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Sadly we did not visit the Vienna Exhibition in January, but as a reward for designing a large-scale Venetian programme with Robert King I was sent a copy of the programme book for the week of concerts under the general title *Conditio Humana*. This is an impressive document of 178 pages, with the expected details of pieces and performers, notes, texts and translations. Each concert is introduced by a page of literary quotations, so the writers of the notes can concentrate on more general matters since short biographies of the composers are given in a separate alphabetical sequence – an idea others might like to consider, since it saves the explanation of a concert's theme getting bogged down in detail.

One feature, however, raises a general point. In the running-orders, the source of each piece is precisely given. Fair enough if needed for identification; but the information goes beyond that. The three Handel works in the first concert each have unambiguous specific titles (*Concerto a due cori 1 & 3, Apollo e Dafne*), yet not only are HWV numbers added but we are told that the music comes from MSS in the British Library and the Fitzwilliam Museum. Is the mention of the sources intended to imply that they have been consulted? Did the compiler know that they had or is it merely an unverifiable seal of authenticity like the 'on original instruments' on CD boxes? Does the listener to Monteverdi's *Christe adoramus te* really need know the extensive title of Giulio Cesare Bianchi's 1620 publication? Most pieces can be identified just by date or at least by brief title of source. To go further is pedantic and it is simplistic to assume that everything has only one source. *Lieto godea* may have been published in 1587, but the Vienna performance paid regard to Schütz's transposed quotation, which confirms the implication of the *chiavette*. The source quoted for Josquin's *Nymphes des boys* does not have the French text, though it is printed a few pages later in the programme and was no doubt sung. Since there is only one setting and the 1508 edition is not of any particular significance, mentioning it was unnecessary and misleading. Information essential in a critical commentary is not appropriate for a list of pieces in a concert: if sources need discussion, leave it for the programme note. CB

## BOOKS AND MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## NONANTOLAN CHANT

*Early Medieval Chants from Nonantola...* edited by James Borders. (*Recent Researches in the Music of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance*, 30-32). A-R Editions, 1996. 3 vols.

I. *Ordinary Chants and Tropes* lxxxv + 87pp, \$52.80 ISBN 0 89579 328 8

II. *Proper Chants and Tropes* lxxiii + 83 pp, \$48.00 ISBN 0 89579 329 6

III. *Processional Chants* lxxv + 152pp, \$72.20 ISBN 0 89579 338 5

The Abbey of Nonantola (near Modena) is given three lines in the Michelin *Italy* guide; on the same page, Monte Cassino is far more lavishly treated. But New Grove has over a page, and it is a name which often crops up in chant studies. By good fortune, three MSS of tropes with full and legible notation survive from the 11th or early 12th centuries. The repertoire they contain is not quite as might have been expected, since it links with both sides of the Alps. It is thus an interesting object of study. But I have some doubts whether publication in this form is the best way of doing it. When I first started getting interested in musicological editions, publication by manuscript was common. To take another area, I got to know Jacobethan keyboard music first from the Dover reprint FWVB then from the Stainer and Bell editions of individual manuscripts, the 'instrumental' repertoire of c.1500 from *Odhecaton* (*Canti B & C* were not then available). But critical editions of the music depend on a variety of MSS and the best way to publish it is not necessarily source by source (nor, for that matter, composer by composer, leaving a rump of minor figures and anon); often the most significant common feature is the style or form.

It is, of course, not possible to produce a simple critical edition of a single, popular trope: the variety is too great. But to take an example in the Nonantola edition which is discussed accessibly in David Hiley's *Western Plainchant* p. 216-220, the Introit trope to *In medio ecclesia* (Vol. 2, No. 17: *Amor Angelorum*) turns out to be just the last part of a much longer trope *Ecce iam Johannes*, sections of which have different distribution patterns. While for chant scholars, each source needs to be studied independently, the more general public which needs the aids provided by this edition is more likely to benefit from a transcription of the fullest version; the separate transmission of certain sections can be noted in the commentary. Borders mentions that the trope survives in England, but not that to trace it you need to look for *Ecce iam Johannes*. The notes eschew detailed information about the rich pattern of inter-relationships and instead devote considerable space to editions of the texts (a good principle, though perhaps superfluous when a separate

textual edition of all tropes is in quite rapid progress) and translations. It is this which points up the contradiction in the publication. Serious chant scholars will not need translations (I hope); their presence implies a different use (though it is difficult to imagine that anyone needs three columns of 'Holy X, pray for us'). But the general public wanting chant to sing or non-specialists wanting to get some idea of the richness of chant that exists outside Tridentine graduals and antiphonals would be better served by a collection that was not based merely on three closely-related MSS. Scholars of the subject need facsimiles of the two MSS that have not yet been published thus, along with full indices to them. Even that is not properly managed here, since there is no index to the three volumes as a whole (though that may come in vol. 4) and quick reference by casual users is impeded by the presence of several numbering sequences in each volume,

On the credit side, though, is the availability of a varied selection of tropes, and if individual repertoires are to be published like this, there are advantages in choosing one that is itself an anthology. Ability to read chant notation is not required. The music is transcribed in black blobs with only two special symbols used for *oriscus* and *liquescence*. I find the use of classical Latin rather than Italianate syllable-division refreshing. Singers should avoid letting one feature of the notation influence performance; notes are sometimes squashed very close together in melismas, but that does not imply any decrease in duration. Teachers will certainly find these volumes a convenient way to show the variety of medieval chant. The content of these volumes has much interest and would also be enjoyable to singers, though not to those whose main interest in chant is to break-up polyphony. Although I don't think that this is an ideal way to publish the music, it is done well and there is no reason to be ungrateful for a trio of volumes which makes more accessible music that has hitherto been the province of specialists. I hope someone (preferably not Marcel Pérès) uses it for a recording.

## MASTERS OF SEVILLE

*Masterworks from Seville...* edited by Tess Knighton (*Faber Motet Series*) Faber Music, 1996. 47pp, £3.95. ISBN 0 571 51652 1

This contains nine motets for SATB by Morales, Guerrero, Ceballos, Escobar and Lobo and concludes with Guerrero's two-section *Hoc est praeceptum meum* for SSATB. Good music, good value. There are the usual problems in fitting renaissance music to the modern SATB line-up. In fact, nothing is done about it here, since there is not much that



can be done. Most pieces are in *chiavette*, so come out a bit high in tessitura for all except altos, but their parts would be uncomfortably low if transposed down. The only transposed pieces are Escobar's *Regina caeli* and Peñalosa's *Versa est inluctum* (C2 C3 C4 F4), which just about work up a fourth. Something might have been said about this problem in the introduction. Note values are halved and there is a keyboard reduction. Delight that a major publisher is prepared to produce a comparatively mass-market anthology at a low price is only diminished by the possible reaction from the public at what may seem to be high prices of the small, specialist publishers of such repertoire as Mapa Mundi and Joed, but for that blame, not Faber, but the attitude of most amateur performers to spending money on music (generally a lower priority than on drink).

#### DU CAURROY & SCHEIDT

Eustache Du Caurroy *Fantasies à III, IIII, V et VI parties* (Paris 1610) edited by Bernard Thomas London Pro Musica (LPM MP8), 1997. Score (84pp) £12.50, parts £4.50 each, except Cinquiesme £3.00 & Sixiesme £2.00

Samuel Scheidt *Ludi Musici (Prima Pars): Paduana, Galliarda, Couranta, Alemande, Intrada, Canzonetto, ut vocant, quaternis & quinis vocibus* (Hamburg, 1621) for four and five instruments with basso continuo edited by Bernard Thomas. London Pro Musica (LPM MP7), 1996. Score (86pp), £12.50, parts each £4.00 except Quinta £3.00.

Here are two very different but outstanding collections of instrumental music, published just eleven years apart. Du Caurroy's posthumous set of 42 pieces is less different from its only French predecessor, Moderne's *Musique de Joye* of the 1540s, than one might expect and in some respects is quite old-fashioned: Willaert was a more influential composer than the infrequency of modern performances might suggest. But there is nothing coldly formal in Du Caurroy's counterpoint. The Jaye Consort used to play the group of five pieces on *Une jeune fillette* and the set works well on viols, though there is no instrumentation specified or implied by the source. A complete edition was published in score by the Institute of Medieval Music, but this version is far cheaper and also has parts. Six part-books are needed. The Dessus is in the treble clef, the Basse-contre in the bass. The middle parts (Haute-contre, Taille and Cinquiesme) are available for wind (i.e. in octave-treble) or strings (alto) clefs. The Sixiesme part-book has both. Many of the fantasies are based on pre-existing themes, which are quoted in the introduction. Despite its unfamiliarity, it is rewarding and I hope players will try it.

The Scheidt is probably better known, since at least some pieces are played quite often. The title, though, may be unfamiliar. The original title page has *Paduana, Galliarda...* and the more general one is deduced only from subsequent volumes (which are sadly lost or incomplete). Despite the presence of a Canzon (No. 18) for four cornetti and a Courant (32) for 2 trumpets and 3 trombones, most of the

pieces are likely to have been intended for violin band (one or two violins, two violas and bass violin) and work best thus, with cornetts and sackbuts as the most obvious alternative. I first encountered the music on viols (and the recording reviewed on page 15 is played on them). I particularly remember a whole evening some thirty years ago working with John Beckett on Paduan 5, a marvelously expressive piece with three different types of triple rhythm. But the more elaborate settings, like the superb *Roland* with its closing repeated semiquavers, need violins. A complete performing edition of the collection was long overdue. As with the Du Caurroy, middle parts (i.e. Altus and Tenor) are available for wind or strings. At present there is no continuo realisation: the editor may issue one if there is demand. The range of styles and scale of the music here is far wider than in the other North-German instrumental collections of the time, there is something for everyone.

#### SICILIAN VESPERS

Bonaventura Rubino *Vespro dello Stellario con Sinfonie ed altri Psalmi* (1655) a cura di Giuseppe Collisani e Danielie Ficola. (*Musiche Rinascimentali Siciliane xvi*). Florence: Leo S. Olshki, 1996. lx + 481pp, L180,000. ISBN 88 222 4434 6

In view of their bulk, it is suprising how many sets of music for Vespers (or sometimes Mass and Vespers) were published in 17th-century Italy. Sadly, only the three Monteverdi sets (1610, 1640 & 1650) have tempted modern publishers. This edition is a model of what should be done for Rovetta, Rigatti, Cavalli etc. Give us a sponsor such as this project must have had, and King's Music would happily give up Handel operas (*Agrippina* and *Serse* are our latest preoccupations) and undertake the task. Finding the right format is difficult. Users of Malipiero will know how unsatisfactory is a small page-size for polychoral pieces with only one system per page, since one is continually turning pages. Two systems of two four-part choirs, two violins, perhaps an independent cello line, and organ bass must be fitted onto the page to make musical and economic sense. I got into difficulties with our Cavalli *Messa concertata*: the A4 version is too small for easy legibility and the B4 enlargement is a bit big for singers to hold. This is only a fraction smaller, but is the only visually and economically viable way.

Rubino's *Salmi varii variamente concertati con sinfonie d'obbligo, et a beneplacito... opera quinta* was published in Palermo in 1655; the sole surviving copy is at Malta Cathedral. There are 23 pieces ranging from double choir and two violins to vocal trios. It begins with three settings of *Domine ad adjuvandum* (there are very few other such settings in modern editions, so I can see these called into service for Vesper-reconstruction programmes of North-Italian music) and ends with two Magnificats a8. In between are two or three settings of the psalms required for Sundays and for days honouring male and female saints (including Mary). In some of the larger pieces the additional parts needed for tutti sections are indicated as *ad lib*, as in some of the Monteverdi settings. There is so much music here

that it is difficult to digest it. In some ways it seems a little old-fashioned, similar in this respect to the Cavalli 1656 set, and there is a lot of movement in thirds, which looks dull on the page but works well in practice provided the singers can blend in tune. 168 statements of the *ciaccona* is perhaps excessive (*Confitebor I*, for SS/TT B & 2 vlms), especially without the sudden key-change that makes *Zefiro torna* so exciting, but setting II (SSS/TTT), perhaps by deliberate contrast, has considerable harmonic interest and is a useful addition to the repertoire for three equal voices. The music is definitely worth investigating and it is a pleasure to see it edited so unfussily. As is customary with this series, there is a long, informative introduction. This is a highly commendable edition, both as a precedent and in its own right, and at under £70.00 it is remarkably cheap: I shudder to think what a *Musica Britannica* volume this size would cost!

#### CHARPENTIER

Three more volumes (6-8) in the complete facsimile of Charpentier's *Meslanges Autographes* (Paris Bibl. Nat. Rés. VM<sup>1</sup> 259). The volumes are fascinating mixtures, much more intriguing than a more systematic collection of pieces might be. Most of the contents are ecclesiastical, but vol. 7 has *Les Arts Florissans* and the Pastorale *La Couronne des Fleurs*. Minkoff has done an excellent job: they are well produced, solidly bound, properly indexed and not overpriced. I wonder whether there are any lawyers among our readership who might comment on the following:

*This publication is protected by French law on copyright. Any reproduction or transcription – even partial – by any means would constitute a counterfeiting punished by laws of March 11th 1957 and July 3rd 1985. (Printed at the front of each vol.)*

Restraint on reproduction is, of course, entirely proper, but the restriction on transcription is surprising. Most editors I know would assume that material in a published facsimile was available for use as a basis for editorial work. Since there is no reference to the more recent European Union copyright legislation, the statement can apply only to France; presumably if I edit a work directly from the facsimiles without permission, it could be banned there. But protection elsewhere depends on the law of the country of the publisher of the edition, not of the owner of the source. I would have thought that a polite request to those wishing to edit from the volumes to send copies of their publications (and perhaps recordings if the edition is not going to be published) and the address of the relevant department of the BN might have been far more effective.

#### BAROQUE INSTRUMENTAL

A recent recording has done more for Caldara's reputation in the musical world at large than many years' musicology. For those wishing to sample the composer further, there is the first edition of his 16 cello sonatas, prepared by the New Zealand Caldara expert Brian W. Pritchard. The first two vols (*Diletto Musicale* DM 1176 & 1177; £22.00 each from A. Kalmus) contain nos. I-IV and V - VIII. They survive as

part of the collection of the cello-loving Rudolf Franz Erwein, Graf von Schönborn-Weissenheid and were written (perhaps specially for him) between April and July 1735. The editor assumes that the music is for two cellos because of the interplay between the two lines: he may be right, but we are less dogmatic on the accompaniment of solo sonatas than we used to be. However played (the edition supplies two parts), these quite difficult sonatas are useful additions to the repertoire.

Johannes Justus Will (1675-1747) changed his name to Justinus a Desponsatione BVM when he became a Carmelite priest. He worked as preacher and organist in Catholic southern Germany and Austria and, as well as sermons, published three volumes of keyboard music. The first of these has a preface dated *Leontj 1703*, which caused a fictitious biography in MGG & New Grove, since the name was assumed to be a place in Sicily rather than Lienz in the East Tyrol. Its original title *Cembalum pro duobus* does not imply the need for two players or manuals but is because 'its variety will delight the teacher, while its correctness will guide the pupil'. It contains 16 short arias and six Parthias (suites): these form DM 1215 (£22.00). DM 1216 (£19.25) completes the 1703 volume with four arias with variations and has an appendix of pieces from the *Musicalische Arbeith* of 1723. It is easy-going music, comfortable to play and to listen to. The editor Erich Benedikt contributes a thorough introduction.

Of arrangements of Corelli there seems to be no end. The Universal Flute Edition is publishing an edition by Gerhard Braun of a volume issued by Le Clerc c. 1740 which has Sonatas 1-6 arranged for flute and continuo and nos. 7-11 for two flutes without bass – the arranger evidently couldn't face recreating *La Folia* for a new medium. Sonatas 1-2 appeared last year; UE 30274 (£11.90) contains nos. 3-4 and UE 19500 (7.95) has nos. 7-11 in print big enough for two to share a copy.

#### CORELLI CONFERENCE

*Studi Corelliani V: Atti del Quinto Congresso Internazionale...* a cura di Stefano La Via (*Quaderni delle Rivista Italiana di Musicologia...* 33) Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1996. xxi + 459pp, L. 90,000. ISBN 88 222 4442 7

The problem with the study of Corelli is that his music has been known so much longer than that of his contemporaries (indeed, one might almost say that it missed out on the cycle of being forgotten and enjoying a revival) that we tend to see all Italian music of his time in relationship to it. Corelli scholars are now engaged in two major activities: seeing the Corellian oeuvre as something less homogenous than it is often thought, and seeing more clearly how it relates to other music. These were to the fore in the papers given at the Fifth Corellian Conference at Fusignano in September 1994, now here published in full, even to the extent of preserving the old-fashioned custom of transcribing discussion (at least, the more formal part: to be really effective it is necessary to report, selectively, on conversation over meals and in the bar). One neat biographical



point: a cartoon gives the only evidence that Corelli was a player of any status in Bologna before going to Rome.

## TELEMANN

Another batch of Telemann appeared last year from Amadeus (Schott in the UK), notably six quartets from the *Quatrième Livre de Quatuors* published in Paris in the 1750s (BP 2251-6; £11.65 each). They are revised versions of works for strings; the vehemence with which the editor argues that the revision must be by the composer immediately raises suspicions! The Paris versions are scored for flute, violin, viola and bass (with figures: these are not classical flute quartets). The top part is headed in the edition 'Flauto o Violino' – probably just an editorial suggestion, but there is nothing inherently unviolinistic about the part. The division of interest between the parts is much more equal than in the contemporary early-classical quartets and the viola is by no means a fill-in. Another quartet for flute, gamba, bassoon and harpsichord continuo (TWV 43: C2) from Darmstadt MS 1033/70 has an interesting texture. The gamba part is kept in the tenor register; the editor notes that it is all within viola range (BP 2276; £11.65). No 52 in the Amadeus numbering of Telemann's Trio-Sonatas (it would be helpful if in later issues the odd blank page could include a concordance between that numbering and TWV) is a Sonata in E for two violins and bass from Darmstadt 1042/52. One wonders whether the dotted notation in the opening *Affettuoso* is an exaggerated indication of *inégales*; but in the following *Presto*, the pairs and triplets can be played as written.

## MOSCOW WEISS

*The Moscow 'Weiss' Manuscript: M. I. Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture, MS 282/8...* transcribed and edited by Tim Crawford (*Monuments of the Lutenist Art, I*) Columbus: Editions Orphée, 1995. xxxiii + 74 + 64 pp, \$65.00 (UK from A. A. Kalmus, ref. PR 2719; £61.75) ISBN 0 936186 89 5

Note the quotes round 'Weiss' in the title. In earlier references and the previous edition by Zen-On the contents of this MS have been assumed to be all by Silvius Leopold Weiss. One of the points made in the thorough documentation given in the introduction is that the 48 pieces can be divided into various categories: some definitely by Weiss, some probably by him, some in his style, some perhaps in his style, some whose stylistic imprint is not clear enough for a judgment to be formed, and some so incompatible that they are beyond the pale. The editor devotes much space to the career of the Ukrainian lutenist Bielogradsky, a pupil of Weiss and a player with a high reputation in Germany and Russia, but cannot pin down any precise connection between him and the MS, which could have been compiled for a skilled amateur. The volume contains a transcription and a facsimile. The latter is a little awkward to use, since it follows the format of the source and has the music written landscape on pages bound portrait; I suspect

that players will be tempted to photocopy pages to be able to place them more conveniently. The editor assumes that players will use the facsimile and that the transcription is for study and for non-tablature readers like me. I can't say that Tim Crawford has spent a life-time studying Weiss, since he was only just showing interest in baroque lute music when we shared a flat in the early 1970s. But he is one of a small group of scholars who have been studying Weiss's music and working to make it more accessible. This is a useful parergon to the *Sämtliche Werke*, in which he is also involved. There is a companion volume (in UK PR 2720; £38.00) with the music transcribed for guitar by Alan Rinehart, who is also credited with the excellent music setting of this volume.

A bibliographical oddity: the edition was, according to the back of the title page, published on December 1st, 1995, but on the facing page Tim's dedication to the memory of his teacher Diana Poulton is dated January 1996. Librarians who get up-tight about publication dates should be warned!

## GERMANY &amp; AUSTRIA

*Aesthetics and the art of musical composition in the German Enlightenment* Selected writings of Johann Georg Sulzer and Heinrich Christoph Koch, edited by Nancy Kovaleff Baker and Thomas Christensen. Cambridge UP, 1995. xii + 210pp, £37.50. ISBN 0 521 36035 8

*Music in eighteenth-century Austria* edited by David Wyn Jones Cambridge UP, 1996. xi + 291pp, £40.00 ISBN 0 521 45349 6

Apologies for delay with reviewing these. Admittedly I received the first rather late, but I have had them for several months. As Sulzer remarked (p. 25), 'Aristotle long ago noted that all art precedes theory'. So it is dangerous to expect theorists to give an insight into the music of their time. The more down-to-earth theorist generally tells us how the previous generation's music works; the other sort, who is more interested in general aesthetic ideas, has little to say about how music is put together. Sulzer and Koch are to some extent complementary. What they have to say is of considerable interest in showing us the aesthetic ideals of the period. But they are also a terrible warning to any modern theorists who think that they might have anything valuable to say to contemporary composers. Is there anything here which really illuminates Bach and Handel – interestingly Sulzer pairs Bach (though with no christian name so probably C. P. E.) and Handel (p. 71) as composers for whom the rules of art are irrelevant – or which Haydn and Mozart would have profited by studying? Writings such as these are a degree removed from any music which we think worthy of study or revival, despite Koch's analysis of an aria by C. H. Graun. They do, though, give some idea of how some critics of the time approached music. The deleterious effects of those approaching music from an inappropriate aesthetic is shown by Mongrédien in the book reviewed below. No criticism of the translation, editing and introductions, but disappointment at the shortage of enlightenment in the authors.

*Music in eighteenth-century Austria* derives from a conference held in 1991 that sought to look behind the familiar figures of Haydn and Mozart. The most substantial (thanks to its numerous music examples) is A. Peter Brown's survey of the Viennese trumpet overture, which throws light on the implications of the use of the instrument in classical orchestral music. (Do music examples have to be of a size so disproportionate to the size of the text type? These are not scores for playing.) Other writers too give information on genres: Chappell White on the violin concerto, the editor on the *a cappella* tradition, Geoffrey Chew on the Pastorella and Robert N. Freeman on the *applausus musicus*. Bruce C. Macintyre describes Vanhal's *Missa Pastoralis* in G in a way that makes it seem worthy of professional revival (BC confirms the quality of the music from a tape of a revival by Macintyre). John A. Rice points to some subtleties in Salieri's operas: Mozart did not have a monopoly on invention. Konrad Küster suggests that Da Ponte's operas for Mozart are rather better than his other librettos, which perhaps says something about the composer's input. Eva Badura-Skoda shows that pianos were in use in Austria earlier than is sometimes thought; the nomenclature was not always specific. The volume closes in 1799 with a discussion by Tia Denora of the implications of a piano duel between Beethoven and Wölfl, a matter with social as well as musical implications. The only analytic contribution is Julian Rushton's enthusiastic advocacy of Haydn's *Arianna a Naxos*. Despite its idiomatic piano accompaniment, Haydn said that he intended to orchestrate it (p. 233, n. 6); the extant version for strings is unlikely to be authentic, but should perhaps have been mentioned.

#### REVOLUTION & AFTER

Jean Mongrédien *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism 1789-1830* Translated from the French by Sylvain Frémaux. Amadeus Press, 1996. 394pp, £29.99 ISBN 1 57467 011 5

Published in France ten years ago, this has a somewhat old-fashioned air, being remarkably directly written with little of the abstract terminology that the English expect from French writers or which we now expect from virtually all musicologists. It is rather a dead period in terms of musical masterpieces: indeed, the only outstanding work comes at its close, the *Symphonie fantastique*. The author does not make the mistake of over-rating the material he is discussing, and the book is all the better for it. He puts his finger on one major cause for the weakness of French music: the distressing influence (supporting the lowest common denominator of taste) of Rousseau, who lacked any sense of the complex way in which music functions. Consequently any music which showed a modicum of interest in any parameter other than melody was scorned as learned and music was not allowed to develop. (It is not too difficult to see parallels with some modern educational theory.) That and the strong nationalistic feeling among French arbiters of taste, whatever the political situation, diminished the influence of German music, despite the symphonies of Haydn

being the staple orchestral diet. The remark in last month's editorial that I don't mind a book about bad music if there is good reason for studying it was written with this in mind. There is a barren patch of music history at a time when other aspects of French culture are in turmoil; without plumbing philosophical depths, Mongrédien tells us why.

The institutional structures are clearly described as well as the music itself. The book would, however, be easier to find ones way around if the chapters had been subdivided with separate headings; that might also have concentrated the author's mind a bit, since there is some bleeding between sections. Commendably, it is not entirely Paris based. The rapidity with which popular operas penetrated the country is amazing, as is the way composers actually profited from it, though it would have helped the reader compare composers' and singers' incomes if they had both been expressed in comparable units. How does 36,000 francs (Napoleon's First Singer, Madame Grassini's salary in the 1800s) compare with the provincial earnings of both Dalrymple and Grétry of around 16,500 Livres in 1795-6?

Very little is said about popular music. Those who enjoyed the large-scale, public pieces of the early Revolutionary period must have had some musical experiences later when upper- and middle-class music returned to the expensive opera houses and salons. Otherwise, this covers a wide area in a readable way and makes me want to hear some of the music, confirming, for instance, the good impression that Méhul's symphonies have made. But it makes it very clear that fashionable audiences are not enough to stimulate music of any lasting value.

#### THE LAST TRUMPETER

Art Brownlow *The Last Trumpeter: A History of the English Slide Trumpet* (Bucina: The Historic Brass Society Series, 1) Pendragon Press, 1996. xxiv + 277pp, \$54.00. ISBN 0 945193 81 5

This is not a meticulous study of every single fact and theory about the flat trumpet (which could hardly fill five pages) but is concerned rather with the slide trumpet, which was probably the normal English orchestral instrument from the 1790s until the last couple of decades of the 19th century. Being a fairly confined subject, organological and musical aspects can both be covered in a volume of modest size. The topic is perhaps peripheral in that very little music that matters was written for English orchestras during this period. But there is one passage in Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture* which would have sounded in tune from an English orchestra but not elsewhere. The problem is that, although it is easy to make a case for the dominance of the slide trumpet earlier in the 19th century, it is much more difficult to establish how long it lasted, since composers seem to have been remarkably careless in specifying what they wanted, while players tended to make the decisions on what instruments were used. So it is impossible to say when players took the easy option and played everything on the cornet. There are rather a lot of 'could haves' scattered

through the later pages of the book. Those who think that the Victorians took their Handel straight should look at the eight cadenzas printed here for *Let the bright Seraphim*.

#### ITALIAN MAGAZINES

*Recercare* is the journal of the Fondazione Italiana per la Musica Antica della Società Italiana del Flauto Dolce. It is published by Libreria Musicale Italiana Editrice (LIM) and is available from Rosemary Dooley (see advert). Vol. V, 1993, arrived at the end of last year and is of considerable interest. Maria Giovanna Miggianai and Piermario Vescova consider the plausibility of the descriptions of musical gatherings in mid-16th century Venice of Doni and Andrea Calmo. Giancarlo Rostirolla presents a 30-page table listing polyphonic settings performed at the Sistine Chapel in the Palestrinan period. George A. Predota takes Francesca Caccini's settings as the cue for showing that the *romanesca* is more complex than a simple melody or bass. Mimmo Peruffo contributes a wide-ranging argument on the use of loaded gut strings in the 16th & 17th centuries. Antonio Trampus reminds us that Count Zinzendorf, familiar to writers on the Viennese classics, is worth more general study; BC tells me that he was involved in an epistolary discussion with Fasch on the theology of cantata texts. There are other shorter articles and reviews. It is a journal well worth consulting. Many articles are in English, the others have English summaries.

*Revista internazionale di musica sacra* is also published by LIM. Despite the *internazionale*, it is primarily an Italian-language publication. I have been sent issues 16/2 (1995) and 17/1 (1996). The former begins with an article on the use of instruments in 15th- & 16th-century in Italian churches with interesting quotations from sources. There is the second half of a substantial article on the theorist Angelo Berardi (c.1636-1694), concluding with an Italian translation of Charpentier's *Règles de Composition*. Vol. 17/1 begins with a long article in French on the liturgical implications of the Aryan controversy by Philippe Bernard. Francesco Bussi introduces his edition of Cavalli's 1675 Vespers (published by Zerboni, Milan, 1995), a publication that is somewhat retrospective and which credits some voices with a very limited range. (My edition of one set of psalms was advertised in *EMR* last month.) Carlo Ramella investigates

the music in the cathedral of Vigevano (a small town some 20 miles SW of Milan) and lists the 16th- & 17th-century editions surviving there. Was all the Palestrina carried off by unscrupulous bibliophiles and only the minor composers left *in situ*? Valentina Ragaini restores the text of the sequence *Mundi renovatio nova parit gaudia* and the volume concludes with an appreciation of Laurence Feininger on the 20th anniversary of his death. If your library doesn't take these two journals, you should try to persuade it to do so (though make sure it takes *EMR* first!)

#### PAPERBACKS

A couple of Clarendon Paperbacks have been waiting space for a mention for several months. I was not particularly impressed by Rodolfo Celletti's *A History of Bel Canto* (ISBN 0 19 816641 9) when it first appeared in 1991: looking at it again, it seems more satisfying to dip into than as a whole. It is perhaps significant that I haven't referred to it in the intervening six years. William Weber's *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* (ISBN 0 19 816607 9) came out in 1992 and is notable, partly for its discussion of the fashionable topic of the concept of musical classics, and partly for its exposition of the institutions associated with the performance of music. Local studies are likely to expand this area, but Weber makes a good starting-point.

I missed Richard Hudson's *Stolen Time* (ISBN 0 19 816667 2; £15.99) when it was published in 1994. It is a big book (473 pages) full of valuable discussion of all sorts of temporal displacements. But it worries me that he fails to distinguish what I understand as rubato from other types: his very first example *Tea of two*, in which he sets forth his subject by notating a phrase as sung, looks more like what I would call syncopation. A major problem in studying the subject is to determine how much precision to give to attempts to show music as played. But I would have thought that most of us use the term rubato for something that is subtle and irregular (the oboe link in *Dove sono*, for instance). Hudson seems to lump too many forms of rhythmic expression together. A stimulating book, with much information.

We change publishers and move back to a much earlier period of musical history for the third edition of Peter Dronke's *The Medieval Lyric* (D. S. Brewer, ISBN 0 85991 484 4; £16.95). This was first published in 1968, received a postscript and biographical supplement in 1977, and now has a new preface of a dozen pages. So it is not a book that looks at the subject from the viewpoint of the 1990s. One way in which there has been the greatest change is in the awareness of how music is part of the total experience. In fact, the reader should be suspicious of the references to music: a polyphonic sequence in the first half of the 9th century, for instance, is implausible (p. 39) and much more care is needed in translated names of instruments. But musicians can look for detailed information on such matters elsewhere; this is still a useful introduction to the medieval lyric in various languages as poetry, not just an object of study.

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## Heinrich Biber: Solving the Mysteries?

James Clements

Ever since the rediscovery of the *Mystery Sonatas* in manuscript in the 1890s, they have been regarded not only as being among Biber's most important compositions, but also as occupying a unique position in the history of the violin. Despite this, there have been very few performances and only a handful of recordings of the works and the small amount of scholarly attention which they have attracted has done little more than scratch the surface. The theories that were put forward in the early part of the century, often based on assumptions rather than historical evidence, were, until very recently, largely accepted by subsequent scholars. Such complacency has meant that our knowledge and understanding of several areas of these works has remained somewhat sketchy, and, I believe, has even been obscured.

One such area is the original performance context for which the *Mystery Sonatas* were written. The most popular theory – prevalent for much of this century – is that the works are examples of the so-called *sonate da chiesa*, and would therefore have been performed in Salzburg Cathedral and other local churches during October – the Rosary month.<sup>1</sup> This theory is based, of course, on the explicit connection that the works have with the Rosary: the first fifteen sonatas are prefaced by small copper engravings of the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary. There are, however, several problems with this theory. For example, it is very probable that the works were never conceived as sonatas to begin with: as Eric Chafe points out, the word *sonata* could not have appeared on the original title page (now lost), as it is used in the manuscript as an individual movement heading and not in a generic sense.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, as Reinhard Goebel has recently shown, the wealth of dance movements and harmonic structures of the works are more analogous to the suite than the sonata.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is unhelpful and somewhat absurd to try and relate information about the use of the *sonata da chiesa* (which is almost non-existent anyway)<sup>4</sup> to the *Mystery Sonatas*. We know, moreover, that dance movements were discouraged in church, which is something that Muffat (Biber's colleague at Salzburg) was well aware of. In the preface to his 1701 *Concerti Grossi* (a rescoring of the 1682 *Armonico Tributo*) which contain many of the dance types used in the *Mystery Sonatas*, Muffat wrote: 'they [the concertos] are suitable neither for use in church nor for dancing on account of the balletos and other airs that they contain, inasmuch as they have been composed especially for the refreshment of the ear alone.' It is therefore unrealistic to assume that Biber's dance movements were any more suitable for performance in church than Muffat's.

It is, I think, unlikely that Biber never intended the *Mystery Sonatas* to be heard by such a widespread audience. This is

suggested by one important factor which has long been overlooked: the omission of the works from the Kromeriz archive. Biber sent manuscript copies of almost all the instrumental music which he composed at Salzburg to his former employer there, Prince-Bishop Karl, Count Liechtenstein-Kastelkorn of Olomouc. The absence of the *Mystery Sonatas* from the Liechtenstein collection is particularly extraordinary given that two of their principal features – scordatura and extra-musical associations – were both very much sought after by Karl Liechtenstein.<sup>5</sup> One can only conclude that Biber had a very specific performance context in mind for the *Mystery Sonatas*. Two such contexts have been proposed in recent years. The first (suggested by Goebel) is that Biber played the works personally to Max Gandolph (Biber's employer at Salzburg) at private devotions in a small Loreto Chapel on Salzburg's Nonnberg. The second (suggested by Davitt Moroney) is that they were played during devotions of the Confraternity of the Rosary in Salzburg. Whilst both of these theories are plausible – more so than the Salzburg Cathedral theory – the second is more likely. This is because the *Mystery Sonatas* display two exclusive connections with the Confraternity. First, they are dedicated to Max Gandolph, who was a diligent member of the Confraternity and spent much time promoting Rosary devotions in Salzburg during the 1670s (the period in which the *Mystery Sonatas* are thought to have been written). Second, the rooms where the Confraternity met in seventeenth-century Salzburg, which still exist today, have on their walls sixteen paintings – the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary and a picture of a Guardian Angel holding the hand of a child – which are the exact same images which are reproduced in miniature in Biber's manuscript. This theory is further supported by the knowledge that there was a long tradition of confraternities commissioning both works of music and calligraphic copies of them. Also, the exclusive connection with the Confraternity probably explains why the *Mystery Sonatas*, unlike many of Biber's other compositions of this period, were never published. Whilst it is obvious that circumstances greatly favour Moroney's theory and dismiss the Salzburg Cathedral theory, it is clear that research into the activities of the Confraternity is urgently required in order to get to the bottom of this issue.

Another very important 'grey area' of the *Mystery Sonatas* is the way in which the music relates to the sixteen miniature images (fifteen copper engravings and an ink drawing for the *Passaglia*) which precede each work in the manuscript. For most of the century, scholars have agreed that the *Mystery Sonatas* are programmatic, but not to any great extent. A few famous examples of so-called programmatic effects have been noted, which explain only a small portion

of the music. Recently there have been more extensive attempts to explain the meaning of the works by relating them to relevant texts from the four gospels.<sup>6</sup> Whilst being somewhat thought-provoking, I believe that this approach can obscure our understanding of the *Mystery Sonatas*: it is hard to believe, for example, that Biber seriously intended the use of counterpoint in the second sonata, *The Visitation* – which is such a fundamental feature of seventeenth-century music – to represent the conversation between Mary and Elizabeth. Furthermore, some of these programmatic effects rely upon a specific performance style: the famous earthquake at the end of the tenth sonata, *The Crucifixion*, is played to the full on John Holloway's recording (with its resonant acoustic and prominent continuo group), but is played remarkably more daintily on Goebel's version, which relegates the earthquake to the status of a gentle breeze at best.

If our understanding of these works is to improve we need to follow Goebel's advice and 'draw on our knowledge of rhetoric, allegory, devotional history, 17th-century religious dogma and the contemporary doctrines of the affections and of musical figures'.<sup>7</sup> Through using this approach I have been able to reveal several things about the *Mystery Sonatas* which had hitherto escaped attention. For example, the *circulatio* – a rhetorical musical figure prevalent in the seventeenth century – is used to striking effect at (among other places) the start of the eleventh sonata, *The Resurrection*, to symbolise the sun – the Resurrection took place at sunrise. It could also be referring to the Holy Trinity or life everlasting (both of which were associated with the circle) because they came about as a result of the Resurrection. Number symbolism is also important in this sonata: several facets seem to be about the number three. For example, there are three movements (a rarity in the *Mystery Sonatas*), the second of which has a time signature of 3/1 – *stile antico* notation – and is the only one of the set to use such a notation. Perhaps this is a reference to the 'three in oneness' of the Holy Trinity. (This is of course *tempus perfectum* which was once indicated by the circle.) Furthermore, this section is prepared by extensive use of triplets which are grouped into threes, as are the soundings of the *circulatio* figure at the start of the sonata, which are heard at three different registers. Finally, the *cantus firmus* is sounded three times in octaves in the violin part. These references seem to be more than just coincidences. The *circulatio* is also used extensively in the fifteenth sonata, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, where it most likely symbolises the crown. The *circulatio* is discussed in Athanasius Kircher's *Musurgia Universalis* (1650), a work with which we know Biber was familiar as he quotes from it in his *Sonata Violino Representativa*.<sup>8</sup> Biber's dedication of the *Mystery Sonatas* expresses a concept which it shares with the *Musurgia*: allegory or symbolism. For example, Biber writes the following:

I am dedicating to you in all humility this harmony, which is consecrated to the sun of justice and the immaculate moon, since you are the third light receiving illumination from both these divine heavenly bodies. For as a son you shine in holy radiance, and as a virgin you defend the virginal honour of the mother.

This is clearly an expression of Kircher's concept (which he adopted from the ancient Egyptians) that higher things are 'perceived hidden in the lower, and lower things concealed in the higher; earthly things in heaven, but in celestial form, and heavenly things in an earthly mode on earth'.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, could it be that Biber's exploration of scordatura in these works, to a far greater extent than that of any other composer before or since, is an allegory for Kircher's Enneachord, an instrument which 'resounds through all the levels of being in the universe'.<sup>11</sup> After all, the fundamental principle of both Biber's violin (which has only recently been acknowledged) and Kircher's Enneachord is sympathetic resonance: Kircher describes in detail the way in which the tuning of the other strings of the Enneachord to either concordant or discordant intervals greatly affects the instrument's resonant qualities, which is a principle that is used to splendid effect in the *Mystery Sonatas*. Whilst it is clear that the *Musurgia* is not the only treatise that could heighten our understanding of Biber's music, it is obviously a very important source.

There has, over the last few years, been a well-deserved growth in interest in both the *Mystery Sonatas* and Biber's other music by both scholars and performers, although, as this article shows, there is still much that can and should be done if we are ever to do justice to this highly original and fascinating composer of the seventeenth century whose importance should not be underestimated. I look forward to the day when Biber is no longer viewed (to quote John Holloway) as merely 'a man of mysteries'.

1. See Eugene Schmitz, 'Biber's Rosenkranzsonaten', *Musica* 5 (1951), pp. 235-6.

2. Eric Chafe, *The Church Music of Heinrich Biber* (Michigan, 1987), p. 186.

3. Reinhard Goebel, sleeve notes to recording of the *Mystery Sonatas*, ARCHIV 431 656-2 (1991), p. 12.

4. See Stephen Bonta, 'The Uses of the Sonata da Chiesa', *JAMS* 22 (1969), p. 54.

5. The possibility that the works were at Kromeriz but have not survived is unlikely: there is an extant inventory of the collection dating from 1695 which does not include any works which fit the description of the *Mystery Sonatas*. It would be coincidental to say the least that the works, if they were ever at Kromeriz, could have been lost between c. 1670 and 1695 when so many other of Biber's works in the collection have survived until the present day.

6. See, for example, Davitt Moroney, sleeve note to recording of Biber's *Mystery Sonatas*, VCD 7 90838-2 (1990), pp. 22-36, and also Chafe, *The Church Music*, pp. 185-192.

7. Goebel, sleeve notes, p. 10.

8. This connection is fully discussed in Jiri Sehnal (ed.), *Musik des 17. Jahrhunderts und Pavel Vejvanovsky* (Brno, 1994), pp. 193-200.

9. Trans. from Goebel, sleeve notes, p. 9.

10. Kircher, trans. and quoted in Joscelyn Godwin, *Music, Mysticism and Magic* (London, 1986), pp. 153-161.

11. *Ibid.*

We repeat our usual apology for the absence of Czech accents

Corrigenda: Charpentier *Salve puellulae* (*EMR* 26 pp. 12-13)

Charpentier notates the piece with two sharps; there is no ambiguity in the status of the Gs, but he draws attention to the surprising G natural in S2 bar 8 by writing *nat* in both the instrumental and vocal part. The repeat pattern is explicit. Verse 1 & 3: solo, chorus, *ritournelle*; verse 2 solo, *ritournelle* (i.e. no chorus). The edition leaves the second verse underlaid so that the verse can be sung when there are no soloists. There are three misprints.

Bar 1 T: three crotchets

Bar 3, last note S1 should be sharpened.

*Ritournelle* bar 11, bass note 2 is an octave too high.

Luigi Rossi *Passacaille*



30



This system contains measures 30 through 37. It features four staves: two treble staves and two bass staves. The key signature has two flats. Measures 30-31 show a melodic line in the first treble staff with trills marked 'tr'. The second treble staff has a sustained note. The first bass staff continues the melodic line, and the second bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

38



This system contains measures 38 through 45. The first treble staff has a melodic line with some rests. The second treble staff has a sustained note. The first bass staff has a melodic line with trills marked 'tr'. The second bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

46



This system contains measures 46 through 53. The first treble staff has a melodic line with a trill marked 'tr'. The second treble staff has a sustained note. The first bass staff has a melodic line with a trill marked 'tr'. The second bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

54



This system contains measures 54 through 61. The first treble staff has a melodic line with a trill marked 'tr'. The second treble staff has a sustained note. The first bass staff has a melodic line with a trill marked 'tr'. The second bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

## LONDON CONCERTS

Shane Fletcher

It would not have been a surprise if the quincentenary commemoration of the death of Johannes Ockeghem on the 6th February had been overshadowed by the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Franz Schubert some six days earlier. London concerts, following the excellent example of Radio 3, managed to find space for both composers. Perhaps the BBC concerts were mindful of the fact that with Schubert the whole procedure can be repeated in 2028, the bicentenary of his death, whereas with Ockeghem, whose birth date is unknown, the world has to wait another century. The proximity of the two dates was, as it turned out, an auspicious coincidence. The overriding impression that the two London concerts gave of Johannes Ockeghem was that, like Schubert, he was a lyrical composer with a fine understanding of the human voice and its capacity to express the emotion of words. I suspect that I was not alone in my musical education in that the impression I was given of Ockeghem was of a canonic genius whose music was to be admired on the page rather than enjoyed in performance. Yet what we know of Ockeghem's life suggests a sympathetic man, a singer and a composer for voices, rather than an eccentric genius of counterpoint.

It was five years ago that the Orlando Consort planned that they would feature the music of Ockeghem in 1997 and their Wigmore Hall recital took place on February 6th, exactly (give or take the odd change of calendar over the centuries) five hundred years after Ockeghem's death. With just four regular members they cannot easily perform the larger scale sacred pieces, but the revelation of their recital was the chansons. Here Ockeghem may not have been a great innovator of form (in other words, the history books do not pay his chansons the same attention that they pay his masses), but these songs, in the hands of the Orlando Consort, emerge as personal statements of great beauty. Their counter-tenor Robert Harre-Jones was not always at home when the top part was low and his voice seemed quite tired by the end of the evening, but *Prenez sur moi vostre exemple* was pure enjoyment. It is a canon, as we might expect from Ockeghem given such a text, but the effect is delightful. (The fifteenth century of course would not have seen any need for the word 'but' in that last sentence. It was an age still imbued with the mediaeval view of the music of the spheres as a kind of mathematical harmony and one whose idea of painting and architecture saw the importance of order and proportion as keys to beauty. It is only our post-Romantic world that is so suspicious of a link between beauty and order in music.) The concert also included *O rosa bella*. This is based on an English ballata, probably by John Bedyngham, that enjoyed considerable popularity on the Continent. Ockeghem takes

the top line of the original and puts another equal voice part alongside it. Some have suggested that this may have been only part of a process that would have ended up with a three- or four-part piece. Whether that is true or not the two parts are most pleasing as they stand, especially as sung by Charles Daniels and Angus Smith.

London's other main tribute to Ockeghem took place in the chapel of King's College. It is one of the odder products of the Gothic revival and much of the chapel's roof is now taken up with a library stack; the new ceiling does little for the architecture or the acoustic. The Clerk's Group, under the direction of Edward Wickham, performed the Requiem with other motets. Their recital was preceded by a short discussion on the Requiem in which David Fallows expressed some doubts about the Requiem's integrity as a whole polyphonic setting. The work ends with the Offertorium *Domine Jesu Christe*; there is no Sanctus, Agnus or Communio. Furthermore, the Offertorium is in a very different style from the rest of the piece.

But the scholar's problems became the audience's delight; the sheer variety of numbers of parts in the movements and styles of writing, from the simplicity of the introit to the complexity of the offertory, made for rich and rewarding listening. The Clerk's Group clearly know the work inside out and the gymel sections were done with wonderfully blended pairs of voices giving an expressive freedom to the carefully measured notes that allowed the listener to go beyond interest or even astonishment into an emotional response to Ockeghem's music. Even though the building was not as generous acoustically as one would like, the nine singers gave a resonance both to the fuller sections of the mass and, especially to the devotional motet *Intemerata Dei Mater*.

Both concerts ended the same way, with the offertory from the Requiem and then Josquin's *Nymphes des bois*, a setting of a lament on the death of Ockeghem. The most successful aspects of the two recitals were spotlighted: the Orlandos, with one voice to a part and a familiarity with the French language of the period, made the chansons of Ockeghem and the lament of Josquin telling and emotional, while the Clerk's Group with their larger numbers made a greater impact on the sacred music. Both groups had taken Johannes Ockeghem out of the history books and revealed him to be so much more than a master of canonic counterpoint: a composer whose death would, like Schubert's some three hundred and thirty years later, be mourned 'by fine singers of every nation.' as Josquin's lament so eloquently puts it.

## RECORD REVIEWS

## MEDIEVAL

**Hildegard of Bingen *Feminea forma Maria: Marian Songs of the Dendermonde Codex*** Ensemble Mediatrix, Johannes Berchmans Göschl 58' 50"  
Calig CAL 50982

We get so used to Hildegard's music being performed by specialists in medieval secular song that it is refreshing to hear a disc directed by a chant expert. However individual Hildegard's style may be, it is surely within the chant context that it arose and probably really belongs, and despite all controversies on how chant might have been performed at any particular place and time, we know considerably more about that than about vernacular or instrumental styles. The small group of female singers comprising the Ensemble Mediatrix is collectively excellent, but some solos (not individually named) are disappointing. Nevertheless, a disc worth hearing, even if you are not concerned with the Marian theology expounded in the notes. It does, in fact, seem rather odd deliberately to select Marian texts from a repertoire that was much less Mary-obsessed than the later middle ages. The texts are included but only with a German translation. CB

The edition published by Otto Müller (Salzburg, 1969) seems now to be unavailable. Can anyone tell me if there is any substantial edition of Hildegard's songs that includes the music (other than the Alamire facsimile and the Antico selection) that can be bought at a reasonable price?

**El Cant de la Sibilla I** Montserrat Figueras, La Capella Reial de Catalunya, Jordi Savall *Auvidis Fontalis* ES 8705 54' 30"  
*Sibilla Latine, Sibilla Provençale, Sibilla Catalane*

This recording is steeped in the cryptomancy of the ancient Sibyls – near divine beings with power of prophesy granted by Apollo. In the *Sibilla Latine* the group captures the atmosphere of meditation and foreboding, and this appealed to me very much. I was a little uneasy about the pitch movements between drones and solo verses. Montserrat has a 'halo' around her characterful voice which largely serves to overcome these discrepancies. The *Sibilla Provençale* is rather static and the ud accompaniment during the verse shadows the tune a few crotchets behind like an over-friendly dog. This said, I did enjoy the composed 'faux bourdon' which contained its own prophecies of harmony. The final piece is from renaissance Catalunya. A parade of loud wind instruments heralds the Sibyl, and the chorus is in full harmony. Although much later, this has its roots in the previous pieces, and to match the mood of mystery, the pace is consciously slow. Overall I found the timeless melismas and incantations a good 20th century detox.

Jennie Cassidy

**Sweet is the Song: Music of the Troubadours and Trouvères** Catherine Bott 66' 24"  
L'Oiseau-Lyre 448 999-2

It has become the accepted wisdom that programmes (whether live or recorded) of medieval songs need to be tarted up with instrumental drones, introductions and accompaniments. Nonsense! With a singer like Catherine Bott, all you need is her: anyone else would be a distraction. There isn't even any need to suggest that the dozen songs here are too many for a single sitting. This is the most convincing interpretation of medieval song that I have heard. As a bonus, the notes by John Stevens focus on how we might listen to a troubadour song. CB

## 16th CENTURY

**Guerrero & Lobo** Musica Reservata de Barcelona. Jean-Marc Andrieu 60' 46"  
Ediciones Albert Moraleda 1665 ££  
**Guerrero** *Missa Saeculorum Amen* a4-5, motets *Maria Magdalene* a6. *Pastores loquebantur* a6  
**A. Lobo** *Missa maria Magdalene* a6; *Responsorio de difuntos Libera me* a5

This is in a series sponsored by ICI (not regular supporters of English discs) devoted to young Spanish musicians. Musica Reservata de Barcelona comprises six singers (SSATBarB) and a director. They have a flair for the music and the general shape and feel of the performances is excellent. But they need to work more on their tuning (like several other less-familiar groups of singers I've heard this month). This collection of little-known, inter-linked music (the Lobo mass is based on the Guerrero motet) is well worth hearing. Since Bruno Turner's notes do not explain the title of Guerrero's fine and previously unrecorded mass (he was asked to be non-technical), I'm tempted to pose it as our competition for this month, but the final answer can easily be checked in Stevenson's book. CB

Available at mid-price from Lindum Records.

**Palestrina Music for the Christmas Season** Chicago a cappella, Jonathan Miller dir Centaur CRC 2303 54' 40"  
Motet & Missa *O magnum mysterium*; Office hymns *A solis ortus cardine*, *Christe redemptor omnium*, *Hostis Herodis impie*; Offertory *Jubilata Deo universa terra*

An honest try; but apart from the fact that much of this music is not otherwise recorded, there is nothing to recommend it. The singing is bland and relentless with no sense that the words are anything other than consonants and vowels. This is especially true of the motet *O magnum mysterium*, one of Palestrina's finest and a clear precursor of Victoria's *O quam gloriosum*. The three *alternatim* hymns are a little better, but the impression of churning on inexorably and inflexibly is just what this music can do without. Noel O'Regan

**English Madrigals** The Amaryllis Consort, Charles Brett dir, Robert Aldwinckle *hpscd* 65' 32" (rec. 1987)  
Carlton Classics 30367 01752 ££  
**Sing we at Pleasure: Tudor Madrigals** Cambridge Voices, Ian Moore 55' 41"  
Past Times PTO819 ££

Of the two vocal re-issues from Carlton that overlap with their St Valentine compilation (see p 18), I find this the less appealing. The Monteverdi duets are outstanding; this does not catch fire (despite the opening Morley piece). In theory, being sung by a one-to-a-part group of excellent singers, it should be preferable to the mostly amateur, choral ensemble of the Cambridge Voices. But voices used to singing oratorio solos need rather more practice in blending than is evident on the Amaryllis disc and I find them somewhat less satisfying than the Cambridge group, despite the fact that when the latter use soloists, Selene Mills and Lydia Smallwood are hardly in the same class as Gillian Fisher and Jennifer Smith. Tempi are sometimes a bit slow, though in the interests of textual clarity. CB

**Ricercari, Capricci e Fantasia a tre** La Gamba, Freiburg, dir Ekkehard Weber 64' 54"  
Ars Musici AM 1168-2  
Music by Agricola, Bassano, Conforti, Guami, Lassus, Monteverdi, Ruffo, Willaert

The booklet has one or two gremlins but I have nothing but praise for the choice of music and for the playing. Who would ever have thought that an hour of music for three viols could be such fun to listen to! Nearly all the pieces come from that magic period between 1560 and 1590 when instrumental music stretched its legs, stood up, and came of age. The Agricola pieces (all arrangements made after the composers' death) and the Ruffo *capricci* stand out: even the Monteverdi *canzonette* (the only arrangements of vocal music) stand up very well to purely instrumental interpretation. Weber has been viol teacher at the Freiburg Hochschule für Musik since 1974. Perhaps the other players are ex-pupils. In any case, the ensemble shows not only impeccable tuning and imaginative, natural phrasing, but the kind of relaxed understanding that could only have come from long acquaintance: the polyphonic pieces are real musical conversations. Unlike some viol consorts on record, they sound as if they are enjoying themselves. I understand that La Gamba has also recorded the Purcell fantasias. Now that's a record I really would like to hear!

Graham O'Reilly

**For His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts: English Music from Henry VIII to Charles II** His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts 71' 00"  
Hyperion CDA66894  
Music by Alamire, Alwood, A. & J. Bassano, Brade, Bull, Coprario, East, Henry VIII, Tye + Locke *For his Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts* & kbd music played by Timothy Roberts



With this disc HMSC really assert their personality. The playing has an air of ceremony and powerful rhythmical distribution of weight. The English genius for melody and that famous eccentricity are threaded through a cohesive and well-conceived programme. The disc should find a much wider audience than simply the brass lover. Variety and contrast are provided in a number of ways. Sequences of pieces played contiguously have splashes of harpsichord and a peppering of regal. The individual players rise and fall in the texture and constantly pass the baton of interest. The *T'Andernaken* a5, often played on dynamically-challenged instruments, contains some extraordinarily alluring changes of mood. Aston's *Masque* is given a beautifully wistful rendition, avoiding the temptation towards obvious angularity. I enjoyed the bizarre *Scottish Dance* by Brade, so deliciously an ex-pat sassenach's eye-view, in a Warlock-esque arrangement. Have no fear of five *In nomine* in a row for these are not of the terminally introspective kind. Each is brilliantly characterised, from the mysterious to the playful. The keyboard pieces, from the organ voluntary to the oddly mathematical virginals fantasia of Bull, are excellent, and Timothy Roberts shares the same humour as the rest of the players. The measured support of occasional percussion and arrangements by Keith McGowan (whose quirky quill I recognised before reading the sleeve notes), makes an excellent concert. *Stephen Cassidy*

**Comédies Madrigalesques** Ensemble Clément Jannequin, Dominique Visse 177' 30" 3 discs harmonia mundi HMC 90856.58 ££

This collection of three independent issues is good value if you haven't already got any of them. The jokes may perhaps wear a little thin on repeated hearings, but there is plenty of fine singing here. The set includes the best-known of the genre, Vecchi's *L'Amfiparnasso*, with three pieces from *Il Convito musicale* added (though not really filling a disc lasting 59' 20"). Bachieri's *Barca di Venetia* also has two pairs of Marenzio madrigals. The Lassus disc *Chansons & Moresche* has some of the lighter madrigals which form the background to the genre, but the chansons cover a wider spectrum, such as the moving *La nuit froide et sombre*; he didn't write madrigal comedies like Vecchi and Banchieri, but whatever he writes, whether serious or light, is undeniably more interesting. *CB*

## 17th CENTURY

**Banchieri Il Zabaione Musicale (1604); Barca di Venetia per Padova (1623)** L'Homme Armé, Fabio Lombardo 65' 06" Arts Music 47285 2 ££

Two madrigal-comedies sung with verve and panache, even if (as with several other discs this month) the male voices are more controlled than the two sopranos and there are a few bad spots of intonation. It is unfortunate that one of the two works appears with much more exciting singing on the set reviewed above, and with the

benefit of an English translation of the text in the booklet. But those wanting more instrumental participation may prefer this disc. *CB*

**Frescobaldi Canzoni da sonar vol. II** Tripla Concordia (Giulio Capocaccia, Lorenzo Cavasanti recs, Caroline Boersma vlc, Sergio Ciomei hpscd & org) + Kees Boeke, Antonio Politano recs & Frederic Marinola theorbo 106' 57" (2 CDs) Nuovo Era Ancient Music 7250/1

A collection to dip into rather than to listen to in its entirety in one session. Frescobaldi's *con ogni sorte di strumenti* here means recorders and more recorders, with only the very occasional canzona for cello or harpsichord solo providing variety. That said, the playing is uniformly sound, though a bit on the safe side for the ever-inventive Frescobaldi, especially in its regularity of tempi. One is left longing for some mercurial violin playing to bring the music more to life. *Noel O'Regan*

**Frescobaldi Il Primo Libro de Capricci** John Butt organ 61' 59" harmonia mundi HMU 907178

Frescobaldi's *Capricci* were published in 1624 and are a part of a progression combining aspects of his virtuosic *Fantasie* of 1608 and the serious *Ricercari* of 1615. Although based in the high renaissance polyphonic style of the previous decades, the *Capricci* indicate the move towards the baroque, not least in the frequent changes of mood and direction which represents the initial shoots of *stylus phantasticus*. The programme note by Anthony Newcomb delves in to the musical 'jokes' in the *Capricci*, although whether the jokes were strong enough to produce the suggested contemporary 'belly laughs' must be a matter for conjecture. Nonetheless, pieces such as the *Capriccio sopra il cucho* may raise a wry smile from today's hard bitten listeners. The organ is a sweet sounding little mid eighteenth century Italian organ in the O'Neill Collection of the University of California and John Butt makes effective use of the 7 stops. It is refreshing to hear an organ CD that does not rely on strong changes of colour. The playing is stylish and musical, although I would favour a less frenetic approach to the virtuosic passages and rather more care on keyboard touch. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

**Monteverdi Duets and Solos** Emma Kirkby, Evelyn Tubb SS, The Consort of Musick, Anthony Rooley 67' 50" (rec 1986) Carlton Classics 30366 00442 ££

This was a stunning issue when it first appeared (PCD 881) and remains so. Who can write better duets than Monteverdi, and who can sing them with more virtuosity, subtlety and passion than Emma Kirkby and Evelyn Tubb? The opening track is slightly disappointing – *Chiome d'oro* seems to rush a bit – but otherwise, perfection! Why can't a record company book singers like these to record *Ulisse* and *Poppea*? I've never heard Penelope's lament as well sung on complete

performances as it is by Evelyn Tubb here. You don't need massive vibrato or rubato for Monteverdian emotion. The new packaging has a longer note by Tim Carter and texts and translations, but omits the players' names. The original booklet gives them as Tom Finucane lute, Christopher Wilson chitarrone, Frances Kelly harp, Peter Fender & Rosalind Harris vlms, Erin Headley viol & lirone and Alan Wilson organ; it also has a nice picture of the singers as a pair, not dull mug-shots. *CB*

**Scheidt Ludi Musici Hamburg, 1621** Hesperion XX, Jordi Savall 61' 40" Auvidis Fontalis ES 8559

Scheidt's instrumental music is woefully under-recorded, so a whole disc of it is welcome. The 17 (out of 32) pieces here are probably the peak of the Anglo-German instrumental repertoire of the first decades of the 17th century; if you are sceptical, try the last group on the disc. If you don't know the music, this disc is worth getting as an introduction. But I can't believe this is really viol consort music; it is amazing that it is played by viols as convincingly as it is, but it needs a renaissance violin band such as The King's Noyse or The Parley of Instruments. (Peter Holman's booklet note is tactfully worded.) The superfluous percussion is fortunately subdued and the continuo is a bit fussy, though what the red-jacketed harpist plays is always intriguing. *CB*

For a new edition of the 1621 set, see p. 3

**Van Eyck Der Fluyten Lust-hof** Sébastien Marq rec. Jill Feldman S. Rolf Lislevand lute, guitar 66' 19" Auvidis Astrée E 8588

This disc is invaluable to lovers of Van Eyck's variations. Jill Feldman and Rolf Lislevand perform some of the songs and lute arrangements from which Van Eyck took his themes. *Excusemoy*, *The Earl of Essex Galliard* and *Can she excuse*, for example, make an interesting and absorbing group. Jill Feldman sings with a clear understanding of the texts and is especially lovely in Dowland's *Flow my tears*. Occasionally, though, her French is a little hard to make out. Rolf Lislevand is a stylish accompanist and soloist. The star of the show is Sébastien Marq, whose recorder playing is effortless and unmannered but with wonderfully sensitive and at times humorous playing. I loved his sung drone for *Ee Schots Lietjen* and 'out-of-tune' cuckooing in *Engels Nachtegaeltje*. A delightful recording, probably the best introduction to these standards of the recorder repertoire. *Angela Bell*

**Danish Christmas Mass from the Reign of King Christian IV** Schola Caeciliania, Charles Humphries A, Michael Chesnutt 65' 49" Pheasant Records PHRC D 9601 Chant from 1573 Copenhagen gradual, *Missa sine nomine* a5; also Schütz SWV 257, 348, 349

There has already been one Christmas Mass of the period recorded in Roskilde – the Gabrieli Consort's Praetorius. That was in German and recorded in the Cathedral; this

Danish Mass comes from the Marian church and is far more modest. The small choir is fine in the chant (from Niels Jespersen's Latin & vernacular *Graduale* 1573/1606), but the intonation in the polyphony (an anon. *Missa sine nomine* and other items by Pedersen) is variable. It is an interesting experience, but sounds more provincial than Christian IV might have liked. The disc is completed by three Schütz solos transposed for alto (confidently sung by Charles Humphries), but the violin parts rise uncharacteristically high. CB

**German Dance Music of the 17th and 18th Centuries** Pro Arte Antiqua Praha 57'55"

Milan Vlcek Music Production SY 0004-2 131  
Music by J. C. F. Fischer, Hammerschmidt, Muffat, Puerli, Posch, Schein

There is an interesting variety of music on this disc from early 17th-century consort music to early 18th-century essentially orchestral suites, all played on viols (though for the Muffat and the Fischer, the top two players switch to violin). In general, the tone of the consort is warm, the tuning excellent and the style just right, although the ornamentation sounds as if it has been lifted out of the book (as the notes proudly claim it has!) rather than being a spontaneous gesture. I have to say that I found the harpsichord intruded slightly, though never to the point of distraction from some well-chosen pieces. The later pieces really do work with viols on the lower voices. Of the earlier repertoire, I particularly enjoyed the Hammerschmidt. BC

**Lagime mie: Early Songs of Love and Torment** Jennifer Lane S, Timothy Burris lute PMG103 62'08"

Caccini *Belle rose porporine*, *Chi mi confort' ahimè*, *Fortunato augellino*; Frescobaldi *Così mi disprezzate*, *Se l'aura spira*, *Ti lascio anima mia*; Kapsberger *Passamezzo*, *Toccata*; Monteverdi *Di misera regina* (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse*); Strozzi *Lagime mie*

This disc contains some gems of Italian florid monody, convincingly researched and well-performed. American mezzo Jennifer Lane enhances her rich and unusual voice with great intelligence and musicality. She has a complete mastery of the *nuove musiche* style and Caccinian ornamentation, my only misgiving being her over-use of vibrato, which is generally applied to every long note rather than spared for more infrequent and effective use. Her dramatic voice has a wide range, of both pitch and emotion. She is fluent and free with her interpretation of written note-values, letting the ornamentation dictate her timing in a way that reminds me of Catherine Bott's singing. This scheme works well in *stile recitativo*, as Lane's embellishments always seamlessly rise out of the character and meaning of the music; however, in the more rhythmically structured pieces, she is sometimes too free, so that the strophic framework of the music and the lightness of tone are all but lost. Timothy Burris is competent, but with a tendency to a digital stutter in his improvisation. He is somewhat unimaginative, missing many opportunities which better lutenists would relish. Selene Mills

**Lamenti Barocchi Vol. 3** Capella Musicale di S. Petronio, Sergio Vartolo dir 75'22"  
Naxos 8.553320 £

Carissimi *Lamento della Regina Maria Stuarda*; Cesti *Lamento della Madre Ebreia*; Giamonte *Lamento della Pazza*; Monteverdi *Lamento d'Arianna*; Rossi *Lamento delle Regina di Svezia*; Strozzi *Lamento del Marchese Cinquemars*

I listened to this with keen interest: would the Italians, recording their matchless vocal repertoire of the 17th century that everyone has been singing for so many years, at last show us style as well as passion, tonal warmth and verbal clarity? The answer is yes and no. *Lamento d'Arianna* receives a distinguished but ultimately disappointing performance from Anna Caterina Antonacci, a dramatic soprano with a lovely voice and plenty of passion and feeling. Her singing, which dominates the disc, is undoubtedly affecting, and she has a good idea of the rhetorical needs of this extraordinary piece. But she doesn't use enough variety of tonal colour, and the piece is sacrificed at the altar of her beautiful over-rich tone and intrusive vibrato. The mad song by Giamonte, despite the same problems, is a fascinating piece, which ends abruptly with a vivid depiction of a string breaking. The lighter soprano, Marinella Pennicchi, on the other hand, sings a Barbara Strozzi lament with much better variety of tone. She controls and uses her vibrato far more acceptably, and in the very high tessitura of Carissimi's *Lamento della Regina Maria Stuarda*, with the Monteverdi the best music on the disc, she is very fine. She is joined in this, as is her colleague earlier, by the tenor Alessandro Carmignani, who sings his small contributions (for which there is no authority in the MSS) absolutely beautifully. He takes risks in his desire for expression, and is occasionally slightly flat, but his is the best singing here. Some of the music is unfamiliar but is always interesting, excepting Cesti's *Lamento della Madre Ebreia*, which also has a nasty anti-Semitic text and is better left to oblivion. The continuo team of harpsichord, two chitarrone and a bass viol is very responsive to the text, but with obviously composed, over elaborate realisations sometimes sounds contrived. Worth a fiver for the good bits. Robert Oliver

## LATE BAROQUE

**Albinoni Concerti a cinque, op. 9, Libro I (1722)**  
Peter Szüts vln, Alfredo Bernardini ob, Paolo Grazzi ob, Concerto Armonico 56'57"  
Arts Music 47132-2 ££

These recordings were made in 1992. Now available on the budget Arts Label, they will put up a fierce battle against the Chandos/Collegium Musicum 90 set, largely because the oboists are absolutely outstanding. The interpretations are also a little more robust: where I described the oboes in the double concertos from Anthony Robson and Co. as 'just adding colour' (*EMR* 27), here there is at least some sense of contrast. In the violin concertos, Szüts (apologies for the wrong Hungarian accent) has slightly less poise than Simon Standage, preferring simply to emerge from the tutti from time to time, but is no

less exciting an advocate of Albinoni's fine violin writing. Recommended. BC

**Concerning Babel & Son: Music composed, arranged and transcribed by Charles and William Babel** Trio Basiliensis 67'05"  
Freiburger Musik Forum AM 1167-2  
Music by Corelli, Fiocchi, Handel, Paisible, Rosier, Steffani.

This is a well-planned and varied concert of music from the Purcell/Handel hinterland, territory in which a first-class booklet note from Peter Holman can be both expected and welcomed. Marianne Mezger's recorder playing has something of the Brüggem about it – *flattement*, vibrato and Hotteterre-style trills are liberally used to colour the musical line. If the first three notes don't make you sit up with a start you have the most unshockable ears in early music! However, if you return to these after the rest of the disc they seem the obvious thing to have done, a tribute to the seductiveness of her interpretations of works to which I am glad to have been introduced. Her colleagues, too, enjoy their solo opportunities. Arranged for gamba, the nobility of Corelli's slow movements is even more pronounced than usual and Paul Simmonds' nimble fingers make light of the lavish decorations in Babel's transcriptions of Handel. Two minor glitches in production (not affecting enjoyment of the music) should have been avoided: the Steffani sonata needs some index points and *Sopranblockflöte* does not translate as Treble Recorder (the English is correct). The Babels had, and the Trio Basiliensis have, excellent taste. This is much more than mere *Tafelmusik*. David Hansell

**Bach Brandenburg Concertos, Triple Concerto** La Stravaganza (Hamburg), Siegbert Rampe 125'41" 2 discs  
Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45255 2 0

Despite occasional touches of imagination (like the little flourishes which embellish the continuo sections of Brandenburg 5 in either version; the conductor also serves as soloist) my verdict can hardly be favourable with regard to this series of recordings. The main problem seems to be totally unacceptable use of the 'period instruments', which have been deployed in such numbers and such ways as to produce an overall picture that conveys to me the spirit of performance of the ECO and Boyd Neel from the 1950s and '60s rather than anything more really up-to-date or stylistically sensitive. Much of the music is played quite fast by today's standards (we just cannot be sure of the 1720s Köthen or 1730s/1750s Leipzig norms), and mostly the playing is in tune apart from the baroque flautist featured in BWV 1050 and 1050a, who sounds unaware that he is frequently flat. Most of the string sound is weak (too much playing at the point of the bow in too much of the music, with the tone enfeebled by over-tightening of the ribbon) and the slower movements are given feeling in such a way that sounds so remote from what is now usually done in performances using specialist players. Even the commentaries demonstrate outmoded

thinking and worrying ignorance of practical aspects of good baroque practice.

CB drew attention last month to the curious illustration of the wrong conductor on the rear of the booklet. Almost as culpable is the portrait poorly-reproduced on the inside cover which, for over 12 years now, has been established as almost certainly not depicting the composer, though is still often reproduced.

Stephen Daw

**Bach Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord BWV 1027-9** Bettina Hoffmann gamba, Alfonso Fedi hpscd 41' 20"  
Arts Music 47242-2 ££

Bach's BWV 1027-9 may be gems of trio writing, but they are not without problems. His gamba writing is awkward, and the choice of a flat key for the concerto-like third sonata (of which arrangements exist as 'the seventh Brandenburg') is somewhat misguided for reasons of sonority. The keyboard is given untenable sustaining lines, and idiomatic figurations appear only briefly in the D-major sonata. The impression one gets from the recording is that there is more to enjoy for the keyboardist than for the gambist. Hoffman's interpretation is convincing and she extracts beautiful sounds from her Bertrand copy. Fedi is a good foil, providing some élan and excitement on his top-heavy Dulcken copy. The recorded sound is a little immediate; the gamba could benefit from some reverberation. Embellishments are kept to localised ornaments, eschewing any temptation to provide *wilckürliche Veränderungen* in the repeats of the slow movement of the G-minor sonata. There is some rhythmic alteration though, viz. overdotted in the Andante of the D-major sonata. Artistic merits aside, I wonder if a 41-minute disc stands much of a chance against the better-known partnerships in this oft-recorded repertoire.

Kah-Ming Ng

**Krebs VI Trios (1743)** Andreas Kröper, Václav Kapsa fls, Markéta Kapsa vln, Angelika Radowitz ob, Thomas Fritsch vln/vdg, Bernhard Gillitzer hpscd. 69' 56"  
Milan Vlcck Music Production SY 0002-2 131

These trios date from 1743/44 during Ludwig Krebs's Zittau employment. The enterprising and stylish small Czech ensemble have used copies of the original printed edition by J.U. Haffner of Nürnberg, and the results are lively, tuneful and stylish. The composer was not praised for nothing by his teacher J. S. Bach, even though these pieces are by no means comparable to even the 'enjoyable' chamber-music of the latter. I think that they are especially well delivered by these apparently young players; all goes well, keeps pretty well in tune and is endowed with such tonal bloom as is appropriate to Krebs's charming gallantries.

Stephen Daw

**Leclair Sonates pour Violin & Basse Continue: extraites du Livre IV** [op. 9/2, 6, 8, 9] François Fernandez vln, Pierre Hantaï hpscd, Philippe Pierlot gamba 68' 29"  
Auvidis Astrée E 8586

Leclair's sonatas never fail to challenge the

violinist: he regularly uses a fairly simple melody to lull one into a false sense of security and then unleashes an almighty array of astonishingly difficult passagework. Fernandez has already recorded some of his violin concertos and so is well versed in the idiom. The apparent ease with which he leaps about the fingerboard on this CD confirms his place near the top of Leclair's interpreters. His tone is closer to Jaap Schröder on ADDA than Ryo Terakado on Denon, though he shares some of the latter's wonderful bow strokes. The continuo players are wholly subservient, providing a directional bass line and some scrumptious harmony (although I suppose that, too, is Leclair's doing!).

BC

**Pedriani Concert Baroque à la Cité interdite** XVIII-21, Musique des Lumières 67' 18"  
Auvidis Astrée E 8609

Even before hearing a note, the booklet intrigues and its eight pages on 'European music in China' and 'Chinese music and the missionaries' are fascinating in themselves. I'm not in fact particularly impressed by the Chinese pieces from Amiot's 1779 transcription (plus a tune familiar from Weber-Hindemith that was printed in Rousseau's *Dictionnaire de Musique* of 1768 and which has survived in Chinese usage), performed here in ways a Westerner might have done; only the flute sounds convincing. But Pedriani's sonatas are of considerable interest. Teodorico Pedriani was sent in 1701 by the Pope at the request of the Emperor of China, who wished to have a European artist in his service. It took him ten years to reach China, where he stayed until his death in 1746. The Emperor was lucky to have been sent so fine a European composer and the music can stand by itself without the excuse of its curious origins. It is played here with considerable imagination.

CB

The notes give no publication date for Pedriani's op. 3 (issued under the pseudonym Nepidi), his only extant work. An edition or facsimile would be welcome.

**Rameau Orchestral Suites** Capella Savaria, Mary Térey-Smith 51' 28"  
Naxos 8.553388 £  
Suites from *La naissance d'Ostris; Abaris ou les Boréades*

It's a bit old fashioned now to record orchestral suites from baroque operas, but the music is certainly worth hearing in this context. The trick is to characterise carefully each extract. Capella Savaria perhaps lacks the final éclat of the very best most recent work: the drama is slightly underplayed, perhaps in the interests of cohesion. But the overall standard is still very good, and is a measure of how quickly the early music movement is progressing in Eastern Europe (Capella Savaria is Hungarian). Slightly longer pauses between each piece would have helped. One false note – not a single player has his name in the booklet. If this was a conscious decision, it perhaps betrays an old-fashioned view of this music, that insufficiently emphasises its chamber-music basis. But I can't say that such a view came over in the playing.

Graham O'Reilly

**Rameau Pièces de Clavecin en Concert** Andreas Kröper fl, Shalev Ad-El hpscd; Richard Boothby gamba 63' 25"  
Milan Vlcck Music Production SY 0006-2131

Most complete recordings of this set are with violin, or combination of violin and flute. Here the use of the flute alone makes the complex textures unfailingly clear, and I can certainly recommend this recording. Its best moments are compelling, with a straightforward approach which makes the most out of, for example, the brisk *Le Vézinet* and the deliciously slow and sensuous *La Boucon*, which is played with melting beauty, yet with no loss of the dance rhythm. There is a spontaneous impulsiveness about the performance which makes it very enjoyable to listen to, particularly the 4<sup>th</sup> *Pièce*, where there is some nice tempo-bending and a sense of risk which makes it all very exciting. There are less successful movements, *La Coulicam* stops and starts, and in the 5<sup>th</sup> *Pièce*, particularly *La Forqueray*, I missed the extra expressiveness of the violin; but they are still good enough to not detract from the overall effect. The three instrumentalists are all superb, and I particularly enjoyed Richard Boothby's command of his sometimes extremely difficult viol part.

Robert Oliver

**G. B. Sammartini Il pianto delle pie Donne, Pianto di Maddalena al Sepolcro** Silvia Mapelli A, Caterina Calvi A, Vito Martino t, Capriccio Italiano Ensemble, Giorgio Cappelli hpscd, Daniele Ferrari cond. 78' 59"  
Nuova Era 7269

The two works recorded here belong to a set of five written in 1751. Each consists of a sinfonia, followed by a recitative-aria pair for each of the three soloists, concluding with a 'dialogue-recitative' (my term) and ensemble-finale. Caterina Calvi has a warm and rounded contralto voice. Soprano Silvia Mapelli is bright and agile; she has a lovely trill in her repertoire, though some of her *Da capo* ornaments are strangely unstylish and her repeated use of single mordents clashes with more imaginative cadential work. Vito Martino's tenor is full-blooded and heroic, although I'm not convinced that angels are cast in that vein – the vocal acrobatics sound just a little too much like hard work for a heavenly being. The instrumental playing is what we've begun to identify as 'stylistically aware', primarily strings with simple oboe lines and punctuating horns. The notes imply that the remaining works will follow. The church used for these live performances is obviously quite large. Listen to the cadenza 10 minutes into track 3 for a demonstration! Audience participation is virtually unnoticeable until the final applause.

BC

**Veracini The Recorder Sonatas (1716). Vol. I, nos. 1-6** Gwyn Roberts, Tempesta di Mare PGM 107 58' 16"

Pro Gloriam Musicae (PGM) proclaim boldly their use of 'state-of-the-art recording equipment' and dedication to provide 'the discerning listener with a level of musical performance and technical excellence unrivalled in the world'. Discerning listeners needn't



bother: the sound quality is poor, the acoustic is dreadful and the performance less than good. Not only does it sound as if each player is in a different room, but the bassoon actually dominates with a fat, unfocussed sound and the harpsichord playing is heavy handed. The recorder player Gwyn Roberts incorporates some stylish ornamentation, but her tone is often forced and her intonation variable. Complicated passage-work can be clumsy and the slow movements are decidedly unsubtle. Continuo cellist Ann Marie Morgan, however, plays with good tone and sensitivity. *Angela Bell*

**Music for the King of Spain** Virtuosi di Praga, Prague Chamber Choir, Rodrigo Orrego T, Pavel Baxa cond. 56' 51"  
Discover International DICD 920300 £  
Scarlati Mass a4; Soler Andaluz; Jose Peris (b. 1924) *Jubilate Dominum, Te Deum*;

I'm not going to say anything about the Peris, since it is well outwith our remit. Of the earlier pieces, the Scarlati is less successful. This 'world premiere recording' of his *stile antico* four-voice setting of the mass is neither inspired nor inspiring, particularly when it comes before the lively villancico by Soler. Only readers of the German notes will discover that the piece survives at the Escorial and has been reworked for full strings from the pair of violins in the original by none other than Jose Peris. It's this piece that encourages one to want to hear more. *BC*

The Mass is published by Carus (40.699). There are over a hundred Christmas Villancicos by Soler at the Escorial, + 8 for Corpus Christi, 8 for S. Lorenzo and 5 for S. Jerónimo: judging by the example here, they are well worth recording more extensively. Peris (currently music advisor to the Spanish court) writes in a contemporary style, full of big gestures that sustain interest. Though difficult to categorise and not entirely successful, such a mixed disc is refreshing. *CB*

**Wanda Landowska in Performance, vol. 2.** Music & Arts CD-959 ££ 69' 29"  
Bach *English Suite 2* (rec. 1947), Handel *Suites 5 in E (2 movs) & 7 in g* (1943 & 1949), Rameau *Courante & Gigue en Rondeau in e & E* (1949); Vivaldi (op. 3/9): Bach (BWV 972) *Concerto in D* (1943)

I must confess that I do not owe my introduction to the harpsichord to recordings of Wanda Landowska: the earliest recital I can remember was by George Malcolm, almost exactly forty years ago in Balliol College Hall. Despite his obsession with registration changes, he was a far more disciplined player than Landowska, and I have never been particularly struck by the recordings of her I have heard. Virtually every movement that can be played slowly is played very slowly and the lack of interest in the sound her Pleyel harpsichord produces accentuates the tedium. There is enormous character in the quicker movements, and one can see why she impressed at the time. The booklet warns the listener that the player sometimes takes liberties with the music. It is excellent that these historical performances are being re-issued. They are part of the harpsichord's history and may perhaps make the arrogant critic question his assumptions. *CB*

## CLASSICAL

**Music by Bach's Sons** Les Violins du Roy, Bernard Labadie 68' 03"  
Dorian DOR-90239  
C. P. E. *Symphony in Eb, Wq 179*; J. C. *Symphony in g, op. 6/6*; J. C. F. *Sinfonia in d*; W. F. *Ouverture in g BWV 1070, Sinfonia in F F67*

These are very stylish performances which make no bones about being played on modern instruments. The playing is, nevertheless unusually delightful, constantly reminding us of the fine qualities of all of the music, including a really splendid *Sinfonia* composed in Dresden by W. F. as well as an excellent finale by J. C. and very attractive accounts of the whole of the G minor overture at one time attributed to J.S. Bach, and included as such on a recording made some years ago by Musica Antiqua Köln. Bernard Labadie is based in Quebec, and his delightful recording of the rare J. S. Bach Köthen secular cantata *Durchlauchster Leopold* BWV 173a is worth ordering at the same time as this excellent recording of orchestral music by two sons already born to J. S. and Maria Barbara before their arrival in the town and the two born to Anna Magdalena some years after they left it. *Stephen Daw*

**Beck Symphonies** Northern Chamber Orchestra, Nicholas Ward 58' 46"  
Naxos 8.553790 £  
In Bb (no. 36), in D (no. 30), in G (no. 35), in D (op. 10/2), in Eb (op. 13/1)

None of the five works on the present disc overlap with Michael Schneider's recording of Beck from several months ago, so anyone who was captivated by Beck's style then need not worry about duplication. If you are tempted a little by the composer, but not strongly enough to part with the cost of a full-price CD, consider this: it's a good introduction to Beck and to the Mannheim School in general. Of course, the playing is a little richer in timbre than the La Stagione set, and while Schneider opts for minor-key, *Sturm und Drang* pieces from one published set, this selection is predominantly jolly and major from a variety of sources. *BC*

Editions are by Artaria Editions, Wellington, NZ

**J. I. Benda 6 Sonaten für Cembalo** Shalev Ad-El 64' 05"  
Milan Vleck Music Production SY 0007-2 131  
Sonatas 1, 5, 7, 8, 12, 16

This recording of six keyboard sonatas is a good introduction to the little-known work of the Czech composer Jiri Benda. He moved to Berlin where he came under the influence of C. P. E. Bach and became one of the group of composers writing in the style associated with *Sturm und Drang*. These keyboard sonatas have all the elements of the style – sudden changes in harmony, expectant pauses, sforzandi and pianissimi, a style which was an important link with the romantic composers of the 19th century, especially the songwriters. The long, fast melodic passages require a very accurate and well-defined fingerwork which Shalev Ad-El certainly has, although at times I felt

the articulation was a little over-staccato. The sonatas are played on a copy of an instrument made by Stehlin in Paris in 1760 which has a very good tone and adds to the clarity of the performance. *Michael Thomas*

**Haydn The Creation** Sylvia McNair Gabriel, Donna Brown Eva, Michael Schade Uriel, Gerald Finley Raphael, Rodney Gilfrey Adam, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 101' 00" 2 CDs  
DG Archiv 449 217-2

This is a thrilling realization of Haydn's masterpiece, full of spirit, insight and warmth of musical conviction. Right from the opening bars of the prelude it is clear that we are in for a revelatory performance; though almost as soon as that, I was aware of one problem: a normal volume setting lacks bite, but a boosted one threatens the eardrums at 'Und es ward LICHT'. All five soloists are eloquent and sensitive in projecting the story, and orchestra and chorus are in marvellous form, responding to Gardiner's inspiring direction, whether in depicting Haydn's love of natural detail or his awe at the new-created world. Apart from the problem already referred to, the recording is first-rate, full of atmosphere, and there is an admirable insert booklet. A performance to treasure. *Peter Branscombe*

**Mozart Trilogy Da Ponte: Le Nozze di Figaro, Don Giovanni, Così fan Tutte** Danielle Borst, Hubert Claessens, Patrick Donnelly, Simon Edwards, Sophie Fournier, Véronique Gens, Sophie Marin Degor, Laura Polverelli, Nicolas Rivenq; La Grand Écurie & La Chambre du Roy, Jean-Claude Malgoire 508' 8 CDs  
Auvidis Astrée E 8606 £

I assumed when this arrived that it was a reissue of older performances, but even without reading the packaging it was clear from the first few bars of the *Figaro* overture that this is a more sophisticated band than the Grand Écurie of old. It is based on stagings of the three works by a single company with the same ensemble. It might be disconcerting to hear one singer as the Count, the Don and Guiglielmo; but Nicolas Rivenq, like the other singers, lacks that ultimate degree of characterisation which would make that worrying. In fact, despite the derivation from stage performances, there is a certain lack of dramatic power. The publicity says that the staging was in 1994, while the recording was made in 1996: perhaps the gap explains that. These are not the most superlative performances of the three operas. But they have merits: crucially, the tempi work, the singing is generally stylish and the playing acceptable, if a little regimented (the oboe is kept on a tight leash in the place mentioned on p. 7). The set is too good a bargain to be missed by those who are not in a position to buy a variety of performances. If your operatic experience comes from live performances rather than disc but you would like a reference set of the works at home, this is fine; if you want the greatest voices, playing and conducting (whether with period or modern instruments) you must look elsewhere. *Docu-*

mentation is a bit thin. Apart from a warning of changes in order, there is no description of the versions used, and there are no texts or translations. Perhaps it is better for record companies to concentrate on issuing records and leaving publishers to produce bilingual librettos (much more convenient than quadrilingual ones). CB

**Mozart Requiem, Salieri Piccolo Requiem** Iva Hospesová, Magdalena Kožená, Zoltán Korda, Jiri Klecker SATB, concertino notturno Praha, Italian Chamber Choir, Andreas Kröper 72' 09"  
Milan Vleck Music Production SY 0008-2 131

'Salieri's Revenge' might be an apt subtitle for this amazing disc. The notes say 'Recorded live in Brixen and Merano' and I assume that the final result is spliced together from two performances: how else could the uneven miking be explained? I have absolutely no qualms at all with the tempi in the Mozart – except, perhaps, the rather laidback *Quam olim Abrahae* – but surely some account should have been taken of the choir's inability to sing quickly enough (without the trombones, the sound would have been a total mush – I've never heard a choir with such regulation vibrato) and the microphone on the cellist's desk is just a bit too close! (Don't listen to the *Recordare* before at least one gin!) Of the soloists, only Magdalena Kožená (who sang so well on the recent Benda CD) is anywhere near ideal: the bass even has the audacity to improvise a cadenza on the opening line of the *Tuba mirum* (I don't object in principle – but, if you're going to do it, at least sing in tune!) In stark contrast, the Salieri is remarkably well done: it is a new piece to me, with lots of swooping clarinet lines and really rather nice melodies. The notes tell us that the two works are almost the same length, though the Salieri is actually 15 minutes shorter than the Mozart (even at 200mph!) Not the best Czech CD I've ever heard. BC

**Mozart Flute Quartets** Andreas Kröper, concertino notturno Praha 62' 39"  
Milan Vleck Music Production SY 0003-2 131  
Contains K 285, K 285a, K 285b, K 298

If voluminous sleeve notes are your thing, then get this CD; otherwise steer clear. The performances here are insipid, with a poorly focused flute sound and distinctly undynamic string playing. It may be, as is claimed, the first period instrument recording of the flute quartets, but in comparison with any other authentic recording of Mozart's chamber works I have heard it fares badly, giving only a perfunctory account of the works. There are good points – solid ensemble and tasteful harpsichord realisations by Shalev Ad-El to name two – but they fail to tip the balance, not offensive, just forgettable. Marie Ritter

**Richter 3 Flute Sonatas op. 2** Camerata Köln cpo 999 440-2 56' 51"

The three Richter sonatas on this disc are typical of the kind that were produced by the

Mannheim School, and as such they bridge the gap, stylistically speaking, between the baroque solo sonata and the fully fledged classical duo sonata. Richter retains the basso continuo but the keyboard part is almost entirely written out, with figures remaining in only a few places. The sonatas are on a somewhat larger scale, too, with their three movements lasting around 18 minutes. The recorded performances are very fine – they consistently present what could easily become rather prosaic in an exciting and imaginative way and reveal the sonatas' very real musical value. A mention must also be made of the excellent sound quality on this disc. Marie Ritter

**English Classical Clarinet Concertos** Colin Lawson, Michael Harris *clarinets/basset horns*, The Parley of Instruments, Peter Holman Hyperion CDA66896 70' 06"

J.C. Bach *Concerted Symphony in Eb*; Hook *Concerto in Eb*; Mahon *Concerto 2 in F*, *Duets 1 in F*, *4 in Eb*

Considering that he was Britain's leading clarinetist for twenty years or so, remarkably little of Mahon's music survives: even his first published concerto is lost. But his second proves a more than worthy representative of the early classical style, including an especially beautiful setting of a Scots melody. Mahon's own playing was not universally praised ('Mahon's Clarinet is as well as a Clarinet can be' wrote one reviewer in 1783): but surely he cannot have matched Colin Lawson's mellifluous tone and finely-modulated phrasing, nor for that matter the elegance of the ensemble in the solo sections. Between a couple of pleasant if inconsequential duets for basset horn, the centrepiece of the disc returns to the *fons* himself, with J. C. Bach's *Concerted Symphony in Eb* characteristically exploring the beguiling colours of varied wind groupings. But this certainly does not overshadow the final work, a concerto from 1812 by James Hook. Some reputations seem to suffer from the vagaries of chance: the organist at Vauxhall Gardens for 46 years who penned *The Lass of Richmond Hill*, surely can't have been a 'real' composer? In fact, he was far more accomplished and imaginative than he is usually given credit for, and this impressive concerto should do much to rebuild his reputation. The first movement, over 11 minutes long, is on a grand symphonic scale, and the swagger of the clarinet's first bravura entry announces a much more ambitious work than anything by Mahon. After an intense Adagio the finale is rather lightweight, but its uninhibited joie de vivre does at last unleash Colin Lawson's ever-characterful virtuosity. Simon McVeigh

**Les Castrats au temps de Mozart** Aris Christofellis, Ensemble Seicentonovecento, Flavio Colusso 65' 02"  
EMI Classics 7243 5 56134 2 4  
Music by Aprile, J. C. Bach, Cherubini, Gazzaniga, Guadagni, Mozart, Rauzzini

Aris Christofellis has already aroused considerable interest with, and mixed reactions to, his forays into castrato country. After

Farinelli and his Times, and The Golden Age, he now offers a programme from Aprile, J. C. Bach, Cherubini, Gazzaniga, Guadagni, Jommelli and Rauzzini; Mozart himself is represented by four pieces from the early years. Part of the pleasure, and much of the interest, comes from the chance to listen to music by once-renowned composers who are all too seldom heard even in our time of massive CD catalogues. None of these items is negligible, though the nature of the voice will certainly not be to the taste of every person who is attracted by the repertoire. Suppressing ungenerous thoughts à la Dr Johnson, I have found it more enjoyable to listen to Christofellis in faster-moving numbers, such as the one by Cherubini, and the Mozart *Alleluia* and *Lucia Silla* aria. The recording is over-resonant but well balanced. Very interesting. Peter Branscombe

## 19th CENTURY

**Dussek Duos Concertants op. 69/1 & 3, Sonata 'Élégie Harmonique' op. 61** Derek Bell *Erard Grecian Harp*, Joanna Leach *Stodart square piano*, c.1823 61' 04"  
Athene ATH CD10

These unjustly neglected works from Dussek's mature creative period are fine examples of his romantic style, with their chromatic harmony, modulations to unusual keys, fuller textures and a wide range of expression established by dynamic and pedal markings in his scores. The performers are faithful to the text and cope effortlessly with the virtuosity demanded of them. The timbres of the Grecian harp and the square piano interweave and complement each other beautifully in a way that would be impossible on modern instruments. The playing is excellent throughout, although perhaps the recording of the Op. 61 masterpiece is a fraction too close. The best recording of this particular sonata is Andreas Staier's using an 1805 Broadwood grand piano with an *una corda*, an instrument familiar to Dussek. Margaret Cranmer

**Saint-Saëns Le Carnaval des Animaux; Works for two pianos\*** Julian Reynolds *pf*, dir, Peter Lockwood *pf*, Ensemble Concentus Bestiales 77' 06"  
Globe GLO 5152

\* Variations on a theme by Beethoven op. 35, Danse macabre op. 40, Polonaise op. 77, Caprice arabe op. 96.

This disc uses Erard pianos from 1868 and 1871. Their distinctive sound comes into its own in the chords surrounding the cuckoo. There is in general a mellowness that contrasts with the modern Steinway and makes this an attractive version of the much-recorded *Carnaval* and most of those who buy the CD will find this the main attraction. The other instruments are played stylishly, but we are not told whether they too are historic. The works for two pianos are impressive but probably more fun to play than to listen too. There are a few co-ordination problems at speed. This is an intriguing disc. I wonder what else is suitable for the Concentus Bestiales? CB

## COMPILATIONS

**Montserrat Figueras: La Voix de l'Emotion**  
Auvidis Fontalis ES 9901 78' 25" ££

The new Jordi Savall subsidiary of Auvidis, Fontalis, is issuing a monthly series of anthologies (one is reluctant to call them samplers, since they are not exceptionally cheap). Last month we had the orchestra, this time it is the wife, in a series of 17 pieces which show her singing at its best. I first heard her on an LP of early 17th-century Italian music and was utterly convinced. We have here two items by Monteverdi, *Pulchra es* from the *Vespers* and the *Lamento della ninfa*, unbelievably without the framing male trios: whoever could sanction such a barbarism? More welcome are two pieces by Merula and it is refreshing to hear her sing something quicker (*Sentirete una canzonetta* – the *Girometta* tune). Otherwise the repertoire is Spanish. First time through I was struck by the sheer beauty of sound and expression, and was lost in admiration of the close of Victoria's *Salve Regina* a8. But second time I was a little more aware of the mannerisms. But I still find much to enjoy. CB

**If Music be the Food of Love: Love Songs of the Renaissance and Baroque**  
Carlton 30368 01052 ££ (rec 1982-1996)

The piece that stands out is Monteverdi's *Non e' di gentil core*, which is from Carlton's reissue of the Kirkby/Tubb Monteverdi Duets (see p. 14). Much of the rest comes from the Amaryllis Consort madrigal disc, which has also been reissued (see p. 13). The London Pro Musica items are less characterful, while I found the Handel arias didn't feel as if they belonged here: the stylistic jump would only have worked had the total range been much wider. There's no need to throw it away if you have received it as a Valentine gift (which is what it is marketed as) but I would warn far more to someone who gave me the Monteverdi duets. CB

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## GOTHIC VOICES

Having taken to heart a comment from Andrew van der Beek after an early issue of *EMR* that our over-use of the exclamation-mark insulted the intelligence of the reader, we have been sparing of them. But at least one distinguished reader was caught out by the opening of my review of the latest Gothic Voices CD last month and hastened to e-mail a defence. The first sentence was a deliberate exaggeration of the oddity of the contents to stress the success of the resulting mixture. It was, I hope, clear from the mention in the Fayrfax review that the subsequent comment about speed and clarity was intended to be raising a question, not giving an answer: this Gothic Voices CD, with its move into new territory, is not just setting a standard but moving the goalposts as well. CB

## COMPETITIONS

Our readers are evidently not cross-word fans. We thought that three disguised clues to the key word would be enough. **Eponymous**, sharing the name of the **guard of the faithful**, **Rocco** the gaoler in Beethoven's *Fidelio* behaved in a less than saintly fashion (**no saint**). **But a loud hotelier** – **Rocco Forte**, who **entered partnership** – formed a company, abbreviated to **Co. with** – add to – a **legendary bird** [**roc+co**]. Three clues to Rocco and the reference to sanctity might lead one to the Venetian Scuola di San Rocco and the Gabrieli Consort's *Music for San Rocco*.

We were, however, intrigued by Kathleen Berg's alternative suggestion of

*A High-Prized Noise: Violin Music for Charles I:*  
Highly-acclaimed (it had a 5-inch review) = high-prized  
The eponymous guard of the faithful: Haile [highly!] Selassie  
Aves are birds and Aves are Hails  
Haile Selassie was no saint in some of his actions.  
Noise is an anagram of *sine O* = without perfection [no saint]  
The loud hotelier is Charles [I] Forte [f]  
Faithful = fideles [fiddles = violins]  
St Peter guards the gate of heaven – but this one is no saint either, he's Peter Holman, who directs.

\*\*\*\*\*

You were far more successful at versifying and we felt obliged to call upon an experienced and distinguished judge. Since some of the singers on the prize disc are people I meet in the annual madrigal-sing on the Grantchester Old Vicarage lawn, I thought it appropriate to approach the conductor of that informal group, who once in a more academic vein wrote an article on the relationship between words and music in the English madrigal entitled 'Perfect marriage or uneasy flirtation?' (referring to the subject-matter, not the performers), Prof. John Stevens, who is one of our most distinguished subscribers.

He found the choice extremely difficult and has a new respect for the problems faced by another madrigal-singing associate, Gillian Beer, a current Booker Prize judge. We print here several examples which we enjoyed, beginning with the winning entry, by Colin Booth (begging Anthony Rooley's pardon for ascribing phony Italian to him). Other entries are by Kathleen Berg and Jennie Cassidy.

A madrigal *maestro* named Rooley performed Monteverdi quite coolly.

Said he: 'That vibrato  
is innamorato

To pure English souls like yours truly.'

There's nothing to music more alien  
Than the amateur male madrigalian.

They open the glottis  
like mock Pavarotti  
And booze in a style Bacchanalian.

To sing madrigals well is not easy;  
The pastoral themes make you queasy -  
You sing 'Now I die',  
So you're tearful, and sigh,  
Then you find out the meaning's more sleazy.

T'was no man so inspired as he  
Who scribed 'Thule, the period of cosmography',  
But others' rhyming oft so ill is,  
And so adieu sweet Amaryllis.

I will try to attempt a small precis  
Of why madrigal texts seem so racy.  
They call girls Amaryllis  
And Flora and Phyllis,  
But never have Sharon or Tracey.

Having just traded in our Caravelle for a Sharan (Volkswagen are insensitive to the connotations of English names), we found the last one particularly appropriate. We put it through its paces by driving 1750 miles in a weekend to deliver loads of Monteverdi to Bremen, Frankfurt and Freiburg (enjoying an Ivesian experience as one very loud band paraded past an even louder static one comprising over a dozen trombones and rather more trumpets). We enjoyed visiting Rainer Luckhardt (Seicento); if his service is as good as his wine, we recommend him to our German readers as a source of editions and information.

This month's competition requires no crossword mentality nor literary skill. I ended the review of Saint-Saëns's *Carnaval des Animaux* (p. 18) by wondering what else the Ensemble Concentus Bestiales might play. The prize offered for the best programme for a CD is Catherine Bott's Barbara Strozzi *To the Unknown Goddess*.

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about this cantata next month



## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

I don't know if you know that poem by P.G. Wodehouse which begins:

As o'er my latest book I pored,  
Enjoying it immensely,  
I suddenly exclaimed 'Good Lord!'  
And gripped the volume tensely...

(The printer has put 'not' instead of 'now')

We immensely enjoyed the latest *EMR*, and we are grateful for the page devoted to the Clavichord Society, but there is one small gap in the contact address: the postcode should be N8 7BU.

Thanks again, and congratulations on another really interesting issue. I couldn't resist quoting Wodehouse, but it isn't really relevant and we certainly aren't going to shoot you (which is the fate of the printer in the poem).

Judith Wardman

Dear Clifford,

Yet again the debate about sopranos/boys and vibrato/emotional involvement (article by Robert Oliver *EMR* 27). Why is there the assumption that because the emotion is not layered on with a trowel, it is not there? Are not boy trebles capable of emotion? Is this not like saying that the lute has no dynamic range? Like emotion in the pure voice, it is there, but one has to listen without the influence of the excesses of the last hundred years. The most powerful emotions are understated.

Kathleen Berg

Kathleen also pointed out that the music of Ockeghem is a bit heavy if it is lead by David Allinson! (*EMR* 27 Supplement 2): perhaps he likes a plumby sound.

\*\*\*\*\*

Two phone curiosities. The music played by the US Visa Office while I was waiting for attention was Vaughan Williams: are all host countries honoured similarly? Later that afternoon there was a message to phone Xerxes: since our next Handel opera is *Seerse*, we assumed a joke, but it was someone wanting the meter readings on our photocopiers. He explained that his mother was doing a course in classical studies when he was born.

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