Early Music REVIEW

Number 73 September 2001

ISSN 1355-3437 Price £2.00

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Published on the first of each month except Jan. and Aug. by King's Music, Redcroft, Banks End, Wyton, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE28 2AA
tel +44 (0)1480 52076 fax +44 (0)1480 450821
e-mail cbkings@attglobal.net
http://www.kings-music.co.uk/
UK: £15.00 Europe: £20.00
Rest of World: £30.00 (air), £20.00 (surface)

When ideas fail, words come in handy. *Goethe*
When words fail, music speaks. *Hans Christian Andersen*

I've seen these quotations a lot recently, since they are inscribed on the opposite sides of a stele in the garden of the hospice in Cambridge in which my mother (b. 12-1-13 d. 7-8-01) spent the last ten weeks of her life. Like all good aphorisms, they have a variety of possible meanings, and readers will be relieved that I'm not going to expound any of them.

My mother was from a working class family that believed in education. She won a scholarship to a grammar school, but did not develop a career since, as was then normal, she believed that she should be at home while her children were young. Apart from other aspects of childcare, this involved teaching the three Rs, and I have no recollection of not being able to read and write. She also made me begin piano lessons when I was six. I was fortunate enough to live at a time before the vice of elitism was invented, so was able to win a scholarship at eleven to Dulwich College and then to Cambridge. This inevitably led me away from the world in which my parents moved. I don't think my life turned out exactly as she might have hoped, but she became very proud when my activities eventually had some success. Even though she had little interest in early music *per se*, she expected to receive *EMR* and showed the latest issue to her visitors.

Visiting Cambridge daily has disrupted our work somewhat, especially since Clare and John's term ended in early July, so one of us had always to be with them. We also had a further personal bereavement: exactly a week after Elaine spent a night at the bedside of my dying mother, she did the same for her brother. So this issue will probably not (as announced) reach you much before the end of August and most of the book and music reviews I should have written have been deferred until next month. (I've read the books but haven't had a chance to write about them). There is, however, plenty to read: we are grateful to Andrew for his extensive cover of the York Festival and Competition as well as London concerts.

We apologise to customers if we have been slower than usual sending out music during the last few weeks. *CB*

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

JOHN JOHNSON

John Johnson (15??-1594) *Collected Lute Music* edited by Jan Burgers. Vol. 1. Introduction, concordances, transcription (326pp), DM 298, vol. 2 tablature (160pp) DM 148 (DM 298 for the pair). Available from Tree Edition, Finkenberg 89, D-23558 Lübeck, Germany tel: +49 (0)4512 8997848, email: albertreyerman@compuserve.de

I have not seen this (in the past, requests to Tree Edition for review copies have been unsuccessful), so I cannot offer any evaluation. According to the handout sent on to me by Chris Goodwin, it contains 49 solos and 25 duets, including works unattributed in the sources that are probably by Johnson. He is the major lute composer of the generation before Dowland and thoroughly deserves such a complete edition that is both scholarly and practical.

BAROQUE GUIDE

David Schulenberg *Music of the Baroque* Oxford UP, 2001. xiv + 349pp, £25.00. ISBN 0 19 512232 1
David Schulenberg *Music of the Baroque: an Anthology of Scores* Oxford UP, 2001. x + 370pp, £22.50. ISBN 0 19 512233 X

The first book on Baroque music I ever read was Bukofzer, and it was definitely the most stimulating – partly, of course, because I knew so little of the music. While I wouldn't be bold enough to say that I know every piece that Schulenberg writes about, I'm in a rather different position in reading his survey. His is a very different sort of book, much more hands-on, and much more specific – helped by its companion, which mostly contains complete works. I was very impressed, and this makes an excellent guide to the period, both for students and the CD-buying public. The latter must include many listeners who know a large amount of music yet would welcome a framework to help pattern their experience. The structure is sensible, the writing is clear and the substance reliable, the attention to performance considerations being particularly (from our viewpoint) commendable. Too rigid a periodicisation is tempered by deliberate overlaps at the beginning and end of the usual 1600-1750 timespan.

In an age when appearance is all, it is a pity that so much of the anthology is reproduced from other editions rather than reset (preferably after re-editing). It is, however, very good value, and the use of second-hand material allows the author to warn the reader about unsatisfactory features of older editions: in fact, that could be a positive feature of a study programme. Foreign texts are printed separately to show their verse form, along with translations. The only absence is a CD of the repertoire.

The New Anthology of Music. Edited by Julia Winterson, prepared for publication by Peter Nickol.
Edexcel (Edition Peters EP 7591), 2000. 544pp. ISBN 1 901507 03 3 + set of four CDs. EP 7591CD.

Unlike the Baroque anthology just mentioned, this package includes both score and recordings. It covers 400 years of music from 1600 (only Taverner's *O Wilhelme* is significantly earlier), arranged chronologically within sections. The selection is slightly odd: Beethoven appears only once, with a movement of the Septet, though G. Gabrieli and Monteverdi have two pieces. (This takes *In ecclesiis* from the old CMM edition while Schulenberg uses the Charteris revision, with less modernised notation.) It is odd to me that the only orchestral sonata-form movement is Haydn No. 26. There are some nice cross-references: I thought when hearing the Tristan Prelude that it would be interesting to compare its opening with the similarly-notorious *Ohimè se tanto amate*, and there it was on the next disc. I don't see the point of a section devoted to 20th-century Art Music when Tippett, Poulenc, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Tavener and Schoenberg appear elsewhere. The selection of popular music is skewed to overemphasise the influence of jazz. Most of the items are printed in full score (perhaps as academic an exercise for pop music as scores of much early music). The short score used for an excerpt from Auric's *Passport to Pimlico* is what the composer wrote; did Gershwin only produce a two-stave score of *Summertime*? (*Porgy and Bess* must be about the only important work with orchestra more than 25 years old of which I have never seen a full score: why is it so inaccessible?) The World Music section is a bit short with six items: only the Indian and Balinese examples sound exotic. The scores are all reset and look good: compact but legible. What a luxury for students of Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Music. (I'm afraid I can't explain to foreign readers what that means.).

The CDs are fascinating. I particularly enjoyed the result when by mistake I set the tracks to be played at random! But that exacerbated what is a fault even in the proper order: there is not enough silence between the tracks. The early repertoire is not all on early instruments, but mostly sounds fine. One could nitpick and find weaknesses in some aspects, but on the whole the enterprise is well handled. There is presumably text material to go with the scores and discs, but they could provide material for a stimulating and well-informed teacher as they stand. Trying to relate the sound of a gamelan with the score is an interesting exercise, and similarly Berio's Sequenza 3.

As explained on p. 1, most reviews are deferred until next month.

GERMAN OPERA

John Warrack reviewed by Peter Branscombe

John Warrack *German Opera. From the Beginnings to Wagner.* Cambridge UP, 2001. xv + 447pp, £45.00. ISBN 0 521 23532 4

Until now there has been no recommendable history of German opera; henceforth this new study will not only have the field to itself, its very excellence will discourage all but the boldest of scholars from attempts to emulate it. It is very thorough, judicious, eminently well written, and enlightened by touches of irony and wit, as well as revealing a deep and wide knowledge of the subject.

Warrack's first three (of a total of eighteen) chapters set the scene with admirable clarity and justness of judgment as he examines Sixteenth-century beginnings, The Thirty Years War and its aftermath, and The Hamburg enterprise; he makes no excessive claims for early manifestations of the operatic genre in German-speaking lands, pointing out the paucity of surviving musical material as well as the equivocal nature of much that does survive. He is guarded in his comments on the *Dafne* of Opitz and Schütz, suggesting that even if the score had been preserved, it might well have proved less significant than the names and reputations of its creators lead one to expect. Similarly, he is less than ardent on behalf of the claim that Harsdörffer and Staden inaugurated German opera with their *Seelewig* of 1644. He writes invigoratingly on the Hamburg venture, and as thoroughly as the limited surviving material allows. He is especially skilful in summarizing the contributions of the librettists, and makes many shrewd observations on the music, appreciating the outstanding significance of Reinhard Keiser ('a composer in whom intelligence and creativity were admirably blended'). The rival claims to importance of works and stylistic features emanating from France and Italy, largely dependent as they are on geographical location and the whims of individual courts, are also well handled, and the author brings even the driest of philosophical and aesthetic concerns to vivid life.

A welcome feature is Warrack's skill in cross-referring. There are crisp, penetrative analyses of the achievements and failings of many now forgotten opera composers, frequently enhanced by comparisons with the solutions to their problems by Mozart or Weber, Meyerbeer or Wagner. On the subject of Schubert's operatic attempts Warrack is at his most sympathetic yet critical. Indeed, his concluding comments on *Alfonso und Estrella* and *Fierrabras* is exemplary of his general approach: 'In his operas, Schubert never manages to harness his genius as a composer of Lied and of symphony to musical drama, and so it tends actually to work against him. Often he seems to come into his own when telling a tale rather than enacting one... The true opera composer will be ready to interrupt and redirect his music for the sake of the drama; the great opera composer will make new musical forms that have their existence and strength entirely because of such dramatic imperatives.' Time and again, as Warrack notes, it was the ineptness of the librettists as much as the dramatic failings of the composers that bear the blame for the paucity of wholly successful German operas between Mozart and Wagner. And of course, Germany's fragmented political, as well as artistic, life did not help.

From this period, Warrack picks out several works that one would, on the evidence of his comments, dearly like to hear – Abbé Vogler's *Samori* is made to sound a very inter-esting score, and I for one hadn't thought of Danzi as an opera composer to be reckoned with. His *Rübezahl* and Spohr's *Alruna* are evidently other pieces that history has treated unkindly.

Throughout, Warrack is lucid and well-informed about the historical and social background of the musical and theatrical arts in Germany and Austria. Without over-emphasis he reveals a thorough understanding of the peculiar circumstances inhibiting, and later encouraging, the development of Singspiel and opera in German; he is particularly sound on the impact of the Thirty Years' War.

Wagner is, of course, the book's consummation – ideally presented, with expertly selected examples. Warrack's concluding sentences neatly summarize his aims, which have been triumphantly achieved: 'To give the composers and works that preceded Wagner's masterpieces their proper due, to see them clear in their times and places as they would have been seen if Wagner had died after writing Rienzi, has been one of the purposes of this book. To contribute to giving Wagner his proper due has been another.'

The bibliography is extensive and valuable; nevertheless it contains surprising omissions: the work of the great Austrian scholars Oscar Teuber and Alexander von Weilen a century or so ago, and among more modern experts, Jürg Krämer, whose two-volume *Deutschsprachiges Musiktheater im späten 18. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1998) is surely the most important documentary study in the field. There is a very thorough index, and an appendix contains a list of German-language operas in alphabetical order of composer. It is to be hoped that some trifling minor mishaps, mainly occurring in German transcriptions and translations, can be corrected before this handsomely produced volume is brought out in paperback, and at a price that students, and interested non-specialist readers, can afford. For this is a major scholarly achievement, and a fascinating read.

VIVALDI'S FLUTE & RECORDER MUSIC

ANTHONY ROWLAND-JONES

Federico Maria Sardelli *La musica per flauto di Antonio Vivaldi (Studi di musica veneta: Quaderni vivaldiani 11)* Florence: Olschki, 2001. ix + 250pp, LIT52,000 (about £17.50)

This book, in Italian with no English summary, is an important contribution to Vivaldi scholarship. While making no concessions to popular taste, it is written in a clear style without pretentious academicism. It is in two parts, the contents being set out as an index on p. 249, not at the beginning. Part One (pp. 3-38) is general, but concentrates on the introduction of the traverso into Venetian music-making. Part Two (pp. 41-214) deals in turn, roughly following Ryom's categories, with works with traverso or recorder by or, in Ryom, ascribed to Vivaldi, covering sonatas (sections I and II), concerti da camera (III), concerti with ripieno strings and continuo (IV-VIII), and vocal works (IX to XII). This is followed by a very useful Inventory (pp. 217-228), and a full bibliography and indexes. At the centre of the book are four sheets with eleven black and white plates, mainly autograph facsimiles. The book is in card covers with a colour picture (by Piazzetta) on the dust-jacket.

Sardelli's book should not be judged by its opening pages, where the topics are rather summarily dealt with, especially as regards the recorder. In 'L'emancipazione del flauto', the background as to why the traverso was 'emancipated' is not fully dealt with (i.e. its changes in design including the addition of the one key, and the persuasiveness and skilful playing of French composer-flautists such as La Barre and Blavet). In 'Il flauto a Venezia: i dilettanti' there is less consideration than one might wish for of the use of recorders by Vivaldi's predecessors such as Alessandro Scarlatti and, earlier, the Venetian Massimiliano Neri, nor of its status as an amateur instrument, subjects dealt with at length in Peter Van Heyghen's 'The Recorder in Italian Music, 1600-1670' in *The Recorder in the Seventeenth Century* (ed. Lasocki, Utrecht, 1995, pp. 3-64), to which Sardelli makes no reference. No mention is made in 'Fra dritto e traverso' to occasions where both instruments had been used in the same piece in the 17th century, for example by Lully and Charpentier. However, once the author reaches the point where these introductory remarks are related specifically to Vivaldi, the book exudes, and thereafter maintains, an air of considerable authority – statements are supported by adequate and appropriate evidence and citations, and well-judged hypotheses developed without prejudice.

A substantial concern in the opening sections of Part Two is authenticity, as the popularity of Vivaldi's music throughout Europe and the opportunism of publishers produced a plethora of spurious attributions. The author handles these questions with thoroughness and erudition and the results of his research are summarised in the Inventory on p. 227, which significantly updates Ryom. As regards the authentic concertos, Sardelli's main interests are instrumentation, the date and circumstances of composition, and how Vivaldi uses recorders and traversi; but in discussing these matters in depth he pays particular attention to style and other interpretational matters, supporting his arguments with many quotations from the music of Vivaldi and other composers. Sardelli does not, however, set out to evaluate and pass personal judgements upon the relative merits and demerits of the works he discusses, let alone to expatiate on performance practice, such as ornamentation. Occasionally he refers to Vivaldi's 'mature style' but no part of the book is concerned with a full analysis of the characteristics of this or earlier styles.

The book should not be seen as what some busy practising musicians might regard as irrelevant musicology. In the process of delving deep to establish facts, the author offers many insights into the qualities of Vivaldi's music and his processes of composition. He is not averse to an occasional subjective opinion. The music of the trio-sonata for recorder and bassoon RV86 is described as 'diabolica' (p. 27); the flute concertos Op. 10, Nos. 5 and 6 appear to him at first 'rather neutral' (p. 94); the one-movement flute *concerto da camera* RV432 has a 'magnificent theme'; and the recorder concerto RV441 is 'of the highest musical value, lengthy, complex and challenging'. He makes interesting points on how Vivaldi reacted to the differences in sound-quality between the traverso and the recorder. But although Vivaldi himself is always clear in specifying *Flauto* (recorder) or *Traversier*, Sardelli never forgets the baroque practice of composers reusing a piece of music in a different context with different instrumentation or of performers choosing an instrument they preferred – see p. 69; but note his discussion of the 'fourth flautino concerto' RV312R at pp. 146-8 (he disapproves of Jean Cassignol's 'arrangement').

At the start of the Inventory the author explains his terminology – *flauto dritto* means recorder and the transverse flute is called *traversiere*. Unfortunately, he does not maintain this distinction consistently. Even within the Inventory, on p. 222 the one entry under 'VII. Concerti per due flauti, archi e continuo' is RV533 for '2 traversieri'. In the title of the book, 'flauto' clearly covers both transverse flute and various types of recorders, but there are many places in the text where one needs to deduce whether the term 'flauto' refers to the recorder or the traverso, or both – although this can generally be clarified by the context, or by a reference elsewhere. This is compounded by the similarly-ambiguous 'flautista'.

Inevitably in a scholarly work of this kind which is so full of information there are occasional inconsistencies or unsupported statements, some of which are explained at other stages in the book. On p. 22 Sardelli says that the three programmatic concerti RV98, 104 and 90 were designated expressly by Vivaldi for traverso. But in the Inventory (p. 219), and in more detail on p. 70, two sources are listed for RV90, *Il Gardellino*, one designated for recorder, and the other for traverso (though this latter source may not have been so inscribed by Vivaldi himself). The recorder is more closely associated with bird-song than the traverso, and the goldfinch sings more merrily on a soprano recorder; Sardelli accepts this possibility (p. 71). If this were a soprano in D, the sixth-flute, it is also easier to play, with fewer cross-fingerings; and the sixth-flute is the intended instrument for the flautino concertos RV443 and 445 (see p. 140). It has been suggested that the companion concerti da camera, *Il Tempesta di Mare* and *La Notte* (RV98 and 104) were also originally meant for the recorder (*The Cambridge Companion to the Recorder* ed. John Thomson, Cambridge, 1995, p. 108). If this were the case, it would affect Sardelli's statement at p. 24 that the former, to which he assigns a date as early as about 1715, is Vivaldi's first traverso concerto, despite its requiring a virtuoso technique, as stated at p. 71, in a difficult key for a baroque traverso (but F major is the home key of the alto recorder). On p. 120 Sardelli states that *La Notte* is for 'flauto', but he discusses its instrumentation in detail on p. 71.

When he reaches the flautino concertos in Part Two of his book, Sardelli embarks on a long and slightly contentious digression (pp. 121-141) on what he regards as 'outlandish' ideas about the identity of Vivaldi's 'flautino'. It makes lively reading. Baroque flautists and recorder-players alike will discover throughout this book a great deal of interesting and relevant material about one of the greatest composers for their instruments; they will be surprised at the number of occasions their instruments are called for in Vivaldi's surviving vocal works, especially the operas. The importance of this study certainly makes it desirable for there to be – with semantic advantages – an English translation.

Addendum

Reference may also be made to Giovanni Toffano's 'Le composizione di Vivaldi per flauto dolci: repertorio e versioni', pp. 70-75 in *Il Flauto Dolci: Dallo scolaro al virtuoso* (ed. Vittorio Nicolucci, Ut Orpheus, Bologna, 2000 – presumably too late for inclusion in part 3 of Sardelli's bibliography). Most of Toffano's short article considers recorded performances of Vivaldi concertos, but it also briefly discusses the spurious sonatas entitled *Il Pastor Fido* which Sardelli dismisses by not mentioning them; nevertheless No. 6 in G minor is a favourite with recorder players – the first movement is lifted from Vivaldi and the rest is a convincing pastiche. The Nicolucci book also has an article by Sergio Balestracci on 'La sonata solistica per flauto dolce nel seicento italiano' (pp. 76-89), the last seven pages of which list all Italian sonatas with basso continuo from 1607 to 1713; the only recorder sonatas listed in the last half of the 17th century are the two by Alessandro Scarlatti from 1699, not mentioned by Sardelli, possibly because Edward J. Dent's assignment of these *Sinfonie* to 'Flauto' is not beyond all doubt.

BAROQUE CANTATA WEBSITE

Rosalind Halton

baroquecantata.com is a website which puts forward research on and editions of cantatas – primarily the Italian repertoire. Designed and organised by countertenor James Sanderson, the site offers editions in electronic and hardcopy of otherwise unobtainable music by Porpora, Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, Durante, Mancini, Hasse, Marcello, etc. The catalogue is constantly being added to by editors James, Rosalind Halton (A. Scarlatti), and Kate Eckersley (D. Scarlatti). Editions are supplied with the usual scholarly information, notes on the sources, texts and translations. Many of the editions are available to view on-line and to hear in MIDI preview.

Solo cantatas with basso continuo are the most numerous group in this catalogue, but duets with continuo are also represented, as well as cantatas with instruments, available with parts. The catalogue reflects our interests, predominantly Porpora and the Scarlattis, but will expand to include earlier Italian composers including Carissimi and Saraceni – all difficult to obtain outside research libraries and facsimile volumes, but full of wonderful and rewarding music for singers and all those interested in the fusion of words and music in this period. The site also offers a discussion forum, and we invite contributions and editions from those who share our passionate commitment to the resurgence of the baroque cantata. [*cf* CD review on p. 22]

I must admit some amazing questions come up on the forum, some of which are occasionally to do with baroque cantatas. But orders for the editions have been from a good selection of places, New York, Canada, Italy, U.K. so far. On the 'scarlattiproject.com' site, I get interesting questions on all sorts of angles on the Scarlattis father and son: certainly a good way to broaden one's own knowledge! (One of the curious ways we fill up our holidays in the absence of the European Summer School phenomenon!)

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EARLY MUSIC NETWORK INTERNATIONAL YOUNG ARTISTS' COMPETITION York, 12-14 July, 2001

Andrew Benson-Wilson

One of the main outlets for the work of the Early Music Network is the biennial International Young Artists' Competition, the latest of which took place during the York Early Music Festival. Around 45 groups submitted tapes to a jury made up of the four artistic advisors to the York Early Music Festival. From the tapes and supporting information submitted, eight groups were chosen to give a concert lasting about 20 minutes in the Final. This was an international affair, not so much for the home base of the groups selected as in the wide geographical spread of the individuals within the groups. Women outnumbered men by three to one. Over the two days preceding the final, each group also gave a short informal concert, introduced by singer and BBC producer Mark Rowlinson, and intended to acclimatise the competitors to the performing space (the new National Centre for Early Music in the converted church of St Margaret's Walmgate), to introduce the groups to the audience, and to give a chance for some feedback and discussion between the performers and a seasoned professional. The judges were not present at these introductory concerts and the performance of the groups did not count towards their marks in the Final (unfortunately, in at least one case), although these reviews draw on both concerts.

The finals started with Amnis, an impressive young group with soprano, 2 violins, cello and harpsichord (plus a theorbo player who was ill and unable to attend the competition). They have already won the 2000 Croft Prize at the Royal Academy of Music. Their two programmes, Serenata Italiana and Via Romana, explored Italian music and its influence on French composers like Montéclair, whose *Morte di Lucretia*, with its thunderous opening and a bittersweet death aria, was the highpoint in their final concert. Soprano Monica Ube has an attractive and clear voice and successfully engaged the audience in the emotions of the text through simple use of eye contact, expression and gesture – she gave us a beautifully paced ending to the tragic aria 'Assiste mi, oh dei!' She was very well partnered by the expressive playing of violinists Claire Duff and Sarah Moffatt, who both produced a wide range of colour and texture in instrumental Ciacconas by Corelli and Vitali. Good eye contact with each other and the audience immediately created that all-important bond between performer and listener.

Rhetoric hail from the USA and include oboe, violin, cello and harpsichord. Their two programmes featured music from the rather conservative court of Frederick the Great and the more adventurous courts of Louis XIV and XV – but including an Italian accent in Couperin's *L'apothéose de Corelli* and Fux's Trio sonata in F with its concluding *Les énemis confus*. They displayed a good sense of the structure of the music, and negotiated some tricky moments with apparent ease. They appeared confident on stage and their programme notes helped to set the scene well. Their continuo players, Nika Zlataric, cello, and Michael Sponseller, harpsichord, were particularly impressive in their vital supporting role.

The Flautadors are all former Guildhall School of Music students. With four recorders and a bassoon, the line up might at first appear a bit limited in scope, but they successfully showed the wide range of texture and colour that can be produced from this combination of instruments in Flauti di Camera – a programme of early-18th-century music from Germany and England. Tuning can be an issue with so many recorders, but they all managed to shade and colour their notes without wreaking havoc on the pitch. Articulation is so important in this repertoire, particularly for the bassoon, and Zoe Shevlin and the recorder players matched their style to the acoustic well. They maintained good rapport with each other and clearly enjoyed their music making (a good selling point to an audience) – their gentle movements also made them visually interesting to watch. Plucking names from the four recorder players is not easy, but Ian Wilson and Fiona Russell are two that deserve a mention.

The members of Babillage all trained in London conservatories, although individually their names hint at more exotic origins than London. Featuring soprano, recorder, viola da gamba and harpsichord, they have been finalists in the BBC Radio 3 Young Artists' Competition. Their two concerts concentrated on Italian and French music of the 18th century, including dramatic cantatas by Clérambault, Campra, Montéclair and Scarlatti. Betsabee Haas has a focussed voice with a wide-ranging palette of tonal colours and clear enunciation. She used strong facial expressions to portray the emotions of the words, only occasionally glancing down at the music. Campra's cantata *Arion* (1708) included two impressive Arias – the short and punchy 'Un monster plein d'injustice' as Arion is bedevilled by the monsters of the deep, and the gently flowing 'Les flots sentient la puissance' as Arion's lyre calms the waves of the sea. Clérambault's *Zéphire et Flore* (1716) had a prominent viola da gamba part, giving Patxi del Amo a chance to demonstrate her impressive solo playing alongside her delicate and expressive accompaniment.

Masques were one of two Canadian groups in this year's competition, and have been prizewinners in the Dorian/Early Music America Competition. Both their concerts focussed on the English repertoire of the mid-17th century, with music by Locke, Jenkins, Butler and Lawes. Their programme notes stressed the importance of the organ as the prime accompanying instrument in England at that time, and they demonstrated ways in which it can by used in Lawes's Suite No 8 in D, where it took independent lines, and Jenkins's Suite in D, where it mirrored the violin rather than providing harmonic support. Violinist Timothy Haig performed from memory throughout – an impressive feat which gave him a very good opportunity to engage with the audience. In their final concert, they played the three multi-sectional works straight through without any apparent break between them, although their first concert was more conventionally ordered.

The seven members of Mediva all trained in London conservatories, and several are now studying at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. The only medieval group in the competition, they were also the only group to provide any sort of visual prop and to make use of the space of the building. They entered in procession (gentle and tingly for the first concert of Cantigas, loud and thumpy for the second concert of Landini, Ciconia and anon) and singer Clare Norburn started Landini's *Adiu, adiu, dous dame* from the far corners of the building, as Leah Stuttard offered gentle harp accompaniment. They successfully built bridges between the various pieces, particularly in their first concert when they kept the jangling cymbals going until they had moved up to the stage for the first song, neatly controlling the audience's applause. They all performed from memory and showed a strong interaction with each other, moving exotically in several of the livelier pieces. The conclusion of their first concert was particularly dramatic as a tambourine deconstructed itself on the final wallop.

Apollo and Pan were the second group to feature a bassoon, this time alongside a violin and harpsichord. Their two programmes, The Contest of the Gods and The Gods United, were based on the contrasting of the rough and ready Pan, the god of shepherds and a wind-player, and the god of the muses, an altogether more refined sort of chap, Apollo – a string player. In music for this contrasting combination of instruments by Schmelzer, Finger, Rosenmüller and Telemann they reflected the late- 17th and early-18th-century fashion for all things pastoral. As with the previous bassoon player, Sally Holman made good use of articulation to project the sonorous bass line in the unhelpful acoustic while violinist Tassilo Erhardt and Michael Borgstede, a sympathetically restrained harpsichord player, retained a good balance between the three instruments. They demonstrated a good sense of the structure of the pieces and the use of rhetoric and other musical devices to bring interest to music that can sound rather inevitable.

With audience energy beginning to wane after a long day, I Furiosi were the ideal group to conclude the Finals. An all-female Canadian group based in Toronto, their CV noted their interest in the 'bizarre and unnatural aesthetic' of the baroque. Their striking stage appearance (black leathers, tattoos and tank tops), dramatic stage manner and strongly presented music (with programme titles The Brazen Throat of War and Hell Hath No Fury) certainly livened up the day. Soprano Gabrielle McLaughlin has a bold and forthright voice capable of considerable agility. She made good eye contact with the audience and used strongly stylised gestures to reinforce the words. Like the other Canadian group, their programmes focused broadly on English music of the 17th and early 18th centuries. They threw in a number of challenges to orthodoxy by performing Dowland's *Flow my tears* and Monteverdi's *Quel sguardo sdegnosetto* with voice and cello alone (and no harmony) and concluding their first concert with a crossover version of The Foggy Dew.

It would not be fair of me to mention critical points for any of the groups – competing is stressful enough. But a number of general points did emerge during the competition. One was that alterations to published programme, however well intentioned, should be avoided if at all possible – one group had changes in both their concerts. Dress was interesting. The code of most of the groups was smart without being over the top for a daytime concert, and most groups had taken the trouble to coordinate clothing styles and colours – and music covers (often forgotten in professional groups). But this did rather show up the groups with a less formal approach. The ability to appear confident on stage, however terrified we might be inside, is a hallmark of successful performance – posture and demeanour are critical factors, but dress can help (although I am not a fan of penguin suits). Spoken introductions are helpful in forming a bond with the audience, but they do have to be audible, carefully paced and relevant – repeating the programmes notes is usually best avoided. Speaking needs rehearsal as well as playing, particularly in unknown acoustics. Building bridges with the audience is critical for any performer, and the foundation for this is usually a responsive contact between members of the group. In groups where this is missing, the audience can feel left out, however well the players might play. Performers who appear totally self-absorbed, unless they are extraordinarily good, will usually fail to draw the listener in – a vital difference between live and recorded performance. That said, every one of the groups deserved to be in an international final and, in my view, several of the finalists must have come close to winning.

The competition judges (Jan Can den Bossche *Utrecht Festival*, Philip Hobbs *Linn Records*, Lindsay Kemp *BBC Radio 3*, Catherine Mackintosh *violinist*, and George Pratt *retired professor*) were looking for the range and sustainability of the repertoire, musicianship and interpretation, the potential contribution to the early music scene and the viability of the group (often a tricky issue for young groups formed during or soon after post-graduate studies). All finalists will be offered concert opportunities through the Early Music Network, and all deserve bookings by other promoters. The winners were Apollo and Pan (Tassilo Erhardt, Sally Holman and Michael Borgstede).

YORK EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The 24th annual York Festival (6-15 July) celebrated the music of Northern Italy and the birth of music publishing 500 years ago by the Venetian Ottaviano Petrucci. All but one of the 16 concerts were based on music from around 1400 to 1650, with a strong focus on the music of Venice around 1500 seen from a variety of perspectives. This was a brave bit of programme planning by the artistic directors and it paid off, particularly for the loyal regulars, although I did wonder how many casual visitors to York would know what to expect from (or be attracted to) a concert entitled 'In Praise of Petrucci'. Indeed, there must be many in the early music world that will not have heard of the first person to discover the means of printing polyphonic music. But that is the joy of the oft-derided anniversary year.

The first weekend was focussed on the haunting sound of the cornett and 'resident cornettist' Bruce Dickey. His own Concerto Palatino opened the Festival with 'Echoes of St Mark's: Venetian wind music 1580-1660' in the broad expanse of the vast nave of York Minster (6 July). Just two cornetts, two trombones and organ were all that were needed to fill the acoustic, although the clickety-click action of the chamber organ was an unwanted distraction, particularly as it reached the ear well before the Minister had gobbled up the more musical emissions, tossed them around a bit and then gently and steadily released them to our ears. It has often been said that only the Doge and his entourage in the very centre of St Mark's would have been able to hear the music properly, but this concert showed that the sound of a single cornett is capable of filling the largest gothic church building in Northern Europe (notably in Bassano's dreamily unfolding divisions on Palestrina's *Tota pulchra es*). At the end of each half, the players divided into pairs on either side of the nave, reinforcing the effect of some spectacular echoes and dialogues. A sub-plot of the programme was the transition from the canzona to the sonata, and a *Canzon a 2 bassi* by Bartolomeo de Selma y Salaverde was an example of the stylistic blurring that took place around 1630. Acoustic blurring also featured in this piece, with the harmonic structure of the two trombones working against clarity of projection – a smaller space or nearby reflective surface was needed to bring this piece off. For an event billed as a 'concert by candlelight', I could have done with rather less of the glaring floodlights.

The following evening's concert (St Michael-le-Belfry) featured what I suppose could be called a 'cornett-on-legs' – the evocative and focussed voice of the excellent young soprano, Faye Newton, together with the lutes, viols and recorders of the New London Consort. In an afternoon lecture, Bruce Dickey had spoken of the link between the cornett and the sound of the human voice, and here was living proof. Singing songs from Petrucci's first publication, the 1501 *Harmonice Musices Odhecaton* (interspersed with instrumental renderings – *Odhecaton* does not in fact include words), Faye Newton showed how a voice with the right harmonic ingredients will comfortably fill a space. She has a naturally communicative style which helped to project these pieces, made even more approachable by their simple verse structure and range of polyphonic devices (including entries that tumbled over themselves in canon). Some hypnotic lute solos with exquisite melodies (and some lovely blue notes) woven over deviously simple bass lines were played by Jacob Heringman – as ever, a master of his art. I couldn't quite see or hear what fellow lutenist Tom Finucane's contribution to the second of these solo spots was (other than a steady supply of strums), but he leapt to his feet to take the applause – I am sure he deserved it.

The real cornett returned for the Sunday night concert (8 July) when Bruce Dickey joined with The Palladian Ensemble and Laurence Cummings for '*Con si soave accenti* – virtuoso music for soprano instruments in the age of Monteverdi'. This period was the time when the cornett was first challenged as the leading solo instrument by the violin. Whether or not this was the intention, the concert did rather show why, especially when the violin was in the expressive hands of Rachel Podger, who showed no mercy in this battle of the instruments. Playing what I imagine to be a violin of rather later style than the early 17th century, her wide dynamic range occasionally felt a bit excessive for the period. The poor cornett didn't have a chance. Four passeggiato versions of de Rore's *Ancor che col partire* for flauto, cornetto, viola bastarda and violino gave each instrument the chance to show its mettle as soloist, but also exposed a problem that had worried me for much of the evening: the different ability of the instruments to retain their intonation against the unyielding pitch of the organ. The cornett occasionally sounded a bit awry of the note, as did the loftier notes of the soprano recorder. One curiosity was Poglietti's Sonata originally written for recorder, cornett and bassoon (played on gamba). In a style well away from that of Monteverdi, the rather military passages for the cornett eventually became a bit tedious. The elusive Dario Castello won the audience prize for his two wild sonatas. Frescobaldi is a good source of information on performance style in this period, and Laurence Cummings' fluid and fiery rendering of his Toccata Quarta (1637) was a fine demonstration of the rhapsodic performing style of the *seconda prattica*.

If the Palladian Ensemble's concert had sounded the death knell of the cornett as the premier solo instrument, then the lunchtime concert the following day (9 July) delivered

the coup de grace. Playing a beautifully decorated violin, possibly of early seventeenth century Italian origin, Pavlo Beznosiuk's inspired playing ('In stile moderno') ran through the whole gamut of early seventeenth century avant-garde Italian violin music. He started and finished with Marini's Sonata terza and Sonata quarta – both mature examples of the genre displaying a huge variety of technical devices to bring colour and texture to the music, including double stopping, bowed tremulo (as in Scheidt's *Imitatio violinista*), slurs and slithers, and wildly virtuosic lines. Traces of the earlier polyphonic and division style appeared in works by Cima, Dalla Casa, and everybody's favourite, Castello, made another wild appearances (the Quarta Sonata a Due, 1621). David Roblou played Picchi's harpsichord Toccata, always a difficult piece to make musical sense of, and Paula Chateauneuf gave us one of Piccinini's expressive Toccatas for chitarrone.

The late night concert the previous evening had featured Paula Chateauneuf alone, with some beautifully expressive chitarrone playing of other pieces by Piccinini alongside Castaldi and Melii. She demonstrated the wide range of compositional styles of the period, from the wandering toccata to the tighter control of variations on the *Chiaccona*. 'A little mouthful of fancy' (the translation of one of the pieces) set the mood for the concert, which included an impressive improvised *tasteggio* on a figured bass by Kapsberger. What better way to conclude a day than sitting in this beautiful little medieval church, with a backdrop of a complete rood screen and a magnificent hammerbeam roof supported by medieval angel musicians, listening to the reverberant sounds of the chitarrone in such musical hands?

The recorder had a chance to stake its claim as the leading solo instrument of the day in a lunchtime concert (at the impressive new National Centre for Early Music at St Margaret's Church, Walmgate, 10 July) given by Pamela Thorby and Laurence Cummings (harpsichord and organ). Another of Castello's anarchic Sonatas opened the bill, with more examples of the *imitata violinistica*, tremulo articulation and one of his grinding and groaning final cadences. The rest of the concert was neatly constructed around Frescobaldi's vast 1637 *Cento partite sopra passacaglia*, played on the harpsichord in three sections with recorder pieces in between. Based on the well known structures of the chaconne and passacaglia, the complex interplay between these and other dance forms showed some of the freedom of expression and structure which Frescobaldi and his contemporaries so loved. Recorder pieces by Marini, Fontana and Selma y Salaverde featured the now expected declamatory eruptions alongside lapses into polyphony and the occasional tune. Pamela Thorby is, of course, a well-loved interpreter of this repertoire, and her playing was, as ever, persuasively appealing. It was good to hear Rossi's madcap *Toccata settima* played on the rather nice chamber organ. Laurence Cummings gave this piece the space it deserves, but rarely gets, exposing the full effect of each change of mood and each bizarre harmonic twist. Wonderful stuff!

The German radio choir, Corona Coloniensis, directed by Peter Seymour, gave a concert of vocal music by Andrea Gabrieli and successors, covering the period 1565-1635. Using his *Missa Quando lieta sperai* as its core, the programme ranged from Donato and Guami through to Monteverdi. Often overshadowed by the broader palette of Giovanni, Andrea Gabrieli wrote some superb smaller-scale music. The Hosanna section of the Sanctus, for example, was delightfully quirky, although composer or editor seemed to have got himself into a muddle trying to fit the words into his jagged syncopations. His extended setting of Psalm 142 (143) *Domine exaudi orationem meam* a6 showed his ability to work to a larger scale. The choral singing was impressive, with excellent enunciation and a clear bright sound, although there were a few very high soprano entries which didn't quite find the centre of the note straight away and some tiredness crept in by the concluding Magnificat, the a6 alternative from Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers.

More choral music featured in the Chapter House of York Minster (9 July) – a delightful, if liturgically inappropriate, venue for Cappella Pratensis. This most impressive nine-voice choir from The Netherlands specialises in the music of Josquin des Prez. His *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrarie* (with its seductively repetitive 8-note motif based on the vowels of the title of the Duke of Ferrara) formed the nucleus of the programme, which also included a plainchant Introit, Gradual, Alleluya and Communion and Josquin's *Virgo salutifer/Ave Maria* and *Miserere mei Deus*. The latter motet was preceded by a homily based on the meditation on Psalm 50 written by the imprisoned (and soon to be martyred) Hieronimo Savonarola (the Duke of Ferrara had done much to rescue Savonarola from death). As in the meditation, every verse of Josquin's setting dissolved into the pleading 'Miserere mei Deus' refrain – a most moving conclusion to an exquisite concert [and a good example of musicological research enriching an aesthetic experience *CB*]. The homily was spoken in a lugubrious voice that came as close to singing as could be imagined, covering the range of a hexachord or more and descending to the depths for the mournful sequence of lines on 'Abyssus'. The rest of the voices intoned, in growling spoken organum, the Miserere refrain. The Maestro di cappella, Rebecca Stewart, led the choir by means of a sinuously exotic dance, wafting her arms and body in a broad reflection of the text and the waves of the chant – it took a bit of getting used to, and owed more to choreography than musical direction, but was nonetheless effective. Indeed, the whole group gently wafted to and fro like reeds in a light breeze – a suitable complement to the gently undulating arcades of the medieval Chapter House. One of the finest concerts so far. [Does this manner link with her studying of Indian music? *CB*]

The first of two concerts on the Harewood House estate featured a smaller vocal group. The sparse, freezing cold and slightly damp church of All Saints' (the joys of an English summer – two days earlier the heat was sweltering) was the venue for the five singers and lutenist of Cantus Cölln and a programme of Wert and Monteverdi. Previous

concerts had made the Festival regulars aware of the operatic drama of instrumental music around 1600: this concert showed how the words themselves inspired such drama. Wert's musical interpretation of the first two line of Petrarch's *Solo e pensoso* – 'Alone and pensively through most deserted fields, I trudge with loitering sluggish steps' – was an early indication of the full rein of the madrigalists' palette of effects. Representing the extravagant cultural life of the Ducal Courts of Mantua and Ferrara (with its three famous lady singers), Wert's madrigals showed the merging of the Flemish and Italian styles. After an awkward pause, which didn't quite turn into a proper interval, Monteverdi represented the closing chapters of the world of the madrigalists with a parade of nymphs. Structural development was the main feature – his almost operatic setting of the *Lamento della Ninfa*, for example, had a soprano shepherdess lamenting the sorts of thing that shepherdesses usually lament while three rather po-faced men stood to one side, useless as ever, repetitively emphasising how miserable she was, but doing nothing to ease her pain except intone 'poor girl'. Hopeless! [But what a lament! *CB*]

The rather grander, but acoustically less helpful, surroundings of the sumptuous Gallery of Harewood House was the setting for Catherine Bott's venture into 15th century Italian song, under the watchful eye of some priceless 15th century Italian paintings and with the plangent support of fiddle and vielle (Pavlo Beznosiuk and Mark Levy). The intricately entwined lines and tormented words of Landini and Ciconia songs had faint echoes of an earlier troubadour tradition, while Dufay (writing in Italy) showed the move towards the delicacy of the later madrigalists. Songs in praise of noble patrons and cities formed the core of the concert, with a pivotal moment of repose (and a rarely heard triad) in the middle of Ciconia's song for Lucca, *Una panthera*. The instrumental pieces showed that there was no lack of virtuosity in the 15th century.

Solo song from Petrucci's publications of French chansons and Italian frottole was the feature of the concert by soprano Evelyn Tubb and lutenist Anthony Rooley (11 July). In a superb display of audience manipulation, Tubb and Rooley demonstrated the effectiveness of quiet presentation and the importance of waiting for an audience to settle. Starting with a barely audible sequence of delicate lute chords, the volume rarely got above mezzo forte. The effect was mesmerising. Evelyn Tubb's gently undulating voice, generally in low register, is the aural equivalent of being smothered in warm chocolate. In a mixture of sacred and secular texts, her use of restrained gesture was most effective, particularly in the anonymous *Se mai per maraveglia* where she literally 'turned her gaze' to an image of the crucified Christ. The gentle spoken, then sung, then decorated repetition of the words 'dolce, caro, soave', were almost unbearably intense – the still, small centre of the concert. We were, quite correctly, asked not to applaud until the end of the concert, although the audible tension in the audience after this and other pieces caused almost as much noise. The short and punchy verse repetitions of the following *Passato è'l tempo iocondo* helped bring us back to earth. Emphasising the sacred/secular split, the last two pieces reflected first the Queen of Flowers and finally the Queen of Heaven, the Amen of the latter returning us again to the state of silence with which the concert had started.

Musica Antiqua of London's programme looked quite intimidating at first sight, with nearly 40 pieces. But it turned out to be a most successful concert, despite its length. Philip Thorby's introductions were user-friendly without being patronising, and the grouping of pieces (which generally turned out to be based on different versions, and titles, of the same piece or melody) was most effective. With hardly any awkward tuning pauses, the concert flowed effortlessly from piece to piece – a lesson for some of other performers. Appropriately the concert started with the very first piece in *Odhecaton*, de Orto's *Ave Maria*. This one piece seemed to encapsulate the whole of the succeeding history of music, as four bass viols slowly unfolded an imitative backdrop for the simple chorale-like chant, intoned line by line. It could have been a Bach chorale prelude. A tour round Europe showed *Odhecaton*'s international flavour, England's contribution being Henry VIII's 'endearing, but random' addition of a 4th voice to *Gentil prince* and his reworking of Compère's chanson *Alons ferons barbe*, about an apparently versatile and overworked lady barber. Tenor Julian Podger and alto Clare Wilkinson were excellent, both with unaffected and clear voices pitched unerringly on the centre of the notes. Jacob Heringman again demonstrated his indefatigable skill on the lute with examples of intabulations from the earliest lute publication, the continuous scale passages sweeping across the whole range of the lute. A fine concert.

'Tonight at 7, I Fagiolini will be misbehaving', almost read the flyer. The early music pranksters, and past winners of the Early Music Network's International Young Artists' Competition, have built an enviable reputation for imaginatively presented programmes. This was based around a staged and translated version of Banchieri's *La Pazzia Senile* (The Age of Folly or, in Fagiolini-speak, The Mad old Git). The first lines set the scene – 'What follows is rather naughty, Subtlety is not our forte'. Whatever might be the arguments of authenticity, this clever translation of the commedia dell'arte plot must be one of the few ways in which this sort of piece can be presented – the pace is so quick, the interplay of language so finite, that subtitles or written translation would have been useless. In a delightful touch, an impressive group of primary school children gave us a series of snapshots of the characters, the result of a day spent working with Matthew Brook and Robert Hollingworth. The programme was titled 'La Parodia', and first half started with two examples of the types of piece that were later to be parodied – Monteverdi's *Audi coelum*, with echo repetitions of the last few syllables creating a new word (excellently sung by Matthew Brook), and his more flowing secular *Parlo miser'o taccio*. Three of Croce's masques for the Venetian Carnival and Pallavicino's *Cinque compagni* introduced us to a wide range of characters, including a

drunken German, the civil if confused Dr Grazio, three old crones, and the luckless Pantaloon striking up a conversation with his own echo. A fine example of how early music can be good fun.

What a difference an acoustic can make. I first heard the Gabrieli Consort's performance of the 1631 Mass of Thanksgiving for Deliverence from the Plague in St John's, Smith Square, and it left me singularly unmoved (*EMR* July 2001). But the vast acoustic of York Minster (13 July) added that magic ingredient to bring it alive. From my seat right at the back of the Minster, the clarity of individual notes was not always easy to pick up, but the overall effect was nonetheless effective. The solo singing of tenor Charles Daniels, in particular, seemed to fill the space just as much as the full forces of the 12-strong choir and instrumentalists. Paul Nicholson's brief organ toccatas and preludes, although played on a chamber organ, had a similar effect in the huge space and the cornetts, as in the opening concert of the Festival, also had no trouble in projecting their voice. Bass Simon Grant was at a disadvantage, as were the sackbuts, in working with less penetrating frequencies, but Grant's performance of Monteverdi's *Ab aeterno* (with its plunges into the depths) was equally effective – he bravely avoided the easy option of going up at cadences and finished on a clearly audible note around low D. As at Smith Square, the promised drama and pomp was concentrated on just a few moments, but six natural trumpets and two meaty military drums certainly made a grand sound in the Minster, as did the opening procession of the choir from the far reaches of the building. The Mass was actually quite an intimate affair, with many pieces for solo or small forces. Of course, the privileged few in the choir area of St Mark's (or those wealthy enough, or considered important enough, to be given decent seats in the Minster) would have appreciated much more subtlety, but the rest of us plebs, stuck in the far corners, had more than enough to hold the attention.

The final concert of the Festival (14 July) was the home team of Yorkshire Baroque Soloists in a refreshing programme of froth and bubble solo concertos from the Italy of around 1700. Very different from the earlier music of most of the Festival, this had a similar effect to a post-prandial brandy in settling the system. A vigorous performance of Vivaldi's *L'Estate* reminded us of the turbulent weather of the week, and Anthony Robson's superb playing on oboe and recorder (together with Crispian Steele-Perkins as trumpeter and interval CD salesman, violinist Lucy Russell and soprano Yvonne Seymour) reminded us of the wealth of solo colour that had featured during the past week.

The show isn't over until the young girls sing, and the Venetian Carnival Extravaganza, put together by Cathryn Dew, the enterprising Education Manager of the York Early Music Foundation, provided a number of show stoppers. Starting with a procession around the Yorkshire Museum Gardens led by The York Waits in loud wind formation, the afternoon included *a cappella* 15th century songs, a clever commedia dell'arte play, a Magnificent Masquerade, a recorder consort and a sizable string orchestra, all drawn from local schools and colleges. For the people of York, a nice ending to a Festival that had hitherto carried on behind closed doors. Perhaps starting the Festival with the Carnival and giving out free concert tickets to the under 40s might help redress the all too obvious age imbalance in the audiences.

LUTE SONGS IN CAMBRIDGE

Clifford Bartlett

A Renaissance Portrait. Mutsumi Hatano *mezzo-soprano* Takashi Tsunoda *lute* Cambridge Summer Music Festival, St Edward's Church, 3 August.

I had received enthusiastic reports from Peter Berg of this pair's CD, so I seized the opportunity of an invitation to their London performance to hear them at a lunchtime concert in Cambridge instead. What a concert! Of the ten items, four provided probably the most moving performances I've heard for several years. St Edward's is a smallish church in a busy area of Cambridge near the market square. Despite the noise outside, the singer and lutenist managed to create a mood of quiet concentration – I'm tempted to use the cliché of an oriental stillness – in which every vocal and instrumental gesture counted. The singer seemed to use the acoustic as an extension of her voice, with the higher, sustained notes ringing quietly around with absolute purity. It took a little while to adjust to the pronunciation, but that soon ceased to worry. *Sorrow stay* and *I saw my lady weep* were gripping, while the two Italian demonstrated rather different styles of expression. Monteverdi's *Si dolce é 'l tormento* (so simple but so neat) showed how close the partnership between singer and lutenist was, and the concert closed with the amazing lullaby of the virgin by Merula *Hor ch'e tempo di dormire*, mostly on the simplest of grounds, which came over to me with the feeling of an hispanic (rather than Italian) peasant merging with the Virgin in a Christmas play. Their UK tour is over, but when they come again, don't miss them. They sent a sample CD which includes some Dowland and ends with Arianna's Lament (see p. 22). Playing it after the concert, I found it slightly disappointing (that's a common phenomenon), but it fired Peter Berg's enthusiasm without benefit of a live experience.

LONDON MUSIC

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Musicians get to perform in some pretty curious places, but a tiny little temple sited within feet of the Thames and its attendant duck population must count as one of the most interesting (and prettiest) venues. The actor-manager David Garrick had the temple built in 1756, to designs by Robert Adam, in memory of Shakespeare in a small Capability Brown garden by his villa at Hampton, just west of Hampton Court. It has recently been restored and was the venue (15 June) for a delightfully intimate concert given by Aria Concertata to an audience of 40, who only just managed to fit into the space. Not surprisingly, the programme celebrated the life and times of David Garrick, with readings, songs and instrumental pieces in a wide variety of moods. Theatrical in presentation, and given to a largely theatrical audience, this was entertainment that Garrick himself would have been proud of – indeed, several of the glees, ballads and songs set his own words. Aria Concertata entered into the spirit of the occasion, with some impressive playing and good-natured banter – it is not easy performing to an audience sitting within inches of you, but they all carried it off brilliantly. Emma Murphy was a sparkling and bubbly recorder soloist, with good natured continuo support from Steven Devine, harpsichord, and Nicholas Stringfellow, cello. The actor Richard Mulholland read extracts from several of Garrick's most famous roles, including his first London one as Richard III. However, it will be as a singer that he will probably be remembered by most of the audience; attractive as Antonia Civic's singing was, she was completely upstaged by Mulholland's rough and ready singing of the rather anti-European ballad *The Air Balloon*. This was music making at its friendliest.

In complete contrast, the performance of Handel's *Tamerlano* at Sadlers Wells (27 June) was in the grand-opera-for-the-masses tradition. With Trevor Pinnock directing The English Concert and Jonathan Miller directing, this was bound to be an occasion. But in the end, I am not sure if it was. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall during Pinnock/Miller discussions. Although, on the day, Pinnock valiantly attempted to lift the performance (difficult anyway from an opera house pit) it was Miller's almost totally static staging that dominated and dulled the moment. For all the movement and interaction going on, it could have been presented as a concert performance – indeed, this might have given Pinnock more of a chance to push up the dramatic stakes. The staging was elemental in its simplicity, and changed but little between the two acts. [What was Miller up to? This is a three-act opera *CB*.] Although the costumes were large-scale and exotic, the acting was the opposite. Singers rarely moved during their sets, and there was little interaction between characters. Arguably this left Handel's music to portray the moods, but fully costumed opera demands more for its money. The pacing of the plot is rather pedestrian anyway, so some oomph was needed from elsewhere. The singers were fine, if rather more suited to a later style of opera; although they sang with plenty of passion, there were too many times when I felt that the pedestrian staging rubbed off onto the singing. Tom Randle was the star, giving an impulsive and headstrong vision of the Sultan Bajazet, even if his stage movements were limited. Anna Bonitatibus sang the role of Irene with soulful intensity, although her relatively slight female form and voice was a curious choice to represent a fearsome Tarter invader. Graham Pushee's countertenor Andronica and Antonio Abete's bass as Leone were both better suited to their roles. This didn't feel like a meeting of minds and although The English Concert were on good form, I have heard them lifted to greater heights by other occasions. [A shame that a production that seems to have avoided the antics that most directors now force on reluctant singers did not succeed! *CB*]

The Palladian Ensemble are one of the most exciting groups around today, and their Wigmore Hall recital (3 July) showed why. In a neatly balanced programme of music of the Seicento, they flexed their Italian muscles in a show of virtuosity and expression that won the heart of the audience, sweltering in the heat of a London summer. One of the joys of this group is the interaction between Pamela Thorby and Rachel Podger. Playing music they clearly know by heart, they tossed motifs and phrases back and forth between recorder and violin as if carrying on an animated conversation. They perform in a very physical manner, being able to carry off swaying to the music without looking daft. Of course, one of the main genres of the Italian 17th century is the wild *stylus phantasticus* sonatas of the likes of Castello, anarchic affairs with the emotional intensity of many an opera. But it was fascinating to hear Castello in more pensive mood. His Sonata 2 (1621) showed just where the early North German organ composers Scheidemann and Jacob Praetorius got their inspiration from for their chorale fantasias – gently ornamented and evolving lines over a broadly adagio pulse. In complete contrast to Castello's more rumbustuous moments, we heard three solo elaborations of Cipriano da Rore's *Anchor che col partire* by Bassano and Rognoni for recorder, violin and gamba. In a programme change, William Carter, lute, played what I think was an extract from a huge Chaconne by Francesco Corbetta, managing to restrict this lengthy piece to a length only just slightly shorter than his seemingly endless spoken introduction: stick to the playing, Mr Carter!

Florilegium celebrated their 10th anniversary with a concert at the Wigmore Hall, home to many of their past

concerts (5 July). A mixed programme presented some of their favourite pieces from the past years, allowing them to demonstrate their vigorous and authoritative playing. With a combination of flute/recorder, two violins, cello/gamba, bass violin, theorbo/guitar, organ and harpsichord there was always going to be a riot of instrumental colour. Kati Debretzeni, violin, David Miller, theorbo/guitar, Daniel Yeadon, cello/gamba and Robert Nairn, bass violin, made noteworthy contributions, particularly in Vivaldi's *La Folia*, a real rollercoaster of a performance that would have been a better conclusion to the concert that the rather lacklustre Blavet flute concerto, an endless sequence of cadenzas that made a curious finale. More successfully, both directors of Florilegium, Ashley Solomon, flute, and Neal Peres da Costa, harpsichord, took the limelight for three of Rameau's *Pièces de claveçin en concert*. The players did well to cope with the oppressive heat and gut-soaking humidity – the inevitable thunder was nicely timed towards the end of the Adagio of Telemann's Quadro in g, with its summer haze texture. In the topsy turvy world of music, any group that manages to last 10 years must be doing something right, although the next ten years might see some new directions for Florilegium.

St Martin-in-the-Fields has a curious reputation in the music world. With concerts on most evenings, usually billed as 'Vivaldi by Candlelight' or some such, it clearly targets the casual tourist as the mainstay of its audience – and does it remarkably well. As such it is rather looked down upon by the purists, particularly as few of the concerts advertise appropriate instruments. But what do the masses get for their dollars, francs and lira? Well, if 26 July was anything to go, they get a pretty good return for their currency. Within hours of returning from the Early Music Network International Young Artists Competition in York, I got a call from one of the finalists in the last competition two years ago inviting me to a concert in St Martin's. The Sweelinck Players, and their smaller offshoot The Sweelinck Ensemble, are based at the Dutch Church in the City of London and are led by Martin Knizia, a young man who had the enviable good fortune to study the organ on one of the most fabulous historic instruments around – the Jacobikirche in Lübeck. Their programme, under a typically naff St Martin's title of 'Glorious Baroque Concertos', featured works by Purcell, Bach, Vivaldi, Geminiani and Pachelbel and an extremely impressive trio of soloists. Debbie Diamond played Bach's A minor violin concerto, an impressive example of a leader who was willing to be the first amongst equals as her tone meshed and merged with that of her fellow violinists: she is an eloquent player who gave musical leadership with dominating proceedings. She was later joined by Penelope Spencer for the D-minor double concerto, showing an interesting contrast both musically and presentationally. Whereas Diamond retained her standing position as leader facing slightly in towards the band, Spencer adopted a full face to the audience pose. Stylistically they varied as well, with the sweeping lines and phrasing by melodic structure of Diamond contrasting with Spencer's phrasing by motifs and careful attention to the detail and articulation. Both were eloquent and expressive players. For me the star of the evening had to be Becky Searle playing Vivaldi's Concerto for sopranino in C (RV442), a stunning performance displaying superb control of tone and intonation, elegantly shaped phrases and a virtuosic agility. I had originally thought her stage appearance rather nervous, but later found out that she was very ill in the days leading up to the performance and only just managed to play at all – an astonishing achievement to play so well under these circumstances. Still a student, she is a player to watch out for. Although the programme didn't exactly break new bounds, the playing of all 11 players was committed and professional. And this was no throw-away event – everybody seemed to be enjoying themselves, and this mood infected the huge audience. The only weakness for me came in Pachelbel's Canon, where rather more could have been made of the realisation of the ground bass. In the same piece, the previously impeccable ensemble began to disentangle a bit when the third violin took on solo ideas slightly above her station. But an excellent concert and an encouraging thought that visitors to London do get a reasonable deal.

THE LUFTHANSA FESTIVAL

In line with its theme of the human voice in all its aspects, The Lufthansa Festival (also covered in the last issue of *EMR*) concluded as it opened, with two contrasted concerts, one for solo voice in St John's, Smith Square, and one for choir, soloists and orchestra in Westminster Abbey. In contrast to Michael Chance's earlier programme of North German sacred cantatas, the concluding solo concert was given by soprano Ann Caterina Antonacci, and was of music of her homeland, the Italy of Monteverdi (20 June). A winner of the Verdi, Maria Callas and Pavarotti international competitions, her repertoire is wide, with a speciality in Rossini roles. She has a richly coloured voice, more mezzo than soprano, and a huge range of expressive devices and ornaments, although composers before Rossini might not recognize some of them. She approaches the music as singer and actor, using both aural and visual expression. The stylised gestures of the latter can be an acquired taste, and are difficult to bring off effectively without appearing mannered or just strange. I am not always a fan, but in this case it generally worked, although there were moments of strangeness, and the bosom-clutching was a little overdone in the dying moments of the *Combattimento*. Having a single singer for all three parts might upset purists but, again, it worked for me: with a singer of such extraordinary range as Antonacci, what need is there of others? Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna* and Giramo's *La Pazza* (the mad woman) completed the vocal works. Ivor Bolton's direction of the St James's Baroque Players was particularly effective in the vocal accompaniments, with some excellent control of the rapidly changing moods and texture of the works, although the performance of the instrumentalists in the rest of the programme lacked dramatic content and a sense of communication.

The full forces of the Saint James's Baroque Players were needed to fill Westminster Abbey for the closing concert of the Festival (28 June), appropriately a programme of Purcell, a former organist of the Abbey. And although the organ used was only a continuo organ, it was good to hear some definition in the bass notes. The opening piece, *Welcome to all the pleasures*, was not intended for an acoustic anything like the Abbey's. Although using forces drawn from the Abbey choir, it was originally performed in Stationers' Hall. In an idle moment, I reckoned that you could fit at least 50 Stationers' Halls into the nave alone of the Abbey, so the singers had to work at projection. Soprano Deborah York was the only one to consistently project her voice with the focussed clarity that the acoustic required, although James Gilchrist and Peter Harvey also managed to do battle with the acoustic effectively. It was interesting to compare the different countertenor voices of Michael Chance and Charles Humphries. Although I had been very impressed with Chance in his solo concert at the beginning of the Festival, in contrast with the lighter and more controlled Humphries (a younger pretender to the countertenor throne), his voice did begin to sound a little bit loose. Of course, most English countertenors have been reared within the English cathedral choir tradition, and there was quite a clutch of them forming part of the Abbey Choir, with the boy trebles adding that intense harmonic edge to the upper lines that we tend to miss with sopranos. James O'Donnell, one of Purcell's successors as organist, is well used to working with the acoustic of the Abbey, and directed the forces with that mixture of clarity and precision that allowed for relatively brisk speeds. The players were not named in the programme, so I cannot compliment the trumpet and recorder players who had notable solo spots. A fine end to yet another successful Lufthansa Festival, London's leading early music festival.

THE SPITALFIELDS FESTIVAL

The Spitalfields Festival has traditionally had early music as one of it key features, but also takes in contemporary music and much more besides. This mix of periods can mean that they miss a review when they clash with the Lufthansa Festival, but the contrast in Spitalfields concerts is part of their charm, as is the rough and tumble of the half-restored Christ Church. I will miss the bare brick floors and unfinished walls when the restoration is complete, although the eventual reconstruction of the 18th-century organ will be of major significance. The opening concert was a grand affair, with the BBC Singers and His Majesty's Sagbutts and Cornetts, directed by Stephen Cleobury. Like a number of the concerts, it was recorded for BBC Radio 3. Much as I enjoy listening to Radio 3, their imposition on public concerts is often an irritant. If the BBC runs the event and the audience is aware that recording requirements will dominate, that is fine. But this concert was an example of BBC manners at their worst. An offstage and out-of-earshot announcer dictated the entire timing of the concert. The concert was not broadcast live, so this could easily have been added later, but we had to sit and wait until the conductor got the red light from the control room before each piece. It would have been better if we had been able to hear the commentary. But what of the concert? In a typical Spitalfields concoction, we had Schütz, Schein, Taverner, Gabrieli, Monteverdi, Purcell completed by a Swedish composer, and two modern works by Bo Holton and Joe Duddell. While I am on an anti-BBC run, perhaps I could have a go at the BBC Singers as well – the range of repertoire they have to cover is huge, and many of them cope remarkably well with the specific strictures of early music singing. But a few do not. Their 'one sound suits all' policy just will not do. It must be time for a more specialist early music consort to be formed by the BBC, either from within the existing BBC Singers or from the pot of talented young singers around today. As with so many others, this concert was spoilt by a few overly operatic singers, particularly amongst the sopranos. The tenors also had several shaky moments, as did many of the featured soloists in Gabrieli's *In ecclesiis* and Monteverdi's *Beatus vir* (where intonation was also a bit awry). Although slightly outside the remit of *EMR*, it was interesting to hear two modern composers working under the influence of earlier ones. Sven-David Sandström's continuation of Purcell's possibly unfinished *Hear my prayer* was an inspired work, with the gradual deconstruction of the recognisable into the unknown over a very quiet and very low drone. Bo Holton built on John Taverner's In nomine, played in a surviving keyboard version by Timothy Roberts (neatly sidestepping the impossible bits), making use of distant voices (or, at least, they would have sounded distant to the eventual Radio 3 listeners – to us they merely sounded as thought they were singing just to the right of, and slightly behind, the stage). Although he hadn't managed to tone down the wobblers, Stephen Cleobury led the forces with discipline, both in terms of clear entries and diction. But there are many choirs around who would have made a better fist of the singing.

The Parley of Instruments took as their reference point the many influences that had inspired Nicholas Hawksmoor, the architect of Christ Church and several other churches in the east of London. As a representative of the English High Baroque, there was practically no period of architecture that did not influence him in some way – his buildings are an astonishing mix of ancient, classical and medieval styles. The musical Baroque generally confined itself to working out compromises between existing schools of performance, with the French and Italians dominating over the German and indigenous English. A programme including Finger, Matteis, Corbett, Paisible, Croft, Eccles, and Prelleur showed just what a wealth of musical ideas there was in England in the early 18th century. But then came Handel, in the penultimate work, to show just why he is the composer we remember most from that period of English musical history. The opening Andante of his Sonata in G minor (HWV393) was all that it took to show just how a musical master has the ability to develop and extend a melodic line – his sure sense of harmonic invention rather put the other composers to shame, attractive as their music

was. The concluding Prelleur work honoured a former organist of the church, buried somewhere beneath our feet. The programme suffered a little from having nearly 50 separate pieces, albeit divided into suites and sonatas; but with little or no thematic development between all the pieces, it became a bit bitty. But the playing was excellent, particularly the two solo trumpets and the upper strings – and it was interesting to hear the different tones and resonances of a bass violin compared to a cello. One of my tests of a good chamber consort is whether the viola can be heard – in this case it was, and to great effect. Peter Holman led from the harpsichord, assuredly teasing out the varying moods of the individual movements.

The Spitalfields Festival is noted for its programme of educational and outreach work, exemplified by the use of students of the Royal Academy of Music to provide soloists, choir and orchestra for Handel's *Theodora*, one of the highlights of the Festival (21 July). Director Nicholas McGegan had spent about a week working with the students, and created a performance that demonstrated a wealth of talent amongst the performers. An example of the close working was that all the soloists produced very effective da capo elaborations and the cadenzas were all extremely well thought out. McGegan must have been an inspiring conductor to work with; his frequent bouts of jigging about kept all the performers on their toes, and the choir sitting facing him must have learnt a great deal about the structure of the music as he carefully conducted each entry and point of musical interest. Amongst the singers that impressed were Cecilia Osmond in the title role – she had a clear voice with a good sense of the phrasing and structure of the music. Paul Thompson's unforced tenor was effective in his role as Septimus, although his role consisted mostly of standing around being sung to. Countertenor David Bates struck an imposing figure on stage, although he could do with developing a better sense of stage etiquette. At the moment he risks turning into a Baby Bowman, with distractingly foppish mannerisms and a rather domineering habit of gazing intently round, flicking through the pages of his score and swaying his head while others are singing. The art of sitting still while others have a go is one that should be on every Academy syllabus.

TWO NEW OLD ORGANS

Rather like London buses, you can wait for years for an important reconstruction of an ancient organ, and then two come along at once. I wrote about the fragments of two early 16th century organs found in the East Anglian villages of Wingfield and Wetheringset a few issues ago. The Early English Organ Project was set up to raise funds and to oversee the reconstruction of both organs (by Goetze and Gwynne). The latest development has been the reconstruction of one interpretation of the type of organ that the smaller of the two soundboards could have formed part of. Appropriately, the new organ was revealed in the church which housed the elusive fragment which, as luck would have it, is next door to Wingfield College, home of the enterprising Wingfield Arts – a well known venue on the early music scene. The new organ has a keyboard compass of F to g^2 a^2 although, in recognition of long-held views on the pitch of the 16th century English organ, the pipes actually sound from Bb-d3. There are five open wood registers: a 5' Principal (permanently on), two Octaves and two Fifteenths, all based on pipework in the earliest surviving English organ at Knole in Kent. The soundboard is an exact copy of the original. Many of the clues about the rest of the mechanism have been deduced from the soundboards, including the position of the pallets and the key action. Other missing parts, like the keys and the bellows, were based on surviving late mediaeval remnants in Spain (the c1530 organs in the Capilla de Anaya and the Capilla Dorada in Salamanca Cathedral) and France (the 1558 organ at St Savin en Lavedan near Lourdes). Of course, the soundboard cannot tell us anything about the sound of the pipes. Dominic Gwynne suggests that English organs from the first fifty years of the 16th century were more English than anything else, but where they have obvious links with continental organs, they appear to be closer to Italian and Iberian styles, than Rhenish or Flemish. The clear open tone is rather like a consort of Renaissance recorders in its harmonic simplicity, although further work on the voicing and the winding system is needed before it would be fair to male a final judgement on the tone quality. Although still unfinished, the appearance seems rather curious. The pipes sit on a solid full-width base with carved panels based on contemporary carvings. The wooden Principal front pipes are shaped to look like rather flattened metal display pipes with square sides but slightly rounded (but not circular) fronts. A few tall pipes are sited at the back of the organ, asymmetrically positioned and rather awkwardly visible from the front through the triangular line of the front pipes. The front elevation is further interrupted by gaps left for wooden verticals – a device that I do not recall from iconographical evidence for late medieval organs and which looks a bit ungainly. The new organ gives us a tantalising glimpse into the possible sound world of composers like Redford, Preston and the young Tallis. A single reconstruction will clearly not be enough to explore this most important insight into a lost world of organ playing. The Wingfield organ (and the Wetheringset instrument, when completed) will be touring other venues to give players and scholars a chance to study the instrument in a variety of contexts. [For a concert in which Andrew is playing it, see diary under 27 October.]

A rather more ancient affair is the recent reconstruction of an organ based on fragments discovered in excavations at the classical city of Dion in Pieria, Macedonia. Dating from around the 1st century BC, the fragments are part of a hydraulis, the earliest known type of organ, invented by the Greek engineer Ctesibius (Ktesibios) in Alexandria in the 3rd century BC. In contrast to the East Anglian fragments, this find included a substantial amount of pipework, together with some of the support structure giving information about the keyboard and winding mechanism. As the name suggests, the hydraulis uses water as part of its

mechanism, although how this was done caused much confusion in Renaissance times when some scholars attempted to get organs to sound by forcing water through the actual pipes! In fact, it was the pressure of water in a sump that created the stable air pressure essential for the working of the instrument. The Dion fragment has 24 bronze pipes positioned in descending order on the windchest – but confusingly for modern players, the opposite way round to the keyboard we have known for the past thousand years or so, with the bass notes to the right. There is also a series of 6 tiny pipes beyond the lowest sounding pipe, but their use is currently unclear and they do not sound in the reconstruction. The pipes are remarkably narrow for their width (very narrow scaled, in organspeak), producing a sound that is curiously fluty (narrow scale pipes usually sound stringy, and wide scale pipes fluty). Contemporary records mention the Greek hydraulis being 'sweet and joyous' (as opposed to its Roman successor, used in gladiatorial contests and far from sweet). The tone of this instrument is remarkably breathy – even struggling for breath. About 50% of the sound is pure wind noise with no recognisable pitch, and the clatter of the primitive action adds to the aural texture. Although not all the original pipes were present, or complete, they had fortunately left imprints in the soil, so that their length could be easily ascertained. They produce a curious scale, the upper octave being diatonic and the lower notes apparently producing more or less our normal chromatic scale. Following an introductory lecture, the music played during the Queen Elizabeth Hall concert (25 June) was a curious mixture of new age and contemporary, with no attempts to re-create the music of the ancient Greeks and more focus being given to the soulful singing of baritone Spyros Sakkas.

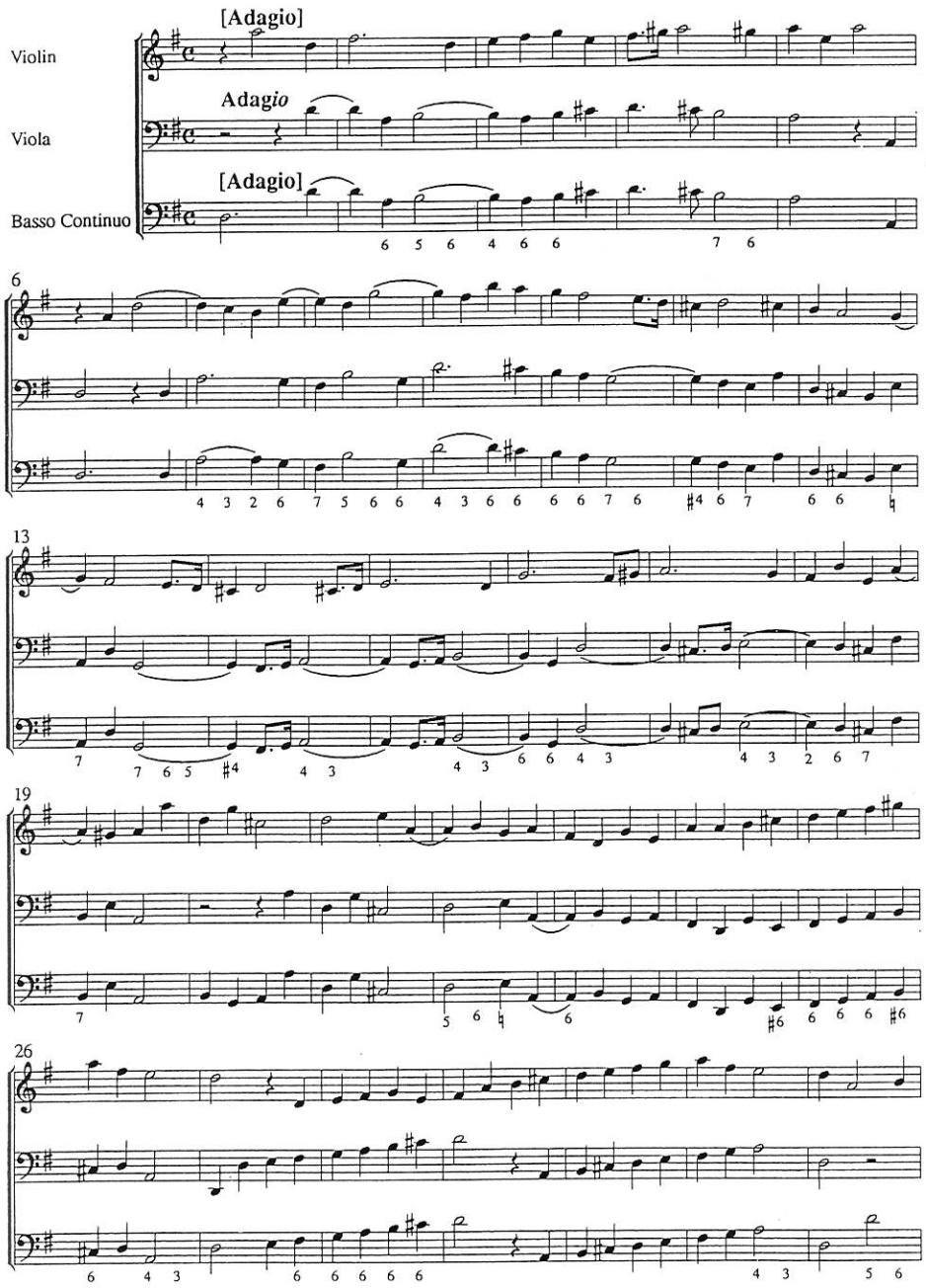
One contrast between the two organs and opening events was the comparative interest that each managed to generate. The English organ project has received very little publicity, even within the organ world, and opened to an audience of about 100 in a remote East Anglian village. With the full force of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture and the London Hellenic Society behind them and some excellent publicity, the hydraulis attracted a huge audience, comfortably filling the Queen Elizabeth Hall, together with ample press and broadcast coverage. A lesson for us in England?

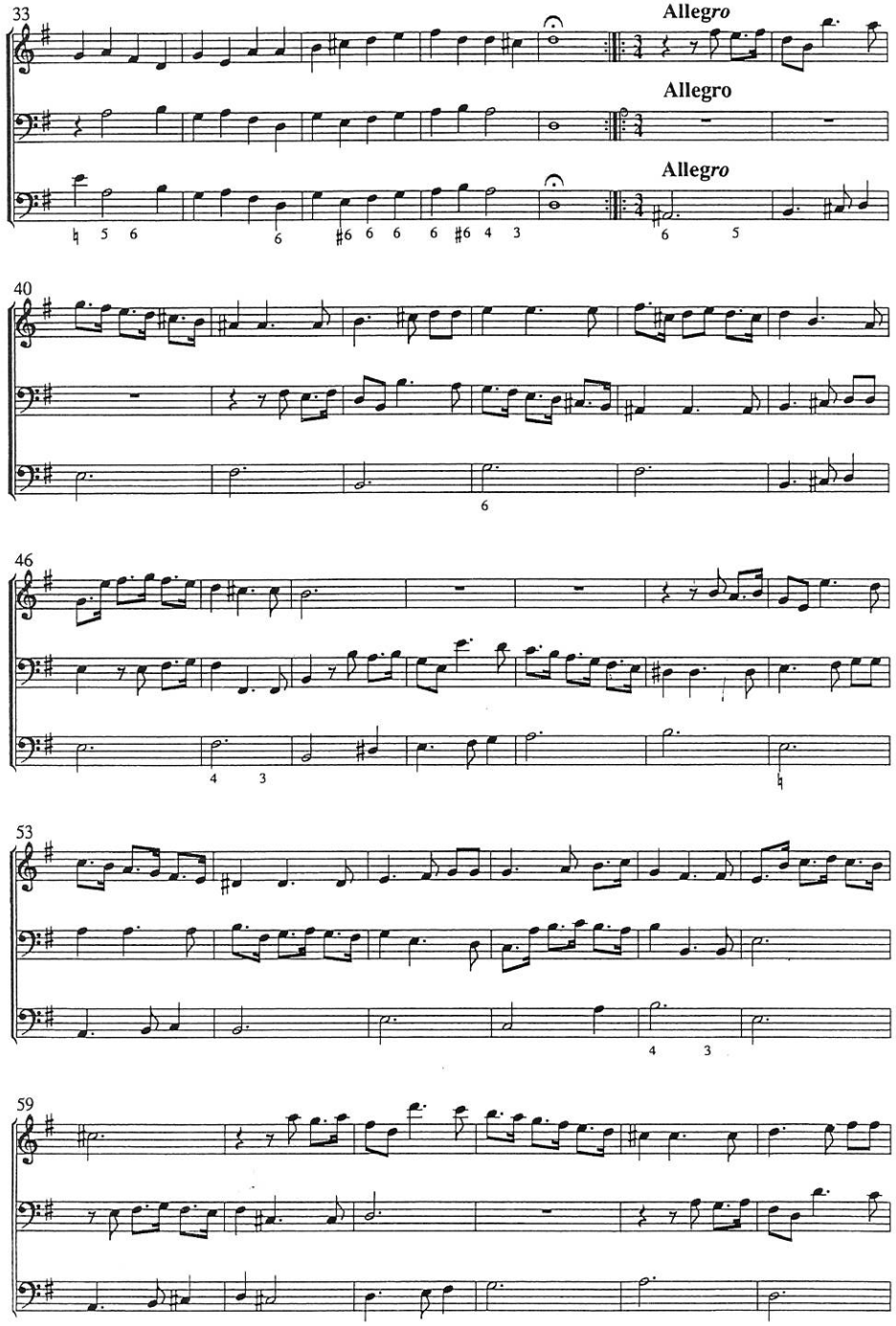
Giovanni Legrenzi
Sonata sesta A2. Violino e Viola
from
La Cetra, op. 10, 1673

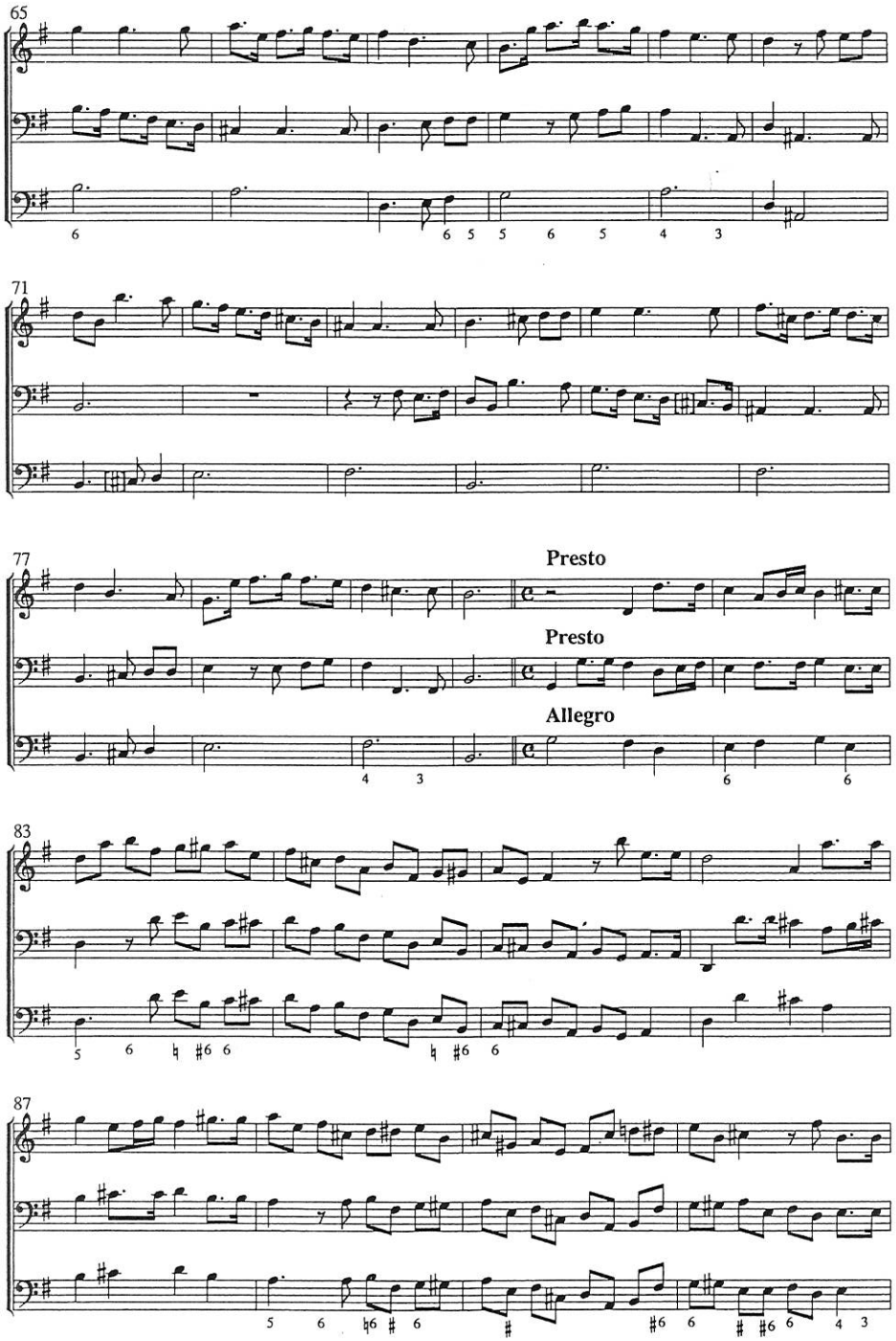
Legrenzi's op. 10 contains three sets, each of six sonatas, for two, three and four string instruments and continuo. Of the first set, 1-3 are for 2 violins & Bc, 4-6 for violin, viola da brazzo & Bc (with *fagotto* given as an alternative for the viola). The latter three are available from King's Music in full-size score & parts. A reduced-size score of No. 6 is given on pp. 17-18. Price £10.00

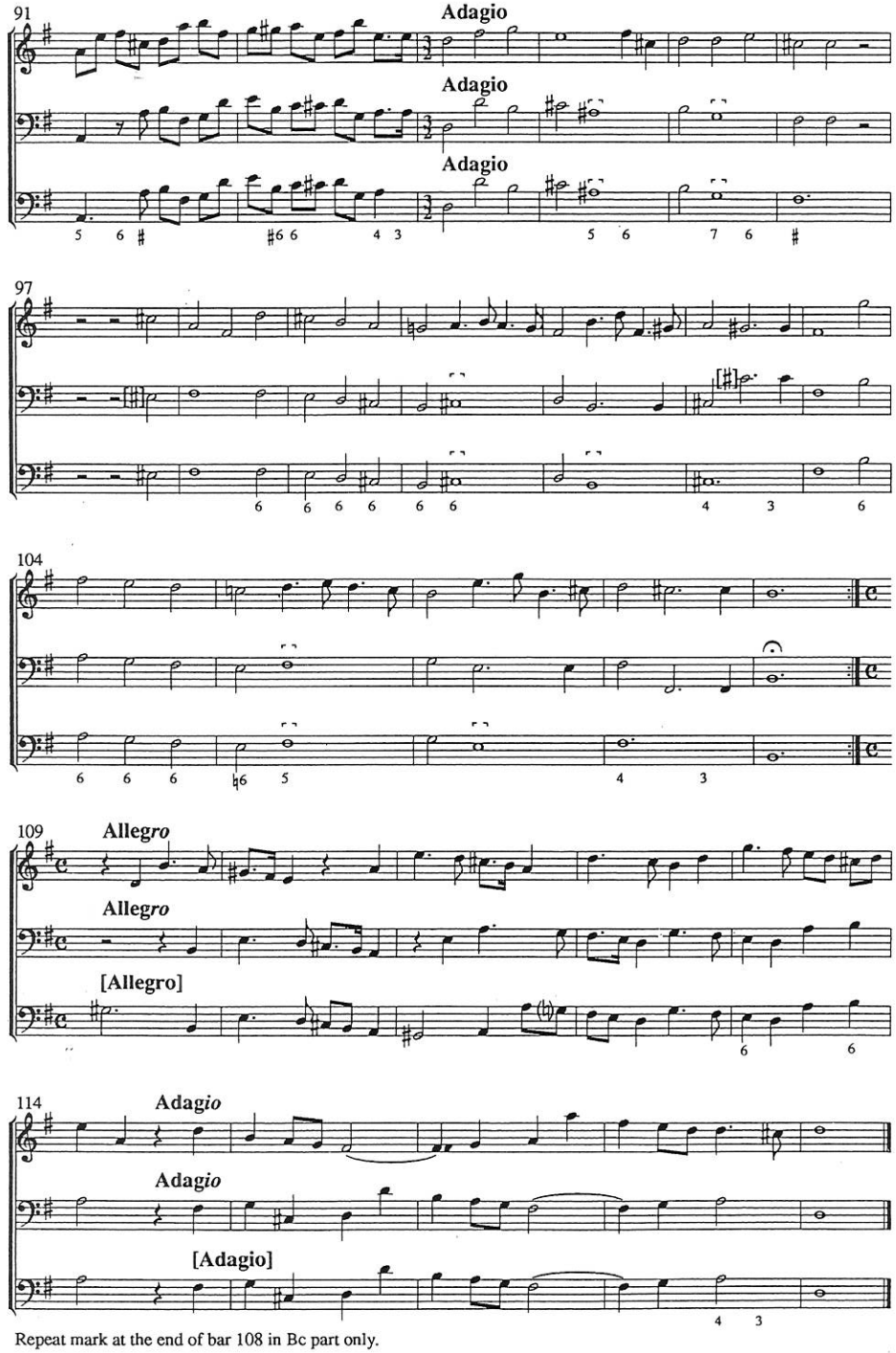
G. Legrenzi – Sonata Sesta

A 2. Violino e viola









Repeat mark at the end of bar 108 in Bc part only.

RECORD REVIEWS

MEDIEVAL

Machaut *Le vray remède d'amour* Ensemble Gilles Binchois, Dominique Vellard 68' 25"
Cantus **C 9625** (rec 1988)

This is a lavish presentation indeed for a reissue, with a 98-page booklet with notes in four languages and texts in five. The decision whether to buy it will depend in part on whether you want spoken text: in terms of length, there isn't much of it, but I found that I only wanted to hear it once, and that it was a bore having to be within reach of a control to skip it on subsequent hearings. That apart, this is a fine recording, with a variety of scorings: unless you are an advocate of voices-only, the choices seem sensible, and the singing is pleasing. Machaut used to sound so, so forbidding when I first encountered his music, but not here! *CB*

Nox – Lux: France & Angleterre, 1200-1300 La Reverdie 63' 10"
Arcana **A 307**

The booklet is devoted to a series of snippets about light and darkness, finishing with 'nearly all theories are crap, but some are less crap than others'. Listened to as a series of pieces without a theme, this is very impressive, with some magnificent singing of 13th-century Parisian-style motets. I am less sure about the concept and the instrumental interludes, but the vocal pieces benefit from the contrast and separation. I wish Arcana would place translations opposite the texts, though it is as well that the English paraphrase of *Victimae paschali laudes* is kept away from close comparison with the original. Well worth buying. *CB*

Triplicité: 1350-1450 Zorgina vocalensemble (Rebecca Bain, Ruth Eiselsberg, Ellen Santaniello) 66' 49"
Raumklang **RK 9905**
Music by Bedyngham, A de Caserta, Cooper, Dufay, Landini, Machaut, Wolkenstein & anon

A good month for female voices in medieval music! This contains a more complex repertoire than that of La Reverdie, but the singers share the ability to tune, shape the music just enough without overdoing it, sing in tune (mostly) and sound attractive. They benefit from sounding a bit more relaxed – this music does not need haste – but they do not let cadences sag. This is the favourite of my medieval batch this month. *CB*

Trois Sœurs/Three Sisters Sinfonye, Stevie Wishart, Vivien Ellis, Jocelyn West 57' 49"
Glossa **GCD 920704**

This is the long-awaited reissue of *Three Sisters on the Seashore* (Lunadisc lun cd 33), one of the first discs at our end of the market that fully exploited the possibility of artistic design in the packaging and on the disc itself. That link with the popular music world is maintained by calling each singer *vocals* (though despite the plural, they don't split their voices to sing chords like Tibetan monks). Our reviewer in *EMR* 15, p. 12 was Jennie Cassidy, who began: 'Hurrah for these vocal tone-colours that prove it is possible to produce a variety of vibrant sounds stemming from folk culture and still incorporate the assets of vocal training'. The repertoire is 13th-century French motets and caroles, which are here brought to life with utter conviction. *CB*

Very belated apologies to Sinfonye and to Jennie for replacing Seashore *by* Beach *in our heading in 1995.*

Tres Culturas: Judios, Cristianos y Musulmanes en la España Medieval Sefarad, Eduardo Paniagua, Luis Delgado, El Arabí Serghini, Omar Metioui, Ahmed Al-Gazi 55' 49"
Pneuma **PN100**
Canciones de Sefarad... Songs of Sepharad: 'I'd like to begin the story' Judith R. Cohen, Tamar Ilana Cohen Adams, Eduardo Paniagua, Wafir Sheik, David Mayoral 59' 30"
Pneuma **PN 270**
Virgen de Atocha: Cantigas de Madrid Musica Antigua, Eduardo Paniagua 67' 50"
Pneuma **PN-280**

The link here is Eduardo Paniagua, and these are three examples of his extensive series celebrating Spain's multicultural history. Readers will know that I am suspicious of the assumption that non-Christian Mediterranean music has survived over the last 500 to 1000 years in any recognisable form and question whether it is a relevant guide for interpreting the written record. Judith R. Cohen expressed disquiet at the appropriation of current Sephardic traditions into the early-music world (*EMR* 31, p. 13), so it is interesting to hear music from that tradition interpreted by her and her daughter. The text material is old, but she stresses that the melodies are not medieval and the style of performance is based on current practice. This well-documented disc is essential listening (and reading) for medieval groups wishing to encompass that repertoire. *Tres Culturas* includes traditional material for its Jewish and Arabic sections but curiously represents Christianity by instrumental settings of medieval music that survives with words. *Virgen de Atocha* has performances, by an ensemble that includes singers, of nine of the Alfonsine cantigas; unlike *Canciones de Sefarad*, there are no English translations in the booklet. I feel that reviews of these discs belong more to a magazine devoted to folk music or the rapidly-expanding world-music market than here. My approach to the addition of flesh to the bare bones of medieval monophony may seem to some to be over-cautious, and I can imagine that many readers will enjoy these skilled and, in their way, convincing interpretations and will be eager to sample others in the series. *CB*

Thanks to Lindum Records for organising review copies.

15th-CENTURY

Josquin *Missa Fortuna Desperata etc.* The Clerks' Group, Edward Wickham 69' 10"
ASV *Gaudeamus* **CD GAU 220**
+ **Busnois** (?) *Fortune desperata*; **Greiter** *Passibus ambiguis*; **Isaac** *Bruder Conrat*; **Josquin** *Adieu mes amours* a4, *Bergerette savoysienne, Consideres mes incessantes, La plus des plus*; **Senfl** *Herr durch dein Bluet*; **anon** *Fortuna zibaldone*

Josquin *Messes de L'homme armé.* Maîtrise des Pays de Loire, A Sei Voci, Bernard Fabre-Garrus 73' 59"
Astrée Naïve **E 8809**
Missa L'homme armé sexti toni, Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales

Before I heard them I had somehow assumed A Sei Voci to be a small razor-sharp vocal ensemble. In fact, they are very much a choir. Aided by the resonant instrument they play here – the abbey of Fontevraud – the group produces beautifully melded sonorities. But although their sound and its effects are often pleasing, the way they deal with the bit in the middle – the music – is less straightforward. Fabre-Garrus is not a musician to let the real issues be obscured by the facts: he is quite happy to bypass any consensus on performance practice en route to his stated aim 'to recreate the spirit of the era'. No surprises, then, that in these readings there are frequent changes of direction for which there are no obvious indications in the musical or verbal texts. Still, musical navigation is hardly an absolute science, and moments that strike me as a turn-off will doubtless appear to others to be right-on.

For all their impeccable choral discipline, one of the Clerks' Group's greatest attributes is that they don't really sound like a choir. Singing from parts means they never take us on that illusory short cut to nowhere – the vertically co-ordinated expressive shift. (It is, let's face it, difficult to achieve a subito ***p*** on bar 17 when bar 17 doesn't actually exist.) Instead, we hear singers traversing the horizontal with skill and discovering the vertical with relish. Superficially the results may resemble the ethereal way Josquin was being presented twenty years ago, but listen a little closer to hear how the Clerks' Group are significantly moving us along the line.

Simon Ravens

Ockeghem *Missa Ecce ancilla Domini* The Clerks' Group, Edward Wickham 63' 40"
ASV *Gaudeamus* **CD GAU 223** (rec 1993)
+ Josquin *Déploration...*, Obrecht *Salve Regina*, Ockeghem *Ave Maria, Intemerata Dei mater*

In recording Ockeghem's Mass *Ecce ancilla Domini* in 1993, The Clerks' Group tackled one of the towering masterpieces of the

15th century, but such was their expertise with this repertoire even before their projected recording of Ockeghem's works for ASV, that one could hardly imagine a happier combination of music and performers. Their feeling for the contours of Ockeghem's sometimes quirky polyphony was unsurpassed then as now, and their authoritative overview of the larger form was rarely matched. The delights of the mass and Ockeghem's motets *Intemerata Dei mater* and *Ave Maria* are complemented by simply superb interpretations of Obrecht's *Salve Regina* and Josquin's *Déploration* on the death of Ockeghem. It is a great pleasure to hear The Clerks' Group on such superlative form in the early 90s, and do I detect a slightly warmer more ambient sound from the Proudsound engineers than the group sometimes has from ASV and other labels? *D. James Ross*

16th-CENTURY

Byrd *Keyboard music* Davitt Moroney 77' 45"
Hyperion CDA66558
Nos. 5b, 8, 12-13, 23a/b, 36, 38, 43, 48, 57, 64, 66-7, 74 79, 94-5, 121 from Mus. Brit. 27-8

A lot has been written already about Davitt Moroney's 7-CD Complete Byrd and it's certainly an achievement which has been broadly welcomed. Not everyone yearns to own all 127 pieces though, so this new 'best of' disc offers, instead, 19 pieces which together represent the major forms and genres that Byrd worked with. There are dances, variation sets, fantasias, vocal intabulations and plainsong settings. For those who don't know Moroney's playing, I'd say it's more sensible than it is sensational, and that, arguably, is just what's required for Byrd. Certainly, there are some excellent, carefully considered performances here. *The Bells* is nicely paced, and the ad lib 'peal of bells' ending is inspired. *The Carman's Whistle*, played on a Goetz and Gwynn chamber organ, is wonderfully whistley, and the Fantasia (BK13) is just as I like to hear it, robust and sonorous. The highlights of the project are the recordings made on the Ahrend organ in Toulouse. Moroney simulates late Renaissance organ pitch by playing down a fourth on this A=440Hz instrument. While some think this approach results in too 'soupy' a sound, I happen to think it's wonderful, and I could honestly listen to *Ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la* for ever. This is a good compilation, showcasing Moroney's playing as well as the breadth and richness of Byrd's output.
Robin Bigwood

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

Lynn Dawson's voice has developed somewhat since 1986, when this was recorded (though the disc seems not to have been issued until 1994), but it was probably more suited to consorting with viols then than now, and this makes an attractive recording, despite its brevity. Seven consort songs (including the popular Amaryllis and Susanna) alternate with seven viol pieces (including three In nomines. the Pavan in C, Browning and Prelude and Ground). The playing is a little more four-square than we get from groups like Fretwork, but fits Byrd's style well enough. Some of the music may seem undemonstrative, even drab, but I had a phrase from 'Out of the orient crystal skies' running round in my head for days after hearing this. A good introduction to the repertoire, but I doubt if many will be tempted by an old and short-running disc at full price. *CB*

Fayrfax *The Masses* The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood & David Skinner 225' 23" (3 CDs in box)
ASV *Gaudeamus* CD GAX 253 ££

There is no need to repeat the praises heaped on the original recordings, and the attempt to repackage them for a wider market is commendable. But I'm puzzled at the separation of the masses from the other music that was included on the original discs. Are they to follow later on a separate disc, or is it assumed that they are dispensible? And if the latter, is it from a considered view that they are inferior, or the consequence of a common assumption that big pieces like symphonies or masses are more important than small ones like piano pieces and motets? There is, however, one motet included in a new recording: an elevation motet *Anima Christi* recently recognised in an Alamire MS. The score is printed in the booklet (congratulations: a first?) In principle, though, I prefer the programmes of the original discs (still available), and would only recommend this if the omitted material were also to be repackaged. *CB*

Palestrina *Missae Ex Jacquet de Mantua Vol II* Delitiae Musicae, Marco Longhini 70' 27"
Stradivarius STR 33478
Jacquet de Mantua *Repleatur os meum, Spem in alium*; Palestrina *masses based on them*

I gave a warm welcome to this Italian group's Palestrina/Jacquet Vol. I in 'Recent recordings of Palestrina', *Early Music* xxvii (1999), 144-147, finding their solo voices, low pitch, blend and sparing use of vocal swelling as an expressive device very convincing indeed. These qualities are also found in Vol. II but my reaction is a little less enthusiastic due to the addition of a male alto whose use of vocal ebbing and flowing I can no longer call sparing; it veers too much towards the style of the Solisti della Cappella Musicale di San Petronio for my liking. This singer is only used for the two motets and for the *Missa Spem in alium*; the *Missa Repleatur* keeps the original line-up. The latter is one of Palestrina's learned masses, with changes of vocal registration for different movements and a series of canons at different intervals: the learning is carried lightly in this recording which brings out Palestrina's great ability to control sonority, texture and harmonic drive. While I welcome the addition of plainchant to the Kyrie movements, these are recorded in a very different acoustic which sounds a bit odd up against the very closely-miked polyphony. Well-worth getting though, as are the group's other Palestrina recordings.
Noel O'Regan

Lute Music Vol. 2: Early Italian Renaissance Music by Francesco Canova da Milano, Pietro Paolo Borrono, Marco d'Aquila, Albert de Rippe Paul O'Dette 67' 21" (rec 1990-92) ££
Harmonia Mundi *Classical Express* HCX 3957043

I'm puzzled about the origin of this disc, since the copyright dates given are 1984 and 2001 but the recording dates are 1990 and 1992. It comes with an enthusiastic quote from *EMR* (stunning music, superbly played and beautifully recorded) and needs no further praise. *CB*

The Song the Virgine Soong: Christmas Music from Tudor England Cambridge Taverner Choir, Owen Rees *dir* 63' 55 (rec 1993)
Herald HAVPCD 252
Brown *Jesu mercy, how may this be?* Byrd *Lullaby my sweet little baby, This day Christ was born*; Pigott *Quid petis o fili?* Smert *Nowell Dieus wous garde*; Tallis *Missa Puer natus est nobis (Gloria), Videte miraculum*

I was a little disappointed by this, though must confess to being happier with my second hearing than my first, during which I was surprised that music from around 1500 was performed so similarly to music from a century later. (The lack of contrast between the polished, imitative refrain and the more angular verses of the opening piece, *Quid petis o Fili*, encapsulated the problem). It is interesting hearing the carol form from both ends of the century, and the pro-gramme is an ideal antidote to the normal Christmas choral fare. I suspect that on the third hearing I'll warm to it even more, and it is good to have an anthology that links early and late Tudor music. *CB*

17th-CENTURY

d'Anglebert *Sämtliche Cembalowerke Vol. 1.* Barbara Maria Willi 67' 52"
Musicaphon M 56827 (rec 1996)

A few months ago I reviewed a recording of d'Anglebert's complete harpsichord works recorded in 1996 by Christophe Rousset. Perhaps it is the composer's fate to endure such delays, for here, again four years after the recording, is the first instalment of another *intégrale*, quite a compliment to music that has not always excited commentator's enthusiasm. (Willi describes d'Anglebert as an underestimated giant.) The sound world of the two recordings differs. Here we have a drier harpsichord at a higher pitch than used by Rousset, although both use similar meantone temperaments. Where I have made comparisons between the two, honours have been pretty even, and where I have preferred Rousset I suspect that I have often been seduced by the richer sonorities as much as by anything in the playing. This music does not have the grandeur of the 18th-century masters, but it does have considerable charms, and now has two committed and persuasive advocates. *David Hansell*

Charpentier *Trois histoires sacrées* Il Seminario Musicale, Gérard Lesne 68' 05"
Astrée / Naïve **E8821**
Dialogus inter angelum et pastores (H406), *Mors Saülis et Jonathae* (H403), *Sacrificium Abrahae* (H402)

This disc, another spin-off from the Versailles festivals, offers two first recordings (H402 & 406) and a work included because, as he honestly reveals in the booklet, the director of the ensemble wished to sing its principal role. Unfortunately, as a falsettist, he is not ideally suited for it, though he does handle the tricky tessitura with great artistry. In the same work, another problem of sonority concerns the choice of continuo istrument for the Witch's recitatives. Was a regal really an option in late 17th-century France? Despite these points, it is only fair to say that this is another in the ever-lengthening line of excellent recordings that enthusiasts will be able to draw on to celebrate the composer's tercentenary in 2004. Some of Charpentier's recitative is a little pedestrian, but in the concerted movements he seldom misses the target, and this ensemble savours all the opportunities he gives them. I like the elegant packaging.
David Hansell

Charpentier *Te Deum; Motets pour le roy Louis* Maïtrise de Bretagne, Le Parlement de Musique, Martin Gester 61' 43"
Opus 111 **OPS 30-297**
Te Deum H146, *In honorem S. Ludovici* H365 & 418, *Psalm 75* H206

According to the blurb, Gester's aim in these performances of what could be rather grandiose works (lots of trumpets in D major) is to emphasise their graceful rather than their bombastic aspects. His notes rightly draw attention to the dance structures that support Charpentier's longer movements and there is certainly a sense of all this in the relaxed orchestral sound and the unfussy singing of the youthful choir and the male soloists. The juxtapositions of the sopranos with the choir are less happy, however. Their sound is distinctly less relaxed, a rather tight vibrato in particular highlighting the contrast between their style and that of the children.

I confess that the famous *Te Deum* does not excite me as much as it would have done its first hearers, but the other works on the disc more than compensate. The two motets in honour of St Louis were composed for the Jesuit church in Paris and are strongly contrasted, the first emphasising the war-like nature of the saint (he died during a crusade), the other being a chamber work for ATB and ensemble (violins, recorders & continuo), the reflective opening of which, setting the saint's dying prayer, is a highlight of the disc. H206 is an expansion and re-working from the 1690s of a psalm composed a decade or so earlier. As ever, Charpentier is sensitive to all the nuances of his text, not least in the 'sleep' movement, a genre in which he excelled. The dramatic contrasts of this work, well captured by Gester and his team, bring an enjoyable recital to a satisfying conclusion. *David Hansell*

Corelli *Concertos op. 6 Vol. 2 (nos 7-12)* Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Nicholas McGegan *dir* 57' 13" (rec 1990) £
Harmonia Mundi *Classical Express* **HCX 3957015**

I'm not going to say that this is the best set of op. 6 around – I don't have enough examples at hand to check and anyway I am suspicious of the idea of scoring up points to select a winner – but it is certainly a good one, shows off the music to its best advantage and is enjoyable to listen to. It is stylishly played, and has the advantage of being good value as well. If you've never acquired a decent set of op. 6, hurry up and do so, and this (together with the previously-issued first half of the set) is among the best. *CB*

Fux *Requiem* Clemencic Consort 59' 17"
Arte Nova **74321 27777 2**
Kaiserrequiem K51-3 + K130, 342, 400, 403/2

Like the Leo reviewed below, this recording failed to live up to its promise. My eyes widened when I opened the box and saw them both, but even repeated listening failed to spark more than moderate interest. The centrepiece is the so-called Kaiser-Requiem. To pad that out into something resembling a Viennese funeral, Clemencic has lifted movements from several other works (bleeding chunks, you might say!) There are six singers and all the instrumental parts are taken by one player each. Normally this would not be a problem, but it seems inconceivable to me that the funeral of someone of Leopold I's stature would have been performed thus, and the resultant thinness of sound confirms my theoretical doubts. The booklet notes are pretty weak overall, and spend too much time talking about Fux's 'other Requiem'. All in all, a bit of a strange one. *BC*

Matteis *The Scotch Humour: Music of Nicola Matteis* Chatham Baroque (Julie Andrijeski, Emily Davidson *vlbs*, Patricia Harvey *gamba*, Scott Pauley *theorbo, guitar* 58' 28"
Dorian **DOR-90256** (rec 1997)

Having been very impressed with Chatham Baroque's excellent contribution to the Reel of Tulloch (DOR 90 291) and being familiar with Matteis's twinkling *Ground after the Scotch Humour* which gives the present CD its title, I approached it with eager anticipation, but was ultimately disappointed on two counts. The sound is pinched, making the strings sound very immediate and at the same time rather dead, but more importantly the music is rather dull and generally not a bit like the witty *Ground*. Aside from the suite of ayres for solo guitar, which displayed a degree of invention, I found the other music mundane, and was definitely unable to share the enthusiasm of Scott Pauley or that of Matteis' contemporaries which his programme note records. Perhaps the players needed to let themselves go a bit more, perhaps the engineers needed to look to microphone placement or perhaps this is simply a one-masterpiece composer, whose skill as a player breathed life into some otherwise very run-of-the-mill music. *D. James Ross*

Monteverdi *I don't want to love* Artek, Gwendolin Toth *dir* 48' 48"
Zefiro **ZR101**

I've enjoyed this immensely. The title comes from an entertainment by the Mark Morris Dance Group, which is being toured in the UK this autumn with Artek providing the music (see Diary). The disc includes five singers and five continuo players (the bass singer also plucking). They sound good, recognising the drama without overdoing it, and have a fine sense of style. There are some favourites (*Zefiro torna* & *Lamento della Ninfa*, the latter not having much of the *tempo del' affetto* though plenty of passion) and other less well-known pieces. Highly recommended. *CB*

Available from 170 West 73rd St #3C, New York NY 10023. www.artekearlymusic.org

Praetorius *Dances from Terpsichore (1612)* The Parley of Instruments Renaissance Violin Band, Peter Holman 70' 55"
Hyperion **CDA67240**

We have been used for the last 50 years to hearing the music from *Terpsichore* played on lavish arrays of early instruments as if the object of the collection was to provide repertoire for as many of the instruments pictured in *Syntagma Musicum* as possible. Praetorius himself, however, makes clear that this is mostly string music arranged from the French court repetoire by himself and François Caroubel. In fact, we don't hear any Praetorius until 24 minutes into the disc – but don't use that as an excuse not to buy it. String groups of various sizes are are used, some with a continuo group of four pluckers, who also make a fine sound separately in setting by Vallet and Bésard. The disc benefits from Peter Holman's unrivalled understanding of string music of the early 17th century; the playing is shapely and one doesn't miss the crum-horns and shawms one little bit. *CB*

NB. Those who wish to acquire Syntagma Musicum, *as described in the advert circulated with this issue, are reminded that it is available from King's Music for £30, but that post is extra and expensive, since it weighs 1.540 kg + packaging.*

Purcell *Harmonia Sacra & Complete Organ Music* Jill Feldman, Davitt Moroney (Thomas Dallam organ c.1675-80 at Enclos Paroissial Saint-Miliau, Guimiliau, Brittany) 69' 20"
Arcana **A 310**

A re-release of a 1992 recording, using one of the finest of the organs built by the Dallam family of English organ builders in Normandy. There are few organs surviving in England from Purcell's time, so these are popular for recording English music, despite being essentially French in style and sound. It is good to hear a decent-sized organ used for accompaniment. Jill Feldman's voice is distinctive, though there are moments when the critical microphone picks up intonation questions that might have been unasked by a live audience. Purcell's (alas!) few solo organ pieces are played with conviction. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

A Scarlatti *Olimpia & other cantatas* chacona, dir. Rosalind Halton 129' 08"
ABC Classics **ABC 461 687-2** (2 CDs in box)

Alessandro Scarlatti's reputation is secure in histories of opera and the cantata but is still not secure in the experience of most listeners, despite excellent discs from, for example, Il Seminario Musicale and the Arcadian Ensemble. This set includes 11 cantatas along with a newly-identified keyboard Toccata (published by Saraband). I hope it will circulate widely, though that must depend on ABC's distribution outside Australia. (It can, of course, be ordered through Lindum Records.) The work that I found most striking was *Silentio, aure volanti*. I happened to have switched off after the preceding cantata, and beginning again later I wondered who had changed the disc, the string introduction sounded so different (Purcell first came to mind). There are three singers. My favourite is Jane Edwards, whose voice has a slight tang that reminds me of Emma Kirkby. The other soprano, Vivien Hamilton, is less individual, but effective. James Sanderson has a rich countertenor voice but is more erratic in intonation than the ladies. The instrumental playing is delightful. There is an excellent booklet with notes by the director. I hope this disc will draw further attention to a repertoire that is still far too neglected; the web site (see p. 5) might also help; it includes several scores that can be downloaded for a fee. *CB*

Strozzi *Opera ottava: Arie & cantate Venezia, 1664*. La Risonanza (Emanuela Galli *S*, David Plantier, Elisa Citterio *vlns*, Caterina dell' Agnello *vlc*, Franco Pavan *theorbo, gtr*, Fabio Bonizzoni *hpscd/dir*) 72' 03"
Glossa **GCD 921503**

The packaging represents the antifeminist reaction: the composer may by a lady, but the box has pictures of two men: her father and the harpsichordist. The singer appears only in the background of the picture on the back of the booklet. A pity, since she deserves greater prominence, as, of course, does the composer. Most of the contents of the original edition are included here, sung with a suitable blend of accuracy and panache by Emanuela Galli, who has the technical skill to encompass the difficulties Strozzi presents and the imagination to make sense of them. Her sound is a little edgy, but there is no trace of any operatic wobble. The continuo team supports her well. Robert Kendrick's booklet note is excellent. If you like Strozzi's type of intense and dramatic declamation, this will suit you fine, though some may prefer music and performances that are a little more ingratiating. *CB*

Tomkins *Barafostus Dreame* Carole Cerasi *hpscd, virginals* 73' 33"
Metronome **MET CD 1049**

You don't have to get far into this CD to realise that Carole Cerasi *really* means business. Forget dry, dusty and academic readings: these glorious, fiery, intense performances demand repeated listening. Even better, there's no end of depth in the playing. *A sad pavan for these distracted times* gives plenty of opportunity for gloomy introspection and *Fortune my Foe* is lyrical and lovely. Two instruments are used – copies of a harpsichord by Stephanini (1694) and a Muselaar virginals by Johannes Ruckers (1611), both brimming with character and ideal for the repertoire. The technical quality of the recording is outstanding, too. Recorded in the near-perfect acoustic of East Woodhey church, this is easily one of the best-sounding harpsichord CDs I've come across. All in all, this is a triumph, and a joy to listen to.
Robin Bigwood

Klaglied: German Sacred Concertos Michael Chance *A*, The Purcell Quartet 70' 21"
Chandos *Chaconne* **CHAN 0645**
J. Christoph Bach *Ach, daß ich Wassers gnug hätte*; **J. Michael Bach** *Auf laßt uns den Herren loben*; **Buxtehude** *Jesu meine Freud und Lust Jubilate Domino, Klaglied, Wenn ich Herr Jesu*, Sonatas BuxWV 266, 271; **Geist** *Vater unser*; **Schütz** *Erbarm dich mein*

Michael Chance's album of German sacred concertos has almost the same programme as two similar discs by Robin Blaze and Andreas Scholl. This duplication is a shame when so much of the repertory is still unrecorded. On the other hand, Chance's disc makes good listening, juxtaposing a German tradition in penitential laments alongside more buoyant arias. Chance has a fuller voice than Blaze or Scholl, giving intensity to his dialogue with the dissonant string writing in Schütz's *Erbarm dich* or J. C. Bach's *Ach, daß ich Wassers gnug hätte*. In Buxtehude's *Jubilate Domino*, Richard Boothby chases Chance's solo with a virtuoso viol part, both performers controlling adeptly the piece's quick shifts of mood. But perhaps most moving is the plaint that gives the disc its title, Buxtehude's *Klaglied*. Chance maintains a searing intensity across this deceptively simple aria. Throughout, the Purcell Quartet accompany with the sensitivity and close listening of true chamber musicians; they also contribute two mercurial Buxtehude sonatas that deserve to be better known. *Stephen Rose*

Music for the Wren Library Richard Lindsay *ct, rec*, Patrick Bennett *hpscd*, Liz White *gamba*
Corda Records [no number] 45' 10"
Music by Byrd, Dowland, Gibbons, Humfrey, Purcell

The library of the title is not that of Trinity College Cambridge but of Lincoln Cathedral and this CD is based on a concert held there. Richard sings beautifully and the playing is effective. However, any harpsichord (let alone a digital one) is a makeshift substitute for viols in 'My sweet little darling' and 'Ye sacred muses', and it emphasises the metronomic playing of 'The woods so Wilde' and a group of Purcell pieces. I commend, however, the use of a harpsichord for the Dowland songs: if you are transposing them beyond what can work with the original tablature, why feel bound to the lute? (But where's the gamba in 'In darkness let me dwell'?) I have some doubts whether it would be wise to market the CD too hard: but as a souvenir of a concert, a gift for friends and a chance for the curious to hear a distinctive and sensitive new voice, it is recommended. *CB*

Available from the same address as Lindum Records

A Renaissance Portrait Mutsumi Hatano *S*, Takashi Tsunoda *lute* 55' 22"
Dowland & Company
Music by Caccini, Daniel, Dowland, Kapsberger, Monteverdi, Niles *Black is the color* & anon

This is a sampler from five discs from the Pardon label, and shows the quality of these two performers. The most substantial items are Dowland's *Go nightly cares* and Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna*, both of which are impressively performed (though using a string bass instrument in the latter creates an unnecessary problem of how long to sustain semibreves). The Japanese inflection is less easy to ignore than it was in their live concert (see p. 11), and the magic of that live performance isn't quite present; but I strongly recommend this as a marvellous example of a singer whose voice seems made to show the expressive power possible with just a lute accompaniment. *CB*

Available from Lindum Records,
or contact dowland @air.linkclub.or.jp
http://www.linkclub.or.jp/~dowland/

Trumpet Concertos of the Early Baroque Friedemann Immer, Graham Nicholson *tpts*, Concerto Köln 58' 25" rec 1987
Dabringhaus & Grimm **MDG 605 0271-2**
Music by Corelli, Francheschini, D. Gabrielli, Manfredini, Stradella, Torelli, Viviani

Friedemann Immer is one of Europe's leading baroque trumpeters, and now has an ensemble named after him. This recording is nearly 20 years old, but contains pieces unavailable elsewhere in first class performances, showing quite clearly why he was one of the outstanding pioneers of the valveless trumpet. The strings of Concerto Köln play nicely, too, with a lightness and sweetness of tone which I associate with recordings of that vintage. I wasn't quite so taken by the Viviani sonata with organ, but that might just sound like me putting that particular composer down for three consecutive issues. *BC*

LATE BAROQUE

d'Agincour *Feste de Pentecoste au Couvent des Visitandines* Les Dames de Saint Jean *chant*, Hervé Niquet (organ of Église de Seurre, Julien Tribuot, 1699) 75' 43"
Glossa **GCD 921701**

François d'Agincour (*Dagincourt* in Grove) is often overlooked amongst the wealth of French Classical organ composers. A pupil of Boyvin and Lebègue, he belonged to the generation in which music began to get

rather silly, although he generally stayed within the bounds of sensibility compared to some of his Rococo colleagues. Although there have been recordings using the alternatim practice for the ordinary of the Mass or the Magnificat, there are few that also include sequences and the Litany. D'Agincour's book of pieces, arranged irregularly into suites by mode, allows for a flexible use for any part of the liturgy. Niquet's playing is stylish and flexible, within the *bon goût* of the period with its strong influence from harpsichord music and the opera. Les Dames de Saint Jean produce a seductive sound, using the distinctively ornamented plainchant that Nivers provided for the reformed Gallic Catholic liturgy. Although the organ verses have nothing of the emotional intensity of De Grigny or the power of Couperin (both of an earlier generation), they are fine examples, often in minature, of the early 18th-century Classical repertoire. Well worth a listen. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach *Three Weimar Cantatas* [12, 172, 182] Susanne Rydén, Steven Rickards, John Elwes, Michael Schopper *SATB*, The Bach Ensemble, Joshua Rifkin 73' 55" (rec 1996)
Dorian **DOR-93231**

Rifkin's Bach Ensemble here performs three well-known Weimar cantatas. Not only does Rifkin use solo voices; the orchestra is also of Weimar proportions, with single strings and no double bass. The bassoon is used selectively, following the indications in the original sources. The Bach Ensemble sounds sweeter and more luxuriant here than in its late 1980s recordings. The 1980s emphasis on contrapuntal interweaving and rhythmic patterning is now moderated by an enjoyment of intimate sonority. Rifkin gives the sinfonia to BWV 182 his usual rhythmic drive but also audibly relishes the unusual scoring of recorder and pizzicato strings. He allows less rhythmic freedom than Koopman or Suzuki, and the oboe solo in the sinfonia to BWV 12 does seem understated. Yet there is an immense power in the restrained expression of his world-class singers. The account of the passacaglia in BWV 12 is one of the most compelling I've heard, with each soloist responding to the others' chromatic weeps and sighs. In all, a thought-provoking disc: Rifkin shows that his alternative to the orthodox Koopman-Suzuki soundworld is not just closely researched but also aurally persuasive. *Stephen Rose*

Bach *Organ Music: Trio Sonatas BWV 525-530* John Butt (Greg Harrold organ at Univ. of California, Berkeley) 75' 03" (rec 1991) £
Harmonia Mundi *Classical Express* **HCX 3957055**

The USA has produced a healthy crop of modern organs built with sympathetic resonances of the organs of earlier times. This one is based on the organs of around 1700 in Ostfriesland, in the far north-west of Germany close to the border with The Netherlands. The relatively small acoustic of the space makes recording the Trio Sonatas even more devilish than usual – they are fiendishly difficult works to play at all, let alone play well. John Butt seems to overcome the technical difficulties with ease without the safety net of a big acoustic. Many of the registrations are in slightly neo-baroque mood, but they avoid the tinkly twittering or shrill screeching that characterised many recordings in the 1970s and 80s. Butt has a distinctive style of touch and articulation that sometimes works and sometimes doesn't. In this case it does, although the acoustic and style of organ could have conspired against him. Exciting playing from a player of conviction.
Andrew Benson-Wilson

Bach *Organ Masterworks: Vivaldi Concerti, Schübler Chorales & Trios* Franz Hauk (Klaus organ in Liebfrauenmünster, Ingolstadt, 1977)
Guild **GMCD 7221** 78' 44"
BWV 585-7, 592-6, 645-50

The organ of Ingolstadt is one of the finest large-scale European eclectic organs built during the 1970s and is a popular recording venue, usually for the major romantic works in the organ repertoire where, in the early recordings, the clarity of the speech of the pipes was a revelation for many used to hearing their organ music oozing out of nooks and crannies. Although it is not a natural Bach organ, it does a reasonable job of projecting line and counterpoint. Hauk is the resident organist, so clearly knows his way round the instrument and plays with insight and clarity. It is interesting to hear the Schübler Chorales alongside the Italian Concertos – unlikely bedfellows that seem to get along with each other. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

Bach *Sonatas and Partitas, Vol. 2* Yehudi Menuhin *vln*
Naxos **8.110964** £
BWV 1005 (rec 1936), 1006 (rec 1936), 1016 (rec 1938 with Hepzibah Menuhin & rec 1944 with Wanda Landowska)

This is of considerable value as a guide to how much performance styles change within less than a century. The opening movement of the E major sonata with keyboard lasts just under six minutes with Hepzibah Menuhin on piano, 20 seconds longer (six years later) with Landowska on turbo-charged harpsichord. Rachel Podger and Trevor Pinnock took around two minutes less in last year's recording! That's not to say that the early versions sound interminably slow. There is some very fine playing from both Lord Menuhin and his partners (as one would expect), but times have changed so very much... *BC*

Bach *The Six Suites BWV 1007-12* adapted & played by Paolo Pandolfo *gamba* 144' 08"
Glossa **GCD 920405** (2 CDs in box)

This is the first recording of its kind that I know of, and it sets a very high standard for any successors. Pandolfo plays a Bertrand, finding the range of tone and dynamic needed to, in one sense of the word, rival the instrument for which the suites are best known, and possibly first written. Many bass viol players will have attempted these suites, and they are such an important part of Bach's output that most will have played them even with no view to perform them. I first heard Savall play the C minor suite (in G minor) about 20 years ago, and realised that my own exploration must include them. Pandolfo's realisation is superb – extrapolating some harmonies, adding ornamentation, to give them a different character, and one very much that of the viola da gamba. It's not always comfortable listening, and in his search for variety, he, like Forqueray was said to have done, strives for, and achieves a range of expression not normally sought on the viol, extending the boundaries of what can be expected from the instrument. Bass viol players should listen to, indeed study, this performance, for his variety of articulation of separate notes, from rapid passage work to legato Sarabandes, and in particular the variety he brings to bowing chords. His versions and their various transpositions (four of the six) are published by Glossa Music Publishing (the hardcopy arm of the recording company, I assume) and will be well-worth having. Cellists may not all agree with what he does, but everyone will admire and applaud it, and most will be, like me, very moved by the passion, insight, effortless technical command and commitment to these ultimate expressions of the golden voice of the lower tonal spectrum. *Robert Oliver*

Bach *The Six Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord.* Vol. 1. Micaela Comberti, Colin Tilney 59' 06"
Dorian **DOR-93233**
BWV 1014-16; Suite in a BWV 818a
Bach *The Six Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord.* Vol. 2. Micaela Comberti, Colin Tilney 71' 39"
Dorian **DOR-93234**
BWV 1017-19; Suite in E♭ BWV 819a

Both Comberti and Tilney are well-knwn in the UK and their supporters will barely hesitate before acquiring this fine, if slightly serious account of the six sonatas. All is tasteful, and the performers combine with mutual generosity. However, those whose budgets are stretched might seriously consider the even more complete set on Naxos 8.554614 & 8.554783, played with slightly more zestful relish by Lucy van Dael and Bob van Asperen. But Tilney's performances of two harpsichord suites are well worth seriously consideration, and Comberti's style, which seems to have derived much from the elegant bowing of Eduard Melkus, is certainly an enriching experience. *Stephen Daw*

Bach *Brandenburg Concertos (Concertos 2)* Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki *dir* 105' 16" (2 CDs)
BIS-CD **1151/1152**
Includes BWV 1050a mov. 1

The authoritative standards set by Suzuki's cantata series lead us to expect excellence, and thorough scholarship and careful preparation have resulted in similar success here. In Concerto 2, a short note records that a hole-free open trumpet has been very carefully modified and its technique

studied by the player, resulting in an even better clarino performance than that offered by David Staff for Philip Pickett. Concertos 1, 3, 4 and 6 are all even more obviously dance-like than the best of the earlier recordings, and we do really hear the differences in scoring of Concerto 5 and its 'Hamburg' original in good performances which highlight Suzuki's distinctive harpsichord abilities. This is not simply good: it has to be rated as the best yet. *Stephen Daw*

G. Bononcini *Divertimenti* Ero Maria Barbero *hpscd* 76' 23"
Agorá **AG 191**

These solo *Divertimenti* were published by Giovanni Bononcini in London in 1722, and, a little ironically (given they're transcriptions), are one of the very few sets of pieces that bear much comparison with Handel's 'Great Suites' of 1720. In fact, the first few bars of the Largo from the C major suite are almost an exact quote of the opening of the Adagio from Handel's F major suite. On the whole these are interesting and pretty good works, quite worthy of performance and recording. I'm not sure *this* recording does them justice though. The playing is OK, if a bit limp and wobbly in places, but the sound is, frankly, odd. A brittle-sounding copy of a Hemsch harpsichord sits lifelessly between the speakers, surrounded by a huge, overrich reverberant bloom. Not pleasant, and not, I suspect, natural. Worse, though, there's some extraneous noise or possibly some form of distortion on one or two tracks. Worth investigation, but unless you are impatient to hear them, wait until someone else has recorded them.
Robin Bigwood

Couperin *Les concerts royaux* Le Parlement de Musique, Martin Gester 57' 11"
Universal Accord **465 676-2**

Couperin himself noted that these concerts (suites of dances, rather than sonatas) were composed for Louis XIV's Sunday chamber concerts in 1714 and 1715 and that, despite their being published in a book of harpsichord pieces, they were suitable for a variety of melody and continuo instruments. Whether or not he meant that the instrumentation should change from movement to movement, or even within movements, is open to doubt, though there are some instances in which this works well (11 *Echoes* for instance). Gester adopts a colourful, almost an arranger's, approach, though not to the full extent of Couperin's comments (no oboe or bassoon), which I find fussy and, at times, contrived, as in the Gigue from the Premier Concert (5) where the repeats are taken by a different ensemble. For me, the most successful movements are those which are most simply presented, such as the Sarabande (3) for flute, theorbo and gamba. The items for two harpsichords also work well. But do not get the impression that I did not enjoy this as a whole. I did, even though there were several places where I thought: 'I wish they hadn't done that'. The music, of course, is lovely, and strong enough to survive almost anything.
David Hansell

Handel *Arminio* Vivica Genaux *Arminio*, Geraldine McGreevy *Tusnelda*, Dominique Labelle *Sigismondo*, Manuela Custer *Ramise*, Luigi Petroni *Varo*, Sytse Buwalda *Tullio*, Riccardo Ristori *Segeste*, Il Complesso Barocco, Alan Curtis *dir* 146' 26" (2 CDs in box)
Virgin *Veritas* 7243 **5 454621 2 9**

An important issue, filling one of the few remaining gaps in the coverage of Handel's operas on CD. (Nominally only *Lotario*, *Deidamia* and a commercial issue of *Arianna* are now lacking; but the pasticcios and important alternative versions – the first *Il pastor fido* and the first *Radamisto*, for example – also need covering, and many existing recordings are unsatisfactory.) *Arminio* was the first of three new operas Handel produced in 1737, during his last full operatic season at Covent Garden, its companions being *Giustino* and *Berenice*. In effect it is his last wholly serious opera, and has never been highly regarded. The recitative of Salvi's original libretto was ruthlessly pruned for Handel's setting, so that, while there is just enough text to establish the context of each aria, new situations arise with minimal explanation, and motivation is obscured. The story is nevertheless a strong one, remotely derived from Tacitus's account of how German tribes led by Arminius (or Hermann) opposed Roman occupation in 15 AD. In the opera Arminio and his wife Tusnelda have siblings (Ramise and Sigismondo) who are lovers, and the action is largely generated by the determination of Tusnelda's father Segeste to betray Arminio and collaborate with the Roman general Varo. There are several fine numbers in the score, especially in Act 2 (Arminio's 'Vado a morir' has foreshadowings of 'He was despised'), and others are interestingly quirky, though the relationship of their musical material to the text or the dramatic situation is sometimes hard to pin down.

Alan Curtis gives the work complete, directing a generally well-paced and energetic performance. (The unobtrusive *notes inégales* in the Act 2 Sinfonia are a nice touch.) However, some arias – those, I suspect, he does not especially admire – are articulated too forcefully with *martellato* bowing. I would have liked a warmer orchestral sound overall: the 14 strings of Il Complesso Barocco – about half the number Handel was using in the 1730s – are lean in tone, and the continuo instruments a shade too prominent. The two sopranos – McGreevy as Tusnelda, and Labelle in the high castrato role of her brother Sigismondo – are superb, and the mezzo Custer is appealing as Ramise. Genaux brings power and passion to the title role, written for the mezzo-soprano castrato Annibali, but I found her uneven tone and the intermittent beat in her voice unappealing. Petroni is a light-weight Varo. The accompanying booklet is not up to Virgin's usual high standard. Curtis's own note makes interesting points but lacks such basics as date and place of first performance and details of the original cast. For French and German readers it is supplemented by a straightforward synopsis of the opera. English readers get a full translation of the libretto – but it is lazily copied from that of the London wordbook of 1737, loose in its rendering of the Italian, and sometimes obscure in meaning to those not used to reading 18th-century English. In place of an English synopsis is 'A Note on the Libretto' by Donna Leon, a pretentious and self-regarding example ('I must say that the third act tries my patience') of the sort of commentary that treats opera as a source of easy mockery. Curtis and his team actually reveal *Arminio* to be a seriously enjoyable work, and they deserve congratulation for making its merits available for all to hear. *Anthony Hicks*

Handel *Judas Maccabaeus* Sinéad Pratschke, Catherine King, Charles Humphries, Mark LeBrocq, Christopher Purves *SmSATB*, Musica Florea Prag, Maulbronner Kammerchor, Jürgen Budday 156' 07" (2 CDs)
K&K Verlagsanstalt ISBN 3-390643-71-5
Handel *Samson* Sinéad Pratschke, Michael Chance, Marc LeBroque, Riamund Nolte, David Thomas *SCtTBB*, Maulbronner Kammerchor, Barockorchester der Klosterkonzerte, Jürgen Budday 154' 31" 2 CDs
K&K Verlagsanstalt ISBN 3-390643063-6
Both sets are numbered ***LC 04457****, so the ISBN needed for ordering.*

The recording of the Maulbronn *Jephtha* of 1998 I reviewed in the last issue (p. 26) has been swiftly followed by these issues of their 1999 and 2000 live performances of what they call Handel's 'Old Testament' oratorios. (Actually the story of *Judas Maccabaeus* is found in the Apocrypha.) *Samson* was not sent for review, but I bought a copy out of curiosity. It is heavily and not very sensibly cut: the model seems to be the later (still current) Novello vocal score, with some numbers restored and a spurious *da capo* added to 'Return, O God of hosts', which Michael Chance, in fine form, almost manages to justify. Other glints of excellence occasionally peek out of the general greyness induced by Budday's over-careful tempos. His *Judas* demands more serious consideration. Basically the performance follows the standard version of the old English editions, but trimmed (on the recording only?) to fit two very full CDs by reducing 'From mighty kings' to its A section and omitting the March and a few recitatives. The fact that Robert King and Nicholas McGegan get all this music and more on their 2-CD recordings indicates that slow tempos are again in evidence; but here Budday tends to make slow numbers *very* slow, with some conviction, while the rest sound fairly normal. His long drawn-out 'Ah, wretched Israel' (8' 45" as against King's 5' 15") is a rather impressive tour-de-force. There is a good team of soloists – though LeBroque's Judas is a little too laid-back – and the introduction of the Prague instrumentalists brings a distinct improvement to the

orchestral sound. Not a first choice *Judas*, then, but an interesting alternative for connoisseurs. As for *Jephtha*, notes are brief and in German only, and no text is supplied; the English libretto for *Judas* (only) is available on the K&K website.

Anthony Hicks

The booklet of Judas *(gold on blue) is a fine example of design defeating legibility.* CB

Handel *Concerti Grossi Op. 3* Northern Sinfonia, dir. Bradley Creswick 54' 03"
Naxos **8.553457** £

I enjoyed quite a lot of this CD – the music is among my favourite Handel, so it would be difficult not to have liked the performances. One thing did bother me, though – the recorder parts are taken by flutes. There's also a fair amount of fussiness of phrasing: for example, the pairs of crotchets in the tutti opening to the 2nd concerto, where Handel makes no distinction, are sometimes staccato, sometimes long plus short, and sometimes one lifted and one placed. There's a bit too much staccato bowing in the solo violins for my liking, too. I don't recommend this as first choice, but at under £5, it's not to be sniffed at. *BC*

Keiser *Opera Arias and Instrumental Works* Elisabeth Scholl *S*, La Ricordanza 70' 24"
Dabringhaus & Grimm **MDG 505 1037-2**
Excerpts from *Der geliebte Adonis, Der gestürzte und wieder erhöhte Nebucadnezar (+ string concerto probably by Telemann), Die verdammte Staat-Sucht, La forza della virtù; Sonata a3 No. 1 (1725)*

This is an enjoyable CD. It's a pity, given that it highlights Keiser's opera output, that I didn't particularly like the singer's voice – she's a little shrill in places, and has a bit too much of a constant vibrato for comfort. The instrumental pieces (including a trio sonata for flute, viola d'amore – there's no mention of such an instrument in the booklet – and continuo), and a violin concerto attributed to Telemann, as well as dance extracts, are very well done. The overture to *Die verdammte Staat-Sucht* clearly impressed Handel, while that to *Adonis* could have been written by Lully or Charpentier. I'd like to hear more of this repertoire – and I think most Handelians should hear it too. *BC*

Leo *Miserere mei Deus: Sacred Vocal Music* Choir of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, Geoffrey Webber 74' 07"
ASV *Gaudeamus* **GAU 226**

I was a little disappointed by this, chiefly because of the music. I've heard quite a lot of Leo lately (most recently the Bis recording of some cello concertos), but this is my first acquaintance with the church music. With few exceptions, it is in the Palestrina style and, although the counterpoint is every bit as sound and taut as we're told, frankly it's rather dull. The performances are good, if sometimes a little thin in tone. The young soloists do well in the sections they are allotted. So a bit of a mixed bag really. Historically interesting repertoire in nice performances, but nothing to set the heart alight. *BC*

B. Marcello *Sonatas for Harpsichord [op. 3]* Roberto Loreggian 136' 49" (2 CDs in box)
Chandos **CHAN 0671(2)**

This is a lavishly produced two CD set presenting a reconstruction (by Alessandro Borin) of Marcello's 'missing' Op. 3 harpsichord sonatas. Ten sonatas have been pieced together from a variety of manuscript sources, and the disc also includes a recording of *La stravaganza*, otherwise known as the Ciaccona in C major, and the curious *Laberinto sopra il clavicembalo*, a piece designed, it seems, to be played with hands crossed throughout. Most of the sonatas employ a familiar four movement *sonata da camera* design, and in general the fast movements are the best. There's a lot to suggest the influence of Scarlatti, and there's no doubt that this is often idiomatic and very characterful music. The slow movements are less immediately impressive and are often based around a two part 'tune above bassline' texture. On the whole this an enjoyable disc. The playing is good and the recording excellent. The Op. 3 'mystery' hadn't been keeping me awake at night, but I suppose it's good that to some extent it's been solved. One thing, though – I'm surprised that no mention is made in the booklet notes of the unmistakable quotation of the entire first movement of Purcell's G major suite from *A Choice Collection...* in Marcello's G major sonata. A mystery indeed! *Robin Bigwood*

Pergolesi *Il geloso schernito, Orfeo* Caroline Odermatt *mS*, Christian Tschelebiew *Bar*, Ezio Maria Tisi *narrator*, European Festival orch, Wilhelm Kietel 54' 28"
Arte Nova **74321 84432 2** £

This is the second CD by the European Festival Orchestra we have had for review. This is much better than the first, particularly on the orchestral front – the harpsichord is relatively unobtrusive, and the strings and horns are sometimes very good indeed. Both singers are of the standard operatic type. The bass is far more successful in maintaining his normal tone while phrasing like an early singer than the soprano, who cannot quite rein the notes into tune whenever she gets a chance to colour them. *Il geloso schernito* also employs a narrator (so you need either to under-stand Italian or read German, as no English translation is provided), but *Orfeo* (for soprano solo) is given straight. An interesting CD. *BC*

D Scarlatti *Complete Keyboard Sonatas, Vol. 3* Jenö Jandó piano 66' 53"
Naxos **8.555047**

I love to hear baroque keyboard music played on piano almost as much as on harpsichord, but I fear that this is a disc that will not come off the shelf very often. Superficially there seems to be some nice playing – technically beyond reproach, and with plenty of variation of dynamic, articulation and tone colour. But it all sounds too much like a celebration of the Steinway and modern piano technique than a mature attempt to capture something of the period colour and fantastical spirit of Scarlatti. The recorded sound is also a bit claustrophobic, and the hall ambience seems artificial. *Robin Bigwood*

Tartini *Sonate (I)* Giovanni Guglielmo *vln*, Antonio Pocaterra *vlc* 56' 40"
Rivo Alto **CRR9904** (rec. 1971)

This recording was fairly heavy going. It was recorded before the days when people started to experiment with the idea that cello as an alternative to harpsichord continuo might actually mean that the bass player fills out some of the harmony above his (often simple) part. In fact, the whole enterprise sounds slightly dated. Both players are excellent of their kind, but make no effort to produce a 'period' performance. Ominously, the title suggests this might be the beginning of a series. *BC*

Telemann *Chamber Music* Passacaglia (Annabel Knight, Louise Bradbury *recs*, Reicho Ichese *gamba*, Robin Bigwood *hpscd*) 64' 45"
Linn **CKD 170**
TWV40 TWV 41: D? *(gamba & bc)*; Trio Sonatas TWV 42: C1, F3, F7, g ?, B4 (rec & hpscd); duo 2 rec. in d op. 2/5 (1727)

This is my disc of the month. From the opening phrase to the end of the disc, I was enthralled. I seem to be jumping on something of an *EMR* band wagon, since the booklet quotes from one of Andrew Benson-Wilson's reviews. The four players really do play as one, and when they take solo status (as they have to, given Telemann's cunning use of all four instruments in various roles), they shine. I'm not a great fan of recorder duets (having murdered a few in my time), but I warmly recommend this CD to anyone interested in Telemann (which should be everyone by now!) or the recorder – you won't hear any better playing. It would, though, have been nice if the booklet had enabled the listener to distinquish the two recorder players. *BC*

Telemann *Blockflötenkonzerte* Rainer Lehmbruck, Ursula Broich-Tophofen *recs*, Philippe Naegele *vln*, Heidelberger Kammerorchester
Da Camera Magna **77 031** 45' 53" (rec 1980)
TWV 52 a1, B1, C1, D3

This is the most successful of something of a flood of discs from this orchestra in recent months. Recorded over 20 years ago, the string playing is rather out of synch with what we've come to expect these days, but the recorder playing is both confident and stylish. The vibrato-ridden cello and the jingle-jangling harpsichord are enough to rule out a full recommendation, but someone who is a fan of 'the old school' of baroque performances might actually like them. And this CD *does* quote the TWV numbers! *BC*

£ = bargain price ££ = midprice
All other discs full price, as far as we know

Telemann *Matthäuspassion 1758 TWV 5:43* Holzhausen, Meylan, Reim, Fenes (Evangelist), Grobe (Christ) *SATBarBar*, Kammerchor der Biederitzer Kantorei, Magdeburger Barockorchester, Michael Scholl 82' 13"
Amati **AMI9902/2** (2 CDs in box)

I do not want to be too unkind, as it is the first recording of this piece, and will possibly be its only one. There are some fine things to mention, such as the solo soprano, who combines vocal dexterity with a warm tone. The chorus is basically a church choir and, as such, copes well with the chorales and more extended choral movements. The orchestral playing is good, if rather undistinguished. The other soloists are not outstanding, perhaps because this is not Telemann at his best or most inspiring. Perhaps, in this case, live performance might give the piece something extra. Really a recording for Telemanniacs and those interested in 18th-century Passion settings. *BC*

Telemann *Early Cantatas*Birckenstadt, Meylan, Krumbiegel, Friedrich *SATB*, Sächsische Vocal-ensemble, dir. Matthias Jung 59' 45"
Cantate **C 58012**
TWV 1:208 518, 1:826 547, 1:1248 527 and 613, 1:1332 515, 7:3 533

I enjoyed this CD a lot. The solo and choral singing is very good indeed, the various cantatas are judiciously paced, and the accompanying instrumental playing is very fine. All the more pity that none of the players is credited in the booklet, particularly the solo violinist in *Ich freue mich im Herrn*, the authenticity of which I'd have to say I doubt – the double stopping violin part and the overall feel is of a generation earlier. Whoever it's by, it is one of five very fine works recorded here – I hope the project will progress and we will have the opportunity to hear more of Telemann's cantata output. *BC*

Vivaldi *The Four Seasons* with Introduction written and narrated by Jeremy Siepmann 119' 41" (2 CDs and 110p booklet)
Naxos **8.558028-29** £

Is it a book? Is it a disc? Should it be a video/CDROM/DVD? These were only a few of the questions that flashed through my mind when I opened the package. What you do not get here is a performance of *The Seasons*; at least, you'll only get one if you programme your player and it has a multi-changer. What you do get is a CD-sized box containing a two-CD set and a 106-page book (English text only). The discs contain a movement-by-movement (in places bar-by-bar) commentary on the music with examples, then a complete and uninterrupted performance of the movement. This is Naxos's standard modern-instrument version, acceptable if unexceptional. The general tone and language of the comments suggests that they are aimed at intelligent and musically quite literate adults rather in the style of Anthony Hopkins' series *Talking about Music* and its successors. I have to say that I certainly wouldn't use them in any of my classes, though I might well be tempted to repackage and rephrase some of the ideas. The book is perhaps more useful, educationally, than the discs. Its 15 concisely written chapters cover the composer's biography and artistic context, the work's history, the script of the CDs, challenges to the interpreter, an analysis at about GCSE set-work level, and then more general essays. These are, in some ways, the most interesting part of the package – ways of listening, what music is, what music isn't, guide to the composer's tools, the basic forms of music, and finally a glossary. These do not relate to the Vivaldi – in fact, they do not even mention it – but they contain some good material for which many teachers and students might be grateful. Overall, there is much of value here: if this is what you want, you probably won't find it better done. *David Hansell*

Vivaldi *Concertos* The English Concert, Trevor Pinnock 260' 05" (5 CDs in box)
Archiv **471 317-2** ££ (rec 1985-7)
Op. 3 & 10 + RV 151, 159, 271, 436, 461, 484, 516, 532, 540, 545, 548, 558,

A real cornucopia: 30 concertos, virtually all worth hearing, and played with style, vigour and skill by some of the best players around at the time. As always, the economy of such packages is diminished if you have several of the constituent discs already, but you can always use the old ones as presents or raffle prizes. *CB*

Weiss *Sonatas for Lute, Vol. 4: Nos. 21, 37 & 46* Robert Barto 66' 10"
Naxos **8.554557** £

Like its precursors in this series this is a superlative disc offering a richly varied selection from the so-called Sonatas contained in the Weiss Dresden manuscript. Barto plays here the majestic suite in A major, which ends with one of the most fiendishly challenging prestos in all Weiss's music, the melancholy, almost tragic F-minor suite, and the relatively simple but wonderfully lyrical suite in C major. To each of these he brings both only a faultless technique that surmounts every obstacle and a musical intelligence which allows the listener to appreciate the melodic and harmonic richness of the individual movements while emphasising the distinctive character that unifies every sonata as a work complete and perfect in itself. It is difficult to imagine that these pieces were ever better played, even by Weiss himself; and the fact that they are made available at bargain price, illuminated by the analytical booklet notes of Tim Crawford, the doyen of Weiss scholars, should allow a wider audience than ever before to appreciate adequately what is quite simply some of the most imaginative music of the high baroque. This issue, and the series to which it belongs, is simply one that no lover of baroque music should be without and Naxos are to be congratulated for making it available in such a finely recorded form. *David J. Levy*

CLASSICAL

The Bach Family: 5 Trio Sonatas for two flutes and cembalo Maxence Larrieu, Jean-Michel Tanguy *flutes*, Kristian Myquist *hpscd* 51' 28"
Pavane **ADW 7440**

This is a modern-instrument recording of trio sonatas by five members of the Bach family. As one might expect from these two French flautists with impressive orchestral and solo credentials, the playing is technically flawless with solid ensemble and tuning. These basic qualities notwithstanding, there is little else to commend the recording; musically and stylistically monochrome (JC and JS Bach receive equally poor historical understanding), the performers fail to offer even a passing nod at standard baroque performance practices of the past thirty years. One to avoid.
Marie Ritter

Bortnyansky *Sacred Concertos Vol. 4 (24-29)* Russian State Symphonic Cappalla, Valeri Polyansky 67' 20"
Chandos **CHAN9878**

Throughout this CD I kept wondering what the music would sound like if the text were removed and it was given to choirs from France, Germany and Italy. Would they make quite as much of an emotional strain? Wouldn't the counterpoint work better if it were taken slightly more quickly? And what of the harmony and the tuning – did Russian choirs in the 1780s learn to sing according the aesthetics of the Italian musicians brought in to teach them, or did they use what, for want of a better expression, I shall call Rachmaninov tuning? If you like big plummy Russian voices (and I do!), there is much to enjoy here – this is a fantastic choir. As I said at the opening, though, I'd love to know what non-Russians would make of it, confronting it afresh. *BC*

Haydn *L'Isola disabitata* Katherina Kammerloher *Costanza*, Anke Herrmann *Silvia*, Robert Lee *Gernando*, Furio Zanasi *Enrico*, Academia Montis Regalis, Alessandro De Marchi. 81'37" (2 CDs)
Opus 111, **OP 3019**

Haydn composed this *azione theatrale* to a libretto by Metastasio for the name day of his employer Prince Nicholas Esterhazy in 1779. Like most such works it takes the form of a brief opera, devoid of changes of scene and employing a small cast to make a moral point in allegorical or narrative form. After a stirring overture, reminiscent in style of his Sturm und Drang symphonies, Haydn advances the action almost exclusively through the use of orchestrally accompanied recitatives, that often tend toward a highly dramatic style of arioso and which are only occasionally interspersed with relatively brief lyrical da-capo arias of high quality if conventional form. The whole piece concludes with an attractive ensemble that features, apart from the verses of the vocalists, successive concertato

passages for solo violin, cello, flute and bassoon. These are all performed, with notable fluency, by the musicians of De Marchi's young, predominantly Italian orchestra of period players. *L'Isola disabita* is an appealing and original work that shows the composer experimenting for the first time with forms of achieving dramatic consistency that recall the influence of the reform operas of Gluck, whose *Orfeo* Haydn had directed at the Esterhàza theatre in 1776. And while the piece is not perhaps among Haydn's most important contributions to musical theatre, a recording is nonetheless a welcome addition to the slim catalogue of Haydn operas at present available on CD in period performance. However, given the extraordinarily short playing time of this full-price, two disc set, I wonder if it would not have been possible to have confined the opera to a single record. This surely would have given wider appeal to a performance of little-known music that deserves – but may not receive – an audience beyond the range of Haydn enthusiasts and obsessive collectors of late-18th-century opera. *David J. Levy*

Haydn *Symphonies, Vol. 24* Cologne Chamber Orchestra, Helmut Müller-Brühl
Naxos **8.554767** 64' 07" £

These three symphonies are scored for the standard early classical orchestra with strings, oboes and horns. No. 46 is in the rather outlandish key of B major, while No, 47 boasts several compositional tricks, including a Minuet whose second half is the first in reverse. The playing is slightly less incisive than it would have been if the orchestra used period instruments, but rates pretty highly as modern bands go. *BC*

Hofmann *Flute Concertos Vol. 1* Kazunori Seo *fl*, Nicolaus Esterházy Sinfonia, Béla Drahos
Naxos **8.554747** £ 78' 52"
Concertos D1, D6, G2, A2 (Badley nos)

I thoroughly enjoyed this CD. The music is delightful and the flute playing very good indeed, striking a neat balance between gentle lyricism and impressive virtuosity, without ever making it sound difficult. The orchestra, as usual, accompanies stylishly. All four concertos are in jolly major keys, with contrasting slow movements sandwiched between two quicker ones. If anything, I'd rate this recording even more highly than the cello concertos I reviewed some time ago. *BC*

Jommelli *Te Deum, Mass in D* Judy Berry, Marta Benacková, John La Pierre,Nikolaus Meer *SATB*, Prager Kammerchor, Virtuosi di Praga, Hilary Griffiths 53' 14" (rec 1997)
Orfeo C 453 001 A

The less said about this the better. Jommelli is not the sort of composer whose music can take too much over-interpreting and that's what happens here. The solo voices are not too bad (the alto and the tenor being somewhat better than the others), the choir is well disciplined but slightly cloudy and the orchestra (most likely at the demand of the conductor) heavy handed. If it's repertoire that might suit period instruments better, why not leave it to them rather than trying to turn it into sub-standard Verdi? Not one for us, I'm afraid. *BC*

Mozart *Quatuors K. 499 & K. 459* Quatuor Mosaïques 62' 48"
Astrée Naïve E 8834

My reaction is much the same as to the Haydn Op.76 quartets I reviewed last year. Despite the Mosaïques' claim to be using period instruments, these are essentially modern-style performances, with the near-continuous vibrato and aggressive accents which you would expect. As such, they are excellent if you like that sort of thing (though I wasn't keen on the heavy stress on the second bar of the minuet of K.499, which is uncalled-for and sounds slightly vulgar). But if, like me, you prefer less 'blood and guts' and more attention to period style, I'd still recommend the Salomon Quartet. *Richard Maunder*

Mozart *Complete Piano Variations* Ronald Brautigam 246' 42" (4 CDs in box)
BIS-CD **1266/1267** ££

This was recorded in 1997 and originally issued as four separate discs under the title *The Complete Solo Piano Music* vol. 7-10. Margaret Cranmer reviewed them with considerable enthusiasm. The instrument is a 1992 copy by Paul McNulty of a Walter c. 1795: perhaps, given the rapid development of piano technology at the time, a little late. Similarly, Brautigam's playing may show traces of a more modern approach. But this is a fine set and can be recommended to those who did not buy the original separate releases. *CB*

19TH-CENTURY

Schubert *Grand Quintuor en Ut op. 163, D 956* Quatuor Festetics + Wieland Kuijken *vlc*
Arcana **A 308** 52' 45"

This is one of Schubert's greatest* works and it seems incredible that it lay neglected for so many years. Mozart added a second viola to the basic string quartet but Schubert opted for a second cello, which means that he can exploit more registers with a wider range of sonority. There is no shortage of good modern recordings, because record companies have linked some very famous cellists with some outstanding quartets. On this early-instrument recording, Wieland Kuijken blends perfectly with his colleagues in an insightful performance that balances beautiful sonority with vigour and raw emotion. The *Adagio* is ethereal but the way that intensity is maintained is superb; look out for the way that the pizzicato adds bite to the expression and propells the movement forward. Very highly recommended in all respects. *Margaret Cranmer*

* *and most loved, judging by the fact that it has been requested more than any other piece in the BBC programme* Desert Island Discs.

MISCELLANEOUS

Echo Conrad Steinmann *aulos & rec* 59' 20"
Divox **CDX 25241-2**

This is a disc that is difficult to classify. It contains a mixture of Steinmann's own compositions, which manage to avoid the problems with most contemporary recorder music by sounding idiomatic to the instrument, with music attributed to Sophronius (7th century) and Athenaeus (2nd century) and versions of some traditional pieces. The brief booklet annotations are sadly uninformative about sources and by what scholarly procedures 'Steinmann brings to life the imaginable music of the Greeks' and I am puzzled by the previous sentence which concludes that his search for lost melody 'only superficially has something to do with history and music history'. But forget that some of the music may have preten-sions to antiquity: just enjoy it as an extension to the recorder repertoire. *CB*

Florilège des plus belles pages pour trumpette et orgue Simon Fournier *tpt*, Jean-Pierre Lecaudey *org*, Frédéric Madeleine *baroque timps* 58' 12"
Pavane Records **ADW 7449**

The trumpet and organ recital seems to be a particular French form of entertainment, and it works very well in an atmospheric church in short doses. But it is easy to tire of a whole programme of transcriptions, and the use of baroque timps doesn't do enough to give adequate individuality to the potential variety of the music (Charpentier's Europeanvision tune, Vivaldi op. 3/7, Bach chorale and G-string *Air)*, Lalande, Schubert's *Ave Maria*, Langlais, Rossini's *Barber*). The only piece written for trumpet and organ (which shows that the ensemble really is viable) comes at the end: a *Récit et choral* by the film composer Georges Delerue. *CB*

Kings over the Water: in the steps of the exiled Stuarts Marie Vassiliou, Harry Nicoll, Richard Edgar-Wilson *STT*, John Trusler, Andrew Roberts *vlns*, Marilyn Sansom *vlc*, Jane Clark *hpscd* 67' 13"
Janiculum **JAN D205**
Music by Albinoni, Cocchi, Desmarets, Fede, Feo, Lully, A. Scarlatti, Stradella, Vitali, Vivaldi & anon

This relates to exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and comprises music that was or might have been performed at the courts of the rejected Stuart royal family. I first heard this without realising what it was – one of several discs I loaded into the magazine of my car CD and played some days later without remembering what it was – and was extremely puzzled by it. I concluded that it must be some provincial repertoire, but couldn't place it, especially with the mixture of Italian and French texts. The string playing seemed suitably homespun (a compliment for my imagined setting, if perhaps less so if the Stuarts are credited with more sophisticated taste), but I was disappointed by the rather woolly singing.

An interesting programme, providing an aural dimension to a topic which has been the subject of several journal articles recently. *CB*

Totus tuus sum, Maria: Music in honour of Our Lady Choir of the London Oratory, Patrick Russill 70' 50"
Herald **HAVPCD 256**

This is an anthology of Marian pieces, ranging from the four seasonal antiphons in chant to the 20th century (Lajos Bárdos, Morten Lauridsen, Casals, Howells, Pierre Villette and, as the title suggests, Górecki). Earlier composers featured are Palestrina, Victoria, Handl, Aichinger and Aguilera de Heredia, a Magnificat by whom is the most interesting of the early pieces: I know his organ music, but evidently the CMM volumes of his sacred works would repay investigation. The modern piece I found most appealing was a simple *Ave maris stella* by Lajos Bárdos. But the usual weakness of such mixed recitals is apparent: the lack of difference in vocal style and sheer sound between the music of different periods. *CB*

Vox Neerlandica I Netherlands Chamber Choir, Paul Van Nevel 64' 10" (rec 1996)
NM Classics **92064**
Music by Ciconia, Clemens, Dufay, Josquin, Kerle, La Rue, Lassus, Obrecht, Rore, Schuyt, Sweelinck, Waelrant, Willaert

This is not so much a reissue as a UK remarketing, and is most welcome. The choir is an all-purpose one, but is far more convincing in this early repertoire than their nearest UK equivalent, the BBC Singers (cf p. 14), or the choir of the preceding review. It is a companion to a printed anthology issued in 1995 by Harmonia Uitgave (another disc includes the more recent music): choir conductors should investigate it. Paul Van Nevel comments in the booklet that he does not follow all that edition's decisions on underlay and ficta: fair enough, but the remark 'our deviations were prompted by strict and consistent application of the rules observed at the time' is surely an overstatement of the efficacy of the rules. The selection is good, the performances are excellent; but why no chant to complete the text for Obrecht's *Salve Regina*? *CB*

That verdammt Porpora always has to go one better...

BIBER'S MYSTERIES FOR AMATEURS

Chris Hedge

Back in the early 70s, having read several references to Biber's *Mystery Sonatas* in Boyden and other books, I wondered why there were no recordings or scores readily available if they were that good. Then, probably in 1972 or '73, I chanced on the Melkus recording, not then in the UK catalogues, in a London store. The music's quality straight-way put it in the 'must play' category. It took the best part of another year to get the Austrian Denkmäler edition imported. The King's Music facsimile was yet to come, and the good performing edition from Doblinger only appeared late last year.

Since the mid 70s, I have had enormous fun playing these works, and wonder why more amateurs don't have a go at them. It is true that they are demanding, but so are many other baroque violin pieces. Does fear of the notation or unwillingness to disturb the standard tuning deter potential players? Or is it that too much potential trouble is mistakenly envisaged in preparing the instrument for what are mostly fairly short works? Whilst there is no escaping the need for the strings to settle, this need not be an insuperable snag with all the sonatas, as explained in the next paragraph but one.

The notation is straightforward, at least in principle: you play what is written but the resulting pitch will initially come as a surprise. It should not take you too long to expect the unexpected, however, and you will probably start to revel in the different timbres that result, becoming an addict before long. Key signatures are often bizarre – middle C a natural but the octave above a sharp, for example – but all you have to remember is that such inflections apply only to the string concerned, fingered in first position. The rule is simply to stay in first position at all times, except where necessary on the top string, using musical sense to resolve doubt or any occasional anomaly. Bowdlerised editions that abandon scordatura in favour of conventional tuning must be shunned – they eliminate the very purpose of the works and make them much more difficult and in some cases impossible to play.

The first sonata and the solo Passagalia are at standard tuning. Otherwise, the G string is never tuned down, nor the E up, showing that Biber acknowledged fundamental practicalities. Six sonatas require one or more strings to be tuned up or down by no more than a tone, whilst in another the E string goes down to C sharp. So nine of the sixteen require minimal disruption at worst: is any of this really beyond the pale?

Having acquired a taste for scordatura playing, it's a fair bet that you'll get hooked and be dissatisfied with playing just part of the cycle. Let the squeamish be assured that tuning the G up to C or D will not snap it, nor will it jeopardise fiddle or bridge: if all are in good condition, their strength is remarkable. Before I needed to wear spectacles, however, I bought some optically flat ones as protective goggles in case a defective G broke when tuned that high – one did, missing the specs and belting me one on the cheek;[1] but it was an old string, so I was asking for it! The temptation to substitute a D string for the G in the sonatas concerned must be resisted on musical grounds: you will lose the febrile atmosphere in Sonatas VII to IX and the triumphant C major open-string trumpet fanfares of XII if you do so. The only warning necessary is always to keep an eye on the bridge in these works – if it twists or creeps, as it probably will under the asymmetrical tensions imposed, correct it without delay. That advice applies to all tuning of course, but more so to the scordatura in these works where the changes are more frequent and extreme than anywhere else in the repertoire.

Although A=440 appears to be the historically correct pitch for these works, it is reasonable to play them at A=415, which reduces any strain. Use of still lower pitches might be counterproductive because that could affect string response as well as the music's ethos, and the keyboard would then probably need to be retuned. In any case, an organ is preferable to a harpsichord in many of the sonatas (as, incidentally, is a cello in addition) and that will restrict the tuning and temperament options. The keys of these works suggest strongly that the temperament envisaged was a close variant of either fifth or sixth comma based on C. The former is perhaps likelier because sixth comma may be a bit late for Biber; but in either case only two sonatas, in C minor and B minor, are a little – and, in the musical context, appropriately – sour, the rest being more concordant than they would be if equally tempered. Players of the time would have had to tune without any of the formalised guidance readily available to us : they would have modified their tempering to suit what was to be played, a skill that largely disappeared under the steamroller of equal temperament, itself the ultimate outcome of such modifications. Nowadays we are blessed with tuning meters, which may only give approximations if their pre-set temperaments are to the nearest cent or half cent, as is often the case; so modern technology doesn't fully come to the rescue.

But don't let these purist meanderings deter you from trying these works. The music is so good, its ingenuity so astonishing and its rewards so great that tackling it is well worth the effort. Citing just one work is unfair, but the sheer joy of playing XI, despite its outlandish tuning, has to be experienced to be believed. Don't be frightened: have a go and you'll have fun!

1. Thereby giving rise to the entirely plausible and original excuse for a black eye from playing the violin, which is somewhat more convincing than the 'fractured wrist while playing chess' ploy.

LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

As the coffin is wheeled in to my funeral (no date planned as yet) I have earmarked Bach's G major Prelude (BWV541). As I don't want this ecstatic gem to be heard on the rather tired old vacuum cleaner that sits in Bolton Priory, for the last few years I have been sampling available recordings. Ton Koopman came close a few years ago, but only when I heard James Johnstone's recent effort on ASV did I sit back knowing that I had at last found the right piece to fit this particular corner of the jigsaw.

So, to then read (*EMR* 72) Andrew Benson-Wilson's review of this particular track on the recording ('frankly bizarre: I can see no reason why anybody should choose to play in this fashion.. a mockery of fine music') was to leave me wondering. There are others better qualified to bring theo-retical witnesses to the dock, but even from my superficial knowledge of their writings, Frescobaldi, Couperin, Quantz, Turk, Marpurg and C. P. E. Bach all seem to encourage liberty and articulation. It is common practice to shoot down a list such as this because the contexts are not specific enough, but it is precisely the spread of those contexts which suggests to me a fairly universal principle. Indeed, as a fellow-performer I am tempted to turn the onus of proof around, and ask where there is any evidence that such liberty in performing a toccata-like prelude is not kosher.

Yet even if there were not one written word to have survived on the subject, it would not be difficult to defend Johnstone's basic approach, because although talk of 'liberty' might suggest some half-baked whimsy, there is demonstrable musical logic to every semiquaver he plays.

Assuming that not all notes in the prelude of BWV541 are of equal significance, how can a performer communicate this inequality on an instrument with no dynamic response? Only through use of time. Rhythm and articulation (these, I think, are useful technical terms for the needlessly pejorative 'jabs and stabs and parries and thrusts' which Andrew Benson-Wilson identifies.) To see the logic of what Johnstone is doing we have to look no further than the first 12 bars of the piece. In this section there are only two notes which are not semiquavers. Both are Gs, occurring at moments of obvious significance – one in the first bar and the other heralding the pedal entry at the start of bar 12. Between those two visits to the same note, Bach leads us on a circular, and apparently rather directionless trail. Looking at the score, all we see at first glance is a series of crotchet-beamed semiquavers. What this beaming hides, however, but what the melodic figurations suggest, is a rather more complex rhythmic organisation. The melodic figures are first repeated every dotted minim (bars 1-6), then every minim (7-9) and finally every dotted quaver (10-11). All that James Johnstone is doing is communicating this structure – a structure as inaudible without articulation as it is invisible without scrutiny – by slightly lengthening the first (and diminishing the remaining) notes in these rhythmic cells. The key word there, to me, is 'communicating'. Why is it that organists, alone amongst musicians, often consider it enough for them alone to know the difference between significant and less-significant notes? (I am assuming that they do make such distinctions, but if there is no aural evidence for this then I am taking any such distinctions on trust). Andrew Benson-Wilson may be baffled by James Johnstone's interpretative interventions, but I am equally baffled by the many Bach players who garner critical praise for unfurling scores with little more insight than I would expect of my computer software.

There is, I gather, more than one way to skin a cat, and there is certainly more than one way to point up a pedal entry. If the player is visible to those who are listening, one such way would be to stand up and dance the entry out on the pedal board whilst still playing the manuals. Now this is frankly bizarre! Yet not too bizarre for the American showman Virgil Fox to manage the feet in the *Jig* Fugue. Not the kind of method that would work on a CD, one might think, but in the recording in question (Virgil Fox Live at the Holywood Bowl, if I remember rightly) it works perfectly, because not only does the organist tell us what he just has to do when the subject enters on the pedals, but the ecstatic hollering of the crowd at the relevant moment confirms that something deeply whacky is taking place up on the stage. Virgil Fox was playing on an instrument that sounds to my ears like a cross between a Hammond and a Wurlitzer. Altogether this is hardly the last word in authenticity, but more than most performers Virgil Fox had the courage and wherewithal to communicate whatever he discovered in the music – in this case pure joy – and that seems like a fairly significant first word. For me, though, this will be the last word: it's the soundtrack I have planned for my coffin's journey back down the nave.

Simon Ravens

Dear Clifford,

Thanks for the review...to paraphrase, I don't mind what you say as long as you spell my name right (in this case, my e-mail address, PRBPrdns@aol.com, not PRBPrdnd). But there were a few other points: I don't think the presence of high Cs, per se, requires a violin to play the part: there are high Cs in Gibbons (fantasia a6 No. 2, treble viol II), in Jenkins fantasias, and particularly in Lawes. And it was expected of the bass gamba player to retune his/her low D to C and back. Again many examples in Jenkins, Lawes etc. (Virginia thought that, in spite of your protestation of long abstention from viol playing, you might have stayed with it long enough to find that these C's and c'''s are perfectly violate!). On the matter of the ficta in Cranford a3, we revised the f-sharps in No. 1 *after* I had made that CD, so the edition as it stands is our final word on the subject. We are about to send you the complete Okeover fantasias (7) and pavans (2) for five viols, and again we came up against the habit of some 17th Century scribes (rather like some

20-21st century musicologists!) to scatter sharps and naturals (or omit them) wherever they felt like it. It seemed, in the Okeover, as in the Cranford, that whenever there were three notes with outer ones a second above the middle one, the scribe raised the latter almost automatically. Of course, *he* may not have had the benefit of the whole score in front of him. In the case of people like Ward, with 17 sources, each with different opinions on ficta, the situation is chaotic, and not remedied by publishing the parts 'with original accidentals'. The Okeover, has only one source (except for fantasia 7, with two) but has the additional problem of frequent notes of the wrong length in different parts, which must have made them impossible, or very contentious, to play from, judging by the only source that remains. Returning to Cranford, his blurring of major-minor tonality is part of his style, causing acute nausea in some players, I'm afraid. There are signs of quickened interest in him, with sales of the 3 and 4 part editions going quite well.

I thought that the CD we left with you included the Maynard, but if not, I apologise. They do have a certain pavanic gloominess, I suppose, but they are turning out to be quite popular, along with the renewed interest in lyra viol playing. Best wishes to you both,

Peter Ballinger

Apologies for the mistaken address. With regard to the scoring of Cranford a3, my concern was that the allocation to viols was assumed, not argued. Although treble viols may have played above the frets, a piece scored for two trebles and bass is not prima facie *inevitably for viols; the compass is only one of many reasons for deciding between viols and violins. It wouldn't be a point worth making had the edition not been described explicitly as* Consort Music for Three Viols *on no stated evidence. The writing of the first Fantasia in particular looks to me to be more suited to violins than to viols, and I suspect too that an organ is required to clarify the harmonic movement. The user needs to be told whether there is any evidence from the sources (and concordances of other pieces within them) that might make one instrumentation more likely than another. (There is, of course, no reason why viols didn't or shouldn't play violin music and* vice versa. *But we have now passed the days when all early music was thought fair game – except, as they used to say, for consenting adults in private – for any group of instruments that could get round the notes.) I am not arguing that the music could not be played on viols; but if violins are also possible, then the editor should acknowledge it – and the publisher will be duly grateful for the enlarging of his potential market.*

Bar 8 of No. 1 is good example of the dangers of modernising the usage of accidentals by omitting those superfluous under modern rules. So many players now are used to facsimiles that they are likely to play the fourth note natural, or at least will be distracted by wondering what convention they are to follow.

I'm glad you mentioned the fact that copyists often often add accidentals without reference to a score. This happens with printed editions, too, and sometimes basses are figured with no reference to the other parts. It is an important point that too rarely features in discussions of editorial practice. We should, however, remember that scores were less likely to be available for much early music, so that it helps to approach decisions from the position of the player/singer of a single line: i.e. consider what the player can see in his part in conjunction with the harmony he has heard so far and which he can expect from the harmonic pattern already apparent.

Dear Mr. Bartlett,

Thank you very much for the nice review you gave for my edition of John Maynard's *Seven Pavans for Lyra and Bass* (PRB Productions) in the July 2001 issue of *EMR*. Forgive my writing to you, but there are several points I wished to clarify.

First, although the edition does provide a copy of the lyra viol part in staff notation, these are provided as a means for critical analysis, and not intended to be used in performance. Indeed, the viol player would be hard pressed to realize the parts from the staff notation, since the music requires the use of several scordatura tunings!

Second, I am surprised at your detailed musings over the 'cadential chord', as this was something I discussed in detail in the Preface to the edition. My conclusion was that because the conflicting sonority appears consistently several times in the pieces, and always in the lyra part with identical spelling, they are not misprints. I surmised that Maynard desired the full sonority of a lyra chord in those spots, but intended the player to prevent the b natural string from resonating very fully. This is the logical explanation I can think of to explain what is otherwise a most puzzling issue. But I welcome other suggestions.

Again, many thanks for the review. And I always enjoy reading your publication.

Joelle Morton

I was musing because I was still puzzled, not entirely convinced, but hadn't at the time any positive thoughts on the subject. A friend who happens to be staying in our house at present and proof-read this edition of EMR was intrigued, and has looked at the music again. He is toying with the idea that, if the single-line bass part were actually an unfigured part to be played chordally (like, perhaps, the song accompaniments in BL Add. MS. 24665, 29481 and Egerton 2971), the chordal progressions of the music would be clarified and in the process some of the apparent clashes would merge into sense. If these thoughts materialise into something printable, we'll include them in the next issue.

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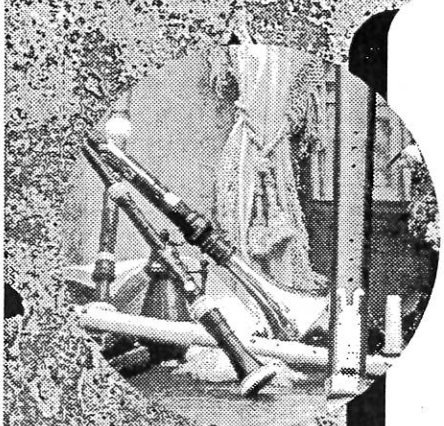

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