

# Early Music REVIEW

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First, apologies to those who received defective copies of the last issue. Unfortunately, we did not notice until most copies had been sent out that the binder erratically omitted pages. While our individual subscribers will have contacted us if necessary, library copies may not have been read so systematically. So librarians, please check.

I heard part of a discussion on the radio recently which argued that a momentous change in our culture took place in the 1970s, when the whole baggage of several millennia of Western culture was overthrown and the past was no longer a significant part of the present. The thriving of early music may perhaps be seen as a tiny nail in the coffin of that argument. But I am not so sure. I am an unregenerate example of pre-pop-culture man and am interested in early music as part of a continuum of cultural change. But I suspect that many of those who buy the CDs we review are less aware of that and, indeed, are not interested in it. Part of our present world is the immediate availability of the past. We have not yet reached the stage of a science fiction story in which we can buy seats to get a good view of disasters of the past. But we can reach back to enjoy isolated cultural experiences and not realise that there is any pattern. And the delight of scholars in stressing the complication of those patterns may well encourage the amateur to give up.

A consequence of this lack of cultural tradition is an absence of common aesthetic criteria and, despite our willingness to make value judgments about performances, a reluctance to do so about the music itself. I am as cautious as any when reviewing editions of unknown music, since it is so easy to undervalue what looks simple on the page but can come to life in performance. But I have a suggestion to musicological publishers: if an author submits a book that does not tell you whether the music he has been studying for several years is worth hearing or not, don't publish it. I don't mind if the music is said to be rubbish if there are good reasons for studying it; but let's have honest evaluations, even if in twenty years time they look silly.

CB

## BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

A vast quantity of books and music has arrived since November, far more than I have space or time to cover in this issue. So apologies to publishers and readers for the need to hold some reviews over until next month.

## ANGELS &amp; SHEPHERDS

Richard Rastall *The Heaven Singing: Music in Early English Religious Drama*. Vol. 1 D. S. Brewer, 1996. xxi + 422pp, £55.00 ISBN 0 85991 428 3

Only 422 pages! It felt much longer: in fact, I took a month reading it, which is why I was unable to keep my promise to the publisher to include a review in our last issue. But don't take that as a serious criticism. It is to some extent a collection of inter-relating but non-sequential chapters, so there is no internal pressure to hurry on to the end. The author often seems to take his time, with the excellent excuse that he is writing for a varied audience whose expertise may well not include matters that musicologists take for granted. Producers and performers of the plays will find here all the musical information they need, both with regard to the actual music required and the musical background. But there is meat here for the musical expert as well. I was surprised by the casual remarks that red clefs indicate transposition (p. 126): have modern editions been omitting a vital clue? Two pages earlier we are warned of the dangers of working from facsimiles: would 'a considerable patch of hair follicles' which affect the pagination of the York angelic songs (p. 123) be noticeable without seeing the MSS themselves?

The book is organised so that individual sections can be consulted separately. Many will turn first to Chapter 3, 'The surviving music'. This whets the appetite for vol. 2, 'which will bring together all that is known or can reasonably be inferred about the music to be heard in the individual plays of the repertory'. I naturally focussed on the overlaps with *The New Oxford Book of Carols*, which includes the two Coventry shepherds' songs. 'As I rode out' is unproblematic, but Rastall points out that the layout of the original of *The Coventry Carol* (i. e. the 1825 'facsimile') has no implication that it is in carol form with the first section as a refrain. He discusses sympathetically John Caldwell's rhythmic reinterpretation but rejects it. An appendix demolishes the suggestion that 'We happy herdsmen' has a dramatic connection, but nevertheless transcriptions from both MSS are printed for comparison; NOBC's conflation is not significantly different from Rastall's 'Carlisle' version. Another carol is not mentioned explicitly, but the phrase 'general dance' comes twice (pp. 198 & 365) and reminded me instantly of the last two words

of 'Tomorrow shall be my dancing day'; this is not entirely irrelevant if the song is an announcement of a series of plays on the morrow (see notes to NOBC 132).

The strength of the book is Rastall's wide range of knowledge and experience (including participation in performances) and his willingness to seek to explain everything, even if adequate information is not always available. His range of interest is wide (as note 76 on page 206 testifies). He sometimes makes heavy weather over simple matters like the use of the liturgical wording *Gloria in excelsis Deo* instead of the Biblical *Gloria in altissimis Deo*. Surely anyone quoting the phrase will use the form heard throughout the year at Mass rather than a version encountered just once at Christmas? So the choice of word need not recall the manner of singing of the Sarum rubric for the words as verse to the responsory *Hodie nobis celorum rex*. A chapter deals with the relevance of the liturgy, not just specifically in providing music for Latin quotations, but as an inspiration for structure and staging. I wonder whether monastics avoid references specifically to the monastic rite when working in 'secular' contexts? Rastall assumes (without argument or footnote) that there was congregational participation in secular services and that everyone knew the *Te Deum* and could join in. That is a particularly difficult piece to sing from memory: I don't know how many disasters occurred during it when I was involved in performing Latin liturgical plays. I wonder whether the idea of congregational plainsong was invented by Helmore in the 1850s. The discussion of the age at which boys voices break is of much wider interest, though Stephen Daw tells me that his research on Bach's Leipzig choristers was rather more hypothetical than the summary here implies.

This deserves to be read widely by those interested in the plays as literature and drama as well as by those seeking to glean snippets of information to build up a picture of the musical culture the plays imply. I look forward to vol. 2.

## MUSICA SCOTICA

*Musica Scotica: Editions of Early Scottish Music. I. The Complete Works of Robert Carver & Two anonymous Masses* edited by Kenneth Elliott. University of Glasgow Music Department Publications, 1996. xviii + 305pp, £45.00. ISBN 0 9528212 0 6  
*Musica Scotica... II. Sixteenth-century Scots songs for voice & lute* edited & arranged by Kenneth Elliott. xiii + 143pp, £25.00. ISBN 0 9528212 1 4

Welcome to a new series. The format size is A4, mid-way between *Early English Church Music* and *Musica britannica*; the new series does not imitate the latter's irritating lower-

case national adjective, though it does imitate MS's roman volume numbers, which are now cumbrosomely long for quick reference. The price is somewhat lower than equivalent volumes in either of those series, thanks perhaps to the economies of a partially in-house production. The typesetting uses an elegant system devised by William Clocksin, who contributed a review in our last issue. Although I am about to continue with some critical comments, my congratulations to Kenneth Elliott and his department for getting the series under way. Further volumes are planned, and cheap offprints are (or will be) available, with no mass costing more than five pounds.

Readers will remember that Kenneth Elliott was the editor of MB xv, which is now 40 years old. It was one of those MB volumes which initially appeared to be a generous anthology but which subsequently has been frustrating for presenting selections instead of complete genres. There can be nothing but praise for this attempt to remedy that. But expectations of how early music should be presented have changed since then, and delight at the complete appearance of all Carver's music is modified by the need to read it through a mass of black notes (reaching as short as demisemiquavers). Reducing values brings in the need for beaming, which imposes a set of assumptions and distractions that an unreduced edition avoids. Singers of this music are likely to be either specialists or experienced enough for breves, semibreves and minims to hold no terrors: the notation here looks so fussy. How refreshing to turn from this to the *Antico Missa Sine nomine* with its breves and minims. (An amateur singer happened to mention recently how much she preferred unreduced note values and could not understand unnecessary editorial modernisation: favouring unreduced values is not just a scholarly fetish.) I am also not entirely convinced that the preservation of partial key signatures is a good idea. Admittedly, changing them makes it difficult to show the status of each B without consulting the commentary, but it makes difficulties for a conductor. (The solution is not to have one!) It is particularly annoying to have two of nineteen parts different, especially when the two parts with no signature don't actually have any Bs.

Vol. II is a bit of an oddity. It contains 29 songs in arrangements for voice with lute intabulation, sometimes exact, but sometimes with editorial divisions. It might have been a good idea if presented as an imitation of a 16th-century printed lute-song book with voice and tablature (perhaps even with the other parts on the opposite page in table-book format), even though circulation would have been small. A complementary version with the accompaniment for modern guitar might have been issued in parallel. But here there is also a part labelled keyboard, a transcription of the tablature which does not look at all satisfactory as an accompaniment on any keyboard instrument, ancient or modern. Its presence also means that most songs have awkward page-turns, and the book is unlikely to sit on a lutenist's music stand without having its back broken. For the originals of most

of the songs one needs to have a copy of MB xv, though six not included there are printed in Appendix I of this volume. Appendix II contains the tantalising single parts of a further 24 songs, mostly from David Melvill's bassus book (BL Add. 36484), the sole survivor of a set. Plenty of material for students to use as the basis for composition exercises! This seems a rather curious volume to me.

The other volumes proposed, however, should present fewer problems and can be eagerly awaited. As I have said before, it is sad how difficult Carver's music has been to see in print, and having it all in one volume is a great boon. Whatever one thinks of some of the editorial decisions, the music is now available in studyable and singable form. There are problems in performing it, not least the strange and extreme voice ranges, like the two octaves required for tenor 4 in each movement of the mass *Dum sacrum mysterium*. (Following a single part, incidentally, would have been much easier if each system had an abbreviated part-name and if parts of the same voice-type had been bracketed.) There have been enough recordings to show that the effort is worth making and this edition should open Carver's music to non-Scottish choirs.

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e-mail: kenneth@music.gla.ac.uk

#### LA SABLONARA

Judith Etzion *The Cancionero de La Sablonara (A Critical Edition)* London: Tamesis Books (Boydell & Brewer), 1996. clxxii + 254pp, £150.00. ISBN 1 85566 047 4

The *Cancionero de La Sablonara* is named after its scribe, the chief copyist at the Spanish court. He produced it near the end of his career as a souvenir for Wolfgang Wilhelm, Count of Neuburg and Duke of Bavaria, who visited the Madrid court from October 1624 to May 1625. Sablonara's introduction mentions that he has 'searched and collected the best songs which are sung at this court', so this MS (now in Munich) is important for containing authoritative versions of 75 pieces thought to be among the best available at the Spanish court in 1625. It is a well-copied MS, with careful underlay. It has not been ignored by previous scholars, but this complete transcription preceded by a substantial introduction is most welcome. It is available in two versions, one with Spanish text, the other (discussed here) with English. However, it is odd that readers who cannot understand modern Spanish prose are presumed to understand 17th-century Spanish poetry. The texts are set out as verse separately from the music, but are not translated. The extensive introduction will be useful to those first approaching this repertoire. It quotes one of the most explicit references to the transposing implications of high and low clefs I have seen in early sources, if 1724 can be called early (p. xxv). Judith Etzion, unlike most editors, takes this seriously and transposes high-clef pieces down to the same tessitura as the low-clef ones.

The music is slightly small (the page-height is 245mm, compared with the 297mm of A4) but clearly legible. When the signature is C3, note values are halved and the barring is flexible, which is sensible for this repertoire. Music in C is unreduced, but note values are halved for ♪; the use of ♪ and C consecutively in No. 4 certainly implies a notable (and probably precisely-calculated) tempo difference. The one area in which the edition is not user-friendly is in the help with additional 'verses' (to use the generic English rather than the specific Spanish terms). These are not underlaid, and the additional texts are printed far away in the introduction. When separate performing editions are issued (as I understand to be the intention, though perhaps not by Tamesis), I would suggest that it would help non-Spanish users in particular if the music could be printed out several times and underlaid with all the words.

I am glad that this has finally appeared. I was involved with Tamesis in 1991-92 in a proposal for collaborating on it, but dropped out since I could see no way of it being financially viable at a reasonable cost. Sadly, the cost is even more unreasonable than we were aiming for then, so I doubt whether many singers will buy copies. I suppose that one advantage of it looking like a book is that more libraries will buy it than they would had it been presented as music in a larger format.

#### MONTEVERDI & GESUALDO

The Breitkopf/Rudolf Ewerhart series of Monteverdi's church music has at last produced a piece that I haven't edited myself. *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* (setting III from the *Selva morale*) is mostly for SS soli alternating with AATTBB with an eight-voice section in the middle. The introduction gives information on the San Marco Vespers psalms, presumably extracted from James Moore, but does not relate its suggestion for manner of performance with the requirement when the *pala d'oro* was opened to perform eight-voice psalms with the singers all together in the *bizogno*. The words *Chor/chorus* in the introduction need qualification: while it makes sense with a modern choir to interpret *tutti* thus, that need not be what the word meant. Ewerhart has not yet got the message about continuo lines in this repertoire. A separate bass part may well be useful for a theorbo, but that use is limited if the figures are omitted; there is no call for an unfigured part for cello or double bass. The edition itself, however, is fine, though DM24.00 is a bit expensive (PB 5325). There is also a chorus score (ChB 5268; DM 4.20); I have not seen it to know what it contains, but on previous form it will not include the continuo part and the two sopranos will probably need the big scores. Apart from its inherent musical value, the psalm is interesting for the light it sheds on the relationship between duple and triple time, since the opening seems to imply that semibreve in Ø 3/1 = quaver in C. I hope that Roger Bowers (who borrowed my set of photocopies of the 1640/41 set some time ago to continue the notational studies he began with the 1610 publication) will soon be able to explain whether things are quite as simple.

More Gesualdo offprints are welcome. A fourth in the madrigal series contains *Ancide sol la morte* and *Moro, lasso, al mio duolo* from book six (DVfM 7724; DM3.50). Both are untransposed high-clef pieces, which makes them work for modern SSATB, though they do need to be sung a bit lower (Michael Procter would call that a defeatist attitude). *Moro, lasso* is one of Gesualdo's more notorious pieces, starting with a C# major chord, a first inversion A minor, a B major and a first inversion G major – a good test of any ensemble's intonation; *Ancide sol* begins slightly more conventionally with A major and a C# major chords. Book 1 in the *Sacrae Cantiones* offprints has three motets for SATTB (the original clefs are not stated: C1 C3 C4 C4 F4 for *Ave, dulcissima Maria & O vos omnes*, C1 C3 C3 C4 F4 for *Domine, ne despicias*). The music is less extreme than in the madrigals: evidence of a different aesthetic for church music, of a less capable ensemble, or of the use of more than one singer per part? Whether or not the latter is true, it is excellent that choirs can now acquire these impressive works cheaply. They are quite short, which tends to encourage a desire to expand them by singing them slowly, a temptation to be resisted. (DVfM 7731; DM3.50).

#### GERMAN CHRISTMAS

Cornelius Freundt *Das Weihnachtsliederbuch des Zwickauer Kantors Cornelius Freundt...* Neuausgabe von Diethard Hellmann. Breitkopf & Härtel (Ch-B. 2950). 64pp, DM 9.50. *Baroque Christmas Classics...* edited by Judith Blezzard. Faber Music, 1996. 32pp, £2.95. ISBN 0 571 51697 1

The Freundt collection is based on an edition of 1897 by Georg Göhler as revised by Diethard Hellmann in 1954 (neither editor quotes the precise source: Zwickau Ratsbibliothek MS LXXXI, 1) and comprises 27 Christmas pieces, nearly all for SATB. Some are homophonic, others have a certain amount of contrapuntal interest. Some of the arrangements are by Freundt himself (he was a Kantor and teacher in Zwickau from 1564 till his death in 1591), others were current at the time, such as *Psallite unigenite/Singt und klingt* (alias the popular chanson *Ho la hé, par la vertu gay*) and *Geboren ist uns der heilige Christ* (a well-known tune for whose original words I have a complete mental block). Clemens non Papa is an unlikely presence in this German context. This is of more use to German than English choirs, but there are some attractive short pieces to make a change in next year's carol concert, and with the mark at nearly 2.70 to the pound, it is quite good value); we sang three of them with some enjoyment at the Eastern Early Music Forum Epiphany Party.

I must apologise to Faber Music for the fact that their *Baroque Christmas Classics*, which was sent to us in July, got buried in a pile of papers and only emerged as we were trying to make room to serve Christmas dinner. Judith Blezzard (who normally sends us our first Christmas card, but was beaten this year) has collected eight German settings, mostly from the early 17th century, which have been laid out compactly to enable the price to be kept low.

There is one overlap with the Breitkopf selection, *Psallite*, which is wrongly ascribed in the Faber book to Praetorius. (In NOBC we were careful to quote Praetorius as the source, not the composer.) German texts have English singing versions added, but Latin is left untranslated. I'm puzzled at the translation of *In dulci jubilo* being claimed as © 1996: had I sung it from a textless copy before seeing this, I would have differed by only one word. The aim, though, of using well-known translations is commendable. The most ambitious piece is Scheidt's *In dulci jubilo* for two choirs and two trumpets (*tibiae minores* or *clarien*, to quote the composer's heading), whose parts look somewhat confused in halved note-values and placed in a piano reduction; the most rewarding is probably Schütz's *Das Wort ward Fleisch* (for a lowish SSATTB). It is easy for the more specialised performer to forget that many choirs have accompanists who cannot read a score and conductors who need to have dynamics notated. Luckily, the interpretative markings are not too obtrusive and should not prevent readers laying in copies of this tempting and not too hackneyed a collection for next Christmas.

#### CELESTIAL SIRENS

Robert L. Kendrick *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and their Music in Early Modern Milan* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. xxi + 556pp, £55.00. ISBN 0 19 816408 4

'Siren' has a different meaning for those brought up in wartime London, but it is 'early modern' that worries me, especially for a book describing music created by people trapped in a life-style that might be condemned (if I were not aware that Christopher Page reads *EMR*) as medieval. When used in a musical context, 'modern' generally means non-tonal music of the 20th century; having a 'pre-modern' period going back to the late 16th century isn't helpful, even if other historical disciplines use it.

Most of us would be hard put to it to list many Milanese composers of church music from the 17th century; we learn here that there were a considerable number of them, mostly nuns. From the occasional reference here, it seems that the growth of convents and nunneries arose as a fashionable way of families getting daughters off their hands by paying a lump sum for their admittance to the cloistered order to prevent them being a more fundamental drain on the estate through dowry or inheritance. No doubt some convinced themselves of or were persuaded to believe in their calling, but there must have been many for whom their state was like being in an uncongenial boarding school with no hope of holidays or growing up. This was made worse by the obsession with virginity (a continual emphasis on the sexual life of which they were forcibly deprived) and the need to keep them in a man-less world, perhaps a necessity given the sexually-assertive way Latin men tend to behave; there is an assumption that if a man is in a room with a nun, impropriety must necessarily occur. So it is not surprising that music, when permitted (and male clerics often tried to forbid it), should bring some solace.

Kendrick reveals the wealth of musical activity that existed and describes 'the surviving compositions in some detail, with many tempting examples. I'm not sure if the whole North-Italian repertoire has been quite widely enough studied to maintain all his arguments for the cloistered origin as a specific influence; from my erratic knowledge (mostly Venetian) the music and texts quoted don't seem quite as surprising as he implies. But that sort of refinement of knowledge will come when more editions are available. It continually amazes me that publishers issue books about music to which only the writer has access: surely the music should appear first. But it seems that the academic community (both in terms of the prestige given to an author as opposed to an editor and in the buying behaviour of libraries) is more interested in words than the music itself. It should be as economically viable for Oxford to publish a volume of music as to publish this book. But there is no need for the Music Department to write and tell me that under current circumstances that is not the case. Knowledge about music seems to have become a substitute for knowing the music itself.

Another terminological quibble: Kendrick continually refers to nuns singing polyphony, as the English for *canto figurato*, i.e. music that is not chant. This clashes with the expected contrast of polyphony and monody. He discusses at length how the music was performed, especially with regard to the fact that about half the repertoire includes parts for tenors and basses. To some extent, inverting the convention of *chiavette* might help. Instead of transposing music in high clefs down, it could have been performed at pitch (thus needing only voices of tenor range, which ladies can supply) and low clef pieces could be transposed up. In solos and duets, parts in tenor clef could be sung by sopranos (such parts were sung elsewhere up the octave by castrati anyway). The problem is those pieces that seem to require genuine basses and would make little sense up an octave; there is no easy way to explain the examples with bottom Ds quoted on page 189 and 357. (There are, of course, freak voices, and after I wrote this I heard of a girl singing, untransposed, the bass solo part in *Hänsel und Gretel*.) But must we assume that everything published by nuns was sung by them? It would have been helpful if all the music examples had the original clefs shown, even when starting mid-piece, and the typesetter should realise that in triple time with long note-values the spacing ratios can differ from duple time.

Of the two lengthy pieces printed in full, Chiara Margarita Cozzolani's *O quam bonus es* (for SS & bc) is very fine, though I am not so convinced by Rosa Giacinta Badalla's *Non planete* (S & bc): the harmonic movement is odd and it is not at all easy to guess what a keyboard player might do with his right hand. Cozzolani is the main composer discussed, and is clearly worth publishing and performing: a facsimile of her solo motet book would be welcome, as well as scores of some of her larger pieces. The book whets our appetite for some very worthwhile music, though it is depressing reading about the milieu from which it arose.

## JENKINS CELEBRATED

*John Jenkins and his Time: Studies in English Consort Music*  
edited by Andrew Ashbee & Peter Holman. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. xxiii + 421pp, £50.00 ISBN 0 19 816461 0

It is curious that while musicologists are growing more and more concerned about the context of the music they are studying (as the book on the Milanese nuns exemplifies so well), they seem intent on giving a disembodied formality to their own activities. This book derives from the conference that celebrated the 400th anniversary of Jenkins' birth; it seems a pity not to devote a page or two to the fuller context of that event, which included a residential course for players to study the music of Jenkins and which incorporated a 19-hour trip round the East Anglian sites associated with Jenkins (under the guidance of Andrew Ashbee), culminating in a moving concert with the Rose Consort playing above Jenkins' memorial stone, a memorable coach ride across moon-lit, cow-obstructed fields to the manor house, with a 17th-century banquet provided by our culinary columnist Jennie Cassidy. Inclusion of the concert programme and menu would have been a nice gesture, as would a mention of Michael Procter, who was not only responsible for the practical arrangement of this Conference but had also (along with the present editors) been involved in the commemoration of the three hundredth anniversary of Jenkins' death.

Not that this is entirely the publication of the conference papers. Some have been revised: the opening contribution, Christopher Field's linking of Jenkins' traversal round the circle of fifths with the new cosmology has expanded to 74 pages. Some contributions were unsuitable for publication here or have appeared elsewhere, and the book is lengthened by items written specially. The current preoccupation of scholars of the English consort repertoire is to establish the relationship of the sources. The preliminary work of cataloguing has been done, largely by or in conjunction with Gordon Dodd, compiler of the Viola da Gamba Society's *Thematic Index of Music for Viols*. So it is appropriate that this volume, which contains several contributions towards this next stage of research, is dedicated to Gordon, a former naval officer whose enthusiasm, devotion and organising skill lies behind all editions and studies of the repertoire. The source studies in this volume, while giving editors more refined information for the evaluation of variants, also enable us to understand the circumstances under which the music was created, transmitted and played.

One contribution which impinges practically on how we perform the music is Peter Holman's *Organ Accompaniment of Consort Music*. Ideas of how 17th-century music should be accompanied are in a state of flux at present (see, for instance, the amazing versions by Tonelli of Corelli's op. 5 in the November 1996 *Early Music*) and we need to take the sources much more seriously, especially when they suggest that keyboard players should double rather than consciously avoid doubling the parts. Linked with this is the function of

scores; some seem to have existed for editorial purposes – as the basis for enthusiasts to check the accuracy of their parts – but they normally seem to have been for use by organists. So the absence of organ parts before c.1630 does not necessarily imply a different performance practice. Lutenists and organists accompanied in different ways, since the former played from the bass while that was not normal for organists till the latter part of the century.

The book is inevitably aimed far more specifically towards scholars than was the conference. As well as specifically Jenkinsian contributions, Lynn Hulse writes on musical apprenticeship in noble households, David Pinto on Orlando Gibbons, Bruce Bellingham on Ferrabosco II and Frank Trafficante clarifies that the classification 'lyra viol music' did not exclude music in tablature for normal tuning.

## VIOL MUSIC

I mentioned Patrice Connelly and Saraband Music in my travelogue last October. Her first publications have now reached me. Their elegantly-produced white and pale-green card covers contain clearly-printed computer-set music. Most items comprise a dozen pages plus duplicate scores or parts as appropriate. There are two volumes of *Duets for Tenor Viols* (SM1 & SM2), with music by Morley, Gibbons, White, Corkine and anon, all transposed but fitting the tenor comfortably. The disadvantage of printing in score is that there is an impossible page turn in the two Gibbons Fantasias. Two (not three, as the introduction leads us to expect) anonymous Fantasias for TrTrT viols (VdGS 913-914; SM5) will fill a gap in most players' libraries – useful when the bass player(s) have another engagement. Their close counterpoint makes them rewarding. Christopher Simpson's *Divisions in F* for two basses take us to a more virtuosic realm (SM4), 12 brilliant variations on two alternating basses. This is printed in score and parts. Six *Airs for solo violin* (SM3) by Thomas Baltzar, VdGS nos. 6-11, exploit the possibilities of the instrument without (as far as a non-violinist can tell) being impossibly difficult. These issues make a good start for a new publisher. They are available from Saraband Music, 10 Hawkins Street, Artarmon, NSW 2064, Australia, tel/fax +61 2 9419 7595.

There is also a new batch of Supplementary Publications from the Viola da Gamba Society. Now I am no longer a member of the Society's committee, I am perhaps more aware of the aging image of what has been an immensely valuable series. The retention of 'supplementary', for instance, is a gross example of the tail wagging the dog. SP 165, two *Fantasias a6* by Dering, looks rather offputting: six legible but quite casually-written MS parts plus another sheet of detailed critical commentary (surely of minimal value without a score). Surprisingly, bars are two minimi long (SPs have normally preferred four-minim bars). Both pieces are in the collection of *Six Fantasias a6* produced much more attractively by PRB in 1994, so there is little point in their separate publication. The cover gets the composer's Christian name and the VdGS numbers wrong.

Simon Ives's *Fantasy a6* No. 1 looks similar, but could surely have had No. 2 on the back (SP 166).

The editor of the PRB Dering contributes Cranford's two *Fantasias a3* (SP 172) and Pilkington's *Fantasia a6*; the latter has long been available in score as part of the Stainer and Bell edition of his *Second Set of Madrigals*, so publication in parts alone is in this case sensible, and a typical SP hand and style is perfectly acceptable. Derry Bertenshaw has followed an article in *Chelys* 23 with an edition of a fantasy freely based on Vecchi's *O che vezzosa a5* (SP 170), which is given in clear, computer set parts accompanied by a score, the latter giving a hypothetical underlay. Finally comes a pair of publications that are technically almost of a professional standard (computer-set, though with the proportions not looking quite right), an edition of Thomas Marc's three sonatas for treble/pardessus and bass. SP 173 has parts for treble, bass and continuo; SP 174 is a score with keyboard realisation. This gives a chance for treble players to exercise a little more virtuosity (and improve their technique) than most of the repertoire the Society has published (though it issued *Sonata 2* in MS twenty years ago). Prices for members are mostly £2.00 or £3.00 (the realised version of the Marc is £5.00): despite criticism, they are still good value. But I think that the committee needs to reconsider the repertoire and technical presentation of the series in the future. (Membership enquiries to Caroline Wood, 56 Hunters Way, Dringhouses, York, YO2 2JJ; orders to Judith Hughes, Bluegates Hole, Mill Lane, Byfleet KT14 7RR.)

It strikes me as odd that another organisation, *The Gamba Music Club*, should be set up to perform the services that the Gamba Society has or should be doing: why not work through the existing organisation, whose committee would surely welcome enthusiastic supporters. Is there really room for two organisations? Their series of cheap music includes vocal music – I hope with the text retained – and other items that are not specifically viol repertoire; further information from Cathy Gaskell, 32 The Burgage, Market Drayton TF9 1EG by 23 February.

### 30 VOLUNTARIES & SOME PSALMS

John Blow *Complete Organ Music* edited by Barry Cooper, (*Musica britannica lxix*). Stainer & Bell, 1996. xxxiv + 97pp, £59.50. ISBN 0 85249 834 9

Our heading alludes to the late Harold Watkins Shaw's edition for Schott, now out-of-print but probably owned by older readers likely to be interested in playing Blow. Leaving aside a more detailed listing of variant readings, what else does this new MB give us? There are 15 so-called 'Psalm Tune Settings'. Their function is described in Appendix 2 of *The New Oxford Book of Carols* (it's an accident that I'm mentioning this so much, not because I'm writing at Christmas), to which the editor could usefully have referred. Their interest is more as rare examples of the notation of improvised practice than for being by Blow, so

it is a pity that his examples are published in isolation from the small number of other examples – though it is better to have some available than none. It also gives three doubtful works, two movements from a 1780 edition perhaps by Purcell or Blow and the Old 100th elaboration also ascribed to both composers. Finally there are incipits of 15 works ascribed to or possibly by him. Apart from one by Frescobaldi, the line dividing these from works incorporated in the volume is not so clear-cut that they deserve complete exclusion; this is quite a slim volume, so there was plenty of room to include a wider selection of pieces that further research may show to be as near to the canon as those now included. If their presence in Geoffrey Cox's thesis (Oxford 1984, repr. Garland 1989) justifies omission, page references to it would have been convenient.

Turning to the 30 Voluntaries, the first problem is the lack of any relationship in order between the two collections. The contents do not overlap entirely, since the Schott 30 includes the Old 100th and two items of which MB only gives incipits (as nos. 49 & 50) and the numbering is completely different. I don't think that the MB editor had any alternative but to create a new set of numbers by the rational principle of key. But surely it is only courteous to the user to include a concordance table and to give the number in Shaw at least in the commentary. After all, however good this edition, in the absence of copies of the sources, reference to an edition based on another source can sometimes explicate abbreviated indications in a critical note. There is a form of arrogance here (either from the editor or the MB committee) which assumes that the new edition is self-sufficient and will immediately replace any other. In fact, apart from the existence of longer versions of a couple of pieces, owners of the Schott edition need not feel compelled to update, especially since it is in a format more suited to most organ stands.

I think I have said before that most people using MB editions are likely to be able to deal with C and  $\mathbb{C}$  time signatures without needing to have them translated into 4/4, and do the psalm tunes really need rebarring? Grouses apart, though, our National Collection of Music should certainly contain Blow's keyboard music. The job has been well done, and I look forward to the companion volume of harpsichord music.

Watkins Shaw's revision of his edition of that classic of the small-choir repertory, Blow's *Salvator mundi* (Peters H 105; £1.95), arrived just too late as a peg upon which to append an obituary in the last issue. He was most widely known for his *Messiah*, a remarkable piece of practical musicology for 1959, but was associated with the music of Blow throughout his long life (1911-1996). The new edition removes the dynamics thought necessary in 1949 and most of the indications of cross-rhythms. The 2/2 of the 1949 version is replaced by 4/4 – not, I think, an improvement either as a representation of the original  $\mathbb{C}$  or as a guide to the pulse of a modern performance. I would have thought it more likely that the text comes from the *Exaltation of*

the Holy Cross than the Sarum original of the BCP Visitation of the Sick. Quite what the function of the piece was remains a mystery, perhaps linked with that of Purcell's *Jehova quam multi*: I suspect that there is an Italian model waiting to be discovered (not unlike some of the Lotti Crucifixuses), and that Blow took the text from that.

#### ANGLICANS and METHODISTS

Ruth M. Wilson *Anglican Chant and Chanting in England, Scotland, and America 1660 to 1820* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. xix + 332pp, £40.00. ISBN 0 19 816424 6

Lampe *Hymns on the Great Festivals and Other Occasions... A Facsimile of the First Edition... 1746*. Madison, NJ: The Charles Wesley Society, 1996. 47 + 66 pp. ISBN 1 882339 04 5

There has been little pressure for liturgical reconstructions to provide a context for late-Stuart and Georgian church music since the 1662 Prayer-Book liturgy is still in use. However, practices change over the centuries and the members of Convocation who approved the BCP at the end of 1661 would be surprised were they to hear what happens now at Cathedral services or what happened at parochial ones in the century or so from the mid-Victorian period till the changes in liturgy and musical taste of the last few decades diminished the extent to which canticles and psalms were sung. There were two problems to be solved: how to achieve some degree of unanimity in improvising harmony on the traditional psalm-tones and how to fit English syllables (much less amenable to regular rules than Latin) to the ends of phrases. In fact, it was only at the very end of the period covered by this book that the latter problem was addressed and Ruth Wilson's concern is more with the evolution of the standard four-part settings, how they were used and the attitudes to the practice of chanting. There is a thorough discussion of the institutional background, useful reading in itself for those who think of the Anglican liturgy as being unchanged since the Reformation. I was surprised by the close connection between the liturgical music of the Scottish and the American episcopal churches. It is noteworthy that some English provincial collections include chants. Some of the documentation of performance practice is, in fact, more relevant to the West Gallery/Georgian Psalmody repertoire. Marsh's hints on accompanying (p. 296) surely refer to metrical psalms?

The connection between the Lampe edition and its modern publisher is Charles Wesley: this was the first collection of his hymns to have been issued with tunes. They seem not to have been intended for use in the Wesleys' evangelical gatherings, though some in fact were adopted for such purposes; Robin Leaver lists here 18th- and early 19th-century reprintings and two have survived in Methodist hymnbooks. The more likely destination was the drawing-room of Priscilla Rich, third wife of the theatrical impresario John Rich. The incongruity of the connection between the theatrical-hating Methodists and the theatrical profession is ironic. The tunes are quite florid and pitched for a soprano accompanied by figured bass. The facsimile is

prefaced by a series of essays on Lampe, the verbal texts and the tunes. I was interested to learn that the model for Wesley's metrical variety was German rather than the English metaphysicals. It is this variety that makes one puzzled to what more vernacular tunes his hymns could have been sung; certainly not the normal CM & LM psalm tunes. This is a welcome publication, not just for the history of hymnody but as an expansion of the available repertoire of English 18th-century song. Those who have been enjoying *The Dragon of Wantley* might like to try some of these if they ever need a solo for church.

*I am grateful to Sally Drage for drawing this to my attention; it is available in the UK from Alan Rose, 26 Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde, Cheshire, SK4 6LP for £15.00.*

#### BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH

Clive Brown *Die Neubewertung der Quellen von Beethovens Fünfter Symphonie. New Appraisal of the Sources of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony*. Breitkopf & Härtel, 1996. 104pp, DM29.00

There are few works so central to the repertoire for which a detailed study of the sources can have as much impact on the public as Beethoven's Fifth: is the Scherzo's form ABA or ABABA? The last fully-considered new edition (Gülke's for Peters) opted for the longer form. While there is no doubt that until quite a late stage in the creation of the work Beethoven did envisage that, establishing when he cut it back to the ABA pattern which we normally hear is important in deciding whether the longer version is just a stage which Beethoven rejected or a viable option. To do that needs meticulous detective-work on the sources, which has here been accomplished by Clive Brown. His conclusions perhaps undermine the need to invest in the edition to which this is a critical report: 'These new findings do not significantly affect the masterpiece... a little extra brass and timpani in the first movement (bars 282 to 285), some additional dynamic markings, modified slurring and notation of note beams and stems and a few corrected notes and alternative solutions... may seem to be of minor importance' while the ABABA Scherzo is cautiously rejected. The non-German-speaking conductor will welcome the fact that this appears in both German and English; whatever score you are using, this is worth consulting. But perhaps we should keep open minds until the new edition by Jonathan Del Mar appears from Bärenreiter. Whether in this tiny part of the capitalist world competition produces conformity or diversity remains to be seen.

Breitkopf's new vocal score of Mozart's *Exsultate, jubilate* is nicely printed and the editing is helpful, including a couple of cadenzas and one bar of embellishment. The editor, Christian Rudolf Riedel, also sanctions by small print the raising of the last three notes by an octave. Some may think it vulgar, but Mozart may merely have been avoiding the obvious because its first performer, Rauzzini lacked a top C. The editor has borne in mind what Mozart was writing for him in *Lucio Silla*, including Nannerl's embellishments for one of its arias (EB 8669; DM12.00, i.e. about £4.00).

## LONDON CONCERTS

Shane Fletcher

January can often be a rather disappointing month for concerts in London. The stream of *Messiahs* that take place in December dribbles on into the new year, but just when everyone has made their new year's resolution to switch off the television and renew their mailing lists there is suddenly nothing to go to. This January, however, those who had flicked through the Wigmore Hall diary and who were prepared to brave the cold were rewarded with two excellent concerts.

On Friday January 10th, Melvyn Tan and Ronald Brautigam gave a recital of piano duets by Mendelssohn, Schubert and Weber. The piano duet has been shamefully neglected in recent years. As at Wimbledon, I suppose, doubles are not as glamorous as singles; but the interaction of partners in music as in tennis has its own fascination. In musical doubles there is the added bonus of the increased counterpoint that is possible with four hands and herein may lie one of the reasons for the unpopularity of piano duet music. On a modern grand piano there are always problems of clarity and balance; with so much going on in the lower part of the keyboard, textures can easily be obscured. The joy of the fortepiano is not only that the music is inevitably clearer with the lighter bass tone, but also that the different tone qualities of the various parts of the range make the sound more appealing where the evenness of the modern grand can lead to monotony.

Were it not a piano duet, I am sure that Schubert's F minor *Fantasia*, one of the astonishing works of his last year, would be taken more seriously. It was the climax of the recital. While visually the two pianists could not be more different, with Melvyn Tan's extrovert style and Ronald Brautigam's more restrained appearance, they generally played well together and their playing of the work's main theme had been carefully thought about so that its tragedy was the more devastating at each appearance. Strangely for two players with such historical perspectives, the only section that did not work was the work's dotted slower section with its Handelian grandeur. It was a pity that they had decided to play encores after this fantasia; it was the equivalent of following *Winterreise* with *Jingle Bells*.

Am I alone in confessing to some unease about lute recitals? So often the listener has to make allowances for the acoustic in the hall and for the sheer difficulty of playing the instrument. It is somehow so much safer to listen to lute music on disc where the producer can deal with the acoustical problems and the editor can cope with the technical ones. In comparison the spills and thrills (and they are usually in that order) of live performance are a high risk strategy.

Paul O'Dette's recital on January 12th set breathtakingly high standards. Firstly he is a lutenist of great technical mastery, capable of a complete evenness of tone. Secondly, he can produce an astonishingly variegated palette of tone colours by subtle adjustments of right-hand position, left hand intensity and various combinations of these. Finally, he has a musical instinct that leads him to find just the right sound for each line of the music. His programme was an all-Dowland recital and not once was there a feeling of repetitiveness. I was sitting well behind the middle of the Wigmore Hall and every note was crystal clear. This was through a careful balance between lines, an ability to project tone with warmth and intensity and also because his playing commanded the complete attention of the audience. Paul O'Dette has the knack of turning the lute, with its fast decaying sound and speciality in short term effects, into an instrument capable of sustaining long melodies and weavings of counterpoint. Each piece ends with a release of energy that under his hands perfectly matches the momentum of what has gone before. Nowhere was all this shown more clearly than in the *Farewell*, in which the chromatic lines revealed the long term structure of the music. There were plenty of jollier delights, too with favourites such as the *Earl of Essex Galliard* and *My Lady Hunsdon's Puffe*.

Those in London who stayed away because of the cold, or because of their televisions or because they are not too keen on lute recitals, missed a rare treat. Listening to Paul O'Dette one could start to understand what Dowland's contemporaries saw as so special in the way he played his own music.

Shane Fletcher will report regularly on London concerts. I particularly welcome his advocacy of my favourite Schubert work (probably the only piano piece I have practised since I was about fifteen). I was also at the Dowland concert and share his enthusiasm. Technique and understanding were united in exploring and presenting to the audience (Paul lacks the introversion characteristic of lute soloists) music in which form and emotion are perfectly attuned. CB

## HANDEL INSTITUTE AWARDS

(up to £1000) in support of research projects involving the life or works of Handel or his contemporaries. Deadline 1 September 1997. Details from Prof. Colin Timms, Department of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT

Tel/fax: 0121 414 5781;  
e mail c.r.timms@bham.ac.uk

## JOHANN GOTTFRIED MÜTHEL

Robin Freeman

The British Clavichord Society organised a concert on Sunday 17th November 1996 at St Matthew, Westminster. The soloist was Menno van Delft, playing a programme of Johann Gottfried Müthel (1728-88) on Katin Richter's 1986 copy of the C.G. Hubert unfretted 1771 instrument.

J. G. Müthel wrote some of the most exquisitely expressive clavichord music of the German rococo. In Riga, where he was befriended by Herder, he would refuse to play it publicly except in winter when the snow muffled the sound of passing carts and carriages. Lacking snow, there are no better places to hear it in London than the church of St. Matthew's, Westminster on a quiet Sunday afternoon. Menno van Delft chose the two ariosi with 12 variations and two of the three sonatas published in 1756 under the same covers by Hartmann in Nürnberg. The young Müthel had sought out not only J. S. and C. P.E Bach but Hasse and Telemann as well. It was thanks to Hasse that he came to know the Italian baroque so well. His highly original interpretation of the *Empfindsamstil* is thus deeply rooted in Baroque practice nowhere more than in the ritornello concerto movement and in the chromatic rectitative. Perhaps the most striking thing about Müthel's most ambitious scores (including the duetto that so impressed Dr. Burney) is the use of sonata type development procedures within the skeletal outline of ritornello concerto form, though the overall harmonic plan often generates a tension more akin to the chaconne.

The shape and scale of the two varied ariosi descend from those in collections like Pachelbel's *Hexachordum Apollonis* but, aside from contrapuntal detail prompted by the Goldberg Variations, Müthel introduces flurries of breathtaking rococo figuration and patches of *Empfindsamstil* harmony. Menno van Delft's training as an organist and harpsichordist means that his performances tend to bring out the conservative side of Müthel's thought, something that does no harm in the quicker movements; but in the slow movements of the F major and G major sonatas, where Müthel's Shandean eccentricity comes very much to the fore, a less measured approach to the text would be preferable. In every other way, an exceptional recital of music by an exceptional composer, recognised as such by the standard reference works but still too little heard, above all on clavichord and fortepiano, the two instruments best suited to his style.

Müthel also features on a 2CD set by Musica Alta Ripa. They ignore this affinity by giving sonata, duetto and both concertos to robust harpsichords copied from instruments built before Müthel was born. The omission of repeats is

also regrettable. Nevertheless, all the performances are highly musical and the idea of making available six major works of Müthel, together with three boisterous polonaises that represent and unexpectedly 'low and tavern' side to his music-making, can only be greeted with admiration. The B flat major concerto in particular is an extraordinary work where sonata logic involves a second subject in a slower tempo than the first and which gradually extends its sway so as to herald the subsequent Adagio. Played on the fortepiano this concerto would not pale on the same programme as the K271 of Mozart. The d minor concerto introduces for the slow movement two obbligato bassoon parts. The effect is not unlike the pastorale vein of Homilius or Krebs. Müthel must have been content with his two bassoonists, for he went on to write an entire concerto for them. About the performance of this one should have no reservation whatsoever; the early classical bassoons are exquisite in tone, the virtuosity demanded and obtained simply dazzling.

J. G. Müthel Konzerte und Kammermusik Musica Alta Ripa  
Musikproduktion Dabringhaus und Grimm MD+G A 34552/53  
CD1 Polonaises in Bb, F & G, Duett in C, Sonatas in D & F  
CD2 Concerto in Bb *kbd & str*, in Eb 2 *bsn, str, bc*, D *kbd*

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The British Clavichord Society was formed in June 1994 to promote the understanding of the clavichord and the enjoyment of its music through the study of its past and present use, its construction and its repertoire. The society promotes recitals and organises lectures on the construction, history and repertoire of the instrument. Members of the society receive a newsletter three times a year and a comprehensive *Register*. Subscription details are obtainable from Sheila Barnes, 3 East Castle Road, Edinburgh, Scotland EH10 5AP Tel +44 (0)131 229 8018.

The next meeting is in the School of Pythagoras, St. John's College, Cambridge on Sunday 6th April (11am to 7 pm). The subject is HAYDN'S KEYBOARD MUSIC. The performers will be Derek Adlam (clavichord) and Susan Alexander-Max (fortepiano). Speakers will be Derek Adlam, Richard Maunder and Kenneth Mobbs. Tickets for the day will be £32.50 (£25 for BCS members), Booking forms and further details are available from The British Clavichord Society, 26A Church Lane, London 8 7BU Tel +44 (0)181 341 4700 e mail 100603.2732@compuserve.com

## EARLY MUSIC NEWS

Clifford Bartlett

Those who also read *Early Music News* will have noticed a change last month. It no longer contains articles and has become entirely a listings magazine. I thought that readers might be interested in its history, so I asked Michael Procter to describe how it began.

*I proposed the establishment of News during the Early Music Conference in 1977. The Conference included, rightly, a great deal of idealistic talk, but not much that was practical, and my suggestion was welcomed – among others by the Arts Council, who provided a small grant with which I was able to carry out a marketing and launch operation. The first few issues were stuffed into envelopes on my dining room table (the first issue, August 1977, went to 17,000 addresses), with the help of my wife and friends, until we set up an arrangement with Office Aids. Your column was established in the second issue, together with the Diary, which for a long time was a separate, pocket-sized guide which one often saw at concerts. The original format of the magazine itself was four pages of A4, sometimes expanded. Interestingly, the circulation (judging by the instructions to advertisers) has hardly altered in the twenty years of its history.*

Change came in April 1979, when Michael passed the magazine over to the Early Music Centre. The format became A5, with 16 pages, including diary. The diary was henceforth always bound in the magazine, but from March 1980 it was visually distinct and separately paginated. This format lasted until July/August 1992, which had a 16-page magazine and 12-page diary. Each issue contained puffs for forthcoming events, reviews and very often short articles. All issues ended with my reviews of books and editions. Editing and publishing were in the reliable hands of Peter Williamson, one of the stalwarts of the Early Music Centre from its early days. Peter kept the magazine running until 1992 alongside his expanding printing business. Financially, it probably depended on Peter not being too rigorous on accounting for all the effort he put into the magazine. But in 1992 the Early Music Centre thought it could do better.

It took over control and redesigned it. This was for several reasons a disaster. There was no inherent objection to changing the size back to A4. But the redesign to make it look smarter backfired: it won no new readers but was more expensive to produce. It was also far more difficult to edit. The rigid design meant that every article had to fit on a page, whereas previously Peter could start laying out material from the front and the back and only needed to adjust where they met (which usually meant getting me to cut or add a few lines). No consideration was given to creating new content to match the new design, and only in its last year did it manage to have much worth-while reading matter. I was a member of the Early Music Centre

Publications Committee throughout this period (for much of the time its Chairman), but all my misgivings were overruled by the centre's management, which seemed more concerned about fashionable design than what might appeal to the early-music constituency.

It soon became obvious that EMN was a financial disaster. Apart from the printing costs, it was uneconomic to run staff in the EMC office and also use Peter Williamson as typesetter. After a couple of years, the management decided that Peter should go, though I was reluctant that less-experienced office staff should be given precedence over Peter Williamson's skill and long-term commitment to News. On 8 February 1994 the EMC Council formally agreed that Peter's services should not be dispensed with for six months pending proper consideration of the financial problems.

I studied the figures and was puzzled how the magazine could survive. Before I could discuss the problem with anyone, I received a copy of a letter dated 1 March 1994 from the EMC Chairman telling Peter that his services were not required after the next issue. I resigned at once in protest at his unconstitutional and improper action (even apart from the Council decision, he should have discussed it with me as chairman of the committee responsible) and started *Early Music Review*, with design and production as basic as possible on principle. I was unable to say anything publicly about the cause of the break with News at the time, since the Chairman suddenly became ill and died, a blow to the Centre, which had lost a most capable Administrator in a fatal accident nine months previously.

News lasted for another two and a half years only through heavy subsidy of the Early Music Centre by the Arts Council. Since other specialist early-music magazines function without state support, this clearly put the Arts Council in an untenable position, and I gather that the recent transformation of News is at least in part the consequence of that.

We wish the new management of News well. Since *EMR* began, we have avoided direct competition by concentrating on our different functions, and we trust that will continue. We leave the listing of events to News, merely including a few news items at a late stage of production to fill in gaps. We have, however, taken over one feature from the old News and have asked Shane Fletcher to write a regular page or two on London concerts. It may no longer be true (if it ever was) that London sets the pace for early music concert activity the world over, but we hope we will cover what is going on in such a way as to interest all our readers, not just those in Britain.

## Why can't a woman sound like a boy?

Robert Oliver

*17th & 18th Century Songs & Catches* The Hilliard Ensemble 43' 23" (rec. 1981?) *Saga Classics EC 3332-2*

The Hilliard comprises David James, Paul Elliott, Leigh Nixon and Paul Hillier + two 'musicians' (as opposed to singers), Lena-Liis Kiesel *hpscd* and Anneke Pols *gamba*.

*The Food of Love: Words & Music for Shakespeare's Theatre* The Gesualdo Consort, Dorothy Linnell *lute*, John D. Collins *reader* 74' 42" *Cantoris CRCD6017*

*Songs & Dances from Shakespeare* Deborah Roberts *S*, John Potter *T*, The Broadside Band, Jeremy Barlow 69' 46" *Saydisc CD-SDL 409*

*The Musicians of Grope Lane: Music of Brothels and Bawdy Houses of Purcell's England* The City Waites 71' 45" *Musica Oscura 070969*

*The Queen's Delight: 17th-Century English Ballads and Dances* The King's Noyse, Ellen Hargis *S*, David Douglass *dir*, Paul O'Dette *lute* 71' 37" *harmonia mundi HMU 907180*

Singing early music presents problems of tone production which cannot be easily solved by so-called traditional singing ideas. Those of us who have trained as singers over the last 30 years have had to develop or adapt our techniques in ways often intuitively discerned. Since the Michael Morrow/Jantina Norman coup de grâce of the 60s there has been a non-stop debate and some considerable variety of solution. Some of this has been very distinguished, born out of great gifts – Nadia Boulanger's Monteverdi team, Alfred Deller and Emma Kirkby spring immediately to my mind. But sometimes the desire for pure, boy-like sounds has been at the expense of expressiveness, inferring the detachment of unknowing and unworldly youth. It is, as any musician knows, the desire for expressiveness which really tests technique.

Each of these five recently-issued recordings features 17th-century English song, mainly informal music rather than 'art song', and offers an interesting comparison between different approaches to similar repertoire. All include instruments to some extent and, with one exception, have been recorded in the last three years.

The exception is the Hilliard recording of songs and catches from the 17th & 18th centuries, a reissue from, presumably, 1981, the date of Paul Hillier's booklet notes. Faultless intonation and tone, a choral approach to one-voice-to-a-part songs yields results that are beautiful in Purcell's (?) 'When the cock begins to crow' and risibly inappropriate in Ravenscroft's 'We be three poor mariners'. The whole is a neat mixture of accompanied solos and duets (Purcell, Blow's marvellous 'Chloe found Amyntas') with harpsichord and bass viol, plus catches and glees by Boyce, Eccles, Arne and anon. The fact that there are only 44 minutes of music makes it poor value for a start. But the lack of real character in, for example, the pallid rendition of 'Lost is my quiet', the not funny, po-faced rendition of the

nudge-nudge catch 'My man John' far outweigh the skilled performances and the all too occasional touches of real involvement with words and moods.

*The Food of Love* is more recently recorded (1993 and 1995) but turns its back on developments in tone production. The Gesualdo Consort's many virtues belong to an age other than that of the repertoire they present here. Unbroken legato, well-produced voices, beautiful tone were it Brahms or Schubert, phrasing by line rather than by syllabic inflection; I found myself straining to hear the words even of songs I knew. Their vocal techniques are secure, but inappropriate, the vibrato well-controlled, but ever present, their tuning good, but ever-blurred by vibrato and over-rich tone. Some of the solo songs are well sung, but I do not trust the balance – the lute is too much to the fore. The programme notes are very general, (Robert Jones' 'Farewell, dear love', which itself pinches a tune known also to Thomas Mulliner as *La doune cela*, is said to be by Thomas Ford) and do not acknowledge the many arrangements. Though these are plausible and reasonable, the listener should be informed. A renaissance flute appears, though we are not told who plays it, and lute solos, undemanding versions of tunes mentioned in the plays, plus appropriately chosen readings, give a pleasing unity. However, the overall approach dates this recording twenty years earlier than its recording dates.

The same area of repertoire is covered rather better by *Songs and Dances from Shakespeare* recorded by the Broadside Band with John Potter and Deborah Roberts. I liked the style of Deborah Roberts' boy-like soprano (no vibrato, clear words and inflexions, clear, lovely tone, easy top) but wondered why she did it. Not one of her songs has any atmosphere. 'Full fathom five' from *The Tempest* (a spooky experience for the almost-drowned Ferdinand, washed up on a beach by the eponymous storm) is briskly presented, with no feeling of its theatrical context. John Potter, on the other hand, achieves great variety and expressiveness within very narrow dynamic limits with a beautifully judged *mezza voce*, real pathos here, a gleam in his eye there. It would have been good had he opened out once or twice, as the whole recording has a slightly documentary feeling. One is well-informed about the music for the plays, the tunes and the instruments, but, while the lute playing of George Weigand has a nicely spontaneous vitality, the recorder, fiddle and bass viol just play the notes, without any of the zest of the folk-band that they sound like and should imitate. It's all a bit pious, but well worth having as a reference tool, and for John Potter's singing.

Piety cannot be ascribed to a single note of The City Waites' *The Musicians of Grope Lane*. Rapscallion, reeking of cheap

gin and bawdy music hall, they sound like Steeleye Span and The Chieftains after the nine o'clock watershed. Lucie Skeaping belts out her numbers with shocking relish – Moll Flanders to the life, and Doug Wootton ('treble yer double entendre') subscribes here to the Long John Silver school of voice production. Their bass singer (Michael Brain) sounds appropriately miffed when, singing the part of the Devil of Hell, he has his nuts chopped off by Doug Wootton's tailor, and is then cozened by his wife (Lucie Skeaping). The instrumental arrangements are in appropriate style, have lots of flair, and are played with lashings of gusto. Nothing documentary here, but there is care behind the devil-may-care approach – Wootton's divisions in 'Mundanga was', Roddy Skeaping's neat bass viol chordal accompaniment to 'Oyster Nan'. But don't listen to it all at once. I found the hilarity and guffaws a little relentless, and would have liked a bit of sweet melancholy here and there – even Moll Flanders could weep.

No reservations with the singing of Ellen Hargis with lute and cittern (Paul O'Dette) and The Kings Noyse (renaissance violin band directed by David Douglass). I have long been a fan of all these artists. The combination of good basic vocal technique (support, open throat, minimal or controlled vibrato, good dynamic control) with a beautifully rich and evocative soprano tone, plus, oh joy, a real range of dramatic feelings makes Ellen Hargis one of the top sopranos singing this repertoire. David Douglass and his violin band make a lovely sound without neglecting their role as jig fiddlers, Paul O'Dette is a truly vigorous lutenist who plays with great expression and delightful rubato. The recording features popular ballads and ballad tunes arranged in authentic 17th-century style – all plausible, if occasionally far-fetched. The notes explain it in rather more generalities than I would like, but so what. Definitely buy it and enjoy it from start to finish.

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#### MIME AND GESTURE IN THE 18TH CENTURY THEATRE

NEMA has gathered together a number of experts in the field of mime and gesture at a conference to take place on Sunday 23rd February at the Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 5HN. The Chairman is Professor Brian Trowell and the speakers will be Ian Caddy, Giannandrea Poesio, Paul Goring and Madeleine Inglehearn. Guy Callan will show the traditional mime and gesture used in the *commedia dell'arte* and there will be an opportunity to visit the Museum's exhibition of London's history.

Further information and booking forms from NEMA, 41 Talma Gardens, Twickenham, Mdx. TW2 7RB Tel/fax: 0181 892 9638 Fee £21 (NEMA members £14, students £7)

\*\*\*\*\*

We were cheered by a note from Carlton Classics: *Food of Love* will arrive after Jan. 6th. Presumably it was not suitable for the twelve days of Christmas.



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New titles February 1997

### MUSIC FROM VENICE

**Cavalli *Missa concertata*** a8 (1656) B4 score £15.00  
SATB SATB, 2 vln, vlc, ATB trmbn, bc

instrumental parts set £25.00

also small-print A4 score (24 staves to the page) £10.00

*Prepared for a forthcoming recording for Hyperion directed by Peter Holman.*

**Cavalli *Vespero della Beata Maria Vergine*** a8 1675) SATB ATTB org score £10.00

*Commissioned for a performance under Robert Weddle in Caen in March 1993 and recently corrected for a performance in Bern.*

**A. Gabrieli *Vieni Himeneo*** a8 (1590) [down a 4th]

SATB ATTB [or AATBar TBarBar B] score £1.00  
Chorus scores in alternative clefs for instruments each £0.50

*The edition in A-R's Complete Madrigals ignores the division into two choirs and the implication of the chiavette. This and several of the Giovanni Gabrieli works listed below were prepared for a large-scale programme Lo Sposalizio devised with Robert King and performed by The King's Consort in Vienna last month.*

**G. Gabrieli edited by Richard Charteris**

**Canzon XII in echo 12 toni a 10 per concertar con l'organo** (1597) score & parts £12.00

*a version of Canzon XI (also available at £12.00) with organ accompanying 2 cornetti + ritornelli a 10*

**Canzon XIV** a10 (1615) score & parts £15.00  
vln, cnt, C2, F4, F4; vln, cnt, C1, F3, F3

**Domine Deus meus** a6 C1 C3 C3 C4 C4 F4 score £2.00

**Lieto godea** a8 (1587) down a 5th (as quoted by Schütz) £1.50  
ATBarB; ATBarB set of 8 chorus scores £5.00

**Magnificat** a17 (1615) set £20.00 score £5.00  
G2 C1 C2 C4; C3 C4 F3 F5; C1 C3 C4 F4; G2 C1 C3 C4 F5

**Misericordia tua Domine** a12 (1615) score £5.00  
C1 C3 C 4 F4; C C4 C4 F4; C4 C4 F4 F5 set £12.00

**Suscipe clementissime** a12 (1615) score £4.00  
voices C3 C3 C4 C4 F4; trombones C4 C4 F3 F3 F4 F5 set (6 VSc, 6 parts, org) £15.00

**Udite chiari** a15 cornetto muto 14 voices & org £4.00  
G2 C1 C1 C3 C4 C4 F4; C1 C1 C2 C4 C4 F4 set £16.00

*NB original clefs of Gabrieli editions are quoted to show ranges, but scores and parts are in suitable modern clefs (middle parts with alternatives in G and C clefs). Underlined parts are explicitly vocal. Sets include either a part (with underlay if original is texted) or a chorus score for each part + a figured organ part.*

## B. Galuppi – Sonata in D major [3rd (=final) movement]

And[anti]no

Violin I

Violin II

Basso

10

15

22

27

1 2

1 2

1 2

1 2

1 2

1 2

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**Corelli Sinfonia Santa Beatrice d'Este (1689)** score £3.00

solo: vln I, II, vlc; rip: vln I, II, vla, vlc, db set £10.00

**Duport Essai sur le Doigté du Violoncelle (1813)** £40.00

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We have the last 4 copies of the OUP edition with introduction by David Boyden; when they are sold, we will supply photocopies without the introduction in our normal style at the same price.

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## RECORD REVIEWS

We have been wondering for some time whether to give any price indications and from this issue we will show budget-price discs by the symbol £ and mid-price discs by ££. Others may be assumed to be full price. But information may not always be reliable, especially outside the UK. Normally, CDs reviewed are new releases or new reissues; for the latter we quote date of recording if known, otherwise date of original issue. However, we sometimes include earlier releases from companies we have not covered before, and this month we welcome a batch from Fermate.

## CHANT

*Gregorian Chant: the selected 1930 French HMV recordings of the monastic choir of the Abbey of Saint Pierre de Solesmes* 75' 13" Vocal Archives VA 1137

The Solesmes style is the basis of most church-based chant singing, and this chance to hear how it was sung long before the idea of authentic performance practice was applied to any other type of music should not be missed. I was particularly interested in the way the singers move slightly out of synchronisation with each other but in a way that is appealing rather than ragged. However, the documentation is inadequate; one would expect a company specializing in early vocal recordings to quote the numbers of the original records and there is no indication at all of the liturgical function of the 31 pieces included. CB

*In Pragensi ecclesia: Christmas at Prague's Cathedral during the Reign of Charles IV* Schola Gregoriana Pragensis, David Eben Supraphon SU 3191-2-231 66' 57"

This is interesting as a selection (in liturgical order) of chant from First Vespers of Christmas Night to the Third Mass of Christmas Day as sung at St Vitus's Cathedral in the 14th century (Charles IV was Emperor 1346-78). But it has added value since as well as chant it includes troped and polyphonic lessons (translated as *lectures* in the notes), and the disc concludes with a *Liber generacionis* with three-voice interpolations. The singing is good, the chant in a slightly post-Solesmes style and the polyphony arising from it just a little harder-edged. CB

## MEDIEVAL

*Machaut Messe de Notre Dame* Ensemble Organum, Marcel Pérès 56' 36" harmonia mundi HMC 901590

Packaged with free sampler *Portrait* (SP 042) containing 13 tracks (78' 12") from 1983-95.

*Machaut La Messe de Notre Dame, Songs from Le Voir Dit* Oxford Camerata, Jeremy Summery 77' 50" Naxos 8.553833 £

These are as different as one could imagine, leaving me even more puzzled than I was

before about how the Mass might be performed. The songs worry me less, and if I prefer the Naxos disc, it is partly because they make it a broad and cheap introduction to Machaut's work as a whole, even if the secular items feel a little cautious. The Mass was recorded in Reims Cathedral, not exactly in the spot where it would have been sung every Saturday during Machaut's last years (and perhaps long after), since that now has a different acoustic, but in another part of the building. This results in a close recording with an enormous echo lurking behind it; I found it more acceptable for casual than careful listening. But I'm not sure whether aiming for a realistic acoustic is relevant; I imagine that in Machaut's time, while this Mass was being celebrated there were all sorts of other activities in the cathedral (including other votive masses) and that the music was not projected to fill the building but sung somewhat inwardly. Any listeners would have tried to ignore the background noise, so it may be perverse to try to create that sense of space that those originally present would have been trying to ignore. Ensemble Organum produce their habitual coarse sound. That might have been exciting, but it is so undisciplined and the tuning is so haphazard that it reminds me more of the recording of *Old Foster* from a Yorkshire pub. Machaut's music is elaborate enough not to need slowing down so that embellishments can be added. Listen to it to open your mind (and the free anthology CD gives a chance to sample Pérès's style on music covering a millennium). But if you want a performance with chant that will stand repeated hearing, the Taverner Consort is preferable (EMI CDC7 47949-2). CB

*El Canto de la Sibilla II: Sibilla Galaica* (Alfonso X), *Sibilla Castellana* (anon 16th cent.) Montserrat Figueras, La Capella Reial de Catalunya, Jordi Savall 71' 12 Auvidis Fontalis ES 990

With the 1990 Glasgow Early Music Festival performance of this repertoire by these forces still a vivid memory, I was anxious to train a slightly more scholarly ear on music which had left a deep impression on me. This performance takes the form of two lengthy sequences, the first taken from 12th and the second from 16th-century sources; within each sequence, verses for full choir alternate with the idiosyncratic solo voice of Montserrat Figueras. The effect is narcotically beautiful, but seems to me to involve some very creative interpretation of the originals. Choral scoring reminiscent of Arvo Pärt, sobbing vocal ornaments and a flute which sounds on occasion like a Shakuhachi leave us teetering on the edge of pastiche. Switch off your critical faculties and enter at your own peril the gloomy caves of the Sibyls! D. James Ross We shall review vol. 1 next month.

*Carmina Burana* The Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen 72' 46" Erato 0630-14987-2

As usual with the Boston Camerata I love some tracks but am suspicious of others. In particular, the concept of well-disciplined choral singing worries me. Can we imagine Philip the Chancellor having weekly choir rehearsals for music enthusiasts among the Parisian students? No doubt students joined together to sing in the pub, but surely not as well as this? It raises the same problem as that of 18th-century demotic church music: should we aim at a professional quality of performance which may be unlike that which it normally received? But that apart, this has an infectious air of enjoyment. I could go through each piece and mark its plausibility, but in such unknown territory, the austerity I would prefer is merely my taste and I would not want to turn others away from such a well-thought presentation of the poems and melodies. CB

*Chansons de Trouvères* Paul Hillier, Andrew Lawrence-King 69' 40" harmonia mundi HMDU 907184

Starting with a voice-over asking if we wish to listen to a song of love (too brief even to begin to worry how long this will last), we are quickly into beautiful performances of the rich repertoire of the Trouvères. The extraordinarily clear diction makes the most of the words. The sparse sound of medieval instruments led me to expect a leaner vocal tone. I'm sure the trouvère yearned hungrily more than sipped elixir in comfort. Sometimes the deep feeling for the poetry is allowed to produce an over-reflective, backward-looking performance rather than a submission to the natural momentum of the melody. The instrumental realisations are extremely imaginative with a galaxy of techniques and inventions. The more resonant psaltery is used to carry the rhythmic pieces forward, the drier harp for the more contemplative songs, with articulation moving from the percussive to a wonderfully soft breathing effect. Melodic compressions and distortions are created from corners of the songs, with flamenco-style figures and reactions to the words. Monodic sources lacking rhythmic notation give scope for virtual recomposition and this disc is compelling listening. Stephen Cassidy

*The Romance of the Rose: Feminine Voices from Medieval France* Heliotrope 63' 11" Koch 3-7103-2H1

The theme here is love (courtly and otherwise) as seen through the eyes of medieval woman, the selection including troubadour songs, chansons de toile and three settings from *The Romance of the Rose* or *Guillaume de Dole*. Reactions to the performances by the accomplished American group Heliotrope

will depend on the level of instrumental participation you accept in this repertoire, which for my taste is in general both too extensive and too sophisticated. Joyce Todd's soprano is intrinsically attractive, but her unvaried tone and diction are less than ideal for poems that demand more expressive interpretation if they are to hold fully the listener's attention – the ear is frequently distracted by the fine instrumental playing. Nevertheless the disc is worth investigating (ideally after sampling first) and, to bring us back to a familiar *EMR* topic, you don't have to play it in one sitting! Full texts and translations are included. *Brian Robins*

**Perotin and the Ars Antiqua** The Hilliard Ensemble 73' 32" *Hilliard Live 1*

It is only eight years since EMG released a Hilliard recording of Perotin. The sheer sound of the two major four-part pieces, *Viderunt* and *Sederunt*, in particular was extremely impressive, even though there may have been doubts whether the music itself was submerged by the total effect. These and *Alleluia Nativitas* are the only overlaps with the new CD, which otherwise concentrates on anonymous music. The manner is far less hieratic, more varied, with the top line in particular sounding a little excitable. The impression is more musical but less distinctive.

Several non-musical points deserve mention. As the adverts in our last two issues showed, it is available on subscription only. The disc comes in an A5 package with a 16-page booklet (including notes by Mark Everist, an essay by Rogers Covey-Crump on tuning and temperament and texts with translations by Selene Mills) plus a 4-page Hilliard newsletter and a cartoon. Since the current format for CDs needing more than minimal printed information is so inadequate and the print in booklets has to be so small, this is an excellent alternative, though presumably will not catch on since record shops are geared to a standard size. The recording is of a live concert at last years' Cambridge Summer School; extraneous noises and passages requiring a retake are few. I thought that the framing applause was superfluous. Don't switch off too quickly at the end. *CB*

**The Muses' Gift** 66' 56" *WAL 8003-2*

**Venus' Fire** 62' 18" *WAL 8004-2*

**The Ring of Creation** 58' 11" *WAL 8005-2*

**Garland Dances** 72' 45" *WAL 8006-2*

The Renaissance Players, Winsome Evans Walsingham Classics

This is a refreshing collection of dance-inspired pieces from the 12th to early 15th century, intelligently realised and well performed by an Australian-based ensemble. Do not be put off by the gaudy cover art. The full line-up of a dozen is used sparingly and includes Mara Kiek (ex-Sinfonye), though her distinctive voice is only on a couple of tracks. I and II are secular, and similar in style and balance; III contains liturgical dance and dance realisations of religious conductus; IV has mostly secular pieces with the emphasis on love and 'games'.

This is fresh and stylish music-making, rather than museum reconstruction. Several pieces come from the modern *Codex Snavensis*, written using medieval style and structure, often based on medieval tunes. Providing this is done honestly (as here), I see it as a creative solution to expanding a limited repertoire, and a natural extension of the improvisations necessary to realise most pieces anyway. It's good to hear old war-horses such as *Kalenda maya* given new insights that make sense of both text and music. Most arrangements are small scale, with 3 or 4 musicians. There is some mellow (yes, really!) shawm playing and I liked the naturalness of singer Mina Kanaridis. Many pieces have been realised with actual dance in mind, and much use is made of long and short measures as found in Balkan folk dance and Spanish *Cantigas*. The atmosphere is infectious, and I would love to see this group live. I was unconvinced by the use of spoken word for whole tracks, either modern (I track 1, unfortunately) or King James English (II). This might work in live performance or broadcast, but perhaps needs brief, original-tongue extracts to bear repeated listening on a music CD. Where this is done (IV), it works.

If you've not liked medieval music before, or are fed up with straight or creaky '70s versions, try I or II. If you fancy a challenge to the constricted presentation of much religious music, try III (I'm struggling with some of this!) If you want something sexy to dance to, go for IV. *Alison Sabedoria*

## 15th CENTURY

**Missa Caput and the story of the Salve Regina (The Spirits of England and France, 4)** Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 66' 02" *Hyperion CDA66857*

Also 6 English carols and *Agnus Dei* (Old Hall MS)

What a mixture: a Mass not by Dufay set amid a versified fable of the origin of the *Salve Regina* foisted onto chant melodies belonging to other texts, some 15th-century carols and an Old-Hall *Agnus Dei*. What unites them and justifies the compilation is the characteristic performance from Gothic Voices. The mass struck me at first as rather fast; but after repeated hearings (especially with the score) it worked, and I would be surprised if it does not set a new trend for the way melismatic polyphony is sung, though I wonder whether the absolute clarity of the detail might feel to some listeners like the re-creation of the act of reading a score rather than any blend possible in an ecclesiastical acoustic, however intimate. Like all Gothic Voices CDs, stimulating and unmissable. *CB*

## 16th CENTURY

**Berchem La Favola di Orlando** Ensemble Daedalus, Robert Festa; Maurizio Maiorana *cuntastorie* 54' 10" *Accent ACC 95112 D*

The decision whether to buy this depends chiefly on whether you are happy to have

chunks of Italian narration between the madrigals. As a dramatic concept, it is an essential part of the disc; but even with the printed translation some may find it tiresome. This is, however, a commendable attempt to show that madrigals do not have to be a string of unrelated items. Berchem set 94 stanzas of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. 15 of them are sung here, linked by a narrator from the current Sicilian storytelling tradition. The performances are convincing and enjoyable in their own right independently of the value of the concept as a whole. *CB*

**Dall'Aquila & Da Crema Lute Music: Ricercars, Intabulations, Dances** Christopher Wilson lute 58' 16" *Naxos 8.550778 £*

With the exception of Francesco Canova da Milano and the Spanish vihuelistas, performers or the record companies fear to present unknown names so that much of the lute's core repertory remains unknown to the general public. This disc is particularly welcome, since both composers were near-contemporaries of Francesco and made significant contributions to the repertory. Christopher Wilson has made a varied selection, including some of the charming dance grounds such as *La cara cosa*, from the intabulations and polyphonic fantasias. Eloquently played and beautifully recorded, the disc also has detailed (but different) notes in English, French and German, and all for a fiver! Irresistible; I sincerely hope that more like this will follow. *Lynda Sayce*

**Dowland Vol. 2. In darknesse let me dwell** Paul Agnew T, Christopher Wilson lute *Metronome MET CD 1011 59' 30"*  
Songs from Book III (1603), *A Musicall Banquett* (1610) & *A Pilgrimes Solace* (1612).

This anthology follows on from *Flow My Teares* (MET CD 1010) and includes selections from Dowland's later song books. Some rarely-performed items are included alongside the famous. The format of a mixed anthology instead of a complete performance of a book is very successful. Paul Agnew delivers the texts with exemplary clarity and variety of colour, and is at his best in songs such as *Time Stands Still*, which is effortlessly dreamy. He is ably partnered by Christopher Wilson, who is alert to every nuance. The disc is beautifully produced; the booklet includes full texts, together with a poignant introduction and pointed observations on the individual songs by Robert Spencer. A delightful recording of great subtlety and intimacy. *Lynda Sayce*

**Dowland Complete Lute Works, Vol. 4** Paul O'Dette 63' 51" *harmonia mundi HMU 907163*

Well, four down and one to go, and I am running out of superlatives faster than O'Dette is running out of music. If you haven't bought these yet, do so; this one maintains the dazzlingly high standard of the previous volumes. Alongside a lot of music we have also had a variety of lutes; a

nice development on this disc is the appearance of the 10 course lute and a larger, lower-pitched 8 course instrument, giving an even more sombre feel to such delights as *Lachrymae* and *Loth to Depart*. This new, seventeenth-century timbre is reinforced by a startlingly modern French-style almand and coranto, which add a fascinating new dimension to the whole. One can imagine Dowland dashing them off with contempt, to show he could write in the new style, but chose not to! *Lynda Sayce*

**Fayrfax Missa Albanus** The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood, David Skinner ASV *Gaudemus* CD GAU 160 74' 46" also includes *Ave lumen gratie*, *Eterne laudis lumen*, *O Maria Deo grata*

How can one find new words to command another in the marvellous ASV/Cardinall's Music Tudor series? Or are you one of those who find that the beautiful waves of sound pass over your head and leave no feature in the memory? Listening to this after the Gothic Voices *Caput* makes me wonder whether the baby may perhaps be submerged in the bath water. But 95% of me loves it and I would not say anything to discourage readers from buying it. Maybe the music just has to sound like this. *CB*

**Le Jeune Missa ad placitum, Magnificat** Ensemble Clément Janequin, Dominique Visse 53' 48" harmonia mundi HMC 901607 + motets *Benedicte Dominum, Tristis obedi me*

Why is Claude le Jeune not regarded as one of the greatest of all Renaissance composers? His technique, command of huge forms, wit, and above all ear for melodic and harmonic beauty surely make him a deserving case. The Ensemble Clément Janequin's 1985 recording of Le Jeune's secular music convinced me of his standing, and this issue confirms it. Will Dominique & Co now record the incomparable Octonaires? When they do I will be a very happy, very sad man. *Simon Ravens*

**Victoria Officium defunctorum** Magnificat, Philip Cave 51' 53 Linn CKD060

Magnificat here produces a rich, well-recorded sound with clean lines and a very suitable pace. There is nothing over-dramatic, but good committed singing which lets the music speak for itself. It is, however, a very short disc: as well as the polyphony there is just the curious addition of a plainchant *Benedictus* preceded by its antiphon (from *Lauds for the Dead*): a shame not to have used Victoria's *alternatim* polyphonic setting. *Kyrie* and *Agnus* are not filled out with the necessary *alternatim* plainchant; this, and the lack of the chant propers or Preface, means that even Victoria's fine polyphony becomes a little relentless. And with so much good Victoria still unrecorded, do we need yet another six-voice Requiem? *Noel O'Regan*

**Canto Mediterraneo** Capriccio Stravagante, Skip Sempé 63' 40"

Auvidis *Astrée E 8548*  
Music by Arcadelt, Azzaiolo, Encina, Frescobaldi, Lambardi, Malvezzi, Marini, Ortiz, Philips, Sanz, Scandello, Vecchi

This is a strange programme of Italian and Spanish music ranging over two centuries from Juan del Encina to Biagio Marini without much holding it together, despite attempts by the over-blown but uninformative notes to justify it. There are some good things, though, including Guillemette Laurens's singing, especially in some Frescobaldi arias, and Marini's *Sonata terza* for solo viol and harpsichord. The instrumental playing is not evenly good over the whole range of music and tuning is occasionally suspect, but continuo playing on lute, harp and chitarrone is stylish and lively. Some imaginative pairings and the arrangements add up to a successful sampling of the repertoire that makes for relatively easy listening. *Noel O'Regan*

**Canzoni alla francese aus der Orgeltablatur von Johann Woltz; Geistliche Motetten** Cornettino Cornetto CORN-30-1-0003 55' 05"  
Music by Antegnati, Banchieri, Brumel, Dalla Casa, Forster, Franck, Guarni, Isaac, Lupi, Macque, Maschera, Merulo, Monte, Tresti

As regular readers will know, Cornetto publishes scores as well as CDs, and this links with editions of works from Woltz's organ tablature of 1617; the booklet has a fine colour facsimile of the title page and the disc itself is prettily decorated with tablature. It features a bright, ten-stop chamber organ built in 1994 by Wolfram Stützle played apparently by the cornettist Martin Lubenow (though I'm not sure how much of the cast list to believe, since it includes his wife on chitarrone, which does not feature on the disc). Some of the music is solo, sometimes a cornett is accompanied by organ, and there are canzonas for two cornetts and two sackbuts. Non-specialist listeners might have preferred a more varied alternation of sounds – seven of the ten quartet pieces come in one block – and the close recording becomes tiring if the disc is played for too long at a time. The highlight is Della Casa's diminutions on *Vestivi i colli* and it is nice to have a cornett accompanied by an organ that is not too demure. *CB*

## 17th CENTURY

**Cavalieri La Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo** Judith Nelson Anima, Paul Hillier Corpo, Magnificat, dir Warren Stewart & Susan Harvey 68' 50" Koch International Classics 3-7363-2

A welcome disc, well sung and played, using primarily an instrumental ensemble of cornetts and sackbuts. The team of soloists is nicely matched, with the minor roles not eclipsed by the two more-famous singers. My fears that a bass would sound wrong as the tenor *Corpo* (as with, for instance, a bass *Orfeo*) proved unfounded. I have one major concern. Cavalieri seems to have gone to considerable pains to get his music accurately

printed, and the details of the bass figuring are amazingly precise. Yet the rhythm of the recitative is here treated with enormous freedom; semibreves are sung as minims or crotchets and phrases run into each other omitting the introductory chord. I'm sure that this was not done without good reason (and it is only really noticeable if you are following the score, so it need not put you off getting the recording), but I'd be interested to see a justification. There are at least two subscribers of *EMR* who might care to comment: Ray Nurse, who plays the theorbo on the disc, and Barbara Sachs, who knows the piece intimately and has submitted our edition to thorough scrutiny. So correspondence is welcome. The performers are a different Magnificat from the English group whose Victoria is reviewed elsewhere on this page: perhaps they should distinguish themselves as *primi toni* and *secundi toni*? *CB*

**Charpentier Les Plaisirs de Versailles (H 480); Les Arts Florissants, William Christie** Erato 0630-14774-2 52' 47" also *Airs sur les Stances du Cid* (H 457-9), *Amor vince ogni cosa* (H 492)

This cross-section through Charpentier's relatively small secular output displays all the virtues and vices that previous issues from this stable might lead us to expect. In the first category we can place the fine music and the great care and affection with which the performances are both prepared and delivered: counter-balancing these are the occasional over-characterisation by the singers, the over-colourful instrumentations and the running time! Not even the impeccable booklet and Paul Agnew's noble performance of the *airs sérieux* with texts from Corneille's *Le Cid* can entirely redeem these disappointing features. *David Hansell*

**Frescobaldi Fiori Musicali vol. 2: Messa della Madonna** Canticum dir, Christoph Erkens, Lorenzo Ghielmi (Antegnati organ at San Maurizio in Monastero Maggiore, Milan) 68' 13" deutsche harmonia mundi 05472 77345 2

Adding the plainchant verses to the *alternatim* organ *Kyries* and interspersing the chanted *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei* and *Ite missa est* between Frescobaldi's various organ pieces for the *Missa cum jubilo* may not count as a liturgical reconstruction but, nonetheless, I find this CD completely satisfying. There is the added extra of *Vespers*, using miscellaneous Frescobaldi organ pieces and *alternatim* verses for the *Ave Maris stella* and *Magnificat*. *Canticum* sing the chant with a resonant ebb and flow and the balance in volume, tone and acoustic between the choir and the organ is perfect (although apparently recorded separately). The organ sounds wonderful – it is a 1588 Gian Giacomo Antegnati instrument with 12 stops (based on a 12' *Principale*), meantone tuning and at the high pitch of g'-440Hz. A photograph would have been nice. The playing is lyrical and stylistically apt with a good choice of registrations and speeds. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

**Monteverdi Vespro della beata Vergine (1610)**  
 Maria Cristina Kiehr, Barbara Borden, Andreas Scholl, John Bowen, Andrew Murgatroyd, Victor Torres, Antonio Abete, Jelle Draijer SSATTB BarB, Nederlands Kamerkoor, Concerto Vocale, René Jacobs 104' 07" 2 discs Harmonia mundi HMC 901566.67

To hear why I don't like this, play the opening of the Gloria of the *Magnificat*. That marvellous melisma is preceded by a vulgar outburst from an inflated continuo section: how can a conductor (and a former singer at that) deflate such a moment for the singer? The fine group of soloists is continually undermined by the accompaniment. I know that René Jacobs thinks carefully about such matters, but whether or not it works in the opera pit, it is a distraction here. This is a very 1970s performance. No consideration of how an owner of the 1610 publication might have used it, use of a choir rather than solo ensemble, excessive string doubling of the continuo, and disregard of the *chiavette*. The notes try to justify lack of transposition, but the writer ignores the equally low bass Ds in the *Gloria* a7 and assumes that violins went out of first position in 1610. Were the performance convincing in its own terms, these matters could pale into insignificance; but I do not find anything here that forces me to reconsider my preconceptions. Perhaps I know the work too well. CB

**G. C. Monteverdi Affetti musici Ensemble Concerto, Roberto Gini 101' 01" 2 discs**  
 Auvidis Astrée E 8602

Whether we would have had a chance of hearing a complete 1620 collection of motets had they been by Giulio Cesare Vallerossi may be doubted, but the fame of his brother is a useful excuse to sample some of the lesser heights of the music of the period, and very attractive it sounds. I suspect another group might make it a little more enticing. Those wishing to explore beyond Claudio will find this an interesting set, which shows commendable initiative by the performers and Auvidis. But sadly no track has stuck in my mind: I can't write 'You must listen to this'. CB

**Roncalli Capricci Armonici Jorge Oraíson baroque guitar 87' 10"**  
 Vanguard Classics 99151 (2 CDs) ££

Roncalli's name may ring faint bells on account of Respighi's use of one of his tunes in the *Antiche Danze et Arie per Liuto*, and one of his suites has been recorded several times on various baroque guitar anthology discs. Few know the rest of his works however: nine elegant suites in a single print. This recording very satisfactorily includes the lot. Few baroque guitar composers can be evaluated on disc, and I am happy to report that this one deserves such treatment. The performances are subtly stylish, crisply articulated with glorious ringing campanella passages. There are some signs of strain in the murderous final suite, but this a minor quibble. A very welcome addition to the repertoire. Lynda Sayce

**Rosenmüller Vespro della beata Vergine**  
 Cantus Cölln, Concerto Palatino, Konrad Junghänel 140' 49" 2 CDs  
 harmonia mundi HMC 901611.12

In contrast to the King's Noyse CD (see below) this 2-disc set is an absolute joy: here is Rosenmüller in Venice with the virtuosic forces of San Marco at his disposal, and what a marvellous job he does! For their first recording with harmonia mundi, Cantus Cölln team up with Concerto Palatino and Canticum, a Gregorian chant choir, for a full Vespers service with plainsong antiphons preceding the Psalms and sonatas and motets as substitutes afterwards. The eight solo voices combine beautifully and the cornets and sackbuts, along with a band of two violins, three violas and basso continuo (there's also a solo trumpet in *Lauda Jerusalem*), are crystal clear and often indulge in deft ornamentation. I've long been a champion of Rosenmüller's music: anyone who has ever wondered why should buy this set and be converted instantly! BC

**Rosenmüller 17th-Century Instrumental and Vocal Music** The King's Noyse, Ellen Hargis S, David Douglass dir with Paul O'Dette lute, Mary Springfels gamba 71' 31" harmonia mundi HMD 907179  
 Suite in C (*Studentenmusik*), Sonatas 3, 4, 7, 10, 11 (1682), Ach Herr strafe mich nicht, In te Domine speravi, Jubilant aethera, Lieber Herre Gott

This is principally an instrumental anthology, including a suite from *Studentenmusik* previously recorded on viols by Jordi Savall and five sonatas from the composer's last publication of 1682, interspersed with four pieces for solo soprano. While I was not entirely impressed by Ellen Hargis's singing (her tone is shrill in the upper register and she has a rapid vibrato on notes any longer than a crotchet which I just could not warm to), it was a pleasure to have the repertoire recorded; it is a shame, though, that the instrumental selection duplicates what is already available. The playing is always vibrant and the blend of the renaissance violins and violas is marvellous. On the negative side, there are a couple of gruesomely audible changes of position. Excellent notes by Kerala Snyder. BC

**Sances Music for sopranos, harp & guitar**  
 Musica Fabula (Lilian Mazzarri, Sarah Pillow SS, Steven Player baroque guitar, Jan Walters baroque triple harp, dir) with Alastair Hamilton T 69' 23"  
 ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 155

Giovanni Felice Sances was born in Rome around 1600 and spent most of his adult life in the service of the Italianate court of the Hapsburgs in Vienna. The music on this disc, however, pre-dates this move and is a demonstration of the composer's skill as a monodist. Lovers of Monteverdi's later madrigals will find this very much to their taste and may even feel that they recognise the opening piece, a chaconne so similar to the 1632 *Zefiro torna* that one wonders who was copying whom! (The Sances was published in 1633.) The programme is imaginatively planned – we are given three

different realisations of one item, for example – and the singing is full of commitment and passion, though not always perfectly tuned. John Potter's helpful essay is translated into French and German but the Italian texts (given in full) are translated into English only. Most applause, though, goes to the continuo team for their demonstration that 17th-century music does not need the multi-instrumental kaleidoscopic accompaniment favoured by several recent discs reviewed in these pages.

David Hansell

**A. Scarlatti Cantatas** Gérard Lesne A, Sandrine Piau S, Il Seminario Musicale Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45126 2 9 65' 22"  
*Clori e Mirtillo, E pur vuole il cielo e amore, Ero e Leandro, Filli che esprime la sua fede a Fileno, Marc' Antonio e Cleopatra, Questo silenzio ombroso*

This is ostensibly a showcase for the countertenor Gérard Lesne, presenting six of Scarlatti's 800-odd cantatas, two of them for countertenor alone and the other four for countertenor and soprano (most were composed for soprano and continuo). It provides many unexpected delights, and more variety than I expected. The two voices are well-matched, with silky tone and great virtuosity which, together with their committed approach to the texts, enables the singers to express many moods with conviction. The languorous singing – of which there is much in these amorous cantatas – is beautiful and expressive, and brilliantly contrasted with faster, lighter or angrier singing when the words and music demand it. The continuo department is equally deeply immersed in the genre, and the performance sounds like the result of close study of the music by all performers, not just the director imposing his ideas on the others, although the quirky final notes of several movements are perhaps more idiosyncratic. The playing is dexterous and clear, energetic and languid by turns. The brief instrumental introduction to *Filli...a Fileno* for two violins, flute and continuo, is delightful.

Selene Mills

**A. Scarlatti Cantata per la Notte di Natale (Abramo, il tuo sembiante) 1705** Rossana Bertini, Elena Cecchi Fedi, Claudio Cavina, Sandro Naglia, Sergio Foresti SSATB, Concerto Italiano, Rinaldo Alessandrini 71' 21 Opus 111 OPS 30-156  
 Preceded by Corelli op. 6/8

The libretto of Scarlatti's extended Christmas cantata views the Nativity through the prophetic eyes of five Old Testament characters, an imaginative approach which clearly stimulated the composer to give of his best. In their turn the Concerto Italiano respond with an affectionate and considered performance in which even the da capos become the object of keen anticipation (praise indeed – there are twelve of them!) The singers are not uniformly comfortable with the demands Scarlatti makes upon them – pretty extreme in some cases – but there are no major blemishes; indeed the sopranos are outstanding throughout, and it can all be warmly recommended. As a scene-setting overture the disc also includes an

atmospheric performance of Corelli's Christmas Concerto which not only serves this valuable musical purpose but also takes the running time over seventy minutes. Bravo! on this as well as other counts: *Les Arts Florissants* please note. *David Hansell*

**Schein Israelis Brünlein** Ensemble Vocal Européen, Philippe Herreweghe 79' 12" *harmonia mundi* HMC 901574

I seem to have had better luck than Eric Van Tassel (see the next review) in that this recording of an even more expressive set of sacred madrigals is on the whole successful. The disc is so full that one can hardly complain that five of the original 26 pieces are omitted, though there might have been room for one more had the performances been a bit tighter. Avoidance of metronomic rigidity can be a virtue; but here flexibility seems to derive less from fluent ensemble singing than the imposition of the director. A one-to-a-part madrigal group should not need that sort of external input. The continuo contribution, too, is a little more obtrusive than one would expect in settings *auf eine sonderbar anmütige Italian Madrigalische Manier*. But no more grousing: the music receives performances that are worthy of it, and if you previously thought Schein rather a light-weight composer, buy this to change your mind! *CB*

**Schütz Cantiones sacrae** SWV53-93 Weser-Renaissance (Mona Spägle, Ralf Popken, Rogers Covey-Crump, John Potter, Peter Kooij SATB, Thomas Ihlenfeldt *chitarrone*, Manfred Cordes *organ/dir*) 111' 53" 2 CDs *cpo* 999 405-2

This may be the first complete recording of this 1625 set of sacred madrigals; it certainly seems to be the first recording by a one-per-part vocal consort. In this repertoire I can't speak as a musicologist; but as a performer I'm confident that Schütz's triple-metre inserts should be sesquialtera and are taken too slow here (the all-triple *Cantate Domino* thrives at a brisker tempo). Using only five singers for all 40 movements entails promiscuous (mostly downward) transposition and turns a varicoloured set to near-monochrome. But the singing is always competent and often sensitive, albeit too subdued, with a deft continuo of *chitarrone* and *organ* reserved (wisely) for the handful of pieces that explicitly require it. The recording shows that the best of these pieces, with their appealing craftsmanship and gently mannerist gestures, should be cultivated as programme-openers by every one-per-part ensemble in the business. *Eric Van Tassel*

**Schütz The Christmas Story, Cantiones Sacrae, Psalm 100** Paul Agnew *Evangelist*, Anna Crookes *Angel*, Michael McCarthy *Herod*, Oxford Camerata, Jeremy Summerly 55' 22" *Naxos* 8.553514 £ *SWV* 36, 53-4, 69, 81, 435

**Schütz Weihnachtshistorie; Praetorius Motets** Emma Kirkby, Nigel Rogers, David Thomas STB, Taverner Consort, Choir & Players, Andrew Parrott 60' 01" (rec 1985-6) *Virgin Veritas* 7243 5 61353 2 1 ££

Praetorius *In dulci jubilo*, *Puer Natus/Ein Kind geborn*, *Wachet auf*, *Wie schön leuchtet* from *Polyhymnia Caduceatrix et Panegyrica* (1619)

Though these two CDs (Virgin a 10-year-old reissue, Naxos a new release) arrived for review just too late for last Christmas, either version of the Christmas Story will be a generous gift 11 months hence. Naxos has, rightly I think, the more intimate acoustic; I particularly regret having Nigel Rogers's *Evangelist* (on Virgin) pushed slightly into the middle distance. But Rogers and Paul Agnew (Naxos) are both very good, dramatizing their text aptly but without exaggeration. The Virgin version is somewhat more satisfying in two respects. One is that Emma Kirkby's *Angel* and David Thomas's *Herod* are just a little more characterful than their counterparts (while Summerly supports Michael McCarthy's *Herod* with some fine cornett-playing, Parrott finds that Thomas's bolder declamation demands trumpets). The other difference is that Summerly treats the *Evangelist's* recitative as a Bachian *secco*, but Parrott's sustained chordal style seems to me more in keeping with Schütz's background in the Italian *seconda pratica*.

The respective fillers are utterly unlike. Summerly's four Schütz *Cantiones sacrae* (with texts mostly unsuited to the Nativity season) in competent but not electrifying readings show, by default, how apt these pieces are to a madrigalian consort of single voices. SWV 36 (an echo-piece from the 1619 collection) is nicely sinewy but could do with more colour contrast. On the other hand, Parrott's four Praetorius motets, richly polychoral and richly scored, fill the sound-stage with colour (some especially stunning cornett-playing) and are exactly right for a Christmas album. *Eric Van Tassel*

**Jan Steen Painter and Storyteller** Camerata Trajectina 69' 46" *Globe* FLO 6040

This should perhaps have been included with Robert Oliver's survey of popular English music of the same period. The performances of 47 short items vigourously blend refinement and vulgarity in a way that perhaps best matches the American disc he favours. I may have been bored by interminable Van Eyck (see *EMR* 25 p. 13 and 26 p. 24), but the musical culture from which he sprang is presented in a way that is much livelier than concentrated recorder variations. The texts are not translated and even the Dutch need help with explanatory foot-notes, but the booklet compensates with 21 colour reproductions of paintings by Jan Steen, many showing music-making. Buy this entertaining disc for your eyes as well as your ears. *CB*

**To the Unknown Goddess: a Portrait of Barbara Strozzi** Catherine Bott S, Paula Chateauneuf *chit/guitar*, Timothy Roberts *hpscd*, Frances Kelly *double harp* 69' 10" *Carlton Classics* 30366 00412 ££

Eleven solos show to the full the variety of passions encompassed in the music of Barbara Strozzi and the singing of Kate

Bott. This will do Strozzi's reputation more good than books-full of feminist special pleading: it is an outstanding CD and is not even full price. *CB*

Bottophiles should note that the CD with the February BBC Music Magazine is an anthology of Renaissance (+ Machaut) Love Songs sung by her and accompanied by Virelai.

**Tanz & Toccata: Norddeutsche Orgelmusik des 17. Jahrhunderts** Marin Sander on Schweimb-John Orgel 1696/1707 at the former monastery of St. Abdon and Senne at Ringelheim 66' 11" *Fermate* FER 20023

Bach BWV 566; Bruhns *Praeludium 1 in e*; Buxtehude BuxWV 137, 139, 203; Lübeck *Præambulum in E*; Praetorius *Dances*; Scheidt *Ach du feiner Reiter*

An exciting programme of organ music by Buxtehude, Bruhns, Lübeck, Bach and the earlier composers Michael Praetorius and Scheidt, played with stylistic panache and informed musicality by the Berlin-born organist, Martin Sander. A winner in the late 80s of many of the major organ competitions, Sander's playing ranges from strong to sensitive with equal skill and musical personality. For the last few years of his life, Praetorius was Prior of the Benedictine Monastery of which this church formed a part: it is therefore particularly apt to include some Terpsichore dances – a reminder that Praetorius noted the organ amongst the instruments suitable for them. Strongly recommended for the music, organ and playing. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

**John Blow's Anthology** James Johnstone (harpsichord and organ\*) 77' 31" *Meridian* CDE 84328

Froberger Suite in d, *Toccatas in a, d\*, e\*, G, C\*, g, F\**, and G, *Ricercars in d\* and e, Capriccios in G\* and d\* and Fantasia on 'Sol La Re'*\*; Fischer Chaconne in G, *Suites in F, e and D*; Strung Capriccio in F\*; *Blow Ground in e*.

John Blow's predilection for 'borrowing' the work of other composers as his own is well known – but this seems to be Blow coming clean with a collection of 35 works by two Italianate and one Francophile Germans, to which his daughter (Elizabeth Edgeworth, after whom the MS is sometimes named) added 25 bars of Blow's own *Ground* in e. The manuscript is now in the Brussels Conservatoire; there is an edition (Stainer & Bell) and a facsimile. The influence of Froberger throughout Europe was enormous and Blow's versions of previously published works give useful information on the style of English Restoration keyboard playing. James Johnstone's playing is excellent on both harpsichord and organ. He manages to combine the extremes of a sensitive keyboard touch with dramatic improvisatory gestures and occasionally fiery interpretations – and all in the best possible taste! I particularly liked his free interpretations of the opening chords in the Froberger toccatas and his very English post-Restoration ornaments. The harpsichord is a 1972 Krosberg (Utrecht) and the organ is the new Goetze and Gwynne in St Matthew's Sheffield (stylistically after the early Father Smith organ in Edam). The recording favours the

harpsichord with fairly close miking; the organ sounds a bit remote and indistinct. Excellent playing, an interesting programme and intelligent notes – buy it!

Andrew Benson-Wilson

## LATE BAROQUE

**Albinoni Double Oboe Concertos & String Concertos** vol. 1 Anthony Robson, Catherine Latham, Collegium Musicum 90, Simon Standage 62' 49" Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0602 Op. 7/1, 2, 4, 5; op. 9/1. 3. 4. 6

This is presumably the first of a pair of discs which complete Collegium Musicum 90's exploration of Albinoni's concerto sets opp. 7 and 9. Catherine Latham joins the soloist on the two discs of solo concerti, Anthony Robson, for the jolly double concertos: they lack the technical virtuosity of many contemporary pieces for this combination, the concertino group really just adding colour to the tutti. Similarly there is little in the string concertos to make one sit up and take note. Indeed I find this little more than very pleasant audio wallpaper. BC

**Bach Weihnachtskantaten (BWV 57, 110, 122)** Vasilika Jezovsek, Sarah Connolly, Mark Padmore, Peter Kooij SATB, Collegium Vocale, Philippe Herreweghe harmonia mundi HMC 901594 61' 41"

Of its excellent kind, this would be hard to excel. Philippe Herreweghe is among our very best consistent Bach choral directors (possibly the very best), he secures the services of good, often young, performers, and he manages to inject each performance of Bach that he directs with the kind of individuality that it seems to me to call for. The whole is well balanced, well recorded and very well introduced in notes by Professor Hans-Joachim Schulze, director of the Bach Archiv in Leipzig and ridiculously unknown in England. Stephen Daw

**Bach Goldberg Variations** Kenneth Weiss L'empreinte digitale ED13065 78' 46" **Bach Goldberg Variations** Jacques Ogg Globe GLO 5129 84' 40" (2 CDs for the price of one)

The Goldberg Variations is one of the great works from the latter part of Bach's life. The variations, composed to ease the sleepless nights of Count Keyserlingk, are constructed on a harmonic bass and Bach uses a variety of styles including canon, three-part invention, fugetta, and French Overture. The Quodlibet before the final aria is based on two amusing folk-songs and the work is overall a very joyful one. Having listened many times now to the Kenneth Weiss and Jacques Ogg recordings, I have to say that the Weiss interpretation captures best this quality. His phrasing is much more free but always comprehensible. Even in virtuoso passages it is always clear to the listener what is going on and where it leads. We are led through the work by his sense of sheer fun. Jacques Ogg's performance is faultless, but lacks the excite-

ment of the other recordings and relies often too heavily on the 4'. Michael Thomas

**Boismortier Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord, op. 91** Musica Humana (Rebecca & John Stuhr-Rommereim) 56' 16" Centaur CRC 2265

The six sonatas of Boismortier's opus 91 deserve more than passing interest if only by virtue of their long-winded poetic dedication to the eminent flautist, Michel Blavet; such a gesture suggests that these pieces were not, contrary to popular belief, mere musical trifles delivered from an overly-fertile pen but conceived as a significant demonstration of the composer's invention and ability. The sonatas are amongst the first of their time to employ an obbligato keyboard part, and in this case Boismortier takes great care to ensure an equal partnership both technically and idiomatically between the two solo instruments; stylistically the works are always inventive and eclectic, echoing at times the coolness of Rameau's *Pièces de Clavecin en Concerts* but also frequently embracing the Italian virtuoso style. The performances on this recording, whilst technically assured, seemed too often tense and hurried, leaving little time for any real imagination to surface; the delicious *Gracieusement* of Sonata 11 began to show signs of the artists' ability to woo an audience, but generally a more sympathetic and flexible approach would have better reflected Boismortier's delightful music.

Marie Ritter

**Caldara Christmas Cantata (Vaticini di Pace); Sinfonias 5 & 6** Mary Enid Haines, Linda Dayantis-Straub, Jennifer Lane, David Arnot SSMS, Aradia Baroque Ensemble, Kevin Mallon dir 65' 29" Naxos 8.553772 £

Another disc that wasn't posted early enough for Christmas. But at the risk of upsetting the *prima le parole* lobby again, I don't actually think the success of this music rests on the 'plot' (there is very little of the Christmas story anyway – it's far more a tale of court intrigue); rather the libretto affords Caldara plentiful opportunities for dramatic arias, which the four singers thoroughly enjoy. The string playing from the Canadian Aradia Baroque Ensemble, directed by Kevin Mallon (a product of the William Christie school) is first rate, and we get more of it in the form of two oratorio sinfonie at the end of the disc. Although I have read elsewhere that Jennifer Lane's is far too big a voice for this repertoire, I found her to be the most dramatically persuasive of the quartet and quite a convincing surrogate castrato. BC

**Handel La Resurrezione** Lisa Saffer Angelo, Judith Nelson Maddalena, Patricia Spence Cleofe, Jeffrey Thomas San Giovanni, Michael George Lucifer, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Nicholas McGegan 106' 50" 2CDs harmonia mundi HMA 1907027.28 ££

This derives from two live performances at the first Berkeley Festival in June 1990 (not

1989 as stated in the booklet); I attended one of them and thoroughly enjoyed it. The local band played well and there was some marvellous singing from Lisa Saffer, Jeffrey Thomas and Michael George. The tempi and overall feel are excellent and this has the advantage of not being so hard-pressed as the Minkovsky version. If you don't have a recording of Handel's early masterpiece already, buy it. CB

**Handel Orlando** Patricia Bardon, Orlando, Rosa Mannion Dorinda, Hilary Summers Medoro, Rosemary Joshua Angelica, Harry van der Kamp Zoroastro, Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 178' 42" 3 CDs Erato 0630 14636 2

The first of Handel's three operas after Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* is the boldest in its deviations from standard *opera seria* format and can be the most unnerving. Christie tends to smooth things out, adopting languorous tempos and an over-expressive approach in the slower movements. (His performance is over ten minutes longer than Hogwood's on L'Oiseau-Lyre, with an identical text.) The result is often very beautiful, but lacks character, as does the refined singing of the excellent cast: Mannion's Dorinda is lively, but she makes little attempt to portray the distraught and lowly shepherdess and is hardly distinguishable from Joshua's Angelica. The trio at the end of Act 1 is a touchstone for comparison with Hogwood: the latter's opening ritornello is a touch lumpy but at his faster tempo the pleas of Angelica and Medoro in attempting to console the heartbroken Dorinda sound genuinely urgent; Christie and his singers spin the music out gracefully but seem uninterested in communicating the dramatic situation. To faster movements Christie brings full-bodied sound and welcome vigour. Overall his devotion to the music is seldom in doubt (though I wish he would not tinker with Handel's orchestration) and his interpretation should appeal particularly to those for whom *bel canto* is the essence of the opera. Anthony Hicks

**Handel Riccardo Primo** Sara Mingardo Ricardo, Sandrine Piau Costanza, Olivier Lallouette Berardo, Roberto Scaltriti Isacio, Claire Brua Pulcheria, Pascal Bertin Oronte, Les Talens Lyriques, Christophe Rousset 197' 09" L'Oiseau-Lyre 452 201-2 3 CDs

Handel's account of the marriage of King Richard I on Cyprus is not among the best of his Royal Academy operas: Rolli's libretto is awkwardly plotted and the requirement for the rival sopranos Cuzzoni and Faustina (Costanza and Pulcheria) to have equal prominence leads to a few arias seemingly composed on auto-pilot, though there are several compensatory gems now happily on disc for the first time. The opening storm scene is one, but it emerges daintily under Rousset's direction and the sluggish tempo for Costanza's ensuing lament makes for an unpromising start. Generally, however, the lyric (rather than the dramatic) talents of Rousset's players suit the music, the leisurely treatment of the Act 2 duet being

the only other major miscalculation. The casting of a mezzo (Mingardo) and a counter-tenor (Bertin) in the greater and lesser castrato roles works well, the two basses (Scaltriti and Lallouette) are reliable and nicely contrasted, and Piau makes a touching Costanza (the only character with serious emotional depth). Brua, a ripe mezzo, seems miscast in the Faustina role of Pulcheria: she has all the notes, but sounds implausibly mature. An apparently arbitrary mix of delayed and undelayed cadences in recitative and some messy rewriting of vocal lines in *da capo* sections are minor irritants, but Rousset commendably leaves Handel's orchestral colours unretouched and uses just two harpsichords for chord-playing continuo. Quibbles aside, this issue fills a significant gap in the recorded Handel repertory decently enough: will the canon be complete before the millennium is out? *Anthony Hicks*

**Handel Messiah** Emma Kirkby, Evelyn Van Evera, Margaret Cable, James Bowman, Joseph Cornwell, David Thomas SSAATB, Taverner Choir & Players, Andrew Parrott 146' 15, (3 discs (rec. 1989) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61330 2 0 ££

A re-issue of the 1989 EMI recording of Handel's 1753 version – the standard text except for the alto version of 'If God is for us' and the short forms of the *Pifa* and 'Why do the nations', with the soprano and alto solos extravagantly distributed between four singers. Parrott's reading is soberly contemplative, and one notes the care taken over clarity of texture and the exemplary interpretation of dotted rhythms. The orchestral sound is good, with horns effectively doubling trumpets, though the closely-mixed harpsichord sometimes makes too much of a splash. Kirkby and Cable are most impressive in their solos and the choral singing, if occasionally short of exuberance, is always powerful. *Anthony Hicks*

**J. M. Hotteterre Ecos Fidèles: pièces pour la flute traversière** Wilbert Hazelzet fl, Jaap ter Linden gamba, Konrad Junghänel theorbo, Jacques Ogg hpscd 76' 10" Glossa GCD 920801

On listening to this disc and reading its accompanying literature I was immediately struck by its originality: not simply because of the unusual presentation (the disc comes in an attractive open-out folder, featuring Watteau's painting *Gilles*) but because it soon became apparent that there was a more than usually detailed programme scheme, in which Hazelzet has genuinely tried to capture something of the 'emotion versus superficiality' battle which dominates much French baroque art and music. This recording takes representative works from three areas of Hotteterre's output: three suites for flute and continuo, several solo *Préludes*, and some arrangements of *Airs Sérieux* for solo flute. The Suite II in C minor (written for the aging Louis XIV) and the pastoral songs such as *Rochers, je ne veux point que votre Eco fidèle* are particularly moving, but the performances are con-

sistently fine throughout. Hazelzet could perhaps be criticised for being a little too indulgent at times, but his natural flexibility of tone and colour are highly persuasive. The 'Faithful Echoes' of the disc's title are borne out by the beautifully rich tone of Hazelzet's Hotteterre copy flute at its original pitch (a'=385Hz) and the revival of an original practice to precede longer works with an appropriate *Prélude*. This is a recording with real artistic merit and will be savoured by all enthusiasts of the French Baroque. *Marie Ritter*

**Kridel Concert-Arien** Anna Hlavenková S, Musica florea, Marek Stryncz 57' 54" Studio Matous MK 0035-2-231  
Dich ist das Brot, Erlaube mir, Mein Jesus mich vergnügt, Mit ganz zerknirschem Hertzen, Von dir O Gott, Wie mein Gott will

This obscure Czech composer (1672-1733) does not deserve to languish in the realms of the unknown: the six cantatas, recorded here for the first time, really are extremely well-wrought sequences of melodious arias with ritornelli for two violins and extended passages of lyrical secco recitative. Anna Hlavenková, a familiar name for fans of Musica Antiqua Praha, clearly enjoys the declamatory sections and the abundant melismata within the arias. Her German diction is not perfect, though I doubt if even Elisabeth Schwarzkopf could make much of Kridel's setting of 'deinen leibeignen Knecht! She is well accompanied by a continuo group of cello, archlute and either organ or harpsichord. The violinists enjoy their sinfonie and decorate the repeated ritornelli stylishly. Yet another gem from the Czech early music scene! *BC*

**Marcello La Stravaganza: Duetti & Cantate** La Venexiana 70' 52" Opus 111 OPS 30-149  
Ah che non può più vivere, Ahi quanto è fiero, Cerco ogn'or con la speranza, Chiuse in placida quiete, Fermatevi bei lumi, La Lucrezia, La Stravaganza, Onda d'amoro pianto, Quando lungi è il mio Fileno, Vaghe calme d'amor

Two of the singers from Scarlatti's *Christmas Cantata* (see p. 19) reappear in this collection of secular cantatas and confirm the favourable impressions made there. Rossana Bertini is fully in control of the music's twists and turns (emotional as well as technical) and the alto, Claudio Cavina, is in the heroic Bowman mould. Though his diction is not always clear, the tone is beautifully even and many phrases are exquisitely shaped. These works are similar in character to Handel's vocal chamber music and absolutely its equal in inventiveness and excitement (try track 5 if you sample before purchase): the end of *La Lucrezia* (a text also set by Handel) is quite extraordinary. I was, incidentally, at first disorientated by hearing this text sung by a man: at least it's at a (potentially) female pitch! My final plaudit for this disc goes to the continuo team whose work is exemplary throughout. *David Hansell*

**Tuma Miserere mei Deus, Stabat Mater** Currende, Erik Van Nevel 60' 10"

**Accent ACC 95198 D**

Cum invocarem a4 + 2 vlns, In te Domine speravi a4, Miserere a 4 in pieno, Stabat Mater a4

In the last issue I reviewed the Czech Madrigalists' CD of Tuma's *Stabat mater* and likened his music to that of Zelenka. This CD, which has perhaps a greater awareness of historical style – particularly from the instrumentalists – confirmed this impression. Strict Fuxian counterpoint with sudden, often poignant chromatic twists and turns, alternate with crisp declamation and bouncy homophonic, melodic passages. The choral singing is excellent and the soloists, both individually and as a *favorito* chorus, are of an equally high standard. This is another incentive for choirs to investigate Tuma's music (and, I would suggest, that of his compatriots, the Brixis). *BC*

**Couperin, Scarlatti, Soler Harpsichord Music in Paris, Madrid and El Escorial** Motoko Nabeshima harpsichord 50' 00" £ Discover International (Koch) DICD 920311 F. Couperin *La Visionnaire, La mystérieuse, La Montflambert, La Muse victorieuse, Les Ombres errantes*; A.-L. Couperin *Les Tendres sentiments, La de Croissy, Scarlatti Sonatas K. 119, 208-9, 216; Soler Sonata in c (M2), Fandango*

Motoko Nabeshima is known as the best harpsichord player in Japan and she ranks high when judged from an international viewpoint. She seems to understand the feeling and sentiment behind every phrase and piece of music, the peaceful ones being so restful, as are the slow pieces. One can understand that she makes the Japanese like and feel 18th-century French music, the *Ombres errantes*, for example, and it so contrasts with *La de Croissy* on the Armand-Louis Couperin disc reviewed on page 23. The *Fandango* of Padre Soler is great fun, a splendid example of studying communication of the harpsichord and its articulation. Like the other three discs I have received this month, this reveals what a high standard, both of technique and intelligent understanding, the playing of the harpsichord has now reached. *Michael Thomas*

## CLASSICAL

**C. P. E. Bach 5 Flute Sonatas** Nancy Hadden, Lucy Carolan, Erin Headley 73' 42" ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 161  
Sonatas H. 509, 515, 551, 556 & 562 + 12 2- und 3-Stimmige kleine Stücke (H 628)

The 18th-century flute and clavichord were perhaps the perfect means of expression for C. P. E. Bach's exquisite *empfindsamer Stil* and this thoughtfully-planned recital provides a rare opportunity to hear them doing so together in two sonatas for flute and obbligato keyboard. Once the ear adjusts to the unexpected sonority, the charm and passion of the style are fully apparent from these expressive interpretations. In the sonatas with continuo (harpsichord), the solo line would sometimes benefit from a more self-indulgent approach, though the playing is never bland – comments that also apply to a brave performance of the unaccompanied sonata. This is a rewarding issue. *David Hansell*

J. C. F. Bach *Sonates en trio* London Baroque, Charles Medlam 70' 42" harmonia mundi HMC 901587 F VII.2-3 (2 vlns & bc in A & F), 5 & 6 (vln, vla, pf in G & A), F.X/2 (vlc & obbl. pf)

Introduced here are two standard earlyish Trio Sonatas, played with two violins, harpsichord and cello, two much later trios for violin, viola and an agreeable period piano, and a charming cello sonata, whose lost keyboard (here piano) part has been recomposed by the string soloist, Charles Medlam. All of the music is persuasively played, although the wide stylistic contrasts of style between the different kinds is highlighted in the perceptive notes far more than it is by any aspect of the playing: indeed, the cello sonata is a very nice piece, but it sounds really like a performance on old instruments in a mid-twentieth-century interpretation. But this is probably our best whole disc of JCFB... so far. *Stephen Daw*

Boccherini *String Trios op. 47/1-6 (G 107-112)* Ensemble Agora 57' 59" Fermate FER 20006

The six trios published in 1793 entitled *opera piccola* (as opposed to the more substantial earlier *opera grande* set) are slender, two-movement works, all in major keys. Conservative in musical language, structure and modulation, the longer opening movements and concluding minuets make attractive, if unpretentious listening. The musical interest lies almost entirely in the violin and viola parts, the cello having little of melodic importance. The performances, on period instruments, are throughout neat, tasteful and restrained. *Ian Graham-Jones*

Carvalho *Vesperas de Nossa Senhora* Kumi Arata, Monique Simon, Christopher Josey, Christian Tréguier SmSTB, Les Pages et les Chantres de la Chapelle. Maîtrise du Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, Olivier Schneebeli 57' 18" Auvidis Astrée E 8610

A prolific composer of both operas and sacred music, the Portuguese composer João de Sousa Carvalho (1745-1798) received a large part of his musical training in Naples, a background immediately apparent in florid solo sections that are frequently more than a match for the otherwise adequate soloists. The choral writing is simpler, being largely homophonic and with a direct melodic appeal that is very disarming, at least in this rhythmically vital and robust performance. Not great music, but the work (which is given within the context of the appropriate plainsong antiphons) is worth investigation by those interested in exploring one of the remoter regions of late-eighteenth century choral music. *Brian Robins*

Armand-Louis Couperin *Pièces de Clavecin* Harald Hoeren hpscd 73' 40" cpo 999 312-2

Armand-Louis Couperin was a cousin of François le Grand, and organist, one of four at Notre-Dame as well as at the royal

Chapel at Versailles. Dr Burney speaks highly of his playing and mentions his use of stops and style, and his playing with two hands up in the treble, whilst the bass played on the pedals. The problem of style in playing post-baroque French music is a great one; Armand-Louis died, as a result of an accident, in the revolutionary year 1789. The first pieces here are something of Dr Burney's description; some are very fast and not always of a homophonic texture. The piano was coming in to rival the harpsichord and both the Italian and the German styles were becoming better known in France. The older more rhythmic style (of Rameau) is shown in the Gavotte and Minuet (Nos. 12 and 13) and the more integrated earlier textures can be heard in some of the last pieces of the disc. *Michael Thomas*

Gyrowetz *Flute quartets op. 11/1-3* Ensemble Agora 60' 31" Fermate FER 20013

Haydn: *Flute Trios, H. IV, 6-11* Ensemble Agora 50' 29" Fermate FER 20010

These two discs from Ensemble Agora make welcome additions to any flautist's collection, giving a chance to hear some rarely performed gems from an immensely popular eighteenth century idiom – that of flute and string ensemble. The trios by Haydn for flute, violin and cello are short, tuneful divertimenti, published in London in 1784; unusually for Haydn, he makes great use of ready-made material from two previous sources: movements from the opera *Il Mondo Della Luna* (1777), and a baryton trio written for Prince Esterhazy, neither of which had been published previously. The result was a highly sophisticated set of small-scale chamber works which became very popular with amateurs and professionals alike. The demand for such pleasantries echoed throughout Europe, and alongside similar works by Mozart, Pleyel and Graf, Adalbert Gyrowetz published his opus 11, a set of three flute quartets, in Vienna in 1795. Gyrowetz enjoyed considerable popularity in his day and his quartets are fresh and charming, as well as displaying a sound technique and understanding of his chosen instruments. Like Haydn, he opts for a three movement pattern, extending the first movement substantially and finishing each quartet with a witty Rondo. The notes by H. C. Robbins Landon for each recording are superb, giving detailed information on sources and editions as well as interesting historical background, particularly on the less well-known Gyrowetz. The ensemble playing and recording quality, subtlety of tone and musicality, backed up by a very competent team of string players; as an ensemble they deserve to be better known in this country. *Marie Ritter*

Haydn *Symphonies 90, 91 & 92* Orchestra of the 18th Century, Frans Brüggen 75' 34" Philips 446 677-2

With the un-nicknamed symphonies between the Paris and London sets rather ignored,

Brüggen's latest release of two of them will give particular pleasure (the Oxford is always welcome). These are all spirited, stylish performances made at actual concerts (spread over some years), with plenty of wit as well as polish, some agogic freedom – and almost no sound from the audiences. The change of tempo for the Trio of 90 struck me as a bit abrupt, but the freshness and vitality of the playing all through, with some brilliant solos from the OEC, mean that no one should hesitate before acquiring this generously full issue, even if the sound quality tends to be over-resonant. *Peter Branscombe*

Haydn *Complete Overtures vol. 2: Overtures from 1777-1801* Haydn Sinfonietta Wien, Manfred Huss 55' 17" Koch Schwann 4-1484-2

This second and final collection of Haydn's overtures presents an extraordinary variety of works in chronological order, offering an interesting view of Haydn's development as a composer, if a rather curious concert for the listener. In rapid succession we hear frothy curtain-raisers and dramatic tone-poems, introductions from the *Seven Last Words* and *The Seasons*, and a muted 'Chaos' from the *Creation*. For all the revival of interest in Haydn's operas, the overtures are surprisingly little known. Only that to *Orfeo (Windsor Castle?)* is regularly played (as the Overture to an English Opera), despite Haydn himself marketing some of them as separate concert pieces. Certainly the overture to *L'isola disabitata*, in turbulent G minor, and *Armida*'s fine pasticcio drawing on numbers in the opera itself show Haydn at his most inventive, the boldly dramatic juxtapositions showing little respect for conventional niceties. Enlivening too is the 'hunting' overture to *La fedeltà premiata*, though as with many of the best preludes it leaves you wanting more, in this case dying away into *pianissimo* to prepare for the temple scene of Act 1. These are performances that compel attention towards sonority and orchestration: indeed the liner notes make clear Manfred Huss's view of Haydn as a precursor of the 19th century symphonists. At times the music seems hard driven, with explosive sforzandos and rasping brass that certainly mirror the director's evident admiration for Mahler. Yet there are stylish moments of repose too, and the ensemble and precision of the Viennese players (some familiar British names too) are truly stunning. As an advocate of highlit dynamics in late 18th-century music, I must admit to finding this an exhilarating disc – but those of a more nervous or refined disposition should take cover. *Simon McVeigh*

Haydn *Baryton Octets vol. 1* Haydn Sinfonietta Wien, Manfred Huss 56' 28" Koch Schwann 3-1250-2

In all honesty, I can only recommend this disc as reference material. How tricky Haydn's horn parts can be (at least as far as tuning is concerned)! The baryton, it seems, was also extremely difficult to play – and I'm not referring to the complexities of

accompanying oneself pizzicato with the left thumb... There are some fine moments: track two, for example, features a lovely brief cadenza from Simon Standage, but it is shortly followed by some dreadfully out-of-tune bass playing and ear-piercing horn chords which had me covering mine. Not for the faint-hearted.

BC

**Mozart Don Giovanni** Werner 'Van Mechelen Don Giovanni, Huub Claessens Leporello, Elena Vink Donna Anna, Markus Schäfer Don Antonio, Nancy Argenta Zerlina, Nanco De Vries Masetto, Christina Höglman Donna Elvira, Harry Van der Kamp Il Commendatore, Collegium Compostellanum, La Petite Bande, Sigiswald Kuijken 152' 41" Accent ACC 95116/18 D 3 CDs

Although it does not reveal the fact, this is a performance of the original Prague score; there would have been abundant space on the third CD (21' 35") for the additional numbers written for Vienna. The recording was made during a concert (?) at Santiago de Compostela on 20 October 1995. There is quite a lot of deserved applause, and a few of the faults inevitable in a live performance. Some of the Italian is a bit rough, but the reading has style and an attractive edge (no stage effects). Most of the cast are hardly household names in Britain. Nancy Argenta of course is a greatly loved artist, and her Zerlina has charm and spirit in plenty. Elena Vink and Christina Höglman are quite good as Anna and Elvira, and Markus Schäfer, not ideally smooth in 'Il mio tesoro', is otherwise a pleasing Ottavio. Werner Van Mechelen and Huub Claessens are well contrasted as master and servant, though this Giovanni sounds unusually dry, lacking sex appeal. Nanco De Vries is a perfectly adequate Leporello, Harry Van der Kamp a rather lightweight Commendatore. Sigiswald Kuijken directs La Petite Bande with fine appreciation of the drama and the lyricism of the score, if with some ponderous recitatives; the technical quality is good. There is strong competition from several other period instrument specialists, and this version does not quite rank with the best of them - Gardiner, Norrington, Östman - or Mackerras in his exciting recent version which, though using a 'modern' orchestra, is rich in historical awareness.

Peter Branscombe

**Mozart Piano Concertos 20 & 21 in d & C, K. 466-7** Patrick Cohen, Ensemble Baroque de Limoges, Christophe Coin 63' 17" Auvidis Astrée E 8589

This recording was made during a concert in the Arsenal at Metz on 5 April 1996; it is an over-reverberant acoustic, but there is mercifully little sound of the audience. The fortepiano (by Christopher Clark, after Anton Walter) has a pleasing tone, apart from occasional janglings, and is well balanced against the orchestra (scaled to two double basses). The winds often cut through the texture excitingly, but the performance has many of the faults as well as something of the excitement of a live event: there are slips in tuning and

ensemble, sentimental touches, and variations in tempo, as well as inflated cadenzas (by Helge Evju), that strike me as sadly unstylish.

Peter Branscombe

**Mozart Serenades K. 375, 388; 3 Overtures** The English Concert Winds 62' 37" Hyperion CDA66887 Early arrangements of Overtures to *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* & *Die Zauberflöte*

In view of the excellence of British wind playing on period instruments, it is surprising that so little attention has been given to the classical repertoire. Perhaps it is a question of programme-planning - after all, there are only so many masterworks by Mozart, and much of the material consists of operatic arrangements (including a vast corpus of early 19th-century work that this group has begun to explore). The present disc ingeniously interleaves the two eight-part serenades between three overtures (*Figaro*, *Giovanni*, *Zauberflöte*) arranged by various contemporary hands. If diversity of scoring is smoothed out in the process (Mozart has a habit of writing in more real parts than anyone else, as those who have tried arranging his music will have discovered), one can only marvel at this group's handling of the virtuosic demands of the string-writing, albeit with a few judicious slurs thrown in. The repeated notes in *Giovanni* are extraordinary - though in *Zauberflöte* the arranger has substituted a kind of inner trill which dynamically raises the energy level. The two great serenades are quite sensitive and thoughtful performances, epitomised by the expressive nuances of Paul Goodwin's oboe and Colin Lawson's clarinet. While there is plenty of force and colour (and the pungent contrast between different timbres enables every strand to emerge in the tutti), the dominant impression is of plangent sensitivity. In the finale of the C minor serenade, for example, a rather leisurely opening tempo allows time for the subtlest phrasing and prepares for a gradual build of intensity as the variations unfold. Overall, a splendidly enjoyable disc, and one that will surely provide an inspiration to other *Harmonie* groups.

Simon McVeigh

**Mozart Church Sonatas** Johann Christian Bach-Akademie. Johannes Geffert organ, Ingeborg Scheerer \*dir 76' 34" Fermate FER 20015

This is the CD for Mozart lovers who do not usually like the sound of the organ! Geffert plays a gentle continuo role for most of the 17 Epistle Sonatas, and even when a solo organ voice is called for, the registration and performance is subtle and entirely apt. Such a change from the neobaroque of so many recordings of these delightful miniatures. Intelligent notes explain the role of the organ in the Epistle Sonatas and the background and use of the sonatas in Salzburg (they were largely a device to save time in a service where the longest mass, in the presence of the Archbishop, had to be over in less than 45 minutes - what joy!) All but 3 of the pieces

are for 2 violins, organ and bass, and are played with sparkle, and the three fuller orchestrated pieces (with trumpets, oboes and drums) are given thrilling performances.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

\* There is no English equivalent of the title *Konzertmeisterin* (literally *Concert-mistress*).

**Mozart Five Violin Sonatas K. 301, 304, 306, 378 & 379** Nap de Klijn vln, Alice Heksch fp Globe GLO 6039 74' 29" (rec 1951-3)

The astonishing feature here is that a fortepiano was used for so substantial a recording project 45 years ago. This husband-wife duo heard the Stein 'Mozart' piano in Salzburg in 1950 and were so impressed that they had a copy made by Neupert. Sadly, they did not also try out a Mozartian violin, so the result is a stylistic clash with a violin that does not now seem to relate to the keyboard. Listeners who are more tolerant of the modern violin in classical music may find it more satisfactory than I do; but as a historic document this is a fascinating reissue. Nap de Klijn (1909-1979) was a leading Dutch player and teacher, and founded the Netherlands String Quartet. Globe has reissued two of their recordings, Mozart's K. 499 & 589 + the oboe quartet with Jaap Stotijn (GLO 6037, rec. 1954-6) and Dvorak's op. 51 & 96 (GLO 6036, rec. 1955). The second violin is the pioneering early violinist, Jaap Schröder. CB

**Pichl String Trios op.7 Nr 1-6** Ensemble Agora 103' 02 Fermate FER 20018 2CD

The music of Václav (=Wenzel) Pichl (1741-1805) has up to now remained almost unexplored, perhaps because of a perverse tendency on the part of musicologists to favour superficial grace in their choice of minor rococo composers as if keen on preserving intact the crushing superiority of Haydn and Mozart. Pichl has none of the lingering eccentricity of the *empfindsam Stil*. Nonetheless his expressive variety is considerable. His instrumental writing throughout these trios is balanced and varied. There is plenty of solo work for 'cello, even more for viola both accompanied and unaccompanied, and frequent duo passages in the three combinations so that 'tutti' and violin-dominated stretches, far from being the norm, are only part of the timbral flux. The finale of the fourth trio is an urgent restless movement in the *Sturm und Drang* manner of Haydn and Vanhal and as successful as any of theirs. The *Tempo di minuetto* of the third trio is in fact a rondo with each episode given to a different soloist. The fifth trio, with its pastorella movement, may have been intended for a Christmas night Mass. Technically these recordings are of the highest order - the playing is spirited and intelligent, the distance maintained between the voices always the right one.

Robin Freeman

Wren Baroque Soloists - Caldara, Peerson, Jeffreys, Purcell - Feb 22 (Brighton), 23 (Cambridge), 27 (St. Andrews) 01243 604281

## 19th CENTURY

**Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 5 in Eb, op. 73 Fantasy for Piano, Chorus and Orchestra in c, op. 80** Robert Levin, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, John Eliot Gardiner 59<sup>i</sup> 41<sup>ii</sup>  
Archiv 447 771-2

Here is a splendid, challengingly-original version of the *Emperor*, and with it not only the Choral Fantasy but as bonus two additional improvised introductions that can be programmed to take the place of Beethoven's familiar version. Robert Levin plays a fine fortepiano of 1812 (its photograph is a valuable inclusion in the booklet, which also has a stimulating note by Levin). The bright, silvery tone of the instrument, especially in its upper registers, takes a bit of getting used to, but as Levin points out, it increases the sense of competition with the orchestra. Levin, Gardiner and the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique make a splendid team. With the pianist improvising not only ornaments but sometimes playing thoroughbass too, this is refreshingly unlike more familiar *Emperors*, though not the first period-instrument one; Tan/Norrrington & Lubin/Hogwood have been here already. As stimulating as it is rewarding.

Peter Branscombe

**Beethoven Andante in F WoO 57, Sonata 15 in D op. 28, Seven Bagatelles op. 33, Bagatelle in c WoO 52** Trudelies Leonhardt fp  
Globe GLO 5158 66' 56"

This *Andante*, which Beethoven originally intended to include in the *Waldstein* sonata, is exquisitely played; throughout the disc the performer makes the colours of the different registers of the fortepiano come alive. The rhythmic grasp is excellent and the chirpiness of the seventh bagatelle made me chuckle. The same work has some interesting eight-bar pianissimo phrases which the composer wants sustained throughout by pedal, beginning with a single fortissimo staccato bass note at the beginning of the bar. A recording and performance of distinction. Margaret Cranmer

**Schubert Der Häusliche Krieg oder Die Verschworenen, D.787** Soile Isokoski, Peter Lika, Chorus Musicus, Das Neue Orchester, Christoph Spering 63' 58"  
Opus 111 OPS 30-167

Here is a welcome early offering for the Schubert Year. The stage works have been regularly dismissed, largely on the basis of their appearance on the page and prejudice, rather than from their sound world as created in a good, faithful performance. To hear this Singspiel, a setting of Castelli's libretto updating Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* to the time of the crusades, is a delight; Schubert has provided a charming if slow-moving score, richer in lyricism than drama, though there are quite extensive ensembles and pleasing use of the chorus. Christoph Spering directs the 35-strong period instrument Neue Orchester with discernment and obtains punctual and strong,

if at times unsubtle, playing. The recording is somewhat over-resonant but bright, and quite atmospheric. If there are no outstanding voices, no one lets the side down. It is a pity that the dialogue is entirely omitted, as it was on Heinz Wallberg's EMI LP recording of twenty years ago; at least a summary of the speech could have been provided in the booklet. Recommended to all who know, and especially those who don't know, Schubert's operas.

Peter Branscombe

**Schubert Piano works, vol. 1** Trudelies Leonhardt Seidner fp (ca 1815/20) 66' 45"  
Globe GLO 5151

D145, 277a, 299, 334, 529, 593/1-2, 604, 612 & 734

The interpretation of these superb miniatures is masterly with Trudelies Leonhardt fully exploiting the sweet sound of the Viennese grand fortepiano by Benignus Seidner to the full. This is the kind of instrument that Schubert was writing for, and in this performance the four pedals are used to produce a wonderful range of timbres. The order of the eight Ecossaises is unusual but effective, and there are lovely touches where the performer's ornaments introduce humour. The piano is a mite thin on sound in its top octave, but where one notices this in the A minor minuet, there is some superb pianissimo playing by way of compensation.

Margaret Cranmer

## 20th CENTURY

**Holst The Planets; St Paul's Suite** New Queens Hall Orchestra, Roy Goodman  
Carlton Classics 30366 22432 ££ 56'42"

Much to my surprise, I found my turntable was still working so was able to compare this with the 1972 reissue (EMI HLM 7014) of Holst's 1926 recording with the LSO. In many respects the new recording is very similar, certainly in tempo, and with refreshing similarities in the clearly-focussed sound of the narrow-bore trombones and the characterful horns. The string playing is less successful, partly because it sounds too self-conscious. Details of phrasing which sound natural in Holst's performance are at times a touch over- or underplayed. A major problem is the need for conductor and players to get the style into the system: I suspect that this would have sounded a lot more convincing had it been preceded by a dozen concert performances (I presume that it wasn't), and it is anyway very difficult to create a performance with its own spark of individuality when so much has to be imitated from a previous recording. I am reminded of the difficulty of performing Britten in a way that is neither a pale imitation of his own recordings nor sounds completely out of style. I would certainly have enjoyed this as a concert, but as a recording it is a little premature: enjoyable, but not yet of a subtlety which can match the best 'unhistoric' performances. It's a pity the picture does not fit the delightful caption of William Waterhouse with a Buffet Crampon bassoon in his right hand and a standard modern German instrument in his feet.

CB

## MISCELLANEOUS

**English Madrigals and Songs from Henry VIII to the 20th Century** Oxford Camerata, Jeremy Summerly 60<sup>i</sup> 36<sup>ii</sup>  
Naxos 8.553088 £

Cornyshe Ah Robin, Blow thy horn hunter; Henry VIII Pastime with good company; anon Hey trolly lolly lo Carlton Sound subtlest notes; Farmer Fair Phyllis; Ramsey Sleep fleshly birth; Vautor Mother I will have a husband; Weekles As Vesta was, Thule the period of cosmography; Wilbye Draw on sweet night, Weep weep mine eyes  
Grainger Brigg Fair; Pearsall Lay a garland; Stanford The Blue Bird; trad The trees they grow so high

Refined voices, refined performances. Even the rustic numbers are sung with almost an excess of good taste, though with an occasional nod towards quasi-rural accents. Anyone who knows these songs may be disconcerted by the enormous liberties taken with the tempi, particularly in *Hey trolly lolly lo!* and *Fair Phyllis*, in which central sections are taken at under half the speed of the rest. In that square of four-square songs, *Pastime with good company*, the rhythm is interrupted by tasteful pauses to clarify the sense of the words. As may be fitting in a CD whose theme is Englishness, the voices epitomise the English sound: clear and accurate, perfectly tuned and well-blended while allowing all parts to be heard. Although they sing with energy, I would have liked a little more passion, and less staid tempi. The full voices (normally two a part) make a sumptuous sound, but never quite achieve the point of madrigals – to give each line its own life and meaning. The most moving item is the traditional Somerset ballad, *The trees they do grow high*, sung entrancingly by Carys-Anne Lane. Selene Mills

**Die Gabler-Orgel in Weingarten** Gerhard Gnann 70' 36"  
Fermete FER 20007

Bach BWV 543, 662, 663, 1027/41; Knecht; Mozart K. 616; G. Muffat; Pachelbel; Vivaldi op. 3/10

Even confirmed organ-haters should give this one a try – and the magnificent Weingarten organ is, of course, a must for any organ-lover. Spread between, beneath and above (including a little *Kronpositive* high in the vaulted ceiling) the six west end windows of this sumptuous southern German baroque basilica, the organ is one of the architectural, engineering and musical wonders of its day. It is a wonderful experience to play – the organ console must be the most sumptuous ever made, with beautiful inlaid wood and ornate carving, and the organist can look over the music desk down the entire length of the church. Above the player's head are a carillon of bells, designed as large, pendulous grapes on a vine (Wein-garten). The programme is well suited to the instrument and the playing is confident and stylish. Organ builders and players (not to say listeners) will sympathise with the story that Gabler sold his soul to the devil to get the *vox humana* stop to work – the devil clearly gave good advice on organ-voicing, and the result can be heard in Bach's prelude on *Allein Gott*.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

## REISSUES: Auvidis sets

Like *Harmonia Mundi* (see *EMR* 26 p. 23), Auvidis has repackaged groups of CDs into mid-priced boxed sets. Probably intended for the Christmas market, they did not reach us in time. One set is outstanding, the Quatuor Mosaïques three-disc recording of Mozart's 'Haydn' quartets (E 8596, 216). I failed to find time to shut myself away with the discs and the British Library facsimile to listen with the much-corrected autograph in front of me, but can nevertheless recommend this highly from less concentrated listening.

Nearly as good is the set of Bach cantatas whose point in common is the scoring for *violoncello piccolo*, played (as is the cello in the Mozart set) by Christophe Coin. The cantatas included are 6, 41, 49, 68, 85, 115, 175, 180, 183 & 199 with SATB soloists Barbara Schlick, Andreas Scholl, Christoph Prégardien and Gotthold Schwarz. In spite of the presence of a possibly-superfluous chorus, this can be highly recommended, apart from some unfortunate trumpet-playing (E 8597).

The set called *Renaissance* (E 8608), with three recordings from the late 1970s, is more variable. I found the Hespérion XX 1978 recording of the c.1550 Lyons publication *Musique de Joye* somewhat fussy for the repertoire, though I know that others favour the group more than I do. There are some famous names in the cast-list (Coin, Dickey, Koopman and the organiser of the Paris exhibitions, Philippe Suzanne). A 1976 recording from the Ensemble Polyphonique de France presents complete Jannquin's XIX *Chansons Nouvelles* of 1540. There is a characteristic French way of singing chansons in which one chord seems to slide to the next without apparent rhythmic precision yet with complete unanimity. I find it slightly disturbing, but this vocal and instrumental interpretation (with three players in common with the Savall disc) is attractive and enjoyable. A feature of the set is the excellence of the booklets, and whether or not you like the sound, the notes for a recording of a selection of Lassus's *Moduli quinis vocibus*, 1571 by the Collegium Vocale and Philippe Herreweghe are well worth reading, with a thorough account by Pierre-Paul Lacas of the structure of the pieces. You may not agree with him, but the opportunity to test this sort of analysis against a performance rather than more clinically against a score is valuable. 46' 16" was short measure even for an LP, so it is a pity that only 9 of the original 19 motets were recorded and that the irrelevant *Pater noster* was added. The choral performance is a bit unfocussed, and there are odd moments that needed retakes. If you don't have the individual CDs, it's worth getting the set.

*Les Fêtes Baroques* (E 8584) contains five more recent discs. The find is Kapsburger's *Libro quarto d'intavolatura di chitarone* which is unexpectedly varied and is nearer to the exhilarating ground playing of the Andrew

Lawrence-King's Ribayez than anything else I have heard. 78' 12" of music for musette, played by Jaen-Christophe Maillard, is too much of a good thing, so must be played very selectively. A programme of English masque music is inevitably distorted by being played primarily on recorder, well though it is done Le Concert Français and Sébastien Marq. The Ensemble Fitzwilliam's disc of Falconieri is entertaining and brings the more popular side of 17th-century Italian music to life. Zelenka's trio sonatas 2, 5 & 6 are remote from the rest of the set, but I'm not complaining, since the performances by the Ensemble Zefiro do full justice to these amazing works. If you don't already have them, this box is worth getting for the Kapsburger, Falconieri and Zelenka, and the other two discs are fine in small doses. CB

## SAMPLERS

*Vox Aeterna* La Capella Reial de Catalunya, Le Concert des Nations, Hespérion XX, Jordi Savall 75' 39" Auvidis *Fontalis* ES 9902 ££

All of the tracks here, ranging from Alfonso the Wise via Dufay, Morales, Guerrero, Victoria, Monteverdi, Cererols, Charpentier, Bach & Mozart to the fourth of Haydn's *Last Words*, are individually sensuous and enticing; but many feel slow, and the cumulative effect of a dozen such excerpts makes one want to translate the title as 'Music which goes on for ever'. It gives a fair flavour of the Savall style across a wide range. Some will love it, but it makes one long for sensitivity to be balanced by greater energy. CB

For the Marcel Pérès sampler, see under Machaut.

## CHRISTMAS

In addition to these, several other Christmas discs are scattered through the reviews above. All arrived after our December issue went to press; We will try to remember to draw attention to them again next December.

A disc of Russian Christmas music (Philips 454 616-2) arrived on January 15th - Christmas may come later in the Russian calendar, but not by as much as that. The repertoire is too modern for us, the oldest item being 'Silent night'. Sadly, the Russian performance of a Willcocks version had no special cross-cultural insight to offer. In general, the choir is more lively than we expect in Russian church music.

One of our French readers sent an attractive disc (Solstice SOCD 142) of modern arrangements of traditional tunes alternating with 20th-century organ settings played on a 1994 François Delangue organ at the Maitrise d'Antony (Hauts-de Seine).

*An Early English Christmas Collection* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers 72' 03" Collins 14822 Includes 15th-cent. carols, Byrd *Lullaby my sweet little babe*, Ravenscroft *Remember O thou man*, Shepherd *Gloria in excelsis*, *Verbum caro*, anon *Sweet was the song*, *The old year now has passed away*

I think I would have enjoyed this more had I not just heard the York Waits disc and had it still resounding in my ears. In comparison, The Sixteen seemed just too smooth. The 15th-century repertoire may indeed have been intended for the well-educated, but the more folksy material does not contrast enough. Whether you will lay it up for next Christmas depends on whether you like carol-singers to sound as if they really need your money. CB

*Christmas Musick* The York Waits, Deborah Catterall S 70' 07" Brewhouse Music BHCD9607

This is certainly worth buying, even if you don't play it until December, and it will make an acceptable Christmas present for your relatives even if they don't like classical music. Don't be put off by the first track, a version of *Personent hodie* which feels neither 16th nor 20th century. This is an enterprising anthology, and it is particularly refreshing to hear bagpipe tunes on the original instruments rather than arranged for four-voice choir. Deborah Catterall sings most appealingly, though I am not too happy about her breaks between lines, especially in *Als y lay on yeolis' night*, in which she loses the mesmeric continuity that was such a feature in the other performances I can remember. Here and in other carols, I would have appreciated more verses; despite the possibility of boring audiences not interested in the words, the essence of strophic forms is that the tunes come over and over again. But that is no reason for ignoring a fine disc. This, the Westminster Abbey *Adeste fideles* and the Holman *While shepherds watched* (see the last issue, p. 10) were my favourite records for the Christmas that has just passed. CB

*In natali Domini: Christmas in Spain and the Americas in the 16th Century* La Colombina Accent ACC 96114 D 70' 18" Music by de Brito, Cáceres, de Cristo, Fernández, Guerrero, Morales, Padilla, Victoria

This is a charming disc, beautifully sung by María Cristina Kiehr, Claudio Cavina, Josep Benet and Josep Cabré. The best-known item, Victoria's *O magnum mysterium*, comes in the middle and is sung with a relaxed fluency that is ideal for home listening, though might seem unprojected in church. But it is a style that suits the programme, which also contains vernacular pieces, including entertaining ensaladas by Gaspar Fernández and Bartomeu Cáceres. I have not seen the scores of most of items, but sense that those that leave the tenor sounding a little uneasy are high-clef ones that have not been put down enough. CB

Corrections to the last issue.

The number of the Schobert disc (see p.21) is: ASV CD GAU 156

John Potter pointed out that the soloists in the reconstruction of Bach's St. Mark Passion only overlapped with the Hilliards (see p. 17).

For *Cantiones sacrae III* in the King's Music advert (p. 5) read *Symphoniae sacrae III*

## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

In the December 1996 issue of *EMR*, you asked why one-part performance of Bach's 'choral' music hasn't caught on, and mused, 'The considerations surely cannot be entirely economic.'

When I raised the same question at the end of *Bach's Choir*, the day-long Taverner Symposium in Oxford last November, I surmised that concert promoters and record companies should jump at the chance to hire four or five singers rather than 12 or 16 or 30. The rebuttal from Andrew Parrott and, especially, from Joshua Rifkin was indeed in economic terms. First, though the personnel might be fewer in number the singers must all be of soloist calibre, so the wages bill goes up and not down. Second, the drawing power of a traditional concert/recording of Bach cantatas rests in significant part on the name-recognition of a choral group – it's the Tallis Scholars, or the choir of X College or Y Cathedral or the like, that puts bums on seats.

I believe there's also a sociocultural taboo: even the most unchurched among us believes that all music *ab argomento sacro* should be approached with a certain sense of decorum, and the impersonality of a choral group imparts a comforting air of respectability.

Well, then, let's accept for both economic and cultural reasons that one-part performance of Bach cantatas will attract a smaller audience. But it wasn't so long ago that professionals and dedicated amateurs saw madrigals as choral music too; yet the vocal consort is now the norm in that repertoire. A great many groups – Dellers and Hilliards, Consort of Musicke and Concerto Italiano, Red Byrd and Ensemble William Byrd – have suffered and starved to make it happen, yet they do now get (a few) festival gigs and Wigmore bookings, and the catalogue does include complete madrigal-books of Marenzio, d'India and Frescobaldi, and even competing versions of some books of Monteverdi.

If consort-style Bach is to build an audience, it may have to be done by a few comparable groups of solo-calibre performers – both instrumentalists and singers, in this case. Such an ensemble must above all work together regularly enough to create its own ensemble culture, with the kind of interdependence, the meshing of individualities, that characterizes the best madrigal work. That ensemble sense is all that's missing from the Schütz CD reviewed on p. 20 and is found in the more satisfying recent CDs of sacred music by Concerto Italiano (see review, *EMR* October 1996 p.21) or Cantus Cölln (*EMR* September 1996 p.15).

In fact, my own wish would be for existing ensembles to prime the pump by adding Bach cantatas to their repertoire. But rather than jumping straight into J. S. Bach, it would be healthier to recapitulate his phylogeny

gradually, beginning with Schütz and Schein (first the *Cantiones sacrae* and *Israelsbrunnlein* (see p. 20), then the *Geistliche Konzerte*), then Rosenmüller and Tunder and Buxtehude, then the older Bachs. And the approach to J. S. himself should be through pre-Leipzig works like BWV 131, 106 and 71.

Eric Van Tassel

Dear Clifford

We have followed the series of articles about Bach's Choir with great interest. The appearance of these articles and current discussions about the size of Bach's choir and orchestra has coincided with the founding of 'The Bach Players'.

For most period instrument performers the music of J. S. Bach is an enduring inspiration and represents the apotheosis of the baroque. In early 1996 the idea was born of creating a group which would be dedicated to the performance of his music. A group of musicians was drawn together which shared a passion for this music. At its core are nine players performing on original instruments, directed from the keyboard by Gary Cooper. An ensemble of stylish young singers will provide both the chorus and soloists in the larger choral works. They will present varied and engaging combinations of repertoire bringing together chamber works, motets, cantatas and the large-scale choral works with the intention of sharing with the British public their fascination with Bach's musical genius.

Nicolette Moonen, (*The Bach Players*)

Dear Clifford,

Whilst I have a natural empathy with anyone who feels as strongly about music as to be 'incensed' about a particular topic, I cannot but think that Marianne Mezger has rather missed the point about the Marion Verbruggen recording of van Eyck's *Fluyten Lusthof* (Letters *EMR* Dec 96).

As one of the critics on your panel who turned down the suggestion that they review the disc, my reservations were based solely on musical grounds. Some time ago I reviewed Vol 1 (not for *EMR*), finding concentration extremely difficult to sustain throughout a whole disc of pieces that are, let's face it, frankly ephemeral. No slight whatsoever was intended to the superb Verbruggen either by myself or, surely, anyone else. I'm sure that whilst both volumes have a didactic value for all recorder players (Ms Mezger is a fine professional player and teacher), the appeal to most general listeners will be very limited indeed, even should they 'dip' rather than have to play the whole disc through. And you are absolutely right to suggest that a more sensible planning policy would have added to the interest of the disc by including versions of some of the source material.

Brian Robbins

Dear Clifford,

In his review of Simon Heighes's performing version of the Bach *St. Mark Passion*, Stephen Daw makes in my view too much of the 'stylistic unsuitability' of Keiser's recitatives. Is the difference between his 'language of recitative' and Bach's so 'readily apparent'? It seems that Bach didn't think so. I have been able to demonstrate that in preparing the recits for the *St. Matthew* Bach was palpably in Keiser's debt – on several occasions, where the words of the two evangelists are identical, helping himself to the older composer's music without changing anything but the key. Elsewhere one or two of the most moving passages in the *St. Matthew*, without being liftings of exactly this kind, are indisputably a reworking of Keiser's settings. When my own version of the *St. Mark* was performed in Cambridge in 1995 Robin Holloway thought that 'Keiser's simple narration and stark *turbae* offset the richer art of Bach to strong effect'. That is not a question of earlier and later styles is, I think, evidenced by the experiment made by Christoph Albrecht in 1991 of using the whole narrative structure of the *St. Mark Passion* by Bach's one-time pupil, J.A. Homilius. His *St. Mark* was not written until 1768, but the recitative really did sound flat and out of date.

Andor Gomme

Dear Clifford,

It's always a delight to receive *Early Music Review*, and I'm usually full of admiration for the wisdom of your judgements on new publications, but (you knew there was a 'but' coming...) I did think you were a little hard on Stephen Bicknell's *History of the English Organ* (Cambridge, 1996) last November. I understand entirely why you would like to see a book on how organs were used with the surviving music – the sort of book that might finally persuade organists that historically informed performance is their business too – but this book isn't it and I'm sure never set out to be. It's a book about the instruments, and to my mind a remarkably fine one. Perhaps its greatest strength is that the author has worked as a builder/restorer so that not only has he had access to the insides of many historic instruments but he has understood what he's seen (not always the case with organ academics), and his comments on their construction, craftsmanship (or lack of it) and later alterations are authoritative. He's also identified and characterised the major turning points in English organ design in more convincing detail than before, which actually provides a much firmer basis for the kind of book you want.

If Bicknell were an 'archival' expert there's no doubt the book could have been greatly enriched by including more evidence from documentary records showing how organs were commissioned, funded and maintained. If he were a music historian it could have gone in much greater detail into questions of use, registration and performance style. But what he's chosen to do, like so many fine scholars, is to write about what he knows best, even if it's only part of the story. And it is a very important part of the story. The book is beautifully written, illustrated and designed. I think it deserves to become a classic.

Daniel Leech-Wilkinson

My innate inability to do anything with my hands other than pound a keyboard (musical or computer) leads to a lack of detailed understanding of organological matters. That probably explains my underestimation of the value of Stephen Bicknell's study. In my concern to write about what I was thinking while reading his book, I understated my delight at so eloquent and thorough a study. I was continually trying to relate the instruments described to the music; there are enough hints for me to feel that the author might have said more than he did. Thank you for correcting my emphasis. I also agree that the book is extremely well produced; we have come to expect that from Cambridge UP but it certainly should not be taken for granted. I will repeat what I intended to be high praise, which would have been better as my conclusion rather than buried in the first paragraph: 'this is a thorough and judicious account of a subject that could so easily be distorted by a display of prejudices.'

CB

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We continue to receive encouragement from enthusiastic subscribers when they renew their subscriptions. One subscriber 'agrees with sentiments of those who praise our efforts, but enjoys reading the complaining letters more'; we must tread on a few more sensibilities to generate them.

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Virgin seems not to be reconciled to Andrew Parrott moving to Sony; their recent release of the Brandenburg Concertos by La Stravaganza (Hamburg), which we will review next month, prints on the back of the booklet a picture of Andrew rather than of the group's director, Siegbert Rampe.

#### COMPETITIONS

We would like to give away some prizes. Being resolutely unfashionable, we will not make the questions as ludicrously easy as those on television to which our mentally handicapped daughter can shout out the answer and which seem to be designed primarily to increase the profits of British Telecom.

Please post, fax or e-mail your answers (with your name and address) to arrive by February 15th.

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The highly-acclaimed CD described by this clue will be awarded to the reader who best unravels the allusions to the main element in its title; credit will be given for the lucidity and completeness of the explanation.

*This eponymous guard of the faithful was no saint but a loud hotelier who entered partnership with a legendary bird.*

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Having recently received two limericks which we were asked not to publish (no, they weren't indecent!) we would be pleased to offer a copy of *Sing we at pleasure*, Tudor madrigals sung by Cambridge Voices directed by Ian Moore, for the best publishable limerick, clerihew or even haiku (not in Japanese) on the singing of madrigals.

We ran out of space in this issue, despite running to 28 pages, so various items of information and advertisements which may interest our reader have been added on this separate sheet.

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### NEWCASTLE REVIVAL

It is interesting when we can revive, not just early music, but early concert institutions. Avison's concert series, introduced in Newcastle in 1735, is reported to be the first such series outside London (I am slightly cautious about their priority, since the history of English concert life has not been exhaustively studied). The modern Charles Avison Society has arranged a series of subscription concerts in imitation of the old series. They will be given by the Avison Baroque Ensemble and Singers, directed by David Roblou. The group will be recording all twelve of Avison's op.6 concerti grossi on the Dorian label this year.

The next concert is entitled *The Baroque Concerto*.

14 Feb The Maltings, Berwick on Tweed

15 Feb King's Hall, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

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### LITURGICAL CANTATAS

A musical milestone was reached in London on January 5th when Peter Lea-Cox and the Lecosaldi Ensemble completed performances of all 195 extant church cantatas by J.S. Bach at the Lutheran Church of St. Anne and St. Agnes in the City of London. Most of the cantatas have been included in Lutheran services as Bach intended. This was not a planned feat, but after some 500 Bach services held through two decades it was discovered almost unexpectedly that only four church cantatas remained to be performed to complete the cycle. But Handel gets a look-in too: it is planned to perform *Le Resurrezione* on Easter Sunday (7.00 p.m.).

Peter Lea-Cox, Cantor at St. Anne and St. Agnes, founded the Ensemble (Lecosaldi is a sort of Italianisation of his name). He has also directed the ensemble in all but one of Bach's 21 extant secular cantatas, all of his instrumental works, together with all of the passions, masses, motets and oratorios in this and a few other City churches.

Further details from 0171 606 4986 or 0181 869 2677

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### HASLEMERE SUCCESSION

Probably the oldest series of concerts devoted to the revival of early music is the Haslemere Festival. It was started by Arnold Dolmetsch in 1925. His son Carl has played in 72 Festivals and has directed the last 56 of them. He is now stepping down and his daughter Jeanne becomes Director, her sister Marguerite Assistant Director. Carl remains Musical Advisor. The 1997 Festival will be on 5th July and from 17th to 20th July. Details from the Festival Office Tel: 01428 643818.

### Riga Early Music Centre

#### Second International Renaissance Music Summer School in Latvia

Edole Castle 22nd July - 1st August 1997

Ivars Cinkuss - Choir & voice, Virve Kutbel - Dance

Stewart McCoy - Lute & broken consorts

Margaret Westlake - Viol, recorders & winds

The Course: is for intermediate to advanced players, both professional and amateur, to explore Renaissance music of the Baltic coast. Tuition will be in English, some tutors also speak German.

**History** Together with Riga, the court in Courland was one of the main musical centres in 16th century Latvia.

**Edole Castle** 170 km west of Riga near Kuldiga, it was the seat of the Bishops of Pilten from the 13th century and passed to the Behr family in the 16th century. They later joined the aristocracy as the von Behr family, one of the most powerful in Courland until uprisings in the 20th century. The castle is full of mystery and intrigue with two resident ghosts from the Behr dynasty.

Cost: 180 Lats (= £200, \$US330)  
covers tuition, accommodation & food.

Details and booking from  
Solvita Sejane, Riga Early Music Centre, Brivibas 85,  
1001 Riga, Latvia Tel :+3712 275575, Fax: +3712 278060  
e mail: musbalt@com.latnet.lv

### David Montgomery

Historical Information for Musicians. Sourcebooks for the Study of Performance Practices in European Classical Music.

Volume I: Musical Tutors, Methods and related Sources c. 1650 - c.1915 177pp. ISBN 1-871775-06-X £20.00

This comprises an alphabetical list of original sources, sifted to omit those of a secondary nature. This is followed by lists by genre (orchestra, keyboard, wind, etc) with the information set out chronologically.



### King's Music

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## THE EAST ANGLIAN ACADEMY OF ORGAN AND EARLY KEYBOARD MUSIC

The Academy aims to stimulate the interest of the widest possible spectrum of music lovers in the many fine old and often small organs in East Anglia and to enable players to acquire the older playing techniques and to understand more fully the aesthetics of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Building on the Bach Experience Recitals at St. Michael's Framlingham, the Academy is now promoting concerts at other organs of interest.

Details of events in 1997 (including the Festival from 21-28th June) will be available shortly from Malcolm Russell 14 Norfolk Crescent, Framlingham, Woodbridge, IP13 9EW Tel: 01728 724456

## TENOR VIOL FOR SALE

Weller 1968 small tenor viol for sale  
lovely sweet tone - a snip at £1,200  
Could happily be strung as an alto viol in A.

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## LINCOLN EARLY MUSIC COURSES

April 12/13th A course for singers (& instrumentalists who are prepared to sing a little) to commemorate the death of Ockeghem - lead by David Allinson.



*Requiescat in pace amen.*

October 25/26 A weekend of small-scale Schütz vocal/instrumental works directed by Alan Lumsden

The Lincoln courses are the continuation of those held by the Kathleen and Peter Berg in their former house in Broxbourne. The atmosphere is informal, with time for other music-making on the Saturday evening to contrast with the main subject. Accommodation is basic (bring your own sleeping bag) but hospitality is generous.

£25 for the weekend + £5 for floor-space and breakfast. Further details from Kathleen Berg, Aldhundegate House, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln LN1 1HB. Tel 01552 527530 e-mail: peter@aldhund.demon.co.uk

*All the Berg weekends I have attended have been entertaining and stimulating; but be prepared to play or sing something you have never tried before. CB*

## LOCATELLI → CONVIVIUM

Elizabeth Wallfisch (violins), Paul Nicholson (keyboards) and Richard Tunnicliffe (cello, viola da gamba) wish to announce that the name of the group Locatelli Trio has been changed to CONVIVIUM to reflect the range of 17th, 18th and 19th century music which they regularly perform.

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## FLANDERS 1997

Festival van Vlaanderen Brugge - 34th Early Music Festival  
25th July - 9th August 1997

The 1997 competitions are devoted to the organ and are open to organists of all nationalities, born after 31st Dec. 1964. Application forms and registration fees should reach the Secretariat in Bruges before 15th April 1997.

There will also be the usual series of concerts, the themes this year being Musica Sacra and Musica Britannica (the upper-case B is intentional - see pp. 2-3).

Festival Office, C. Mansionstraat 30, 8000 Brugge, Belgium  
Tel: + 32 50 44 86 86 Fax: + 32 50 34 52 04

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## BEFRIEND A TRIO

The Trio Sonnerie (Monica Hugget *baroque violin*, Sarah Cunningham *viola da gamba*, Gary Cooper *harpsichord*) is looking for Friends. For £50 membership, Friends can support the London performances of Trio. Friends will enjoy the benefits of discounted concert tickets and CDs, regular newsletters and pre/post concert receptions. A membership pack can be obtained from Friends of Trio Sonnerie, 87 Lancaster Road, London N4 4PL Tel: 0171 263 5668

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## LES CONCERT SPIRITUELS?

One of the subscribers who wrote because she had received an incomplete copy of the December issue mentioned in passing that, according to her faithful Eric Blom dictionary, the form *Les Concerts Spirituels* was never used. Does anyone know if there is any truth in this?

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## The GOLDEN VIOL

Vol. 4 of Grace Feldman's *The Golden Viol: Method for Bass Viola da Gamba* (224 pp) is available from the author at Grace Note Press, 100 York St, 15E, New Haven, CT 06510. Cost \$35.00 + \$3.00 post (USA), \$10.00 (Overseas).