul McCreesh 59' 40"
Archiv **447 095-2**

The immediate impression of this recording is that the sustained intensity of the choral sound matches that of the music. Falsettists on the top line impart a sense of tension

which doesn't suit all music (Byrd, for example, or Palestrina) but which fits this music perfectly. The sentences are long, the melodic arches large-scale, and the music demands the full-blooded but crystal sound it gets here. The Mass is set in the liturgical context of the funeral service for the Empress Maria of Austria, for which Victoria provided the music. Collect, Epistle and Gospel are intoned, the *Dies irae* is sung in plainchant, and there are two motets. Some of the chant, and all the polyphony is accompanied by the *bajón* (bassoon). The polyphony rises like islands out of the sea of chant, with an atmosphere of liturgical solemnity overpowering in its effect. It grips the emotions right to the magical and brief 'Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison' with which the recording (but not the booklet text) concludes. *Robert Oliver*

The Feast of San Rocco, 1608 *see page 14*

From Bohemia's Castles and Chapels: Music from 16th century Prague Concentus Musicus of Minnesota, Arthur Maud 60' 05"
Meridian **CDE 84309**
Boleslavky *Kdyz jsi v stesi*; Gallus *Dulces exuviae, Turpe sequi casum, Missa Undique flammatis*; Harant *Maria Kron, Qui confidunt in Domino* Mestecky *Pisen Adelfova* & anon items

Concentus Musicus Minnesota was founded by Yorkshireman Arthur Maud in 1967. His choir of 14 produces the sort of constricted sound that was normal then but now feels old-fashioned, and tempi tend to be slow (apart from the raced *Turpe sequi casum*). There are some attractive tracks for solo and instruments and it is nice to have a chance of hearing the repertoire. (Apologies again for the absence of Czech accents.) *CB*

Utopia Triumphans: The Great Polyphony of the Renaissance Huelgas Ensemble, Paul Van Nevel 52'46"
Sony **SJ 66 261**
G.Gabrieli *Exaudi me Domine* a16; Josquin *Qui habitat* a24; Manchicourt *Laudate Dominum* a6; Ockeghem *Deo gratias* a36; Porta *Sanctus & Agnus (Missa ducalis* a14); Striggio *Ecca beatam lucem* a40; Tallis *Spem in alium* a40

This anthology of large-scale music is framed by the two 40-part motets, the Tallis first. Chronologically, that is the wrong order; although sounding more archaic, it was inspired by the Striggio. But the fading ascent to paradise at the end is, at least on disc, more effective than the solid 40-part broken chords of the Tallis. (The absence of top Gs in the last chord of the Striggio justifies the quieter end). The recording has immense clarity and precision, though these massive pieces need to be heard with imagination and preferably a score to assist the ear to get their full effect. Curiously, Van Nevel credits the inaccurate OUP edition for the Tallis but not the Mapa Mundi Striggio, which corrects the vast number of errors in the source. I'm not convinced that these two pieces were really intended for performance in a circle: the relationships of parts 40 and 1 is not significant in either piece. The whole programme receives strong and convincing performances. The Josquin and Ockeghem are elaborate canons, the latter with audible consecutives that confirm suspicion of the attribution. The surprise is the Gabrieli, a profound four-choir piece using some of the effects of the better-known *Timor et tremor* and that, unusually, really does work just with voices. Worth buying even if it does mean getting another *Spem*. *CB*

Frühe süddeutsche Orgelmusik Franz Raml (Chororgel, 1609, of Stiftskirche, Zeil)
Coronata **COR 1219** 63' 15"
Buxheim Orgelbuch, Buchner, Kotter, J. & H. L. Hassler, Erbach.

This is a very welcome addition to the few organ CDs that venture into the 15th century organ repertoire, with four short liturgical pieces from the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch* (1455/70). Equally interesting are the Buchner and Kotter pieces of the early 16th century, mostly dances, including the astonishing *Spaniol Kochensperg*, played with due panache. Interpretation of this very early repertoire is tricky, not least because there are no contemporary sources that suggest a style of playing, and Raml's approach is convincing. The rest of the CD is of pieces from around 1600 and the Italian inspired Hasslers and Erbach. The delightful little eight-stop Zeil organ is ideal for this repertoire, although the fairly dry acoustic is no help to the player. Raml takes a fairly strict view of the pulse but, within that, uses a subtlety of articulation that lends much to the musicality of the performance. He tackles the fastest of the Hassler cadential passages with enviable ease, resisting the finger-saving temptation to ease up on the tempo. His occasional ornamental addition is always appropriately in style. A most enjoyable CD, with fine playing on a delightful organ. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Musik für Laute Konrad Ragossnig 275' 43"
Archiv **447 727-2** (4 CDs)
106 pieces recorded 1973-5

This includes a substantial and well chosen selection of pieces from England, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Hungary, Germany and the Netherlands dating from the first decade of the sixteenth century to the second decade of the seventeenth; one thus gets a splendid overview of the renaissance lute repertory. There are some noteworthy rarities; two of Sweelinck's lute pieces, for instance, which I have heard nowhere else. As one would expect from the date, the lute sound and technique inclines towards that of the classical guitar, currently unfashionable in lute circles, which means purists will take exception to it. This is a real pity because it is a fine achievement; Ragossnig plays with flair and considerable virtuosity, and deserves representation in any collection alongside Bream. I wonder at the wisdom of releasing such a large anthology, as the cost is likely to be off-putting to all but those ardent followers of the lute revival. *Lynda Sayce*

My Delyt: 16th Century Scottish Music The Kincorth Waits, Charles Foster 70' 45"
Watercolour Music **WAITCD015**
Contents include the music in Foster's recent LPM anthology, 12 Scottish songs and European dances from Susato and Mainerio.

'Is that Pickett?' asked one of our reviewers as he walked up the stairs to my office/library; but as he reached the top, he answered his question in the negative. It is bold of Charles Foster to issue a CD by his local Aberdeen ensemble in the sort of repertoire that one judges against Munrow and Pickett. Much of it is extremely enjoyable, if lacking their virtuosic flair, and it is nice to hear the recently-published reconstructed Scottish music (whether or not one believes that other anonymous pieces should have been included). The tutti singing sounds fresh, if a little regimented, though it was a pity to include soloists, who sound too raw and insecure. The texts are easier for the southerner to understand sung than as printed in the normal Scots orthography. The inclusion of Susato and Mainerio (rather less of them than the back of the booklet suggests) reminds us that Scotland had its own direct links with Europe. *CB*

Deller Consort
Dowland *Awake Sweet Love: Airs & Partsongs* 53' 36" (1965)
Vanguard Classics **08 5071 71**
Wilbye *Madrigals* 44' 53" (rec 1957)
Vanguard Classics **05 5080 71**
Madrigal Masterpieces vol. 3 51' 07"
Vanguard Classics **08 5092 71** (rec. 1963)
Gesualdo *Belta poi che t'assenti*; Jannequin *Le chant des oiseaux, La chant de l'alouette*; Josquin *Le déploration de Jehan Okeghem, Parfons regretz*; Lassus *La nuit froid et sombre*; Marenzio *Cedan l'antiche*; Monteverdi *Lamento d'Arianna, Ohimè il bel viso*

I am on the whole less impressed by these than some of the previous Deller reissues, perhaps because the outstanding tenors Ian Partridge and Wilfred Brown are not present, perhaps because the sopranos are less controlled, perhaps because these are just less impressive overall as performances, or perhaps just because I have heard too many of these Deller reissues. Nice though it is to hear some of the Dowland in four-part versions, the middle parts come and go rather oddly. As with all madrigal singing of this and earlier periods, the slow tempi and the cadential pull-backs annoy. I found that I was left unmoved even by my favourite Wilbye, 'Weep, O mine eyes'. I'll send the next batch to someone else. *CB*

EARLY BAROQUE

Biber & Schmelzer *Sonatas* Freiburg Baroque Orchestra Consort 74' 29"
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi **05472 77348 2**
Biber *Sonatae tam aulis... 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12*
Schmelzer *Lamento a3 in b, Lamento sopra la morte Ferdinandi a3 in b, Lamento a3 in Bb, Harmonia a5 in Bb, Sonatas a2 con basso in a & d*

The last few months have seen several new discs of this repertoire and there is at least one further set in the pipeline (the Purcell

Quartet on Chandos). The Freiburgers play seven of the 12 sonatas which make up Biber's *Sonatae tam aris quam aulis servientes*, ranging from five-part strings to an eight-part ensemble with two trumpets. The Schmelzer pieces are much smaller scale, including three *Lamenti* (a genre in which he specialised). The playing is everything you'd expect from this polished group. Once again, my main problem is not with the music, more with the approach; there's very little of the wonderful phrasing and poise that I anticipate from the Purcell Quartet release mentioned above. *BC*

Boesset ***Airs de Court;*** **Madame de la Fayette** ***La Princesse de Clèves*** (extracts). Alain Zaepffel *A & dir*, Marcel Bozonnet *récitant*, Ensemble Gradiva 52' 58"
Alain Zaepffel (Musidisc) **204722**

This contains 14 airs. Half are performed with for four voices and lute, half with the director Zaepffel as a pleasing alto solo (though one wonders whether, as with the English lute-scong, the association with the male alto voice is a modern affectation). Another seven tracks are devoted to brief extracts from the famous historical novel, *La Princesse de Clèves*, published in 1678 but set over a century earlier; the booklet gives no information on this. The ensemble singing is most beautiful, though feels a bit slow for homophonic, text-based music. *CB*

Cavalli ***Vespro della beata Vergine*** **(1656)**
see page 14

W. Lawes ***Royall Consort Suites vol. 1 (nos. 1, 3, 6, 7, 9)*** The Greate Consort, Monica Huggett 69' 31
ASV *Gaudeamus* **CD GAU 146**

This is an accomplished performance of marvellous music, differing in some aspects from the Purcell Quartet's recording I reviewed last October. It is recorded in a generous acoustic, seemingly more distant (perhaps to help solve problems of balance). The result is a warmer tone, with treble and bass clearly defined, but with the tenor register (where so much contrapuntal interest lies) often indistinct. Baroque violins are louder than bass viols, and here the viols produce a mellifluous blending tone (warm buzzes) which make them harder to hear. The violins' approach is more that of the eighteenth century than of the seventeenth (ornamentation, phrasing, tone), and though I prefer the Purcell Quartet's approach in all these matters (clearer tone, much more distinct viols, decoration of repeats, ornaments), buyers of this recording will still enjoy the music. But when will somebody record these with the right instruments, strung and set up according to the early seventeenth century standards (so far as they can be agreed)?
Robert Oliver

Monteverdi ***Vespers 1610***
see page 14

Monteverdi ***Vesperae in nativitate Sti. Joannis Baptistae***
see page 14

Purcell ***The Indian Queen*** Emma Kirkby, Catherine Bott, John Mark Ainsley, David Thomas *SSTB* etc, Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood 73' 27"
L'Oiseau-Lyre **444 339-2**

Another recording of *The Indian Queen*, with Daniel Purcell's additional Masque music recorded here for the first time, gives me mixed feelings, as did the Purcell Simphony recording I reviewed last year, but for different reasons. There is much more a sense of the theatre here, with a big orchestra and operatic voices. John Mark Ainsley has an ideal voice for this – effortless at the top, bright, and dramatic – but he uses too much vibrato. Ismeron is sung by Gerald Finley, whose approach is entirely modern: sustained and beautiful tone, but little inflection. David Thomas relishes his antimasque roles to the manner born, Emma Kirkby's exquisite 'I attempt from love's sickness' fulfils expectations, while Catherine Bott movingly depicts the passionate suffering of Orazia (about whom nothing else is, or need be, known). The orchestral playing is a bit mixed, occasionally untidy, but at times beautifully shaped, as in the Symphony to the second Act; and the music is consistently wonderful. Daniel Purcell's additional Masque has a hard five Acts to follow, but does so successfully. It concludes the work in light-hearted vein, full of humour, good tunes, with a splendid final trumpet tune and chorus, reminiscent of (and not inferior to) brother Henry's 1st Act trumpet tune
Robert Oliver

Exquisite Consorts: courtly ensembles and dramatic music by William Lawes and Henry Purcell The Harp Consort, dir Andrew Lawrence-King 61' 38"
Berlin Classics **0011552BC**

This is a neatly-assembled programme of great variety and continuing interest with music little of which has been recorded. Short and musically slight (but delightful) pieces are grouped with much longer and substantial movements, under headings such as *The Masque of Love*, and *The Mad Scene*, to name two of the six. There are songs and instrumental pieces by Lawes and his contemporaries, including two movements of the Harp Consorts and a complete Fantasy Suite for violin, bass viol and organ. The notorious setting of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' from one of Pepys's songbooks is sung with rather too much drama by Douglas Nasrawi (from hushed *pianissimo* to *subito forte* with little in between), but the soprano Ellen Hargis is superb in the two Purcell songs.'If Music be the food of love' (big version) and 'Bess of Bedlam', where she brings maximum expression without compromising her sense of style, and effortlessly copes with the a=440 pitch. Nancy Hadden's limpid renaissance flute is a novel but very effective treble in the Paven to the Harp Consort, and I have always liked David Douglass' renaissance violin playing – assured, crackling with energy and style, and such an appropriate sound for the Lawes. The plucked sounds (five lute/cittern/orpharion/theorbists plus Andrew Lawrence-King on any of four harps or keyboards) provide imaginative rhythmic drive, with a seventeenth century barn dance (complete with caller) to finish. Superb. *Robert Oliver*

The Golden Dream: 17th-century Music from the Low Countries The Newberry Consort
Harmonia Mundi **HMU 907123** *66' 29"*
Music by Camphuysen, Coprario, van Eyck, Gibbons, Huygens, van den Hove, a Kempis, Merula, Norcombe, Petersen, Schop, Vallet

The Golden Age of the Netherlands' music spans the incredible – and not only for its length – life of Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687), whose *Pathodia Sacra* (1647) is generously represented. on this disc. The other composers are not exclusively of Low Countries provenance: the zeal and comprehensiveness of the Dutch music-printing industry in the 17th century provides a convenient excuse for the Newberry Consort to include composers as diverse as Tarqinio Merula and Orlando Gibbons, which is just as well, for those of us who are not die-hard fans of van Eyck (mercifully only one item). this is appetite-whetting. But the bias towards division-type works makes me hanker for something to balance the diet – perhaps a sonata by Johan Schenck. The performances and the tuning are very good. How much you are going to like this recording will presumably depend on how fond you are (or might become) of Drew Minter's voice. *Kah-Ming Ng*

Venetian Music of the 17th Century Les Enemis Confus
Vanguard Classics **99706**
Marini: *Sonata 2, 3, 5, 7, senza cadenza, sopra Monica, etc (1626/9)*; Picchi *Canzon 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 (1625)*; Turini *Sonata a2, E tanto tempo hormai (1621)*.

I have played most of these pieces on violin. Many of them are familiar from other recordings, most notably by the extremely stylish fiddlers of Musica Antiqua Praha, so I was pleasantly surprised that they are so convincing on recorders. I have rarely heard two recorders in such perfect harmony, not only with each other but also with the various continuo instruments; from the opening passage, which the organist doubles at pitch, there is a warmth about the sound which is quite wonderful. As the disc progresses, one becomes aware of the little liberties of timing and extended ornamentation, which can only come from years of playing together. Very enjoyable and thoroughly recommended, especially at mid-price. *BC*

LATE BAROQUE

Bach ***Cantatas BWV 79, 80, 192, 50*** Arleen Augér, Ortrun Wenkel, Peter Schreier, Theo Adam *SATB*, Thomanerchor Leipzig, Neues Bachisches Collegium Musicum, dir. Hans-Joachim Rotzsch 58' 44"
Berlin Classics **0021762BC** (rec 1981-4)

Shallow though the state-radio-controlled recording is, over-solid as is the unnecessary

East-European harpsichord continuo, and ridiculously over-projected though the solo voices seem now (not just an Eastern fault), this disc still delights me in one special respect: the involvement of St Thomas' choir. The sound remains unlike all other young male choirs in the world – fresh, open, considerate of the words and refreshingly pleasant through long choral movements, despite the accompaniment of swamping strings and over-competitive wind. By the early 1980s, especially in Leipzig itself, performers were beginning to take note of informed scholarship, so the trumpets or drums (added perhaps by WF Bach) are omitted from *Ein feste Burg*. This group of Reformation cantatas reminds us how skilfully Bach managed to set commenting texts with imaginative variety, even when they were of necessity centered round the same Gospel text. *Stephen Daw*

Bach *Cantatas 8, 26, 43, 61, 85, 130, 182* Chorale Heinrich Schütz Heilbronn, SW German Chamber Orchestra/Pforzheim Chamber Orchestra, Fritz Werner 146' 06"
Erato **4509 97407-2** (2 CDs)

Fritz Werner's Bach cantatas were a little old-fashioned even when they were originally issued around 1960, but at least one British teenager collected them eagerly and relished their positive musicianship, even if it was associated with other tasteless contributions. There was seldom a dull moment and always a balance between devotion and good-humour which gave them a special authority. This batch includes *Ach wie flüchtig* (BWV 26), a work I already loved before I heard it performed, and I have always rather liked many aspects of this recording: the wonderful opening chorus is taken at just about the right speed to be clear and mobile; the arias are well-balanced, despite the heavy and inflexible bass. The sustained organ chords in recitatives are given clear variety by the contrasts between phrase-endings; and if many of the soloists are rich in vibrato and intensity of colour, at least they don't usually over-project. But it is the clear love of the music and of the modest faith it represents that I still relish over 20 years on. *Stephen Daw*

Fasch *Concertos* Giuseppe Nalin *ob*, Marco Cera *ob*, Ermanno Giacomel *fl*, Accademia Bach Baroque Orchestra, Carlos Gubert
Dynamic **CDS 129** 57' 12"
Concertos for 2 obs in G (FWV L:G9), & Bb (B4); for ob & fl in b (h1); for ob in a (a1); Ouverture in G (FWV K: G19)

I have become familiar with all of the pieces here through working on editions for the Fasch Society. The notes share the widespread ignorance of the work done by a small circle of musicologists mostly from the former East Germany in the last 20 years or so, including Rüdiger Pfeiffer's catalogue of the composer's work. The director does not seem to realise that half the material the group uses is autograph, not secondhand copies with no authority. Fasch's orchestrations are disregarded: he had a very keen ear for instrumental colours and, when he says bassoon, he means it. In one case, not one but two bassoon parts are played by cellos! In the Ouverture, the standard wind trio is supplanted by concertino strings. These are missed opportunities. Despite slight reservations about four-square phrasing and some approximate tuning, the music (I'm happy to report) survives intact. But I'm looking forward to The English Concert's forth-coming CD and the day when Reinhard Goebel tackles some of Fasch's large-scale concertos. *BC*

Handel *Berenice* Julianne Baird *Berenice*, D'Anna Fortunato *Selene*, Jennifer Lane *Demetrio*, Andrea Matthews *Alessandro*, Drew Minter *Arsace*, John McMaster *Fabio*, Jan Opalach *Aristobolo*; Brewer Chamber Orchestra, Rudolph Palmer 149' 46"
Newport Classic **NPD 85620/3** (3 CDs)

This was a pleasant surprise. I must confess that I had never heard of the Brewer Chamber Orchestra or Rudolph Palmer. But the Overture was attractive and the first aria outstanding. Julianne Baird is the singer, and it's worth getting the set just for her. She knows how to embellish in such a way as to enhance the quality of the music; the other singers fall into the usual trap of making their additions sound worse than what Handel wrote. In other respects, too they are not quite up to her level and John McMaster is distinctly disappointing. But the good outweighs the bad and this is a fine introduction to rarely-heard opera. Its most annoying feature is nothing to do with the musicians but the appalling layout of the Italian text: no verse for the recits and justified right rather than left! *CB*

Handel *Giulio Cesare* Malgoire
Review will appear next month

Handel *The Complete Sonatas for Recorder* Marion Verbruggen *rec*, Ton Koopman *hpscd, organ*, Jaap ter Linden *vlc*. 57' 37"
Harmonia Mundi **HMU 907151**
HWV 360, 362, 365, 367a, 369, 377

These are extremely fine performances. Verbruggen's technique is, needless to say, perfect, her phrasing is a delight and her ornamentation resourceful. The cello playing is neat, even undemonstrative; the quick semiquaver passages can pass almost unnoticed. Ton Koopman's accompaniment is unfailingly inventive – and if you read a slight hint of criticism in the term, you may be right, since I think that it may irritate if played too often. (How much should players consider purchasers who can only afford to buy one version of a work when recording it?) It is refreshing that he uses the organ for three sonatas; here the recording is more backward than with the harpsichord, perhaps to separate its sound from the recorder. If you have bought the complete solos reviewed in our last issue, you may find this a luxury; but recorder enthusiasts will find it difficult to resist temptation. I don't understand why HWV 377 is numbered HY 418, or what HY stands for; HWV numbering (not used) is now standard. *CB*

Locatelli *XII Sonate à Flauto Traversiere Solo è Basso op. 2* Jed Wentz, Musica ad Rhenum 132' 16" (2 CDs)
Vanguard Classics **99099**

Musica ad Rhenum are presenting a very accomplished series on Vanguard. This, their latest tribute to Locatelli, is extremely well played and recorded. Jed Wentz is one of the leading exponents of the baroque flute and his cadenzas (one, Track 19, is based on a capriccio from the virtuosic *L'arte del violino*, as stunningly recorded by Libby Wallfisch) are breath-taking. For some reason, I find his note-bending far more subtle and appropriate than Andrew Manze's. The continuo playing, too, is impressive, with organ and harpsichord, bassoon, bassetto (a gamba?) and cello in various combinations. Jed Wentz also contributes a lengthy note discussing Locatelli as performer, his music and Musica ad Rhenum's approach. A landmark recording, and unresistable at mid-price, like the op. 5 reviewed in our last issue. *BC*

Roman *Sinfonias* Drottningholm Baroque Ensemble, dir. Jaap Schröder 62" 02'
Musica Sveciae **MSCD 418** (1990)
Trio Sonatas Trio Sonnerie, Kreeta-Maria Kentala *vln* 62" 14'
Musica Sveciae **MSCD 408** (1994)
Sonatas and Assaggi Jaap Schröder *vln*, Johann Sonnleitner *hpscd* 56' 00"
Musica Sveciae **MSCD 406**

These three discs are a valuable collection, revealing as they do the many facets of one of Scandinavia's most influential early composers. The trio sonatas are, perhaps, the most baroque in character; the Sonatas and *Assaggi* tend towards the Classical, while the Sinfonias are typical of an early orchestral repertoire between Italianate concertos and Classical symphonies which is rather neglected. The players on all three discs shows convincingly how music which might be considered of little importance can be brought to life with a little imagination. Highly recommended. *BC*

Telemann *Sonate metodiche 1728/1732* Barthold Kuijken, Wieland Kuijken, Robert Kohnen 137' 42" 2 CDs
Accent **ACC 94104/5D**

This is in many ways the very opposite of Jed Wentz's Locatelli reviewed above. These two sets of *Sonate metodiche* were intended both to entertain and to instruct, in this case in the art of ornamentation. While Wentz's performances are virtuosic, his decorations extravagant, Kuijken's are perhaps closer to what an (admittedly exceptionally accomplished) 18th-century amateur might have achieved. He does not restrict himself to the composer's given elaborations, choosing to embellish some of the Allegro movements too. Over recent years we have become used to ensembles using various continuo line-ups, so it was slightly disappointing that this otherwise exemplary recording of some fine performances was limited in this respect. *BC*

Vivaldi *Stabat mater* Andreas Scholl *A*, Ensemble 415, dir Chiara Banchini 52'02
Harmonia Mundi **HMC 901571**
Also contains *Concerto in C RV 114, Cantata* Cessate omai cessate *RV 684, Sonata a4* Al sante Sepolcro *RV 130, Introduzione al Miserere* Filiae maestae Jerusalem *RV 638*

This is an interesting collection, with three varied vocal works and two instrumental. Chiara Banchini's band (no details provided) is impressive; they produce a wide range of colours (Vivaldi himself is responsible for one of the most interesting, where one part plays the melody *pizzicato* while the other uses the bow – it's a curious, but extremely effective, sound). The singer crafts a fine melodic line, declaiming the text clearly and thoroughly relishing the scrunches. As always with this repertoire, though, I find myself inevitably asking why a countertenor is singing and not a female alto *BC*

Vivaldi *Viola d'amore Concertos RV 392-7* Catherine Mackintosh, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment 67' 18"
Hyperion **CDA66795**

At first sight, a disc of six concertos for the same forces and in only three keys might appear a recipe for utter tedium. In the event, I found myself listening to this disc over and over again. The wonderful if unfamiliar sound of the viola d'amore (sometimes like an understated violin, at others every bit as bold as a hearty viola), the extremely fine playing from soloist and orchestra alike and, above all, the music are three reasons why this should feature in all collectors' libraries. Just listen to the spine-tingling, eerie opening of Track 12 and try to tell me this is just another incarnation of Vivaldi's one concerto! *BC*

Weiss *2 Sonaten für die Laute* (23 in f♯ & 30 in g) Michael Dücker 57' 46"
Thorofon *Capella* **CTH 2098**

Thank goodness the days when our knowledge of this fine composer was based on a handful of ancient recordings of *L'Infidele* are long gone, as also are those when recordings of the baroque lute were battle grounds between performer and lute (the lute usually won). This latest offering includes two of Weiss's late sonatas. The f♯ minor sonata has also been recorded by Kirchhof, a little less neatly but with more excitement, (see *EMR* March 95) but the g minor was new to me. Dücker's playing is polished and sensitive, nicely paced and beautifully phrased. He uses a broad range of dynamics, articulation and timbre to good effect. The striking sparsity of ornamentation is my only criticism of an otherwise very fine recording. *Lynda Sayce*

Concerti 'per l'orchestra di Dresda' Musica Antiqua Köln, Reinhard Goebel 70' 30"
Archiv **447 644-2**
Dieupart *Concerto in a;* Fasch *in d;* Heinichen *in F, Pastorale in A;* Pisendel *Sonata in c;* Quantz *Concerto in G;* Veracini *Overture no. 5 in Bb*

The seven works presented in dynamic performances by a very lively MAK have various Dresden connections. Only one of the six composers represented was not actively involved with the famous orchestra of Augustus the Strong, Fasch, and even he spent some time in the Saxon capital. Among the highlights of a quite stunning selection of orchestral music are the most breathtaking natural horn playing ever, a delightful little concerto for sopranino recorder by Dieupart and, for me, Fasch's lute concerto. This has already been recorded on guitar, with a rather lugubrious accompanying band; Goebel's approach is far more robust – the staccato really is staccato, the tempi are far more lively and the soloist, Michael Dücker, relishes the concertante sole in such a late piece. Goebel's assertion that the piece must have been written for Weiss is not necessarily sustainable: court records at Zerbst, where Fasch was Kapellmeister from 1722 until his death in 1758, show that Johann Gottlieb Baron performed there in 1737. That makes no difference to an excellent recording of some very interesting repertoire. *BC*

CLASSICAL

C. P. E. Bach *Music for Organ* Gerald Gifford 65' 50"
Meridian **CDE 84318**
Wq 70/3-7 [=H. 84-87, 107], 6 Variations in C, Fugue in d.

The organ music of CPE Bach occupies one of those artistically fascinating transitional periods as one style merges into another – here the Baroque into the Classical. Famed as a composer in his day, his music can now sometimes seem a bit trite, certainly in comparison to that of his Dad. However, his four Sonatas for organ are well worth a listen: light and frothy at times, melancholic and dark at others – a true reflection of the increasing angst of the age. They were written for Princess Ann Amalia of Prussia around 1755 (for an organ which still exists in Berlin) and make a fine vehicle to introduce a new organ in the chapel of the University of Hull, built by Lammermuir Pipe Organs with advice from the performer. Gifford clearly feels at home on the instrument, and shows its various colours off to good effect. My only quibble with the playing is the rather mannered style of articulation, particularly the overuse of staccato (even, on occasions, when the score is clearly marked legato) rather than the normal slightly detached articulation that is so essential for playing early organ music. Apart from losing the sense of the musical line, this does not always allow the pipes to speak properly. A CD worth listening to; but before buying, try to compare it with Jacques van Oortmerssen's recording of more or less the same pieces on BIS-CD-569 on the 1826 Bätz organ in Harderwijk. Notes are rather sparse, but include a specification of the new organ.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

J. C. Bach *Three Berlin concertos for harpsichord and strings (1754)* Jacques Ogg ***hpscd***, Les Eléments Amsterdam 57' 04"
Globe **GLO 5139**

This is a delightful new experience; new, because it claims to be the first recording of these youthful compositions, full of charm and intimate warmth; delightful, because Jacques Ogg is a highly responsive artist whose neatness of delivery is linked to real identification with the music. His little cadenzas combine excellent invention with a strong instinct for appropriate development. Alda Stuurop has has impressed with her zestful playing and well-balanced good-humour both as soloist and as ripieno leader of La Petite Bande for over 20 years. Her new group, which effectively combines co-specialists of many years like Ku Ebbinge (oboe) and Ruth Hesseling (viola) with new names from the generation of their pupils, plays very well indeed. Nobody with a serious interest in the continuation from baroque to classical of the *galant* should miss this delightful disc. *Stephen Daw*

W. F. Bach *Three Harpsichord Concertos* Richard Egarr, London Baroque 54' 09"
Harmonia mundi France **HMC 901558**
Concertos in F (F44), a (F45) & D (F41)

I think that I am unorthodox in my unhappiness with the way in which Mozart's instrumental music is often played today, with too much cantabile, too little accent, too little relinquishing of basslines and low textures; it seems to me to lack guts and stature, and to represent poorly the spirited musicianship of its remarkable composer. In these delightful quintet-concertos, London Baroque seem to me to use excellent instruments in such a way as to underplay another distinctive composer's personality through similar basic misunderstandings. There is too much melodic sensuality, too much flexibility of tempo (especially in the slow movements) and too little poised discipline. Listeners who like this kind of playing will be delighted with this romantic interpretation, and Richard Egarr is indeed exquisite in his own way. But it's not for me. *Stephen Daw*

Haydn *London Symphonies Nos. 101 & 102* La petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 52' 51"
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi **05472 77351 2**

When Salomon learnt of the death of Prince Esterhazy, he hurried to Vienna to arm-twist Hadyn to travel with him to London. Hadyn overcame his initial reservations – unfamiliarity with language and travelling – to begin a hugely profitable association with one of the most successful (and tenacious) impressarios. The result of his becoming a free-lance artist and commercially viable composer is some devastatingly splendid works, including the London symphonies. Kuijken's band is smaller than most I have reviewed; although it lacks opulence and sheen, it is well-adapted to enhancing both galant and *empfindsam* aspects of Hadyn's writing. The liner notes, instead of dwelling at length on conductor and orchestra, could have mentioned that the collapse of a chandelier in the Hanover Square Rooms when a symphony was being played, really took place during No. 102, not 96.
Kah-Ming Ng

Haydn ***Variations in f; 3 Sonatas*** Joanna Leach (on square pianos of the period)
Athene **ATH CD2** 68' 47"
Variations in f; Sonatas in c, C, Eb H.XVI:20, 35, 49

This interesting selection from Hadyn's piano works is performed with intelligence and perception. The four square pianos (one for each work) have been well restored by Andrew Lancaster. He provides helpful notes on the instruments, which have been chosen with the pieces in mind. The C major sonata, which could just have well been played on harpsichord, is performed on a 1789 Broadwood square piano with single action and no sustaining mechanism. Joanna Leach has a real command of Hadyn's tempi and phrasing, although I would be inclined to be less tentative about adopting the original speed where it is marked 'tempo primo' in the first movement of the C major sonata. Her articulation is excellent and I particularly enjoyed the interpretation of the wedge staccato in the first movement of the C minor sonata. *Margaret Cranmer*

Krebs ***The Best Crayfish in the Brook: Music for Harpsichord and Chamber Organ*** Gerald Gifford 67' 37"
Meridian **CDE 84306**
Suites in b & c, Preludes 2, 3, 5 & 6, 16 chorales.

This a characteristic enterprise of Gerald Gifford, who has been noted before for his knack of playing music from the less familiar repertoires so sensitively, and also characteristic of Meridian, a small English company whose academic connections have facilitated giving attention to those less famous composers who enlighten our understanding of even their most illustrious contemporaries. JSB and J. G. Walther had taught Krebs senior in Weimar and his son became a trusted and admired pupil of JSB in the early 1730s, at a time when his own eldest sons were roughly the same age. The title, a quotation reputed to come from Bach, is less witty in English than German.

Careful listening reveals that J. L. Krebs is a composer of the *galant*, rational type more closely related to WF than JS Bach. There is very considerable ability in the invention of what JS called 'good (thematic) ideas' in a series of very agreeable miniatures recorded here, which include spirited suites on the harpsichord and charming chorale settings on the organ. He also produced some good large-scale works. A striking organ prelude in C, toccata-like yet serious and sincere in its address, bears witness to greater depths and even intellectual capabilities than we are likely to perceive from this selection, which regrettably ends rather soon; further pieces could have shown the crayfish to be more significant than this. *Stephen Daw*

The String Quartet in 18th-Century England
The Salomon Quartet 69' 25"
Hyperion **CDA66780**
Abel op. 8/5; Marsh in Bb, Shield op. 3/6, Webbe *Variations on 'Adeste Fideles'*; S. Wesley in Eb

With a vested interest in this recording, and in particular the John Marsh quartet, I have tried to offer an unbiased review of the relative merits of this extremely interesting profile of the string quartet in England in the 18th (and early 19th) century. Presenting a most valuable collection of works, the most predictable is the Abel, with it's throbbing bass lines, triplets and unassuming galant melodiousness. Of Shield's six quartets this compelling C minor work is the antithesis of predictability in its dramatic opening and the unexpected major/minor shift in both the *adagio* and the concluding minuet/rondo. John Marsh, described at the time as an 'amateur of fortune', is the least well-known composer on this disc. Because his musical activities were primarily confined to the southern counties, his prolific compositions were little known in London circles. The Quartet, 'in Imitation of Hadyn's op. 1' (actually No 1 in Bb) is no slavish imitation; well crafted, with an individual 'Englishness' in the writing, the two minuets in particular will prove a delight to listeners. Of the remaining two early 19th-century works, I found Webbe's *Variations* the more interesting, with its (at times) intense chromatacism and diverse textures. The Wesley is texturally and harmonically more advanced, closer to the styles of Hummel and Spohr. Its lengthy opening *allegro* starts engagingly, yet the similarity in texture of the following three shorter movements begins to pall on the ear. All these works are played with all the Salomon's usual assuredness and musicality. This is a disc not to be missed by chamber music lovers. *Ian Graham-Jones*

The Marsh Quartet, published by Consort Publications, is available through King's Music.

19th CENTURY

Dussek ***Sonates vol. 2*** Andreas Staier, (Broadwood 1805) 61' 10"
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi **05472 77334 2**
Fantasia & Fugue to J. B. Cramer, op.55; Elégie Harmonique sur la Mort de Louis Ferdinand, op. 61 Le Retour à Paris, op. 64

Dussek's piano music looks forward to the romantic period and demands a virtuoso technique. Andreas Staier rises to the challenge with these vigorous and expressive performances. The *Elégie harmonique* sonata is a beautiful work with some tender cantabile sections and the lovely pianissimo passages are played with great control. The Paris sonata was also published as op.70, 71 and 77; some interesting pedal markings in the early editions are missing from the 1963 Czech edition. Some double-octave passages in the bass tend to be a little too martellato and could distract the listener's attention from the rather more interesting music in the right hand. The instrument is an 1805 Broadwood grand and typically has quite a resonant bass. *Margaret Cranmer*

Schubert ***3 Klavierstücke D 946, Valses nobles D9 69, Moments musicaux D 780***
Peter Katin (Clemanti square piano 1832)
Athene **ATH CD7** 73' 33"

Peter Katin is a highly respected pianist and this disc is full of different colours and nuances, with a lovely lilt to some of the waltzes. The composer's wishes are honoured and the performances of the *Moments musicaux* are among the best I have ever heard, with an expressive lyricism in the Ab major piece and a super legato in the right hand counterbalanced by a lively staccato in the left in the C♯ minor work. The instrument is a Clementi square piano with an English action and consequently fuller sound than the Viennese instruments from the same period; it was probably this that led me to feel a couple of the waltzes a fraction heavy. The recording is excellent with good forward sound. *Margaret Cranmer*

Thanks to the French strike, the discs sent to Michael Thomas did not reach him in time for us to include reviews. We will include them in the next issue, together with several other delayed items.

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We erroneously confused Fretwork and The Purcell Quartet in the review of Fretwork's edition of William Lawes' *Royall Consort* in the last issue.

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We were intrigued to see that, in connection with the Alfred Deller Memorial Countenor Competition, there is to be a countertenor marathon at the Utrecht Festival involving the performance of all the John Dowland song-books. It seems very odd to me to choose for the event a body of songs virtually none of which can be sung by countertenor without transposition: it makes one wonder what the authentic solo countertenor repertoire really is. Perhaps some of the speakers at the ambitious series of lectures will address the problem. Details from IVC Office, PO Box 1225, 5200 BG 's Hertogenbosch, Netherlands (fax +31 73 612 45 17).

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Applications are invited for Handel Institute Awards, up to a total of £1,000. Details from Professor Colin Timms, Department of Music, The University of Birmingham, B15 2TT (England).

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Charivari agréable (two of whose members, Kah-Ming Ng & Linda Sayce, are regular reviewers here), are expanding from their normal ensemble of three to give a concert of Biber, Muffat and Pachelbel at Exeter College Chapel, Oxford on Sat. Feb. 17 at 8.15pm. Tickets from Blackwell's Music Shop, tel 01865 261384. A further concert with Piers Adams follows on March 9.

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Tess Knighton has pointed out that there is a list of pieces performed by Gothic Voices compiled by Lawrence Earp in *Early Music* xxi/2 (May 1993), pp. 292-5. Back issues are obtainable from Marion Tatham at Oxford University Press.

LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

One of the refreshing things about reviews of music in *Early Music Review* is that they always take the side of the user and in so doing call attention to bad practices that editors and publishers often overlook – or sometimes persist in out of misguided principle. One such practice is the numbering of bars in fives or tens regardless of whether the user has sight of at least one number on every opening. Many editors retain uncritically the idea inculcated in their apprentice days that it is more professional to number bars at fixed intervals. Granted, there can be a small pragmatic advantage in this, in that when separate parts are derived from the score, the numbers remain exactly as they were, reducing the risk of error. But this is trivial set against the frustration of not being able to orient oneself immediately in rehearsal or when checking a point in the critical commentary. Moreover, if one always places bar numbers at the beginning or at the end of each system they are located more quickly and are less easily confused with other figures appearing in the musical text.

You will be happy to know that, even before reading your review, the New Critical Edition of Vivaldi's works decided to reform its practice. Its next volumes, beginning with *The Four Seasons* (watch out for some major surprises and revelations here!), will present bar numbering system by system instead of by tens.

Michael Talbot

Some conductors claim that there is an advantage in every player having the same numbers, since they then should take an equal time to find a given point; others believe in rehearsal letters, since they can be placed at significant rather than arbitrary points. But I'm sure your solution combines efficiency and tact, and it is the one I always use. I find the printing of numbers in each bar that Schoenberg practiced rather pathetic, implying laboured composition as well as slow rehearsal. I'd be interested to know the earliest use of bar-numbering for performance use – as opposed to composers numbering bars to facilitate copying of repeated passages. CB

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Dear Clifford,

I'll leave it to others to explain why, twenty-five years after Kent Opera discovered the same difficulties with singers as you describe in your December editorial, music colleges have not yet been able – or willing, it would seem – to produce singers able to listen and react in the same way as instrumentalists. It's certainly a question of education; at least here in Nantes, we are encouraged to think and listen instrumentally: with what result is not for me to judge.

But if matters have not improved much *chez* singers, they are certainly no better with organs. This was again brought home to me a few days after reading your editorial when I listened to a new recording by Gérard Lèsne of music by Stradella in which all the players use real old instruments or good copies – except, yet again as usual, for the organ! The current attitudes to organs and singers do seem similar; is it because they are both connected with the church and its choirs, which (as you pointed out) seem resolutely uninterested in authentic performance practice? It is an attitude which spills over into otherwise good work; one exemplified by Robert King, who described a Dallam organ of 1653 as 'wheezing' and 'not very impressive' (Organists' Review, February 1995).

Since in Britain there is a strong, long and largely unresearched history of domestic organs – a tradition that runs parallel with the 'official' church organ history – the remaining instruments of this tradition will certainly repay closer attention by its potential users, if they approach the 'difficulties' presented by the old organs with an open mind. Such difficulties have been largely overcome with other instruments – why are singers and organist continuo players (and conductors) still struggling against the tide?

On another topic, Shane Fletcher's comment about Beethoven choirs being placed in front of the orchestra has interested us; we are to sing his op86 C major Mass soon, and had thought the chorus too small ... perhaps it would be better placed thus.

Martin Renshaw

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A letter from Denis Stevens which we did not have space to print when we received it has some interesting remarks on the use of the organ in Vivaldi performances. He writes The great majority of Vivaldi's large-scale works specify *organo*, and the use of the organ in his day can be confirmed by literary, bibliographical, musicological and iconographical evidence that positively bellows at one. *This is not, I hope, news to our readers, even if it is ignored by many performers. Stevens describes a concert he produced of* L'estro armonico *in the 1950s with the ripieno group accompanied by organ, the concertino by harpsichord (played by Geraint Jones and Thurston Dart: the violinists were Louis Kaufman, Neville Marriner, Emanuel Hurwitz and Granville Jones). He traces the use of the organ further back to a Royal Philharmonic Society concert at the Queen's Hall in 1916 where op. 3/8 was played by Ysaye with Beecham conducting. Two additional. movements were inserted: the middle movement of op. 6/1 and an* Allegro *which he could not identify:*

Dear Clifford,

I enclose my renewal form and cheque – what a bargain! I look forward to reading *EMR* whenever it is published and suffer withdrawal symptoms in January and August! I have to admit that as a non-singer I sometimes find the singing technicalities numbing but I even try to work my way through those. I'm glad to see references to periodicals I don't receive so that I know if I am missing anything of interest and the book reviews even tell me about books 'unknown to Kohler' – that being a note in bookseller's catalogues when they find a Milton edition we didn't have in our big Milton collection! In fact, when I first read about the Byrd insert I though, ugh – because I'm not a singer. But it was gripping. I can't wait for the next one. *EMR* has expanded my horizons in a way that no other early music publications has. That, believe me, is a very big compliment!

Now a couple of comments, queries, etc. I have sent Peter Berg an e-mail to try to order some CDs. It would be nice to encourage an enterprise like this. I was glad to read the review of Jan Vermeulen's recording of Schubert in this latest issue and will make sure he receives a copy of the review. He is a very fine player of the fortepiano – played here in Dorking in February of this year and was a great success.

I think your editorial was mighty fine. My only query is whether it isn't something to do with the conductor, since I heard Dorothea Röschmann sing in a Caldara opera. without the least bit of wobbliness. Perhaps McGegan has some of the responsibility for what you note. I think your comments about the Purcell operas are very apt. They should be read by a much larger audience than just the subscribers to *EMR*, You are so right about it not being achievable on the cheap. What good is a *deus ex machina* if it is just a milk crate on a wire? And of course the Covent Garden King Arthur wasn't period staging – but how many people know that? I think that it is better to have an excellent concert performance with period music and period singing than to have a staged performance which is a little of this and a little of that and nothing proper in the end. I went to see René Jacobs' *Dido* in Innsbruck this summer and it was dreadful – totally earthbound and in parts grotesque. What is the point? I have long wondered what is the point of reviving neglected Baroque operas in modern staging? I, personally, don't get any pleasure from it. But Baroque opera in its full baroqueness —ahh! But I have only ever been to one.

For a start why, when we know that the originals were on stages with depth – and depth enhanced by the scenery, are so many performances produced width-wise? The whole feel is wrong. But as long as modern designers get the commissions for modern stagings and as long as people spend their energies arguing about whether the performance is period style if done by electric lighting rather than candlelighting, nothing will happen. (You can have a real coal fire without sending little boys up the chimney to clean it so why not a period opera lit by electric lights mimicking candle-light? I am willing to accept compromise on *that* issue.) The sad truth is that if there were enough money for a proper period opera it would probably be given to the least talented conductor, don't you think? This is a discussion that could run and run; but I think it important that the critics who say that any staging is better than none should not be encouraged. A brilliant concert performance is better than *any* staging. We should not accept mediocrity. Even a not-so-perfect concert performance that gives enjoyment is better than any old staging that queers the pitch for the real thing.

A question that perhaps you could help me with. Michael Thomas in his review of Robert Kohnen's Couperin says that the Belgian musicians 'as members of the Alarius Ensemble, did much to make Couperin and the other baroque composers known in England by their concerts and radio broadcasts'. How do I find out about these broadcasts so that I can include them in my discography? Is there a database of radio broadcasts? There are some of their recordings which I have not been able to locate and I would like to know the information given on the sleeve. I have tried the National Sound Archive, do any EMR readers have this information or know where to get it?

Michèle Kohler

I don't know the current BBC situation – perhaps Graham Dixon, who is in charge of early music there, can help. For the period to which you refer (1960s and 1970s) there was a card index which recorded the date of each piece broadcast on the Third Programme and Radio 3. If the cards still exist, they could be checked against Radio Times. *But it would be a laborious job, and even if they do exist, access would be difficult. The cards were used to generate an annual* Catalogue of Music Broadcast, *produced for internal circulation only, though it was not treated as confidential and copies may exist elsewhere. But they only give the total number of performances, so would not help you; their main practical use beyond their function in monitoring output was for the average timings they included. (For some years I was in the anomalous position of having editorial responsibility for the catalogue but not for the file on which it was based or the staff who produced it – I can never hear the Prayer-Book phrase 'dwell for ever with peace and felicity' without thinking of one of them.) I must confess that I don't remember many broadcasts from the Alarius, whom I heard mostly on record.*

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Dear Mr Bartlett,

I have noticed that you accidentally printed my telephone number incorrectly in your review of my editions (EMR 16). The number has also changed slightly and is now 01483 563916, I would be extremely grateful if you could print a correction in the next issue. Many thanks.

Timothy Symons, Cantus Firmus Music

Dear Clifford,

Following your comment (which I wholeheartedly endorse) on singers being behind players in adapting to period performance, don't get too complacent about the professional standards of baroque instrumentalists.

I recently went to a concert given by a professional chamber group who describe themselves as 'one of the leading groups of its type... which performs the exciting music of the 18th Century on period instruments'. Three of the four string players were using modern instruments with two gut upper strings, albeit with period bows. (No wind player could get away with such deception!) For a programme devoted to music from around 1700, I need hardly say that the sound they produced was very disappointing, and I felt I had been cheated into the expense of a ticket and a journey.

When I first started up an amateur baroque band in Norwich in the early 1980s, I was careful not to deceive an audience by claiming that we were a period instrument group until every member was using an appropriate instrument. Surely we should expect professional players to observe the Trades Description Act.

June Emmerson

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Thank you for introducing me to the words haplography and dittography (EMR 13, page 22). You might like to have (if you do not have already) what seems to be an apposite example of the latter to which Margaret Phillips has drawn my attention:

> Suddenly he appeared on the lists of Westminster School as a 'Bishop's Boy' (formerly known as a 'Lord's Westminster School as a 'Bishop's Boy' (formerly known as a 'Lord's Scholar')

Robert King *Henry Purcell* (1994) pages 77-78.

David Hunt

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Jonathan Jones, after congratulatory remarks (of which there are enough for one issue already), expressed a preference for slightly larger type. We sympathise. But, apart from my innate desire to get as much on a page as possible (which is also apparent in King's Music editions), there are also financial considerations. I came across my initial plan for *EMR* recently: it suggested 8, or at the outside, 12 pages per issue. In fact, they now run to 20, 24 or 28. Yet the subscription rate follows the costing for 8 or 12 pages. Larger print would make our printing bill even greater. We hope, however, that we might be able to sharpen the print image. We have so-far been unable to get our old laser-printer to accept the font we chose, so have had to print from a cheap bubble-jet. We like the font, and don't want to change it. But we may get a new laser-printer soon, and trust that it will accept the font.

STAFF CUTS AT EARLY MUSIC REVIEW?

Our front cover looks different this month: the list of reviewers has been shortened. But this does not mean that we have sent half our reviewers packing without notice. The list of people on whom we call has increased, and we hope will go on doing so. This has left less room for the contents and in some issues the editorial address has been pushed off the bottom of the column. So from this issue we are printing on the front only the names of those who have contributed to the current issue. So Angela Bell, Jennie and Stephen Cassidy, Julia Craig-McFeely, Shane Fletcher, David Hansell, Selene Mills, Graham O'Reilly, Alison Payne, Simon Ravens, Bryan Robbins, Eric van Tassel and Michael Thomas have not suddenly departed to set up a rival magazine – or if that have, they haven't told us. Reviewers, if you are disappointed at your occasional demotion, blame Julian Elloway of Oxford University Press Music Department, who phoned to complain that we didn't print our address anywhere in the last issue.

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We were intrigued to see from a recent computer magazine that Hyperion has a new Press Officer, one Ted Perry. Has there been a palace revolution? Lucky firm, to have an enthusiast happy to enter his complete catalogue on the www: we need a volunteer to do the same for us.