

Early Music

REVIEW

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The number of new recordings of early music by the major companies is far fewer than it used to be. This may, of course, be a sign that early music is out of fashion. But a more likely reason is that, as the major players in the industry get larger, there is less room for new releases other than those that will sell in large quantities. What they should be is decided not merely by (it may still be cynical to say irrespective of) their musical quality but according to their promotional possibilities.

But the smaller companies are producing vast quantities of obscure repertoire from a wide range of less-famous artists. Some must be funded by love or vanity, but the longevity of many of the labels must testify to some commercial success. They probably spend far less on marketing and depend rather more on prospective buyers reading reviews. Their market can probably be reached quite cheaply, though performers and record companies will only make their fortune if the occasional disc happens to catch the wider media interest.

The smaller companies can run far more efficiently than the big ones: if you only have a staff of half a dozen, you are aware of every pound you spend so that every fee must be reduced to the minimum. Performers and engineers may get paid less and there is little money for the poor editor of the music or writer of the booklet notes – my income from such activities is a fraction of what it was a decade ago. There are few long-term contracts, though often a considerable element of loyalty (between company and performers and also from the public). Now the big firms are behaving in the same way, though without the loyalty. Producers and engineers are freelance, and even quite famous performers are released from contracts – surely Evelyn Glennie, one recent example, is God's gift to any marketing team!

We can now enjoy cheap reissues of extremely good and often quite recent recordings that the major firms made when they were interested in smaller sectors of the market. (Will they buy up other labels when they run out of material?) Some are of standard repertoire, but more esoteric discs are also being sold cheap, competing with new Naxos issues. The small labels will have to depend even more on their wits to survive. CB

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

CHRIST CHURCH DUBLIN

Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin: A History edited by Kenneth Milne. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000. xxi + 420pp, £130.00. ISBN 1 85182 487 1

On our first and only trip to Dublin last February we visited Christ Church, and must confess that we found that the most striking feature was the floor, designed after medieval models by the architect of the Victorian rebuilding. Street, and comprising 83,360 tiles. This warrants only a dozen lines in this otherwise admirable book. Musically, we were pleased to note but sorry to miss a concert the following weekend of Bach cantatas with a period-instrument band. Much of the musical history of the cathedral was covered by Barra Boydell in his *Music at Christ Church before 1800* (see *EMR* 47 p. 7). He summarises that here and adds two further chapters bringing them up to date. Curiously, despite many footnote references to 'Boydell Music', the book isn't listed in the abbreviations and bibliographical references in the prefatory material, though it is advertised on the back of the jacket. It is interesting that cathedral music flourished in the early 19th century: was Dublin unusual, or is it that the author is free of the prejudices of the Victorian reformers that still dominate historians of 19th-century Anglican music? It is gratifying that music is given such a significant place in a book covering all aspects of Christ Church's history. As well as Boydell's five (out of 18) chapters, there is one on the medieval liturgy by Alan J. Fletcher. I found the earlier sections of the book heavy going owing to my abysmal ignorance of Irish history, and as an outsider I would have welcomed a simple, easily found description of the relationship between Christ Church and St Patrick's cathedrals. I'm not qualified to comment on the non-musical contents, but welcome this as another excellent cathedral history that enables us to place musical activity into the history of the building and its services.

ANDREA GABRIELI

I have previously mentioned vols. 3 & 4 of the new edition from Doblinger of Andrea Gabrieli's keyboard music (*EMR* 46, p. 2). Now vols 5 & 6 have appeared, and I have also seen vols 1 & 2, which I missed on publication. The contents (listed in the table opposite) follow the series of six posthumous volumes published by Gardano.

Each volume contains a two-page introduction (in three languages), fine in itself, but it is frustrating having no specific editorial information in the volume. You may wonder, for instance, whether the *Toccata del quinto tono* which comes after the 8 *Intonazioni* in Book I is the same as

Andrea Gabrieli: Diletto Musicale volumes

Vol. 1 (DM 1141)	The intonations and toccatas of 1593 along with various similar works
Vol. 2 (DM 1142)	The 11 ricercars of 1595
Vol. 3 (DM 1143)	The ricercars and settings of 1596
Vol. 4 (DM 1144)	The organ masses (from MS)
Vol. 5 (DM 1145)	The variations and ricercars of 1605
Vol. 6 (DM 1146)	The <i>Canzoni alla Francese</i> of 1605

the piece listed as *del Primo Tono* in the 1593 set: it is. Most readers interested in keyboard music of the period will be accustomed to the Doblinger style, a bit pedantic but generally better than the old Pidoux editions. If you already have the latter, you will need to be somewhat of an enthusiast to spend an average of around £20.00 a volume for the new version. But if you are starting from scratch, this is the edition to have. It is, incidentally, a pity that the integrity of the original sources is not preserved by including the small amount of music by Giovanni Gabrieli that they contain.

MONTEVERDI BOOK III

Claudio Monteverdi *The Third Book of Madrigals for five voices (apt for voices, viols and recorders)* edited by Richard Charteris (*Viol Consort Series No. 34*) PRB Productions, 2000. score xviii + 87pp & parts, \$45.00. ISBN 1 56571 153 X

There is, I think, no doubt that Monteverdi was writing with voices in mind; there are no madrigals here which obviously lend themselves to solo voice and accompanying instruments, and the music is so word-inspired that much is lost if they are omitted. However, these madrigals circulated, especially in England, in instrument-only versions (probably for viols), so an edition of this sort, in a series aimed at viol players, has good authority. (The 'apt for voices...' of the title page is, of course, borrowed from English madrigal prints and is not from any Monteverdian source.) It has many merits. As one expects from Richard Charteris, the detail of the editorial work is meticulous, and as one expects from PRB, the appearance is also excellent. My only criticism is that in the score I would have preferred a slightly bigger gap between systems at the expense of a slight reduction in the generous print-size. The parts are very easy to read and include the underlay so can be used by impoverished singers who don't want to buy five copies of the score. The third and fourth parts are available in alto or octave-treble clefs; you can order sets with either, but at \$10 difference, it is worth allowing for various eventualities and getting both. (Parts without the score are \$36.00 for seven or \$26 for five; the score without parts costs \$24.00 – good value, whatever option you choose.)

One quibble with the parts is that the meticulous treatment of original accidentals of the score is not replicated. This isn't quite as bad a discrepancy between score and parts as the case of Bach Cantata 198 which I mentioned last month, but it is annoying and insulting to the intelligence of players. In another respect, though, the parts are an improvement on the score, in that *chiavette* pieces are transposed down a fourth. The only aspect of the lengthy introduction with which I disagree is the section on *chiavette*. If the pieces using high clefs were intended for Mantua's *Concerto di donne*, why should the lower parts also need to be pitched higher? Couldn't the Duke employ a proper bass? Surely such pieces require the normal transposition. There is no reason anyway to believe that even famous ladies of the time sang particularly high: to do so successfully and keep looking pretty without opening the mouth too wide, as was required from courtly ladies, is quite difficult, and the more relaxed pitch of C1 soprano parts (assuming an original pitch a semitone or so either way of A=440) was probably socially more acceptable. So for the high-clef pieces, singers should use the parts, not the score. There should, however, have been some indication in the parts themselves beyond the use of implausible key signatures like one sharp to show the transposition and the original clef: poor student singers may well decide not to buy the score.

The score includes the texts set out as verse with helpful translations. Footnote 5, explaining the word-play in the use of the word *viuola* in the dedication, might have mentioned that 'viola', while a convenient translation, is too specific. It is excellent to have so fine an edition of this book; not perhaps Monteverdi at his very best, but certainly well worth singing and even playing.

MONTEVERDI BOOK VIII

Claudio Monteverdi *Madrigali Guerrieri e Amatori Libro VIII* (Venezia 1638) a cura di Andrea Bornstein. Ut Orpheus Edizioni (ODH 07 & 08), 2000.

Vol. I: *Madrigali guerrieri*. xiv + 135 pp. Score (ODH 07A) £110.00; score + 14 parts (ODH 07B) £1220.000

Vol. II: *Madrigali amatori*. xvi + 111pp. Score (ODH 08A) £100.000; score + 13 parts (ODH 08B) £1180.000

These editions really are most welcome. The Dover reprint of the Malipiero edition is, of course, a cheap way of getting hold of the music in a fairly accurate edition, but this is far more desirable, if more expensive. (Exchange rates are somewhat variable at the moment, but the Vol. I package is about £70, vol. II £57 and both scores without parts £66.50). The score is clearly but compactly printed (246 pp instead of Malipiero's 365), the slightly larger format (A4) and lack of keyboard realisation enabling two systems of the pieces for six voices and three instruments to fit on a page. For singers to perform such complex music from parts is more of an undertaking than with Book III, but sheer economic necessity might make it worth trying, since the sets of parts include both vocal and instrumental parts. The modern

parts, however, is less user-friendly than the originals, which include a continuo part below recitative lines such as the *Testo* in the *Combattimento* and cue the voice part for the continuo player. The presence of a bass-line-only continuo part may encourage conductors to employ a cellist unnecessarily, though it is useful for theorbists.

Taking the *Combattimento* for closer examination, at first glance I was puzzled whether I'd missed something when I prepared my edition, since Bornstein prints separate staves for *violoncello* and *contrabasso* as well as *Bc*. But a quick check of my almost illegibly black microfilm confirmed that this is editorial extrapolation from the two almost-identical bass parts in the source: the continuo part is printed in both the solo partbook and the continuo. No information is given in Bornstein's score itself to suggest that this is an editorial extrapolation of the original. It would be nice to assume that the differences between the notation of semibreves, minims and ties in the two printings of the continuo part are significant, but this is by no means certain. The idea that one part is for a string instrument and the other for harpsichord is, however, scuppered by the fact that both parts are figured (which is not evident from the new edition, since the bass figures are omitted from its *contrabasso* part). It is misleading to use the word *violoncello* for the reconstructed bass to the two violin and viola parts, sensible though the part itself may be: it is a later term and the use of the modern word makes it too easy for the user to infer that the *contrabasso* is also to be used in its later sense to refer to a 16' instrument. (One wonders why Monteverdi's editions so rarely include a separate bass part, unlike Cavalli in his 1656 *Musiche sacre*.) There is discussion of the editorial decisions in the introduction, but not in the commentary. The inclusion of the separate *contrabasso* stave required the use of a smaller type-size than would otherwise have been necessary, making the score rather cramped and the naturals and sharps of the bass figuring easy to confuse. Why choose to replace the original flats with naturals anyway? Admittedly, ten years ago I left Malipiero's naturals in my edition; but it is much easier for the player to think of flats as minor, sharps as major chords rather than to add natural which can mean either and demand a different mental process from the performer – even if the score looks untidy with the modern usage of accidentals used elsewhere.

The preceding paragraph will hardly help to sell the edition, so I must reaffirm my enthusiasm. The Italian texts are printed separately in the commentary and there is a good introduction (though a pity there isn't an English translation included). One editorial quirk strikes me as pedantic: the retention of black notation for minim-semibreve pairs in triple time. I suppose it warns singers of cross-rhythms, though that is only an incidental function and in an edition with bar lines it is redundant. This neat, uncluttered score is a vast improvement on Malipiero (though the Dover reprint is worth having for its translations) and it is certainly the score I will now use for the pieces I haven't edited myself.

PEERSON

Martin Peerson *Fantasias & Almainses for Six Viols* edited by Virginia Brookes (*Viol Consort Series* No. 39). PRB Productions, 2000. Score v + 52pp + 7 parts. Score \$17, parts \$36, both \$50. ISBN 1 56571174 2

I remember trying to assemble parts of these pieces thirty years or so ago and finding it very difficult. They have all been available in some form or other, but it is convenient to have them together in one set and uniformly well edited. I hadn't realised that Peerson was almost a local boy, from March, where our accountant lives and from whose church the angels of the church roof in *The Nine Taylors* were borrowed. He took an Oxford B. Mus in 1613 and became Master of the Choristers at St Paul's Cathedral. The six-part pieces are laid out, as one might expect, for pairs of treble, tenor and bass viols, so there is no need for alternative-clef parts. The sources have no organ part, but an editorial one is provided (though sensibly not included in the score): it looks very plausible. The music is more extrovert than most viol music: in fact, these are good concert pieces. There is a lot of throwing around of short phrases and some interesting harmony. Richard Charteris's ascription of the anonymous Fantasia 7 has generally been accepted, so it is included. Violists who have opportunities to play a6 should not hesitate to get this: it may not be the most profound music for viol consort, but it is certainly entertaining.

17th-CENTURY VIOLIN

Three recent issues in Doblinger's *Diletto Musicale* series contain 17th-century violin music. *Choral mit Variationen* is an implausible title for a set of variations for violin and bass by Brade; indeed, the tune looks secular to me. Bernard Thomas's edition (DM 1154; £7.95) does not quote the details of the Uppsala MS which is its the main source; two of the five variations also occur in *The Division Violin* ascribed to Cornelius van Schmelt. It is difficult to decide on the attribution in that no other solo music by Brade survives for comparison. The edition sensibly prints the violin part (which has no gaps for page-turning) on single-sided sheets to be shuffled on the stand.

Bernard Thomas is also the editor of a selection of dances from Cazzati's *Correnti e Balletti* op. 30 (1662). There are four pairs of Balletto + Corrente (nos 3, 4, 8 & 9) and the closing three pieces in the book (two Brandi and an *Aria over Balletto*). All are short binary pieces *per sonare nella Spinetta Leuto, o Tiorba: Overo Violino, e Violone, col Secondo Violino a Beneplacito*, but the edition is described as being for two violins and continuo. Surprisingly in view of the mention of *violone* and the active nature of the bass, there is no separate bass part. They are sprightly pieces, but a bit short for concert use (DM 1157; £11.90).

A selection from Uccellini's *Correnti ed Arie* op. 4 (1645) edited by Martin Nitz begins with *Correnti* nos 4, 11, 13,

16-18 and *Aria* 10 then continues with more substantial settings of *Caporal Simon*, *Questa bella sirena* and *La mia Pedrina*. The title-page instrumentation is unspecific, and the second treble part is again *ad lib*. The edition is presented for two recorders (treble and treble/tenor) with continuo (this time with a separate part), though it is made clear that violins are more plausible: the first group of pieces, not drawn on for this selection, are explicitly for violin. The user is advised to consult the facsimile (SPES) to check the places where the music is changed to fit recorders; so violinists might as well use the facsimile anyway. Players who can't will find some attractive music here, especially the three more extended pieces (DM 1270; £19.55).

SONGS WITH BASS

I first encountered the editions that Cedric Lee is putting out under the imprint Green Man Press when he asked me to sight-read for him at the Interfora Millenium Weekend party (note that *party* is not capitalised). I'm glad I said yes to him and no to dancing the salsa rather than vice-versa. Cedric is a fine bass singer, and the three samples he has sent for review all include a bass voice. The earliest is a set of *Three Devotional Songs* for bass and continuo by George Jeffreys from the autograph score, British Library Add. 10338. All three are indebted to the contemporary Italian solo motet style. One has an English text: *Praise the Lord, O my Soule* (original spelling is preserved). The other two are *O quam suave* and *Spetiosus forma*, both of which require wide ranges but the former is more athletic. The edition is commendably uninterventional. The continual changes of bar-length in the English piece look fussy, but I remember finding the rhythmic movement quite tricky when playing it, so the guidance is probably helpful. The curious key change after the double bar is not a sign that a Pars II is missing but something added by the computer of its own volition. This publication will be most welcome to bass singers.

4 *Duets from Orpheus Britannicus* (Pur 5) by Purcell for soprano, bass and continuo are genuine duets, not soprano songs with a bass coming in as a chorus. 'Soprano' should, in fact, be taken with a pinch of salt. It was already normal for solos for tenors to be printed in treble clef and the opening piece *For Love ev'ry Creature* (Z458) is distinctly high in the upper part while the thirds and suspensions in *When Myra sings* would be more effective in closer harmony. The other two duets are *Leave these useless arts* and *Come let us leave the Town* (from *The Fairy Queen*). A more substantial single piece is Bernier's cantata *Diane et Endimion* from Book II (Ber 1), an attractive piece with opening and closing duets surrounding three airs (two for the bass). Although the French cantata repertoire is readily available in facsimile, this is a useful addition to the rather few modern editions available.

Each Green Man title costs £5.95. For that you get a green-covered score which includes realisation, one copy (two for the duets) of the voice and bass, plus a separate bass part. I've mentioned one computer glitch and there are a few

others, but not serious ones. There are brief introductions and translations of the texts. This is a well-thought-out and nicely executed series.

PURCELL'S PLAYS

Henry Purcell's Operas: The Complete Texts edited by Michael Burden. Oxford UP, 2000. xvi + 538pp, £75.00. ISBN 0 19 816445 9

I'm not complaining, but this would have been invaluable back in 1995 (or just before) when I was editing the Purcell operas; we might then have printed a more scholarly text in our *King Arthur*, which is still, as far as I know, the only edition of a Purcell opera to print play and music in sequence. It is nevertheless very welcome, making it easier to understand how the music fits in. It probably won't change performances very much, but at least it will enable our more conscientious programme-note writers to describe the contexts of the music at first hand and make it easier for those who want to place the music amidst a narration to concoct a script.

There are two valuable introductory essays. Michael Burden discusses the form and how it was performed. Andrew Pinnock's 'From rosy bowers' takes on the esoteric subject of printing practice and textual criticism in a remarkably fluent manner. I am, however, slightly concerned at the editorial principles (only slightly, since what is printed is fine), which seem more concerned with recreating a single source in modern typography than preparing a critical edition. For the spoken texts, there is generally just one source so no conflict. But multiple sources exist for all the musical sections, and there is no reason to presuppose that the printed source is necessarily superior. (The table of the history of *Peter Grimes* printed to show the possible complexity of source material is illuminating.) The edition retains the original orthography, so a less-pedantic version of the sung texts (presumably for the benefit of those setting them out in CD booklets and concert programmes) is added as an appendix. Since each play has a different editor, there is some inconsistency in practice: H. Neville Davies, for instance, is far more thorough in giving his *King Arthur* explanatory footnotes than the other editors. They are helpful, but seem out of place in an edition that is otherwise so austere. A useful feature is the inclusion of both the 1689 separate edition and the version included in the 1700 *Measure for Measure* for *Dido and Aeneas*.

This is an essential addition to any academic library, adding a dimension to what appears in the Purcell Society edition (though general libraries will shelf this with 17th-century drama rather than with the scores) and also of interest to those who have acquired some of the excellent recordings of the music that have appeared in the last few years and want to look at the plays as well.

I'll confine discussion on the matter of line-numbering to small print. I don't think I have any editions of English verse plays that follow the practice adopted here of numbering the lines in one

sequence from beginning to end (though that might be because my days of buying such editions are long gone). The authority given is the practice of the Malone Society, which publishes academic editions of English drama. The form I am used to and which I thought was standard is: act in capital roman, scene in lower-case roman, line in arabic (II, iii, 45). The disadvantage of continuous numbering is that, when there are passages of prose, different editions will have different formats so that numbering will vary. At least if the next scene begins at 1 again, discrepancies will not last for very long. Also, such editions only number lines of spoken text: this edition numbers all lines of print, including headings ('Act I') and stage directions. Admittedly, some of the stage directions (e.g. the descriptions of the Masque in *Dioclesian*) are very long, but it is surely better to put up with that (or provide auxiliary numbering – e.g. II, iii, 45¹² – for them) rather than have a system tied to a particular edition. As I said above, surely an edition should be of the work, not of a particular printed manifestation of it? However, I swapped e-mails with Prof. Stanley Wells, the editor of the Oxford Shakespeare, and he was far more sympathetic to the practice of the editors, even though in the end he adopted the conventional practice for that publication. So I may just be old fashioned. (But taking a musical example, do others find the numbering through the movements of the Ricordi Vivaldi concertos annoying? And is it really helpful for there to be different line numbers for each of the three printings of the text of *Dido and Aeneas* in the book?)

JACK'S, PIPES & FACSIMILES

The facsimile programme from JPH [Jacks, Pipes and Hammers] Publishing is progressing well, and I have three new titles from the Purcellian period to report on. Each set comes in a portfolio containing A4 parts photocopied on good-quality paper (not the pseudo-antique stuff used on some earlier JPH issues) and comb bound. Each set comprises two publications; the large number of small books is a bit confusing, and I think it would have been more convenient had books I & II of each part been bound together, perhaps with a sheet of the card used for the covers between them. The English items are landscape format. Each set has an excellent brief introduction by Peter Holman added to one of the bass parts. The series is good value and will, I hope, make English music of the period more available to players: it is not technically difficult but very rewarding to play. Unusually for facsimile publishers, the library where the original resides is listed in the catalogue, and a leap-back to the time of the originals is made by the inclusion of a subscription list to the facsimile series *Music in England circa 1700*. I hope the number of names increases.

I don't know how many times people have asked me about the availability of the Matteis Books of Aires: the oddly-formatted Gregg Press facsimile has been out of print for many years. An edition of Book IV has recently appeared (see *EMR* 62 p. 3) and now we have a facsimile of Books I & II (£25.95). They were first published in 1676 for solo violin and continuo; the preface mentions that there were also second treble and tenor parts 'that can be used by gentlemen who would like to enjoy superior harmony': no doubt such gentlemen ordered MS copies direct from the composer. Matteis published second violin parts for Books III & IV, but such a part for Books I & II did not appear until a reprint by John Walsh in 1703, who claimed: 'the Second Treble never being Printed before is now Engraven from the Authors own Manuscript'. Peter Holman in his preface

is sceptical on the grounds that there are so many misprints in the other two parts. Players are advised to check the parts with the Gregg facsimile of the original edition. So wouldn't a new facsimile of that (supplemented by Walsh's 2nd violin) have been more useful?

Purcell's *A Collection of Ayres*, containing most of his instrumental music for the stage was published by his widow in 1697 and is available from Performers' Facsimiles (£50.00). Although not always the best source, it is the only one for many of the sets of pieces for plays, and it also includes music from the operas; the main disadvantage is that there are only four part-books so the occasional trumpet movement had to be cut down. It provides lots of engaging music for string players, and is not too difficult to read, provided that the viola player can manage the C2 clef (fluent readers of modern scores can pretend they are reading for a horn in F, or else imagine you are playing the violin in treble clef). This edition was pirated by Roger in Amsterdam as *Recueil D'Airs a 4 Parties Tirez des Opera Tragedies & Comedies de Mons^r Henry Purcell* and issued in two books in 1700. It is the only early Purcell publication from outside England. Peter Holman argues that the engraved print is easier to read than the typeset English edition, though the spaciousness of the PF version gives an impression of greater legibility than it really has and the Amsterdam edition is quite small, with 15 staves per page. The JPH version of the Amsterdam edition is half the price of the PF (£24.95) and has the errata listed in the 1697 edition incorporated.

Harmonia Anglicana was a series of theatrical suites published by Walsh from 1700 after the pattern of the Purcell 1607 set. Plays as well as operas had introductory music, an overture and 'tunes' between the acts. JPH has produced a package containing Books I & II of the series, each with six sets (£24.95). Composers included Paisible, Croft, Finger, Eccles and Daniel Purcell, along with the lesser-known Lenton and Orme. The introduction points out that the bass is not figured and the music may well have been performed in the theatre without continuo, so players of this (and the Purcell suites) need not feel embarrassed if there is no harpsichord.

LOCATELLI COLLECTED WORKS

Pietro Antonio Locatelli *Opera omnia...* Critical Edition under the direction of Albert Dunning. Schott, 1994-

1. *Dodeci Concerti Grossi Opera 1* edited by Agnese Pavanello. cviii + 264pp, £227.00. ISBN 0 946535 31 0
2. *Dodeci Sonate per Flauto Traverso e Basso Opera II* edited by Fulvia Morabito. cxlvii + 143pp, £147.00. ISBN 0 946535 32 9
4. *Sei Introduzioni teatrali e Sei Concerti Opera IV* edited by Anna Cattoretti & Livia Pancino. cliii + 291pp, £272.00. ISBN 0 946535 34 5
5. *Sei Sonate a Tre per Due Violini o Due Flauti e Basso Opera V* edited by Piera Federici. xlix + 67pp. ISBN 0 946535 35 3
6. *Dodici Sonate per Violino solo e Basso Opera VI* edited by

Barbara Sciò. cv + 133pp, £150.00. ISBN 0 946535 36 1

8. *Sei Sonate a Violino solo e Basso e quattro Sonate a Tre Opera VIII* edited by Pietro Zappalà & Angela Lepore. lxxxiv + 133pp, £132.00. ISBN 0 946535 38 8

9. *Composizioni senza Numero d'Opera* edited by Albert Dunning. lxxxv + 63pp, £70.00. ISBN 0 946535 39 6

I was delighted when a box arrived at the end of July containing these monumental and impressive volumes of the complete works of Locatelli. I welcomed the first to appear, op. 5, in *EMR* 11 and vol. 8 in *EMR* 19. What I thought an optimistic hope that the edition might be completed within a decade seems likely to be easily met, since there is only one volume still to come, op. 7. Compared with the rate of other similar editions, this is indeed amazing, and I suspect that the general editor in particular is to be congratulated for not letting his editors and publisher slacken. I wonder, in fact, if one reason for the industry of the former is paradoxically the length of the introductions. These are musicological studies in their own right, so perhaps count for more in the evaluative process that infects most educational institutions than the mere preparation of an edition.

Each volume is divided into three parts. The long introductions cover far more than one expects, especially in the area of musical description and analysis. Indeed, were they published separately, they would provide a substantial monograph on Locatelli's music. The musical edition is a pleasure to read. The orchestral volumes are more compact than the rather extravagant layout on which I commented in my review of op. 8, but with no problems of legibility even in op. 1/7 & 8, which have two systems of ten staves per page. Editorial principles are sound. The roman page-numbering continues after the music into a thorough critical commentary. This contains some discussion of performance practice issues (e.g. what does *solo* really mean) as well as a comprehensive survey of the sources. It would have been useful to state which copies have been used for facsimiles. (King's Music has mostly used the copyright-deposit prints in Leyden.)

For most works, the editorial task presents few problems. Locatelli was far more concerned than most composers with the accuracy of his editions. There can never be publication without misprints, but some were corrected and one can be fairly sure that the general house style met with his approval. I mentioned in my previous review that I did not understand why the editors felt it necessary to add slurs from grace notes when the original lacked them, not even marking them as editorial. I happened to open the facsimile of op. 2 at the first page to make a comparison, which threw up that topic and also made me wonder whether the modern practice of aligning the bass note with the main treble note rather than the appoggiatura was misleading? The original engraver is erratic, but in places where there is no general displacement between treble and bass he seems to prefer the former practice, not the modern one. Whether that has any bearing on performance is

another matter. The listing of variants in the critical commentary is frustrating because it is so detailed that it is often difficult to pick out variants that have any musical significance; this applies especially to op. 1. Some aspects could be dealt with by general comments. Anyone interested in the minutiae of the differences of figuring will need to consult the originals anyway.

I have picked on vol. 2 for a few detailed comments. It should have been possible to have devised a brief form of reference from one volume of the edition to another without having to give a full bibliographic citation each time (e.g. vol. 2, p. xlvii, note 66, listing all the places where Schott has an office!) On the following footnote, I'm surprised to see anything written by Giazotto on Albinoni being quoted without backing up from less inventive scholars. On page lvii it is misleading to call the notation as being *a parti separate* in a bibliographical context, implying that there might be separate bits of paper, like the odd cello obbligato missing from most sets of Vivaldi's op. 8. The movement is a set of variations, and in quite a standard format, the repeating bass part is printed at the end of the opening rather than in score to save space, thus getting the whole movement on an opening without a page turn (which, of course, the modern edition fails to do).

It is surprising how little unpublished music by Locatelli survives: vol. 9 has even fewer pieces than the final volume of the Corelli Collected Works: a violin sonata in G minor, a Sinfonia a4 in F minor *composta per le esequie della sua Donna* and violin concertos in A and E. Other MS items relating to published works are included in the relevant volumes. The opus that has been most recorded recently, *L'Arte del Violino*, op. 3, has not yet appeared.

I look forward to the completion of the edition. It is immensely valuable, and it is good that those who can't (or won't) perform from the facsimiles will be able to get material based on this edition from Schott and, for the orchestral works, study scores from Eulenburg. I hope the editors' and publishers' efforts will lead to a lot more performances of the music, and that, since this isn't one of those open-ended collections threatening long-term budget commitments, all academic libraries will subscribe. (The subscription prices are 15% below those quoted here.)

I am grateful to Barbara Sachs for arranging with Albert Dunning for us to receive a set of the edition for review.

18th-CENTURY INSTRUMENTAL

Doblinger has published the second and third of Molter's Concertos for four flutes and continuo in versions for four treble recorders. This seems to be a sensible way to provide interesting pieces for an easily-obtainable ensemble. (Doblinger: Haslinger Blockflöten-Reihe 37 & 38; £9.95 & 7.95 for score and parts)

I don't normally see arrangements of baroque solos with editorial guitar accompaniments, but was quite impressed

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by Babell's Sonata III in G minor (Doblinger GKM 215; £7.65). The package includes three copies of the work. The guitarist has a score with a realisation that looks quite plausible, while there are two other copies, both containing the treble part and figured bass. It is odd that the picture on the cover shows a lute, not a guitar. (The normal edition is DM 1220.)

Universal Oboe Edition has issued a *Trio con Oboé, e Fagotto obbligato* by G. B. Platti in C minor, edited by Christian Schneider (UE 31 284; £9.95). The original continuo part is unfigured, and I wonder whether it might work without keyboard: the original designation for the continuo part is just *violone*. Be that as it may, the score includes a realisation (printed like a piano trio with the keyboard part larger than the other instruments). The editorial slurring goes beyond adjustment for parallel passages, but at least it is distinguishable as editorial.

Further trios for treble, bass and continuo, but with less

specific scorings, come from Musica Rara/Breitkopf with editions of two of Boismortier's op. 37 trios sonatas, no 3 in D (MR 2251) and 4 in G minor (MW 2253) by Ann Knipschild. Both are for treble (flute, oboe or violin), obbligato bass (bassoon or cello) and independent continuo (so a second melodic bass instrument isn't overkill). As always with Boismortier, they are worth playing, though there is a choice of facsimile available (Fuzeau or King's Music).

Turning to facsimiles, Performers' Facsimiles has reproduced Benedetto Marcello's *VI Sonata a Tré: Due Violoncello o Due Viole di Gamba e Violoncello o Basso Continuo Opera Seconda* published by Witvogel in Amsterdam in 1734 as op. 2 (PF 239; £21.00). Pioneering pieces for their combination, they will certainly have considerable didactic use, and may penetrate the concert hall. I wonder who were the Venetian gamba players. The opus number isn't very helpful, clashing with the recorder sonatas, which were op. 2 in their Venetian and Amsterdam editions but op. 1 in Walsh's. revision for flute or violin. The single cello and continuo sonatas have similarly confusing numbers, starting as op. 1 from Witvogel but issued by Walsh as op. 2.

Richard Jones *Suits or Setts of Lessons for the Harpsicord or Spinnet...* (PF 242; £17.00) dates from 1732, earlier than his other two publications, both of which are for violin and continuo. The six Suites are refreshingly unstandard in form: No 2, for instance, has a Giga as second movement and no 6 closes with a Corente. This is intriguing music, well worth trying.

MUSICOLOGY FROM LIM

Sull'improvvisazione edited by Claudio Toscani (*Quaderni del Corso di Musicologia del Conservatorio 'G. Verdi' di Milano*, 4). Lucca: LIM Editrice, 1998. 150pp, £1730,000. ISBN 88 7096 043 9

Four studies, all derived from recent theses, deal with improvisation at the keyboard in four periods. This stimulates reflection on the development and the persistence of the practice, and was a good reason for presenting them together in this volume. All are in Italian, but some of the material – appendices and quotations from treatises and dictionaries – might be of use to non-Italian readers familiar with the music described.

Mariateresa Muttoni discusses how early theorists, from Tinctoris in 1477 to Biagio Rossetti in 1529, distinguished between *resfacta* and *contrapunctus*, where the latter could be either 'written' (and thus equivalent to the former) or 'improvised'. Improvisation was usually transmitted by oral tradition, and taught by the rules also found in written manuscripts (e.g. Jakob Kebicz and various mid-15th century books of exercises or *Fundamenta*). The *praeambula* of 14th- and 15th-century German tablature sources are analysed, including the formulas and diminution techniques typical of this genre. Two appendices present the sources of the tablature repertoire and list all the preludes in eight of these sources, giving for each one the number of voices,

the type of composition, the particular musical 'events' (whether structural or ornamental) found, along with descriptive observations. This appendix alone would be quite useful to players of this repertoire.

Maria Grazia Sità takes us to the late 18th and early 19th centuries, examining the term *capriccio*, which involves the concept of improvisation (sometimes real but more often faked). It is interesting that the concept applies to the figurative arts as well, and that musical fantasies exploiting virtuosity were often considered bizarre or diabolical enough to inspire terror or horror. Quotes are in original languages.

The third study may be the most enlightening, especially for those modern pianists who lack the perspective of early music, in which most written compositions were subjected to some sort of improvisation and where tradition provided techniques and models for extemporaneous compositions. 'L'improvvisazione pianistica a Parigi intorno al 1830: permanenze e innovazioni' by Andrea Estero begins with definitions and descriptions of *préludes*, discussing the distinction between giving performances and improvising, which by gradual, reciprocal contamination led to variations on themes and pot-pourri. Czerny's *L'arte d'improvvisare* is discussed quite thoroughly in the longest section of the essay. The shortest describes some peculiar inventions: Guérin's piano *improvisateur* and Winkels *Componium*, said to be capable of producing 14,513,461,557,741,527,824 different pieces. If this makes us wonder what a 21st-century MIDI could do, then we are already a step beyond the last study, by Alberto Mauriello, on the notion of performance in new (20th century) music.

Jean Grundy Fanelli *Musica e libri sulla musica nella Biblioteca Marucelliana di Firenze pubblicati fino al 1800/Music and books on music in the Marucelliana Library of Florence published up to 1800* (*Studi Musicali Toscani* 5). Lucca: LIM Editrice, 1999. xxviii + 161pp. £it. 50 000 ISBN 88 7096 235 0

As the dual language title shows this volume is in English and Italian. The Presentation by Michael Talbot, the Foreword about the contents and history of the collection, and the Cataloguing Criteria appear in both languages. The catalogue itself, the bibliography and the index of publishers and printers need no translation. Talbot notes that 'the author has greatly increased the usefulness of her catalogue by indicating clearly what items are rare, unique or not listed by RISM.' The 1,450 items are mainly treatises and instruction books, many dating from the 15th century (though the library also holds 6000 opera and oratorio librettos and tens of thousands of manuscripts and books from monasteries and convents in Tuscany). There is some music – liturgical and early 16th century Venetian prints, some mentioned in the foreword, the rest to be discovered by browsing the rest of the book. Tantalised readers might like the following useful information as well: the library is on via Cavour, no. 43, just before it enters Piazza S. Marco.

Witold Rudzinski *Il ritmo musicale – Teoria e storia* Edited by

This complex book might interest early music specialists, but it is far more philosophical than musicological. The Musica Ragionata series, directed by Alberto Basso, is dedicated to furthering an inter-disciplinary understanding of music 'in the history of civilization'. The book itself, by a composer with a background in philology, covers the most evolved rhythmic possibilities, though inspired by the ideas of Dom André Mocquereau on rhythm in gregorian chant. (Despite current opinions on that particular analysis Rudzinski considers his method, a quantitative rather than dynamic concept of tension and distension, fundamental.) There are only a few scattered references to baroque works, and numerous musical examples from classical to contemporary composers, but they are only illustrations: the discussion of the perception of rhythm will heighten the awareness of any musician willing to read in depth about the subject. Flow, beat, structure, polymetrics, conflict, freedom, the rhythm of language, et al. are explained as phenomena – the point being to fathom every ambiguity in the context of expectation, both as players and listeners.

Barbara Gogolick Sachs

LUTE NEWS & EARLY MUSIC PERFORMER

The latest issue, No. 55, of *Lute News* is particularly valuable for those interested in what the lute may have played around 1500. Jon Banks begins with a few irrelevant digs at the a-cappella heresy: by this period, no-one is trying to deny that there is music written specifically for instruments, or that vocal pieces could be played; and in Italy the vocal conception of the Burgundian chanson seems to have been lost. But his argument that lutes, playing single lines, are the natural instruments for certain pieces is fruitful. He is able to list nearly 50 pieces readily available in standard editions that may have been intended for lute trio, while more generally he suggests that about 1000 pieces in 23 sources are ripe for addition to the list. The article is much richer than this summary may suggest: it deserves thorough reading. One little point: the discussion of the meaning of *Canti*, which the editor of the magazine extends to the English *Song* (as in Parson's *Trumpets*) can also embrace the German use of *Carmen* – all are words that one would expect to imply vocal performance used instead for instrumental pieces. This is followed by a more specific article by Hiroyuki Minamino on *Fortuna Vincinecta*, whose tune is in mensural notation with the two accompanying parts in tablature for a lute. This is, of course, an obvious way of performing the frottola repertoire, as is exemplified in the Bossinensis prints, but it seems that the melody line is probably intended for instrument not voice – the evidence being not so much the fact that the voice is untexted but that it is transposed. There are also the editor's valuable summaries of articles in various journals. The accompanying music is a substantial booklet (32 A4 pages) with, among other things, lute versions of In nomine by Taverner, Parsons and Stroggers and Tallis's 1564 *Felix namque*.

Early Music Performer 6 asks whether Dowland was a spy – quite possibly. There is a fuller obituary on June Yakely

than I have seen elsewhere and a history of King's Music. John Catch, in an article which he sent to me some months ago (I suspect I put aside for an issue for which we were short of material, an occasion which has not arisen) argues that our expectation of non-equal temperament in early music comes from our paying too much attention to theorists, who delighted in working out abstruse tunings but were ignored (as theorists tend to be) by most working or amateur musicians. But it was far easier for a player to use these so-called complex methods of tuning (often, one imagines, intuitively and only as precisely as was needed for the music to be played) than to learn how to tune by equal temperament (even if the concept and rules of thumb – or ear – for doing so available). I think this topic links with another of John's concerns: the playing of scales. Perfect tuning comes from playing with other people and listening; playing scales in isolation offers no check for the tuning; if you can't hear if a note is in tune, playing scales does you no good. You cannot ask 'Am I in tune' without having something to be in tune with. If your ear happens to have been taught equal temperament, then your intervals may be equal, but you still haven't learnt how to vary the interval according to the harmony.

Apologies that most of the items mentioned last month have not yet been reviewed. We still have a couple of copies of the Bärenreiter Bach Cello Suites available for £20 + post.

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EARLY NIGHTS IN EDINBURGH

D. James Ross

There was something almost unbearably poignant about the choice of Trinity Apse for 'Testimonies of Love', Sequentia's contribution to Edinburgh Festival's series Music of the Millennium. In so many ways it epitomises the Scottish attitude to culture. As Trinity Collegiate Church, it had been one of the most important Gothic buildings in the city when it was dismantled in 1848 to make way for Waverley Station. Its stones were numbered and stored in bags on nearby Calton Hill, but when moves were eventually made to reassemble it, it emerged that the burghers had helped themselves to much of the stonework to embellish their rockeries and only the apse could be rebuilt. It was in this curious sawn-off rump of a church, a monument to the Scots' cavalier attitude to their past, that Sequentia evoked the splendours of 12th-century France.

Much of the music they performed had associations with the Court of Marie, Countess of Brie and Champagne (a gastronomically tantalising epithet if ever there was one) and the performers cleverly established the atmosphere of a courtly evening of music and storytelling. Sequentia's familiarity with this material is complete and their performances are technically impeccable, extremely sensitive and musical but above all entirely relaxed and authoritative. The French music of this period is characterised by the repetition and alternation of melodic fragments often of great character and felicity, and Eric Mentzel's beautifully controlled and lyrical tenor voice lent tremendous passion to *The Lai of the Old Testament and the New*, while Benjamin Bagby cleverly slipped between song and declamation in a highly dramatic rendition of a section of the *Chanson de Roland*. Unfortunately a combination of our own breathing and the dank Edinburgh air led to a minor crisis with the sheep-gut strings on Susanne Ansorg's fiddle, forcing her to drop out of a spirited performance of *Puella turbata*, but it recovered quickly and entirely in time for the next piece.

The second half took on the air of a ceilidh as each member of the group came forward in turn to present a solo piece. Norbert Rodenkirchen's sparkling account of the instrumental lai *Markiol* involved some stunning ornamentation on the simple mediaeval flute, and his tone here and throughout the concert was extremely impressive in its purity. Eric Mentzel's account of the chanson *En dous tans et en bone eure* by Grace Brulé was an object lesson in voice control and projection, while Susanne Ansorg's fiddle performance of *Kievrefuel* with its ringing drones and fluttering ornamentation was simply mesmerising. Benjamin Bagby chose a comic section of the story of King Arthur, and had the audience wrapped round his little finger. The concluding group of pieces again involved the full ensemble and the concert ended with two lively pastourelles.

This is perhaps not the most superficially engaging repertoire, and yet in the hands of consummate masters like Sequentia armed with complete integrity, enormous virtuosity and a handful of instruments, it had indeed become a testimony of love. As we moved from the Apse into the Edinburgh drizzle, I mused about all the Scottish music which must have sounded in and around the huge complex of Trinity College and Hospital of which not even a testimony has survived.

The next concert in the series took us to a building abused not so much by physical vandalism as by usage, where presbyterian remodelling of the great Collegiate Church of St Giles has brought the musical focal point from the choir to the crossing, with the concomitant complication of acoustic and sight lines. The Hilliard Ensemble did their best to bring the music to their large audience by delivering solo chants from a variety of vantage points, but all of the polyphony, isorhythmic motets and the *Messe de Notre Dame* by Guillaume de Machaut, was sung from the new choir stalls, unseen by most of the public. To accommodate the group's excellent alto David James, the work was performed at written pitch and a second alto in the form of David Gould was drafted in to cope with the variety of vocal ranges which resulted from this decision. This need for five singers to sing a four-part piece is surely a strong argument for performing the music a fourth lower, using two high tenors, baritone and bass. I suspect it was also the involvement of countertenors which dictated the rather genteel attack and tempi, which robbed the Kyrie, Gloria and sections of the Sanctus of some of their grit and virtuosity. A further factor in this process was the decision to interpret the distinctive cadential tail sections as contemplative afterthoughts to the cadence rather than as lively anacrusis to the next phrase. This was a performance which was never less than beautifully crafted but sometimes less exciting than it might have been. The motets were sung with greater bite, and some of the hocketing passages combined virtuosity with a delightful sense of inevitability, as if this rather bizarre compositional device were the most normal thing in the world!

The Hilliards' second Edinburgh concert found them sounding much more at home singing the music of Dufay and Josquin in the Canongate Kirk, a late-17th-century building with little direct relevance to the repertoire but providing a perfect acoustic for its performance. The core of the programme was a *Missa ficta*, a sequence of movements from the greatest Dufay masses, interspersed by motets by Dufay and Josquin. The singing was extremely impressive, warm, passionate, expressive and intensely moving. This was the sort of concert which makes you question the decision to go to Wagner's *Rheingold* later in the same week – if Dufay

and the four voices of the Hilliard Ensemble can achieve complete perfection, why bother with the overblown attempts of other lesser composers and performers?

A particular highlight was the delightful compositional jesting of Josquin's *Ut Phoebi radiis* where the bass picks out a gradually rising and then falling hexachord, setting Guido's solmisation syllables, which also miraculously combine into an intelligible text. Also memorable were the accounts of the Kyrie and Gloria from Dufay's *Missa Ave regina coelorum* the Agnus Dei from the *Missa L'homme armé* as well as a glacially cool reading of Josquin's *Tu solus qui facis* and a fascinating juxtaposition of verses by both composers of *Ave maris stella*. The sheer perfection of ensemble was all the more remarkable as Rogers Covey-Crump was replaced by Steven Harrold, who in a remarkable display of versatility sang in all but one of the concerts I attended, performing repertoire stretching over half a millennium.

A composer who has long suffered as a result of his reputation for perfection is Palestrina, and fortunately after decades of deferential performances verging on the craven, choral groups are beginning to sing his music with more dynamism and energy. At the forefront of this trend is Andrew Parrott and his Taverner Consort, Choir & Players. With two four-part solo consorts of voices (plus a cornett on the top line of one) and backed by a ripieno choir of the same number and an organ, he presented a very impressive account of Palestrina's Mass *Fratres ego enim accepi* in the liturgical context of a Feast of the Virgin Mary. With tenor voices on the alto lines, and altos (perversely two male and one female) with the cornett on the top lines, the sound was very muscular and ably supported by four full bass voices. The singing of the chant was equally sinewy, while the overworked but resilient instrumentalists, Doron Sherwin (cornett) and John Toll (organ) also supplied a series of instrumental interludes by Bovicelli, Nanino and Pasquini culminating in a set of very virtuosic divisions on a motet by Palestrina. Never a man to do the expected, having emphasised the antiphonal devices contained in the music, Parrott had eccentrically [or following Schütz's suggestion CB] placed the ripieno group for each choir behind the solo consort for the other choir parts, thereby cancelling the antiphonal effects in the sections for full choir. But the overall effect was very pleasing indeed, with fine robust singing and playing throughout.

Sadly this could not be said of the event intended to be the concluding highlight of my early music banquet at the Edinburgh Festival. Since his famous, almost definitive recording of Monteverdi's *Vespers* recorded in 1984, Andrew Parrott's views on the piece have hardly changed at all, and as for the recording, his ensemble performed largely one to a part, at low pitch and in a liturgical reconstruction which assumes that Monteverdi intended his music to be performed in order at a single service. I have doubts about the soprano intonation on disc, and the same bad habits of undercutting and quavering on sustained top notes marred some crucial moments in the live performance. If the more

extensive employment of male altos on the top lines marked one of the few changes of mind, it had a serious detrimental effect on several of the pieces, with wild tuning, harsh tone and general very obvious strain leading to too many uncomfortable episodes. As on CD, the ornate singing of the tenors and the instrumental playing were breathtaking, but essential elements of the larger structure, such as the *Sonata sopra Sancta Maria*, were effectively scuppered by some very unlovely singing indeed. Rather than filling 'the mysterious golden spaces' of the acoustically and visually splendid McEwan Hall with the magnificent sounds I had anticipated, I was too often left as unsatisfied as the rich in the Magnificat. I cannot conceal my disappointment, having waited so long to hear these forces perform this work live and having it fall so far short of what I and the very large Edinburgh audience deserved

To end on a more positive note and precisely that of large audiences, the five events which I attended in the enterprising Music of the Millennium series were all had capacity audiences, and it was a truly stirring sight to see large and familiar venues such as St Giles, Greyfriars, and Canongate positively hoaching with devotees of early music. To cap it all, the McEwan Hall played host to a vast audience of 1125, surely sending a powerful message to the Edinburgh Festival organisers that in the wake of pioneering work by several excellent Scottish early music ensembles and the untimely demise of the Glasgow Early Music Festival, there is an enormous potential audience for early music in the north.

Johann Philipp and Johann

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THE PROMS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The music of Bach appeared, in some form or another, in 14 of this year's Proms concerts. Bach as interpreted by the likes of Schoenberg, Webern, Respighi and Wood is beyond the remit of *EMR*, but not so Bach as reconstructed by Ton Koopman. The St Mark Passion is a frequent hobby horse of musicologists, eager to discover the secrets behind Bach's most enigmatic work. Of the three possible missing Passions, the St Mark is the one with the greatest credence (the other two might either have not been by Bach, and/or might not have been true Passions). The St Mark Passion was first performed in Leipzig's Thomaskirche on Good Friday 1731, seven years after the St John Passion and four years after the St Matthew Passion. Only the libretto survives. What sort of music could Bach have composed for the third and, presumably, last of his great Passions? Although the structure appears to be the same as the other two, the mood must have been completely different, with fewer of the arias and choruses that had led to complaints of 'theatrical music' in churches. A number of assumptions have been made by Bach scholars – not least that the St Mark Passion was a parody, alongside the many similarly constructed works from that part of Bach's life. Most reconstructions have been based on the *Trauer-Ode* (Cantata 198), with some interpolations from the St Matthew Passion, the Christmas Oratorio and Cantata 54, and with the crowd scenes and recitatives generally taken from the Passion by either Reinhard Keiser or Georg Bruhns.

Koopman has taken an entirely different approach, making his point of departure the premise that a Bach pupil was given the task of composing the Passion using whatever material he could find from Bach's works up to 1731, adding his own compositions for anything he could not find elsewhere, including all the recitatives. This is exactly what Koopman has done, using material from 16 cantatas, the St Matthew and St John Passions and the Christmas Oratorio and chorales from the 1784/7 publication of four-part chorales. The choice of Bach interpolations were successful, although I wonder if Bach would have used fugues quite so often for the chorus, without any apparent textural allusion – to the law, pedantry or such like. But many of the choruses were beautifully apt, the bustle of whispering voices in 'Ja nicht auf das Fest' (from Cantata 24) being one example. Koopman's own recitatives were generally convincing, often inspiring, and only occasionally curious, the exposed continuo minor cadence at the end of 'Und Judus Ischarioth' being one example of the latter – but then, I doubt if Koopman would have been the most compliant of Bach pupils. The fleeing disciples, crowing cocks and the weeping of Peter were expressive without being trite copies of Bach's other passions. In the Prom performance (31 July), Koopman's Amsterdam Baroque Choir and Orchestra were

joined, briefly, by the boys of the Salisbury Cathedral Choir, complete with their Bishop's Chorister, Vestry Monitor and Head Turner. Any Koopman performance is distinctive and, although speeds were normally fine, his organ continuo did intrude on occasions, with too much melody applied on top of the already melodic outline of the recitatives (in 'Das ist mein', for example). With only seven arias, the role of the soloists was limited, which was just as well as I didn't think much of most of them, particularly the strangled duck countertenor. However, Christoph Prégardien and Peter Kooy were effective as the Evangelist and Christus and the choir and orchestra were on very good form. It was unfortunate that there were so many empty seats.

Empty seats were not an issue for the other two Bach concerts. Prom 2 (15 July) saw a John Eliot Gardiner stop-over on his Bach Cantata Pilgrimage with works for the fourth Sunday after Trinity (specifically, the 20 June 1723, when both cantatas were performed). This is not the most gripping of Sundays as far as potential cantata texts is concerned, but Cantata 185, *Barmherziges Herze der ewigen Liebe*, (reflecting on Christ's Sermon on the Plain from St Luke's Gospel) has some nice lines, including the sensible advice to store up capital which one day will be repaid with ample interest, and a terse observation that, though your neighbour is not altogether pure, you are no angel either. The wide stage spacing of the singers made cohesion difficult in this cantata, but didn't affect the striking bass aria 'Das ist der Christen Art', whose opening phrase was repeated, to great effect, at the opening and close of each section. Nicolas Testé was an impressive soloist in this aria and in Cantata 24, *Ein ungefärbt Gemüte*, which featured a particularly dramatic recitative shot through with staccato orchestral interjections before resolving into a pleading coda, with little echo passages as the subject seeks relief from the pressures of the world. He also impressed in concluding Magnificat in D. Paul Agnew communicated his mini-sermon recitative and arietta (in Cantata 24) effectively, but Nathalie Stutzmann seemed to be having trouble getting down to the lowest of her notes. I wasn't keen on Magdalena Kozená's rather pinched tone but did like Miah Persson's much clearer voice and more direct projection and communication in 'Quia respexit'. A feature of both the cantatas was the use of the clarino, an unknown instrument that was interpreted on this occasion by a hybrid instrument specially made for the performance with a trumpet mouthpiece and a bizarre-looking bit of plumbing based on a high horn and played by Gabriel Cassone. The vocal works were contrasted with two orchestral pieces, the Suite No 4 in D and the first Brandenburg Concerto. The former was given a polished and gentlemanly reading, with well-paced tempos and some good trumpet playing.

Some anarchic horns rather got in the way of the Brandenburg Concerto, and their stage positioning didn't help them sound in time with their colleagues. The Polonaise was given a particularly delicate interpretation. The Heathrow flight path above the Albert Hall became noticeable during the Magnificat, but with musicians representing 70 nationalities on stage, I suppose we shouldn't bemoan their means of access to each other.

For me, the highlight of these three concerts was the St John Passion given by the Choir of Clare College, Cambridge with the St James Baroque Players, directed by Ivor Bolton (23 August). The choir (with female sopranos and a mixed alto line) were on striking form, with a clear and focused sound, excellent control over their consonants and an air of sincerity missing from many choirs. And all this from college students, mostly undergraduates by the look of it! Paul Agnew was excellent as the Evangelist. He adopted the mode of a comforting preacher – with his hands resting reassuringly on his reading desk, he addressed each member of the audience directly and confidently with a clear, direct and expressive voice. Sandord Sylvan gave a strong portrayal of Christus, as befits the Gospel text. His rich voice was well balanced over its range and, like Paul Agnew, he brought some effective insights into the text, almost speaking the plea to 'Sheathe your sword' in the opening Garden scene. Gerald Finley was excellent in the bass arioso 'Betrachte, meine Seel' and in the role of Pilate, although I prefer performances where there is some stage interaction between Jesus and Pilate (rather than singing

only to the audience). During the superb aria where the tormented souls hurry – where to? – to Golgotha, Finley pushed the very sensible pace set by the introduction, but the hushed choir interjections of 'Wohin?' were spot on. I was less happy with the higher-pitched singers. Michael Chance took the alto arias, but his voice was not entirely in keeping with the pious mood of 'Von den Stricken meiner Sünder', and a slightly shrill edge to the upper tones was not helped by the acoustics of the Albert Hall. The soprano, Ruth Ziesak, had a very curious voice and style, breaking her phrases up into little snippets that did little to aid the flow of the music or reveal much about the underlying text. Her hesitant and breathless voice added to the disjointed feel of it all, and she was not quite reaching the pitch of the notes at the upper end of her range. The minor soloists drawn from the choir were not of the collective standard of the choir as a whole, these testing moments being the only time when youth showed through. But the choir's chattering consonants in 'Bist du nicht seiner Jünger einer' and 'Lasset uns den nicht zerteilen', mocking pomposity in 'Sei gegrüßet' and triumphant final chorale were a joy to hear. Ivor Bolton set well judged tempi and kept the flow going well. He was not afraid of the occasional silence, but avoided the usual pause after the death of Christ. All in all, an emotionally powerful and musically sensitive performance.

[Andrew hasn't mentioned the Prom *Messiah*. We saw a bit on television, but it just didn't sustain our interest, and we've found no-one who had a good word for the soloists. Opinion on the English Concert's playing varied CB/EB]

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE NINTH BIENNIAL *International Early Music Network* Young Artists Competition

The Competition is organised by the *Early Music Network*, with funding from the **Arts Council of England**: it will take place in York from **11-14 July 2001** as part of the **York Early Music Festival**.

This prestigious international competition is open to vocal and instrumental ensembles (minimum 3 persons) who:

- are between the ages of 17 and 30 (35 for singers)
- specialise in repertoire within the period from the middle ages to the 19th century
- follow appropriate 'historically-informed' playing techniques and stylistic conventions

If you are specialising in early music you should seriously consider entry. The competition can be a key stage on the way to national and international recognition for performers starting their professional careers; the jury (as well as the audience) regularly includes representatives of the broadcasting, recording, festival, and music promotion worlds – who see this as a prime opportunity to identify and select new and promising young talent. Judging will be by an international panel of performers and promoters. There is no registration fee; competitors participate at their own expense.

For further details please contact: the *Early Music Network*, 31 Abdale Road, London W12 7ER
tel 020 8743 0302 fax 020 8743 0996 e-mail glyn@earlymusicnet.demon.co.uk

Closing date for applications is **Friday 1 December 2000**

Vancouver Early Music Programme and Festival 2000

Jennie Cassidy

Surrounded by coastal mountains and overlooking the Pacific Ocean is the city of Vancouver. It is home to the 'Vancouver Early Music Programme and Festival' which ran from 28 July to 18 August in continuous sunshine.

The programme and festival runs courses, workshops and performances for singers and instrumentalists of all levels of proficiency. The cost can be relatively low and there are grants available, which makes it accessible for students and young professionals. There were two concurrent two-week courses for advanced and professional-level performers; 'The path of the mediæval singer' run by Sequentia (Benjamin Babgy, Eric Mentzel and Katarina Livljanic) and a baroque course 'Italians abroad' directed by Ray Nurse and run by twelve tutors (including Bruce Dickey, David Douglas, Ellen Hargis, Pat O'Brien and Charles Toet). There was a one-week early music workshop for novices through to good amateur level run by nine tutors including Herbert Myers and Elizabeth Liddle, and Steven Adby ran an all-comers day workshop for dancers. The Vancouver Early Music Festival presented fourteen professional concerts including three fully staged and costumed performances of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and performances by the Rose Consort of Viols, Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, Sequentia and Camerata Trajectina. A big enterprise, with something for everyone.

I was lucky enough to be studying on the Mediæval course and this is a report of what was an enlightening fortnight for all who took part.

Before the course proper, Sequentia gave an opening concert entitled 'The harp in the cloister'. The theme linked with the festival centrepiece production of *Orfeo*, and followed the symbolism of the harp through biblical texts and the Songbook of the Rhineland Harper. The voices presented the stories simply but with stunning beauty, interwoven with the filigrees of Bagby's harp. Eric Mentzel's shimmering voice was truly captivating. Katarina Livljanic joined Sequentia for the first time in this concert.

The next day saw us at work. The course was described in the brochure as being intensive, which was no exaggeration. There were only sixteen students and three tutors which was a luxurious ratio. We were free from around 9pm and at the weekend, but in that time we had preparation for solos and ensemble items, memory work and exercises on modes to do and concerts to go to – which meant late nights and minimal drinking or sun-bathing time at the nearby nudist beach. All our classes were held in one group, although we met up in smaller ensembles to practice in between sessions.

The core of the music was from the *Codex Calixtinus*, which is a manuscript focusing on songs about St James. The book is best known as one of the earliest travel guides, giving great detail about how to follow the great pilgrimage route from France to Santiago de Compostela. We also studied Latin songs from the Notre Dame manuscripts. One aspect that became very clear to me was that all the beautifully scribed mediæval tomes that we learn our music from today were not used in that way when they were written, and were certainly never used as performance copies. They were created more as a record of the music that was in use at that establishment; nor were they available outside. The monastery or convent novices would have had a decade in which to learn by rote the prodigious wealth of chants required for each service and holy day. Being taught music by heart takes time and nowadays it is a luxury we seldom enjoy. Bagby's course followed the path of the mediæval singer in that all the tutors taught in this way. We were not allowed props such as running away after the session to write down the tune or even the words we had just been working on, nor the making of secret recordings. The effort was significant but paid off in the end. We learnt the structural core of the melodies first, only adding the elaboration which created the final piece afterwards. In this way we achieved a complex but fluid and coherent line, creating one voice from sixteen singers. We did read some polyphonic music, which allowed us to practice our square notation and neums over the two weeks. We examined modes and used them to improvise tunes and compose discants. Using the phonetic alphabet, we experimented with tuning vowels, which was fascinating and made a huge difference to the sound, especially given the cosmopolitan accent mix of the participants. The largest emphasis was on telling the story in the most direct way possible and without putting in singing 'effects'. It is all too easy to drop into the habit of simply producing a beautiful sound or adding a mannered musical effect when word painting without thinking about the sense of the whole meaning. Bagby described this as the equivalent of constantly donning different funny hats or false noses. We spent much of the second week polishing up solos and ensemble items for an informal end-of-course concert which amounted to around an hour of music from memory. An intensive fortnight for us, but a drop in the ocean compared with the task of the mediæval noviciates!

At the weekend I wandered downtown to see Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (edition provided by King's Music) featuring Paul Agnew as Orfeo and Suzie LeBlanc as Euridice. The noteworthy cast also included Meredith Hall, Ellen Hargis, William Hite, Jan Opalach, Stephen Stubbs and Paul O'Dette, and members of Concerto Palatino. Research into

historic performance practice created a completely believable visual recreation thanks to the stage directors Steven Aaby and Roger Hyams. The singers performed with drama and sensitivity enabling the onlookers to be absorbed by the narrative as well as to appreciate the beautiful music. I wasn't alone in my use of handkerchief in the sadder moments of the plot. The string ensemble associated with the upper world and symbolising Orfeo's lyre was sweet and melismatic. Concerto Palatino's sublimely sinister brass sound represented the infernal in the underworld. Using stunning costumes, simple and effective stage sets, early baroque gesture and some delightful dances with the whole cast the show reached out to the audience and swallowed them up in its story.

I attended the dance workshop at the weekend, and found that having had a week of memory work, remembering the moves was simplicity itself. I have attended several dance workshops, but none so methodically structured. Steven Aaby, with enthusiasm and encouragement, introduced us to the Pavan and then to the Bransle in its various forms – the Bransle simple, the Bransle gay and the mimetic (or mime) Bransle which included bransles in imitation of horses, washerwomen, nagging wives and shelling peas! We finished with the Galliard, after having been reassuringly informed that its rhythm is that of the British National Anthem.

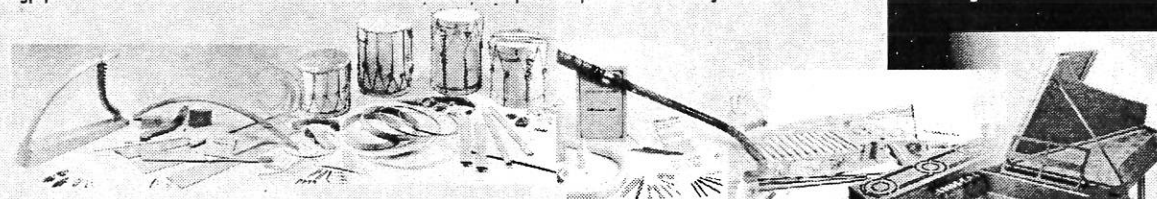
The following night we were treated to Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 (another KM edition), with a line-up of the excellent soloists and instrumentalists from the *Orfeo* team.

The highly contrasting movements were characterised to the full and gave the Vespers a constant forward momentum. The generous continuo section of three chitarroni, violone and organ provided a forceful substructure for the larger items and afforded plenty of scope for variation of colour in the smaller movements. The solo singing was again superb, but I felt that the melodramatic style employed to such great effect in *Orfeo* was rather overbearing and out of keeping when it occasionally appeared in the Vespers. The majestic perfection of Concerto Palatino was the highlight for me, their florid and amazing divisions in the ritornelli enhancing the shape and flow of Monteverdi's masterpiece.

Along with a concoction of mediaeval melodies many other memories are with me still – the heady, scented magnolia, the wonderful and cheap sushi bars, sunsets from the rose garden over the sea, my first whiff of a skunk, a huge salmon which fed 15 for £4, skateboarding in downtown Vancouver, totem poles in the park, fireworks over the bay, singing Shape Note and Bulgarian songs after hours with my new friends and some well earned G&Ts.

Ray Nurse, one of the organisers of the Festival, wrote to *EMR* (not for publication, but we have a column to fill): We had remarkable reviews in the (national newspaper) *Globe and Mail*, and also, quite a surprise, the *Financial Post* in New York. The local critics, knowing less, were a bit lukewarm about *L'Orfeo* and, inexplicably, Paul Agnew, but raved about the Vespers. CB

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SUFFOLK VILLAGES FESTIVAL

Clifford Bartlett

This Festival, held at the August Bank Holiday weekend (the weekend including the last Monday in August) is a model of what can be done to raise enthusiasm and an audience in a rural area. Only one corner of Suffolk is involved, right on the Essex border, with concerts this year in Stoke by Nayland and Boxford, villages about five miles apart. For venues, there are magnificent and spacious late-medieval churches, and the population within half-an-hour's drive includes a considerable number of that comparatively well-off, cultured class a decade or so either side of retirement age which seems to be the predominant audience for early-music concerts. (A typical example, perhaps, is a cousin of my wife, an artist who lives next to Stoke by Nayland church; I noticed that the picture on the wall next to where I was sitting when we visited before one of the concerts included a reference to a score of the St Matthew Passion.) The following weekend there was a Bach Festival a few miles away in Framlingham: perhaps, with diminishing state subsidy for what has been condemned as the elitist arts, that is the way forward. All (!) you need is the enthusiasm of a local musician like Peter Holman and a strong local committee. Six concerts took place over the weekend, none, as far as I know, supported by public funds.

The musical levels at which the Festival operates are variable. The 'Members of the Essex Baroque Orchestra' which played in Bach's St John Passion (25 August) can certainly be treated as professional. They played well, apart from disorder in the first two bars (which may not have been their fault). I was, however, puzzled that there were only single strings; I can't tell from the information I have at hand (I gave up subscribing to the *NBA* critical reports before the Passions were published) whether Bach's surviving orchestral material only includes single strings – with the confusing number of versions, it might not be possible to tell anyway. But one would have thought that the existence of ripieno choral parts would have implied extra strings too. The parts do, however, include a continuo part figured throughout, so it was odd that the organ was so often silent (particularly since Peter Holman has, for the 30 years I've known him, always demanded an adequate number of chordal instruments).

It was perhaps a pity that the opportunity wasn't taken to follow Bach's practice of not having separate singers for Christ and the Evangelist, though the Evangelist's voice probably wouldn't have stood the strain and it would have looked odd if Christus (Stephen Varcoe, impressive as always) hadn't also been separate.* The other soloists came from the choir. I've heard the alternative arias of the 1725 version performed separately, but this is the first time I have experienced the whole work in Bach's first revision. The tenor's 'Zerschmettert mich' (which replaced 'Ach

mein Sinn') is a really dramatic piece, magnificently sung by Julian Podger, which really should be sung more often. The opening chorus was 'O Mensch beweine', familiar from the St Matthew Passion. That and the closing chorus ('Christe, du Lamm Gottes') were interesting to hear, but felt out of place: the former because the different context that Bach found for it feels so right, the latter because it is unnecessary. It puzzles me why Bach wanted a chorus to follow 'Ruht wohl' and the end of the 1725 version is its most unsatisfactory feature, though I suppose that if one didn't know the triumphant chorale of the final version one might be less disappointed. The most impressive of the unfamiliar movements is the duet with two flutes: the bass sings 'Himmel reisse', initially just with continuo, the flutes entering with the soprano, who sings the chorale 'Jesu deine Passion'. This and the aforementioned tenor aria completely transform the end of Part I: why did Bach change it? Patrick McCarthy was the Evangelist, singing in a style that was slightly more measured than is often the case, and using a fuller voice than we generally get from lighter tenors. It worked very well.

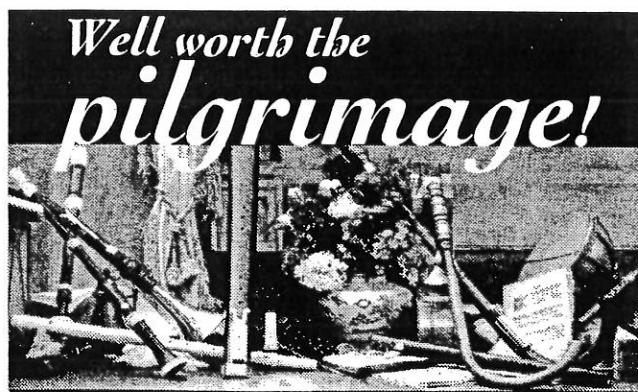
The following evening was a little more like what one might expect from a village festival. The venue was a school hall and the performance of Gluck's 1762 *Orfeo ed Euridice* was at a less professional level. The augmented band needed far more expressive conducting than Peter Holman could give from the harpsichord, though the dull sound may have been largely due to the acoustics. The players were placed on one side of the stage, leaving room for the three soloists to act a little in the space in front of the chorus on the other side. This didn't really work: the movements were a distraction rather than a help, and I was not the only person who failed to spot the point when Orfeo made the fatal turn. For once, Jack Edwards' flair didn't triumph over an adverse location. (I hope, incidentally, he will write something for us on his Chilean *Dido and Aeneas*.)

Orfeo has traditionally been revived for the benefit of a star singer (going right back to the Berlioz version, which Paul McCreesh is conducting with the Welsh National Opera). Timothy Kenworthy-Brown, despite his considerable merits (also evident in the Passion) can hardly claim that status; so I was more aware of the work itself, which was not an advantage, since I have never been as impressed by it as its reputation demands. Gluck's reforming conception of opera is so limiting compared with the emotional and musical richness of the baroque form at its best. Compared with the marvellous array of obscure operas Peter Holman has revived, this seemed an odd choice. And I wondered why, since its action is so simple and since Peter & Jack have generally presented opera in English, it was sung in English, whereas the much more word-dependent Passion was in German.

I managed only half of the concert the following evening, since I had the family in tow and it was unfair to make them wait too long while I enjoyed the esoteric delights of Senfl. Not everyone's cup of tea: I'm sure there were many who enjoyed the Gluck far more than me and missed the humour and vitality of this rather private music. But for those who are attuned to the Tenorlied (Julian Podger was the eponymous voice, in excellent form), this was a delightful evening. The players of Musica Antiqua of London really seemed to be enjoying themselves and led us into their private world. It took a while to catch the tone and hear what is happening in the scurrying counterpoint that once used to be played so sedately, but it was worth the effort. Philip Thorby even managed to achieve a round of applause by stating the notes of his part in *Fortuna desperata* before playing it. This was a more esoteric programme than the Gluck, but I found it more enjoyable.

There were also two other concerts on Bachian themes and, following tradition, a lecture recital by an instrumentalist, this year Gail Hennessy on the oboe. I was sorry to miss them, but King's Music has to function even during bank holidays.

* The subject of soloists singing the choral parts throughout cropped up at the party afterwards in conversation with Julian Podger – who has done the St John Passion singing Evangelist, tenor solos and chorus, and said he had no problem with it – and with Jennie Cassidy, who had taken part in a nine-voice St Matthew Passion with Andrew Parrott; she (as ninth voice with a symbolic adjustment to her concert garb) had little to sing, but the others apparently managed without too much grumbling.



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RECORD REVIEWS

We must apologise both to readers and to record companies that, as a consequence of an overlap in holidays, a whole batch of BC's reviews was not available when I sat down to sort out this section of the magazine – probably lost for ever in cyberspace. BC is somewhere in Sicily inspecting Greek temples and no doubt sampling the local vintages along with another of our reviewers, so we have had to go ahead without them. There are also more reviews than usual that have not arrived from other reviewers: perhaps they like to holiday in September. CB

MEDIEVAL

Cantigas de Amigo (Songs for a Friend): 13th-century Galician-Portuguese Songs & Dances of Love, Longing & Devotion Ensemble Alcatraz etc. 65' 25"
Dorian DOR 90285

This strikes me at being at one end of the plausible methods of performing medieval monophony before it merges with such discs as the orchestral transcriptions of Bach which so disappointed me last month (p. 28) – the other end would be a single unaccompanied voice, which we nearly get for track three, though the tune is ascribed to the group's string-player, Shira Kammen; other tracks also are attributed to individual performers. This is not, however, the sort of arrangement that Ian Harwood is so suspicious of (see p. 26), but a legitimate attempt to imagine what might lie behind the scanty surviving materials. The disc includes a mixture of sacred and secular texts and the songs of Martin Codax (whose MS was bought within living memory for a fiver: see last month p. 8). The soprano of Alcatraz, Susan Rode Morris, is joined by the San Francisco Balkan ensemble Kitka (making a surprisingly tame noise) and a choir of medieval harpists named Angelorum (any suggestions for a noun on which the genitive might depend?) An interesting disc; I'm not sure if I really believe it, but it is well worth hearing for its unusual textures and fine melodies. CB

The Earliest Songbook in England Gothic Voices, Christopher Page 64' 42"
Hyperion CDA67177

We expect Gothic Voices discs to comprise carefully-selected anthologies, so it is a surprise that their latest offering is drawn from just one fairly obscure manuscript and contains 23 of its 35 songs. I hasten to add that it is a pleasant surprise. The original order (with the monophonic items first) is not preserved, so there is a mixture of textures. I had intended to listen in front of the microfilm reader, but that proved rather hard work and was rather too clinical; but it is definitely worth following the texts, since there are none of the added features that enable the disc

reviewed above to be heard just as sound. The performances are quite restrained, and I found I had to listen a couple of times before I felt at home with the music. The opening piece may be familiar from *New Oxford Book of Carols*, though the closing *Ad cantus letitie* is a different setting from the ones there; some other items are part of the international repertoire, but most of the items here will be new even to experts. A commendable and enjoyable disc: I look forward to John Stevens' forthcoming edition of the MS. CB

Das Nibelungenlied Eberhard Kummer
Preisner Records 93415 70' 43"

A recent flurry of interest in the declamation of ancient epic texts has brought us a number of revelatory discs including Sequentia's account of Norse Eddas. An obvious candidate for similar treatment is the ancient Germanic saga of the Nibelungs, and Eberhard Kummer seems the ideal performer to do it justice. In collaboration with the foremost expert in early Germanic literature Ulrich Müller, Kummer has compiled a sequence selected from the huge text featuring five of the adventures, which he sings to the ancient *Hildebrandtston*, accompanying himself on lap harp and hurdy-gurdy. Kummer achieves a compelling blend of declamation and singing, and in impeccable pronunciation admirably captures the drama of his remarkable text. Scholarly attention was redirected recently to the work following the discovery of an additional fragment of the work in the magnificent library of the Abbey of Melk, not a stone's throw from the wine-rich Wachau where the original tale was set (Wagner's transposition of events to the Rhine being purely a piece of German chauvinism). This important recording contains by way of a bonus verses by the 12th-century Austrian poet Kurenberger and the *Alterslied* by Walther von der Vogelweide. The recording is slightly claustrophobic and in the early verses of the saga Kummer slightly undercuts the pitch, but the performances are generally technically proficient. D. James Ross

Tripilicite: 1350-1450 Zorgina Vocal Ensemble (Rebecca Bain, Ruth Eiselberg, Ellen Santaniello) 66' 49"
Raum Klang RK 9905
Music by Bedyrham, A. de Caserta, Cooper, Dufay, Landini, Machaut, Wolkenstein

I wonder if others my age tend to separate Machaut from Dufay as being from different historical periods on the strength of their appearing in different volumes of Reese. This disc certainly bridges the gap, with a selection of 17 individual but compatible trios. Zorgina, founded in 1993, is new to me. The three singers make a good, clean and accurate sound, and understand the music well. There is a certain amount of individual characterisation of the pieces,

but not really enough to sustain a whole disc, and after a while I wanted a little more vigour. They have some of the take-it-or-leave-it feel of Anonymous 4, and it is easy to let the sound drift into the background. But there's excellent music here, and those happier with over an hour from high voices than I am will not share my unease. Excellent booklet, though the composers' names on the folder are barely legible. CB

15th CENTURY

Laude Celestiniane della tradizione medioevale aquilana (Secc.XIV-XV) Soloisti dell'Ensemble Micrologus. Compagnia di Cantori Hora Decima 57' 49"
Warner Fonit 8573 81470-2 (rec 1996)

My wife doesn't usually like medieval music and I only got away with playing it while driving across Ireland recently because she was half asleep; I wasn't too struck by it either. But it grew on us, and by the second playing, once past the opening editorial *Toccar de trombette, tamborini, pifari e otricelli* we rather enjoyed the seven Laude in honour of St Celestino, briefly Pope in 1294. The somewhat subdued sound grew on us, though the choral sound could have a bit more edge to it. The instrumental backing doesn't dominate, and the sheer repetition of the verses has a cumulative effect even when not following the texts, which are printed in full in Italian and English. CB

16th CENTURY

The Tradition of Antonio de Cabezon Canto a mi caballero Capriccio Stravagante, Skip Sempé 58' 09"
Astrée Naïve E8651

Not many recordings featuring instrumental transcriptions of vocal music go to the trouble of printing the texts of the original songs. This one does, so it is all the more curious that Skip Sempé's pretentious liner notes dwell on his idea that texts are not important for instrumentalists compared with 'opulence of sound'. This I suppose is his excuse for overloading pieces mostly designed for solo keyboard with highly coloured arrangements for viols, harp, guitars, vihuela and recorder in addition to his own contribution on harpsichord or virginal. The result is that the modern arrangements take precedence over the music: it is the performance that demands our attention, not the piece. Even in Ortiz's simple *recercada* on 'Douce memoire' (written for viol and keyboard) the recorder gets in on the act, and there are far too many thoroughly rehearsed changes of dynamic and attack for the music to sound convincingly improvisatory. The big band pieces veer towards the 'flamenco' with multiple strumming from the pluckers and a nasty habit of

playing last chords *subito piano* followed by a tasteless crescendo. Not all the music here is by Cabezon: the folksong 'Canto a mi caballero' also appears in a setting by Gombert, and as the basis for a mass by Morales, some sections of which are vigorously played by the viols, and there are also instrumental performances of madrigals by Arcadelt and Rore. The musical highlights, however are not to be found in these garish arrangements, but in the genuine solos. Mike Fentross offers a thoughtful performance of Narvaez's version of 'Mille regretz' for vihuela, and Skip Sempé himself plays eloquently in Antonio de Cabezon's embellished version of Rore's 'Anchor che col partire' and Hernando de Cabezon's 'Dulce memoria', with a well-judged balance between spaciousness and forward momentum. I'm afraid these are the only tracks on this CD that I shall want to hear again, performed as the composers intended: as solo reworkings of their vocal originals, played with integrity and respect for their models.

John Bryan

Jean de Castro Polyphony in a European Perspective Trigon-Project, Capilla Flamenca, Piffaro, More Maiorum 59' 23" Passacaille 931

Music by Castro + Lassus *Dessus le marché d'Aras, La cortesia; Utendal Mors tua mors Christi; Wert Nunca mucho costo poco; Willaert Ricercar I toni & chant*

There is no doubt that Jean de Castro belongs among the first rank of Franco-Flemish polyphonists of the second half of the 16th century, and this varied programme confirms this fact with a range of instrumental and vocal pieces, both sacred and secular. There are some lovely secular songs sung by solo voices and instruments, as well as music for an alta capella of shawms, dulcian and sackbut, and some organ music impressively presented on the organ of Sint-Jan-de-Doperchurch of the Beguinage of Leuven. The performers list is impressive, if slightly misleading – each ensemble appears individually except for some mixing of the Capilla with More maiorum for the last item. Apart from this we only hear the excellent Capilla twice, and the equally impressive Trigon Project, a female chant cappella, only sing two gregorian chants. This notwithstanding, the performances are all extremely good, a mark of the outstanding quality of early music performance in the Low Countries.

D. James Ross

Holborne The teares of the Muses: Pavans, Galliards & Almains 1599 Hesperion XXI, Jordi Savall 66' 11" Alia Vox AV9813

Holborne's 1599 collection of five-part pavans, galliards and almains has long been a source of favourite pieces for recorder and viol players alike. Just over half the 65 items were given emblematic titles, and rather like Haydn's nicknamed symphonies they are the ones that are most often performed, which means we miss some untitled gems in the process. Hesperion XXI (they seem to have collected

an extra digit, presumably to mark the new century) include 19 of those old favourite 'titles' in their 25 tracks, but are to be thanked for also including a warmly shaped account of the noble pavan 41 which is just as great a piece as more well-known items. Holborne scored the music for 'Viols, Violins, or other Musically Wind Instruments'. Hesperion use a viol consort, but add to it a 16' violone, organ, harpsichord, two lutes and multifarious percussion in such a self-consciously orchestrated way that one sometimes wonders whether they don't trust Holborne's music to stand up on its own. To my ears the best tracks are those that limit the timbres and focus instead on clarity of part-writing and the often delicate details of dialogue between the parts. Jordi Savall's playing of the treble line is always expressive, particularly in those pavans where his ability to shape a long flowing line is at a premium. He (alone amongst the viol players) decorates his line, always with delicacy and restraint, and some numbers effectively contrast versions for solo treble viol and lute with the full band. There are many surprises here for those who know the music well: 'The Sighes' belies its title in frenetic bustle and 'The Night Watch' sounds distinctly moorish with its ethnic drums and jingles. But if this CD wins more converts to the charms of Holborne's music, then it deserves a warm if slightly guarded welcome.

John Bryan

Palestrina Missa de Beata Virgine I (1567) Soloists of the Cappella Musicale di S. Petronio di Bologna, Sergio Vartolo *dir* 55' 24" Naxos 8.553313 £ (rec 1995) with chant + Cavazzoni *Ave maris stella*

This is Naxos' second disc of Palestrina masses by this group, so I guess someone must like them! Not me, I'm afraid. The liner notes quote the choir's director as saying that Palestrina 'developed a madrigal style in his sacred music, originating in the work of Josquin' which doesn't inspire much confidence. It worries me to think that the disc's billing as 'restoring earlier performance traditions' and 'recapturing in timbre something of the sonority of Palestrina's music' may fool unsuspecting purchasers into thinking there is some authenticity here. I know of no 16th-century evidence for the singers' constant stopping and re-starting of the sound, their exaggerated swellings and breaking up of words. It sounds like a harmonium with leaking bellows. While there is evidence for falsettists intoning plainchant in Rome, there is none for its being entirely sung by a solo falsettist as here (the singer is not named), with spurious ornamentation and in a highly mannered fashion which gets wearing even more quickly than the polyphony. Singing by soloists is authentic, tuning is good and there is no other recording of this mass available, but I would still give it a wide berth.

Noel O'Regan

Musica per liuto italiano Massimo Lonardi, Paul Beier lutes 72' 35" Nuovo Era CD 7343 Music by Borrono, M. Galilei, da Milano, Molinaro, Piccinini

This is not a disc of lute duets as one might expect, but a curiously lop-sided anthology of at least some pre-issued material; it is essentially a solo disc by Beier, preceded by 7 minutes' worth of Lonardi. With only 3 minutes of Francesco da Milano, but over 34 minutes of Michelangelo Galilei, (who neither worked nor published in Italy), it cannot pretend to give a balanced overview of Italian lute music. The music is very tidily played and attractively recorded but it all emerges sounding rather clinical and bloodless. Both artists tend towards a gentle, reflective approach, which I feel ill-serves much of this extrovert and innovative repertory. Molinaro's complex counterpoint is projected with exemplary clarity, but the innovative Galilei, who achieved a remarkably effective and powerful synthesis of French and Italian styles, emerges sounding like an incoherent Ennemond Gaultier. This recording could have been a fascinating history of *il liuto italiano* rather than *la musica italiana*, but only Lonardi's bright-toned 6-course emerges as a recognizably different instrument. Otherwise there's little distinction in sound and playing style between the archlute used for Piccinini and the 8-course used for Molinaro. Maybe a useful sampler if you're considering buying the mother discs.

Lynda Sayce

17th CENTURY

Fischer Musical Parnassus vol. 2: Suites Nos 7-9 Luc Beauséjour *hpscd* 60' 19" Naxos 8.554446 £ *Musikalischer Parnassus 7-9, Musikalisches Blumen-Büschlein 2 & 8*

Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer has long belonged in the history books as the foremost influence on Bach in the latter's Well-Tempered Clavier collections. If Fischer's preludes and fugues are compared directly with Bach's they do seem somewhat meagre. But there are many other pieces by Fischer that show him to be absolutely in the first rank of German keyboard composers before Bach, one who was largely instrumental in transmitting the most recent French idioms into German music culture. His balance of subtlety, complexity and directness parallels that of his elder contemporaries, Buxtehude and Kuhnau and even that of J. S. Bach. The steadily growing amount of Fischer's music available on CD is encouraging, with some excellent collections from William Christie and Siegbert Rampe. This is Luc Beauséjour's second volume of the *Musical Parnassus* of 1738, containing three suites named after the muses. Immediately striking are the beautiful chordal preludes opening each set, followed by dances that are more purely 'French' than most in the German repertoire. Beauséjour produces elegant, lyrical accounts of each suite with an obvious understanding of each dance style;

£ = bargain price ££ = mid-price
Other discs are full price, as far as we know

the faster, more extrovert, pieces are perhaps more subtle than brilliant but Beauséjour is always able to evoke the wider, orchestral texture implied by so much of this music.

The collection is rounded out with two suites from Fischer's earlier *Musicalisches Blumen-Büschlein* (1696). These are hardly less substantial than the later pieces, and show that Fischer was a remarkably consistent composer over a forty year span. Indeed one of the most interesting pieces in the whole collection presented here is the short Suite in G from the earlier publication, opening with a multi-sectioned Froberger-style prelude paired with a Chaconne, one of Fischer's richest variation sets.

John Butt

Marini *Affetti musicali* Il Viaggio Musicale Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0660 64' 44"

This disc suffers from the idea that what is satisfactory as an edition will work as a CD. 27 unrelated instrumental pieces (average length under two and a half minutes) don't make a satisfactory programme, and were clearly not intended for hearing as a single sequence. If you want to be convinced by Marini, go for the Romanesca anthology (HMU 907125; see *EMR* 35). Il Viaggio Musicale's 11 players are stylish and I would be happy with any individual piece; but whenever there is a choice of moving forward or hesitating, they always choose the latter, which ultimately makes the music outlast its welcome. If you can afford discs to dip into rather than play through, this is certainly worth hearing, and those with the SPES facsimile wanting to find out what is worth performing may prefer hearing this to buying the new score (reviewed last month). But I longed for a voice to vary the texture.

CB

Pachelbel *Orgelwerke* 1 Nigel Allcoat (1998 Aubertin organ, St Catherine's, Bitche) Cantoris CRC6042 69' 33"

Pachelbel *The Complete Organ Works, Vol. 7* Antoine Bouchard (1964 Casavant organ at St-Pascal de Kamouraska, Quebec) 63' 07" Dorian DOR-93196

Yet another Pachelbel series gets under way, this time from the English organist, Nigel Allcoat. Like Krebs (see below), Pachelbel is becoming increasingly popular amongst recording organists – is there really a market for so many 'complete works'? Each series will have its own, possibly fairly local, targeted audience; but for recordings to make their mark on the international stage there needs to be something that lifts it above the rest. But what? The choice of organ is an increasing consideration, with the ease of access to historic organs of the correct period and style as well as recent instruments built in historically informed style. Curiously both these CDs feature modern French-inspired organs, although Bouchard claims, quite erroneously, a Saxon influence. Both instruments fail to approach the sound-world that Pachelbel might have known, although the Aubertin organ produces a very seductive sound, helped by a healthily

plump acoustic. Equally, neither player really brings a fresh outlook on Pachelbel's music, although Allcoat's slightly self-conscious playing will appeal if you like that sort of thing. Bouchard's playing and interpretation is frankly not of the standard required for a CD, with its quirky and unstylistic ornamentation, unsubtle articulation and jerky sense of rhythm although, for librarians amongst our readers, his catalogue of editions for every Pachelbel piece might be of interest.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Rossi *The Songs of Solomon: Vol. 1. Music for the Sabbath* New York Baroque, Eric Milnes dir 45' 54"

Dorian DDD 93210 (rec 1996)

This is a re-issue of PGM108 in memory of PGM's creator, Gabe Wiener. PGM's issues suffered from Wiener's uncritical enthusiasm. I was a little equivocal in welcoming this disc in *EMR* 25, but it is better than the other two CDs of Rossi's Jewish music that I know. The music deserves a good, stylistically aware recording.

CB

Shakespeare's *Musick* The Musicians of the Globe, Philip Pickett 71' 54"

Philips 468 024-2 (rec 1997-9)

Music by Dowland, Haussmann, Humfrey, Jones, Morley, Purcell, Wighorpe & anon

This is a compilation from three earlier collections of Shakespearean music. Most of it is early enough to have been around in Shakespeare's lifetime – some possibly used in his plays; but the last six tracks move to later in the century, with four pieces by Purcell, Humfrey's 'Where the bee sucks' and the 'Full fathom five' that isn't by Purcell. I felt occasionally that the performances smacked more of the concert hall than the theatre, but this is well worth getting if you don't have the source discs (one of which has the same title.)

CB

Siehe, meine Freundin, du bist schön: *Music based on texts from the Song of Songs* Ensemble Alte Musik Dresden 53' 20"

Raum Klang RK 9706

Music by Bernardi, Cima, Demantius, Franck, Hammerschmidt, Schütz

A delightful anthology of German music (apart from Cima, who worked in Milan), including five settings by Schütz, performed by a group of eight solo singers and six players, all of whom are fully in accord with the technical and stylistic demands of the music. The booklet has thoughtful essays on the text and the music; texts are printed in Latin and German only, but the biblical references are given so English versions can easily be found. I suspect that Italians will find the northern adaptation of their idiom just a little too cool, but it seems ideal to me.

CB

Spanish Guitar Music: *Jacob Sanz, Santiago de Murcia* Jakob Lindberg 72' 16" BIS-CD-899

The problem of this disc is that it starts with the best-known and probably the best

piece, Sanz's *Canerios*, and the rest is downhill – not in terms of performance, but in musical interest, at least to non-guitarists. There is the same problem of too many short pieces as with the Marini disc reviewed above, but here it is worse, with 40 items averaging at under two minutes each. The playing is too good to relegate to background music, and guitar enthusiasts should not hesitate to buy it; but others may not last the course, although any track heard at random is marvellously played and worth hearing, and the Green-sleeves would make a pleasant change to the synthetic ones we hear while hanging on to the phone.

CB

BACH

Bach *Cantatas for the Purification* (82, 83, 125, 200) Robin Tyson, Paul Agnew, Peter Harvey ATB, Monteverdi Choir, English Bach Soloists. John Eliot Gardiner 68' 59 Archiv 463 585-2

Unlike some other issues in this series, this CD is actually taken from one of the concerts of Sir John Eliot Gardiner's much-proclaimed Pilgrimage, having been recorded live last February at the Priory Church, Christchurch, in Sir John's home county. Performing all the cantatas on the appropriate Sundays and feast days of the anniversary year is clearly a proper tribute to the composer's status, but whether the peripatetic nature of the project helps the music-making is questionable; no doubt the performances will have their highs and lows as they would under any other circumstances. I cannot imagine that the account of BWV 83, *Erfreute Zeit im neuen Bande*, will be placed among the best: the soloist in the opening alto aria sounds frantic, placing undue emphasis on the word 'Zeit' as if foretelling some disaster rather than rejoicing in the hope of salvation. The rest of the cantata is excessively earnest, ending with a stiff chorale. However, the slumber aria of *Ich habe genug**, delivered at a hypnotically slow tempo by Peter Harvey, works its magic, preparing for a more relaxed yet still precise realisation of the complex textures of BWV 125. Astonishment at the sophistication and variety of Bach's reflections on the *Nunc dimittis* ultimately overrides assessment of the performances, which is as it should be.

Anthony Hicks

* Some recent editions have restored the early spelling *genung*. Most Bach texts seem to be edited with standardised spellings, but singers accompanied by early instruments should perhaps be adopting early pronunciations. One of our readers has been taking advice: contact briggsk@info.bt.co.uk

CB

Bach *Cantatas for Whitsun* (34, 59, 74, 172) Martina Jankova, Magdalena Kozená, Bernarda Fink, Robin Blaze, Christoph Genz, Steve Davilim, Richard Hagen, Peter Harvey, Christopher Foster SSaCtTBBB, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 66' 52"

Archiv 463 584-2

BWV 30/5, 34/3, 84/3, 198/3 & 5, 232/6, 243/2, 208/9, 244/39, 245/35

This recording was made last year rather than during Gardiner's current Bach Pilgrimage. I was particularly looking forward to hearing *O ewiges Feuer* BWV34, with its wonderful first chorus, though overall I found *Erschallet, ihr Lieder* BWV172, with its brilliant writing for trumpets and its beautifully contrasted arias, even more compelling. The performances have the strengths and weaknesses we have come to expect from Gardiner's Bach. There is a very strong sense of direction, excellent solo and choral singing and generally good orchestral playing – though the intonation in one or two of the more demanding instrumental passages is not perfect. There are two main weaknesses. There is an occasional feeling that that the music is being driven too hard, especially in the first 'chorus' of *O ewiges Feuer*, and some of the editorial decisions are questionable. Readers of *EMR* will not need reminding of the Rifkin-Parrott arguments for single voices in the choruses. I listened determined not to let my musicological scruples influence my opinion of the music-making, but could not help finding the choral singing overblown, particularly in chorales, where I believe the singing should be essentially neutral and communal in style to act as a foil to Bach's highly personal, emotional response to the aria texts. The chorales are particularly unconvincing in the intimate duet cantata *Wer mich liebet, der wird mein Wort halten* BWV59; they would have sounded wonderful with just two additional singers. The more brilliant choruses, of course, sound splendid as sung by the Monteverdi choir, though 'O ewiges Feuer' in particular would have benefited from some of the fugal sections being taken by soloists. It is understandable that choirs will want to ignore the Rifkin-Parrott arguments, though they could easily use the evidence for solo-ripieno vocal scoring in Bach to provide themselves with an additional expressive resource: dividing some choruses up into solo and tutti sections provides more variety and often helps to clarify the structure for the listener. Two niggles: why is it that timpanists never ornament cadences in Bach? To end with a single 'bonk' on a sustained final chord makes no musical sense and is historically wrong. Also, why are the excellent instrumental soloists not credited in the booklet? The first trumpet certainly deserves a mention for his/her work in BWV172 and 34, as does the violin soloist in the extraordinary final aria of BWV74. By contrast, Gardiner's name appears at least 15 times in the packaging, a sign of the wearisome cult of personality that now infects the large record companies.

Peter Holman

Bach Cantatas 102 & 151; Purcell Celebrate this Festival (Britten at Aldeburgh) English Chamber Orch, Benjamin Britten 78' 51" Decca 466 819-2

Cantata 102 Janet Baker, Peter Pears, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, mSTB, Aldeburgh Festival Singers (rec 1965)

Cantata 151 Heather Harper, Helen Watts, Peter Pears, John Shirley-Quirk SATB, Wandsworth School Boys' Choir (rec 1968)

Purcell Celebrate this Festival (1693) Heather Harper, Josephine Veasey, James Bowman, Peter Pears, John Shirley-Quirk SmScTTB, Ambrosian Singers (rec 1967)

Although I do not remember these performances, Britten and the ECO was an ideal performance medium for me in the mid-1960s, and I enjoyed chamber-orchestra concerts of Bach cantatas by Paul Steinitz and the London Bach Society, for whom Heather Harper and Janet Baker were the favourite lady soloists. The latter is more impressive here. Despite his unfashionable sound, I still find Peter Pears impressive, and Fischer-Dieskau needs no apology. But, as I have (too) often said, nostalgia over early-music performances is usually a mistake, and I can't really recommend these except for historical interest (especially for Britten's way with Bach). The instrumental phrasing is often expressive, though I don't like the rigid approach to the opening chorus of Cantata 102. The documentary value of the disc would have been greatly enhanced had the orchestral members been named (one might guess at William Bennett and Neil Black as the responsive flute and oboe players); I think the sort of people who buy discs like this would like to know. As for the Purcell, the less said the better. Even at the time, I puzzled why Britten (who evidently loved the music) treated it so oddly.

CB

Bach Passion Package
Stemra Brilliant Classics 99137

I think we may have mentioned this before, but now I have a copy I cannot resist drawing attention to it. For £24 you get a two-disc boxed set for each of the four

Gospels. The Matthew and John are unequivocal works of Bach, the former in the fine performance conducted by Paul Goodwin for Jonathan Miller's production: I didn't see it live, but it was just about the best musical presentation I can remember seeing on TV, and the performance is pretty good on disc without the vision. The John Passion is from King's College Cambridge, conducted by Stephen Cleobury with Roy Goodman's Brandenburg Consort. Roy conducts the European Community Baroque Orchestra in the Simon Heighes (King's Music) version of the St Mark Passion. The anonymous St Luke Passion is from the Collegium Musicum Tübingen, conducted by Gerhard Rehm. I haven't listened in enough detail to say: 'these are the best performances around: buy them'. But the set offers some extremely fine music-making and is certainly worth acquiring. The only snag is a complete absence of texts or notes: in fact, no booklets at all. I'm sure our readers can manage without, but neophytes attracted by the bargain price may fail to understand what the music is about.

CB

Bach The Works for Organ vol. 12 Kevin Bowyer (Marcussen organ at Sct Hans Kirkem Odense) 123' (2 CDs)

Nimbus NI 5647/8

BWV 131a, 527-8, 545, 550, 562, 571-2, 589, 591, 700-1, 710, 771, 910, 946, 989, 993, 1090, Anh 44,

Bach Organ Works Vol. 6 Gerhard Weinberger (Christoph Treutmann organ, Monastery Grauhof, 1734-37) 77' 26"

cpo 999 700-2 ££

BWV 532, 545, 548, 720-1, 727, 735, 741, 768

With so many complete editions of Bach on the market buyers need to be very strict



about their criteria for purchase. Complete editions are more likely to become reference material than single subject CDs, so the re-listenability factor needs to be high. Any quirks or mannerisms can quickly grate on repeated listening. This month's choice is not an easy one. Weinberger uses an historic instrument, Bowyer uses a modern one with little or no historic pretensions. Both have their idiosyncrasies, Weinberger (in his sometimes eccentric articulation and ornamentation) more so than Bowyer (with his helter-skelter tempi and use of *notes inégales* for a trio sonata Andante). Bowyer is certainly ahead on curiosity value, with a number of early works and pieces normally considered to be for harpsichord transferring successfully to the organ. He also gains on the pure excitement scale, with some thrilling interpretations that will appeal to many (the Capriccio in E, for example). But it is a shame that he doesn't put himself through the rigour of using an historic instrument, or a modern one with more stylistic sympathy to Bach's music, to aid his interpretations – he need not lose any of the excitement, but the detail of interpretation and performance would be improved. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach *The French Suites* Christopher Hogwood
134' 20" 2 CDs (rec 1983)
Decca 466 736-2 ££
BWV 812-817, 818a, 819, 819a

Although a reissue of a 1983 recording, Hogwood's account of the French Suites deserves full review. These Suites exist in several versions testifying to stages in Bach's compositional process and different performing traditions; the familiar set of six was selected by Bach disciples in the late-eighteenth-century, excluding other pieces of similar style and provenance. Hogwood discusses the source problems in a challenging, self-aware booklet note. His solution – varied reprises that synthesise different readings – contrasts with the current tendency to record variants on separate tracks, but recognises that changes arise in performance, particularly for a player-composer such as Bach. Hogwood also records two suites (BWV 818a and 819) omitted by the Bach circle from the canonical set of six. Hogwood's playing has worn fairly well. Compared to 1990s' performances, he is cautious with rhythmic flexibility and chord spreads. But there is an elegant dance pulse, plus a large-scale sweep to the double-bar in every movement. Each suite is played in a different temperament to bring out its character: particularly notable are the tunings for the E flat minor of BWV 819 and for the B minor minuets of BWV 814. A small gripe is that Decca have not left enough space between tracks. Nonetheless, this reissue is important for its imagination and the rare rigour of its source-work. *Stephen Rose*

Bach *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book 1*
Robert Levin *hpscd, clavichord, organ* ££
Hänssler CD 92.116 106' 32" (2 CDs in box)

Levin's WTC 1 uses organ, clavichord, plus single and double harpsichords. Some choices of instrument are conventional (clavichord for the E flat minor prelude with its notated spread-chords, organ for the A minor fugue requiring pedals). Otherwise, Levin establishes distinct if slightly stereotyped characters for each instrument. The clavichord is used for fast movements with repeated, thumming* notes (e.g. D minor prelude); the organ for *alla breve* fugues (e.g. C sharp minor and B flat minor). Perhaps revealing Levin's Mozartean background, his interpretations suggest early-19th-century pianism in their virtuosity and their reverence for the contrapuntal text. He makes the preludes preliminaries to the fugues through a virtuosic flightiness (e.g. D minor, F major and G major) rather than a late-17th-century sense of exploratory improvisation. The fugues are strongly characterised: the D major has regimented precision in its descending sequences; the A major has a wonderful springiness; the *alla breve* fugues are all weighty and measured. Levin's organ playing, although always good, isn't quite articulate enough for the ample acoustic, with the A minor prelude rather indistinct. A specification of the organ would have been welcome, and I feel Levin could sometimes strengthen his instrumental choices with more idiomatic playing. But this is a thought-provoking and immensely musical release; will Levin now record WTC 2 with these four instruments plus fortepiano?

Stephen Rose

*a coinage by the writer, trying to convey the effect of fast repeated notes on the clavichord strings.

Bach *Concerto, Fantasia & Fugue: Keyboard Works from the Weimar Period* Robert Hill
hpscd 52' 09"
Hänssler CD 92.105 ££

Hill here records Weimar harpsichord pieces in which Bach's improvisatory urge is tempered by the ritornello forms and harmonic direction learned from Vivaldi. Hence 'Concerto' in the title of a disc of fantasias and fugues. The recording opens with a masterful performance of the Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, followed by various free works and dance movements all in A minor – forty minutes of one key is not the best programming. Hill's playing, however, is outstanding. He combines vigorous articulation with much rhythmic flexibility and flamboyant chord-spreading. The fantasias show flair and rhetorical power: the A minor Fantasia BWV 922 has an organ-like grandeur in its opening rhetorical flourishes, humour in the obsessive motivic repetition, and a sense of direction in a piece others have dismissed as rambling. The Suite in A minor BWV 818a is also a delight: despite Hill's note about Italian influences, his performance suggests a French style in the rhythmic inequality of the courante and the lavishly-decorated chaconne-sarabande. In all, Hill's immense understanding of early Bach makes him a

powerful exponent of the marked changes in style that occur in the Weimar keyboard works. *Stephen Rose*

Bach or not Bach: early harpsichord works – authenticity disputed Christian Rieger 73' 43"
Glissando 779 011-2
BWV 821, 832, 897, 905, 956-7, 959, 990

A disc of works that have some association with the Bach name but which are unlikely to be securely attributed one way or the other forces us to interrogate our presuppositions about musical value and authorship. This is something that Christian Rieger stresses in his lucid sleeve notes and his efficient, stylish playing shows these pieces in the best light. In fact, the Bach label helps in bringing our attention to a repertory we might otherwise miss; moreover, it shows an astonishingly rich world of craftsmanship and imaginative manipulation of a common language. If we can wean ourselves away from being dependent on the concept of a single composing figure we can surely appreciate a far wider range of excellent music.

This collection is built around three partitas (in both senses of the term: dance suite and variations). The Bb suite (BWV 821) immediately seems to belong to the same world as Bach's first partita in the same key and the closing echo – if authentic – provides us with the only example before that of Bach's French Overture, BWV 831. The A major partita, BWV 832, contains a colourful trumpet tune and one of the most delicious Sarabandes on record. Its affecting dissonance is also shared by the Sarabande serving as the theme of the C major partita, BWV 990. While many have seen a connection with Lully, this sort of music has something of the luscious lyricism of Louis Couperin. The odd piece out is the rather later arrangement that Bach made of Prince Johann Ernst's concerto in G. Bach's virtuoso arrangement and Rieger's performance turn the prince's worthy effort into a wonderful keyboard concerto 'after the Italian style', here balancing the French-orientated music of the suites. *John Butt*

Bach *Harpsichord concertos II* Robert Hill
etc. Cologne Chamber Orchestra, Helmut Müller-Brühl 74' 32"
Naxos 8.554605 £
BWV 1054, 1058, 1063, 1064

This is vol. 4 of the seven-disc Complete Orchestral Works which Stephen Daw reviewed favourably in March. It benefits particularly from Robert Hill as the solo harpsichordist in the Concerto in D as well as the two triple concertos: Gerald Hambitzer plays the Concerto in g BWV 1058, and the two along with Christoph Anselm Noll play the two concertos for three harpsichords, the latter of which is also given in the hypothetical original version for three violins. As has been said rather frequently on these columns, the Cologne Chamber Orchestra plays very stylishly on modern strings and there are excellent notes by Peter Wollny. *CB*

£ = bargain price ££ = mid-price
Other discs are full price, as far as we know

LATE BAROQUE

Gallo 12 *Trio Sonatas (once attrib. Pergolesi)*
Parnassi musici
cpo 999 717-2 ££

According to the distributor's leaflet, this is 'a lovely disc... beautifully balanced'. The quotation is from *Early Music Review*, so it must be true! After writing that last month, Peter Berg told me that the quote was about another disc; meanwhile this one has disappeared into the confusion arising from our house extension, so I can't say if the quote applies to it too. If you want a stylish set of the attractive trios upon which Stravinsky drew so heavily for *Pulcinella*, this is probably a pretty safe bet. CB

Geminiani *Concerti Grossi (after Corelli op. 5)*
Academy of Ancient Music, Andrew Manze
144' 19" (2 CDs)
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907261.62

This is definitely my favourite issue this month. Despite the misgivings expressed at times in *EMR* about modern arrangements, Geminiani was entirely successful in converting Corelli's famous violin solos into concerti grossi, producing a successor to opus 6, the most popular set in England at the time – a bit like a modern novelist writing a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*. There is an extra richness in the texture but (despite Burney's criticism) this adds to rather than overweighs the original. Those who don't know op. 5 can enjoy the music and the brilliant playing for their own sake; those who do can admire the skill with which they are transformed. When there is eventually a modern edition (as far as I know, all that is available are the King's Music facsimiles and our first-draft scores of six of them), it would be nice if it were to be done like Ravel's *Pictures at an Exhibition* with the original printed under the arrangement. The first violin naturally has a greater predominance than in opus 6, and Andrew Manze plays magnificently, with apt embellishment. There is a marvellous (if perhaps out-of-period) example in the slow Variation 15 of *Follia*: the piece won't seem the same without it. The set also includes op. 5/9 played on violin and cello with Geminiani's graces and his cello sonata op. 5/2, played by David Watkin in such a way as to whet the appetite for the other five. The discs are accompanied by the reduced-size copy of the reproduction of Hawkins's 1770 history of the original Academy of Ancient Music, with introduction by Christopher Hogwood, which was sent with the AAM's Christmas greetings a couple of years ago. CB

Handel *Israel in Egypt* Susan Gritton, Libby Crabtree, Michael Chance, Robert Ogden, Ian Bostridge, Stephen Varcoe, Henry Herford SSAATBB, Choir of King's College Cambridge, Brandenburg Consort, Stephen Cleobury 125' 50" (2 CDs in box) rec 1995 Decca 452 295-2

Any recording of what is (by a generous margin) the most choral of Handel's oratorios lives or dies by the choral singing; and although King's now sings with more vitality and Baroque stylishness than I've heard in a third of a century's listening under those fan vaults, the choir is still a dreadnaught (or an oil tanker) where Handel probably expected a frigate or a destroyer. So there are rather scrappy moments such as 'And the children of Israel' and especially 'He rebuked the Red Sea': in the latter, Andrew Parrott's smaller chorus (of mixed adult voices) in his 1989 recording actually sounds stronger because it's more focused. In the huge echo of King's Chapel, the choir is at its most effective in Part 1 (lifted straight from *The ways of Zion*, the Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline). Did Handel actually expect such vastly reverberant sonorities in Westminster Abbey (for which he wrote the funeral anthem)? Did he anticipate that the chorus would sound quite different in the more confined and padded space of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, where he produced the oratorio? and did he therefore build a more animated harmonic rhythm into the latter two parts of Israel in Egypt? Parrott takes some movements slightly slower, too, which is no bad thing. Each recording has some strong soloists – insofar as they matter – and in that respect honours are about even. I haven't heard John Eliot Gardiner's two versions and don't think I need to: Parrott and Cleobury, very different and oddly complementary, should be enough for anyone in this wonderful piece. Incidentally, the recording was laid down in 1995 but is P-dated 2000. Eric Van Tassel

Handel & Vivaldi *Cantatas, Sonatas* Matthew White A, The Four Nations Ensemble (Colin St Martin fl, Ryan Brown, Claire Jolivet vlns, Loretta O'Sullivan vlc, Andrew Appel hpscd/dir) 66' 56"

ASV Gaudeamus CD GAU 211
Handel *Mi palpita il cor*, Vln Sonata in D HWV 371;
Vivaldi *Qual per ignoto calle* RV677, Cello Sonata in B \flat RV45, Vln sonata in c RV83; op. 1/12 *La Follia*

Andrew Appel's ensemble here attempt a sequel to their earlier 'Rivals' disc of Handel and Porpora (*EMR* 54, p. 25). The tag is now 'Handel Compar'd (*sic*) and though the programme is more sensible, it again seems to have been assembled to make a pleasant concert rather than as a serious illustration of the 'comparison' idea. Loretta O'Sullivan's playing of the Vivaldi cello sonata in B flat (RV 45) is very pleasant indeed, with finely judged nuances of rubato and articulation. In the cantatas Matthew White tackles the wide-ranging vocal lines (especially in the Vivaldi) with assurance and verbal clarity, though in recitatives he is curiously reluctant to add appoggiaturas in all but the most obvious places. The thin tone of Ryan Brown's violin became something of a drawback for me in Handel's late D major violin sonata, but this is nevertheless a recommendable disc if you are attracted by the repertory covered. Alas, Appel's notes remain long on waffle but short on basic information about the music (dates,

sources, contexts), and his metaphors are still out of control ('the tip of an iceberg of fashion'). Anthony Hicks

Vivaldi Andreas Scholl cT, Australian Brandenburg Orchestral, Paul Dyer 69' 31"
Decca 466 964-2
Clarae stella RV 625, *Nisi Dominus* RV 608, *Salve Regina* RV 616, *Vestro Principi divino*; Concerti in C (RV 109) & F (RV 141)

Scholl is more convincing as a young woman than he was as a castrato (see *EMR* 51 p.25), and we hear less of the petulant-sounding mannerisms than of yore. He phrases intelligently; his tempos, often just a bit slower than is fashionable, seem just and commodious. His dynamic control is quite phenomenal when you consider how many falsettists sing forte in places where their vocal technique just won't allow a more appropriate piano. When I say he keeps the mannerisms in check, I don't mean he's inexpressive: he gives freer rein to his histrionic impulse than (for instance) Michael Chance in RV 608 and 616 (see *EMR* 50 p.24). And this must be right: why should we suppose that Vivaldi's young singers weren't alive to the almost operatic affective potential in their tutor's writing? The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra also seems to me more gracefully at ease than when I heard them last (*EMR* 53 p.18); the use of a theorbo and even an occasional guitar in the continuo group lends a certain edge which nicely approaches coarseness without going too far. The programme is well balanced: the wide spectrum of colours and affects in the solo cantatas is attractively paced by the interspersed concertos. I'm left with only one cavil, which is no criticism of Scholl or the band: it's merely to ask why, in a supposedly feminist era, a man should be singing music that was either probably or certainly written for a woman's voice. Are Larmores, Stutzmanns, Finks, and (at least vocally) even Holmes so scarce? Or do record label executives simply demand singers who can be marketed as ever so slightly freakish? Eric Van Tassel

CLASSICAL

Bortnyansky *Sacred Concertos Vol. 3* Russian State Symphonic Cappella, Valeri Polyansky Chandos CHAN 9840 66' 12"

This contains Concertos 17-23. Bortnyansky reminds me of Salamone Rossi. Both composers were trying to bring the current Italian language to an utterly different tradition. And as with most performances of Rossi, the listener's ability to judge his success is hampered by having to perceive the music through a mid-20th-century performance style. If choirs in St Petersburg really sang like this 200 years ago, they must have had an extraordinary ability to anticipate later, more romantic practices. The composer survives quite well, and the performances are convincing within their chosen manner; but I'd rather the music sounded either more Russian or more 18th-century-Italian. CB

Haydn *The Early Symphonies, Nos. 1-12* Cantilena, Adrian Shepherd 184' 07"
Chandos CHAN 6618(3) 3 CDs in box ££
(rec 1988-9)

These recordings have been re-assembled to form a 3CD set of the first twelve symphonies in Mandyczewski's ordering. Adrian Shepherd uses a smallish body of modern instruments, including a prominent harpsichord continuo, though without bringing off anything very revelatory. There is some neat solo work, especially in the Times of the Day symphonies, but too often I felt these to be routine performances: brisk allegros, somewhat leaden slow movements, and minuets that in their phrasing rather seldom catch the imagination. The recording is perfectly adequate.

Peter Branscombe

Haydn *Die Sieben Letz Worte* Ann-Christine Larsson, Martina Borst, Frieder Lang, Peter Lika SATB, Chorus Musicus, Das neue Orchester, Christoph Spering 52' 34"
Opus 111 OPS 30-284

The choral version was the fourth and final version of his Seven Last Words that Haydn composed – or rather, in this case revised after the oratorio setting by Joseph Frieber that he had heard at Passau on his second return journey from London. It is a careful revision of the set of orchestral slow movements originally commissioned by a Spanish canon in 1786, with Frieber's vocal text modified by van Swieten after sound Enlightenment models. A new wind *Introduzione* to Part II is the most original fruit of the re-working, though the voice-parts for chorus and soloists mark the most obvious change. The choral version is nowadays rarer on record than those for orchestra, piano, and especially for string quartet (opus 51); it is very welcome in this fine performance from Spering and his familiar forces, backed by a good solo quartet. In evident desire to obviate too much slow-moving gloom, Spering favours faster tempi than Haydn had in mind; the effect is faintly ridiculous only in the closing Earthquake, also endowed with sung text. An interesting, important issue.

Peter Branscombe

Krebs *Complete Organ Works* John Kitchen (Frobenius organ of Cannongate Kirk, Edinburgh) 77' 40"
Priory PRCD 734

Krebs *Complete works for organ and instrument obbligato & ClavierÜbung* Hassler Consort, Franz Raml (Gabler Organ, Weingarten) 127' 51" (2 CDs in box)
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 614 0971-2

Krebs went through something of a revival in the 1980s, when several organists recorded CDs of his superficially attractive works for solo organ or organ with a variety of solo instruments. I say 'superficially' attractive deliberately because, although Krebs was the only pupil of Bach who seems to have stayed loyal to his master's compositional style and structural form, his music is far from his sublime

spirituality. For me, his galant compositions are great in small doses, but in complete CDs their predictability does begin to grate. But the vogue today for serious recording projects is to focus on the works of one composer (hence the need to sit through an hour or more of unadulterated Krebs), played on an organ at the very least sympathetic to that of the composer – preferably the composers own instrument or one historically related to it (hence the importance of Krebs' own instrument in the Schlosskapelle at Altenbruch, near Leipzig). So what are organists in Scotland or South Germany supposed to do? Franz Raml has the distinct advantage of presiding over a fine Holzay organ in the mid-17th-century style that Krebs would have recognised – he also is close to several other magnificent organs in similar mode, including the Weingarten organ used for his CD. Against such competition, I am afraid Scotland's John Kitchen stands no chance with his (or the producer's) choice of a two year old Frobenius, with none of the tone colours, particularly at 8' pitch, that Krebs' music demands. This is a shame, because the playing is competently sure-footed and, if it is a trifle unadventurous, it at least takes Krebs seriously. The German competition has the advantage, not only over the choice of organ, but also with the inclusion of Krebs' work for obligato instruments. These really are works that deserve to be better known, representing as they do a fascinating genre in the development of instrumental solo performance. Krebs' own choice of instrument has been treated in a rather cavalier fashion, but no matter – all the pieces work with the instrument used, and the pitch and temperament issues have been neatly side-stepped. Raml's playing is musical and sensitive to the mood of the period, and his fellow musicians are in similar sympathy. So it's Germany 2, Scotland 1.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

19th CENTURY

Beethoven *Archduke & Ghost Trios* Jos van Immerseel, Vera Beths, Anner Bylsma 64' 30"
Sony SK 51353

These are perceptive interpretations of these two great piano trios, but the great strength of the recording lies in the skilful way that the performers use the particularly fine sonority of all the instruments to enhance the quality of the ensemble. The strings blend together beautifully and the use of period instruments enables their parts to be heard more easily. In general, tempi are appropriate with a nice sense of buoyancy in the Scherzo from the *Archduke* trio, but the following Andante could do with a little more spaciousness in order that the demisemiquavers do not sound rushed. The performance of the *Ghost* trio is very fine in all respects. The notes provide a brief but highly competent introduction to these works, as one would expect because they are written by Robbins Landon. There is no analysis of the music itself.

Margaret Cranmer

GLOSSA REPRISE

This is a fine series of mid-price reissues of quite recent recordings. Unlike the Virgin set listed below, these retain their original booklets.

Ecos fidelles: Flute music by Jacques Martin Hotteterre Wilbert Hazelzet fl, Konrad Jung-hänel lute, Jaap ter Linden vlc, Jacques Ogg hpscd
GCD 2K0801 76' 03" (rec 1996)
A recording with real artistic merit (EMR27)

Ars Melancholiae: Lute music by Sylvius Leopold Weiss José Miguel Moreno
GCD 2K0102 63' 58" (rec 1993)

Music by Bach's Students Wilbert Hazelzet fl, Jaap ter Linden vlc, Jacques Ogg hpscd
GCD 2K0802 59' 11" (rec 1997)
C. F. Abel *Sonata in e*; Goldberg *Sonata in C* (BWV 1037); Kimberger *Fuga in f*; *Sonata in g*; Krebs *Sonata da Camera in e*; Mützel *Sonata in D*
A superb collection (EMR33)

La Bona Notte: Música de cámara de Luigi Boccherini La Real Cámara (Emilio Moreno vln, vla, Enrico Gatti vln, Wouter Möller vlc)
GCD2K0301 59' 42" (rec 1994)

Eine Abendserenade: Harmoniemusik by Mozart Nachtmusiq24ue, Eric Hoeprich dir
GCKD 2K0601 64' 42" (rec 1996)

Las Mujeres y Cuerdas: Canciones y piezas para guitarra Marta Almajano, José Miguel Moreno
GCKD 2K0202 70' 39" (rec 1994-5)

El Último Adiós: Música en la España romántica Patrick Cohen *Érard piano*
GCKD 2K0501 70' 01" (rec 1995)
Music by Marcial del Adalid, Martín Sánchez Allú, Eduardo Ocón, Teobaldo Power & Adolfo de Quesada

ASTRÉE SAVALL EDITION

Jordi Savall may have moved on to his own label, but Astrée has plenty of worthwhile older recordings by him and his various ensembles and are reissuing them at mid-price. 20 have already appeared; the following 10 were released through Harmonia Mundi in August. The original issues, with different numbers, are now deleted.

ES9939 Tye *Laudes Deo*
ES9940 Alfonso X *Cantigas de Santa Maria*
ES9941 Mudarra *Libre tercero... 1546*
ES9942 El Canto de la Sibila II
ES9943 El Cancionero de Palacio
ES9944 Monteverdi *Madrigali Book VIII*
ES9945 Marais *Alcione, Suites*
ES9946 Demachy *Pièces de viole*
ES9947 Couperin *Les Apothéoses*
ES9948 Bach *Brandenburg Concertos* (2CDs)

DG PANORAMA

These two-disc compilations are part of a series offering portraits of 100 composers. They are hardly representative of the total oeuvre of these three 'early' composers

(no vocal music for either Bach or Handel), but the recordings are certainly worth reviving, with their sensible collections of performances which even experienced listeners like our readers will find attractive: you certainly get your moneysworth in playing time. The booklet notes are reduced to a brief essay on the composer, but for standard repertoire this is less of a handicap than with some of the more recondite discs on the Virgin budget series noted below. I'm not sure what a Victorian building and a double-decker bus has to do with Handel (the wrong label for a pun). We haven't listed all the soloists, but the line-up in the Vivaldi is impressive. Some of the Bach set is duplicated on a five-disc set of Bach Concertos (CD463 725-2), but the package here with Musica Antiqua Köln and the English Concert offers interesting scope for a 'compare and contrast' exercise: if I may anticipate a topic that may crop up next month, the English Concert performances are 'safe' choices, whereas Musica Antiqua's give a more idiosyncratic view which inspires but shouldn't be heard too often. CB

469 103-2 Bach 149' 02" (rec 1981/87)
Brandenburg Concertos Music Antiqua Köln
Vln concertos BWV 1041-2 (Standage); hpscd
concerto 1052 (Pinnock), 4-hpscd concerto 1065
English Concert, Trevor Pinnock

469 145-2 Handel 148' 24" (rec 1982-5)
op. 4/6 (Ursula Holliger hp), op. 6/5, 6, 12;
Concerto 3 a due cori; Firework & Water Music
English Concert, Trevor Pinnock

469 220-2 Vivaldi 138' 26" (rec 1982-95)
Gloria, The Four Seasons (Standage), RV 151,
439, 484, 532, 548-9, 558, 575 The English
Concert, Trevor Pinnock

VIRGIN VERITAS

This is a fine series of reissues of two CDs for the price of one. The pairs were not originally released together, and booklets, with only eight-pages to encompass front picture, running order, recording details and notes in English, French and German, leave no room for texts and translations and are a poor substitute for the original documentation. So the more recent repertoire which has less need of accompanying words is more desirable. The recordings are too old for us to have reviewed them on their first appearance. All are worth hearing, none are outmoded by more recent research or stylistic development, all are by performers who have something to say, whether or not you agree with every aspect of their interpretation. As a whole they show the acuteness of Virgin's choice of what and who to record in the period covered by these discs. If you haven't got them already, take advantage of their cheap reissue. There is one track that I heard on Virgin's 1988 sampler disc that struck me as being utterly distinctive: the Pickforth *In nomine*, which ends disc 1 of 61821. It is nice to hear in a period context, but it sounded so much more individual between two Haydn movements.

Perhaps the next round of reusing old recordings will be to make stimulating mixed period and media anthologies.

We print only the central section of the numbers:
in full they are

7243 5 xxxxx 2 x

61794 C. P. E. Bach OAE, Leonhardt (rec 1988)
Symphonies Wq182, 183/1-4 54' 17"
Cello Concertos Wq 170-2 Anner Bylsma 79' 13"

61797 Schubert Lambert Orkis *fp* (rec 1989-90)
8 *Impromptus* D899, 935 65' 11"
3 *Klavierstück* D946, 6 *Moments Musicaux* D780;
early versions of D899/1 & 946/1 76' 59"

61800 Haydn
Symphonies 26, 52, 53 La petite bande, S.
Kuijken 62' 26" (rec 1988)
Sinf. Concertante ob, bsn, vln vlc; Vln Concerts
H. Villa 1 & 4 OAE, Wallfisch 59' 01" (1990)

61803 Handel-Scarlatti *Cantatas* Gérard
Lesne, Sandrine Piau, Il Seminario Musicale
70' 03" & 65' 23" (rec 1991 & 1996)

61806 Schubert OAE, Mackerras
Symphonies 5, 8 (compl. Newbould) 74' 11"
Symphony 9 59' 35" (rec 1990, 1987)

61809 Mendelssohn *Str qtet op. 13; qtets op.*
18 & 87, *octet op. 20* Hausmusik London
123' 27" (rec 1993, 1989)

61812 Telemann 6 *Paris Quartets* (1738) Wilbert
Hazelzet, Sonnerie 118' 23" (rec 1990-93)

61815 Spanish Music of Travel and Discovery
The Waverly Consort 116' 28" (rec 1992-95)

61818 Ensemble Gilles Binchois
Le Banquet du Vœu 59' 34" (rec 1989)
Dufay *Missa Ecce ancilla* 64' 06" (rec 1992)

61821 *Armada* Fretwork, Michael Chance
Music from the courts of Philip II &
Elizabeth I 61' 38" (rec 1988)
Music from the late Tudor and early Stuart
age 59' 15" (rec 1986)

ERRATUM

The number of the JS/CPE Sonatas reviewed
on p. 31 of *EMR* 63 should read C 130021

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LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

Your comments on p.21 about 'awareness of Christian culture' are alas very true. I was astounded to find that there are undergraduates even at Oxford reading subjects such as English and History whose knowledge not only of Christian culture, which should surely be a *sine qua non*, but also of English history, and indeed European history beyond the confines of the 20th century, is all but non-existent. Such knowledge of the cultural background is indispensable in classical studies (my own discipline), and it mystifies me why educators adopt such a cavalier attitude to Western European culture – which is, after all, of considerably more day-to-day relevance.

Another of my bugbears is the insistence of editors upon introducing excessive numbers of cautionary accidentals; in my experience, they are almost as often as not quite unnecessary and hence cause rather than reduce confusion, and I spend much of my time crossing them out. If we have a set of clearly defined conventions, then why do we not stick to them? I find the problem particularly noticeable in choral music, where accidentals can appear in places where one would not think of singing anything else, simply because another part has had an inflexion a few bars before – presumably the result of editors working at the piano. I wonder whether this is a particular problem in England, where we tend to do rather more sight-reading?

Nick Wilshire

There is a logical problem in the sort of edition that has a piano accompaniment: should the notation of the voice and the piano parts agree? Practice may also vary according to the potential sophistication of the performers using the edition. In some circles, it can be helpful, if a piece with a flat signature has a section ending with a G major chord and the next section begins with a G minor or B flat major chord, to add a cautionary flat even if it is a different part from the B natural of the cadence. Cautionaries are also sometimes necessary when a work in a minor key with a flat short in the signature is transposed to a sharp key and the notation is modernised (e.g. D minor with no signature to E minor, when the two-sharp signature that a literal transposition produces looks wrong) to distinguish inflections that are the result of transposition from those that are explicitly notated and from those that are entirely editorial so in square brackets. But I agree: there are often too many accidentals. However, a good case can be made for preserving the original notation, and that can be made more user-friendly if cautionary accidentals are added to cancel previous accidentals that would be valid by modern conventions but are not valid by the rules of the period.

CB

Dear Clifford

It will probably come as no surprise to learn that I heartily endorse your editorial in *EMR* 63. I don't know much about the Bach scholarship controversy, but I certainly agree with your first paragraph and with the Japanese interviewer quoted in your last. It was the 'detective' side of early music

research and practice (it's hard to differentiate the two) that was one of the main reasons for my interest in the first place. I still feel privileged to have worked, either in the footsteps of, or alongside some of the great scholar/detective/musicians and to have been able to make the odd little contribution myself. I find it strange that this exciting side of musical research seems to be on the decline; it isn't as though there is no more detective work to be done, after all. The situation is even worse in the closely-related field of Shakespeare research and performance.

What makes me so disappointed and discouraged is the feeling that some performers are now apparently deliberately disregarding and/or discarding the store of knowledge so painstakingly accumulated by the pioneer musical detectives, at whose work it is so fashionable to scoff. Is all their work to go for nothing? Was it some kind of enormous ego trip? The general feeling today seems to be 'Who cares?'

One little note of caution, however: on page 34 you appear to be condoning the very practice we both deplore, simply because it happens to chime with your own taste in the matter of Rossini. Whole operas without words? Come on! What would you have said if they'd done it to Monteverdi?

Ian Harwood

My excuse: some music can be effectively used (without insulting it) as background music, some can't; while I'm no enthusiast for Rossini, I also enjoy the wind versions of Mozart operas – where the words do matter, but where there is, as it were, enough in the music for it to survive without. In fact, Monteverdi's music circulated in 17th-century England without words, odd though it may seem to us (see p 2). I'm also inconsistent in enjoying the concerto versions Geminiani made of Corelli's op. 5 (see p. 23). Arrangement in itself is part of the historical pattern, but if that 'authentic' tradition is continued, it needs to be done with a little more rigour than is sometimes the case.

CB

Dear Clifford,

Jeff Gill provided *EMR* 63 with an excellent review of the Praetorius course at Beauchamp House (in which you and I also participated). He asks 'Does it matter when music written in an age of faith is sung and played by people who do not share the beliefs underlying the texts?' And, if an unbeliever's earlier Christian upbringing helps him to respond to the music, is this cheating?

I tried to tease out this problem in *Singing the Meaning* (1996) in the chapter on 'Our integrity as singers', esp. pp. 130-3. My feeling is that in a concert performance the singing will sound rather different if the performers are themselves Lutherans/Catholics. Comparing a good Continental choir and one of our expert groups often confirms this. To sound convincing, one must feel the importance of the text and have at least some general sympathy with it: otherwise one shouldn't be singing. Your footnote draws a

parallel with opera singers (and one could add Lieder singers with texts expressing Germanic emotion). And one may take to heart Bruno Turner's crack in his Preface to my book (p. xi): 'Honesty and integrity are what you need, and if you can fake *them*, you've got it made'.

But if we are singing liturgically we are not just performing – we are affirming, especially in a Credo. I have suggested (p.135) that before we agree to sing (or indeed are asked to sing) we should have a strong actual sympathy with what we are affirming, even if we fall short of actual adherence to the creed in question. We should follow the promptings of our moral, artistic and scholarly consciences – an approach which I recognise as unfashionable.

But people are troubled by these affirmations, if only when Praetorius's lyric-writer [Martin Luther] shockingly prays against Papists and Turks. And I wrote about the troubling anti-semitism in the Passion narratives on pp. 111-3 and 130 (where I disagreed with Taruskin's solution of changing the words).

Harold Copeman

Singing the Meaning is published by Harold Copeman at 22 Tawney Street, Oxford OX4 1NJ (01865-243830) £13 including post or \$25. e-mail: hcopeman@oxfordox.freemove.co.uk

I was slightly flippant about the choir from Galilee Kibbutzim when writing about my experiences of Messiah in Israel (*EMR* 57, pp. 10-11), but was as impressed by their presentation of the text as by the string-players' awareness of it – though Jennens's skill in presenting the Christian message mostly in words from the Old Testament may have helped. I don't know if he is using the same singers, but Philip Thorby has performed the Biber Requiem in F minor there recently, and the same or related forces are planning a St John Passion. I agree that singers need to understand the words, but suspect that the truth lies in Bruno's crack. Belief doesn't necessarily help the vocal chords or lead to musical understanding. Perhaps it is Musica itself that is the donum Dei, not the private beliefs of the singers. CB

Dear Clifford,

In the February *EMR* you asked how many readers remembered Charles Cudworth. Were it not for him I might not be reading it today. He was largely responsible for my interest in early music. I first encountered him in 1967 when I started work as secretary to John Lade in the BBC's Gramophone Programmes Department. John Lade was the producer/presenter of the Saturday morning Record Review on Radio 3, and Charles was our regular reviewer for what we called 'pre-classical' music, lumping together everything from the troubadours to J. C. Bach. I well remember his enthusiasm for Telemann as well as for English music of the 18th century. He introduced us to two Cambridge students, David Munrow and Christopher Hogwood, who both became successful presenters of record programmes.

The last time I saw Charles was in 1976, not long before his death. I was taking a music course with the Open University and he was guest speaker at the summer school in Cardiff. His subject was 'Gainsborough and his musical

friends'. We were warned before the lecture that he was in poor health – even that it might have to be cancelled. However, he came all the way from Cambridge and treated us to a fascinating evening. When the caretaker came to lock up the lecture theatre, Chares was still holding forth – so he proposed adjourning to the bar, where he continued until the small hours.

Madeline Seviour

'Pre-classical' wasn't a term confined to the BBC's Gramophone Department: the Music Department (music then excluded records) had an editor of pre-classical music, the immensely civilised and knowledgeable (if somewhat managerially innocent) Basil Lam. CB

I was pleased to see that Boydell and Brewer, whose musical output we have often reviewed, had commissioned a new piece of music for performance in a Suffolk church. One of their main fields of activity is in Anglo-Saxon studies, and Sally Beamish has set a modern translation of the atmospheric poem *The Seafarer*. If I hadn't been rushing to get *EMR* to the printer, I'd have loved to have heard it (and seen it, since the performance included projection of illustrations by Jila Peacock).

I was disappointed to hear that New Grove has abandoned the idea of producing it on CD-ROM. I don't know how other readers feel, but I find this disappointing: a bird in hand (even if it is dependent on a working computer) is better than several on the end of a phone line.

We recently spent three days in Ireland (if this issue is late, blame that) and were delighted to pay a surprise visit to John Clark, who is No. 1 on our list of subscribers. He is a music therapist at the Camphill Community in Ballytobin, near Kilkenny (where we missed seeing another subscriber, the harpsichordist Malcolm Proud). He proudly showed us the hall the community had built over the last few years, with the intention that it be suited for concerts (which are held weekly) as well as other purposes. It looked very impressive, and seemed (from a few claps and John's report) to have a fine acoustic. It is in very quiet surroundings, with few passing aircraft. So anyone looking for a quiet, peaceful place for a recording might like to investigate – and I'm sure the community would provide a responsive audience as a warm-up.

Last month we circulated to subscribers the catalogue of Concerto Editions. On p. 28 we print a reduced-size version of a motet by Morales listed in that catalogue. Full-size copies are available (\$2.00) from Maxwell Sobel, Concerto Editions, 8730 Lafayette Road, Indianapolis IN 46278-1037, USA.

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Cristobal de Morales
c.1500-1553

Psalms 116:3 "The groans of death surrounded me; the sorrows of hell surrounded me."

10

me - ge - mi - tus mor -

runt - ge - mi - tus mor -

gc - mi - tus mor -

runt - me ge - mi - tus mor -

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Circumdedderunt me

[illegible]

in the source.

30

cir - cum - de - - de - runt _____ me.

_____ me

cir - cum - de - de - runt _____ me.

runt _____ me - - de - runt _____ me.

ni cir - cum - de - - de - runt _____ me.

cir - cum - de - de - - - - - runt me.

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