

# Early Music REVIEW

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|    |   |                      |
|----|---|----------------------|
| 2  | Books & Music                                     | CB                   |
| 8  | Pandolfi and the Critics                          |                      |
|    |   | Andrew Manze         |
| 10 | London Concerts                                   |                      |
|    |   | Andrew Benson-Wilson |
| 14 | Handel Angels, ever bright<br>and fair (Theodora) |                      |
| 15 | CD Reviews  |                      |
| 27 | Letters   |                      |

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I am writing this in the week of the Gramophone Awards. Those involved in the classical recording industry have had a concentrated period of social and promotional activities. I'm not much of an attender at such events, though unusually will have visited London four times in a fortnight. Seeing the English National Opera's *Poppea* is still to come. One friend phoned to say how much she liked its scantily-clad men; two older friends of my mother also enjoyed it, but didn't report that feature of the production.

A lunch to promote the link between the Academy of Ancient Music and St John's, Smith Square, was enjoyable. Despite their large discography, it has been quite difficult to hear the AAM live in the UK, so it is good news that they are to appear regularly at St John's. It is also intriguing that they have established a link with Holyhead: perhaps they should collaborate with a ferry company and a local hotel so that travellers to and from Ireland could receive musical sustenance and stay overnight instead of rushing through; they could also climb Holyhead Mountain or see the prehistoric remains.

Next came the 20th anniversary of the UK office of Harmonia Mundi. It is one of the most fruitful sources of discs for us to review and there is no sign of decline in output. They were also celebrating the success of one of the AAM's directors, Andrew Manze, and Richard Egarr in the *Gramophone* awards; rather than being interviewed Andrew has written us an article.

Finally, the 20th anniversary of Hyperion. When Ted Perry celebrates, he does so in style, and it was good to see him enjoying the company of so many colleagues and friends in the magnificent Porter Tun room in the old Whitbread brewery in the Barbican. (Has anyone used it for a concert?) If I wanted to study business methods, I'd go to Hyperion, not the big firms. Ted might not be as rich as the bosses of the latter, but is probably happier with his hands-on approach, and his customers certainly are. Hyperion has the ability they lack of generating brand loyalty based on the quality of its product, not on the style and quantity of its advertising. Perhaps when he started, Ted muttered as a prayer the words of the hymn 'Breath on me, breathe of God': his Hildegard hunch was a typical example of his ability to achieve enormous artistic and commercial success from an instinctive response to an idea. As usual, Hyperion did well in the *Gramophone* awards; who would have expected such success for the 7-disc set of the complete keyboard works of Byrd, a project rejected by three other companies before Ted rescued it. It is marvellous that Byrd, as well as Davitt Moroney, has received such recognition.

CB

## BOOKS &amp; MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

## UTRECHT CAROLS

*Twenty Medieval Christmas Carols from Utrecht* transcribed and edited by Joan Malcolm. English translations by Harold Copeman. The author, 1999. xiii + 44pp. ISBN 0 646 38579 8 [from RMB 444 Nowra Road, Moss Vale, NSW 2577, Australia.]

This little book contains mostly two-voice carols from Berlin Staatsbibliothek germ. 8 190, a volume probably compiled around 1500 but in a retrospective style. Some titles are familiar, but not always exactly as we know them. *In dulci jubilo*, for instance, starts with the tune in the upper part, continues with it in the tenor, and then goes its own way with a refrain. *In natali Domino* has the tune in the upper part all the way through, except for an odd quirk in bar 8. The edition is offered as a practical one. A single verse is underlaid, with the whole of each poem printed opposite in one column with a singing translation along side. Most texts are in Latin, but a few have phrases in Middle Low German. The music isn't very sophisticated, but it is attractive and adaptable to various ensembles. I would have welcomed some bibliographical assistance: there must somewhere be a list of textual and musical concordances or an accessible study of the source to which the user could be referred.

## SUNDRIE BYRD

William Byrd *Songs of sundrie natures, some of gravitie, and others of myrth, fit for all companies and voyces...* Performers' Facsimiles (163), [2000]. 6 partbooks, £64.00

Facsimile publication of English music has been remarkably slow, apart from lute songs and lute solos, whereas some of Byrd's publications have had three different modern editions. You don't have to be exceptionally skilful to read a line of a facsimile, even if the clefs are unfamiliar: indeed, when I expressed surprise that a London church choir regularly uses our *Gradualia*, I was told that some singers could read the original notation, whereas those singers who could barely read music and followed their neighbours might as well not read the facsimile as not read the modern notation as the former was cheaper. This facsimile is probably a bit cheaper than the Byrd Edition volume will be, but it has the advantage that, being in parts, only one set is needed for performance. One will, of course, need the Byrd Edition for its editorial skills and commentary, and it can save a lot of time if there is a score at hand when singing or playing: apart from rescuing irreparable collapses, it makes it easier to see at a glance the best part for a voice if a consort-song style of performance is adopted. There are a fair number of

people around who have attended singing & playing from facsimile courses, and music degree courses should be showing editors how the early sources work in practice. This is a fine example in that it calls for a wider variety of forces than the madrigal book: everything can be sung with one-to-a-part voices, but there are anthems which may have been intended for choirs and consort songs as well as part-songs. The repertoire ranges from three to six parts. The music is, of course, first-rate even if the verse is sometimes of lesser quality.

## DOWLAND FOR FOUR VOICES

John Dowland *Ayres for four voices* newly edited by David Greer (Musica Britannica vi) Stainer & Bell, 2000. xxxv + 215pp, £78.00. ISBN 0 85249 858 6

It is difficult for a modern edition to represent all the possibilities inherent in the layout Dowland adopted for his *First Booke of Songes or Ayres* in 1597 and which was followed by the other lute-song publications. The solo voice and lute part are printed in score on the left-hand page and three other parts facing up, right and down on the right page. The lute was, domestically, a ladies' instrument (like the harpsichord and piano later), so the soprano would have played the lute and sung the top part, sitting alongside one man who sang or played the part facing the bottom of the opposite page. The other two singers or players sat opposite and on one side round the table. Only two singers were able to read verses subsequent to the first, which were printed beneath the soprano part: in view of the frequent difficulties of underlay, perhaps they didn't even try. Apart from that, the format, with each piece on a single opening, was practical and economic on paper.

One reason for replacing the MB edition of 1953 was the desire to include the lute parts, both in tablature and transcription. The former edition also reduced note values, while the new one, in accordance with the policy of the edition of the part-songs with lute by other composers of the period (MB 53 & 54), retains the original and also keeps to the mostly long bars of the sources – giving generally a signature of 4/2, which looks odd in a lute part, since anyone who can read tablature can cope with the original ♭ signature – and for reasons given below, this is hardly a practical edition for use by the sort of singers who will ask 'Why are there four minims in this bar when the signature says two?' (I make this point with every MB edition!) It is odd, though, that having decided to keep the barring, the editor chooses to modernise the text. I wouldn't go as far as recommending the preservation of U and V or the long S (*Vnquiet thoghts your ciuill flughter flint*), and when the parts vary in spelling I am happy with the choice of the more

normal modern form (giving *Unquiet thoughts your civil slaughter* stint for the opening song). There is no need for excess pedantry: the annotations in Doughtie's 1970 edition of the texts is thorough enough for anyone, and facsimiles are readily available. But one expects a scholarly edition, especially of music sometimes sung in old pronunciation, not to modernise unnecessarily.

The ready availability of facsimiles (from Scolar Press/Brian Jordan and Performers' Facsimiles) must also affect editorial practice. Who is this edition intended for? Not the performer, since the layout doesn't work. One expects a modern editor either to underlay the verses (if only to work out how they fit), or at least make sure that they are on the same opening as the music to which they are sung. The edition fails right from Song 1. Underlaying three verses under one set of staves is about the maximum possible (that is the rule I've adopted for the *Oxford Choral Classics* volume that will contain some of this repertoire). Few songs have more verses, and they tend to be short ones which can be printed on one opening. The chief problems are songs with separate words for the repeats (e.g. *Can she excuse*); that can often be solved by printing the music again for the repeats. Anyone using this volume for performance is going to do a lot of writing-in of words. A practical edition for singers, though, doesn't really need a lute part (either in tablature or transcription). Since the lutenist is catered for by facsimiles or the *English Lute Songs* series, perhaps all that was needed was a scoring of the four voice parts plus a critical commentary. The integrity of the songbooks is already broken by the omission of the songs just with a solo voice or solo and bass, so perhaps the vertical completeness could have been abandoned as well as the horizontal. It is a pity that each song doesn't have the original book and number in the heading, since songs are often identified by the book from which they come.

It is, however, nice to have this edition on the shelf. It is clear to read, and has a careful critical commentary. I happened to be proofreading my Oxford UP edition of *Weep you no more, sad fountains* when this arrived, so have used that as a point of comparison. I like the long bars, though for a non-specialist market we have chosen short ones. I have also made different decisions about the key signature. The original has two flats in the bass, one flat for the other parts for a piece in G minor. The difficulty with modernising to two flats (as in MB) is how to indicate the status of the Es in the score rather than just listing them in the commentary. MB doesn't try. There are no doubts anywhere, but by normal editorial principles one would expect the E in the top part in bar 3 to be shown as an editorial flat and the Es in the bass at the end of the same bar to have square brackets round the natural. The chief editorial problem is how to deal with the different editions of Book I. David Greer has decided that the 1609 revisions were not made by Dowland, so (unlike the 1953 MB edition) follows the 1597 first edition. The differences between the two are listed separately from the critical commentary, a sensible decision enabling easy comparison to be made.

Despite my disappointment at some features of the edition, this is certainly an improvement on the 1953 volume that it replaces and it is particularly good to have proper editions of pieces that don't fit the standard format like the dialogues with instruments *Humour say* and *Come when I call*. But the book should end with *Up merry mates* and that marvellous wedding song *Welcome black night* – you need the English Lute-Songs edition for them though they both included choruses.

#### SONGS WITH THEORBO

*Songs with Theorbo (ca. 1650-1663): Oxford, Bodleian Library, Broxbourne 84.9; London Lambeth Palace Library, 1041* Edited by Gordon J. Callon (Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, 105). A-R Editions, 2000. xxxvi [+ 12 facs] + 108pp, \$55.00. ISBN 0 89579 461 6

The Lambeth Palace MS, inscribed *The Lady Ann Blount* on its first page, is quite well known, and is available in facsimile in vol. 11 of Garland's *English Song 1600-1675*. The Oxford MS is related to it but has only been in the Bodleian since 1970 and is less well known. The repertoire is similar, and its scribe, Charles Colman, is one of the copyists of the Lambeth Palace MS. So editing the two complementary sources together in one volume is sensible. MS 84.9 has 15 songs (four being in Italian, one in French), along with a single statement of *La Folia* for theorbo; 1041 has 29 songs (four in Italian, six in French). It is a pity that the edition of the latter is not complete in that it omits the educational material for theorbo at the end.

A major reason for editing these two sources is the presence of embellished vocal parts. Sometimes a second verse is written out in full with greater elaboration than the first, and sometimes there are separate versions added to text pages. The latter are printed here in the commentary: a mistake, since they need to be visible on the page with the whole song. An extraordinary quirk in the notation of the edition is the omission of original slurs. There are many places where, in their absence, one wonders if the odd-looking underlay is really unambiguous in the source, and the use of modern metrical rather than syllabic beaming encourages even more doubt. The slurs in the MSS justify the oddities, but should be visible. This worrying editorial practice is mentioned briefly on p. 82: 'For consistency, original slurs are omitted'. Consistency with what? Why? As with the Dowland reviewed above, it is unnecessary to print big, modern time signatures.

Pitch perhaps needed more discussion. Some songs are transcribed as for a theorbo in G, some in A, with the vocal notation changed to match. Do we assume that players always had (and will have now) two theorbos at hand? Did singers use a different pitch with theorbo than with keyboard? I think that if I had produced the edition, I would have kept to the notated pitch of the voice part and let the tablature come out at whatever pitch the singer and accompanist wished.

There is a fine introduction setting the music into the context of 17th-century English song. The edition is clearly printed with both tablature and realisation, with due regard for sensible page-turns. The poems are all printed separately in the introduction, with translations of foreign ones. The music is mostly secular, but there are three psalm tunes with modest embellishment. A useful edition, which considerably increases the number of mid-century songs available in modern editions.

#### PURCELL MANUSCRIPTS

Robert Shay and Robert Thompson *Purcell Manuscripts: The Principal Musical Sources*. Cambridge UP, 2000. xxii + 353pp, £55.00. ISBN 0 521 58094 3

Amazing: after last month's Purcell opera texts, now we have the first comprehensive study of his manuscripts. It shows how undervalued our musical past is that the 1695 celebrations did not include proper publication of the major autographs: for that matter, with a bit of imagination and support from some sponsor prepared to recognise the greatest English (British is apparently now a racist term) composers between Byrd and Elgar, we could have had them reproduced on a CD tucked inside the cover of the book. In fact, one could consider this book as a guide to a not-yet-available collection of sources.

I suspect that the number of people who will read this through could be counted on the fingers and toes of the authors. Fortunately, I know some of the MSS and was enthralled. The book is built round discussions of the main autograph volumes, with ancillary sources dealt with in relationship with them. This enables a two-way exchange of information between them, which helps the dating of both. As one reads, one gets the impression that Purcell was far more precocious than used to be thought. The youthful wonders of the 1680 viol Fantazias now have a considerable preceding output, mostly of church music, behind them.

It is an accident of the survival of the autographs that Purcell's anthems loom so large here. The area in which I have done more editorial work, the theatrical music, is much less in evidence. It also shows a weakness of the book: by concentrating on manuscripts, the picture of that facet of Purcell's output is incomplete, since there is no full discussion of two major printed sources. The score of *Dioclesian* emanated directly from the composer, and the 1697 *Ayres for the Theatre* is of considerable importance – its authority needs determining by the sort of penetrating discussion which the autographs receive. Every time anyone examines the Royal Academy's *Fairy Queen* MS, less seems to be assigned to Purcell's hand!

Anyone editing Purcell in future will need to study this volume carefully. I will need to check the introduction of every work I have edited. In our edition for *King Arthur*, for instance, we (not a royal 'we', but to include co-editor Peter Holman) assumed that the copyist of Fitzwilliam 119 was

William Isaack, who died in 1702, whereas it is now ascribed to 'London F', who seems (though the evidence quoted might not be conclusive) to have been still working in 1706. What the authors do not say is that the version of *King Arthur* written there excludes all the music included in the 1697 *Ayres*, surely a feature of interest for the transmission and relationship of sources that would have been mentioned in the earlier, church-music section of the book. Apart from helping editors, the book throws light on the relationship between Purcell and his contemporaries, and the authors are to be congratulated on their indefatigable and intelligent study of so many manuscripts. [see also p. 28]

#### BACH CANTATAS

Eric Chafe *Analyzing Bach Cantatas*. New York, Oxford UP, 2000. xvii + 286pp, £40.00. ISBN 0-19-512099-X

Eric Chafe's aim is to examine the ways in which traditional hermeneutics were influential in both the text and designs of J. S. Bach's cantatas; to provide a perspective on their relationship to the liturgical year; to reflect on the bearing of modal chorales on both chorale and non-chorale cantatas, and examine the role tonal allegory plays in these issues. He believes that one of the most important steps towards understanding Bach's music is to consider the issue of 18th-century religious experience and the way the composer related his music to the Lutheran metaphysical tradition. This theological aspect of Bach's music, however, presents a problem for the contemporary listener unfamiliar with 18th-century Lutheran tenets. Chafe's objective, therefore, is to familiarise the reader wishing to analyse Bach's cantatas with those aspects he believes are fundamental to that process, one he sees involving 'the interaction of musical and extramural qualities'.

First, he establishes the musical and religious contexts of the cantatas, their relationship to Lutheran hermeneutics, and the perceptions that governed the listening experience. These contexts Chafe identifies are those principles governing the Lutheran interpretation of the scriptures; the framework of the liturgical year within which the cantatas were created, and the fashion in which music became involved in the interpretation of the scriptures based on Luther's view that 'music was next to theology', and that therefore music's ability to enlighten the spirit could make it a component in interpreting the scriptures.

To illustrate how Lutheran hermeneutics worked Chafe takes the cantata *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis*, BWV 21 (1714), in which the link between scriptural text and the faith of the believer are taken up by emphasising 'parallels and points of transformation' of Part I (in c minor), and Part II (in C major). Chafe then explains how this highlights the central issue of the manner in which Bach's tonal structures relate to the theological content of the cantatas, and which circa 1711 saw the appearance of the circle of keys, the tonal model which displaced the earlier modal-hexachordal system. He concludes that an awareness of the way in

which Cantata 21 mirrors this context is the means of appreciating Bach's 'tonal hermeneutics' as a whole.

Chafe then turns to historical music theory and the fashion in which Bach worked with modal melodies, specifically those with unusual events such as closing with a shift of mode, and the ensuing effect on such melodies on multi-movement cantata designs. He also examines modal chorale harmonisation in the context of the theories of Werckmeister, who pre-dates Bach, as well as the composer's own pupil, Kirnberger. It is through Bach's unique understanding of the enriching value of the modes that Chafe suggests the ability of music to pose questions normally raised by text was expanded and enhanced.

Taking the examples of BWV 121, *Christum wir sollen loben schon*, and BWV 9, *Es ist das Heil uns kommen hier*, Chafe illustrates the broad range and depth of expression in the meditative process and the parallels associated with the principles applied to the interpretation of the scriptures. These, he believes, appear to furnish the links of the contemporary believers' faith and the fundamentals of the scriptures mirroring Luther's principal hermeneutic principle.

Chafe extends his discussion further, and in considerable depth, examining BWV 77, *Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben* (1723) in the context of a number of Lutheran themes that include the Law versus the Gospel, the love of God and of one's neighbour, human imperfection and the hope of eternity. The cantata incorporates two chorales, at the beginning and the end, with the first traceable to the archaic melody associated with Luther's chorale paraphrase of the Ten Commandments.

In summary and paraphrasing Chafe's own words, he suggests that allegory reflects the spiritual aspects of life, and is as much a way of thought in music as in the arts and religion, and as a consequence is a considerably deeper fundamental imperative underlying the composition of music than is usually conceded.

Analysing Bach Cantatas must be mandatory reading for anyone wishing to achieve an understanding of the importance of Lutheran theology and hermeneutics in Bach's cantatas, be they student, scholar or simply the listener seeking a better understanding of these unique works. *Charles Hoste*

#### MORE BACH SUITES

Johann Sebastian Bach *Sechs Suiten für Violoncello solo...* BWV 1007-012... edited by Kirsten Beißwenger... with an Introduction by Jaap ter Linden. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8714), 2000. 88pp + 20pp facsimile, DM68.00.

Had the Bärenreiter edition not anticipated this, I would have received it with complete enthusiasm: well-printed and quite cheap (about £20), with a good musical text backed by a smallish (two pages on one) facsimile of the Anna Magdalena Bach manuscript. The editor treats this as

his major source, probably sensibly, though his singling that out for presentation in facsimile perhaps gives it greater weight than it can bear: the examples of Anna Magdalena's mis-copyings of slurs in the violin solos given in the Bärenreiter introduction are a warning not to expect too much accuracy in this area. The Breitkopf critical commentary is more extensive, making up a bit for the way Bärenreiter shows variants in its main text. The latter is clearly essential for serious study; but I can imagine cellists preferring to play from the Breitkopf text, partly because it is free from the distraction of variants on the stave, partly because the more compact layout reduces page-turns. All editorial matter is in German and English.

#### HEINICHEN MASS

Johann David Heinichen *Mass in D Major* [Siebel 10]. Concerto Editions (CE00Hei4), 2000. 191pp, £25.00 (Score & parts \$75.00)

This is a largish piece, requiring pairs of horns, trumpets (with timps), flutes, oboes, bassoons and strings with four voices – presumably solo and chorus, but one needs specific evidence from the sources to be sure: *solo/tutti* markings are not conclusive. Not enough information is given to tell whether original performance material survives. As the editor, Maxwell Sobel, points out, there is some vacillation between styles in the piece, though probably not enough to

### JAN DISMAS ZELENKA

#### The Six Trio Sonatas for 2 Oboes, Bassoon and Basso continuo

Written in 1721-2 this set of Trio Sonatas is certainly among the most striking and unusual, displaying exhilarating virtuosity. This new critical edition makes use of recent discoveries, analysing all sources to create a performing version that meets modern scholarly standards. Each Sonata contains a preface and critical commentary, and is published as full score and separate parts.



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imply division of compositorial labour. Trumpets and drums are delayed until the Gloria, replacing the horns of the Kyrie. I'm not sure if it is the sort of piece to get a choral society to rehearse for three months, but it seems worth performing. Perhaps we could celebrate the end of the Bach anniversary year by performing his music alongside that of his contemporaries.

#### BEL CANTO

James Stark *Bel Canto: A History of Vocal Pedagogy*. University of Toronto Press, 1999. xxv 325pp, £40.00. ISBN 0 8020 4703 3

I'm afraid that I am suspicious of the two words *Bel Canto*. They are so often used to justify prejudices about Italian singing (which has not been as good as it used to be for the last three centuries), and don't seem to me to serve very much purpose if people don't agree what they mean. At least this book is based on some scientific basis, linking the term to the sort of voice that was clinically investigated by Manuel Garcia II. But so what? Instead of offering modern scientific study of singers using a variety of different styles (and it seems that few if any top-rate singers have been studied) and then focusing on those who sing Italian opera in a suitable manner, the author hypothesises about what singing was like long before there is any scientific evidence. He makes matters worse by believing the propaganda put out by Caccini and his contemporaries, quoting their writings rather than looking at actual 17th-century music. So he doesn't realise that the Florentine revolution petered out quite quickly and barely relates to early commercial opera. I doubt if his *bel canto* style is much help in singing the word-based music of Monteverdi: how many words does one usually hear in 'Possente spirto' and how untypical that is in the rest of his music when well sung! The relation of language is crucial, but there is no attempt to describe how singing in German, French or English is different from singing in Italian. It is a waste that someone who evidently has with the appropriate scientific knowledge doesn't try to define a style for which he is so obviously enthusiastic by comparison with other styles. He also hasn't listened to any decent early-music singing: I've heard some pretty bad performances of 17th-century Italian music, but they rarely sound with a 'deadly mechanical precision' (p. 162) – though I suspect that the author would condemn thus performances that I would find flexible! It depends what you expect. There are interesting things here, such as the chapter on Vocal Tremulousness, though the author finishes by calling on intuition and good musical sense, about which there is, of course, utter disagreement! His Mozart quote on p. 133 is revealing, but even that depends on the recognition of an undefinable 'proper limit'. There is no common judgment of what is musical now in the way there was even half a century ago. Read this as a study on the Garcia tradition; but be sceptical about back-interpretation on the 250 years before: there is a lot more research needed, both scientific and musical, before a reliable book on the various singing styles of European art music can be written.

#### MOZART in C MINOR

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart *Fantasy and Sonata in C Minor K 475/457 with the earlier versions of the Adagio according to the autograph*. Edited by Ulrich Leisinger... Neuauflage. Wiener Urtext (UT 50228), 2000. vii + 42pp, £6.95.

It is not clear whether 'Neuauflage' means that there is a previous version of this one, or whether it replaces an early unrelated Wiener Ausgabe edition. The autographs of the two works (independently written but bound together in the early 19th century) had been lost to scholarly view since the death of their owner, William Howard Doane, in 1915. (Doane is remembered as the amateur composer of the tunes for such hymns as 'Tell me the old, old story', 'To God be the glory, great things he hath done' and 'Rescue the perishing'.) On 31 July 1990 they were found in an envelope marked 'Sacred music' at the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. They were sold at Sotheby's on 21 November that year for £880,000 and are now in Salzburg. (There is an account of the discovery and a study of the MSS by Eugene K. Wolf in *The Journal of Musicology* X/1. It concludes by noting the College's intention of devoting its windfall to sacred music.) Any serious student of the work(s) needs an edition that takes account of this discovery. Apart from the superfluous fingering,\* this one looks excellent. It contains thorough, bilingual editorial documentation along with some information on historical performance practice. The *Andante* of the sonata is printed twice, the main text being from the first edition, an appendix following the autograph, which has substantial variants within itself. I haven't followed recent Mozart editions enough to check whether there are rivals that also take account of the new information; but any Mozart player needs either this or one that is comparable to supplement the older complete editions of the sonatas.

\* I was amused to hear from Davitt Moroney that when piano teachers complain at the lack of fingering in his edition of the new Purcell MS, they are sent a copy of my review.

#### THE EARLY HORN

John Humphries *The Early Horn: A Practical Guide*. Cambridge UP, 2000. ix + 138pp. hb £32.50 ISBN 0 521 63210 2; pb £11.95 ISBN 0 521 63559 4

This is comparable to Colin Lawson's excellent guide to the early clarinet (see *EMR* 61, p. 7). There is a much smaller body of historical and theoretical material for the horn than the clarinet, but the parameters of what is possible are far more restricted by the nature of the instrument, and much of the advice to players is taken from instructions for other instruments. This isn't always helpful, as in the example of 'notes inégales' (p. 79), where the example from *Giulio Cesare* mixes adjacent short notes (likely candidates for inégalité) with repeated notes and leaps (which are not): a less ambiguous French example would have been better. There is a concise sketch of the history of the instrument, though perhaps a little more might have been said about the relationship between early 'art-music' horns and the

hunt, real as well as symbolic. Another chapter deals with technique. As a non-player, I was most interested in the discussion on particular pieces, especially the Brahms trio, the last important work for the hand horn. There are a few comments in earlier sections about particular orchestral passages, but I would have welcomed a little more on that topic, in part to counter the German bias in the choice of solo works. This is only an introductory book; it is good as far as it goes, but most information of importance to players still seems to be transmitted orally.

#### RUSSIAN COURT CHOIR

Carolyn C. Dunlop *The Russian Court Chapel Choir 1796-1917*. Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000. x + 198 pp, £28.00 ISBN 90 5755 026 1

*Galuppi to Vorotnikov: Music of the Russian Court Chapel Choir I* edited by Carolyn C. Dunlop. Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000. x + 163pp, £28.00, ISBN 90 5755 042 3

*Music of the Russian Court Chapel Choir II* edited by Carolyn C. Dunlop. Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000. xii + 169pp, £28.00, ISBN 90 5755 075 X

This repertoire is a bit late for us, but I found both the book and the two anthologies revealing and interesting, and recordings of some of the music covered here have been mentioned in our pages, such as the Bortnyansky I reviewed

last month. It seems that I was wrong to want the sound to be either more Russian or more English, since even apart from his ten years in Italy, the chapel choir was thoroughly Italianate anyway. The list of works publicly performed at concerts in the first half of the 19th century is impressive, with *The Creation* in 1802, *The Seasons* in 1803, Mozart's *Requiem* in 1805, *Messiah* in 1806 and the first complete performance anywhere of Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* in 1824. Carolyn Dunlop (whose location in North Britain is revealed by several 'outwith's) traces the famous choir from Bortnyansky's period in charge to the 1917 revolution. The institutional information is clearly presented, but there could have been more integration between the historical volume and the two volumes of anthology. These have 42 pieces in modern clefs with the Russian text in western and Cyrillic script. A non-singing translation is printed for each piece, along with details of the sources. There is no critical commentary, so one wonders whether Tchaikovsky's 1881 Collected Works of Bortnyansky really is musicologically sound enough to be the basis of a modern edition. Not all the composers are obscure: there is music by Glinka, Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov and Arensky as well as more obscure figures. It is mostly fairly simple, and the sub-bass As are doubled the octave above, so readers with church choirs might be tempted by them. There are lists of works of the main composers, though I suspect that getting hold of copies of some of them might be quite difficult.

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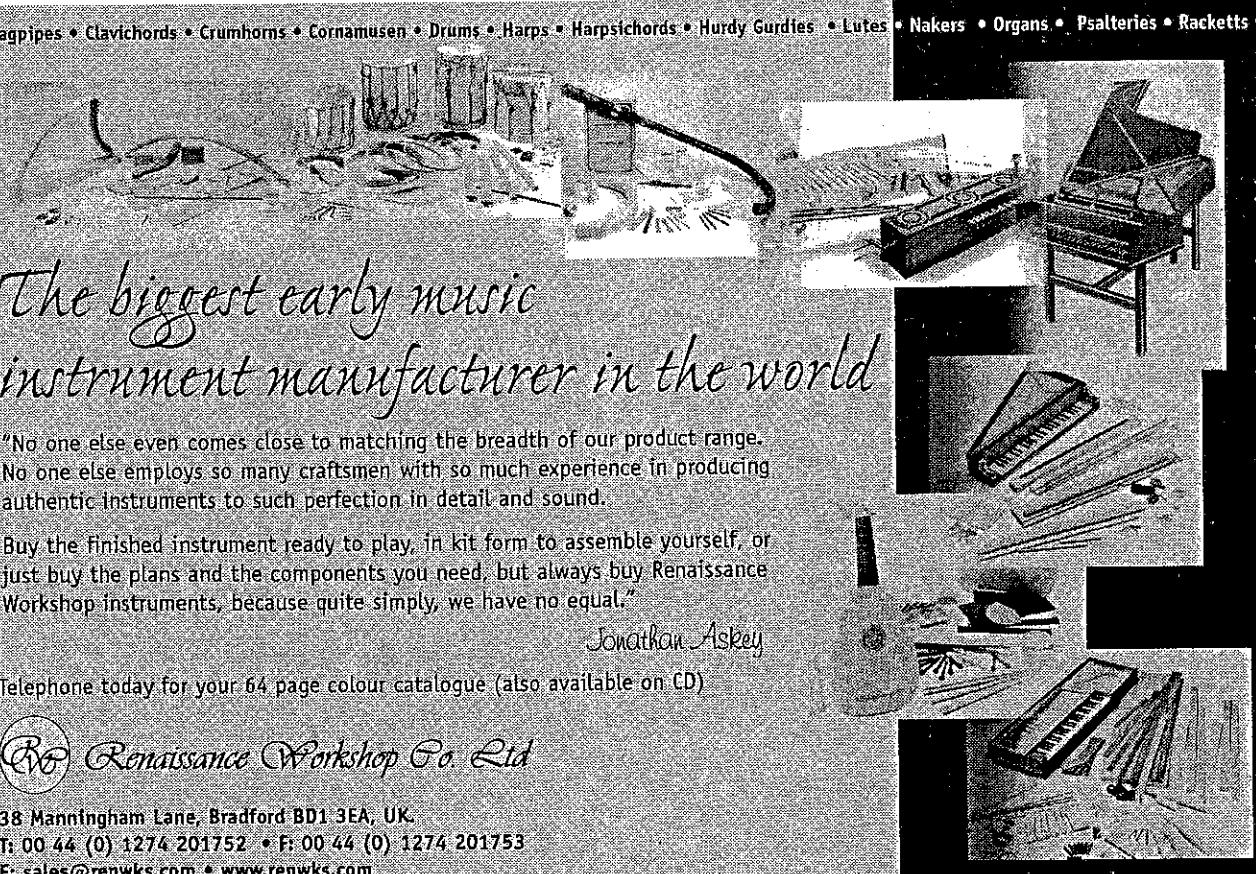
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## PANDOLFI AND THE CRITICS

Andrew Manze

This piece is not so much to express the author's opinions as to invite the reader's. These pages are the perfect place to ask what reviews of early music recordings are actually reviewing: musicianship or scholarship? performance or performance practice?

To illustrate some aspects of this question, I offer as a case study a recent CD I made with my harpsichordist colleague Richard Egarr of all the solo violin sonatas by the little-known Italian composer, Giovanni Antonio Pandolfi, issued in 1999 by Harmonia Mundi (HMU907241). This recording is topical because it received a Gramophone Award in October, although for the purposes of this debate such an award represents no more than an extremely good review from the Gramophone magazine. However welcome and thrilling the award is, it does not signal any objective value but a subjective choice by the magazine's writers. What is more important is that the Pandolfi recording has received many and varied reviews from the whole spectrum of critical writing, from a couple of sentences in a national newspaper to lengthy analyses in the specialised early music press.

First, though, a little about Pandolfi – hardly a household name! Any account necessarily includes many a 'maybe'. Whether he was born in Perugia, in Umbria, between 1620 and 1634, and died in Sicily after 1669, are intelligent guesses but no more than guesses. He was definitely living and working as a violinist at the Hapsburg Kapelle at Innsbruck in 1660, amongst many other Italian musicians (most notably Antonio Cesti) and some other foreigners such as the English violist William Young. 1660 is without doubt his floruit year because that is the only year any documentary evidence for his whereabouts survives and that is the date of his two volumes, Opp. 3 and 4, each containing six sonatas for solo violin. Opp. 1 and 2 are lost. The skeletal nature of these facts are in complete contrast to the technicolour brilliance of the sonatas which pierce the biographical gloom of the composer's obscurity. Whence his inspiration came (Uccellini's Opp. 4 and 5, visits to Innsbruck by the virtuoso Roberto Sabbatini?) and whither it went (Schmelzer's *Sonatae unarum fidium* of 1664, Viviani's *Capricci armonici* of 1678 are the clearest derivatives, not to mention Walther, Biber, Corelli, etc.) we cannot know, but the inspiration is there for all to play and hear:

My point is that this is important repertoire in the development of the violin as a solo voice, although that importance is nowadays hard to prove or document. In other words, the edifice of current knowledge about 17th-century instrumental music has been built up without a brick marked Pandolfi.

Interestingly, two reviews of the Harmonia Mundi CD took me to task for describing the disc as containing the complete sonatas. Their grounds were understandable: there is a third volume entitled *Sonate cioe Balletti, Sarabande ... a uno, e due Violini ...* (Rome, 1669). (I put aside here the question of whether this is by our Pandolfi: the composer's name is slightly different, there is no opus number and the music is stylistically completely different.) If the recording did not include the 1669 sonatas, how could it be complete? The answer is that there are no solo violin sonatas in the later volume, only a Balletto and three Capriccetti, all very short and clearly not sonatas. I know that not from reading reference books but because I have the music. Although I am far from being a musicologist, I am able to use some of musicology's tools and I attempt to be as well-informed about the solo repertoire I play as I can be.

One way I was keen to improve on an earlier Pandolfi recording Richard and I made (in 1992 along with theorist Fred Jacobs: Channel Classics CCS5894) was by using a 17th-rather than a late-18th-century instrument, so I went to enormous lengths to find, afford and have restored (brilliantly by John Topham and David Rattray) a suitable violin. Not one review I have seen mentioned the instrument or noticed this difference between the two recordings. Has the practice of identifying instruments on record sleeves simply created an enormous, costly red herring for period instrument players? In an interview in *Gramophone Early Music* (Autumn 1999) the German baroque violinist Reinhard Goebel was critical of musicians cutting corners with their instruments: 'Look around in the English baroque world at the moment – they all have modern violins'. In the same issue, Peter Holman neatly parried this thrust in his review of a recent Goebel recording, describing as 'a basic problem' the fact that the instruments used were inappropriate in date and sound. I have often maintained that I do not play the baroque violin out of any duty to authenticity or to an idealistic musical ecosystem, but out of choice. I prefer its feel, its fickleness, deftness and eloquence. But my personal opinion is also that an 18th-century (or later) instrument is not as well suited to pre-1700 repertoire as a 17th-century instrument.

It must be conceded that while historically informed performance practice is a serious tool in the process of discovering ways of playing early music in a more effective and convincing way today (with partial authenticity as a possible by-product), it has also become for many musicians a lucrative bandwagon. Lest I appear to be indulging in an ego trip, I should add that not all reviews of the Pandolfi CD have been flattering. My playing has variously been described as 'hare-brained', 'crack-brained', 'brazen', 'like

Jack Nicholson playing the devil' and 'pleasant listening for a quiet evening'. One reviewer graphically declared that 'Manze dances with the corpse of a lunatic'.

As luck would have it, both Pandolfi recordings were reviewed in *EMR*. That of 11/99 is worth quoting at length:

[When] I first encountered Pandolfi... I was puzzled by the music, and though impressed in some respects, placed him as 'a composer of only erratic genius'. Omitting the 'only', this makes him tailor-made for Andrew Manze... My problem [with Manze's first recording, rev. *EMR* 8/94] was a concern that he and Richard Egarr at times went over the top: not in itself objectionable, but worrying when something that is too idiosyncratic is fixed on a disc. (All performances, of course, have to be individual: it is a matter of degree.) Early music performance has in general got much freer even in the last five years, and anyway Pandolfi is a composer whose style (*stilus fantasticus* as a term, in various spellings, is much more familiar now) demands such imaginative intervention. So such matters worry me far less.

The reviewer accepts that his experience of Pandolfi's style has expanded ('is much more familiar now') and that his own tastes have changed ('such matters worry me far less'), and that the style demands 'imaginative intervention' (though it is not clear whether he is referring to the performer, listener or, as I hope, both). But did he realize that his words imply that there is an objective 'height' above which a performance may be described as 'over the top'? I can hear conscientious students asking where this 'top' is, so that it can be avoided. And can any musician or performance be too 'idiosyncratic'? If 'all performances... have to be individual', who defines the boundaries of that safe area in between on one side unoriginal and uninspired, and on the other 'objectionable' and 'worrying'? That notorious scourge of the early-music movement, Richard Taruskin, put it graphically in the *New York Times* (14/6/98): expressing contempt that one well-known tenor had 'recently been praised for what one critic some-what infelicitously called his *self-elimination* during a lieder recital', he remarked that in former times 'the performer's contribution was cherished and eagerly awaited. To fail to astonish or surprise... the audience... would have been regarded as an insult. Performers who self-eliminated could expect to be flushed away.'

My aim here is not to pick a fight with critics. In fact I understand and expect that critics will use a CD and column inches to express opinions, with the unsurprising consequence that a piece might say more about the reviewer than the reviewed. There could be more healthy and pro-

itable debate in the slow-motion conversation that goes on between performers and reviewers via CDs and magazines. The problem comes when performances of what we now possessively term early music have to satisfy critical criteria which other repertoires do not. No wonder 'conventional' musicians are still loathe to play music of pre-1750 (apart from Bach). In bringing to light so much wonderful repertoire, such as Pandolfi's sonatas, and so many intriguing ideas about how the music should be performed, we are at the same time in danger of rendering it the exclusive property of the early-music brigade who do not necessarily have a monopoly of musicality, technical skill or purity of motives. How I would love to hear some of today's great 'modern' violinist-musicians play Pandolfi, and how I would weep if their performances were judged on anything other than musical grounds!

Pandolfi Mealli Complete Violin Sonatas Andrew Manze vln, Richard Egarr hpscd Harmonia Mundi HMU 907241 80' 00"

I hope this provokes some correspondence. The location of 'the top' must surely be on the borders of the territory of the 'good taste' (or Mozart's 'proper limit' quoted on p. 5) that theorists are always writing about but never define. Border disputes are unavoidable. CB



## LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Due entirely to a system error in my brain, I submitted an early version of last month's reviews, which omitted one of the concerts. So we start with a belated review of the Prom concert on Friday 28 July, the anniversary of Bach's death. Most music lovers must have held that day in special regard, perhaps more so than the anniversary of Bach's birth in 1985, for now we were celebrating a life that had been lived and fulfilled. As in 1985, my own contribution was a lunchtime organ recital of music still existing in Bach's own hand (one of the better ways of trying to ensure that we are actually playing his own music), followed by a mellow afternoon with friends. Rather than the 1985 evening Westminster Abbey Royal concert, this time it was the B minor Mass at the Royal Albert Hall, with Sir Roger Norrington conducting the Orchestra and Choir of the Age of Enlightenment – an apt name for the time of Bach's death, although at odds with most of his life. After a heartfelt introduction from Sir Roger Norrington on Bach and the power of his music, which 'creeps into your soul and doesn't want to let you go', the Choir of the Enlightenment opened, very movingly, with the 8 part double choir motet *Lieber Herr Gott, wecke uns auf*, written by Bach's second cousin, Johann Christoph Bach sometime before 1672 and reworked by Bach late in his life, possibly even for performance at his own funeral – although the rolling semiquavers of 'Ihn mit Freuden zu empfangen' set a mood far removed from that of a funeral dirge. Bach's instrumentation is one of the pieces that has reappeared after the recent discovery of the Berlin Sing-Akademie library in the Ukraine. The B minor Mass can reduce me to tears at the best of times, but on this day it was inevitably an emotional experience, aided and abetted by some inspiringly involved direction from Norrington. Standing (and occasionally jiggling about) like a lion tamer in a circus ring, he stood in the midst of the orchestra, behind the violins, coaxing and encouraging the performers without the aid of score or baton, although occasionally resorting to what looked like double-handed tennis strokes in the more exuberant choral sections. Norrington's interpretation of the choral highpoints in the centre and at the end of the Credo were superb, the carefully detached placing of the final word (*est*) of both 'Et incarnatus' and 'Crucifixus' being just the sort of touch that engages both the mind and heart of the listener. The choir and orchestra were on excellent form, befitting the occasion, as were soloists Mark Padmore and Alastair Miles, although the highest three soloists disappointed, with some particularly wild tuning from mezzo Annette Markert and a rather swoopy David Daniels. Norrington made sensible use of larger than usual forces for most sections of the mass, including 4 flutes in 'Domine Deus'. Although the occasion might have dimmed my critical faculties, I did find this a most moving performance.

## Earthly Delights – Early Music Festival 2000

God bless Philip Pickett for arranging no fewer than nine concerts in the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room for me to review over the weekend of 8-10 September, allowing me to swan off for the rest of the month for some playing and a holiday in Andalusia. Perhaps it is his age, but Mr Pickett does seem to be increasingly concerned about matters of the flesh: as well as his plea that it was time for early music to 'get naked' and a programme introduction promising sensuality, love, lust, desire and passion, he also managed to slip in his oft-repeated assertion of the phallic symbolism of the recorder in the opening seconds of the preliminary foyer discussion with Sean Rafferty – despite there being no recorders to be heard until the very last concert of the Festival.

The opening concert was of Bach's Orchestral Suites with Pickett's own New London Consort. As with most Pickett concerts, there was an intellectual/philosophical undertone to the proceedings, with a rejection of French double-dotting in the Ouvertures and a reliance on the Affekts of the different movements based on the descriptions in Mattheson's *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* of 1739 (rather than slightly later theorists such as Quantz, seen by Pickett as possibly irrelevant to the music of Bach). This naturally led the more analytically-retentive members of the audience to check the performance of each movement against the descriptions of the mood of each dance, noting each occasion when the interpretation seemed at variance with Mattheson's often rather convoluted descriptions (which read rather like homeopathic indications). Were the Bourrées 'flowing, connected, with contentment and pleasantness, untroubled calm, a little slow, but agreeable and not unpleasant'? Was the Polonaise played with 'frankness and freedom' and the Sarabande with 'ambition, seriousness, or even quite grandly'? I thought not, but did it really matter? Other matters of interpretation did matter rather more, principally the habit of strongly accenting the first note of each bar, particularly from the strings, and most noticeably in the Gavotte, Menuet and the Bourrée movements. Although Mattheson indicates a clear upbeat for Gavottes, I don't think he intended that to be carried through to each bar. That said, this was an uplifting concert. There was some excellent playing, particularly from Dorothea Seel (flute), Gail Hennessy and Hilary Stock (oboes), Sally Holman (bassoon) and Clare Barwick (a nicely audible viola), although there was some curiously over-emphatic playing by the cellist in a number of movements, but particularly when set against the solo flute in the 2nd Suite, when the cello volume was kept the same whether in support of the soloist alone, or the whole band. Some rather jerky harpsi-

chord playing also jarred in the same Suite. But violinist Pavlo Beznosiuk was a delightfully sensitive partner to Dorothea Seel's pleasantly rhetorical flute. It was good to hear the ubiquitous Air from the 3rd Suite played at a sensible speed, allowing the music to flow and the melodic line to make structural sense.

Harpsichordist Andreas Staier was not the only one to have some misgivings about some of the programme notes, giving a health warning before his recital of the Goldberg Variations about the thesis developed in 1984 that linked the variations to Ptolemaic cosmology which was presented rather uncritically in Andrew Stewart's programme notes. Staier certainly didn't attempt any of the rather bizarre interpretations that some of the variations would have required to fit the thesis, notably variation 19, which is surely as far from Martian as one can get. This was a well-thought-out performance, with much effort given to the architecture of the whole without skipping on matters of detail. Staier's use of varied articulation was outstanding, as was his sensitive changes in registration and the different resonances in the instrument that these produced. He linked some variations by holding the bass note through to the next variation, but also allowed us a few coughing gaps between other variations. Variation 10 (supposedly Mercury) was given a strongly percussive reading, redolent of seven league boots, albeit with springs, rather than the wings that the heavenly messenger might have relied on. The melody of variation 13 was delicately spun out over the continuo bass, with a neat flow and direction to the melodic line, more saucy than sensuous, but with clarity of articulation throughout. The famous variation 25 was portrayed as a Venetian mandolin and lute duet. I don't know what Ptolemy would have made of it all, but I think Bach would have approved.

The three concerts on the Saturday (9 September) contrasted music from the medieval Spanish tradition with the classical world of Boccherini and the early baroque French courtly airs of Louis XIII. In sharp contrast to the mood of much of the weekend, Alia Musica's concert of music from the Spanish/Sephardic tradition took as its premise that, during the hours between sunset and morning, man has a special disposition to attaining the highest religious feelings, not through lust, debauchery and other matters genital, but by praying and singing. Present day visitors to Toledo Cathedral might be enthralled by the Mozarabic Chapel (if they find it open) which was set up to restore and maintain the Spanish liturgical tradition of chanting that had been suppressed from about 1200. A *Breviarium* from 1502 for that chapel refers to Aurora, the dawn service, and the tradition survives in the Aurora Brotherhods of eastern Spain who sing songs to the Virgin of the Dawn from midnight to daybreak. The mood was set as the performers made their way onto the blacked out Queen Elizabeth Hall stage carrying lanterns and chanting the opening *Salvea la Fuensanta* from the *Auroros de Murcia*. Three other pieces from the same collection appeared in the first half, including the distinctive *Correlativa*, a *dolorosa* which featured lengthy pauses at the end of each phrase - a

single voice sang the first syllable of the succeeding phrase before the other singers joined in. We also heard samples of the *bacasot*, a plea or rogation song dating back to the 6th century but kept alive in the Judaeo-Spanish traditions in Syria and Morocco, and a Sardinian *Miserere* which also featured lengthy silences, neatly filled in this performance by a rumbling stomach whose owner was sitting just behind me. The second half included chants both from the synagogue and the non-liturgical tradition, including a fascinating poem by Salomón ab Gabirol (one of Málaga's better features, albeit from the early 11th century) which presented parallel texts, one praying for rain, and the other for dew. Adding to the confusion, the same melody is apparently also used in the Balkans as a song of circumcision. Joining the voices were the breathily restless tones of the overblowing nay flute and the kaval (a flute-like instrument with an extended mouthpiece) and the harpsichord-shaped dulcimer, the kanún.

Boccherini is about as far removed from the music of medieval Sephardic Jews as you can get, and he also seemed somewhat distant from the Festival's promised theme of Earthly Delights. Ensemble 415, directed by violinist Chiara Banchini, presented the Quintet Opus 4/4 (1780) and the *Stabat Mater* in its original 1781 incarnation for solo soprano. Making full use of his own instrument, the cello (both pieces featured two of them), Boccherini seemed sometimes to be at a loss as to what to do with the violins - something of a problem for a group directed by the first violinist. For much of the time in the Quintet, for example, Boccherini intended both violins to be in either an accompanimental role, or as a follower of the cello's first stab at the melodic line (the cello certainly held the melodic interest for much of the time). But the bright tone and volume of the first violin frequently overshadowed both the second violin and the two cellos. The Quintet is a fascinating work, new to me. It is clear who is in charge from the growling opening as the two cellos creep into view. The ending of the final movement (where the viola has a leading role alongside the cellos) is slightly curious, almost fizzling out like a damp firework. The pulsating bass of the second (Allegro vivo) movement set a vigorous mood, although the lengthy page turn break between that and the third movement Adagio was overdone - musically the two movements needed to have a closer link with each other. I last heard the Boccherini *Stabat Mater* a couple of years ago, in its version for two sopranos and tenor, and had trouble working out the mood of the piece. But this performance made things a lot clearer for me. Of course, Boccherini was writing in the late gallant, early classical style that we tend to associate with matters flippant, but with words of the utmost poignancy. The earlier performance overemphasised the gallant style of the accompaniment, to the detriment of the soloists and mood. Ensemble 415 always managed to keep the occasionally unusual orchestral textures well under control, even in the bustling seventh section. What was curious about this performance was that singer Agnès Mellon read out the words of each section before singing it. Even if her French accent was

seductive, I am not sure if this was such a good idea – the words were in the programme (in English only) anyway. But, when singing, she grasped the complex moods of this lament well, particularly Boccherini's superbly simple concluding Amen, with cello and vocal arpeggios reducing almost to a sigh.

I reviewed Catherine King and Charles Daniels singing *Airs de Cour* (with Jacob Herringman, lute) at their Wigmore Hall concert last year. Although the Purcell Room has nothing of the charm and intimate scale as the Wigmore Hall, it is still a good venue for such intimate music making. The composers were from in and around the courts of the French Kings, Louis XIII and his predecessor, Henri IV in the first half of the seventeenth century. Pierre Guédron, his son-in-law Anthoine Boesset and Boesset's son, Jean-Baptiste Besard form a musical dynasty in the Royal court, whereas Etienne Moulinié, their only serious rival, worked also for Gaston d'Orléans, Louis's dissolute brother – the two opening works by Moulinié seem to refer to one of Gaston's mistresses, 'the lovely Uranie'. Alternating between the solo Air *Sérieux* and the Dialogue, the programme could not have been more effectively presented than by Catherine King and Charles Daniels: their mezzo and high lyrical tenor voices entwined in both tone and register, with Daniels often adopting the equivalent of a vocal missionary position as his melodic line appeared on top of King's in the last lines of the Dialogue verses. Both singers excelled in their use of ornamentation, either improvised or following the written-out examples provided in the manuscript of Jean-Baptiste Besard's *O dieux je ne scais pas* and in Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle* (1636) where various diminutions are given for Moulinié's *N'espérez plus*, whose increasing intensity was always contained within the broader pulse and melodic line. The former piece was unusual for avoiding a clearly separated introduction and verse structure, the vocal entries overlapping with the lute introduction. The improvised ornaments were beautifully appropriate and unostentatious, never interfering with the flow of the music. Both singers drew the audience into their own world of courtly love, communicating the complex, and usually unrequited, pleadings of the poets and musicians with captivating effectiveness.

In stark contrast to the beautiful, if ultimately sexually frustrating, strains of the 17th-century *Airs de Cour*, Sunday afternoon started with the rude shock of Dominique Visse's Ensemble Clément Janequin and a programme from the considerably more earthy, and far more sexually successful, early-16th-century French-speaking world. What little was left to the imagination was dispelled by the programme writer, who eagerly explained the not-terribly-well-hidden meaning of Marion's pretty little pleat being torn undone (to the cries of Ow, Ow, Ow), for example, and set into context the growth in sexual repression that was to form the basis of the increasing French bourgeoisie – a repression that clearly happened sometime after the setting for this concert and before that of the previous evening. Most readers will know of Ensemble Clément Janequin's style in

such programmes; sitting around a table, the five singers evoked the far from heady atmosphere of bawdy home entertainment with Dominique Visse's extraordinary counter-tenor (for want of a better word) voice dominating the proceedings, particularly in his higher and more animal-like register. The programme suggested a banquet, with respectful prayers (from Clemens non Papa and Tielman Susato) before and after the feast. But the opening *Nous sommes de l'ordre de Saint Babouin* had already set the tone, with the monks description of entire days spent (after they had wakened at noon) consuming vast amounts of food and drink and then, presumably with the help of some divine intervention, managing to give the pretty girls who leap into their beds around midnight a good going over. Three courses were served – small game, game birds and big game – with the text switching between hunting of the animal variety and that of the more human nature. The well-known hunting songs from Nicola Gombert (*La chasse du lievre*) and Clément Janequin (*La chasse du cerf*) were contrasted with a pair of paeans to les Tétins, which moved from *Du beau tétin* of a young girl (Janequin) to the rather more mature variety (*Du laid tétin*) that resemble saddlebags and can be hidden under armpits (as depicted by Clemens non Papa). My companion found something quite bizarre about a group of men, dressed in black, gathering round a table to discuss women's breasts (but I wasn't sure how she felt they should have been dressed). In total contrast to the debauchery depicted by the singers, Eric Bellocq, as ever, provided some exquisite lute and guitar solos by Adrian Le Roy. Although not for the squeamish or sensitive listener, these concerts are certainly tremendous fun.

The Argentinian soprano María Cristina Kiehr joined harpsichordist Jean-Marc Aymes for 'Come, Sweet Heart', an evocation of the music of early-17th-century Italy. Following on the theme of the weekend, there was plenty of passion in the texts of the songs (and at least one veil that managed to get torn), starting with Luigi Rossi's *Lamento di Zelemi Con occhi belli e fieri*, the tortured mood swings of Zelemi, a Muslim Princess in Algiers who had fallen for her father's Christian slave, with little success. She pleaded and raged until she was rescued by Amore – the refrain 'His neck is encircled with iron, and so is my heart' appeared five times during the song. María Cristina Kiehr has an impressively beautiful voice, broad and with consistently rich colouring. Her slightly swallowed tone suggests that the voice comes from the nasal region, but without sounding the least bit nasal in tone. But on this occasion she really didn't vary her tone or emotional approach enough, leaving a rather flat impression after the emotional high jinks of some of the other vocal concerts. A bit more Latin American, or Italian, flair would have helped. She wasn't helped by some musically competent but rather buttoned-up harpsichord playing. Sigismondo d'India's dawn song, *Forse vien fuor l'aurora* (1609) and Barbara Strozzi's lament, *L'Amante segreto* (1654) were the highlights, the latter piece founded on a four-note descending ground bass, a feature of a number of the pieces.

Christophe Rousset directed Les Talens Lyriques with soprano Valérie Gabail in *Les Muses Galantes*, an investigation of late-17th- to mid-18th-century France. Michel Lambert, one of the last composers of the refined courtly air, had been a young page in the chapel of Gaston d'Orléans, where he would have met Etienne Moulinié, who featured in the *Airs de Cour* concert the previous evening. His three opening airs were far removed in mood from the dramatic cantatas by Rameau and Montéclair and the pathetic strains of the *Plainte d'Althée* from André Campra's *Ballet des Muses* of 1703. The vocal works were balanced by Couperin's *Premier Concert Royal* and Leclair's *Sonata Opus 5/4*, which features a jovial tour de force Allegro movement for the violin and some tricky gamba passages in the massive concluding *Chaconne* (which also featured a few noisy page turns). Two unannounced changes to the programme order confused me, but Valérie Gabail's eloquent and impassioned voice left me in no doubt as to the mood of the texts. She embraced a wide range of tone colour in her repertoire, but a rather persistent and rapid vibrato did get in the way in the more lyrical moments. Astushi Sakai's gamba continuo playing was musically sensitive with an intuitive awareness of ensemble playing, although his light and transparent sound was sometimes too weak – separating the bowing more would give more support in the acoustic of the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Stéphanie-Marie Degand's violin playing demonstrated a good understanding of style, with tastefully subtle ornamentation, but she didn't quite manage to sustain longer phrases. Christophe Rousset is a master of French baroque music. Working with young musicians he gets his musical ideas across clearly and has the ability to sustain musical interest through subtle variations of colour, texture, ornament and phrasing. An enthralling concert.

Philip Pickett's beloved recorders were saved until the final late-night concert – a phallic feast of instruments, but devoted to the most austere music of the weekend, extracts

from Bach's *Art of Fugue* (Contrapunti 1-9, plus the *Canon alla duodecima* and the incomplete *Fuga a tre soggetti*), performed by the Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet. This combination of instruments and music worked surprisingly well, the common tone giving the feeling of a performance on the organ, but with degrees of subtlety of tone and inflexions within notes that organists can only dream of. A wide range of recorders was used, ranging from the barely visible *Garkleinflötlein* to what I think of as a 'Great Double Bass' – about 8' long with a speaking length of around 6'. Variety of tone colour, the occasional addition of ornaments and one movement played with consistent vibrato added to the contrast between movements. Ending a weekend devoted to 'Earthly Delights', most of a rather naughty nature, with the plaintive dying away of the alto voice of Bach's incomplete (or unfinished) final fugue was an interesting choice – a reminder, perhaps, that whatever debauchery we might get up to in life, it all has to end one day.

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#### ANGELS, EVER BRIGHT AND FAIR

*Theodora* has been one of Handel's least popular oratorios right from its first performance in 1750. Handel's explanation was: 'the Jews will not come to it (as to *Judas* because it is a Christian story: and the Ladies will not come, because it is a virtuous one.' Its recent revival at Glyndebourne has drawn attention to it (though it was not intended to be staged, and from what I saw on the TV relay, it was better to keep ones eyes shut), and now it has been recorded by Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli: we hope to review it soon (but haven't had a review copy yet). There is a new King's Music score edited by Timothy Robert and myself: £40.00, but £30.00 to *EMR* subscribers. 'Angels, ever bright and fair' is the one aria that stayed in the repertoire: it is also short enough to fit onto page 14. CB

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Handel – Theodora

17b (HWV 68/14). Angels, ever bright and fair *Air*

**Larghetto**

**Violino I** *[tr]* *p* *f*

**Violino II** *[tr]* *f*

**Viola** *[tr]* *p*

**Bassi**

4 *[tr]* *pp*

**Theodora** *[pp]*

Angels, e-ver bright and fair;  
an-gels, e-ver bright and

*[p]*

8 *p* *[p]*

Fair, Take, O take me, take me, take me, take me, take me,

## RECORD REVIEWS

## CHANT

1000: A Mass for the End of Time Anonymous 4  
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907224 72' 27"

Regular readers will know that I generally find the beauty of Anonymous 4's concerts and recordings disquieting (and attempts to find more sympathetic reviewers have not been entirely successful). What worries me here is that I cannot imagine what sort of institution in 1000 AD might have sung the liturgy like this: it is not that a female religious community might not have had four marvellous singers in their midst, but that they should have been allowed to take over the whole liturgy and excluded their fellow members. Or is the scenario the household of a lady of distinction who employed four first-rate singers in her private chapel? There is a degree of unreality here. My disquiet, however, is balanced by the moving singing of a richly-troped Mass for the Ascension. It's not just a good marketing ploy: it actually works extremely well musically too. CB

Canti Gregoriani: Nicolaus: Ufficio Liturgico di San Nicola vescovo di Myra nella Cattedrale di Bari secolo XIII Ensemble di Musica Medioevale Calixtenus, Gianni de Gennaro Tactus TC100004 78' 49"

While Calixtenus doesn't go quite as far as Marcel Pérès's Ensemble Organum in the art of coarse plainchant, the singing here is refreshingly unsanctimonious, accurate without excessive polish – a nice contrast with the previous disc. We hear Matins for St Nicholas, with all the psalms, sometimes chanted to drones. Whether the sound is particularly Barian I cannot judge, but doesn't matter; the MS used is there now, but came to Bari from Paris. Listening to this is an austere, timeless experience, taking you to another world. To follow the words you'll need to equip yourself with a psalter, and the other texts are printed in Latin only. CB

## MEDIEVAL

Landini Ballate Camerata Nova & Chomin-ciamento di Gioia, Luigi Taglioni dir 59' 26"  
Tactus TC 32120

A disc devoted to Landini is in principle to be welcomed, but I don't feel comfortable with the voices here, though I'm not quite sure why. It may be that they seem to be skating over the surface of the notes, a bit like an organ with no chiff, or perhaps the shorter notes are not tuned well enough with each other – or it may just be that I don't like the sound. But do try it: stylistically things are fine, and the use of instruments is sensible. Like other Tactus discs, the booklet notes are good and trilingual, but texts are not translated. CB

*Deus ad un turnei enpris: Songs from the crusades* Oliphant Medieval Music Ensemble  
Alba ABCD 152 71' 46"

This is one of those creative recordings of medieval monophony, from a group comprising one singer and four players – and even the singer doubles as drummer. But unlike some other such groups, they are concerned to present poetry, not just a jolly noise, and sound very impressive. A lot of responsibility is put on the singer, Uli Korhonen, but she can stand it; so although I generally prefer a Thibaut de Champagne and his colleagues performed more chastely, I can strongly recommend Oliphant's versions. The booklet has notes only in Finnish but there are English translations of the poems. CB

## 15th CENTURY

*Sweet love, sweet hope: Music from a 15th Century Bodleian Manuscript* The Hilliard Ensemble 70' 33"  
Carbon 7 C7-048

This appeared in 1996 as Isis CD030 (see *EMR* 26, p. 14) in a pretty blue cover with an appropriate 15th-century picture on the front. A bit conventional, perhaps, but a good indication of the content. I don't understand the purpose of the faded-gold cover of this reissue, with a picture that looks like an upside-down ogee window. Nor do I understand how anyone except a designer with no awareness of words can think that printing a booklet in two shades of white on a black background is an aid to legibility – and aligning the French texts to the right to make a pretty pattern with the English translations justified left is perverse, if pretty. The packaging is presumably intended to give the Hilliards the image of a contemporary, not an early-music group. The original disc was sponsored by or through the Bodleian Library (it had a fine launch party there). But however wrapped, this anthology from a major source of the period from that library, MS Canon. Misc. 213, is well worth reissuing: buy it if you missed it first time. CB

## 16th CENTURY

Byrd *The Masses* (The Byrd Edition, 5) The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood, David Skinner 78' 39"  
ASV Gaudemus CD GAU 206  
+ Fantasias in C & d, Voluntary a3

I suspect that more readers have sung Byrd's masses than anything else by him, save perhaps *Ave verum*, so this will be the disc by which the series is most critically judged. Perhaps I'm feeling dispeptic this month, but I had some worries about it. The anachronistic phrase 'muscular Christianity' came to mind: it all seems rather forceful, a bit too loud, especially one

singer in the lower parts. I would have thought that those celebrating a clandestine mass behind closed doors would sing more discretely. (The excellent booklet notes describe the state of catholics in protestant England.) Generally, the tempos are fine, but I wasn't expecting so much variety, and sometimes it felt a bit uncontrolled. The prominent cadential rallentados and tempo variation between sections challenge my expectations and feel strangely old-fashioned: perhaps the world has moved on and I'm out of touch. The Mass of Four Voices is commendably transposed down according to the implication of the clefs (G2C2C3C4). I wondered if the five-voice mass (G2C1C3C4F3) would be treated the same way, but it isn't. The three-part mass is sung by SAT. Don't treat the three organ pieces as excuses for pouring a drink between the masses: they are equally worthy of attention. CB

Byrd *Songs and ensemble music* Lynne Dawson, The English Consort of Viols 49' 52"  
Musicaphon M 56808 (rec 1986)

This is one of several discs that have reached us from Musicaphon this month that are reissues from the Cantate label. They have copyright dates from the mid-1990s, so have probably been sent to us because they have found a new UK distributor. They are worth investigating, even if I am not always 100% enthusiastic – though they really should be much cheaper than the lowish end of the full-price range. In this case, I'm not sure that, even in 1986, this was quite the repertoire for Lynne Dawson: a voice with viols needs the minimum vibrato, and although she is no wide wobbler, her natural colouring is not a perfect match. She sings seven of the better known consort songs with the English Consort (founded in the 1930s, the booklet says, though stressing that none of the original players are on the disc), who play the same number of instrumental pieces. Their style is a little more stolid than is now fashionable (thanks to the influence of Fretwork), but suits the music, and they make the most of the false relations. CB

Forster *Teutsche Liedlein III: The Song Masters of Heidelberg* I Ciarlatani 64' 22"  
Christophorus CHR 77232

By the 1540s, the Tenorlied had become a little more foursquare and sedate than the songs by Senfl recorded by Musica Antiqua of London: maybe music was becoming a more widespread and less specifically professional activity in mid-century Germany. These performances use a legitimately wide range of instruments with three singers. The result is enjoyable, even if by Book III Forster may have used his best material. The booklet prints the texts in German with explanations of archaisms, but just gives summaries of them in English. CB

Marenzio *Cantiones Sacrae* Currende, Erik van Nevel 62' 25" Eufoda 1313

Marenzio's sacred music is often overlooked in favour of his superb madrigals; this recording aims to redress that imbalance, but does not quite succeed. Although pleasant, and in places magnificent, both music and performance often lack the excitement we have grown to expect from Marenzio. There is a lot of the same texture: a rather low-key (in both senses) choir of sixteen, doubled most of the time by a cornett and sackbut ensemble with viols and organ, with judicious orchestration by van Nevel in an attempt to vary the sound. Now and again the music inspires them to greater things: *Laudate Dominum* and *Exsurgat Deus* are full of fast-moving tunes and rhythms, and here we are treated to full-blooded and memorable performances. But several of the polychoral pieces are heavily chordal, with some decoration but little harmonic interest, and here the singers sound dull. Words (mainly psalm settings or standard liturgical texts) are not given priority. Following attempts to find a reliable text or translation for *Caecilia cantate* defeat is admitted, so neither is given. A couple of the texted motets are performed instrumentally, and the booklet gives the text of one but not the other - why? The CD ends well with *Jubilate Deo*, richly inventive and adorned with an instrumental introduction (though we are not told whether this was written by Marenzio or van Nevel!)

Selene Mills

*Chacona: Renaissance Spain in the Age of Empire* Ex umbris (Grant Herreid, Paul Shipper, Tom Zajac voices & insts) 74' 40" Dorian DOR 93207

I was rather dreading yet another disc of Spanish guitar-based grounds but was pleasantly surprised. The linking of 13 of the 31 tracks to a single theme (a dramatised *Conde claros*) helped, bringing cohesion when one was tiring of two- and three-minute items. The programme begins with an editorially-concocted *Chacona* which, with its various shouts, probably works better in concert than on disc; but the whole compilation is greatly enjoyable. The singing is a bit variable: I generally assume that the simpler the music, the less vibrato is needed, and the ladies wobble a bit. I love the sound of the bass (Paul Shipper) in *Conde claros*: though *Paseávase el rey moro* sounds a bit odd with the melody below its accompaniment. He obviously enjoys rolling his *rrrrrrrrs*: I don't know Spanish well enough to tell if they are a parody or not. The booklet (with notes - in English only, no Spanish version - by the tenor, Grant Herreid) is excellent; texts are in original and English. CB

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

## 17th CENTURY

D'Anglebert *Complete harpsichord works* Christophe Rousset 158' 39" (2 CDs in box) Decca 458 588-2

Over the years d'Anglebert's keyboard music has had a mixed press. Pirro described the *Folia* variations as *bien pauvre*, Apel saw him as the highest point of the French baroque (as opposed to the later rococo), James Anthony is neutral and Rousset, in a persuasive booklet-note, writes enthusiastically of him as an innovator. These well-filled (in every sense) discs now give us the best chance we have ever had of coming to our own conclusions and no-one with even half an interest in the *clavecinistes* shou'd fail to take it. The music consists of the four long suites from the 1689 publication, which include transcriptions of orchestral movements by Lully as well as the expected dances, and two shorter groups pieces from MS sources. The complex textures are projected with exemplary clarity by Rousset, with the help of a splendid-sounding Ruckers (with *petit ravalement*) tuned to meantone and low pitch (392). He is also absolutely convincing on matters of inequality and ornamentation, in part as a result of his sensible tempos. There is no gratuitous virtuosity, but one can only marvel at the potent cocktail of technique and musicianship displayed here.

David Hansell

Brunckhorst *Opera omnia* Ensemble Musica Poetica Freiburg, Hans Bergmann Hänsler 98.364 53'47" Weihnachts-Historie, Oster-Historie, Praeclodium in E minor, Sonata in A

You may be forgiven for not recognizing the name of Arnold Matthias Brunckhorst (c1670-1725). A characteristic member of the prolific and often talented generation between Schütz and J. S. Bach, Brunckhorst served in Celle, Hildesheim and Hannover, centres where Schütz's reputation probably continued to be felt well into the 18th century. This 1999 CD, presenting everything that is known from Brunckhorst's pen, comprises two short keyboard pieces (a *Praeclodium* for organ and a binary one-movement sonata for harpsichord) and two *Historien*. The latter are formally not unlike Schütz's biblical histories but err on the side of brevity (23-24 minutes each); both are scored for strings plus two trumpets (the latter used sparingly in the *Oster-Historie* and more generously in the *Weihnachts-Historie*, where they are also replaced by oboes in one pastoral aria). In each work, biblical narrative is interspersed with meditative poetic texts; the latter are set not only as arias but also as particularly appealing chorus movements. The performances are stylish and lively; the singing - graceful but not showy - suggests just what might have been heard, in Bach's early years, if the paymasters of a town church or provincial court chapel took some pains to secure four good singers without stretching the establishment's resources by adding ripenists. It was in such a context

that Bach learned how to write concerted music; and this recording shows why the one-per-part vocal configuration is exactly right not only for such relatively modest works as these but also for Bach's more ambitious ones. Moreover, such capable and indeed rewarding performances, by a dozen young musicians we've never heard of, show that the one-per-part configuration is perfectly within the grasp of any team of professionals who are prepared to teach themselves how it's done. There are no weak links technically (I'm sorry a few more string players couldn't have been added to the four used here), and as a group, Musica Poetica has a keen ensemble sense. I enjoyed every minute of this CD and only wish that Brunckhorst had been more prolific.

Eric Van Tassel

Falconieri *Il primo libro di canzone, sinfonie, fantasie* Gabriele Cassone tpt. Antonio Frigé kbd 63' 14" Warner Fonit 8573 81477-2 (rec 1996)

What a strange disc: 22 out of the 45 pieces in Falconieri's first book of *Canzone... per Violini, e Viole, ovvero altro Stomento* performed on trumpet and either harpsichord or organ. Of course, this was not unusual practice for musicians in the early 17th century, but the very notion of recording pieces in this arrangement seems very strange - despite the particularly fine playing of both musicians! The problems (for me) were too much of the same tonality (the fault of the modern fixation with completeness and preference for a disc of one composer rather than a well-chosen anthology), imbalance between the big, beefy organ (I don't have a problem with 'proper' organs if they are appropriate) and the trumpet (especially in such a resonant acoustic), and a longing for more variety of sound which performances on a group of stringed instruments would have brought - La Luna would have had a ball! So, but this for sheer virtuosity and some very interesting pieces, but not to listen to at one sitting. BC

Fischer *The Daughters of Zeus* (Musikalischer Parnassus) Mitzi Meyerson hpscd 78' 36" Dabringhaus und Grimm MDG 605 0977-2

As anyone who has been to one of her concerts will know, Mitzi Meyerson is not the shy and retiring type, and I half expected this CD to be a touch on the flamboyant side. Actually it's delightful: stylish, and not a bit mannered. Although the nine suites that make up *Musikalischer Parnassus* are named after the nine Muses, none of them reflects the character of its namesake. There are, however, some good little pieces here nonetheless. The *Praeludia* and *Chaconnes* are wonderfully opulent, and whilst the French-inspired dance movements are somewhat less catchy they still have enough going for them to warrant further investigation. In fact, the way the CD has been produced, with one track number per suite, rather forces the listener not to skip over any 'boring bits', which must surely be a good thing. Robin Bigwood

Fux *Dafne in lauro* Mieke van der Sluis  
*Diana*, Lina Akerlund *Dafne*, Gérard Lesne  
*Apollo*, Silvia Picollo *Amore*, Martin Kliemann  
*Mercurio*, Ensemble Vocal La Cappella,  
*Orchestre baroque du Clemencic Consort*,  
*René Clemencic* 118' 45" (2 CDs)  
*Nuova Era* NE 7345 ££

I heard this recording first time around and remember being slightly disappointed, partly by Fux's music (which I'd expected to be 'better' somehow) and partly by the performance (the orchestra seemed slightly distant and the singing and playing wasn't quite good enough). I'm afraid to say that a decade has done nothing to change my opinion. It is, of course, nice to have such pieces available on CD and the very last thing I'd want to do is put anyone off exploring the vast untapped resources of surviving Fux manuscripts (there are some lovely pieces), but this I'm afraid is not one of the best and it needs to be projected with more flair to be successful! BC

André Philidor *Marches, Fêtes et Chasses pour Louis XIV* La Symphonie du Marais, Hugo Reyne 67' 47" (rec 1994)  
*Virgin veritas* 7243 5 61778 2 6 ££

This 1994 recording is just what you would want to hear when wandering at Versailles, not least because it was for that context that this music was conceived. From the large surviving repertoire, Hugo Reyne has cleverly grouped the inevitably short pieces (51 tracks!) to suggest departure for battle, the fighting, the victory and the celebrations. Amid the general alarms the recorder sonata suggesting the time of relaxation after the triumph is particularly welcome. Elsewhere, oboes, trumpets, drums and various *bruitages* hold sway, and most entertaining it all is. Even *La Folia* makes an appearance, as does *Lillibulero*, which opens a glorious Ivesian *mélange* of battle music. Other highlights include the improbably scored *Mascarade du Roy de la Chine* and a lively *Marche à 4 Timbales*. A good disc for the Christmas stocking; and having first appreciated the care and skill of Reyne's programming, do then submit to the surreal juxtapositions that 'random play' can produce! In almost any order, this is irresistible. David Hansell

Purcell *Sacred Music* The Choir of New College, Oxford, Edward Higginbottom dir, Rufus Miller T 55' 03"  
*Meridian* CDE 84432  
*Z* 10, 24, 45, 53, 131, 135, 192, 193, 504

Although dated 2000, this seems to be an unaltered reissue of Meridian CDE 84112, of 1988. Revisited, the New College trebles still give pleasure with their keen-edged timbre and their deft way with cadential ornaments, but to me they still sound too immature to make convincing soloists in such intensely dramatic music. (Readers who wish to know my views at greater length may pore over my longish article in *Early Music* 24/1 (Feb. 1996), pp. 79-92.) Such a good choir, directed with such sensitivity and acumen, should indeed be asked to record Purcell afresh; but I'd be

glad if they would focus on the full anthems, and perhaps add a few by his near contemporary Blow. Eric Van Tassel

Purcell *A Collection of Ayres* La Bande des Hautbois du Roi, Paolo Tognon cond  
*Nuova Era* NE 7346 64' 04" ££  
*Suites from Abdelaizer, Dioclesian, The Double Dealer, The Gordian Knot Untied, The Married Beau*

I enjoyed this as background music, which was how such an ensemble would surely have been treated in Purcell's time – like the informal brass-band concerts that are now a feature of Sunday afternoons in our parks, where a few fans sit and listen and the rest of us pay attention some of the time but are not inhibited from conversation. The style of orchestration (larger than the wind quartet which Purcell specifies in *Dioclesian*) is probably French rather than English. If this is really an outdoor style, is a harpsichord necessarily? CB

Purcell *The Tempest, etc* Aradia Baroque Ensemble, Kevin Mallon 76' 26"  
*Naxos* 8.554262 £  
*+ If ever I more riches* Z544, *Chacony* Z730, *Overture* Z770, *Trumpet Overture* Z630/16, *Trumpet Sonata* Z850

As a PR move, the misattribution of the anonymous *Tempest* music was its salvation. Unlike other play music of the period, it has needed little special pleading. In the Purcell anniversary celebrations of 1959, it was revived with the complete play at the Old Vic – I only remember my rather priggish disgust at the desecration of Shakespeare and not the performance as a whole. By the time I played in a performance ten years later, Margaret Laurie had shown that, apart from one song, it wasn't by Purcell. That doesn't prevent it being enjoyable in its own right, and this performance does a pretty good job at reviving it. The singing is not really top class (it wouldn't stand comparison with the best performances of genuine Purcell operas), but it has some good moments, as does the orchestral playing. It moves along well, except that the normally delightful halcyon days (only two pages in our score) drag on for seven and a half minutes. The edition (appropriately for a Toronto-based recording) is based on a Toronto MS which shows some differences from the usual score. Listeners should note that the wind machine is an authentic reconstruction. To justify the lack of question marks against Purcell on the packaging, a group of indisputably genuine and fine works are added at the end, of which the symphony-song *If ever I more riches* is the most welcome, if treated rather grandly: is it really for chorus and orchestra? CB

A. Scarlatti *Venere e Amore* Enrica Mari, Marco Lazzara SA, Giorgio Matteoli fl/dir  
*Agorá* AG 193 50' 28"  
*+ Solitudini amene* & *Sonata* 23  
A. Scarlatti *Davidis pugna et victoria* (1700) Patrizia Mora, Annamaria Calciolari, Paola Reggiani, Giorgio Erle, Sergio Foresti SSATB, Cappella Palatina, Coro della Schola S. Rocco, G. B. Columbro dir 78' 41"  
*Agorá* AG 249

The cantatas and oratorios of Alessandro Scarlatti – but not, alas, his operas – are beginning to get good representation on CD. *Solitudini amene*, a chamber cantata with obbligato recorder, seems to be new to the repertory and Enrica Mari's light soprano brings out its charm. Matteoli (who plays recorder as well as directing) adds a lively account of the Concerto, one of the seven in the Neapolitan collection dated 1725. Unfortunately the serenata *Venere e Amore* is less successful. More like a long cantata than a typical serenata, it is a curiously incestuous dialogue between Venus and her son, with vague compliments to the city of Naples. The alto role of Venus is assigned to Marco Lazzara, described as a male contralto since 'he is not a countertenor, because basically he is not a fальsettist'. In my book, however, he is a countertenor with a fruity tone and makes too matronly a Venus, but the voice is well formed, keeping just to the right side of parody. The main problem is the use of a prominent organ continuo, first noticeable in the opening sinfonia, where the recorder fails to match its pitch at several moments. The organ then becomes an instrument characterising Venus (why?), using sustained full chords when not arpeggiating as if it were a harpsichord. Slow tempos in a few of the Venus arias exaggerate the glutinous effect. Matteoli also takes the liberty of inserting twee recorder flourishes in a recitative making passing mention of 'il cantar degli augelli'. There is nevertheless much pleasure to be had from Mari's vivacious and organ-free *Amore*. A vinyl recording of the serenata dating from 1986, also with soprano and countertenor (Michelle and Henri Ledroit), has less refined playing, but comes closer to the spirit of the music.

Scarlatti's *Davidis pugna et victoria* (his only surviving Latin oratorio) has its tercentenary this year, having been produced in Rome for the jubilee of 1700. (The score was published in 1969 as Vol. 5 of Bianchi's incomplete edition of the oratorios.) It is based on the story of David and Goliath, told partly by a Narrator (Textus) – who borrows the last line of the *Aeneid* to describe the death of Goliath – but mostly through the comments of the main characters, among whom are a pessimistic Saul and an optimistic Jonathan. The choruses are especially remarkable, though they tend to outstay their welcome as a result of excessive repetition and Scarlatti's reluctance to vary the textures of the rather clotted eight-part writing. Sadly, the new and apparently first recording is a shabby affair. In his booklet note the conductor declares 'that a work which has been rediscovered should be reconstructed in a form and manner as close as possible to the original', but despite nearly a week of recording sessions (15-20 February 2000 according to the booklet) he manifestly fails to deliver such a 'reconstruction'. Woodwind are arbitrarily added to Scarlatti's perfectly self-sufficient scoring for five-part strings. (Organ continuo, which would be appropriate here, is not used.) In Part 1 the concluding ritornello of Saul's

second aria and the repeat of his earlier duet with Jonathan are omitted, though the duet is clearly designed to link with the following chorus. Several more ritornellos are missing from Part 2, though two short ones get played twice, and a solo for an anonymous Hebrew, written for soprano without indication of repetition, is first sung by a tenor and then again by a soprano. Sluggish tempos and undistinguished voices further inhibit any recommendation. I am glad I still have a tape of Jane Glover's fine BBC studio recording, broadcast in 1982 – complete, yet eight minutes shorter than Columbo's.

Anthony Hicks

**Scheidt Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht**  
Basler Madrigalisten, Ensemble Galliarda  
Basel Marianne Lüthi & Manfred Harras dir  
Cantate CAN580002 62'09" (rec 1988)  
+ White Christe qui lux

This is a potentially valuable reissue of still-neglected repertoire, but the wobbly soprano and slight stolidity of the first track is disconcerting: it is possible to sing this sort of music with greater fluidity than here, but still maintaining a steady tempo. The music sounds duller than it need be (and really is), though I must confess that after my dose of Praetorius in July, I find that the Scheidt here is less imaginative. The White is included for comparison with Scheidt's use of the melody. Useful for reminding oneself that Scheidt exists (and the instrumental playing is rather better), but his vocal music needs an airier advocacy than this.

CB

**Schenck Les Fantaisies bisarres de la Goutte**  
Lorenz Duftschmid, Sophie Watillon gambas,  
Rolf Lislevand theorbo, gtr, Wolfgang Zerer,  
hpscd, org 67'18"  
cpo 999 682-2 ££

It must have been quite a challenge for the Dutch-born Schenck to decide how to balance the opposing contemporary influences of elegant French dance music and the fiery Italian virtuosity of the Corellian school. This well-planned CD shows both these distinct sides of Schenck's musical character as well as his individuality: there's an outlandish quality about some of it that hints at the improvisatory style expected of a virtuoso player, and from all reports Schenck was such a virtuoso. So is Lorenz Duftschmid, who mostly makes light work of Schenck's wide leaps, flashing allegro figuration and complex chordal writing. He seems more at home in the overtly violinistic Italian movements, but he also effectively evokes the cultivated charm of the lilting minuets. At times one could wish for more repose, but in those movements that approach a Bach-like arioso Duftschmid produces a warm, calm cantabile. He and Sophie Watillon both play German viols contemporary with Schenck; the full-blooded grainy timbre of these instruments is well suited to this muscular music. The CD is however quite closely recorded, so that one is all too aware of the surface sound of bow on string, the heavy breathing and the most

clattering harpsichord I've heard in a long time. The best tracks are those in which Duftschmid is unaccompanied, allowing himself the space to play with the music, and enjoy its wayward harmonies. When the full continuo forces are employed the players seem to compete to create the maximum impact, leading to some vicious accents that unfortunately undermine the lyricism inherent in much of Schenck's music.

John Bryan

**Schütz Die sieben Worte Jesu Christi am Kreuz**  
London Bach Society, Collegium Sagittarii,  
Paul Steinitz; *Four Dialogues* Monteverdi  
Choir, John Eliot Gardiner 47'40"  
Cantate C 57615 (rec 1975)

How things have changed in a quarter-century! I enjoyed a lot of German music in Paul Steinitz's concerts in the 1960s, but he didn't really adjust to the changes of tempo and expression that were associated with the introduction of early instruments in the 1970s, so parts of his Seven Words sound quite dated. The opening chorus and Symphonia, for instance, are taken in crotchets, though the signature is  $\frac{2}{4}$  (except, if the Hänsler edition is right, in the top two parts of the chorus) and the male soloists are better than the sole female, Eiddwen Harrhy (who more suitable as a Handel singer). The Gardiner performances are in some ways better, but the music is dragged for spurious emotional effect. I wonder whether the performances would have been better if the continuo players (Alastair Ross is in both groups, Nigel North in the Gardiner) had taken control!

CB

**Tomkins and his contemporaries: Songs and Ensemble Music** Timothy Penrose cT,  
Eric Lynn Kelley kbd, The English Consort of Viols 66'40" (rec 1990)

Musicaphon M 56815  
Music by Byrd, Ford, Giles, Nicholson, Tomkins, Wigthorpe & anon

This, like the Byrd disc reviewed above, is considerably more successful than the Cantate Musicaphon re-issues of Scheidt and Schütz. Timothy Penrose perhaps balances voice and words a little too much in favour of the former, and is recorded a fraction too separated from the viols. He sings three Byrd consort songs (not overlapping with those on that disc), as well as Ford, Nicholson, anon and Wigthorpe's version of Dowland's *Sorrow come*. Tomkins features just as an instrumental composer, mostly with six-part viol pieces: well worth getting for those, from a composer sadly under-represented on disc.

CB

**The Art of the Bawdy Song** The Baltimore  
Consort & The Merry Companions 70'35"  
Dorian DOR 90155 (rec 1992)

This comes with stick-on label 'Parental advisory explicit lyrics' (curious grammar), presumably a promotional gimmick. It may attract juveniles, but the performers here are capable of rather better. Sometimes the singers seem to think that the repertoire

was rustic, though, at least in the way it survives, it seems to relate more to the urban world of Pepys and the like, and mummerset should be distinctly tongue-in-cheek. I suppose grown men still indulge in this sort of humour in rugby clubs (or the American equivalents), though probably without a soprano. But one or two interrupting canons is quite enough for one session, and I can't really imagine our readers wanting a whole disc of such material, despite the excellence of the performances. At a time when there is virtually no censorship, the stuff here is pretty unshocking anyway: it would only be fun if it were banned. So perhaps buy it and leave it around for children to see the stick-on label: they might then discover 17th-century music through the illicitness of hearing it.

CB

**Seventeenth Century German Harpsichord Music: the Stylus Phantasticus** Edward Parmentier hpscd 69'29"

Wildboar WLBR 9202

Music by Bohm, Buxtehude, Kerll, Krieger, Scheidemann, Schildt, Weckmann

I'm worried by the subtitle: I fear that some people may be put off by the expectation of a disc of music of gesture and patterns. There is indeed some of that, and those who, like me, enjoy it (and find it particularly suited to the harpsichord, even though one more often reads the term *stylus phantasticus* in relationship to organ music – or is it just that there is more written about German 17th-century organ than harpsichord music?) will welcome this disc. (What a long sentence!) But it provides a much wider range of music: Schildt's fine variations on *Lachrymae*, for instance, or the charming anonymous *Resonet in laudibus*. Instrument (a Keith Hill copy of a 1640 Hans Ruckers) and recording ambience match well, and Edward Parmentier truly understands the music and how to present it.

CB

My hint to Wildboar in *EMR* 63 that we'd like some of the discs to review has born fruit and four discs promptly arrived, though two of them are not reviewed so promptly and, with some other keyboard issues, are deferred till next month. This one was made in 1992, so I don't know how recent a release it is, but it is certainly worth hearing.

**Verse Anthems from Bull to Boyce** Consortium, Edward Barbieri dir, Gareth Price org 73'34"  
Deux-Elles DXL 853  
Anthems by Blow, Boyce, Bull, Child, Greene, Humfrey, Locke, Purcell, Tomkins, Weelkes, Wise

Consortium is yet another ensemble of warthogs (White And Rather Too Homogeneous Oxbridge Graduates), with the strengths and weaknesses we're used to hearing from that species. One of the strengths, in this instance, is adult sopranos who sound 'pure' enough to make good substitutes for boy trebles, and who balance well with the Anglican altos in tutti passages. The choir isn't afraid to sound decisive and, where appropriate, to wear its heart on its sleeve in dynamics and choral declamation. The programming, taking a cross-section of anthems from

c1600 to the later 18th century, isn't quite fashionable (such anthologies come more often from cathedral choirs on specialist church-music labels than from warthog groups); this selection of works shows, in fact, just how little continuity the verse-anthem genre really manifests between Bull and Boyce. The pre-Commonwealth examples are rather austere in the consort-song tradition, whilst the post-Restoration pieces show a sudden upswelling of interest in the expressive declamation of emotive texts. Greene and Boyce, however, demonstrate that Prayer Book prose (and these two texts are rather prosy) doesn't matry very well with quasi-italianate thematic material, spun out at length in a sub-Handelian manner. As a whole, though, the choice of repertoire is flawed only in wanting greater novelty. One of Gibbons's less familiar anthems instead of *This is the record of John* might have spared us a not very interesting alto falsetto solo; the CD might even have skipped Purcell completely (since Robert King has recorded almost all the anthems adequately) in order to sample the still-neglected Blow. But the Child and Wise anthems, neither of which I knew, are very welcome: Child in particular is here revealed as more imaginative than his canticle settings suggest. So on balance a very welcome release. *Eric Van Tassel*

## BACH

*Bach Cantatas 16, 98, 139* Katharine Fuge, Derek Lee Ragin, Julian Podger, Gotthold Schwarz SATB Monteverdi Choir, English Bach Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner 45' 30" Archiv 463 586-2 (rec 1998)

Three more cantatas in Eliot Gardiner's Bach sequence. Again, I found Ruth Tatlow's notes interesting in giving a human face to the music – the idea of choirboys delivering the texts like monthly paperboys, for example – and she somehow manages to get into the music without any waffle. The performances are not the best I've heard, but there are lots of lovely things. Katharine Fuge is a new name to me, and I thoroughly enjoyed her 'Hört, ihr Augen' (BWV 98:3). Likewise, Gotthold Schwarz's 'Meinen Jesu lass ich nicht' (BWV98:5). His has sometimes been a slightly gruff voice, but here the line flowed, and it was especially nice to hear a rich deep entry which wasn't lost in the instrumental accompaniment. I was surprised to find that the second violin part of the second movement of BWV 139:2 was by Robert Levin, not Bach! As if in reply to last month's criticism, the individual players and singers are listed this time. *BC*

*Bach Coffee Cantata, Peasant Cantata* Suzie LeBlanc, Brett Polegato, Nils Brown SBarT, Tafelmusik, Jeanne Lamon 52' 59" *Analekta fleurs de lys* FL 2 3136

I enjoyed this, except for wondering about the tone: how funny should these cantatas sound? There is surely a case for making the father in the Coffee Cantata sound a bit like one of the foolish basses in Italian

intermezzi? Since it was performed in a coffee house, wouldn't he have been made fun of? And what about the peasants – not just the singers, but the instrumentalists too could have made it far more of a send-up. But the joke would have worn thin after an initial hearing, so Tafelmusik and its singers maybe right just to sing the music straight. The playing is fine, and Suzie LeBlanc sounds well. Perhaps leave the fun for live performances. *CB*

*Bach The Organ Works* Helmut Walcha Archiv 463 712-2 12 CDs ££ (rec 1956-71)

My first encounter with anything that might be called historical performance practice was the Archiv recordings and the recitals given by Helmut Walcha on the Royal Festival Hall organ in the late 1950s. I longed to visit Alkmaar to hear the organ he favoured. (I've now been there twice, but seen the cheese market rather than heard the organ). I found out that Bach needed something different from the Anglican organ and RCO style of playing, and also that he had sense of humour. The RFH organ is now restored as a period-piece and Bach-playing has changed enormously. Listening to these reissues (of later recordings than the ones I first knew) enables me to trace the austerity of my taste (see, for instance, my review of the Byrd masses in this issue) and my suspicion of over-interpretation. You can sometimes listen to Walcha's figuration and mentally impose different phrasing patterns on them, whereas current practice would expect the player to make his choice and impose it on the listener. We don't now want players to sit on the fence, but to go over the top (see p. 8)! There have been previous releases from these recordings, but this comprehensive set is definitely worth acquiring, and has a much better booklet than most reissues. *CB*

*Bach Heyday in Weimar* Andrea Marcon (1619/1744 Schott/Bossart organ, Klosterkirche Muri) 59' 45" *Hänssler 92.092*  
BWV 538, 541, 45, 582, 695, 709, 711, 730, 1027/1

This is apparently the third CD that Andrea Marcon has recorded for the Hänssler Bachakademie edition, although it is the first one that I have received for review – I hope I will be sent volumes 87 and 90 as well as this one (92), for the playing is of the best. Bach's relentlessly and darkly powerful Passacaglia opens the CD, and is played more or less *pleno* throughout, as it should be. Readers who have problems with such a registration will find sufficient interest in the articulation and gentle rhetorical inflexions to grab and retain their attention throughout. The Preludes and Fugues in C (545), G (541) and the Dorian Toccata and Fugue in d (538) make up the other large scale free works on the CD, all featuring different versions of the *pleno* registrations possible in this 34-stop, two-manual organ. These are contrasted with the single-movement Trio in G (1027/1) and some gentler chorale preludes, including the little choral

fantasia on *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, delightfully played on the Rückpositive Flauto (a 4' wooden open flute). Marcon plays with conviction and a degree of risk that adds excitement to the performance – there are occasions, for example, when he seems just about to speed up, but never quite does. This works well, as it would in recital, and his improvised ornaments also add to feeling of personality behind the playing. The organ is not known to me. It was restored in the 1970s by what I take to be an Eastern European version of Metzlers, and I wonder if the restoration is to the historic standards that we would expect today. The temperament is not stated, but it can't be too far away from equal judging by the unsteady final chords (for example, the end of track 7). The winding has a degree of flexibility, but I am not sure if the percussive multi-layered chord at the end of track 5 is a result of too heavy a touch from the performer or poor regulation of the wind system. But this does not detract from an excellent recording.

*Andrew Benson-Wilson*

*Bach Clavier-Übung II* Martin Souter (Jan Ruckers hpscd 1642) 59' 03" *Classical Communications CCL CD003*  
+ 4 Duets from *Clavier-Übung III*

A wicked streak within me prompts me to subtitle this disc 'Bach in the broom-cupboard' – rarely have I heard a recording made in such a dry and unflattering acoustic. This doesn't help the 1642 Ruckers instrument to sound its best, and there are clearly some voicing problems as well. Souter's playing is worthy and reasonably neat, but not terribly dynamic or musical. Also, technical difficulties seem to show through as instabilities in rhythm and articulation. Much as I love the idea of this kind of CD, I'm sorry to say that this one is of organological interest only.

*Robin Bigwood*

*The packaging is uninformative about the music included. The front cover has J. S. Bach and the series titles (Keyboard Classics, The Metropolitan Museum of Art) with a picture of the instrument; the back cover has some prose from which one can pick out the contents, but no clear list. The other two items in the series, which we reviewed in September, were more recent issues (this is 1998) and are specific, so perhaps the inconvenience to potential buyers has already been accepted.* *CB*

*Bach English Suites BWV 806-811* Robert Levin pf 127' 56" 2 CDs in box *Hänssler CD 92.113*

I have fond memories of Levin playing Beethoven at Wigmore a few years back, and I was fully expecting this to be something really special. Whilst it is certainly one of the safest and neatest recordings of Bach I've heard in a while, it is also one of the least remarkable, and despite repeated listenings I can find little in it of interest. Bach on the piano doesn't bother me at all – in fact I'd listen to Glen Gould in preference to most harpsichordists – but Levin, on this recording, plays the piano in such a decidedly wimpy fashion that it

makes me long for a good, rattling performance on the 'proper' instrument. It is as if he's scared of the piano getting too loud, or, for that matter, too soft. Articulation is on the whole restricted to a narrow range somewhere on the dry side of *tenuto*. As a result, the preludes come across as inconsequential and reticent, the sarabandes as dry and joyless, and only the lighter gavottes, minuets and *bourrées* work at all well. The allemandes seem jolly fast to me, and lack the essential sense of line and growth. The F major allemande in particular is disturbingly devoid of any tenderness or lyricism. The best thing on the disc is the D minor prelude, but that's probably down to Bach's writing, forcing Levin for once to find some sonority and colour in the instrument. A disappointing and somewhat bizarre recording.

Robin Bigwood

Bach Harpsichord Music Céline Frisch 63' 17"  
Harmonia Mundi HMN 911707  
BWV 808, 816, 818a, 870, 912

This is something of a Bach's Greatest Hits for keyboard, and it's an exceptionally good disc. On the harpsichord, striking a balance between expressive depth and simplicity is a tricky thing to achieve, but Céline Frisch gets it bang on most of the time. Her interpretations are subtle and sophisticated, and she digs deep in the music without any hint of over-indulgence. Highlights undoubtedly include the lithe and nippy Courante from the G major French Suite, and the brilliantly clear ascending scales in the opening of BWV818a. There are some nice, innovative interpretational touches in the D major Toccata too, whilst the G minor English Suite is both graceful and, when necessary, appropriately weighty. The harpsichord, by Anthony Sidey, is good but takes some getting used to. It's a muted and dry-sounding instrument, and in the C major Prelude particularly the sound its characterised by a rather odd scraping quality, almost as if the voicing was far too strong. It doesn't last though, or maybe you get used to it. A lovely CD.

Robin Bigwood

Bach *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book II*  
Robert Levin hpscd, clavichord, org, fp 135' 59"  
Hänssler 92.117 (2 CDs in box)

Like his recording of WTC1, Robert Levin's account of the second part uses organ, clavichord, and single and double-manual harpsichords; he also adds a forte-piano, recognising the modern style of some of the second set. Levin is sensitive to the increasing emphasis on the preludes in WTC2 and achieves some lovely moments, particularly on the forte-piano: the galant F minor prelude is full of sighing nuance, while the E minor fugue exudes brisk energy and culminates in a typically Levin-esque cadenza. But Levin's harpsichord and clavichord playing are unidiomatic and somewhat disappointing. On the former, he makes insufficient nuances of articulation or shading, scrambling through the semiquavers of the G major prelude and

barely showing the slurs in the subject of the B flat major fugue. Nor does Levin exploit the full expressive potential of the clavichord: the D flat minor fugue receives a dry, humourless performance. This wariness of the instrument's capabilities can lead to rather uncommunicative playing: Levin ploughs through the G minor fugue, avoiding any rhythmic placings that would signal the craziness of the unexpected subject and countersubjects. Of course, Bach's music survives virtually any performance or medium, and a player of Levin's intelligence and musicianship is always worth hearing. But it is a shame that Levin should use such a variety of instruments for performances sometimes little different from those of mainstream concert pianists.

Stephen Rose

Bach *Concerti BWV 972-987: arrangements of various other composers' works* Peter Watchorn hpscd 150' 26" (2 CDs in box)  
Hänssler 92.111

While at Weimar, Bach transcribed many Italian concertos for harpsichord, both to satisfy his patron but also to familiarise himself with the style of Vivaldi. Peter Watchorn here records all the transcriptions on a copy of a large Harrass instrument, perhaps the closest that 18th-century Germany came to an 'orchestral' harpsichord. Watchorn plays with great virtuosity, but this is unyielding music. Vivaldi's concertos abound with semiquaver figuration and fast repeated chords that sound exhilarating on strings but transfer badly to the harpsichord. A harpsichordist colours chords by varying their spread and adding acciaccaturas: both techniques are hard to use in these transcriptions, and in slow movements Watchorn struggles with the intractable, repeated quaver chordal accompaniment. In general, he does his best to enliven unidiomatic music, although a more extrovert performer might have had greater success. For me, the Vivaldi transcriptions were blighted by my familiarity with the originals in *L'Estro Armonico*, but I greatly enjoyed Watchorn's account of a Marcello concerto in C minor and a Torelli concerto in B minor. Watchorn responds well to their multi-movement design, finishing the Marcello with a prestissimo that, if not particularly fast, is full of humour and energy. An interesting if not invaluable release.

Stephen Rose

Bach *Original and Transcription* Robert Hill  
kbd 75' 15" (2 CDs in box)  
Hänssler CD 92.110 ££  
BWV 954, 964 (cf1003), 965, 966, 968 (cf 1005),  
1006a & Hill's own version of 1001 & 100

Robert Hill first came to prominence in the 1980s as the harpsichordist for Musica Antiqua Köln and for its characterful director, Reinhard Goebel. The recordings from that era show him to be one of the fastest harpsichordists on record. He also had impeccable academic credentials with a dissertation on the early keyboard works of J. S. Bach. Since then he has built up a formidable reputation in his adopted

Germany as a fortepianist, harpsichordist and conductor; and he still cultivates his encyclopaedic knowledge of German keyboard sources. This collection of originals and transcriptions, mainly consisting of Bach's Reincken transcriptions and arrangements of five of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin, is one of several Bach recordings that Hill has produced around the time of the Bach anniversary.

Quite simply, this is as good as harpsichord playing gets: the virtuosity that Hill amply demonstrated in the 1980s is now accompanied by a subtlety, spontaneity and freedom that are virtually unparalleled in my experience. The process of arrangement that began with Bach in his Reincken transcriptions, and that was carried on by his circle with some of the violin solos, is continued by Hill in his arrangements of BWV 1001, 1004 and 1005. And his playing seems to lead on seamlessly as part of this process, the Chaconne of BWV 1004 reminding us of the excitement of the great 19th-century tradition of keyboard arrangements culminating in Busoni, but now relived in 18th-century style. Hill provides an ideal model for the ways in which historical study can provide inspiration for vital, original playing, opening up new possibilities rather than closing off the expressive instinct.

Hill performs on three instruments: a conventional harpsichord (a Taskin – which, I suppose shows more than anything Hill's distance from HIP fundamentalism); a clavichord (for some of the Reincken pieces); a lute-harpsichord for BWV 1006a (which Bach seems to have conceived for a lute-like instrument) and BWV 1001. The latter is interesting enough, although it seems to offer something halfway between the brilliance of the harpsichord and intimacy of the lute while serving neither ideal particularly well. Hill uses the clavichord for only a small selection of pieces – the liner notes suggest that he doesn't really relish this instrument and he uses it in its slightly duller, unfretted form. Yet, given Hill's technique and experience this would surely be an ideal medium for his style of performance, infinitely preferable to the experimental lute-harpsichord, I think.

John Butt

Bach *Clavier-Büchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach, 1725* Michael Behringer kbd, Sybilla Rubens S, Johannes-Christoph Happel Bar  
Hänssler CD 92.136 145' 44" (2 CDs in box)

The three miscellaneous albums of mainly keyboard music that have survived from the Bach family circle offer a fascinating insight into their domestic music-making, personal tastes and compositional processes. This complete recording of the second Anna Magdalena book, which contains large-scale partitas and suites as well as numerous short dances, chorales and arias thus has documentary as well as concert/entertainment status. The discs are recorded more or less in album order, leaving listeners to programme their own 'evening with the Bach family', which is actually quite fun. Michael Behringer does a noble job on both the monuments and the

miniatures; here and there a spread or ornament doesn't quite work, but this playing will upset no-one and, indeed, offers both excitement and humour where appropriate. Try the various *polonaises*. The vocal items are more uneven: the rather close recording does the singer no favours and the chamber organ has a rather weak bass, which leads to some strange-sounding apparent inversions – though even with just this keyboard accompaniment, *Schlummert ein* comes across as pretty special. I felt rather daunted by these 61 tracks, but in the event have greatly enjoyed them. I certainly wasn't bored!

David Hansell

Bach *The Six Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin* James Ehnes 150' 11" (2 CDs) Analekta *fleurs de lys* FL 2 3147-8

I'd seen a lot of publicity for this recording before it arrived for review, and I have to say that I would have to agree with remarks made about a phenomenal technique. The booklet notes, though, talk about the sonatas and partitas being no mere vehicles for display, but rather transcendental pieces, requiring meditation and contemplation, and (for me at least) this aspect was somewhat lacking. His tuning is excellent and he can play all the notes (and that's not as ridiculous as it sounds – some players prefer to draw polyphonic lines from the chordal passages of even the least contrapuntal movements, but here you get all the notes...) Of it's kind, this is a very fine recording of Bach's solo violin music, but it lacks Sigiswald Kuijken's composure, the fire of Lucy van Dael and Rachel Podger's combination of pleasure and fun! BC

Bach *Works for Violin & Basso continuo* George Egger vln, Boris Kleiner hpscd, fp, Ekkehard Weber gamba 64' 05" Hänsler 92.123 BWV 1019a, 1021, 1023, 1025-6

'Miscellaneous music of doubtful attribution' might have been a better title for this release in the Hänsler edition's Bach-akademie series – and the music is played in such a manner as to make it sound even less Bachlike. The opening to the E minor sonata (BWV 1023) wouldn't sound out of place on a Fritz Kreisler disc, for example. The 'Sonata BWV 1019a' is, in fact, three of the four discarded movements from different versions of BWV 1019, with one omitted because it's keyboard only (in this case, it would have been fortepiano), and that version is available elsewhere in the series. The violinist is a sound modern player, although he has that oh so annoying habit of sounding open strings and following them immediately with a beautiful third position second finger version of 'the same note'. The booklet could have been half the length simply by getting rid of the conjecture and merely giving specific references to the sources, etc. The keyboard player could perhaps explore other lefthand techniques than staccato – if a stronger, or more articulated bassline were what was required, couldn't

the gamba player have joined in (not that I'm suggesting that seriously!) For reference purposes only! BC

Bach *Concertos* The English Concert, Trevor Pinnock 295' 18" (5 CDs) Archiv 463 725-2 £ (rec 1979-84) BWV 1041-4, 1053-8, 1060-5 + arr of 1055 & 1060

What a treat! I bought three of these five CDs in their original incarnations. (Strangely for a fiddler, one of the ones I didn't have was the violin concertos set!) It seems quite strange, too, that this is part of Archiv's Collectors Edition sequence – I don't feel old enough to have been around the first time 'classic' recordings were made, but I suppose Time does march on.... They date, in fact, from my last years at university, and I can remember enjoying listening to my tape of the multiple harpsichord concertos on my bus home from St Andrews to Dundee on a Friday night – it was so bright and invigorating. I don't think I enjoyed listening to the CD for purely sentimental reasons: these are still excellent recordings by anyone's standards, thanks surely to Deutsche Grammophon's technical superiority. This is a wonderful tribute both to that and to the cutting edge roles played by Simon Standage and Trevor Pinnock, who are thankfully still as active two decades on. BC

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

Bach *Harpsichord Concertos III* Michael Behringer, etc Cologne Chamber Orchestra, Helmut Müller-Brühl 64' 27" Naxos 8.554605 £ 74' 32" BWV 1060-2, 1065, Vivaldi op. 3/10

These two discs (vols 4 & 5 of Naxos's Compete Orchestral Works) include eight concertos with various numbers of harpsichords as well as Vivaldi's original 'four-violin concerto in B minor and an attempt at reconstructing a concerto for three violins. It is very interesting to have the different versions side by side. The Cologne Chamber Orchestra is bright and more incisive than either of the bands used on the Hänsler recordings (see below). The keyboardists are well balanced; the recordings range from 1995 to 1999 – all of the sound engineers are credited on the back covers – but there is an admirable consistency of acoustic and quality. At bargain price, these fine performances will probably win out over the more expensive Hänsler in the end. BC

Bach *Harpsichord Concertos* BWV 1060-2, 1061a Robert Levin, Jeffrey Kahane hpscd, Oregon Bach Festival Chamber Orchestra, Helmuth Rilling 57' 45" Hänsler 92.129

Bach *Concertos for Three & Four Harpsichords* Robert Levin, Mario Videla, Michael Behringer, Boris Kleiner hpscds, Isabelle Faust vln, Jean-Claude Gérard fl, Bach-Collegium Stuttgart, Helmuth Rilling

Hänsler 92.130 74' 35" BWV 1963-5 + 1044 & 1050a

Volumes 129 and 130 of the Hänsler edition are far better than I confess I had imagined they might be. Really, I ought to have known better than to write off anything involving Robert Levin, even if Helmuth Rilling (of whom I am not the world's greatest fan) is conducting. The Oregon Bach Festival Chamber Orchestra is slightly the brighter of the two in terms of articulation and there's a slight element of preciousness about the non-keyboard soloists on Volumes 130. To my ears, the modern flute just does not suit Bach's music. The most interesting aspect of the performances for me was speed – none of the slow movements hang about. Also, the soloists are free and liberal with cadenzas, which is very nice. A pleasant surprise and two enjoyable discs. BC

Bach *Harpsichord Concertos* Byron Schenkman, Seattle Baroque 64' 24" Centaur CRC 2497 BWV 1052-3, 1055-6

This recording takes the Bach solo harpsichord concertos into a different dimension. All of our readers will know of my admiration for Byron Schenkman (and if proof were required, they need only read my review of his solo Handel disc below), and Seattle Baroque (four bowed strings and one plucked) take very much the same excitement into their performances. There isn't the suggestion of improvisation here, but very much a feeling of ideas bouncing back and forward. A sudden pianissimo in one of the ritornelli caught my ear at one point, which is typical of what I perceive their idea to be – let's find different ways to bring this music to life without overstepping the bounds of what was possible in the composer's day. This is the disc I'll return to for these concertos, for sure. BC

## LATE BAROQUE

Boismortier *Sérénades françaises* Laurent Le Chenadec bsn, Le Concert Spirituel, Hervé Niquet 59' 19" Naxos 8.554456 £

Anyone who resisted Niquet's previous foray into Boismortier's pastoralia really ought to give in this time. This is a more varied anthology in which an attractive chaconne and a miniature suite frame two concertos (for bassoon and for musette) and two more-extended suites featuring hurdy-gurdy and musette on one hand and flutes, oboes and violins on the other. I find this music and these performances most beguiling. Boismortier has a great facility for the production of engaging melodies and this is what, by and large, we have here. The rather mechanical passage work in the first concerto is redeemed by the sonority and by moments of artful counter-melody. In the second, the limitations of the protagonist are circumvented

by assigning to the oboe sections incompatible with the prevailing drone. But it is the dances that are the main course here, and excellent *musique de table* they make. You can always resort to *The Art of Fugue* with the brandy if greater substance is required!

David Hansell

David added after his review: 'I actually listened to this for the first time while doing the ironing, but don't think that *musique de repassage* is a term in common use, even in England.'

Clérambault *Motets pour Saint-Sulpice*  
Gérard Lesne, Mark Padmore, Josep-Miquel Ramon i Monzó ATB, Il Seminario Musicale Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45415 2 0 62' 52"

Mine cannot be the only mind in which the church of Saint-Sulpice is so strongly associated with organ music of the late and post-romantic school that the discovery (through this disc) of its musical life as a new church in the mid-18th-century will come as a shock. The church was consecrated to the sound of 80 musicians performing a *grand motet* by Clérambault; in contrast, here we have *petits motets*, some of which are enriched by violins and/or flute in addition to the continuo. These are attractive complements to the composer's more widely known cantatas, having the harmonic richness of Charpentier in the slow music and something of the vigour of Handel, with strongly contrasted themes, in contrapuntal allegros. The singers respond intelligently to the music and the texts, achieving a good balance between both themselves and the instruments. I remain unconvinced by the use of harpsichord and organ in the same piece, but that quibble apart, I enjoyed this very much. Unlike some other discs in the *Musique à Versailles* series I have reviewed recently, this is a recent recording.

David Hansell

Couperin *Un Concert Royal* London Baroque, Charles Medlam dir 56' 37" (rec 1988)  
Musicaphon M 56806  
Concerts 3, 10, 13, Sonates *La Françoise*, *La Sultane*

Now this is a re-release to welcome without any reservation! The music is wonderful (especially the gorgeously sonorous sonatas with pairs of violins and gambas!) and the playing exquisite. If only Couperin had been more prolific! If anyone is in any doubt about what I mean about music sounding French in the Rebel review below, let them listen to this – delicious harmonies, rich yet transparent sonorities (there's just something about having two bass instruments!) and, of course, Couperin's lovely melodies. Paradise!

BC

Gallo 12 *Trio Sonatas* (once attrib. Pergolesi)  
Parnassi musici

cpo 999 717-2 ££

The group's violinist Margaret MacDuffie read my apology for not being able to review this last month and kindly sent me another copy. I played it as background while checking through a large batch of e-mails and found among them one from James Ross offering a review of it he had written elsewhere, which is printed below. I enjoyed the disc very much: did Stravinsky really take the best tunes, or is it just familiarity that makes them more memorable? CB

These delightful pieces, formerly passed off as the work of Pergolesi but now recognised as the music of a relatively obscure Venetian composer of the 1750s, make an extremely satisfactory set of chamber items. They are played here with great love, finesse, elegance and technical assurance by the German-based ensemble Parnassi Musici and highlight the fact that in the mid-18th century Europe was awash with this sort of attractive and inventive music, poured forth by musicians who would mostly never achieve the recognition they deserved. While much of such repertoire is relatively formulaic, Gallo's trio sonatas are not particularly clichéd and have a pleasant degree of melodic invention. It is this quality above all which the ensemble bring to the fore in their expressive playing.

D. James Ross

Handel *Harpsichord Variations* Byron Schenkman 72' 23"  
Centaur CRC 2436  
HWV 428/5, 430, 432, 434-6, 440

The first time I listened to this all the way through, I was bored to tears. I don't know quite what was wrong with me – maybe I just wasn't in the mood for Handel, or suites of harpsichord music. But every time since then, I've never ceased to marvel at how Schenkman can take music I've known for ever and make it sound as if he's making it up! There's always in my mind a concert I attended in Boston some years ago when it felt as if he'd just sat down at the keyboard and improvised 'in the style of', knowing all the while that it was the real thing. That is never quite going to come over on a CD, but the way he lingers over cadences ever so slightly, or sticks in a couple of glitzy little ornaments here or there to catch you unawares is compelling – more than that, it's entertaining. Full marks (again!) BC

Jomelli *Miserere* 'Pietà, signor'; 5 *duetti sacri* Sylvia Pozzer, Giovanna Manci SS, La Magnifica Communità, Maurizio Ciampi org & cond. 59' 20"  
Nuova Era 7330 ££

I had not expected the best from this CD; that's how sceptical I am of Italian recordings of Ancient Music. Although it is not among the best of the discs I've heard this month, I was very pleasantly surprised by both the quality of the music and the performances. The *Miserere* is for two sopranos with five string players, organ and harpsichord. Of the seven movements, Nos. 1, 4 and 7 are duets, with solo arias for the sopranos in between (shared so as to complete a symmetrical arch). The sacred duets set Italian verses from various psalms and are performed with organ continuo. The texts are given in Italian only, although Biblical references are noted. Worth getting hold of if you're at all interested in this period.

BC

Porpora *Ouverture Royale*, *Salve Regina*, *Magnificat*, *Laudate pueri* Susanna Rigacci,

Chiara Angella, Marco Lazzara, Gregory Bonfatti, Lisandro Guinis SSATB, Capella S. Cecilia della Cattedrale di Lucca, orchestra da camera del Teatro del Giglio di Lucca, Gianfranco Cosmi dir 69' 51"  
Bongiovanni GB 2249-2

This CD includes live performances of three pieces of church music and a Royal Overture by another under-recorded composer. Sadly, it will do nothing for his profile. The playing is very heavy indeed and the singing far too approximate for a serious commercial venture. The soloists warble (the men are far better than the women, but the opera house is surely whence most of them came) and the choir screech. The *Salve Regina* is a bizarre piece (if this performance is to be taken as a fair representation of the source). There is a nice violin solo in the 'A solis ortu' of the *Laudate pueri*, but that's about all I can find to praise – apart from Porpora's music! Let's hope some more stylish Neapolitans take time to re-explore this material. BC

Rebel *Sonates pour le Violon* (1713), Suite in G (1705) Ingrid Matthews vln, Byron Schenkman hpscl, Margriet Tindemanns gamba Wildboar WLBR 9602 53' 52"

I've enthused in these pages on many occasions about these performers, so it may come as a surprise to most readers that my initial reaction to this particular CD was not very positive. Somehow the playing was too bright, too pointed, yes, too aggressive. It will come as more of a shock, perhaps, that I sought refuge in the *Harmonia Recording* by Andrew Manze. Somehow the softer focus seemed more appropriately French. However, I've come around to the feeling that the two are just very different and that it was a classic case of not recognising (or enjoying) something you've come to love when it appears in a new guise. Yes, there is something quite Italian about this new set, but that isn't really a problem, and with players of this standard it wasn't going to take long to convince of that. Still, I'll keep both sets to hand – I wouldn't want to be without either, and there are only two overlapping pieces anyway.

BC

Telemann *Ouverture comique* Collegium Musicum 90, Simon Standage 67' 28"  
Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0661  
Concerti in e rec, fl, A 2 ob d'am, Bb vln  
Ouvertures TWV 55: D22, fis 1

The only familiar piece on the latest installment of Collegium Musicum 90's Telemann series is the concerto for flute and recorder, brilliantly executed by Rachel Brown and Peter Holtslag, with an extra bit of Polishness in that jazziest of final allegros. Simon Standage continues his exploration of the solo violin concerto repertoire (will he and Michaela Comberti be bringing us more of the double violin concertos soon, too?) and Anthony Robson and James Eastaway are the soloists in the charming A major concerto for two oboes d'amore (it would nice if this could be followed by the D major work with added

solo cello). The two orchestral suites are one for strings only in F sharp minor and a D major overture – the latter called tragique on the manuscript. Each of the dance movements has a French subtitle as well as a traditional descriptive title (e.g. *Le Podagre, Loure*). Three trumpets and a pair of drums are added to the strings. Telemann uses some untypically piquant harmonies (especially in the *Lentement* of the Ouverture). These are wonderful Telemann performances and I hope Chandos will continue to record more – I'd be especially interested in hearing cantatas sung one voice per part, or perhaps even one of the many unrecorded passions. Surely no-one needs convincing of Telemann's rightful claim to wider popularity nowadays! BC

**Vivaldi Violin Concertos op. 6; The Cuckoo** (RV 335) Andrew Manze, Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood 58' 33" Decca 455 653-2

On its own terms these are spirited, enjoyable performances of some of Vivaldi's lesser known concertos (assuming they are all by Vivaldi, that is: I have my doubts about the suspiciously short and pretty undistinguished Op.6 No.4). Andrew Manze's playing is, as always, polished and stylish, by turns impressively virtuosic and tenderly expressive, especially in the slow movements accompanied by continuo only.

But I have serious reservations about 'big band' Vivaldi concertos, which bear as much resemblance to the composer's expectations as does the use of large choirs in Bach cantatas. The original publication of Op.6 (c.1719) was issued with just six parts, for the soloist, two more violins and a viola, plus two copies of *Organo e Violoncello* (one for each of them, presumably). This is the standard format for Venetian concertos of the period, and there is plenty of evidence to show that one-to-a-part performance by exactly those instruments named (with no supernumeraries such as a double bass or archlute) was taken for granted. Such sets of parts were simply not designed for 'orchestral' performance, which is impossible without first preparing and editing a score, deciding which strands of the music should be played by whole sections and which by soloists, where and when not to add a double bass to the continuo team, and so on. I can't believe that 18th-century composers and publishers expected their customers to go to all that trouble every time! The inflation of Op.6 No.3 on this recording is particularly unjustified, for it is simply not true, as the programme booklet claims, that 'in both of its outer movements the orchestral (sic) violins are treated as a single part' and 'in the finale... the principal violin merges with the other violins'. In the original print, violins 1 and 2 are explicitly marked *tacet*, making clear that these movements are trios for a single violin, viola and continuo. The alleged 'inconsistency in the treatment of the principal violin' is not of Vivaldi's making!

Another grumble: the pitch used here is the usual standard 'baroque'  $a' = 415$  Hz (itself an example of the regrettable

uniformity to which CB alluded in his September editorial). But all 18th-century writers agree that Venetian pitch was much higher than elsewhere. The Venetian oboist Ignazio Riom had to transpose down a whole tone when playing in Rome. So why do people play Vivaldi at low pitch, when it would be nearer the mark to use the modern  $a' = 440$  Hz? Richard Maunder

cannot quite put my finger on why that should be. It might be a slightly 'brighter' recording. Perhaps the recorder playing is just a little 'part of the sound' (since the Musica Pacifica player isn't a guest artiste). I really don't know. In an ideal world, I would recommend anyone interested in Mancini (in particular) should have both!

BC

**Vivaldi Sonatas for Violoncello** Aner Bylsma, Francesco Galligioni vlc, Uvano Zanenghi archlute, Alessandro Sbragò violone, Andrea Marcon kbd 75' 10" Sony SK 51350 Paris 1740 set: RV 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47

This CD has six of Vivaldi's sonatas for cello and continuo played in a variety of scorings (RV 46 and 47, both in B flat major, have violone as well as cello, archlute and organ, while RV 40 has two cellos with harpsichord and RV 41 has two cellos with archlute). As one would expect from a cellist of Aner Bylsma's reputation, these performances are authoritative and stylish, if slightly understated. The only chink in the armour is a very occasional sharpness when bold bow strokes were applied to the lower strings. Although my first choice for these pieces will remain Pieter Wispelwey with Florilegium, I'm happy to recommend this CD to others. BC

**Zelenka Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetae** Ulla Groenewold, Hein Meens, Max van Egmond ATB, Academy of the Begynhof, Roderick Shaw dir 63' 32" Globe GLO 6051

This is a re-release of a 1990 recording. It would have had to be very good to knock my current favourite recording (The Chandos Baroque Players on Hyperion) from its pedestal. There, wonderfully expressive instrumental playing was matched by crisp declamation of the extensive recitative passages and beautifully fluid 'arias'. Here, although the playing is good, it is not quite as good, and the singing is slightly weak – which this music really cannot bear. To my ears, van Egmond rushes over passages of text which need more attention and Meens' voice is simply too slight. Good, then, but not the best. BC

**Concerti di Napoli** Rebel (Matthias Maute rec, Jorg-Michael Schwarz, Karen Marie Marmier vlns, John Moran vlc, Dongsok Shin hpscd) 64' 41" Dorian DOR 90286

Sonatas by Mancini, A. Scarlatti & Valentini Nos. 2, 6-8, 13, 17, 23 of Naples MS

There have been a spate of recordings of this repertoire recently – this one strangely from a company which issued one only last month which overlaps slightly in the choice of pieces. The source should now be known by all our readers, so I really only need say that most pieces are scored for recorder (various sizes are used here), two violins and continuo. I've enjoyed Rebel's recordings in the past and this one is no less successful, but I have to say that I prefer the Musica Pacifica set, although I

**Concerti per violoncello, archi e cembalo** Davide Amadio vlc, Interpreti Veneziani 56' 01" Rivo Alto CRR 9814

**Rossini Une Larme: tema con variazioni;** Tartini Concerto in D; Vivaldi RV 407, 413, 418

This is a curious disc. Clearly the Interpreti Veneziani (quite rightly) wanted to showcase their star cellist, Davide Amadio, so looked around for relevant repertoire. The Vivaldi concertos are well done, though it seems slightly strange not to have a continuo cello (the band's line up is six violins, viola, double bass and harpsichord). This is more problematic in the Tartini, where the bass part is slightly more melodic and the growling double bass just can't get to some of the notes in time (I'm sure the player is quick enough, but his strings just don't have time to speak). The Rossini is lots of fun (I'm sure Shostakovich must have known this before he wrote some of his film music), and this strikes me as being the Interpreti Veneziani's thing – more Goldberg Suite than Goldberg, if you like. Something for Italians to get their heart and souls into. Fine cello playing, indeed, but not really for me. BC

## CLASSICAL

**C. P. E. Bach Six keyboard sonatas for harpsichord & fortepiano** Carole Cerasi 67' 27" Metronome MET CD 1032 W65/5, 12, 20, 44, 47, 48

Why has the music of C.P.E. Bach been so badly neglected, given that the wealth of invention that flowed from his quill can be said to rival that of his father? The low profile accorded to it in recital programmes (*etiam mea culpa*) is not just attributable to the idiom of his musical language, one which sits uncomfortably (for us) between baroque and classic. The stumbling block for us performers is probably the mental effort required to convey the wit and flamboyance of his music. Carole Cerasi rises to the challenges of this repertoire extremely well, with a motley collection of sonatas taking in a chronological span of six decades. She elicits the most wholesome of sounds from the Mietke and Stein copies. I'm grateful that she hasn't thrown in a clavichord for good measure: the change in volume levels would have made listening in one sitting tiresome. Carole Cerasi is well on her way to joining the pantheon of the grandes dames of the clavecin world, such as Blandine Verlet, Christiane Jacottet, and Huguette Dreyfus, renowned for their elegant playing. If you have her first CD, you'll want to have this as well.

Kah-Ming Ng

Biscogli *Concerto per tromba, oboe, fagotto, violini e continuo*; G. B. Sammartini *Sinfonie I* Virtuosi Italiani 53' 31" Bongiovanni GB 5606-2

The four pieces by G. B. Sammartini are thoroughly enjoyable – a pair of sinfonie for strings and a pair with added horns, with no indication of sources, played in a straightforward, no-nonsense way, without the great rallentandi at the ends of movements which can sometimes spoil some Italian recordings. The disc is worth having for these alone. The Biscogli concertos are something of an oddity. In some ways, they are Italy's answer to Brandenburg No. 2, although the three wind instruments work independently of the band for the most part and there are several extended cadenza passages by one Nicola Samale. While I might return to Sammartini, I don't think I'll be drawn back to Biscogli. BC

Brixius *Judas Iscariotus: Oratorium pro die sacro Parasceves* Ludmila Vernerova, Pavla Ksikova, Jiri Vinklarek, Miloslav Podskalsky SATB, Chamber Chorus of Prague, Musica Bohemica, Jaroslav Krcek cond. 79' 28" Panton 71 0372-2 (rec 1995)

Throughout this recording, I kept trying to picture myself at the first performance. For sure, it would have sounded nothing like this, but the congregation must have been taken aback by the strange instrumental sounds – Death (the solo alto) is accompanied by two tenor oboes (the sleeve notes say solo French horns, but I think they may mean English) – and by the quite astonishing coloratura writing for the soprano (especially if contemporary cadenzas soared into the stratosphere as here). Of course it is good to have such pieces available on CD, but a lighter touch in every respect would have helped enhance Brixius's reputation. The choir only appears in the final Amen fugue: I have to ask why a choir is needed anyway – surely the four soloists would have been fine? – and the sopranos (in particular) snatch at the high notes. The playing is good on the whole (one wouldn't expect less from Czech performers) and the solo singing okay. The recitatives simply lack any life or soul, and the arias are just too expansive for the chosen tempi. Even slightly faster, they might still outlast their welcome. The alto aria with cor anglais (?) is very attractive, though. Brixius deserves wider notice – and slightly better service from the Czechs! BC

Cimarosa *Il Maestro di Cappella; Pergolesi Il maestro di musica* Karen Antje Vogel, Timothy Simpson, Christian Tschelebiew STE, Putbus Festival Orchestra & Chorus, Wilhelm Keitel 54' 51" Arte Nova Classics 74321 72121 2 £

These two pieces are probably more interesting for their subject matter (the music business) than for their music. The Cimarosa is an *intermezzo giocoso* but, at over 19 minutes, it's at least 14 minutes too long. The Pergolesi, complete with intertwined spoken text, is similarly not the most

thrilling piece ever written. The performances are fine, given the material the players and singers are working with. Curiosity value may sell this, but I doubt if the disc will hit the Classic fm chart. BC

Gluck *Iphigénie en Tauride* Christine Goerke *Iphigénie*, Rodney Gilfry *Oreste*, Vinson Cole *Pylade*, Stephen Salter *Thoas*, Sharon Baker *First priestess, Greek woman*, Jayne West *Second Priestess, Diana*, Boston Baroque, Martin Pearlman dir. Telarc CD 80546 133' 43" (2 CDs in box)

This strikes me as a good but not outstanding performance of Gluck's masterpiece. Martin Pearlman directs it with evident love and respect; tempi are sound, the drama is well conveyed, the singers are inside their roles, and most of them manage passable French. Christine Goerke does not achieve quite the vocal impact of Diana Montague on the Gardiner recording, being edgy at times, though eloquent at others. Rodney Gilfry and Vinson Coles are both very fine. The chorus is happier at being angry Scythians than Diana's priestesses. What I miss is the directness of utterance, the burning conviction of Gardiner's Philips recording. The new Telarc claims to be the first to use period instruments; the gain in clarity and freshness of sonority would be greater, given more vivid and precise attack. Any reader who has noticed the long playing-time must be disabused: the second disc closes with nearly half an hour of talk by the director (illustrated by excerpts). This device served a purpose with the recording of the then recently-discovered *Der Stein der Weisen* (EMR 55, November 1999, pp22-3); but one need not play this track more than once.

Peter Branscombe

Haydn *Symphonies Vol. 5: 70-81* Austro-Hungarian Haydn Orchestra, Adam Fischer 242' (4 CDs in box) Nimbus NI 5652/5

Five of these symphonies were included in Hogwood's AAM set that I reviewed in the September issue (p32), though there is little point in comparing the period-instrument performances of Hogwood and his colleagues with the modern instruments of the Austro-Hungarian Orchestra. These are doughty readings, large-scale, busy, detailed, and in the case of pages in the slow movement of 76, for instance, and the first of 78 (C minor), properly fiery. The Haydn Hall at the Eisenstadt Palace is a marvellous venue when there is an audience present, though without, as here, detail occasionally blurs, and the impact strikes me as over life-sized. But this is an impressive issue, with some wonderful, under-appreciated symphonies coming across in all their vitality and wit. As Hans Keller said, 'there is nothing new under the sun, if you know your Haydn'. Peter Branscombe

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

Haydn *Complete Piano Trios, Vol. 2 (Hob. XV:11-14)* Trio 1790 74' 30" cpo 999 467-2

This disc is recorded in a resonant acoustic and the excellent sonority of the instruments presents a texture that is almost orchestral at times. The performers take an extrovert view of these trios and apt tempi ensure that the musical impetus is fully maintained. Occasionally, however, one looks for more tonal and dynamic refinement, especially at moments when Haydn is being reflective rather than hearty. These competent performances cannot quite match the musicianship of the Beaux Arts trio playing these works on modern instruments.

Margaret Cranmer

Kraus *Complete Symphonies, vol. 3* Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Petter Sundkvist 63' 05" Naxos 8.554777 £

There are only two proper symphonies on this CD: the C sharp minor, with its strangely austere chromatic opening, and the E minor. The C minor is literally a funeral symphony consisting of four slow movements, including a chorale setting. Once again, the playing is very good (Vol. 1 won a Cannes Classical Award in 1999) and the choice of tempo judicious. I'm not sure I would recommend the entire CD at one sitting – one of my visitors asked me to turn it off before she reached for a sharp knife! A bit melo-dramatic, perhaps, but small doses might be best! BC

Mozart *Piano Quartets K 478, 493 & 452 Sonnerie* (Gary Cooper, Monica Huggett, Emilia Benjamin, Alison McGillivray) ASV *Gaudamus* CD GAU 212 75' 53"

This fine Mozart playing is full of character with interpretations that have been well conceived and rehearsed. The transcription of the quintet for piano and four wind instruments is excellent, although those who know the original well will miss the horn flourishes at the end of the Allegro moderato because a viola has such a different sonority. The strings achieve beautifully controlled quiet playing in the larghetto when they are accompanying the forte piano and join it in a fine, slow, crescendo. Liberties are taken with the pulse in the last movement in line with the players' view of its structure, with a longish pause on the rest before the cadenza, which is marked *in tempo* but is played very freely so that their accelerando towards the final climax is more marked. The performances of the original quartets are super, although I am not sure that some of the shorter decorative additions really add to the music overall. Highly recommended.

Margaret Cranmer

Naumann *Psalms 96 & 103* Bettina Eismann, Elisabeth Wilke, Werner Güra, Egbert Junghanns SATB, Körner'scher Sing-Verein Dresden, Dresden Instrumental-Concert, Peter Kopp 54' 09" Ars Musici AM 1277-2 + Cantata *Kommt herzu & Overture to Gustaf Wasa*

I was very enthusiastic in reviewing these forces in an earlier recording of two Naumann masses (AM 1178-2: see *EMR* 33, p. 27) and the present recording happily repeats all the virtues of that set. The orchestral playing (shown off to great advantage in the opening track, the overture to Naumann's epic *Gustaf Wasa*) is excellent, as is the choral sound: the four parts balance beautifully. I have to confess that, listening without the booklet or a score for guidance, it was difficult to say when one psalm had ended and the other begun (and which particular movement was the cantata *Kommt herzu!*), and that the music sounded slightly operatic rather than churchy, but that is not to criticise the performers. There are plenty of opportunities for the soloists to shine and this they mostly do: the bass was sometimes a little Don Alfonso-esque. Naumann's music is truly worthy of rediscovery at a time when Mozart's contemporaries are throwing up relatively few real gems. Highly recommended. BC

**Paisiello** *Stabat mater* Ermonela Jaho, Sonia Prina, Alessandro Codeluppi, Nikola Mijailovic *SmSTB*, Corsarara, Giuseppe Camerlingo *dir* Agorà AG 251 52' 11"

+ Sequence *Alleluia in aeternum* & 3 *Tantum ergo*

This CD is interesting in bringing to wider notice a re-working of what has always struck me as one of the least interesting pieces of mid-18th-century church music (the *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi). The solos are shared among four singers and the orchestration is considerably spiced up. I regret to say that all of Paisiello's efforts were wasted as far as I am concerned. The *Alleluia in aeternum* is very well sung, and bright and cheerful; the *Tantum ergo* are rather duller affairs and the soprano is not as successful as the alto in projecting the lines. As far as the playing goes, it sounds like a period instrument orchestra trying to sound modern (i.e. exactly the opposite to what we normally hear and, I suspect, expect!) and it was not always 100% convincing. Choral societies might like to take up the *Stabat Mater* as a change from their normal fare. BC

**Portugal** *Le donne cambiate* Ana Paula Russo, Ana Ferraz, Jorge Vaz de Carvalho, Luís Rodrigues, Alberto Lobo da Silva, Nuno de Villalonga, City of London Sinfonia, Álvaro Cassuto 69' 16" Marco Polo 69' 16"

This disc arrived rather coincidentally on the same day as I'd been chatting to a Portuguese guy on the Internet about 18th-century music in that country. I'd never heard of Marcos Portugal, let alone *Le donne cambiate*. The CD consists of the arias and ensemble numbers from the sole surviving manuscript – there are no recitatives (not too unfamiliar a situation with opera scores of this period), and the Portuguese text has been replaced using a Florentine manuscript (the notes don't make clear if it's a musical manuscript), and two printed libretti. The music is very pleasant indeed, with some nice singing

from a totally unknown cast. Portugal's historical importance seems to be based upon his development of ensemble singing (in the theatrical sense) and in the introduction of Rossinian (if that's not too *cart-before-the-donkey-ish!*) coloratura. As the title ('a farce') suggests, the story is rubbish, and there is some buffo nonsense, but there are enough good tunes to make this enjoyable listening. BC

**Soler** 6 *Concertos for Two Organs* Gareth Price, Graham Howell (1978 Tamburini and 1996 Tickell organs, Douai Abbey, Woolhampton, Berkshire) 61' 34" Deux-Elles DXL883

As an example of English church bookstall recordings, this would receive a glittering review, but in the tough old world of the more specialist early music scene, it gets a more hard-headed going over. Firstly the organs. The 1978 Tamburini was one of a number of organs imported from the continent in the 1970s. They were influential at the time, largely because they introduced many English organists to the concepts of unequal temperaments, flexible winding systems and sensitive mechanical actions. However, history has not been kind to many of them, and they are generally now seen more as representatives of a neobaroque style that was dying out on the continent, but was only just crossing the channel to England. Even their historic precedents have not moved far into the mainstream English organ – the more recent Kenneth Tickell organ at Douai, although fine by most English church organ standards, is far removed from the sort of modern historically inspired organ that is a commonplace in many other European countries, with its eclectic specification that owes allegiance to no one historical school and more or less equal temperament. So why record Spanish 18th-century music on these two organs? The repertoire for two organs is admittedly limited, but it is reduced to nil when you consider that one organ is loosely based on 17th-century Italian models and is in an unequal temperament, and the other is a typical new English church organ of the 1990s.

As far as the playing is concerned, there is much to praise, not least surmounting the complexities of making the recording in the first place. The two organs, although not too far from each other, are not quite in the same acoustic space, the smaller Italian organ speaking across the width of the narrow choir, while the larger Tickell organ speaks across one end of the vast new extension to the 1930s Abbey church. Keeping time with each other, which they do most of the time, must have been very tricky. But the players show little sign of familiarity with historic conventions of performance and the subtleties of touch or articulation. They are also not the first English organists to confuse the Spanish organ stop *Flautado* with the English *Flute*: although admittedly having a fluty edge to their tone, the *Flautado* is the Spanish equivalent of the English *Diapason*, the German

Principal, French *Montre* or Italian *Principale* – the case pipes of the organ. The production (by the two performers) also raises questions, particularly in the loss of acoustic background between tracks and the extended pauses between variation movements that lose the flow of the musical structure. That said, Soler's music is great fun, and if you are a fan of late 20th-century English and Italian organs, or a supporter of Douai Abbey, you might want to own this CD. But do listen to the CD of a similar repertoire by Mr and Mrs Koopman before you invest in this.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

**Concerti and Chamber Music** David Watkins *harp*, Simon Standage, The Salomon Quartet Meridian CDE 84425 71' 17"

J. C. Bach *Sinfonia concerto in G op. 1/4* [NOT no. 3], *Sonata 6 in Bb (hp, vln, vlc)*; Haydn *Concerto in C H.XVIII.5* [NOT H. 15.3]7, *Trio in F H XV:40*; Mozart *Adagio & Rondo K617a*

This is a delightful disc. The harp enjoyed considerable popularity at the end of the 18th century and David Watkins has arranged over an hour's worth of lovely music which would undoubtedly have attracted amateur and professional players alike. He is a particularly fine performer – the trills in his cadenza to the first movement of J. C. Bach's *Sinfonia Concerto* are amazing (to my uninitiated ears, at least!) The Salomon Quartet seem sometimes slightly ill at ease, perhaps consciously trying not to overpower the harp. The Haydn Concerto is perhaps the least successful piece – I wanted more tone (weight?) from the strings, which could only come from a larger group. That said, it rounds off a fine recital which makes for very easy listening. BC

18th Century Viola Concertos Vidor Nagy *vla*, Kurpfälzisches Kammerorchester, Jiri Malat Koch 3-6755-2 52' 52" A. Stamitz in Bb, J. Stamitz in G, Sperger in D

The viola enjoyed something of a late-18th-century purple patch. Three very good concertos don't quite fill this disc, so another would have been welcome, or perhaps even the Mozart *Sinfonia concertante*, just to show that it wasn't only obscure composers who were attracted to the richer tone! I have to confess that I've never heard of Vidor Nagy, but he is a fine player, equally dexterous in the fast passages and mellifluous in the more *cantabile* movements. He's well supported, especially in the later pieces, where oboes and horns help to articulate the *tutti*. All of my viola pupils will be made to buy it! BC

## 19th CENTURY

**Beethoven** Four *Piano Sonatas on Period Instruments* Ursula Dütschler (on copies of 1805 Walter fp) 72' 57" (rec 1996) Claves CD 50-2004

op. 10/2, 14/2, 27/1, 31/1

I am delighted to award top marks to this absolutely first-rate recording. Dütschler

has a wonderful feeling for the young Beethoven's quirky originality and humour and is not afraid to push the instruments to the limit in the violent dynamic contrasts, as I'm sure the composer himself would have done. Her playing is imaginative, exciting, expressive and technically impeccable, and it is a joy to hear such scrupulous attention to Beethoven's detailed articulation markings, especially the sharp staccatos characteristic of Viennese fortepianos of the late 18th century (and quite impossible, of course, on a Steinway). Dütschler is one of the very few fortepianists I have heard who reserves the knee-levers (damper-raiser and 'moderator') for special effects, to be applied to whole phrases rather than to individual notes. The results are much more colourful and convincing than the grey uniformity of those who unthinkingly transfer their anachronistic modern pedalling technique to the fortepiano.

It's a bit naughty of Claves to claim 'period instruments' when those used on this record were all made in the 1990s. All three are said to be 'after Walter, 1795' although the date 'c.1790' is also quoted in the programme booklet. It's hard to tell from the photos, but I suspect they are all based on the instrument in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, that Michael Latcham dates 'c.1800' in his 'Mozart and the pianos of Gabriel Anton Walter' (*Early Music*, Aug. 1997). No matter: they all sound well, with very little audible difference between them. Personally, I prefer the slightly brighter tone of the McNulty.

Richard Maunder

*Weber Horn Concertino, Overtures, Symphonies Nos 1 & 2* Anthony Halstead hn, Hanover Band, Roy Goodman 110' 47" (2CDs) Nimbus NI 7062/3 (rec 1986/88)  
6 Overtures & *Invitation to the Dance* (orch Berlioz)

The disc with the six overtures (along with the Berlioz arrangement of *Invitation to the Dance*) dates from 1988, the one with the symphonies and horn concerto from two years earlier. Both discs suffer from the over-reverberation of an empty acoustic, particularly the one containing the overtures (All Saints, Tooting), but the performances are unfailingly lively, with a splendid rasp to the trombones and horns, and with felicitous attention to the numerous wind solos; the string tone is alert and neatly articulated. Anthony Halstead's nimble, stalwart playing of the taxing concerto gives a new meaning to the phrase 'plumbing the depths'; he is equally adept at scaling the heights. Peter Branscombe

*Mr. Madison's Crystal Flute: Solos and duos for flute and guitar* Rob Turner (1813 flute by Laurent), Frank Wallace (1854 guitar) PDI Recordings PDI CD 12022 65' 36"

If you don't mind a bit of American sentimentality, this is quite an interesting recording of early-19th-century Parisian flute music played on an original crystal 1813 Claude Laurent flute, a gift to the music-loving American President James Madison. Having changed hands a number

of times, this simple-system instrument now resides at the Library of Congress. In celebration of its history, this disc was recorded in the 'Madison-era dining room' at the Madison home in Montpelier, Virginia. Musically, the content is, in truth, less than riveting – a collection of charming but quite unmemorable salon duos for flute and guitar by Carulli and Molino (respectively Italian and Spanish guitarists who worked in Paris), and two short studies by the French flautist and teacher Louis Drouet. Unsurprisingly, the guitar parts sound far more exciting than the flute parts, which tend to consist of lots of scales, arpeggios and fancy patterns without ever really being virtuosic. The playing is nice from both soloists, and the recording quality is good, but this is probably more a disc of historical interest than one for repeated listening.

Marie Ritter

## VARIOUS

*Blessed spirit: music of the soul's journey* Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Tim Brown Collegium COLCD 127 71' 10" Chant, Byrd, Hildegard, Sheppard, Schütz Victoria & others

I requested this chiefly because I thought it might be helpful for the notes I should by now have written for the choir's Spitalfields Christmas Festival concert, though in fact the programmes do not relate. The pieces I found most striking were from the 20th century: a very simple Psalm 121 (though not the *Requiem aeternam* that was linked to it) by Walford Davies, with a lovely pure soprano solo (Vanessa Huntly) and Tavener's mesmeric *Funeral Ikos*. Listening to the disc first time through without the crib-sheet, the former was unplaceable, but the composer of the latter was utterly obvious). It is nice that chant is included.\* I do enjoy these mixed anthologies, though when I have a little more time I must try to formulate why it is nearly always the more recent pieces that come over best.

CB

\* It is also pleasing that the disc of hymn arrangements by John Rutter, Tim Brown's predecessor at Clare, issued simultaneously (COLCD126) includes far more plainsong than one might expect in a collection of otherwise popular material.

CB

*Cathedral Voices: Great Sacred Choruses* 152' 07" (2CDs) Virgin Classics 7243 5 61788 2 3

One of those anthology/sampler discs that it is fun to play as background since the variety is stimulating and you encounter music that you may never meet otherwise, though that applies more here to disc 2, which is post-Baroque. The extracts are taken from discs of repute, those in disc 1 (with the earlier repertoire) mostly being by the Taverners and the Gabrieli. The title is odd, since very little of the music was written for cathedrals and the only cathedral choir in evidence is Winchester. There are some complete pieces (including Hugh Keyte's first, and now superseded, investigation of Allegri's *Miserere*). CB

## SAMPLERS

*Scène pour l'Art 2000* 76' 02" Glossa GCD 920009

A distinctive feature of this sample of 22 tracks from recent Glossa releases is that the booklet gives for each a www address which takes you straight to the full details of the CD from which it comes, and enables you to read the complete booklet. The flip side that one can see is that eventually it might be thought cheaper to issue all CDs with such references instead of a printed booklet, but taken this far the idea is a sensible one.

*The Essential Hyperion* – 2. 156' 48" (2CDs) Hyperion HYP20

We have mentioned the Hyperion 20th anniversary already (see p. 1). This is an attractive reminder of the wide range and excellence of their catalogue: 51 items from Gothic Voices to The New London Orchestra, each of whom contribute the two anonymous items in the set: *Dulcia dona redemptoris* and *The Arkansas Traveller*. In another sense, we regress from 1749 (Handel's Firework's Music on track 1) to 1740, *Rule, Britannia*, the last track of disc 2. I defy anyone to listen right through this selection and not feel the urge to go out and buy some discs. The booklet includes a note warning prospective customers not to believe shops who say discs are deleted: it often merely means that they are not on the shops' own database.

CB

## GRAMOPHONE AWARDS

This is the first year that we have known for some weeks in advance what the results were, so I suppose it is some sign that *Early Music Review* is achieving wider recognition. I expect all our readers will have heard the results by now (two are mentioned on p. 1). We list the three early music winners below. Is it cynical to wonder whether the Byrd would have been quite so successful if the voting critics had had to buy the seven-disc set? A single-disc selection will be available in the new year.

### Early Music

*Byrd Complete Keyboard Works*. Davitt Moroney Hyperion CDA666551/7

### Baroque Vocal

*Handel Acis and Galatea* Les Arts Florissants, William Christie Erato 3984-25505-2

### Baroque Instrumental

*Pandolfi Mealli Complete Violin Sonatas* Andrew Manze vln, Richard Egarr hpscd Harmonia Mundi HMU 907241

£ = bargain price ££ = mid-price

Other discs are full price, as far as we know

## LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

I was very interested in your article in *Early Music Performer* about the genesis of King's Music. It answered a few (though not by any means all) of my questions about how you manage to achieve so much in a mere twenty-four-hour day.

I was also interested to learn that, like me, you use PMS on an Acorn. I don't produce a fraction of the output that you do, but I do like the programme, and did all the examples for my harpsichord book on it – largely because Sibelius, which we tried, wouldn't accept three parts on one stave, which is absolutely essential in e.g. French harpsichord music. (Maybe it will do it now, but the choice has been made.)

Yes, it is quite hard to set keyboard parts in PMS, but it is harder, if not impossible, to write keyboard parts, and I implore you not to start doing so. You will know as well as I that what a good continuo player plays defies notation: and as you say, most of your clients are good players. As for the others, who need a prop – well, one might try to write a simple neutral framework, but non, *please not*, in four-part harmony! I go in some detail in my book into the rationale of those written-out four-part 'continuo' parts surviving from the 18th century, including Bach's *Principles and Precepts* – they were composition studies, not an indication of what should be played, except in the most general sense (one will, of course, play in four-part harmony *sometimes!*)

I always greet EMR with enthusiasm, and wish you well – it's the best early music publication by far!

Ann Bond

*We often get comments like your last paragraph when subscribers pay their invoices: the best way to express your enthusiasm is to get someone else to subscribe!*

*There is a strong financial reason for printing continuo realisations: only thus do editors earn fees from the Performing Rights Society. Had I written keyboard parts for all our publications, I would be rich enough to retire! Indeed, there seem to be doubts that establishing an edition is in itself a copyrightable activity at all, though at least there is still the 25-year graphic right. Like you, I am sceptical of their musical value, though amateur players do seem to find it extremely difficult to work straight from the bass. I agree that much of the 'evidence' for continuo playing is not in fact intended for that purpose. But the problem is that we are left with very little guidance, so that what we do is instinctive and subject to fashion. But that has changed in the 30 years in which I have been playing, and even the editions of Monteverdi operas we published early in the 1990s (with what then seemed to be the minimal figuring necessary) are now being criticised for encouraging players to follow the intricacies of the harmony rather than playing the basic chords, which is what I advocated and was trying to encourage by my notation.*

CB

Dear Clifford,

I read your editorial for October with interest, particularly your comments on the drop in the number of early music releases and record company sizes. I welcome them as an invitation for debate.

Sales of classical music recordings have fallen by some 25% over the last twelve months. The amount would be much smaller if it were not for cheap re-releases and compilation theme albums cobbled together from bits of earlier recordings. These are, of course, encouraged by Classic FM. Sales are also boosted by trendy, hyped cult artists, such as the abominable Medieval Baebes and Charlotte Church. As a response to the fall in sales, the major record companies have made drastic cuts in their production department staff, some by as much as 90%. Major artists such as The King's Singers and Evelyn Glennie have been released (dumped) from their contracts.

You note the role of small companies in early music recording. Brewhouse is possibly the smallest of them all, having only one full-time person – me. We have released two early music CDs (both of the by the York Waits), soon to be joined by a third, a dreaded 'compilation'. Our problem is not in producing new recordings but in selling them. For example, even with good reviews, enthusiastic mention in your pages and in other magazines, such as *Early Music Today*, backed by expensive advertising, we have still sold, less than 2000 of the highly-acclaimed Christmas Musicke (The York Waits with Deborah Catterall).

We continue to advertise, but seldom recover the cost of advertising in increased sales. Curiously, we sell more early music to the USA and Japan than in Europe as a whole. Part of the problem is the distribution to the high-street shops, which is dominated by a tiny group of companies working in a declining market. Your editorial notes that small labels: 'depend even more on their wits to survive'. True! Brewhouse studios now record spoken word, voice-overs, English language courses film sound tracks, sound effects and singers demos. We have opened a website ([www.brewhousemusic.co.uk](http://www.brewhousemusic.co.uk)) resulting in some increase in sales, and we have striven to widen our market in other ways. It is perhaps interesting to note that our best-selling CDs are of sea shanties and sailor songs. We target the special interest groups and sell only a few via the high street. If only we had as good a response to our early-music marketing efforts. With the web, advertising to target potential outlets, mail order and other means, we just about survive. Even companies only a little larger than ours seem to be in difficulty.

It is rumoured that their record company spent two million pounds on pre-release hype for the first Medieval Baebes CD. It hit the classical and pop charts within a week of its

release. We could not afford even the cost of a page in *Gramophone*. We can only advertise our CDs from money earned doing boring things in our studios.

I have a lurking suspicion that the problem is exacerbated by the lottery. Previously, shoppers with ten pounds in their pockets at the end of their essential purchases bought a record: now they buy lottery tickets.

Eric Cowell (Brewhouse)

Dear Clifford,

'Alfonso decimated': absolutely priceless! (I haven't read any further.) One of my favorite verbal bêtes-noires is the use of 'decimated' to mean 'wiped out'. A usage columnist many decades ago (I think when I was a boy) pointed out that a regiment is decimated when one man of every ten is executed, usually as an example to the rest of the laggards. Now it is used to indicate that no one survived a battle. You have recovered the correct meaning. Jerome F. Weber

More specifically, it comes from Roman military discipline. I had assumed that the practice was for every tenth man in the line on parade was killed, but the Oxford Latin Dictionary states that the selection of victims was by lot. My Latin books are all packed away so I can't check: the earliest reference (from an older Latin dictionary) seems to be to Livy 2, 59. There's a vivid description in one of Colleen McCulloch's fascinating novels on the Roman Empire from Marius to Caesar. Once one knows the real meaning, there is no temptation to abuse the word. Sadly, modern permissive lexicography encourages the weakening of the language. CB

Dear Clifford,

I was fascinated to read Madeline Seviour's letter about her memories of Charles Cudworth. She mentioned his talk as guest lecturer at The Open University's Summer School music course at Cardiff in 1976. As a tutor that very year I, too, well remember his talk. He was certainly the most inspiring guest lecturer of any that I can remember over the course of some twenty years' teaching at this summer school. Charles Cudworth was responsible for encouraging me to investigate and perform the music of John Marsh (1752-1828), and I well remember his singing to me some of the tunes from these symphonies - he knew them from

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memory just from a study of the part-books - in the street in Cardiff!

I have just completed a critical edition of the the nine extant Marsh Symphonies and the three Finales for A-R Editions, which will be published next year and have dedicated the two volumes to the memory of Charles Cudworth.

Ian Graham-Jones

Dear Clifford,

While listening again to an old recording of Purcell's *Jehova quam multi sunt Z135* (see p. 17), I looked in the Purcell books on my shelves and I saw that none of my betters has remarked in print on the fact that the text of this sacred madrigal bears no resemblance to the Vulgate version of Psalm 3. Can any of your readers identify the source of this Latin text, which - to my classically illiterate eye - looks as if some Renaissance humanist was trying to improve on St Jerome?

Eric Van Tassel

I've commented on this in several programme notes and in our edition of the work, but no-one has offered me an answer. Whether it was a catholic or protestant translation might have some bearing on why it was written. Incidentally, I tried looking up *Jehova quam multi* in the index to Purcell Manuscripts (see p. 4) and realised that there was a weakness which I did not spot when reading it: the individual titles in the tables of sources are not indexed. One can find a list of MSS for each piece from Zimmerman, but his sigla are utterly unmemorable. So if I didn't know what MS it came from, it would have been quite slow locating it in the table for BL 30930. CB

\*\*\*\*\*

Barra Boydell has pointed out that his book is listed in the abbreviations of Christ Church Cathedral (see last month, p. 2): it is not given along with reference to another work by him on p. xiv, but appears in a different section (which isn't arranged alphabetically) on the previous page.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Green Man Press publications (see last month p. 4) are stocked by Brian Jordan and Jacks, Pipes and Hammers, or can be ordered direct from:

[www.greenmanpress-music.co.uk](http://www.greenmanpress-music.co.uk)

#### NATIONAL EARLY MUSIC ASSOCIATION

First Early Music Day ~ Saturday 25 November  
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10.00 Workshop: Monteverdi Vespers  
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3.00 Lecture: Richard Maunder  
*Bach's Concertos: orchestral or chamber music?*  
4.30 Concert: The Sweelinck Ensemble (£5/free)  
*Schütz, Buxtehude, Scheidt, Castello*  
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