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There seems to be a general disquiet in the world of the professional music critic about the way newspapers are changing from review to preview. From the performer's viewpoint, that would seem to be nothing to worry about. Previews are normally essentially publicity material provided by PR agents or obsequious interviews and are likely to provide favourable advance publicity. What use is a review, which might well be unfavourable and rarely expresses unqualified enthusiasm, after the show is over? Only for opera runs may a critic affect the turnout. Early-musicians may be particularly suspicious of critics, since on the whole the acceptance of historical styles and instruments happened despite rather than because of the critic: my recollection is that the BBC and the record companies were way ahead of the main national press critics.

The danger with publicity by preview, however, is that the more you can afford, the more likely you are to get any. I don't want to paint too rosy a picture of the past: few critics of the national press have ever devoted much space to concerts by little-known performers in outlandish venues. But we need some counterbalance to the pressures of money, age (either very young or very old) and sex that are the main criteria for news stories. The nonagenarian conductor or the 12-year-old soprano (the one I'm thinking of has now grown up enough for sex to become part of the publicity process) will get publicity provided that they are competent musicians – though I'm not sure if the sexiest medieval group is even competent. While one doesn't want to think of critics as censors, there is need for some sort of quality control.

In artistic matters, there can never be complete agreement, which is why the dearth of criticism of early-music performance is regrettable. More than with later music, knowledge (not in itself certain) needs to be balanced with taste. While there are plenty of reviews of CDs, there are very few of live performances. It is worrying that *EMR* is almost in a monopoly situation. No-one can be right all of the time, though the requests for our reviewer to attend concerts suggests that most performers are happy with what we print. But other magazines should be offering a different viewpoint. CB

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

Another thin month for books, though two have just arrived ready for the next issue, by when we hope also to have received the *Cremona Selva* morale.

VIOL-MAKING IN ENGLAND

Michael Fleming *Viol-Making in England c.1580-1660*. (Open University PhD Thesis, 2001). VME CD-ROM available from the author, £15.00.

I'm going to write about the practical details and general issues relating to his method of publication. I would welcome a review by any reader more skilled in the organological research it presents and its implications.

In the mid-1960s, I was in charge of London University Library's photocopying office. One activity was making copies of theses (in the days when electrostatic copying was just coming in and they were still reproduced by a dye-line process), another was making microfilms of them. They were the joint copyright of the author and the university, and for each request we had to get the author's permission and also a signed declaration from the user. This seemed a cumbersome way for the circulation of knowledge; I don't know how many times I had to write to our most popular author (a Dr Bishop of Imperial College, whose 1952 thesis was on the stability of dams). American theses have long been available through University Microfilms and its successor, and the hard-copy versions can be very good value, thanks to their flat-rate charge. (I only ever bought those with lots of pages!) But with the cost of making one's own CD so low, now every successful PhD student (and, for that matter, unsuccessful ones – David Wulstan's Oxford thesis, which I gather was rejected on controversial grounds, was well worth reading), Michael Fleming's decision to circulate his Open University PhD thesis himself seems eminently sensible. The price is very reasonable, and its ready availability will surely be good for the academic and performing communities. I'm none too competent at getting external material to work on my computer, but once I'd replaced my Acrobat 4 with version 5 from the thesis disc, I had no trouble at all, and the illustrations were far better than most publishers could have provided. Copyright still has some effect: some illustrations are omitted since permission has not been given for reproduction.

I suspect that I would need to be a very serious student indeed to sit at a screen and work through the document. I read in bed, lounging on a sofa, in a train (though I may be a little less relaxed on future London trips, since they involve passing Hatfield and Potters Bar), or while standing outside the house making sure that our son doesn't wander too far; but when I sit on office chair in front of a screen,

I'm busy writing *EMR*, formatting and printing music, or sending King's Music invoices. Printing out the whole thesis would be a possibility (though you would need to look at the pictures on screen). With a photocopier attached to my computer, it would probably cost me about the same as the cost of the CD; but at commercial (or library) rates, you would have to multiply that by a factor of 5 or 10. Perhaps younger readers are happier working on screen.

The convention of typing theses double-spaced on one side of the page has always bothered me. It greatly increases the cost of photocopying, and reading such spacious layout is utterly unlike reading a book, almost as if the system is designed to make the point that it isn't intended for public use. Since on screen, the size of magnification is in the hands of the user, single-spacing with more visible at a time would be much easier to follow. The text has not been reformatted, to preserve the pagination of the official original, which is how references to the work should be made. Perhaps an academic committee might like to consider a new thesis format that will allow for the inconvenience that most computer screens are in landscape format while text pages are portrait. It is annoying that, if the text is large enough to be legible, the footnotes for the top half of the page are off the screen. Perhaps the notes should be in a parallel column to the side (like notes in some bibles). Or is this a temporary problem? Will the new flat screens be easy to switch round 90 degrees?

This is no reflection on Michael's production, merely an excuse for not having read it. (The fact that it only arrived a few days ago is another.)

MUSICAL HUMOURS & RECREATION

Tobias Hume *The First Part of Ayres, 1605* [facsimile] with an introduction by Frank Trafficante. Ruxbury Publications, 2002. [iv + 64pp], £15.00 + post UK £1.50, abroad £2.25.

John Playford *Musick's Recreation on the Viol, Lyra-way, 1682* Ruxbury Publications, 2002. xx + 88 pp, £15.00 + post UK £1.50, abroad £2.25.

My first encounter with tablature was when I bought the Hinrichsen facsimile of Part I of Playford's publication. I had never been near a viol then, but transcribed a few pieces, then decided that they were a bit naive and have hardly looked at the book since. I later learnt that lyra music sounds richer than the bare notes on a modern stave might suggest. Most of the pieces are light in tone, but it makes a good introduction to lyra playing, I'm told – I never ventured into tablature when I later took up the viol. The 1960 edition only included the First Part, ending at page 56,

piece no. 77. This new one also includes The Second Part, with another 40 pieces on pp. 57-88. Natalie Dolmetsch's introduction to the previous facsimile is included here (without the German translation), preceded by a useful updating by Gerald Gifford, the Honorary Keeper of the Dolmetsch Library. The date of 1965 given for that in the new introduction is wrong: I dated my purchase 1960, which corresponds with the publication date printed on the back of the title page. It has long been out of print, so re-publication would have been welcome even without its enhancement. The reproduction is clear and the spiral-binding allows for flat opening on the music stand.

The Hume was included in the Scolar lute-song series – a little surprisingly, since it includes only five songs – so has been available since 1969. That was reproduced at full size (36cm high); the new version is reduced to A4 (6 cm less), or by another means of measurement, reduced by 90%. The difference in legibility is considerable, but there are advantages of economy and ease of carrying and shelving in the smaller format. Frank Trafficante's 1969 introduction is reprinted, with a brief reference to his articles in *Grove*⁷ and the forthcoming new DNB. Hume's music is definitely more of a handful than that of the Playford collection. Whether or not they believe that his music is of the highest quality, all who play lyra-way have a soft spot for him and his two publications are essential parts of their libraries.

Ruxbury Publications are an offshoot of Peacock Press, whose address and phone no. appears in the advert for The Recorder Magazine in each issue of *EMR*. There is also a fax (+44 (0)1422 886157) and email: jerry@recordermail.demon.co.uk

CROFT'S CANNON

William Croft *Overture to "With Noise of Cannon" for Trumpet, Strings and Basso Continuo from "Musicus apparatus academicus"* edited by Carolyn I. Sanders. Musica Rara/Breitkopf (MR 2255B), 2001. 155pp + parts, £19.00 (also tpt & pf £12.50)

Croft's *Musicus apparatus academicus* comprises two works written and performed by Croft 'as a Preparatory Exercise to the taking of my Doctor's Degree' in 1713 and published in 1715. The text refers to the Peace of Utrecht, hence the cannon, though the music lacks (and doesn't need) drums. The editor twice mentions a MS source, but I presume that it is edited from the publication. There are thin double-bars and continuous bar numbers, but all four movements come to a full, tonic close, with the trumpet tacet in the D-minor Adagio; the rest is in D major. The score has quite small print and includes a realisation; it comes with trumpet parts in D, C and B_b, a set of four strings (a second bass would have been useful) and a cembalo (a bit unnecessary if there is one in the score, and which is not set out with sensible page turns: the last bar of p. 3 should begin p. 4). It's a piece worth performing, though if you follow the editorial dynamics and treat every repeated phrase as an echo, you will bore the audience: it's too crude an effect to use over and over again.

BROCKES/MATTHESON PASSION

Johann Mattheson *Der von den Sünden der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesu...* herausgegeben von Katharina Bayreuther. Cornetto (CP203), 2002. 236pp, £16.00

Barthold Heinrich Brockes's text for his Passion oratorio was first performed in his house in Hamburg in 1712 with music by Reinhard Keiser: Brockes must have had a large house, since he claimed that over 500 people attended. Within a few years, settings were made by Telemann, Handel and, in 1718, Mattheson. This edition was made for a performance in 1995, available on Cavalli Records. It is based on a MS copy in Berlin; I wonder if the lost Hamburg autograph has subsequently reappeared? It is a substantial work for SATB soloists and chorus with an orchestra including, as well as strings and oboes, recorders, flutes, a carillon and a *zampogna*. Additional soloists are required for smaller roles: the recit No. 34, for instance, needs two tenors and three sopranos. Seeing the score makes me want to hear the work, and performance material is readily (and cheaply) available. The editor estimates the duration as 2½ hours. The spiral-bound score (costing under £10), is used by all singers, but it flops a bit and is best used with a music stand. (A hazard of binding loose pages is that it is easy for a chunk to be out of order or upside down; in the review copy, pp. 169-212 are back-to-front. The publisher has my sympathy.) The parts seem, from the list supplied, to be set out sensibly, with flute and recorder included in the oboe part. There are some features of instrumentation that are not clear in the score. No. 60, for instance, begins with one treble-clef part for *Traverso e Violino*, but in the second section an additional treble-clef stave appears and the upper part is evidently for solo violin; the editor gives no explanation. No. 62 (with Tr Tr A B instrumental staves) is headed *Violini e Traversi* – does Mattheson usually divide his flutes or put them both on the top line – then in bar 60 we have a few bars marked *Oboe solo*, but no guidance whether that lasts till the end of the movement or only until the other parts enter at 65. One assumes that the editor has a greater knowledge of Mattheson's practice than most conductors, so discreet editorial intervention would have been helpful. Was the carillon common in Hamburg scores? Did Handel get the idea of his *tubalcain* from his friend Mattheson? I hope this fine edition will encourage more performances.

CORNETTO

Martinus Agricola *Instrumentische Gesänge: Choralgebundene Instrumentalkanons mit 1-2 freien Gegenstimmen für 3-4 Instrumente* herausgegeben von Peter Thalheimer. Cornetto (CP245), 2002. 28pp.

Emanuel Benisch [scribe] *Toccaten, Ricercare, Canzona von B. Weissthoma, B. Pasquini, A. Poglietti, E. Benisch...* herausgegeben von Raimund Schächer, Cornetto (CP0227), 2002. 23pp.

Claviermusik des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts aus der Zips... herausgegeben von Raimund Schächer. Cornetto (CP0227), 2002. 23pp.

Franz Liszt *Carnaval de Venise (Paganini)* herausgegeben... von Christoph Öhm-Kühnle. Cornetto (CP247), 2002. 18pp.

This batch is a sample Cornetto has sent of its recent output, along with the Mattheson reviewed separately. In his covering letter, Wolfgang Schäfer says that they are publishing up to five new facsimiles a month as well as editions and CDs (a batch of those will be reviewed next month). All these items are folded A3 sheets, properly finished (i.e. stapled and trimmed) with informative covers. Most have a page of introduction in German: only the Liszt has an English translation.

Martin Agricola (1486-1556) is primarily remembered for his *Musica instrumentalis deudsche* (1529). His set of 54 textless canons was published posthumously in 1561 as part of his *Duo libri musices*, an introduction to music theory for schools. There was one for each week of the year (no long holidays then) plus a couple of spares. This edition includes four pieces a4 and eleven a3. In each case, a chorale melody is presented in canon above one or two independent parts. Most pieces have G2 and F4 as the original clefs (some of the canonic parts, of course, are at a different pitch) and should be playable on limited-range wind instruments. Quick allocation to individual instruments would be easier if ranges had been given at the beginning of each piece. For concert use, they would be useful in conjunction with vocal settings of the melodies: there is no difficulty in finding most of the titles here in versions from Walther to Praetorius and beyond to Bach. You get three copies of the score for your money.

The Benisch volume includes eight pieces from Yale University LM 5046, a collection of 91 organ pieces which he copied in 1688. Four are probably by the scribe, an organist at Dresden from the mid-1690s until his death in 1725. There is a Toccata by Bartholomäus Weissthoma (1639-1721), a Toccata in d by Bernardo Pasquini and two pieces by Poglietti: a *Canzona del 2º Tuono* and a *Toccata fatta sopra Cassedio di Filipsburgo* of 1676 (the only piece not receiving its first edition here).

The Zips collection contains pieces from various MSS surviving in the library at Kezmarok (Kesmark in German) in the district of Spis (Zips) in north Slovakia to the east of the High Tatras. The area was heavily settled by Germans who extracted minerals. The volume begins with two sets of 14 short dances by Johann Schmur of 1756 and 16 plus three slightly longer pieces by Johannes Marcus (1788). Then comes a three-movement sonata by Samuelis Loysch (1790). Eight pieces from a MS of Anna Susanna Ballzerin (1790) include two Murkis (presumably not a contraction of Mazurkas, since they are in the wrong rhythm). The volume ends with four organ fugues by Wilhelm Wagner (1815-87) - two-stave pieces that don't need pedals. Like the Wagner, the Liszt volume takes us well beyond our period. I must confess that, being used to working from elegant mid-19th-century engravings of Liszt's piano music (useful for writing programme notes, though far too difficult for me to play), the computer setting is offputting - but that is a general problem for idiomatic piano music. Liszt is a composer of sufficient interest for the need to publish everything he wrote, so it is good that this Paganini piece (S 702a), antedating his better-known Paganini-based works, should be available.

MOZART CONCERT ARIAS

Mozart Konzert-Arien für Sopran und Orchester.. Edition for Soprano and Piano... edited by Franz Beyer with Cadenzas by Julianne Banse. Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8672), 2002. 140pp, £22.00

This contains 12 arias, ranging from K152 to K416. K152 & the next item in the book, K178, survive only with keyboard accompaniment, but are included here because both must have been for orchestra originally, and an orchestration by the editor is available on hire. The availability of parts of the other items is not mentioned: they are only erratically available from any quarter, so I hope that these will appear in Breitkopf's orchestral catalogue soon. The preface devotes much effort to persuading singers to add the necessary *appoggiature*, more sensible than writing them in the score every time they may be needed, since to some extent their presence depends on how the singer interprets a passage: in *Ah, lo previdi*, for instance, it may be more effective if the singer has plain (and shortened) crotchets on the first note of in bars 15 and 23 to enhance the effect of the short orchestral chords on the remaining three beats. There are short notes on each piece and a bibliography of relevant early treatises, which includes English translations apart from the recent one of Tosi/Agricola. An appendix gives the texts in German and English. I hope singers will be inspired by the examples here to sing cadenzas - whether those printed or their own - and, indeed, to sing the arias, though not all will manage K368, with its octave leap to a top F.

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- G.P. Telemann, "Du, o schönes Weltgebäude" (BO21), Spring 2002, \$38. First in a series of eight chorale cantatas "for Danzig" (BO21-28). Each edition will include a full score, one vocal score, and a set of instrument parts. *Extra vocal scores, parts available*.

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BRANDENBURG CONCERTO 3

Pavlo Hrechka

While listening to Bach's Brandenburg Concertos performed by Bach Collegium Japan and Masaaki Suzuki on BIS, favourably reviewed by Stephen Daw in *EMR* 73, I was struck by an obvious discrepancy, which goes strangely unnoticed by performers, between the fast tempo almost always adopted for the last movement of the third Brandenburg Concerto and the tempo it should be played, if they care about the 'authenticity' of the performance. As I shall argue, this movement should be played much slower than Suzuki's very fast rendering; Philipp Pickett, for instance, plays slightly slower, but still much too fast.

The clue for my argument lies in the bass aria 'Gleichwie die wilden Meereswellen' of Bach's Cantata *Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält* (BWV 178/3), which has strikingly similar musical patterns to the last movement of the third Brandenburg Concerto. It was supposedly written later than the concerto (the cantata was first performed in 1724, but the concertos antedate 1721).

First, these two pieces share the common image of the sea, *das Meer*, hidden in the concerto, but obvious in the aria with its word-painting. This explains the similarity of musical expression, namely, the similar gigue-time (9/8 in Aria, 12/8 in Concerto), common key (G), strings as a vehicle of expression, ticking-time repetitive accompaniment, similar types of development, and – the most intriguing – the literal concurrence of one of the passages. It must be stressed, nevertheless, that Aria has somewhat different *Affekt* from the Concerto, owing to the difference of intent of these pieces; but this is a different character of the same image, and should be treated accordingly. The cantata deals with God's support against the rage of the foes of true faith. The *Affekt* of the aria is the confidence in God's support of Christ's frail boat (*Christi Schifflein*) on the mercy of the sea of life (*Kreuzesmeer*), as the preceding recitative explains. Despite all the differences of intents of these pieces, the

immediate consequence of this similarity for the rendering of the last movement the concerto is the tempo, which cannot be much faster than the by no means fast tempo of the aria. With this concept in mind, the really fast tempo, as played by Suzuki, sounds quite exaggerated. *Das Meer* never appears like a bubbling waterfall, which is the impression that Suzuki's rendering creates; it is always majestic and boundless, even when stormy, and is never fast.

Another example from cantatas with quite similar expressiveness is the tenor aria 'So schnell ein rauschend Wasser schießt' from *Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig*, BWV 26/2. Here we also face, after a quite nautical opening chorus, the rather disturbing image of human life likened to swiftly rushing water in a torrent (although, one must stress, by no means as swiftly as the modern approach to the finale of the 3rd concerto). Maybe the image of *Das Meer* as it appears in the finale of that concerto expresses not only festiveness and rejoicing but also a fleeting essence of human life? If so, why haste to the end?

Now I shall present the evidence to show the striking parallel between the finale of the 3rd Concerto and BWV 178/3. For the sake of convenience, only violins I and II together with the basso continuo are presented in the excerpt from the aria, and violin I, viola I and the combined cello, violone & cembalo lines of the excerpt from the Concerto.

The common gigue-time might partly account for this similarity, but it lies beyond mere similarity of genre's traits (which bear here the common expressiveness). And if, indeed, the finale of the 3rd concerto is a gigue, it must be played not unlike a dance, so, again, not too fast. We may suppose that the ten-part texture of the first movement of the concerto is the expression of 'fullness' while the seven-part texture of the third movement, by the same reason, is the expression of 'harmony'. The structure of the 3rd concerto, and its festive character, implies the transition between these states. The third movement, therefore, is quickly attained harmony, not harmoniously attained quickness, and for this reason, the second transitional movement needs not to be elaborated, as Suzuki does. Every piece of music has at least two (in fact, many more) possible variants of rendering. Suzuki's seems too definite by its utmost virtuosity. Was the latter in the same way inherent in the Baroque tradition? Rather it was a matter of spirit and wholeness of comprehending,

Gleichwie die wilden Meereswellen, bars 36-38



Brandenburg Concerto No 3, 3rd movement, bars 10-12.



SAMUEL WESLEY

Philip Olleson and Peter Leech

Peter Holman's inspiring article about Thomas Linley in the May 2002 issue of *EMR* generates much food for thought. It is indeed a 'pleasant daydream' to consider what Linley might have been capable of, had he not drowned tragically in 1778. Another captivating 'what if' is the story of Samuel Wesley, a much-neglected English 18th-century master whose best music is largely unknown but no less deserving of wider exposure.

Wesley's tale is also a tragic one. In 1787, at the age of 21, he fell into a hole dug by builders and sustained a serious head injury. This triggered the onset of manic depression, from which he never fully recovered. He would eventually hold an important position in the late-18th-century English musical world, but for the rest of his career he was beset by a failure to live up to the promise of his youthful inventiveness. It is regrettable that modern commentators tend to base their understanding of his music on the inconsistent products of his later career, rather than on the forgotten gems of his adolescence.

One of these precious stones is the *Missa de spiritu sancto*, composed at the age of 18 in 1784 to mark his conversion to Roman Catholicism: a move that alienated him from his father Charles Wesley, his family, and the Methodist community in which he had been brought up. He wrote it as a thank-offering, and in September 1784 sent a fair copy, magnificently bound, to Pope Pius VI in Rome. He probably never intended it for performance, either in London or in Rome, but solely as a display of his prowess as a composer and as a mark of the sincerity of his conversion. It certainly was never performed in London in Wesley's lifetime: it is too long for performance on an ordinary liturgical occasion, and requires vocal and orchestral forces too large for any English Catholic chapel at the time. Nor does it appear to have been performed in Rome.

By the time he came to write the *Missa de spiritu sancto*, Wesley was already an experienced composer. He and his elder brother Charles had been child prodigies, and it was partly in order to widen their musical experience and to give them an opportunity to hear their compositions performed that their father allowed them to organize private subscription concerts at the family home in Marylebone. There were nine seasons, from 1779 to 1787, and for these Samuel composed a large amount of orchestral music, including overtures, symphonies, and no fewer than seven violin concertos. During the same period he also composed church music for performance at the Catholic Ambassadorial chapels he attended, and where he no doubt also sang in the choir and played the organ. He had not written any large-scale choral music at this stage, although he had plenty of examples to hand in the form of Anglican church music,

oratorios by Handel and other composers, and small-scale continental sacred works performed in the Catholic chapels.

The *Missa de spiritu sancto* is Wesley's largest and most ambitious work. Written for soloists, chorus, and orchestra including trumpets and drums (but without clarinets), it lasts around ninety minutes, exceeding all of Haydn's and Mozart's masses in length, and matching Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*. The overall structure follows continental examples with the five individual sections divided into choruses, solos, and solo vocal ensembles. The main sections conclude with elaborate choral movements. The Kyrie I fugue returns in extended form in Kyrie II, and at the end of the work forms the main material of the massive 'Dona nobis pacem'. This is striking on its own, but in the final movement Wesley has some additional tricks up his sleeve. In an exhilarating contrapuntal tour-de-force he combines the main subject with those of the other choral fugues of the work: the 'Cum sancto spirito', 'Et vitam venturi saeculi' and 'Hosanna'. The thematic ingenuity and compositional originality of this mass give it a stature equal to anything produced in the same genre by Mozart or Haydn before 1784, and yet their sacred music was unknown to Wesley at this time and anyway is mostly of later date.

The solo and ensemble movements are operatic in style, perhaps reflecting Wesley's familiarity with the Italian operas he had seen and heard in London. Movements for the upper voices predominate. There are extended solos for the soprano and mezzo soprano soloists, duets for the two sopranos and for the first soprano and the mezzo soprano, trios, and quartets; but no solo numbers for the tenor and bass soloists, who sing only in ensembles. The 'Domine Deus' for soprano, with its prominent flute parts, conjures up a pastoral mood, and there is deep pathos in her later 'Crucifixus', one of the work's minor-key movements. The main showcase for the mezzo soprano soloist is the long and taxing 'Et in spiritum sanctum', with an unusually low tessitura, and one suspects that Wesley may have written this part with an alto castrato in mind. The altos in the chorus are frequently required to sing down to e below middle c, suggesting that perhaps an all-male ensemble, with countertenors falling into baritone or chest voice, may have been envisaged.

Samuel Wesley's *Missa de spiritu sancto* will be performed by the Bristol Bach Choir and Frideswide Ensemble in Clifton Cathedral, Bristol on Saturday 15 June 2002 at 8.00 pm, conducted by Peter Leech. It will be only the second performance (to our knowledge) in modern times and the first complete one. There will be a pre-concert talk at 7.30pm by Philip Olleson. Tickets are available on 01275 349010; the choir's website is www.bristolbach.org

LONDON CONCERTS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The Guildhall School of Music and Drama Early Music Project's latest offering was Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo* (St John's, Smith Square, 29 April), directed by Christian Curnyn. This is an unjustifiably overlooked work, probably better known to students of operatic history than concertgoers. First performed at the Palais-Royal in Paris in 1647, the first modern revival was in 1985 and it was recorded by William Christie. King's Music edited it for the Boston Early Music Festival in 1997. It follows the tradition of early baroque opera of choosing the *Orfeo* myth, including Caccini's 1601 *Euridice*, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* of 1607 and Landi's 1619 *La morte d'Orfeo*. Rossi's works had been known in Paris since 1642 and he was the natural choice for a courtly production of astonishing splendour. The orchestra numbered over 60, and there was a huge cast of singers (at least 26 separate solo singing roles) and troupes of dancers. A new theatre, complete with elaborate stage machinery, was specially constructed just for this one performance, which apparently lasted more than six hours. The overall cost of the production was roughly one quarter of France's annual national income, and nearly bought down the government of the day. The huge scale of the production is apparent in the musical structure, with an opening 12-part chorus and numerous numbers for more singers than are normally affordable. At this stage in the development of opera, the separation of aria movements from the surrounding recitative was complete, so much so that Rossi frequently blurs the boundary in the opposite direction, by making his recitatives very close to arias in style and melodic content. After an ill-fitting and jingoistic Prologue, the libretto delves further in the *Orfeo* plot than the better-known versions, with the result that Euridice doesn't receive her fatal serpent bite until just before the final Act. Rossi's key shift at this point, followed by a long-held single note, must be one of the highpoints in all opera.

This Guildhall student production was outstanding in practically all aspects. The production was slick and stylish, with some neat staging and excellent acting by the young singers. Regular readers will probably predict my only concern. Although the instrumentalists played in exemplary period style, with clear unforced tone, the singers, with few exceptions, demonstrated voices that were clearly being trained to belt out large-scale romantic roles in huge opera houses. There were some alarming examples of vibrato. Truants from ENO or the Royal Opera House audience will probably be used to such singing, but I was amazed to find it in what purported to be a specialist student 'Early Opera' project. Apart from that, it was one of the best student productions I have seen. Christian Curnyn's direction was focussed and stylish (his best yet), with good cohesion between the two continuo groups either side of the stage and an imaginative use of the continuo forces. I generally avoid mentioning specific names in student productions,

but will mention a few roles whose occupants impressed, including all three of the Graces, a delightfully acted (and sung) 'Just William' portrayal of Cupid, *Orfeo*, Aristeo and the pantomime dame incarnation of Venus. I am sure we will see a lot more of these performers – I hope we also see a lot more of Rossi's *Orfeo*.

The following evening (30 April), I was at The Barbican for a production, and a Cupid, of very different proportions. Although The Barbican does not have all that many period-instrument performances; when they do, they do it with considerable panache. William Christie and his Les Arts Florissants are regular visitors. This time they brought with them a semi-staged version of their recent *Théâtre des Champs-Elysées* production of *Les divertissements de Versailles*, a compilation of scenes from works by Lully. Purists might raise their hands in horror at the borrowing and recompiling of existing works, but I thought it worked a treat. Indeed, there are a number of other opera composers who could benefit from the same treatment. Eleven works, representing his characteristic genres of *Ballet de cour*, *Comédie-ballet* and *Tragédie lyrique*, were plundered to put together a show whose passing array of characters might have been initially confusing, but which had an underlying logic and a light-hearted sub-plot to pull it work together. Central to the proceedings was William Christie – literally so, for he stood in front of the large orchestra, turning his back on them to face the stage and singers, acting as a focal point for the whole production and allowing himself a number of cameo roles of his own. Just over a month ago, I watched him mouth every single word of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*. Tonight he demonstrated a similar detailed grasp of this work. The first laugh of the evening came with Christie's spoken plea for us to 'Imaginez Versailles' – rather tricky in the confines of The Barbican. Four Harlequins acted as the focal point for each of the varied scenes along with a fetchingly coquettish Cupid who danced and spoke beautifully, but did not sing (Hélène Baldini, who also choreographed the production). An early skirmish between Cupid and Bacchus and their followers (from *L'amour médicin* and *George Dandin*) was followed by a night scene (from *Atys*) and Paul Agnew's first appearance as La Sommeil. He sounded more French than some of the native singers, his haute-contre voice shaded with some effective ornaments. The mad scene from *Armide* followed with Rinat Shaham's evocative mezzo voice reaching into the wildly, and widely varying emotions of the text. Emmanuelle Halimi and Isabelle Obadia, two of the Harlequins, then presented a short skit on the merits of Love, from *Les plaisirs de l'île enchantée*. The scene depicting Pan (the impressive Boris Grappe) and Syrinx (from *Isis*) featured some lovely instrumentation, including passages for bass recorder, two flutes and organ. In the second half,

the *Scène du froid* with assorted Furies was a delight, as was the following *Scène des forges*, both also from *Isis*. In an evening of huge contrasts, one of the most emotive moments was Eurydice's lament from the *Ballet des Music: Plainte d'Orphée*. In contrast was the huge and occasionally rambling mad scene from *Roland* with the bass Olivier Lallouette making it all seem easy. In true French fashion, the entertainment ended with a *Passacaille* (from *Armide*). There were some impressive contributions from the orchestra, notably violinists Myriam Gevers, taking the role of *Orfeo* in Eurydice's lament, the percussionist Marie-Ange Petit, and most particularly the superb harpsichord and organ continuo player Béatrice Martin, who produced one of the finest examples of continuo playing I have heard. Expressive, imaginative and spirited, she was the focus of the continuo group and orchestra for much of the time, keeping time brilliantly. William Christie need have no fears of turning his back on the orchestra with somebody like that in control. There is a new CD of this production, which, if you like your Lully in smallish doses, is strongly recommended – by me anyway, though whoever gets to review it may think differently.

LONDON HANDEL FESTIVAL

This year's London Handel Festival, the 25th, opened with a staged version of *The Brockes Passion* that I was unfortunately not able to get to. But I did manage the programme Cantatas and Concertos at St George's, Hanover Square (17 April) with Emma Kirkby and the tenor Andrew Kennedy. By one of those twists of fate (and the fortuitous booking of an up-and-coming singer) Andrew Kennedy had, earlier in the festival, won first prize in the first Handel Singing Competition final. One of the prizes was an appearance at the 2003 festival, so we will be hearing a lot more of Mr Kennedy. His voice certainly impressed in his performance of the cantata *Cecilia, volgi un sguardo*. He has a beautifully lyrical and well-grounded tone, and a sure grasp of the notes, although in his first aria he seemed at odds with the speed set by Laurence Cummings and the London Handel Orchestra and dragged the pace a bit. There were other examples of high contrast. Cummings directed the first five movements of the opening overture to *Il pastor fido* [in the newly-edited King's Music edition], with their delightful expanse of instrumental colour, with refined taste and good manners, demonstrating his usual attention to the detail of articulation and phrase endings, gently exploring, for example, the contrasting mood and texture of the central Allegro and its succeeding Menuet. But, like a naughty schoolboy sticking his tongue out, he took the final movement at such a helter-skelter pace that string intonation, tone and clarity suffered alarmingly. A similar burst of adrenaline created havoc with 'O cara spene' (in the cantata *Cruel tiranno amor*) where the pulse ran away with itself, giving Handel's admittedly rather choppy phrases an almost burlesque quality. In the earlier aria 'O dolce mia speranza', and on a few other occasions, the rather plodding insistence and over-pronounced articulation of the continuo cello and bass also conspired to undermine the general

lightness of the instrumental textures – and was in sharp contrast to Emma Kirkby's eloquently fluid lines. Her 'Sei cara, sei bella' was full of contrasts in timbre and emotion, although her position behind and to the side of the orchestra made her appear rather subdued.

The recent arrival of the Handel House chamber organ in St Georges, Hanover Square has enabled the festival to give rather more prominence to Handel the organist than in previous years. This year's festival included three lunchtime recitals by students of London conservatories, two Americans and one Italian. The final recital (26 April) was tantalisingly billed as featuring 'an extremely rare claviorganum', but it turned out to be so rare that it failed to materialise. There was apparently a Transylvanian angle to the story as well, which added to the mystery. The Californian Ian Pritchard is currently at the Royal Academy of Music and won the Broadwood Harpsichord Competition in 2001. His CV suggests rather more experience as a harpsichordist than organist, and this was apparent in this recital. His performance of Arne's striking harpsichord Sonata IV was excellent, contrasting the tumbling flourishes of the opening section with the following bucolic siciliano and the expressive Fuga. On a couple of occasions the instrument itself conspired to expose a slightly heavy touch in the bass, but the vigour and panache of the final Allegro demonstrated real excitement, even if the speed obscured some of the detail. Excessive speed was an issue in many of the organ works, and probably caused most of the note slips. This understandable youthful exuberance was a shame, as he generally has a clean touch and a good sense of the range of articulation and ornament appropriate for the period. Use of rhetorical gesture to outline the ebb and flow of melodic lines can be a risky business, but the occasional bizarre moment (as in the final Allegro of the Ouverture from *Il Pastor Fido*) was well compensated for by shafts of insight into the structure of the music. The languid Largo of *Il Pastor Fido*, with its angular bass theme, suffered a bit from an awkward registration which produced a pronounced top, little bottom and no middle, and he took a bit of time to get the timing of the combination pedal right. The curious series of six mordented top G's at the opening of the first lengthy solo section of the Organ Concerto from *Athalia* (Op. 4/4) sounded rather mannered, as if the player's fingers might not doing quite what he wanted them to. But they certainly did well to negotiate the hazardous final Allegro, which includes a few terrifying moments for the performer. He was extremely well supported in the concerto by seven very talented young instrumentalists from the Academy, led by Sarah Moffatt.

With neat symmetry, the festival closed with the oratorio *Esther*, performed in the complete 1732 version and including several numbers from *The Brockes Passion* that opened the festival. Historians are unclear what happened to *Esther* after its first performance in 1718, but the 1732 revival seems to have been the first public appearance of a much revised and enlarged version, although again with much borrowing. If the festival had chosen the 1735 version,

they could have also included a couple of Handel's Organ Concertos as well. The additional scenes added to the opening borrow and rework pieces from *Silente venti* and *La resurrezione* (the gorgeous 'Watchful angels'), but with greatly expanded orchestral colourings, including harp, recorders and four-part violins. Later in the first Act, Handel incorporated the whole of the Coronation Anthem 'So much beauty' and, at the end of Act 2, a truncated *Zadok the Priest* with the revised words 'Blessed are they', a piece which seemed to cause great mirth amongst some of the choir. One object of their grins might have been the astonishing conducting of Laurence Cummings, who did a magnificent job of keeping the large forces of the London Handel Orchestra and Choir in time, particularly when joined by the brass high up on side galleries and a good distance away from the rest of the performers. His technique on these occasions was to leap gallantly high into the air, arms akimbo and way above his head, punching out the beat in a couple of spectacular Concertos for Conductor. Whatever the entertainment value, it worked. Despite having to play well ahead of the pulse, the brass timing was spot on. Laurence Cummings' direction was otherwise able to be far more sensitive as he teased out the varying emotions of the work. Rosemary Joshua took the lead role, but never quite managed to leave her ENO persona out of the more confined space of St George's, Hanover Square. Her opening number 'O King of Kings' was frankly showing off and she rejected the pace set by the introduction in 'Tears assist me'. I also wondered whether she might have forgone some of the vibrato, given the ease of projection in a church acoustic. James Bowman was an imperious Ahasuerus. The resolutely rich bass voice of Christopher Purves gave a massive strength to the role of Haman, the principal baddy of a libretto that includes more than its share of evangelical fervour. His 'Pluck root and branch' was one of the highlights of Act 1, as was Rebecca Outram's singing of the gorgeous 'Tune your harps', one of those sumptuously melting arias of Handel at his most inventive. The rapid plucked strings contrasted with the oboe melody (beautifully played by James Eastaway), both, together with the vocal line, featuring wide leaps of tessitura. One of those magical moments, as was the following 'Praise the Lord' with some exquisite harp playing from Francis Kelly. For most of the work, Susan Bickley was singing evocatively (and very effectively) at the bottom of her well-controlled mezzo voice, not least in the mournful lament that closed Act 1, 'O Jordan, sacred tide' and the almost-alto 'Dread not, righteous Queen', although she ventured up into her normal range for 'Jehovah crown'd with glory bright' and her interjected Allelujahs in the final chorus. Other commendable singers were Andrew Kennedy (again) and Cecilia Osmond.

Connoisseurs of misprints might be amused by the following, which we picked up in the proofs of the Byrd Newsletter (p. 4)

The Press also publishes Byrd's verse anthem *O Lord rebuke me* not using the organ accompaniment rediscovered since Fellowes' edition of 1949.

QUIS CUSTODIET CUSTODES

On a sunny Tuesday afternoon, a small but distinguished and highly-informed audience of 14 – almost half of which were professional keyboardists – were treated to a selection of Sweelinck favourites by a visibly and audibly nervous organist. Andrew Benson-Wilson's meandering introductory remarks were a sign of things to come. He should have had little to be cautious about in his playing, for the pieces chosen were not the most difficult, and all can be played on manuals, with the possible exception of the concluding fantasia. For the most part, the listener was drawn to the near omission of ornamentation, absence of architectural conception, and an ambivalence towards the momentum of phrases. More distracting were such technical issues as the use of unvaried articulation and the awkward handling of fast notes, often ameliorated via a forced gear-change of tempo and a propensity to bend the pulse to his advantage. A triumph of expediency over musicality. The more sensitive among us were disturbed by a peculiar habit of holding chords into a change of harmony, with the unfortunate effect of obfuscating anacrusic fugal entries. The setting of Psalm 140, a somewhat tedious piece which requires special treatment, if not pleading, did not receive much help from the player, who grappled with passages in parallel thirds. Alas, in the final fantasia, the hexachord theme of which was trumpeted in a variety of obvious ways, the promise (in the notes) of 'a majestic build of tension' remained unfulfilled. Still, the organ sounded very splendid throughout the recital. Clearly Benson-Wilson's playing merits as much scrutiny as his reviewing.

Kah-Ming Ng, James Johnstone,
Timothy Roberts, Neil Coleman, Carole Cerasi

We've been receiving various comments, mostly from keyboard players, criticising Andrew Benson Wilson's reviews (balanced by requests from equally distinguished musicians asking him to review their concerts). The review above is printed as received; but it is fair to the readers and to the performer to point out that the reviewers went to the concert with the explicit intention of writing a hostile review. Any player is likely to be 'visibly and audibly unnerved' when faced with a row of critics whom he knows are intent on attacking him, and some of whom he would admit to be better players than he is anyway.

This review has been preceded by a lengthy email correspondence. I am grateful for being kept informed, though am puzzled that, at a time of such unpleasant goings-on in the territory that was called Palestine on the maps in Bibles when I was a child (is there a term for the territory now that is acceptable to all who live there?) the correspondence was entitled 'And the proud uncircumcised shall be cast down from his loft'. What, metaphorically, does Andrew have to do to become circumcised?

There is perhaps a need for general discussion on the appropriate styles for playing 17th-century keyboard music. Apart from individual competence, do players who are primarily harpsichordists approach it differently from organists and do the fingers of continuo players behave differently from those of soloists? CB

BACH DVDS

Clifford Bartlett

Bach *Johannespassion* Midori Suzuki, Robin Blaze, Gerd Türk, Chiyunki Urani, Stephan MacLeod *SATBarB*, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki *dir* 120'
TDK DV-BAJPN

Bach *Brandenburg Concertos* Freiburger Barock-Orchester, Gotfried van der Goltz *cond* 108'
TDK DV-BABBC

The Italian Bach in Vienna Il Giardino Armonica, Katia & Marielle Labèque *fp*, Giovanni Antonini *cond* 73"
TDK DV-BACON
CPEB Wq 182/1; JSB BWV 1061, 1063; Vivaldi RV242

Musically, the outstanding disc here is the *St John Passion* from Bach Collegium Japan. The version used is that of 1749, as in his 1999 recording (BIS-CD-921/922, reviewed by John Butt in *EMR* 51, p. 23), but this is a different performance with some different soloists, though Gerd Türk remains as an impressive evangelist (not that I have ever heard a Bach Passion with an inadequate Evangelist: it's a role for which no economy can be justified). The occasion of the performance was the exact 250th anniversary of Bach's death; it took place in Japan and was shown live as part of a 24-hour commemoration in Leipzig. Suzuki writes with evident pride that the Collegium had performed in Leipzig just six days earlier. The occasion must have increased the excitement for the performers, though I can't say that it is not overtly apparent to the listener: all one needs to know is that it is a very fine performance. If you have the CD set, it probably isn't worth buying this just for the pictures; but if not, take advantage of the fact that a single disc with vision is cheaper than two discs without. Personally, I like having something to look at: if not a score, then the performers. Those who abhor shuffling choirs can be reassured: all musicians (including singers) not performing remain absolutely still – something the Japanese can teach Westerners.

There is something ironic in a Japanese Calvinist becoming such a great interpreter of Western Europe's supreme church music. During his own period at a Calvinist court, Bach had to eschew church music. His main activity at Cöthen was directing the Prince's private instrumental ensemble, and fortunately the room in which it would have played still survive – not unchanged, since its title, the *Spiegelsaal*, refers to mirrors which were added to the decor some years after Bach moved on to Leipzig. I made a few notes of aspects of the Freiburger Baroque Orchestra's performances that were not entirely convincing, but won't go through them in detail. If you want to see a performance in various parts of the room in the Cöthen Palace, buy it and enjoy it. It is actually quite an awkward performance area, with the shoebox shape of a small concert-hall rather than the squarer design of a more intimate drawing room. I wonder how the players were set

out when Bach and his colleagues were making music informally. Most DVDs have add-ons – sometimes (as with the King's College Carol service reviewed on p. 24 of our Diary section in December) more interesting than the main fare. I can't work out whether the appendage to this disc is a series of German jokes that don't travel or pretentious rubbish. There's a woman in an 18th-century nightdress and a cut-out model of Bach interacting with a few additional pieces. The only point I took was the identity of modern male orchestral players' uniform with that of waiters. The whole disc was disappointing in comparison with the ambitions of the Cöthen Brandenburg project in which I was caught up a decade ago, which would have included, not just a performance of the music, but the choice of whether to watch the players or a facsimile of the autograph, a brilliant series of introductions to Palace and Town by John Julius Norwich, and a data-base of all the documents that survived relating to Bach's stay in Cöthen. Various things went wrong, but I hope that Hans Petri, its instigator, who is heavily involved in the classical DVD industry, will come up with similar projects. At present, DVDs are essentially parasitic on television programmes and have no budget for such imagination.

The multinationally titled programme from Vienna provides some lively music-making. I presume the Lebeque sisters don't play the harpsichord. BWV 1061 sounds fine on two forte pianos – Bach certainly could have used the instruments in the 1730s. But the choice of two pianos and one harpsichord for BWV 1063 seemed odd: there is no reason for one part to sound different from the others. This sort of mixed programme would not have made a strong impression as a CD; but if the format is that of a concert, such variety is more enjoyable than the library approach of many sound-only CDs. I was more aware of close-ups on the performers than in the other two discs reviewed here: Enrico Onofri was brilliant to hear in RV 242 (for Pidendel, giving it a tenuous Bach link) but a little distracting to watch.

The bonus is a quarter-hour programme on the restoration of Bach's MSS. It starts with too many shots of players and not enough of the MSS themselves, but then becomes more focussed. Pictures of the fronts and backs of autograph pages being separated were horrifying. I suppose the experts know what they are doing, but I expect they thought they did at the restoration that apparently occurred between the wars and speeded up the deterioration. More encouraging is the project to present them all in digital images, though why could full-size scanned images not be produced while the pages were bisected? The website www.bachdigital.org is still in its early stages, but one of the two Bach pieces in the programme was on it and I found the autograph of the solo parts of BWV 1061 very quickly. I look forward eventually to having access to all Bach's MSS (parts more than scores) from my desk.

AMERICAN ORGAN

John Butt

Bach The Young Bach Harald Vogel (John Brombaugh Organ, op. 19, 1976 Central Lutheran Church, Eugene, OR) 70' 43"
 Loft LRCD 1009
 BWV 531, 553-560, 709, 742, 767, 914, 1119-20

Bach One of a Kind William Porter (Paul Fritts 1998 organ at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA) 71' 03"
 Loft LRCD 1025
 BWV 533, 548, 565, 582, 653b, 709, 721, 727, 736

Bach and the French Influence Kimberley Marshall (Stanford Memorial Church Charles B. Fisk organ op. 85, 1954) 72' 13"
 Loft LRCD 1024
 Bach BWV 537, 552, 562, 572, 587; music by Couperin, de Grigny & Marchand

Bach and the Italian Influence Kimberley Marshall (Stanford Memorial Church Charles B. Fisk organ op. 85, 1954) 69' 17"
 Loft LRCD 1023
 Bach BWV 538, 540, 579, 588, 592, 596; Frescobaldi *Toccata avanti la Messa della Madonna, Canzona dopo l'Epistola, Ricercar dopo il Credo, Bergamasca* (Fiori musicali)

Complete Organ Works of Nicholas Bruhns & Johann Nicolaus Hanff William Porter (Cathedral Organ, 1554, Roskilde, Denmark) 58' 48"
 Loft LRCD 1012

Daquin and the French Noel Robert Bates (Stanford Memorial Church Charles B. Fisk organ op. 85, 1954) 67' 18"
 Loft LRCD 1004

Krebs Clavier-Übung William Porter (organ at Gammalkil, Sweden, 1806) 76' 54"
 Loft LRCD 1026

Strungk Music of a Father and Son: Organ Works of Delphin and Nicolaus Adam Strungk David Yearsley (Arp Schnitger organ, 1686-92, Norden, Germany) 72' 08"
 Loft LRCD 1010

...in *Dialogue* vol. 1 Robert Bates & David Yearsley (on the two mean-tone organs of Stanford Memorial Church) 61' 35"
 Loft LRCD 1008
 Buxtehude BuxWV 155; Reincken *Toccata in G*; Scheidemann *Galliard ex D*; Scheidt *Bergamasca, Toccata super In te Domine speravi*; Schildt *Gleichwie das Feuer, Sweelinck More Palatino*; Tunder *Christ lag in Todesbanden*

Many organists in Britain tend to be dismissive of American organists and organ building. On the one hand, there are the sensational Americans such as Virgil Fox and Carlo Curley, who brim with technique but tend to exceed the bounds of what counts in the UK as 'good taste'. Then there is the experience that many of us have surely had of the visiting professor of organ who seems not to be able to string two notes together, or – most common of all – the American organist who plays in an English cathedral for a visiting choir, often without a single change of stops (or tempo). Yet, as always, the US is far broader and more diverse than the stereotypes suggest. Moreover, in the fields of historical organ playing and building the country is truly a world leader, producing work of a quality that is seldom heard in Britain. In England, there is still the strong influence of a 'living tradition', namely the Anglican Cathedral and Collegiate tradition that relates only obliquely to the historical performance movement. In America, organists are ahead of the game in the field of historical performance, and perhaps this is precisely because their

tradition is generally one that has been created out of nothing. There is certainly an element of sumptuousness, even superfluity about some of the new 'old' organs in America, and, as a group, the ten or so historical builders are not even rivalled in Europe. In Britain (with a few obvious exceptions), there seems never to have been the incentive to build historical organs of this quality.

These nine discs from Loft, which as its name suggests seems to be dedicated to organ recordings, give a splendid overview of the American historical-organ culture. Godfather of the whole enterprise is Harald Vogel, who was highly influential in the design of the celebrated dual-temperament Fisk organ at Stanford University (1984). He has taught many historically-informed organists in America and is almost better-known there than in his native Bremen. For his recording of 'The Young Bach' he chooses John Brombaugh's 1976 organ in north German style at Eugene, Oregon. If he lacks the fire of many of his American disciples, Vogel's style is based on a sort of lingering subtlety that reflects his deep love of the actual sound of historic organs. Perhaps it would not appeal to those who are not already converted to the organ's charms, but here there is certainly a persuasive advocate of Bach works that are generally ignored: the truly dreadful Prelude and Fugue in C, BWV 531, and the disputed 'Eight Little Preludes and Fugues' – whose paucity is to my mind exacerbated by the expressive and thoughtful approach to performance.

William Porter is not of a generation to have studied directly with Vogel, but he has been closely involved with Vogel's North German Organ Academy. His three discs give us a direct comparison between American and European organs: his Bach disc is on the 1998 Paul Fritts organ at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington, while his Krebs disc is recorded on an 1806 organ in Gammalkil, Sweden, and that of Bruhns and Hanff on the organ dating back to 1554 in Roskilde, Denmark. Porter is quite simply the finest improviser I have heard of 17th-century German music, so I find it surprising that the Bach playing sounds somewhat timid and dutiful. The Krebs recording is absolutely revelatory, though. Krebs so often sounds like a pale, light-weight shadow of Bach, but here we have tremendous spontaneity and wit in this selection of chorale settings from Krebs's *Clavier-Übung* of 1752-3. This is something to recommend to those who still find that 'galant' style pointless. Porter's recording of Nicolaus Bruhns and J. N. Hanff has both the advantage of presenting the entire organ oeuvre of these composers and of capitalising on Porter's own extemporary instinct. Bruhns's four organ works, like his cantatas, suggest that his death in his early 30s deprived Germany of a composer of the stature of Buxtehude (at the very least).

The remaining three organists are all closely linked through their association as pupils or teachers at Stanford in the years straddling 1990. Kimberley Marshall presents two discs on the Stanford Fisk which serve the dual task of showing Bach's skill in both Italian and French styles and this organ's versatility as an instrument that is somehow both historical and eclectic. Marshall presents clean, even performances of Bach's toccatas in F major and D Minor and gives even lesser works, such as the fugue on a theme of Corelli and Bach's arrangement of a concerto by Johann Ernst, a vitality that one would not expect them to elicit. The French disc presents some 'genuine' French music, such as the luscious *Tierce en taille* of Nicolas de Grigny, together with some excellent accounts of French-inspired Bach works such as the Prelude in E-flat, BWV 552 and the *Pièce d'orgue*, BWV 572. Robert Bates also uses the Stanford Fisk for a complete recording of Daquin's twelve Noels. If these pieces sometimes suffer from a certain monotony when heard back-to-back, Bates compensates for this both with the variety of registration and the sheer virtuosity of the variations accompanying each carol. Particularly impressive is his control of reed stops, on which – even in the best conditions – it is so difficult to articulate the lines convincingly. David Yearsley uses the famous Arp Schnitger Organ of Norden for his disc of the two Strungks, Delphin and his son Nicolaus Adam. Little of this music is well known, but together the two composers give an excellent overview of German keyboard styles from the time of Sweelinck's influence to the turn of the 18th century. It is not just the quality of organ and music that make this disc so outstanding, Yearsley has a remarkable command not only of varieties of touch and articulation, but also of the expressive potential of this sort of music. The highlight is Delphin Strungk's *Toccata ad manuale duplex*, a catalogue of monodic and echo devices, including chromatic coloratura, that stretch the bounds of even 17th-century musical wildness.

Bates and Yearsley come together at Stanford for a medley of 17th-century German music played on the Fisk (in its meantone incarnation) and a newer meantone organ by Paul Fritts in late Renaissance style. Here is a typical example of American superfluity – neither organ is surely absolutely necessary for the type of worship held in an American university chapel – but it mirrors, I suppose, the sort of

superfluity that generated such superb instruments in the Calvinist churches of Holland, a sign of the wealth of the times and civic pride in the arts. Bates and Yearsley infer from the number of churches in northern Europe with two organs that the masters of the 17th century often played in dialogue, improvising against one another with no small element of competition. It is certainly interesting to hear pieces that are themselves based on a dialogue structure (such as Tunder's shaggy-dogged setting of *Christ lag in Todes-banden*), although if I hadn't read the sleeve notes I would probably not have noticed that two organs (and organists) were involved. Two thoughts come out of this: how much more interesting this would be if the organists were heard in live improvisation, truly playing off the ideas of each other; secondly, the qualities I certainly value in all these excellent organists – subtlety of articulation, spontaneity, insight into the rhetorical nature of the music – have surely raised the standard of Baroque organ playing well beyond anything that was available forty or fifty years ago. However, when organists of this kind (including myself) play to their best, I'd be damned if I can tell them apart. Is this a problem? Or does this reflect the fact that we're entering an era, not unlike the 17th century itself, in which excellence, variety and experimentation thrive in an environment in which deep subjective differentiation ('genius', as it would have been understood in the nineteenth century) is no longer truly conceivable?



BBC & EARLY MUSIC

Colin Booth

Some of you may know that I feel I was treated unprofessionally by the director of BBC Radio 3 last year. Believe me, the following was not written with any intention of settling scores. It is the result of a feeling which had already arisen some time before (and shared by many, as recent press coverage shows) that there is something wrong with a much loved institution, which I would like to help to correct. In these circumstances, I hope I will be forgiven for going public with this letter.

Tariq Ali has pointed out how misguided it can be to patronise the British public (speaking on 'Start the Week', Radio 4, 25th March 2002). He compared the success of Tate Modern with the failure of the Millennium Dome. The former contains uncompromising displays of contemporary art, and was packed from its opening day; the latter was devoted to a theme-park, and we know what happened to that.

We have a publicly funded national radio station in the UK devoted principally to music: BBC Radio 3. Unfortunately, even in the area of music, one can detect a similar tendency to treat the public as idiots, though this may, of course, be condemned as a subjective impression. More importantly, perhaps, the element of balance has been lost from Radio 3, and this is demonstrable. Whether or not a legal duty of balance exists, the BBC's charter emphasises it, and one would expect such an institution to try to achieve it. It is possible that this loss of balance is to a great extent responsible for the recent desertion of the medium by tens of thousands of previously loyal listeners, including myself. I now only listen to Radio 4 and CDs. This letter offers evidence of the loss of balance in one field of music.

Although my musical tastes are wide, for 30 years I have been a particular enthusiast of Early Music. 18th century authorities often claimed that the purpose of music was to move the soul. Early on I joined those who worked for its performance on instruments and in styles appropriate to the period, in order that this use of a detailed context might help to release any emotional force the music might contain. Reactions to my recordings and concerts encourage me to think that this effort has not been in vain.

As a harpsichordist my particular field of interest is wide. The range of pre-classical keyboard music is vast: a wide variety of instrumental sound is matched by a repertoire supplied by at least dozens of good composers, of whom the best-known and most-played are (from the late Baroque) Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, Couperin, Rameau and Purcell, and (from the earlier repertoire) Byrd, Bull, Gibbons and the other English Virginalists, Frescobaldi and Froberger. More than thirty years of exciting and illuminating work by countless performers, scholars, and instrument-builders,

have provided a basis for our present wealth of fine recordings and live concerts. On an amateur level, there are now many thousands of harpsichord-owners in this country. Far from being in any way an exclusive instrument, the availability of kits and instrument-rental means that any enthusiast can acquire an instrument from this diverse family.

Turning back to Radio 3, while areas which are 'flavour of the month' receive a disproportionate amount of airtime, some parts of the music spectrum, including my own, are hardly heard at all. I have misgivings that Radio 3 currently devotes up to two hours every weekday morning to playing the record companies' game, by enthusing over re-released material, mostly of work by dead artists. This generous allocation of time reduces the potential for living artists to have their work exposed, but is, of course, far cheaper. In my field it also means that listeners hear frequent performances of Early Music on modern instruments and in an unenlightened style. The impression given is that performance of pre-classical keyboard music has regressed several decades.

To reinforce such an impression, BBC personalities can be heard on air expressing with authority the view that such considerations are of little importance. On Christmas Eve 2001, two of Radio 3's leading producers, Jonathan Swayne and Rob Cowan, joined forces to present CD Masters. They discussed a performance of Rameau by Rafael Puyana – actually on a harpsichord – and agreed that although neither the instrument nor the performing style were in any way close to what Rameau himself might have hoped for or expected, this 'does not matter'. Subjectively, the instrument (of an early 20th century design) sounded far from beautiful, and the playing was typical of the mechanically rigid harpsichord-playing of its period. If this could be followed by anything even more inclined to turn most listeners off Early Music, it was: a leaden, half-speed rendering of Bach's 5th Brandenburg Concerto from 1950, with the harpsichord part played on a grand piano. This too was strongly praised.

Is this assessment of Radio 3 too selective? For perhaps two years I had suspected that the amount of airtime given to my own field of music on Radio 3 was becoming as meagre as that given by Classic FM. (The latter might perhaps excuse itself on the grounds of commercial criteria). I was encouraged by colleagues to acquire some basic statistics, and the following is the result of simply noting down items from the Radio 3 schedules in the Radio Times. I apologise should there be any errors or omissions, but I don't think a few of these would distort the general picture. I also think a sample-period of 4 months should be adequate. Items broadcast after midnight are omitted for two reasons: the instrument and player are then rarely specified (and I don't

intend to change my habits to find this out!); and if items in this field do tend to be scheduled more often for the middle of the night (as a superficial examination suggests), this in itself would support the complaint.

The broadcast time surveyed was 6am to midnight, between 19th October 2001 and 22nd February 2002 – approximately 4 months (or 18 weeks) at 18 hours' total broadcast time per day (which includes a small percentage of spoken-word material). During this time, there were 37 pre-classical keyboard items (an average of 2 per week). Average length of item 4 minutes. Weeks in which no items occurred: 4. Total playing time over four months: under 3 hours.

Of the 37 items, the number played on the modern piano was 25, of which 18 were by Bach. Two recitals were devoted to Bach on the piano. Non-piano performances were therefore 12 in number, and only of single pieces. Weeks in which no item played on the harpsichord was broadcast: 12 out of 18. All pieces by Bach, Scarlatti, Handel, and F. Couperin were played on the modern piano.

It must be allowed that *Composer of the Week* twice included several items played on appropriate instruments, when featuring William Byrd and C. P. E. Bach. During the period, harpsichordists were featured more than once on *In Tune*, in a chat-show format. Apart from these instances, the following items were played on the harpsichord: Rameau (on a pre-war Pleyel) (1); Bohm (1); Louis Couperin (1); Soler (1). CD of the week recently was a performance of Rameau on the piano. Another highly praised release in February 2002 was of C. P. E. Bach, again on the modern piano. To my knowledge no CD of harpsichord music was featured on CD Review in the four months, but I might be corrected on this.

Conclusions:

Today's Radio 3 producers do not regard pre-classical keyboard music as a field worthy of serious attention. These producers know very little about the harpsichord, and don't like the instrument. Their preferred instrument for any pre-Classical keyboard music which does get considered, is (as it was up to about 1960) the modern piano. This instrument is chosen unless no piano version is available.

Works by well-known and often-recorded composers (Bach, Scarlatti) therefore form the bulk of the small amount of broadcast material, but are almost invariably presented on the piano, while occasional items by more obscure composers (Bohm; C. P. E. Bach) may be presented on appropriate instruments.

'Minor' composers of keyboard music from 1550-1750 are rarely considered worthy of broadcast time.

If my own field should be comparable to others not fashionable at the moment, then areas of music either considered by today's BBC producers as of minority interest, or simply not enjoyed by themselves, receive so

little airtime that comparisons with areas which are in vogue are startling. For example, the recent allocation of an average of several hours per day to World Music (as reported in the press) compares with that given to pre-classical keyboard music (even including performances on the piano): less than 3 hours in the last four months. During this period, solo music on the harpsichord was heard on Radio 3 for a total of less than one hour.

This situation is unacceptable. Specifically, a significant and important area of musical repertoire and of instrumental sound is being all but dismissed. With a few exceptions (jazz; historic performance), established interest-areas do not seem to be a part of the station's thinking, and on a broader basis, the evidence suggests that no consideration is given to a fair balance of varieties of sound and performance.

Why is this important?

Individuals and groups with a particular interest in certain types of serious music and performance should expect a publicly funded national radio station to offer them the pleasure of hearing the sounds which attract them, on a regular, if occasional basis; the stimulation of hearing music within their own field of interest by artists and composers (and in this case, instruments) with which they may not yet be familiar.

If you agree with me, I would ask you to:

- forward this to any other individuals who might want to contribute to this debate.
- contact anyone you know who might be in a position to do something about it.
- encourage as many as possible to hold the BBC to account, both by writing to Roger Wright, Director Radio 3, and by publicising the issue in as many areas of the media as possible.

These remarks were circulated to various people in April. The following update was added early in May.

I received the expected support from Early Music enthusiasts, after circulating this letter, but as far as I know, none of the broadsheets or mainstream music journals have been interested. I did, however, receive an immediate friendly response from Roger Wright, Controller Radio 3. He rang me for 40 minutes, and further contact is likely. Whether this will ultimately lead to any review of Radio 3 policy, I cannot predict.

This was sent to us in the form of a letter for publication. In view of its length, we have printed it as an article. Curiously, although my musical education was enormously indebted to the BBC in the 1950s and 1960s, I virtually stopped listening to Radio 3 when I started working for it in 1970. It was a little late in accepting early-instrument performers, but during the late 1970s and early 1980s it was a great encouragement to the early-music world. I wonder whether the BBC still publishes (or keeps on computer) an annual list of music broadcast on Radio 3, supervising which was once one of my jobs.

CB

RECORD REVIEWS

16th-CENTURY

Balsamino *Novelette a 6; Monteverdi Combattimento* Ensemble Vanitas, Madrigalisti della Radio Svizzera, Diego Fasolis cond Dynamic CDS 384 56' 49" (rec 1993 & 1998)

A curious disc. Balsamino will be unknown to most readers. His single collection of madrigals, *Novellette* for six voices, was published in 1594 with a dedication to the Duke of Urbino and an introduction that says they were performed in the square outside the ducal palace. (I haven't heard madrigals there, but was very impressed by the sound of an *alta* band accompanying a hundred or so people in a very self-disciplined early dance.) The pieces are quite short, the 20 items averaging less than two minutes each; most of them are to texts from Tasso's *Aminta* (which are regrettably not included in the booklet). The composer favoured the *ceterissima*, as accompanying instrument; his own invention, it had seven courses and was 'perfect for performing any polyphonic music for two to five voices'. Sadly, nothing is known about it, so it is replaced by harpsichord and lute. The music is enjoyable, both in itself and for the performances; but I'd like to see the texts, or at least a score, before further evaluation.

The other item on this short-running disc is a weird performance of Monteverdi's *Combattimento*. It is not so much Hamlet without the prince as without the supporting cast. Imagine the composer sitting at a harpsichord and playing through his newly-composed work to his friends, like Handel playing an unperformed opera to his admirers (cf the review of the Harris correspondence in last month's *EMR* p. 6). The note-writer seems not to have been given any reason for the recording, calling the version 'quite peculiar' and coming up with the most plausible explanation she can think off. In fact, Marco Beasley gives an impressive performance, dramatic and enlivening; but the harpsichordist (Guido Morini), given an impossible task, makes it worse by trying to play his interludes expressively too, which makes the impetus sag. If I was making a study of how to sing the work, I would certainly want to compare Beasley with his rivals; but I can see no point in this as a performance of the work in itself. CB

Lassus *Singphonic di Lasso: Lieder, Chansons, Motets* Die Singphoniker 51' 55" (rec 1992) cpo 999 855-2

Prepared by the titles of the CD and of the performers for something quite vulgar and tasteless, I was most happily surprised by this distinguished performance of secular songs by Lassus in German, French and Italian. The six young male singers hail, like their eponymous hero, from Munich, and the neatness and unanimity of their

performance comes from years of shared discipline and common purpose. The music is thoroughly rehearsed and ingrained: there is no doubt that each member of the group understands the harmonic working of the music: the interesting parts are brought out whenever appropriate, yet not at the expense of the text or shape of the piece. They have mastered the musical aspects of the songs, and are free to have fun with them, while remaining faithful to the composer's intention. Closely-recorded in the manner of a close-harmony group, their voice production sounds effortless, and slight effects make enough dramatic impact to keep the listener in thrall. Once or twice they go over the top with drunken sound-effects, but I reckon this is within the bounds of taste in drinking songs – of which Lassus wrote quite a few. There are also Petrarch settings, love songs, battles of the sexes, classic favourites such as *La nuit froide* and *Bonjour mon cœur*, and a wonderfully irreverent ode to noses.

Selene Mills

17th-CENTURY

Aliotti *Oratorio Il Sansone* (Naples 1686) Francese Garrigosa Sansone, Adriana Fernandez Dalila, Claudio Cavina, Claudine Ansermet, Ivan Garcia, Coro Antonio Il Verso, Ensemble Elyma, Gabriel Garrido K617 K617133 67' 46"

Wow! An oratorio written in Sicily and performed at Naples in 1686 – and a fine one it turns out to be, too, recorded here from a live performance in Palermo last July. The five soloists (three humans, one God and one allegory) are accompanied by strings, recorders, cornetti and trombones, with theorbo, lute, guitar, harp, harpsichord, organ and spinet. It tells the familiar story of Samson and Delilah with a sinfonia and framing choruses. The singing is bright and clear, the playing nicely paced and phrased. There is no information about scorings in the notes, which are actually quite confusing when discussing the sources: there are two MSS, but it is not clear which (if either) the recording follows. Despite that, I'd recommend this to anyone interested in 17th-century oratorio without hesitation. BC

Böhm *Works for Organ Vol. 1*. Christiaan Teeuwsen org 78' 44" Naxos 8.555857 £

Naxos have done it again with this stunning recording of some of Böhm's finest organ works. The Bovenkerk in Kampen is well known to organists for its monumental 1741 Hinsz organ, but in the choir at the opposite end of the sizeable church stands an impressive new organ by the Dutch firm of Reil, sympathetically built in 17/18th century Dutch style. The flexible winding would alarm a less musical player,

but the positive effects are well demonstrated in the opening Prelude and Fugue in C, where the organ itself seems to dance and sing along to the music. The Canadian organist Christiaan Teeuwsen gives an excellent performance, revealing a musical mind that is capable of looking beyond the notes. His subtle rhythmic inflections and intelligently thought-out articulation give life to the performance without ever becoming flashy or unmusical. Players who make desperate attempts to make organ music exciting should take note – this is the way to do it. The four major partitas show off the various colours of the organ, as well as Teeuwsen's impeccable phrasing and Böhm's inventive use of variation technique. The well-known *Vater unser im Himmelreich* is performed with the rather French ornaments found in Walther's copy of the piece, rather than the pared-down version that might have been the original. It throws up my only concern about the organ in that the pedal sounds a bit weak. Fine music, a fascinating new organ and excellent playing – and all for under £5.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Buxtehude *Seven Sonatas Op. 1 Convivium* (Elizabeth Wallfisch vln, Richard Tunnicliffe vlc, Paul Nicholson hpscd) 60' 32" Hyperion CDA67236

Initially I was a little bothered by the idea of the gamba part of Buxtehude's sonatas being played on cello: this is, after all, a group playing with due regard to historical accuracy. The performances, however, convinced me that there was little wrong with the concept. Although the cello attacks notes at the front, where the gamba grows into them, the texture was not unduly upset, and the balance with the rather thin harpsichord bass was actually surprisingly good. Needless to say, the performances are excellent. I think I will stick to the John Holloway versions because, in the end, I do prefer gamba. BC

Charpentier *Messe de M. de Mauroy* (1691) Le Concert Spirituel, Hervé Niquet 65' 51" Glossa GCD 921602

This mass (*pour* rather than *de* M. Mauroy) is by some way the longest of Charpentier's essays in the genre and is here luxuriously presented, with the disc conventionally housed but also joined by a 52-page booklet within an outer cardboard case. Ironically, the printed material is less than helpful in several respects, not least by failing to acknowledge, identify and translate the motet used as elevation (*O salutaris H262*). The music, however, is magnificent, featuring typically spicy harmony and fluent counterpoint, not least in the jolly fugato that ends the Gloria. Niquet's direction recognises the spaciousness of the composer's conception and he does not force the pace at all –

though that is not to say that he is in any way sluggish. Choir, orchestra and male soloists maintain this relaxed approach, though unfortunately the soprano solo sound – rather tense and with a quick vibrato – is often in conflict. The organ versets required by the composer are here improvised convincingly by Michel Chapuis, though some genuine 17th-century music might have been preferable. The concluding *Domine salvum* was composed as part of the mass, but Hitchcock catalogued it separately as H299. It is only a shame that the dedication of the artists is not fully supported by the packaging. *David Hansell*

Monteverdi Il combattimento...

see Balsamino in 16th-century section.

Purcell The Fairy Queen Lorraine Hunt, Catherine Pierard, Susan Bickley, Howard Crook, Mark Padmore, David Wilson-Johnson, Richard Wistreich *SSmSTTB*, Schütz Choir of London, London Classical Players, Roger Norrington 122' 06" (2 CDs) (rec 1993) Virgin Veritas 7243 5 61955 2 3 ££

I remember the 1993 'Purcell Experience' at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall well; it was the only time I've seen/heard the music in relationship with the play for which it was written (presented by actors reading scripts on a bare stage, but better than nothing) and the only time the music has made any sense except as a programme of unrelated sections. Normally I find the totality less rather than more than the sum of the related parts, and there is nothing in this recording to improve that, despite being recorded immediately after the 1993 performance. It is, however, highly commendable on the musical side. The dances are characterised without being caricatured; I'm not quite so convinced by the singing, and sometimes found the instrumental play-through more enjoyable than the vocal version. But if you didn't buy it first time round, take advantage of its mid-price reappearance. *CB*

Rosenmüller Requiem: Mass and Motets for the Dead La Capella Ducale (Mona Spägle, Ralf Popken, Wilfried Jochens, Harry van der Kamp), Ensemble Canticum, Musica Fiata Köln, Roland Wilson *dir* 90' 59" Vivarte S2K 89470 (2 CDs in box)

I greeted the arrival of this recording with a mixture of delight and suspicion: I love Rosenmüller's music, and a double CD promised to be very exciting, performed by these musicians, but I could not think how a Requiem could be reconstructed from the surviving sources: having recently discovered a Requiem by Schmelzer in the middle of a MS of another mass altogether, it wasn't beyond the bounds of possibility that Roland Wilson had done the same with Rosenmüller. The reality is, though, that Requiem is something of a misnomer: the subtitle *Mass and motets for the dead* is far more accurate. The striking thing about the concerted music, though, is that it is all in one key, suggesting that either the composer had a thing about death

and E minor or that there might, indeed, be some connection. That fixation with one key possibly explains one of the weaknesses of the set: in order to break up relentless E minor with plainchant. I'm not, I confess, a great fan of it anyway, but without all the other bells and processions that would have gone with a reconstructed service, what's the point? Especially when all of the music would then have fitted a single CD? And what of the performances? I have to say it took me a while to get used to the sounds of both the soprano and the alto, even though I've heard them (and been very enthusiastic) before. Otherwise, the undoubtedly winner is the composer who, at long last, seems to be enjoying something of a purple patch. Long may it continue! *BC*

S. Rossi Hebreo Mantovano Siena Ensemble, John Shrapnel *spkr* 63' 42" Classical Recording Company CRC 1202-2

I have reviewed three recordings of Rossi's *Songs of Solomon* since *EMR* began (none of them satisfactory), but only a scattering of his 12 other publications. This redresses the balance by offering a conspectus of his total output, only the first, tenth and 21st (and last) tracks being Hebrew settings. The programme was devised by Michelene Wandor (who reviewed Don Harran's book on Rossi for *EMR*), who also plays the viol and recorder, and supplies short spoken introductions, which I heard as rhetorical prose but are printed without punctuation in the booklet as a continuous poem. These are well judged in length and spoken with the right degree of formality by John Shrapnel (who appears also as Bach in a review below). But their poeticality is sometimes counterproductive. I'm not sure if I want to be reminded (twice near the opening) that Mantua was the city of Virgil and Monteverdi: enjoyable though Rossi's music is, comparison of the vocal pieces with Monteverdi is not to his advantage. Is 'In Mantua vespers belong to the evening' a truism or does it mean that they take place later in the day in Mantua than elsewhere? There are memorable stanzas, such as:

music travels from left to right

Hebrew from right to left

and back again before nightfall

the gates of the ghetto shut before night falls though is Hebrew script really boustrophedon? And if I can't tell from the reading that the stanza begins with a lower-case letter, what is the point of breaking normal printing conventions? The script balances Rossi's *il moderno* and *ebreo*, but to the listener, the former predominates, with the latter only noticeable by the gentile if he recognises the occasional Hebrew word like *adonai* and *shalom*. Most items are for two trebles, either voices (Lisette Wesseling and Jennie Cassidy) or recorders (Philip Thorby and Layil Barr). The former pair make a fine sound, blending well. The recorders have more brilliant writing and exploit it to the full. James Johnstone supports well on the harpsichord, though it is a pity that the

limited budget could not run to a chitarone for variety. Despite some criticisms of the script, I'm full of admiration for Michelene Wandor for undertaking, not just the artistic aspects of the recording, but the organising, financing and marketing. *CB*

A promotional leaflet was included with last month's *EMR*

A. & D. Scarlatti Concerti & Sinfonie Europa Galante, Fabio Biondi 63' 39" Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45495 2 6

A. Scarlatti 6 Concerti grossi, Sinfonia Clori Dorino e Amore, Sonata 9 in a; D. Scarlatti Sinfonia 3 in G, 5 in a, 7 in C

It's not immediately clear from the packaging what is on this CD, so I'll begin with some identifications. It begins with the fine Sinfonia to Alessandro Scarlatti's serenata *Clori, Dorino e Amore* of 1702, and ends with his well-known Sonata in A minor for recorder, two violins and continuo, the ninth of the set of sonatas and concertos for recorder and strings in a manuscript at the Conservatorio di Musica S Pietro a Majella in Naples; they have been published most recently by Ut Orpheus. The three sinfonias by Domenico Scarlatti are nos. 7 in C, 3 in G and 5 in A minor from the collection of his sinfonie in a Paris manuscript [CB has a photocopy and also his own MS parts of some items]. Incidentally, no. 5 in A minor is clearly not complete as it stands in the manuscript (and is performed here), for it consists of only two movements (all the others have three or more) and the second movement, an Adagio, ends on a dominant chord. Presumably there is a third movement missing, or a repeat of the first movement intended.

The rest of the CD is taken up with a complete recording of what is called here *Sei Concerti in sette parte* but which is actually the *Six Concertos in Seven Parts... Compos'd by Sigr. Alexander Scarlatti*, published in London by Benjamin Cooke around 1740 [facsimile published by King's Music]. Europa Galante play the six concertos orchestrally and the author of the notes assumes that they are genuine concerti grossi by Scarlatti, so it is worth pointing out that the set as published by Cooke is almost certainly a forgery. Four of the works, nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5, are string quartets rather than concertos: they are found minus their ripieno parts in a MS in the Santini Collection at Münster described as sonatas for *Due Violini Violetta e Violoncello Senza Cembalo*. Presumably Cooke or an accomplice added ripieno parts in order to cash in on the English craze for seven-part string concertos around 1740. Nos. 3 and 6 do not, so far as I know, exist in earlier sources, though no. 3 is undoubtedly genuine and may originally have been a concerto or sonata for violin, strings and continuo, not unlike the early examples in B by Handel and Pergolesi. No. 6 is in a rather different style from the others, is of inferior quality, and sounds to me as if it was written in England rather than Italy by someone at least a generation younger than Scarlatti.

It was presumably included to make the collection a standard set of six.

The performances are variable. Europa Galante mostly play in very good time and tune, though they cannot resist some of the irritating mannerisms that have become fashionable among Baroque groups in recent years. Tempi tend to be rather extreme, and movements sometimes come to an unscheduled and unwarranted halt for a flourish or a pause; notes tend to be played very short or very legato; accents are smashed out; the continuo team (harpsichord or organ, theorbo and, on occasion, harp) is hyperactive and finds it difficult to get through a movement, let alone a complete piece, without changing the instrumentation. Most irritating, there is the occasional unjustified recourse to pizzicato – on one ludicrous occasion, just for the last note of an otherwise arco movement! In short, this CD is something of a taste-free zone, though to be fair, most of the excesses occur in the sillier music, such as the Domenico Scarlatti sinfonias. The best and most serious works, the four concertos derived from the Alessandro Scarlatti four-part sonatas, receive more sympathetic performances, with particularly well-shaped and affecting slow movements.

Peter Holman

Williams *The Complete Instrumental Music*
Camerata Köln 48' 26"
cpo 999 813-2
Trio Sonatas op. 1, Duet in F, Sonata in d

Who'd have thought it? A complete CD of music by a little-known follower of Purcell, recorded by a German group and issued by a German company, CPO – or cpo, as they style themselves in e.e. cummings mode. Actually, it is not the complete instrumental music – they missed some recorder duets and a two-part air in John Lenton's *The Gentleman's Diversion* of 1693 – and at 48' 28" it is distinctly short measure; there would probably have been room for Williams's seven surviving vocal pieces as well. Nevertheless, it's good to have a complete recording of the *Six Sonata's in Three Parts* (1700), consisting of three trio sonatas for two recorders and three for two violins, as well as single sonatas for recorder and continuo and two recorders.

Williams is unfamiliar today mainly because he died too young to fulfil his promise or create a large body of work. If my guess in the new New Grove is correct that he was the William Williams who was baptised at St Margaret's Westminster on 1 August 1675 and was a Westminster Abbey choirboy in 1685, then he was only 25 when he was buried at St Mary-le-Strand on 20 January 1701. (I mention these dates because the CD notes still rely on the out-of-date article on Williams in the old New Grove.) His early death evidently caused a stir, and the *Six Sonata's* are certainly highly accomplished works for a lad barely out of his teens; we know he had written at least some of them as early as 1696 because a newspaper advertisement on 24 December of that year invited subscriptions for the set. As we might expect, they are essentially a mixture of Purcell and Corelli,

though there are some original touches in no. 6, the *Sonata in imitation of Birds* – the only well-known work in the set. The F major sonata for two unaccompanied recorders is rather feeble, though the D minor sonata for solo recorder and continuo turns out to be a much more substantial and interesting work than I thought when I wrote the Grove article; it shows the influence of the set of sonatas Godfrey Finger published in 1690.

The performances, using period instruments including copies of Bressan and Stanesby recorders, are accomplished and thoughtful, if a bit sober and restrained at times. Camerata Köln avoids the excesses of some other Cologne-based groups: there are no wildly eccentric tempos, no over-emphatic accents and no Rick Wakeman-like changes of continuo scoring, which is a blessing. I can whole-heartedly recommend this recording to those interested in exploring the fascinating byways of English music between Purcell and Handel. Perhaps Camerata Köln might now like to turn their attention to some of Williams's contemporaries, such as Finger, Godfrey Keller or William Corbett. Also, no-one has yet recorded any of William Croft's youthful set of trio and quintet sonatas.

Peter Holman

Il Canzioniere: *La poesia di Francesco Petrarca nel seicento (L'Heritage de Monteverdi VI)*
Maria Cristina Kiehr, Stephan van Dyck ST,
La Fenice, Jean Tubery 59' 29"
Ricercar 233402

Music by O. Bassani, Borboni, Gagliano, d'India,
Lambardi, Landi, Merula, Monteverdi (*Hor che'l
ciel*), Peri, Pesenti, Riccio, S. Rossi, Trabaci

The poet who embodies the seed of the renaissance is communicated to us in this programme by the composers who brought it to a flowering close. Petrarch's poetic collection *rime sparse* immortalises the mysterious Laura, who is represented by *rime in vita* and *rime in morte*, forming equal halves of the recording. Only at the junction between the halves is there a break, where *morte* is announced by the powerful *Ancidetemi pur* for solo harp by Trabaci. The *segue* of songs and interspersed instrumental pieces builds a narrative from the sequence of poems. The result is compelling listening, like a small opera, and is beautifully conceived. The singers are Stephan van Dyck and the matchless Maria Cristina Kiehr, supported by a changing range of continuo instruments, notably the endlessly inventive harp continuo of Christina Pluhar. You have to go a long way to hear a soprano more aware of tone and harmony and a continuo player more able to project sense and poetry. The two songs by d'India (symmetrically, one from *rime in viva*, one from *rime in morte*) are almost painful in intensity – in just the way both d'India and Petrarch would have wanted. The instrumental playing (principally Jean Tubery and Gebhard David on cornetti) is wonderfully free but without overstepping the mark. Six singers join the full ensemble for the final *Hor che'l ciel e la terra* by Monteverdi, which announces a symbolic silence

and truly ushers in a new age. A wonderful disc, and well worth setting aside the hour to hear it from cover to cover.

Stephen Cassidy

I had intended to review this myself, and gave it a first listen while making a devious journey from a church in the middle of Ipswich to the Cassidy house on the outskirts of the town via Colchester (conveniently turning a five minute trip into the necessary hour). But the cornett-playing was so exciting that I thought it would find a better home with Stephen. I noticed that the church had a hymnbook entitled Hymns for Living, though didn't match Petrarch with a second volume Hymns for Dying.

CB

Lully in Deutschland L'arpa Festante München
Michi Gaigg dir 47' 35" (rec 1990)
Amati SRR9012/1
Erlebach Suite 3 in c (1693); Kusser Suite 4 in C
(1700); Handel op. 3/4

This is an imaginative programme of German orchestral suites inspired by the instrumental music in Lully's stage works. The Erlebach and Kusser suites are sets of many short dance movements, some of which show the dramatic lineage of this style by depicting stock stage figures (Pulcinella, harlequins, satyrs). I particularly enjoyed the chaconne in the Kusser suite with its catchy opening and array of textures; another highlight was Erlebach's sequence of movements depicting sorrow, sleep and joy. The disc ends with a Handel concerto grosso that also draws on traditions of stage dancing in its overture and minuets. The band plays well in this 1990 recording, getting a good dance momentum and balancing excitement with spaciousness. It is a shame that the microphone placing is suddenly very distant in the quiet movements (e.g. Erlebach's *La Plainte*). A shame too that there's only 47 minutes of music: with playing as enjoyable as this, why not round the disc off with a Fischer, Muffat or J. S. Bach suite? Stephen Rose

The Rags of Time: 17th-c. English lute songs and dances Paul Hillier voice, Nigel North lute, theorbo, gtr 64' 51"
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907257
Poems by John Donne; H Lawes; plucked pieces by Corbetta, R. Johnson & J. Wilson

This is a treat for anyone who enjoys lute song, the poetry of John Donne, or the Elizabethan imagination. Arguably the greatest of the metaphysical poets, Donne developed from passionate lover to egrevious Dean of St Paul's, and wrote poetry throughout his life. His intense imagery and tightly-structured verse are conducive to musical settings, as both his contemporaries and later composers including Britten realised. Few of these settings are sung at all frequently and it is a real pleasure to hear these settings by Corkine, Ferrabosco, Hilton, Johnson, Wilson, Lawes and others. Equally delightful is the way in which Paul Hillier slips between singing and speaking successive poems: this, together with the intimacy of the genre and the delicacy of the performance, creates a vivid and convincing sense of the character of a 17th-century evening's entertainment. Nigel North accompanies impeccably, shaping his phrases to match

both music and words, and improvising as a background to some of the spoken verses. Both artists have the gift of extremely clear articulation within a satisfying structure, which is just what is needed to convey every nuance of this subtle poetry. The second half of the recording is from Henry Lawes's *Select Ayres & Dialogues* (1652/69). The poetry and the tone is much lighter – rosebuds and shepherdesses do not feature much in Donne's verse – with strophic continuo songs more typical than through-composed accompaniments capable of standing alone without the vocal line. Nonetheless, they are charming songs, with their own style of drama. *Selene Mills*

LATE BAROQUE

Bach Arias & cantatas Gérard Lesne A, Il seminario musicale 59' 12" Naïve E 8873

J. Christoph Bach *Ach daß ich Wassers gnuß hätte*, *Wie bist du denn*; J. Michael Bach *Ach wie sehnlich*, *Auf laßt uns den Herren loben*, *Es ist ein großer Gewinn*; JSB/Hoffmann BWV53, JSB BWV 54

Robin Blaze, Michael Chance and Andreas Scholl have all recently recorded albums of sacred concertos from the generation before Bach. Gérard Lesne's CD covers much the same repertory, but his darkly plaintive voice is particularly suited to the laments and death-songs so common in this period. His focus is on plaints by members of the Bach family, including strophic arias by J. M. Bach and Johann Sebastian's Cantata 54. There is also *Schlage doch*, once known as BWV 53 but now attributed to Melchior Hoffmann and so, like other pieces evicted from the Bach canon, rarely heard these days; it includes handbells for a literal portrayal of tolling funeral bells. The twin highlights of the disc, however, are the two J. Christoph Bach *Lamenti*. Both are accompanied by viols and a solo violin, allowing rich harmonies over which the violin soars as if a spirit released from earthly life. *Wie bist du denn* in particular is an incredible piece, with a third movement probing the deepest mortal despair. The melodiousness, close word-setting and inventive scoring make this comparable with J. S. Bach's *Actus Tragicus*. Throughout, Lesne sings with great feeling, characterising each word with subtle vibrato and *mese di voce*; his vocal style is refreshingly different from the Oxbridge manner prevalent in many Bach recordings. Such moving performances are irresistible; I am drawn in further every time I listen to this CD. *Stephen Rose*

Bach Sonatas for Violin & Harpsichord (BWV 1014-19) Giuliano Carmignola, Andrea Marcon 93' 54" (2 CDs) Sony S2K 89469

This two CD set has just the six sonatas for violin and obbligato harpsichord, without the additional sonatas with continuo that have augmented other recent sets. Carmignola will be familiar to readers after my very favourable reviews of his Vivaldi releases. Marcon is a prolific

keyboard player and conductor. This CD represents for me the best Bach playing I've ever heard by Italians. Carmignola is (obviously) more than the technical master of the pieces and is not shy in adding very occasional ornaments, or even bridging improvisations at repeat marks, but there is nothing of the extravagances (as I see them) of other Italian performers in this repertoire. *BC*

Bach Complete Violin Sonatas 2. Musica Alta Ripa 65' 11" Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 309 1074-2 BWV 1017-19, 1023, 1026

This second volume of MDG's complete Violin Sonatas brings the second three of the six with obbligato keyboard and two extras, the G minor fugue (BWV 1026) and the possibly dubious E minor sonata (BWV 1023, accompanied by cello, theorbo and organ), both played by Ursula Bundies with typically meticulous playing. Her Musica Alta Ripa colleague, Anne Röhrig, is equally admirable, perhaps lacking a little of Bundies's bite; but there is a quiet serenity about her playing, and she gets bonus points for playing the second slow movement of the C minor sonata as written. I will return regularly to this CD. *BC*

Bach The Complete Flute Sonatas Lisa Beznosiuk fl, Paul Nicholson hpscd, Richard Tunnicliffe vlc, Elizabeth Kenny archlute Rachel Brown flute II 121' 42" (2 CDs in box) Hyperion CDA67264/5 BWV 1013, 1020, 1030-5, 1039

Lisa Beznosiuk's playing has adorned specialist baroque music now for well over 20 years since I first began to notice her live in Bach Suites and on disc in Eliot Gardiner's Handel *Water Music* around 1982. These are among the best 'complete' attempts to record the whole of the surviving genuine Bach for the flute besides a fair quantity of the much more dubious material responsibly omitted from NBA VI/9, but which is also probably mostly derived from the Bach family circle around 1730. The playing of the accompanying ensemble shares the distinction of the flautist. Indeed, for anybody seeking examples concerning ways to play in and with Bach, I cannot easily think of any CD yet issued to surpass this. Congratulations are well deserved all round. *Stephen Daw*

Bach Suite & Concertos Arion, Jaap ter Linden dir 78' 10" early-music.com EMCCD-7753 BWV 1044, 1050, 1061, 1066

This longish though conventional up-to-date Bach recital has a great deal to commend it. The programme is rather ingenious, setting the fifth Brandenburg beside its similarly-scored double concerto brother, often rather inaccurately referred to as 'the triple'. The source material of this later ensemble concerto was at least partly composed well before the Brandenburg Concerto, surely written at Köthen in 1720 for performance using Prince Leopold's new Mietke harpsichord

collected that year from Berlin. In addition, the disc features both the Ouverture-Suite in C [Suite 1] from around 1724 and the Concerto for two harpsichords, probably produced in the mid-1730s for performance by members of the Bach family with the Leipzig Collegium Musicum.

Although Jaap ter Linden is a highly competent conductor and guest colleague in Bach, somehow the sum total of this enterprising is less spirited and authoritative than we might have been led to expect. The talented individual players seem to have arrived at a collective impression of Bach that lacks sparkle. But these worthy, well-meant, performances of a good programme certainly merit serious attention from Bach specialists.

Stephen Daw

Bach Life and Works written and narrated by Jeremy Siepmann. 273' 45" Naxos 8.558-51-4 £ (4 CDs in box)

This is the first of Naxos's *Life and Works* series that we have received. This 'narrated biography with extensive musical examples' is intended for a more elementary level than will be relevant for most of our readers, but will be extremely useful for teachers, parents and those seeking presents for musical nephews and nieces. The script is extremely up-to-date, though sometimes suffers from accepting too readily Christoph Wolff's recent biography. The idea that the Capriccio was written for a departing student rather than literally for a brother, for instance, is plausible but not certain. I find it regrettable that the first piece of music (after the title music) is an excerpt from that piece played on the piano. As a general rule, the more trivial the music, the more it benefits from being played on the right instrument, and it is a anyway a pity that we are not introduced to Bach's own soundworld. This applies particularly to the organs. The booklet gives a list of the Naxos discs from which the music is taken, but does not name the instruments or give any idea whether they are like those which Bach played.

The spoken aspects (with Siepmann, whose broadcasting experience goes back to 1963, as narrator and John Shrapnel as Bach) are fine, and the music mostly sounds good and is apposite, with substantial movements rather than snippets. The 114-page booklet has a good introduction, brief biographies of other composers (though omitting the earlier members of the Bach family), a chronological table of Bach's life in association with contemporary art, culture and history, and an index of musical terms. Its text is in theory available at www.naxos.com/lifeandworks/bach/spokentext, but I haven't yet managed to get through to the Naxos site. The pages are already falling out: glossy paper and 'perfect' binding are a poor combination. I recommend Naxos's attention to the comment on the Mascagni disc at the end of this month's reviews. There is no genealogical table, an essential feature of any Bach book. It is also a pity that the magic letters BWV, which feature prominently, are nowhere

explained. I'm not sure how many people will want to sit at home and listen to 4½ hours of talk and examples: this seems to me to be long-car-journey material. But it is done well and can be recommended, despite the unhistoric recordings. *CB*

Handel *The Choice of Hercules*; Greene *Hearken unto me, ye holy children* Susan Gritton, Alice Coote, Robin Blaze, Charles Daniels, Peter Harvey *SmSAB*, Choir of... & The Kings Consort, Robert King 65' 32" Hyperion CDA67298

The thing that struck me first about this recording has nothing to do with the performance: why on earth would one want to couple Handel's *Choice of Hercules* [not, I hope it is unnecessary to add, any relation to the separate oratorio *Hercules*] with an anthem by Greene? I can see no earthly connection, and I would far rather have had more Handel, no matter how good the Greene may be. Robert King is a fine Handelian, in that he uses the best players and some of the more characterful singers around, and he has the good sense not to interfere too often, and to let the music speak for itself, with little or no what we'd term 'conducting'. The result here is a worthy representation of the score, with some very fine singing; but I would have liked something of the drama of the old Neville Mariner version. The Greene is a fine piece of English church music, with pretty airs and finely-constructed choruses. *Tara Hall*

Rameau *Suites from Dardanus & Hippolyte* L'arpa Festante, Michi Gaigg dir 68'55" Amati SRR 9206/1 (rec 1993)

Although there is no lack of Rameau suites available, this reissue from 1993 is welcome as a comparatively rare plundering of the exquisite instrumental music from *Hippolyte et Aricie* (all three versions). As so often in this repertoire, the orchestra really does sound as if it is enjoying itself and, as a listener, so did I. *David Hansell*

Zelenka *Lamentations* (ZWV 53) Michael Chance, John Mark Ainsley, Michael George ATB, Chandas Baroque Players 73' 01" Hyperion Helios, CDH55106 (rec 1990)

This re-issue doesn't need much more commendation from me than it got elsewhere when it was first released. Quite simply, it's the most consistently beautifully sung version of the work I know, with exemplary instrumental contributions (I especially enjoy Easter Eve with its recorders and cellos, and the wonderful violin/oboe/bassoon combination), and a natural pacing and sense of drama. If you don't already have it, make sure you don't miss it this time around. *BC*

Barocke Orgelmusik aus Frankreich Stefan Johannes Bleicher (Riepp Trinity organ, 1766, Ottobeuren) 59' 19" Arte Nova 74321 86895 2 Music by Balbastre, Corrette, Couperin, de Grigny, Marchand

The Trinity organ in the vast South-German counter-Reformation Abbey of Ottobeuren is one of the world's most important historic instruments. Although the organ-builder was originally a local, by the time he built this organ and its companion on the other side of the choir, the lucky chap had married the heiress to a Burgundian vineyard, and his mind and work had turned to things French. Although the Trinity organ is at heart a South German organ (at least as far as the flue-work is concerned), the mutations, mixtures, reeds and layout of divisions is classical French. And on this CD it is the pieces that feature the mutations and reeds that work best. The flue pieces, including Marchand's *Fond d'Orgue* and the *Plein Jeu* sound rather more Germanic than French. The programme offers a brief glimpse into the French classical organ school, from the sublime Nicolas de Grigny to the really rather silly Michel Corrette and the decidedly daft Claude Balbastre. Although the performer clearly understands the complex traditions of performance of this repertoire and applies it well, I am uncertain whether his heart is totally in the music of this period. French 18th-century music, in particular, needs more than applying the rules and playing the notes, not least the subtle freedom of expression and independence of thought that characterises *le bon gout*. But that said, this is by no means a bad recording, and is worth a listen, particularly if you haven't heard the magnificent organ. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

CLASSICAL

Boccherini *Stabat mater* (1781) Miwako Matsumoto S, Südwestdeutsches Kammerorchester, Vladislav Czarnecki cond 48' 44" Amati ami 8903/1 (rec 1989)

This recording is of the version for solo soprano with string orchestra. It is not really one that I can recommend, for although the playing is quite neat and the singer well presented in the acoustic, she simply has too wide a vibrato (at least for my taste) for the length of the piece – there's little of the variety in speed and texture that, say, Vivaldi achieves in his setting. *BC*

Dussek *Three Sinfonias* (E♭3, F4, G2) Helios 18, Marie-Louisa Oschatz 68' 53" Naxos 8.555878 £

Here is a further treat from Naxos: three attractive four-movement sinfonias by Mozart's Prague friend and host, Franz Xaver Dussek (1731-1799), for whose wife Mozart wrote fine vocal works. The useful booklet note suggests the sinfonias were written in the 1760s or '70s; for that period they are solid, worthwhile compositions, the one in E flat complete with a slow introduction. The performances by the period-instrument group Helios 18 (you can count the players in a little photograph) are alert, lively, and in the slow movements quite eloquent. This issue fills another gap on CD shelves devoted to Mozart's contemporaries: recommended, especially at a time when only a set of Six

Parthias (catalogued under the Czech spelling of the composer's name*) is otherwise available. *Peter Branscombe*

* Until we change computers, I haven't got the Czech characters to print it. *CB*

Freithoff *The Chamber Works* Norwegian Baroque Orchestra Soloists, Ketil Haugsand hpscd 76' 44" Simax PSC 1220

The chamber music of Johan Henrik Freithoff (1713-67) includes three trios, a violin sonata, a flute sonata, two nocturnos and a *sonata a tres*. Originating on the south coast of Norway (of German ancestors), he flourished after his move to Copenhagen in the early 1740s. Most of the music here is suitable for dinner party backgrounds, but occasionally (the opening movement of the G major trio, for example) it makes you sit up in your seat the rushing semi-quavers suddenly catching one's attention. I enjoyed listening to this several times. *BC*

Mozart Flute Quartets Claire Guimond (fl), Trio Sonnerie 55' 40" early-music.com EMCCD-7754

A very attractive recital of Mozart's four quartets for flute and string trio. Claire Guimond plays beautifully, with the warm support of Monica Huggett, Emilia Benjamin and Alison McGillivray evoking with confidence the rococo world, with touches of incipient Romantic sentiment. Tempos are well chosen, balance is ideal, and the recording, if a shade over-resonant, is otherwise suitably intimate. The booklet contains a good essay on the music, and information about the period instruments and the performers. This CD demands to be set alongside the finest existing recordings of these familiar works, and provides irrefutable evidence that Mozart actually rather liked the flute.

Peter Branscombe

Portugal *Lo Spazzacamino* Ilaria Torciani, Silvia Loranzi, Sergio Spina, Andrea Porta, Claudio Zancopè, Daniele Cusari SSTBBB, Orch. da Camera Milano Classica, Álvaro Cassuto 86' 32" (2 CDs) Dynamic CDS 385/1-2

Born in Lisbon in 1762, the composer of this opera was originally named Marcos Antonio da Assunçao. He adopted the rather obvious nom-de-plume Portogallo when, at the age of thirty, he moved to Naples, where he spent the next eight years as a successful composer of operas both comic and serious. *Lo Spazzacamino* (The Chimney-Sweeper) is a one act comedy dating from the composer's Neapolitan years in the 1790s and strongly reminiscent in its music of the bustling and melodious style of Domenico Cimarosa, the master in chief of theatrical confections of this sort. It is therefore appropriate that while the conductor of this performance is, like the composer, Portuguese, his singers and players are authentically Italian with a good feel for the vivid and light-footed

lyricism this type of opera requires. Among a generally more than adequate cast, I found only Ilaria Torciani's Rosina rather disappointing. On this recording at least, her voice sounds a trifle thin and her intonation occasionally dubious. Even if comic opera requires less sheer vocal brilliance and power, and even tonal precision, than is needed in an opera seria like *Semiramide*, I kept thinking how fortunate it was that I had first heard Yvonne Kenny – in vol. 1 of Opera Rara's magisterial anthology: *A Hundred Years of Italian Opera* (Orch 101) – and not Torciani in Portogallo's idiomatic writing for the soprano voice. Despite this reservation there is still much to enjoy in this recording of an opera worth savouring by devotees of Neapolitan opera buffa. But how much more welcome would be a revival of the many splendid serious scores composed by Portogallo and his contemporaries in the generation before the even more flamboyant brilliance of Rossini cast almost all their names and achievements into an oblivion as historically complete as it is musically undeserved. *David J. Levy*

Zumsteeg *Die Entführung; Des Pfarrers Tochter von Taubenhain* Bernd Weikl bar, Wolfgang Sawallisch pf. 46' 10"
Orfeo C 074 021 A (rec 1982)

Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg's name occurs more often in the context of Schubert's supposed models than on behalf of his own music. Although the recording is elderly, and Bernd Weikl's singing comes at times close to parody, with exaggerated emphases and clumsy ornaments, these two ballads should find a warm welcome among lovers of early Romantic song, especially as the current Classical Catalogue contains no music at all by Zumsteeg. The songs date from 1794 and 1792 respectively. The tales are typical of the poet Bürger's predilection for Gothic fantasy. There are useful notes and texts in three languages, but just two songs is short measure for a CD. Sawallisch characterizes the demanding piano parts with skill, and supports the singer up to the hilt. Not for solitary listening on a stormy winter night!

Peter Branscombe

Du clavecin au pianoforte. vol. 1. Alfred Gross hpscd, fp 70' 45"
Amati SRR 8902/1 (rec 1988)
Music by Balbastre, Duphly, Eckard, Edelmann, Forqueray

There is some rare and interesting music on this 1988 recording which enterprisefully explores the transition from one keyboard style to another. If I enjoyed the piano sonatas more, it is because I have heard some outstanding harpsichord playing recently rather than from any positive faults here. Excellent recording of both instruments and a helpful booklet are also reasons for a warm recommendation.

David Hansell

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

19th CENTURY

Beethoven in context Ella Sevkaya fp 61' 31
Quilisma QUIL303
Beethoven op. 13, Dussek op. 13/2; Ries op. 58/5-7

This is one of the best fortepiano records I have heard for a long time. The instrument (a Johann Schantz of c. 1800) is superb, and the playing no less so. Sevkaya plays the Beethoven with both passion and wit, eliciting an astonishing variety of dynamics and tone-colours from the fortepiano. Her use of the knee-levers is most convincing, and Beethoven's careful articulation markings, for example in the triplet semiquavers at the recapitulation in the second movement, are always clearly audible (on the modern piano their existence is often more in the imagination than in the ear). The moderator is used quite a lot, but the effect of its sudden removal in bar 58 of the Rondo makes the fortissimo truly shocking. My only small quibble (if it isn't churlish to mention it) is that the arpeggiated first chord doesn't seem quite compatible with the *fp* marking. Thurston Dart once said that this chord should sound as if a hammer had been dropped on the instrument! Every string or wind player knows that *fp* is an instruction to start a note forte and drop down quickly to piano, but how is a poor keyboard player to simulate such an effect? I wonder if *fp* should be regarded as the equivalent of Mozart's notation in which a minim chord includes some black note-heads, presumably as a signal to release those notes quickly but hold the others?

The Ries 'trifles' are very entertaining, full of delightfully over-the-top operatic (and pianistic) gestures – though perhaps No. 5 goes on a bit too long. As recital pieces, the only snag is that they would keep the audience in fits of unseemly laughter. They were presumably written with the English grand in mind, but Sevkaya does a marvellous job of simulating its effects by adroit use of the knee-levers and by avoiding the characteristically sharp staccato possible with Viennese dampers. She makes a persuasive case for Dussek's substantial, dramatic sonata in the grand manner. Personally, I feel that Dussek is an unjustly neglected composer, who should arguably be rated higher than the undoubtedly worthy but sometimes desperately dull Clementi.

Strongly recommended: this recording should be required listening for all modern pianists, to show them what they are missing!

Richard Maunder

We received a recording of Mascagni's opera *Parisina* that I must have requested by mistake thinking it was by his great-great-grandfather. I'd send back if I could remember where it came from: the label seems to be Actes Sud, the number is OMA (or AT) 34103. What is interesting is its format: a bound book of CD booklet dimensions – I suppose about 100 pages, but they aren't numbered – with the three discs in pockets at the ends. This seems infinitely more satisfactory than a fat booklet whose pages fall out and a fragile plastic box. Harmonia Mundi have used the method for some of their book + CD didactic output. It strikes me as an enormous improvement on the usual plastic box.

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LETTERS

Dear Clifford,

In his interesting review of The King's Noyse's recording of Dowland's *Lachrimae*, Ian Harwood takes issue with my ideas in two main areas. I don't want to return to the question of transposition and its implications for the lute part, since I think I've said everything I wanted to say on the subject in my Cambridge UP book on *Lachrimae*, and we just don't know how a violin consort working with Dowland would have solved the problem of the painfully low tessitura of the *Lachrimae* pavans. However, upward transposition would have been the obvious solution at the time (it is presumably why several versions of 'Lachrimae Antiquae' are in D minor rather than A minor), and the composer surely would have had no problem producing extempore lute parts at the higher pitch, even if we have problems with the idea of jettisoning his tablature parts.

However, I would like to respond to Ian's idea that Dowland wrote the seven *Lachrimae* pavans (actually six, because the five-part A minor setting of 'Lachrimae Antiquae' was almost certainly in existence some years before 1604) in Denmark in the spring of 1603 rather than in England in the winter of 1603-4, as I suggested in my book. Ian thinks that Dowland wrote the cycle as a memorial to Queen Elizabeth more or less immediately after the news of her death reached Denmark, but if so it is strange that *Lachrimae* was dedicated to the new queen, Anne, rather than to the memory of the old one, and that there is no mention of Elizabeth in the prefatory material. By trying to equate *Lachrimae* with the psalms Dowland wrote in memory of Henry Noel in 1597, or the two memorial collections by Coprario, he rather makes the point for me: the psalms are specifically entitled 'Lamentatio Henrici Noel' while the Coprario collections are said on the title-pages to be 'For the death of the Right Honorable the Earle of Devonshire' and 'Bewailing the untimely death of Prince Henry'. It is true, as Ian says, that *Lachrimae* 'was surely no way to secure a post in the new royal household', partly because the collection was unsuited to Anne's temperament and situation, and partly because it is unlikely that she could have been seen to poach a musician from her brother, Christian IV of Denmark – a point he does not make. But that does not mean that Dowland did not dedicate it to Anne with that intention. On several other occasions, such as his 1595 letter to Cecil or the preface to *A Pilgrimes Solace* (1612), he showed a talent for being his own worst enemy, and his friend Henry Peacham ruefully observed in 1622 that throughout his career he had 'slipt many opportunities in advancing his fortune'. One might also observe that he may have thought he stood more of a chance of preferment with the new regime than with the old; after all he had been repeatedly passed over during Elizabeth's reign, and had no particular reason to feel grateful to her or devoted to her memory.

However, the main reason why I think that Dowland wrote the other six *Lachrimae* pavans in London rather than Denmark is his statement in the dedication to Queen Anne that the collection 'was begun where you were borne, and ended where you raigne', which I take to mean that some of the pieces were written in Denmark, where Anne had been born, while the rest were written in London, where she was now queen. As I pointed out in my book, the collection divides in two groups in several respects. It surely is not a coincidence that the pieces with generally high tessituras include most of the ones that are thought to have been written earlier as songs or lute solos, such as 'The Earle of Essex Galiard', 'Capitaine Digorie Piper his Galiard' and 'M. Henry Noel his Galiard', or those with Danish connections such as 'The King of Denmarks Galiard' or 'M. Thomas Collier his Galiard' with its continental two-soprano scoring. If I am right that these pieces were arranged for a violin consort at the Danish court, then it makes it more likely that the other group, low-tessitura and mostly without any earlier concordances, was the one written in England. And if some of the pieces were written in London, as Dowland clearly implies, then it can only really have been in the winter of 1603-4, for he had been out of England continuously since 1598, with the exception of a visit in the winter of 1601-2 to purchase instruments and recruit musicians for the Danish court. Of course, it is just conceivable that he wrote the rest of the *Lachrimae* pavans during that visit rather than the one in 1603-4, but if that were ever proved, then it would invalidate Ian's theory just as much as mine!

Peter Holman

Dear Clifford,

Chris Hedge's letter (May 2002) astonished me. He points out a policy which is not only ridiculous, but impossible to carry out with consistency. Many historic harpsichords which were restored to playing order in the '60s and '70s and used for recordings (for example, the Sodi in Exeter Museum) are now being 'conserved' in accordance with the politically correct museum practice now current, and returned to silent, hands-off artefacts. In this context, what is supposed to happen within the continuo section of such an orchestra? Again, I know of few if any truly usable original theorbos or chamber organs, even within collections. Assuming that it is acceptable to use modern reproductions for some parts of the band, has no-one pointed out this anomaly to the management of the orchestra in question?

Colin Booth

Dear Clifford,

I sympathise strongly with Chris Hedge in his outcry against excessive devotion to old instruments in the violin world. It is, of course, a phenomenon almost exclusive to the violin family, because of the peculiar adaptability and

resilience of old violins, 300-year-old wind instruments or keyboards instruments (or indeed viols) in playable condition or restorable thereto are so rare and fragile as to be largely unsuitable for the rigours of modern concert life. The relatively vast numbers of surviving 18th century violin-family instruments and the grotesque distortion of values (monetary and musical) caused by the intense interest of collectors and investors in a small part of that number do sometimes blind us to the very high quality of craftsmanship produced by some of today's makers.

The particular point in Chris Hedge's letter which is worth emphasising concerns the use of old instruments in supposedly historically-informed performances of (especially) 17th-century music. It is inconceivable that the explosion in quality and quantity of violins made in northern Italy and Tyrol which happened in the 17th century could have taken place without the fullest collaboration between makers and players – many of whom were also the composers whose music was stretching the demands on instruments. Thus Biber's relationship with Jakob Stainer was surely stimulating and beneficial to both of them, and must have been typical of many such. Biber, and many of his contemporaries, must clearly have given many performances on instruments which were very new indeed.

However, there are a couple of points. One is that there are a number of surviving even earlier instruments which have been successively modernised over the intervening centuries which point to an interest in 'old' instruments which must have already existed in the 17th century. Admittedly, the oldest instrument Biber or Corelli could conceivably have encountered could hardly have been much over 100 years old; but that already raises interesting questions about sound development in ageing instruments. I am fortunate to have the use of a good 18th-century Italian violin. It sounds quite different from the new instruments which I otherwise use (particularly for 17th-century music) and has qualities which they do not (yet?) have. When it acquired these qualities no-one can say. However, it is highly likely that a violinist in the late-18th century playing on a Jakob Stainer or Nicola Amati instrument would have encountered many of these ageing qualities.

Another point is the question of appearance and taste. We don't have enough mint-condition 17th- and 18th-century instruments of impeccable pedigree to be able to know for sure how they looked when brand new. It seems likely, however, that makers then as now responded to the tastes of their customers, and surviving instruments in good condition suggest that tastes varied then as now. It could well be that the very bright orange varnish seen on some of today's violins is historically accurate, and that some violinists of earlier times loved it. That does not mean that we must. Some, at least, of the more extreme silliness about only accepting genuinely old instruments would be reduced if some of the more extreme varnish colours used today were modified to accommodate quieter tastes. Incidentally, one of my new violins has been most artfully

'antiqued', and I get much harmless pleasure from the puzzled reactions of supposedly knowledgeable violin buffs until they look at the label inside.

A further point which I think needs making is that we should always be wary of exaggerated claims of historical 'truth'. I agree with Chris Hedge's ridicule of the notion that Monteverdi's fiddle parts should only be played on an early Amati violin. I am concerned that claims similar in nature are made for something called a 'renaissance' violin which seem to me to be just as spurious. We have nothing like an adequate sample of reliable sources for late-16th or early-17th century set-ups (bridges, bass-bars, soundposts etc) to be able to assert general and characteristic differences between mid-17th century instruments and their predecessors. Even if we did, the use of the word 'renaissance' to describe them would remain an unfortunate choice in art-historical terms; and the assertion which is to be heard that such instruments are uniquely suitable for mid to late 17th century music seems to me to have more to do with modern marketing than with historical probability. Whatever Nicola Amati and Jakob Stainer made, it was not 'renaissance' violins.

In fact it is, of course, the combination of the player and the instrument which decides the sound. In the field of 'renaissance' string ensembles, we have none which bring together appropriate instruments with all the known appropriate playing techniques – violin held at the breast, bow held thumb-under-hair etc. Even if they did, they would not have done this to the exclusion of all other repertoires and techniques from the beginning of their musical lives – and rightly so. We cannot deny who we are, and when we are. We should have the courage to say that we play how we like, on what we like. That informing ourselves as widely and deeply as possible about the music which we want to play is vital to interpretative integrity is a given for any repertoire; but in the end we are responsible for what comes out. I'm afraid that does imply that the ensembles who only accept genuinely old instruments have an absolute right to do that, even if they sound worse for it!

John Holloway

Dear Clifford,

Since the player is more important than the fiddle, may we assume that the period orchestra to which Chris Hedge referred last month is advertising in *The Celestial Musicians Weekly* (and its infernal companion) for players contemporary with the contents of their programmes, in good working order, bringing their fiddles of their own time and condition with them?

John Catch

Dear Clifford,

The end of the semester and reading back numbers of *EMR* on a long flight to the DeutscherChorWettbewerb with correspondence about *Spem in alium* performances past and

present, encourages me to write a few lines about the value of this wondrous work as a teaching tool.

When I began organising the choral program at the University of Kansas (KU), Lawrence, my first teaching position after my twentyfive King's Singer years, I soon became aware of the lamentable level of sight reading among all but the most outstanding singers, in spite of any number of earnest solfège classes taught by the theory department. I thought of my chorister days at Christ Church, Oxford, where a wrong note or rhythm from an 8 year old boy resulted in a dig in the ribs from your 10 year old neighbour, and wondered if the only remedy might be peer pressure and the removal of all well-intended educational props. I decided to teach *Spem in alium* to forty of my best choir members with a firm commitment to a public performance. After much initial discomfort, the challenge was gradually taken up and, following some fairly extended struggles – one by one and in various small groups – the students survived a couple of performances in the miserably dry acoustic of the University concert hall. Emboldened, we then went over to the rather fine Cathedral in nearby Topeka, the State capital, to record a run through in a more friendly ambience. This recording was subsequently included on our *Lawrence, City of Choirs* CD to which you made a kind reference in an *EMR* that year, and even now, with a number of commercial recordings by Britain's finest in my collection, ours really doesn't sound half bad!

Two years later I arranged a tour of southern England based on Marlborough, Wiltshire, through Dr Nick Maurice, a friend from Cambridge days, as a fund raiser for his charity, the Brandt Group, which had set up a link between Marlborough and the town of Gunjur in the Gambia. Nick's one request in return for all his work was that we should include *Spem in alium* in our program! This meant of course that I had to teach it again to an entire new generation of singers, but by now it was a labour of love and, more to the point, the standard of reading had increased many fold.

The performances the KU Chamber Choir gave of the Forty Part Motet that spring under the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, in Magdalen College Chapel, Oxford, St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and a number of other ideal locations, will remain some of the most moving experiences of my life. The sense of achievement those students experienced in negotiating their independent entries, of weaving glorious contrapuntal lines around each other, of savouring each of the dissonances and those extraordinary tutti moments, left an enormous impression on those singers from the American Mid-west, who enjoy none of the privileges of us ex-choristers, trained so effectively in the mysteries of reading complex counterpoint from a tender age.

Our last engagement of the tour was to sing at a special Eucharist for the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral for which the Tallis was deemed inappropriate. Not to be outdone, Nick persuaded us to sing it one more time – after

a rather liquid lunch, with him sitting on the table in the middle of our circle! We made up for our spirited though not very accurate performance by presenting him with a copy of that elegant Oxford score, signed by each of my students on their own voice parts – with additional annotations such as 'this is where I missed my entry in Edington Church', or 'here's my favourite line', or 'thanks, Dr Nick, for the chance to sing this wonderful piece in Dorchester Abbey', or even 'come visit Kansas soon!' Somewhat to the bewilderment of his patients, Nick now has this score on permanent display on a music stand in his Marlborough surgery.

As always, thanks for all the enjoyment that *EMR* brings to summer vacations.

Simon Carrington

Dear Clifford,

May I ask you a question? Is there a collection of maps of old England where I can find all the places mentioned in the books about composers of English consort music; or better, is there a geographical book with descriptions, pictures and maps with a historical aspect? It is interesting to read again and again the names of these places, of houses in a certain area with a certain family, but not satisfying when you can't participate in the ideas and even feelings that an informed English reader has.

Michael Steinkühler

We make a habit of buying out-of-date guidebooks from around the world, which are sold off cheaply in bookshops and often (at least here) by libraries. It was thus, for instance, that I could look up *Kezmarok & Zips* for the review on p. 4. Luckily, English road-names have rarely been changed to accord with changing political fashions (when I visited Moscow in 1960, all the maps had the official communist names, but since they had never caught on, the street signs bore pre-Revolutionary names.) Most British places can be located by current maps. The main difficulty is when town-centres have been destroyed, occasionally by bombs, but more often by developers. Perhaps readers can suggest the best web sites for street maps and also other sources of information. CB

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ANNUAL BYRD NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

Until 1997, when John Harley told us otherwise, it was thought that Byrd was born in 1542 or 1543. Many events took place in 1992 and 1993 to celebrate his '450th' anniversary. One such was the concert devoted to his music given in Edinburgh and repeated twice in Glasgow during 1992 by the late lamented Scottish Early Music Consort. In the course of the recital, their violists played Warwick Edwards's reconstruction of the third fantasia a4 (now published by King's Music) and verses 1-3 and 8 of the first *Te lucis* set. In 1993 Fretwork made their famous recording of all of Byrd's consort music that survives complete. Thanks to a quirk of history, this includes the second verse of the second *Te lucis* set. The remaining four verses of *Te lucis* I and the remaining three verses of *Te lucis* II, plus a setting of *Salvator Mundi* in two verses, each in four parts, all stayed unrecorded and, to my knowledge, unperformed. As I observe below in *Miscellany*, last year University Music in the University of Aberdeen inaugurated its Teatime Recitals. This initiative has proved successful in giving soloists and ensembles within the University an opportunity to perform one or two items within a varied programme before a good audience. One such ensemble is the recorder consort *Cantores ad Portam*, directed by David J. Smith. The recital on 1 May 2002 was of the greatest significance for Byrd's music, because as part of their fine and enjoyable contribution, *Cantores ad Portam* played verses 4-7 of *Te lucis* I, plus all of *Salvator Mundi* and *Te lucis* II. Although early pieces, each of the ten verses revealed at least one unique moment that marked it as the work of a composer far beyond the average. Yet again: made in Scotland!

NEW WRITING

329. Wesley, Samuel. [Proposal to publish, by subscription, SW's transcriptions of antiphons by William Byrd in the Fitzwilliam collection, Cambridge.] 1826.

No copies are known to survive: see Kassler, Michael and Olleson, Philip: *Samuel Wesley (1766-1837): a source book*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001) p.705. (1826Wp)

330. Darton, Ruth. ' "A father of musick": an exhibition on William Byrd.' *FULLView* 12 (1994): 4-5. Report on 227/1993Df. (1994Df)

331. Ashbee, Andrew *et al*, comps: *The Viola da Gamba Society index of manuscripts containing consort music*. Vol. 1. Aldershot: Ashgate 2001.
Many entries under Byrd in index, p.397.

332. Dirksen, Pieter. 'Byrd and Sweelinck: some cursory notes'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 7 (2001): 11-20.
Far-from-cursory consideration of evidence for links between the two composers. Suggests that an anonymous Prelude (*Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* no.117) once ascribed to Sweelinck may be by Byrd. Discusses and transcribes the version of the Petre (Tenth) pavan and galliard from the Düben Tablature Book, 'the only source with a documented connection with the Sweelinck school'. (2001Db)

333. James, Peter: 'The significance of Byrd's verse compositions: a reappraisal'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 7 (2001): 7-10.
Sets Second Service and church anthems in context of origins and development of verse idiom. (2001Js)

334. Keller, Arne. 'Some observations on R134 of the Herlufsholm Collection, with proposed identifications of owners and compilers: a new source for Byrd's *In resurrectione*'. *Annual Byrd newsletter* 7 (2001): 10-11.
Draws attention to Danish MS containing the tenor part, reproduced in facsimile in *Early music review* 71 (2001): 23. (2001Ks)

335. Mitchell, Nicholas. 'Pitch in viols and harpsichords in the Renaissance'. *Galpin Society journal* 54 (2001): 97-115.
Penultimate section 'Instrumental transcriptions of works by Byrd', pp.112-13.

336. Turbet, Richard. 'Recommended recordings of music by Byrd'. *International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres United Kingdom Branch newsletter* 42 (2002): 10-11. (2002Tr)

ADDENDA TO WILLIAM BYRD: A GUIDE TO RESEARCH

T 287: add MB LXXIV 24 no.8
T 314: add MB LXXIV 114 no. 28
p.10: add [MB] LXXIV. Watson, Thomas. *Italian madrigals englished* (1590), edited by Albert Chatterley. 1999.

All unsigned contributions are by Richard Turbett

CHECKLIST

The following numbers, usually provided in parentheses and continuing the sequence established in chapter II of my *William Byrd: a guide to research*, were omitted from the 'New writing' section of *Newsletter 7*, 2001.

295:	1999BOe	311:	2000Hb	319:	2000Tbyr
303:	1998Mb	312:	2000Hw	320:	2000Tj
304:	1924Fn	313:	2000HOh	321:	2001Ci
305:	1943Ww	314:	2000Km	322:	2001Kb
307:	1997Su	315:	2000Pb	326:	2000Pf
308:	1998HOr	316:	2000Rb	327:	2001Bb
309:	1999Bb	317:	2000Tby	328:	2001Sb
310:	1999SMf	318:	2000Tb		

THE BYRD EDITION 7

Cantiones Sacrae 1589 & Propers for Lady Mass from Christmas to the Purification The Cardinall's Music, Andrew Carwood & David Skinner ASV CD GAU224

These wonderful recordings continue to impress and delight in equal measure. With the seventh of the series we are on relatively unknown territory, and the listener may do well to begin with tracks 5-10, the Lady Mass Propers from the first book of *Gradualia*, whose material is somewhat more approachable. Byrd's all-purpose *Gloria Patri*, the same as in *Rorate caeli*, is reassuringly familiar, and there are the usual Byrd-isms in the word-setting to delight, move or enthrall. With the eight sacred songs from the 1589 *Cantiones* we enter a dark and dangerous world, described in disturbing and graphic detail in David Skinner's booklet notes. Vocal lines twist and turn about in semitones, and the scoring is low-pitched, dense and sombre, as befits the gloomy and anguished texts.

I had some fairly serious reservations about the performances when I reviewed the first of these discs, but I found this one much more satisfying. There is still a tendency for the singers always to be on the forward edge of the pulse, as though being slightly hustled along, but the speeds are generally more comfortable these days, and the singing is expressive, even impassioned at times. I could wish still for a rather more mellow tone-quality in the singing; there is a rather thin, pinched sound in the upper voices at times, which occasionally grates on the ear. These are minor quibbles, however, when set against the powerful impact of the performance as a whole. An essential addition to your collection.

Timothy Storey

OTHER SIGNIFICANT NEW RECORDINGS

The leader of the Jaye-Consort Berlin, Tilman Muthesius, has sent me a review copy of their disc *Farewell all ioyes* which contains exciting material by Byrd. Most importantly it includes premiere recordings of the songs *Oh Lord bow down* and *The day delayed*. (The latter is regarded by

Philip Brett in volume 15 of *The Byrd edition* as a dubious attribution.) Furthermore it includes the first recording on CD of the incomplete second fantasia a4. The remaining two items by Byrd receive interesting treatment. The duet *Delight is dead* is performed as a solo song, and during the instrumental opening to *Ye sacred muses* the soprano beats funereally upon a drum before she begins to sing. The rest of the disc contains songs and consorts by Dowland, Wilbye, Morley, Holborne, Robert Johnson, Bennet, Simpson, Hume, Gibbons, Chetwode and Pilkington. The singer is the Argentinian soprano Ines Villanueva, and the Jaye-Consort Berlin consists of four violists whose instruments are made after those of the great London maker Henry Jaye. The disc is a recording of a recital at the Kapelle Klein-Glienicker on 7 February 2001. It can be obtained by sending 22 Euros to Tilman Muthesius, Tuchmacherstrasse 44, D-14482 Potsdam, Germany. Herr Muthesius tells me they obtained the Byrd songs 'which are so great for singer and viols!' from one Herr Schasiepen, an enthusiast who visited Great Britain in the sixties to find viol music and copied masses of music from the originals in the libraries here. (As a music librarian with a penchant for Byrd this gladdens my heart.)

13 Motets from *Cantiones sacrae* sung by the Sarum Consort on the ASV label (CD QS 6211) contains a selection from all three books, including the first recording of *Recordare Domine* from book II.

Keyboard music by William Byrd played by Davitt Moroney (Hyperion CDA66558) is the selection from the complete recording (CDA66551-7) listed on page 4 of *Newsletter 7*, 2001.

All three discs of CRD's selections from Byrd's *Cantiones sacrae* of 1575, 1589 and 1591 have been reissued as a boxed set (CRD 5003), sung by the Choir of New College, Oxford.

One of Oxford University's fine mixed choirs, that of The Queen's College, sings four of the Easter propers (excluding *Victimae paschali*) and the ecclesiastical version (with organ) of *Christ rising* on a disc of that title (Guild GMCD 7222) conducted by Owen Rees, himself a Byrd scholar of distinction.

It is good to welcome the reappearance of the unique recording of *Is love a boy* sung by The King's Singers (EMI CDC 7 49265 2). Unfortunately the booklet retains the misinformation from the 1982 notes that this is Byrd's arrangement of one of his consort songs. There are few of these among the 1589 Songs and this piece in four parts is not one of them. Last among the 35 madrigals on 'All at once well met' is the version in six parts of *This sweet and merry month*.

There are three new versions of consort songs on a disc with the cumbersome title *Allegri: Miserere: Renaissance polyphony and consort songs* by Pro Cantione Antiqua on the Regis label (RRC 1065). None of the songs are familiar but all are on other discs. Accompanied by the English Consort

of Viols, the countertenors James Bowman and Paul Esswood sing the duet *Delight is dead*; James Bowman sings *How vain the toils* and the tenor James Griffett sings *O Lord, how long wilt thou forget?*

Interlude: three slices of sheer fun. On *Stokowski's Symphonic Baroque* BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Matthias Bamert includes his arrangements of the Salisbury pavan and the Gigg (Chandos CHAN 9930). The soundtrack of the film *Elizabeth* contains an hallucinatory arrangement of the first part of *Domine secundum actum* (London 460 796-2). And on Dutton CDSJB1008, Sir John Barbirolli conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra in a performance of *An Elizabethan Suite* which includes his arrangement of the Salisbury pavan.

In Newsletter 5, 1999 (p.3) I drew attention to an 'intriguing novelty': pianist Joanna MacGregor's recording of the first nine variations from *Hugh Aston's ground*. Now she has recorded the whole piece on her most recent album *Play* (SoundCircus SC007).

Volume 8 of the ASV Byrd Edition, including the rest of book 1 of the *Cantiones*, 1589, will be released before Christmas. Volume 9 is scheduled for recording in September and will feature the *Gradualia* for Corpus Christi. Volume 10 will be the first of three covering book 2 of the *Cantiones*, 1591, and will include the reconstruction of the unpublished *Domine exaudi* with the identically titled and similarly texted motet published in 1591.

During 2001 the NMC label, which is run by Colin Matthews, a contributor to the Newsletter, released a disc entitled *Themes & variations*. It consists of three composite sets of variations on traditional tunes, by a total of nineteen British composers, played by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Jac van Steen. The best-known and earliest set is the Variations on an Elizabethan theme, Sellenger's round, for string orchestra. It begins with Imogen Holst's transcription of Byrd's first variation, to be played twice over. None of the succeeding settings invoke him, nor does Tippett in his *Divertimento on Sellenger's Round* which is derived from his contribution here. This work is scheduled for performance at the 2002 Proms.

A fuller, though not complete, arrangement of *Sellenger's Round* forms the fifth and final movement of Granville Bantock's *Old English Suite* played by the Czechoslovak State Philharmonic (Kosice) conducted by Adrian Leaper on Naxos 8.223274.

MISCELLANY

In 'Sports Daily' from *The Times* of 23 June 2001, under the headline 'Aussie rules (even if Shakespeare's better than Neighbours)' by Simon Barnes:

The traditional defence against Australian sporting triumphalism is the invocation of the Cultural Cringe. Who is the Australian

Shakespeare? Must be the joker who writes Neighbours. Is Rolf Harris's *Sun Arise* the nearest Australia can get to *Peter Grimes* and William Byrd's *Mass for Five Voices*?

Readers who have browsed through the Byrd volumes of the British Library's Catalogue of printed music will have espied a reference under *The battle to Bird-Boogie* by Franzpeter Goebels (Kassel: Barenreiter, 1974). The first part is 'The flute and the drum' followed by a Boogie and Coda 'based on free improvisations by the editor (after V. Nelhybel)'. For information about Vaclav Nelhybel see *Grove*.

Gerald Finzi founded the Newbury String Players in 1941, and its collection of sets of 700 parts is now in Reading University Library. A catalogue was compiled in 1959. This was rewritten forty years later, and is now on the world wide web. Byrd is represented by his Browning (*The leaves be green*) in Terry's edition, two versions of the 'Cradle song', i.e. *My little sweet darling*, now regarded as spurious, and a 'Carol for Christmas day', in fact *An earthly tree*. A 'Fantasia for strings' was regrettably 'noted as missing from the Collection at the time it was deposited at Reading' in 1981. Nevertheless it is gratifying that this amateur body was drawn to some of Byrd's music during the lull between Fellowes and the subsequent professional musicologists, a period when his music involving the instrumental consort was still relatively inaccessible.

In the notes to his recording of music from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, Christopher Hogwood suggested that some of the popular tunes set by William Byrd might have had a special meaning for Byrd's fellow-Catholics, since it is conceivable that words of a specifically Catholic significance were sometimes sung to them. In support of this idea he cited the Scottish publication *Ane Compendius Buik of Godly and Spirituall Sangis*, generally known as *Gude and Godlie Ballatis*. The first known edition of this collection appeared in 1567, although it is thought there may have been earlier editions and some of the contents may have been circulated in the form of broadsheets. *Gude and Godlie* is markedly Lutheran in character, but its adaptation of popular songs is clear in the case of verses beginning 'Johne, cum kis me now' and 'With huntis up'. These may indeed represent a more general practice of adaptation, but so far no verses of a particularly Catholic import have been located. Can anyone suggest where they might be found?

It is always gratifying to discover how widely Byrd's music was performed during the century between the beginning of his revival and the first publication in his complete edition, 1840-1937. Recently I purchased a programme for one of 'Mr Sam Vickers Popular Concerts season 1925-26' at the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool. In part 2, item 6(c) was 'Hey ho to the greenwood (canon)' by 'William Byrd (1580)' sung by John Goss and The Cathedral Male Voice Quartet. (Why 1580?) This item is now regarded as spurious, but later in part 2, item 8, The Cathedral Male Voice Quartet sang 'Wounded I am (madrigal)' again by 'William

Byrd (1580)'. It would be interesting to know whether they sang the entire song, or just the first part as it was later published in *Invitation to madrigals for SATB* edited by Thurston Dart (London: Stainer & Bell, 1962, no.167, p.48). Samuel Vickers, who was born in 1864, was well known locally as a concert promoter, besides owning S. Vickers, piano showrooms. Despite stating the present season was his last, he continued until just before his death in 1930. The Cathedral Male Voice Quartet consisted of A. Whitehead, S Taylor Harris, A. Pilgrim and A.K. Maclean. Presumably the first named was Albert Whitehead, the male alto immortalized as the soloist on the famous first recording of Constant Lambert's *The Rio Grande*.

It is a pleasure to congratulate Cathedral Press on its fifth anniversary. Series editor Peter James has contributed two significant articles to the Newsletter, and his editions have expanded the Tudor Anglican repertory, as he specializes in reconstructing fragmentary Services and anthems. Particularly welcome are the two early verse Services by Byrd's pupil Tomkins, conventionally numbered Sixth and Seventh, and consisting only of the evening canticles. These Services exhibit vestigially the influence of the opening of Byrd's seminal Second Service: both settings of the *Nunc dimittis* and the *Seventh Magnificat* begin with the first three notes of the modern minor scale. (This observation corrects the one on page 490 of my article 158.) Cathedral Press also publishes Weelkes's First Service, another possible homage to Byrd's Second, as well as the neglected but superb Verse Service by Michael East. Byrd himself is not overlooked. Cathedral Press publishes Peter James's edition of *Exalt Thyself O Lord*. Peter himself rediscovered sufficient material to make this reconstruction possible, and he wrote about it in Newsletter 4 (1998), pp.9-10. The Press also publishes Byrd's verse anthem *O Lord rebuke me not* using the organ accompaniment rediscovered since Fellowes' edition of 1949. Peter's article on Byrd's verse compositions is in Newsletter 7 (2001), pp.7-10.

In last year's Newsletter it was noted that Byrd had made his breakthrough into the cinema. (See also under 'Significant new recordings' in the present issue.) His music was also used in the 20th-century commercial theatre. Healey Willan arranged the Pavan; the Earl of Salisbury for a production of Shakespeare's *Love's labours lost* in 1920 at Hart House Theatre, University of Toronto, where he was musical director from 1919 to 1925. The previous year Arthur Bliss arranged three pieces for a production of the same author's *As you like it* at the Stratford Memorial Theatre. No trace of the music survives, though it is known that the three pieces were pavane, galliard and jig. I would be grateful to hear of any other examples of Byrd's music being arranged or played (not recorded) as incidental music in the commercial theatre or on film.

Last year's William Byrd Memorial Concert took place on 3 July 2001 in the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Stondon Massey, its usual venue. The regular choir, the Stondon Singers, was conducted by Edward Wellman, and

sang *Justorum animae, Laetentur coeli, Ave verum corpus* and *This sweet and merry month a 4* plus several other Renaissance works. Their guests, The Ravenscroft Consort, played an arrangement of the *Salisbury pavan*, the *Pavan* and *Galliard*, and the now discarded *My little sweet darling*.

At the inaugural Teatime Recital given by University Music in the University of Aberdeen on 3 October 2001, *Cantores ad Portam* performed Byrd's *Fantasia a 3 no.1*, and the Chapel Choir of King's College sang the first part of *Laetentur coeli*.

The Music Appeal at Lincoln Cathedral is in the middle of a 'big push' towards its initial target of £1.75m. Donations can be sent to Mrs Susan Ridley, Secretary, Cathedral Fundraising, 4 Priorygate, Lincoln LN2 1PL.

Byrd featured at the Proms on 25 July 2001 in a programme given by the Tallis Scholars including his mass a 5 and *Ne irascaris*.

On 5 May 2001 the Royal Musical Association celebrated the golden jubilee of *Musica Britannica* with a concert and reception at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Among several contributions from its publications, Davitt Moroney played Byrd's *Hornpipe* and his arrangement of Dowland's *Lachrymae* pavan and Harding's galliard pairing.

Byrd was Composer of the Week on BBC Radio 3 from 31 December 2001 to 4 January 2002. At a time when the station's coverage of early music is in serious decline, this was a judiciously selected, chronologically based sequence of programmes.

The third annual William Byrd Festival took place in Portland, Oregon, from 26 August to 3 September 2000, and the fourth from 25 August to 2 September 2001. The latter featured pieces from the second *Cantiones* of 1591.

Three motets which are increasingly aired in public concerts – *Miserere mei, Peccantem me quotidie* and *Infelix ego* – were performed by Cappella Nova as part of 'Tenebrae', given on successive nights in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh on April 27-29. At Aberdeen, the demands which Byrd places on his singers were made manifest, particularly in *Peccantem*. One hopes that the audiences in the Central Belt heard something closer to what Byrd intended. Nevertheless, the climax to *Infelix* came off gloriously.

ORDINARY BYRD: MASSES AND PRECES

Byrd could not have made his music ordinary even if he had tried. My reference here is to the ordinarys of the Latin and Anglican liturgies, specifically to a couple of issues that need to be addressed concerning the performance in Byrd's day of his masses and his *Preces*. How were Byrd's masses, and indeed his *proper*s, performed in his own day? We know they were sung illegally and secretly by recusants including females. Instruments were involved, but we do not know

whether these were doubling voices, replacing absent parts, or providing voluntaries, or some of these, or all. But what was actually sung? If the entire service was choral, and if Byrd's propers were used, did the performers sing one of his masses or someone else's or plainsong? If they sang one of Byrd's, did it correspond to the number of parts in the propers? If so, what happened when his propers for SS Peter and Paul were sung? Did singers double up on the three-part mass? (One must bear in mind Joseph Kerman's hypothesis that it might have been composed for Holy Saturday.) And to turn the questions round, if any of Byrd's masses were sung, were the propers chanted or were another composer's settings used, or Byrd's?

Anyone who has heard, or better still sung, Byrd's First and Second Preces and his Preces and Responses will agree with Craig Monson that the Second Preces were probably composed first, followed by the First Preces, and the Preces and Responses last. Why are there no Responses to go with the Second and First Preces? Could the Preces and Responses have in fact been composed first, so that the Responses could be used with any further Preces that Byrd composed? Or were the Second and First Preces indeed composed first, at Lincoln where perhaps the Responses were routinely chanted, or settings by another composer were used? And were the Preces and Responses composed when Byrd moved to the Chapel Royal, where there was a bigger and more able choir singing within a more musically conscious environment, where everything including the Responses was sung to composed music rather than to chant?

R.T.

MEANINGS

An occasional series in which contemporary musicians are invited to say what the music of Byrd means to them.

What does William Byrd mean to a busy cathedral organist working in West Yorkshire?

I recently adjudicated at a school choirs competition on the cathedral steps in Wakefield and quoted to the children Byrd's famous dictum:

Since singing is so good a thing
I wish that all would learn to sing

How extraordinarily relevant this still is in 2002, when so many children go through school without being taught how to sing.

Byrd's Latin and English church music is of supreme importance and we sing a fair amount of it in Wakefield Cathedral. The choristers find the style hard to get into at first ('Where's the tune, Sir?'); on the other hand, the layclerks live every suspension and false relation ('Why don't we sing more Tudor music, Jonathan?'). There are some interesting statistics in John Patton's *A Century of Cathedral Music 1898-1998*. With regard to the 1998 Survey, in the Most Popular Anthems category Byrd's *Ave verum corpus* comes ninth; in the Most Popular Canticles category

his Second Service comes thirteenth; in the Most Popular Eucharists category his Mass for 4 voices comes first, his Mass for 3 voices comes sixth, and his Mass for 5 voices comes eighth. Here at Wakefield we sing all three Masses plus:

Ave verum – with its searing cross relations.

Haec dies – we love the dancing 6/8 cross rhythms and ever-rising bass Alleluias.

Short Service – the Te Deum can seem awfully long if you have got boys away.

2nd service – 'As he promised' is good for trying out a new treble soloist.

Sing joyfully – we like blowing the trumpet in the new moon

Teach me, O Lord – a delightful verse anthem.

William Byrd's musical style was conservative rather than avant garde. He obstinately continued to write for the Roman rite while supplying the obligatory vernacular settings for the new Anglican liturgy. His musical genius and religious faith brought forth in the first Elizabethan Age a plentiful supply of superb masses and motets, settings and anthems. His star will not wane in the 21st century. In this new Millennium cathedrals are expected to provide music in the traditional language and also for the modern liturgies, be ecumenical, and provide music which speaks to believer and unbeliever alike. In the wider musical field postmodernism has replaced experimentalism. Byrd is well placed to prosper in this second Elizabethan Age and beyond, and rise to increased importance in both cathedral and concert hall, in live performance and on disc.

Jonathan Bielby

Jonathan Bielby has been Master of the Music at Wakefield Cathedral since 1970 and Lecturer at Leeds College of Music since 1979.

WILLIAM BYRD INVESTIGATED, 1583-84

'Was William Byrd a traitor?', asked Christopher Harrison, when conveying to us the most important knowledge about the composer's life to have emerged for a long time.¹ The answer is: 'Almost certainly not', but the idea does not now seem quite as far-fetched as it may have done. I have a couple of things to report about the question, which will help to fill up the story of Byrd's doings at a particularly tense moment in Elizabethan history, and in his own.

1. The rest of us have underestimated the gravity of suspicions raised against Byrd as a collaborator with Catholics involved in conspiracy against the state: to be exact, in what is known as the Throckmorton Plot. This was an attempt to organise an invasion of the country and a concurrent Catholic rising, which was frustrated by the arrest of Francis Throckmorton in November 1583 and the interrogation of Throckmorton and a string of other Catholics thereafter. We had known that Byrd was one of them: Dr William Parry wrote in a letter of 22 February 1584 that Byrd had been examined by the Council, but 'very honorably intreated' by them, and left at liberty. We also knew that about that date Byrd was required, under a bond

of £200, to make himself available at his house at Harlington 'within any reasonable warning'.² The bond was evidently the result of the examination, and its terms are just about compatible with Parry's benign description of it. But they might imply something stiffer, and we can now see that they do.

Sir Francis Walsingham, the Secretary of State, was in charge of the investigations which had been going on since Throckmorton's arrest, and in his office diary of the period there are three references to Byrd. The first dates from about 10 February 1584:

'To seek out matters against Byrd.'

Shortly after this, Walsingham is

'to send to Francis Mylles Mr. Byrd's note'.

The final mention, written in what seems to be early March, is:

'To sende for Mr. Byrd.'

The first note is ominous: a dossier is to be compiled against Byrd who, as a criminal suspect, is not given the title 'Master'. It looks as if Francis Mylles, one of Walsingham's confidential servants, had been instructed to draw up the evidence against Byrd, and that Byrd had been summoned to appear. His 'note', I imagine, said that he could not come just then because the queen was detaining him at court. By Parry's account he must have appeared shortly after, and the bond have been taken then. He must have been examined twice. Perhaps his second appearance was only before Walsingham; in any case, we may note that in the second and third references Byrd's 'Master' has been restored, which may imply that he was off the hook. Possibly the queen had intervened to stop any heavy interrogation, as she did in the case of another suspect, Lord Henry Howard. The dossier against Byrd must have been dropped, though we shall see that one item of it probably survives. Byrd certainly remained under suspicion, because his house was rigorously searched a year or so later, in a panic caused by the attempt of Philip Howard, the young Earl of Arundel, to flee the country and join the Catholic opposition.⁴

2. What exactly was Byrd investigated about? This has now become pretty clear, and may be expounded in two stages.

First. We have recently discovered how close Byrd's relations had been with members of the Catholic aristocracy who were, one way and another, connected with the plot. In particular he was intimate with the Paget family, two of whose members were heavily implicated. Through the emergence into light of the Elizabethan Paget papers, we have found that Thomas, Lord Paget, his family and his houses at Drayton in Middlesex (very close to Byrd's Harlington), at Burton-on-Trent and in London had formed the centre of a network of Catholic nobility and gentry deeply concerned with music; and that in this circle Byrd's musical and social activities, so far as he was not occupied at court, had been pursued for several years before 1583. Byrd had, among other things, been coaching Lord Paget's

younger brother Charles in composition.⁵ Charles had gone to France in 1581; on the arrest of Francis Throckmorton Lord Paget had fled there too, his escape organised by his friend the Earl of Northumberland from his house at Petworth in Sussex. Both he and Northumberland had been too close to Throckmorton's doings for comfort; and it would emerge that a principal event in the conspiracy had been a clandestine visit made from France to Petworth by Charles Paget in September 1583. There he had met both lords and sought to recruit them for a rising in Sussex to coincide with a landing on the coast.

Second. Byrd appears to have kept up his friendship with Charles Paget after Charles's departure for France, and we have two pieces of evidence about this. The first is William Parry's letter of 22 February 1584, cited above (n. 2), which was addressed to Charles Paget. In it he complained that Paget had written to him, presumably via the French embassy, a letter enclosed, with others, in a packet addressed to somebody else. Immediately after this he reported Byrd's examination before the Council; which might suggest, no more, that the packet had been addressed to Byrd. The suggestion becomes more persuasive when we add another piece of evidence which, if sound, is new. In the same collection of Walsingham's papers in which Parry's letter survives, there is the copy of another letter to Charles Paget in Rouen in France, dated from London on 17 November 1583 and signed 'W. B.'.

The writer said that he had had two letters from Paget, one very loving to himself, the second, which he had received yesterday, containing 'matter of cold comfort' to an unidentified gentlewoman about her 'travelsome' husband. He would pass on an enclosed letter from Charles to a Dr. Bourne, and had given a message to Charles's mother, the dowager Lady Paget. He enquired after two sums of money, one sent over to a friend of Charles, the other to Charles himself. He asked to be remembered to one Mr. Davison and his wife, who had evidently emigrated to France; he hoped that Davison had found a way of supporting himself there. Perhaps the first thing we can extract from this letter is that Paget had written to the writer at least twice from France, and had enclosed in one of the letters a letter to somebody else; which ought to remind us that was the way Paget's later letter was to come to Parry.

Was W. B. William Byrd? From Byrd's known and intimated connection with the Pagets, and perhaps particularly with Charles; and from Parry's letter to Charles which, even if it does not mean that Charles had sent another packet to Byrd, does mean that Charles was interested in Byrd's fortunes, I think we can be pretty sure that he was. It is implausible to suppose that anyone else with those initials would have received a long and loving letter from Paget; and Byrd would be a natural person to pass on news of Charles to his mother. W. B. was evidently close to her, and Byrd was to be a mourner at her funeral in 1586. We do not learn much from the other persons mentioned in the letter, except that they all seem to be connected with

emigration to France. I cannot identify the 'travelsome husband' to whose wife W. B. was to pass on a message of cold comfort. 'Dr. Bourne' may be Anthony Bourne, who had fled to France in 1577 on a passport provided by the French ambassador, either because of political persecution or because he had run away with somebody else's wife. He was presumably now back in England. 'Master Davison' must be John Davison, a catholic émigré who was to make a career in the law faculty of the University of Paris. I do not find a wife in the relevant records, and wonder whether she would be compatible with that career. W. B.'s enquiry about Davison's prospects may perhaps indicate that he was wondering whether to emigrate himself. On the positive side there are three more things to say: that W. B. referred to 'our Lord', which I think means that he was a Catholic; that he sent money to Catholics abroad, which Byrd is known to have done; and that the form and language of the letter are similar to those of the two letters of Byrd from the period which we have. I conclude that William Byrd wrote it.

How had his letter got to the authorities? It is one of three written from England to Charles Paget which must have fallen into Walsingham's hands together. All of them survive in copies. All the signatures are disguised: one of the others signs himself 'Ri[chard] Maemor', the other with the initials 'F V F R'. Their letters are dated 17 and 20 December 1583. To cut a long story short I shall suggest that the three letters had been meant to go, as Byrd's had probably come and as Parry's was to come later, via the diplomatic bag of the French ambassador, Castelnau; that the person carrying them was one George More, who had been a postman between Mary, Queen of Scots, Throckmorton and the French and Spanish ambassadors; and that More, who had turned informer, handed them over at the time he had his confession, which was 20 December. Why they are all in copies I cannot say: perhaps the originals were put into Byrd's dossier to be produced at his examination. We can now be pretty sure what he was examined about.

My thanks to the Keeper of the Public Records for permission to reproduce W. B.'s letter, and to the British Library Board for the quotations from Harleian Ms. 6035.

1. 'William Byrd and the Pagets of Beaudesert. A musical connection', *Staffordshire Studies*, iii (1990-91), 51-63, at p.51.
2. See my *Under the Molehill. An Elizabethan Spy Story* (New Haven and London, 2001), pp.82-106; for Parry's letter, which is in Public Record Office, SP 12/168, no.23, see *ibid.* pp.97 f and John Harley, *William Byrd, Gentleman of the Chapel Royal* (Aldershot and Brookfield, VT, 1999 edn), p.74. In *Under the Molehill*, p.97, I date Parry's letter new style (i.e. 12/22 February); from the Byrd reference it now seems clear that it was old style (22 February/3 March). Harley (p.73) dates the bond to 17 February, from PRO SP 12/200, no.59; David Crankshaw, in his unpublished 'New Evidence of William Byrd's Aristocratic Catholic Friends', p. 16, n. 3, from PRO SP 12/205, ff. 21r, 27r, 29v, to 27 February. I quote from Crankshaw, for the use of whose piece I am very grateful.
3. British Library, Harleian 6035, ff. 56v, 58r, 61r. I date them from the letters of Walsingham to Stafford, ambassador in Paris, of 7 - 8 February and 2 March (*Calendar of State Papers. Foreign Elizabeth* London, 1863-), viii (1583-84), nos. 408-10 and 456, notes for which are in the diary at ff. 55v and 60v.
4. J. H. Pollen and W. MacMahon (ed.), *The Ven. Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Catholic Record Society, xxi, 1919), p.123; Harley, *William Byrd*, p.74.
5. Christopher Harrison, art. cit., above, n. 1; Harley, *William Byrd*, pp.

17 November 1583, W. 3. To Charles Paget, London Copy
Public Record Office, S.P. 12/164, no. 37 (f. 60)

Sir, I have receaved two letters from you the first a long and a most frendlie explanation of your love towards me and care of my poore estate to which I have returned aunsware by that meane that yt came to my handes. The second and last contayning some matter of cold comfort to the good gentlewoman expecting to heare well from her travelsome husb: I receaved but yesterday and meane with all convenient speed to geve her such intelligence as your letter dothe report. The letter inclosed directed to Dr. Bourne shall be sent unto him.

I have not omitted the remembrance of your dutie to my Ladie your mother who ys allwayes very joyous to heare from you of your welfare. All the rest of your frendes are yet well. I hope you have long since receaved xth. of late by exchange. I would gladlie knowe the certentie therof in your next because some of your former letters do impute the contrarye.

I praye you commend me verye hartelie to my old frendes and acquayntances M^r Davison and his wief of whose good habilitie to live I would be right glad to heare. And thus our Lord ever more preserve you. London this xviith of November 1583.

Your worship's ever to commaund W: B

Superscribed

To the right worshipfull and my assured frende
M^r Charles Paget esquier at Roane.

Endorsement

Decemb: [sic] 17 1583
Copie of W: B: letter
To M^r Charles Paget.

The letter is written in a plain secretary hand, except for the initials of the signature, which are italic. The endorsement is in a largish italic hand, which may be the same as that of the initials of the signature of the letter.

- 46-50, 58-63. David Crankshaw's piece cited above, n. 2, gives a broader view of the circle and adds important detail.
6. *Under the Molehill*, pp. 75 f. and references there cited; the accounts of Charles Paget in DNB, and in L. Hicks, *An Elizabethan Problem: some Aspects of the Careers of Two Exile-Adventurers* (London, 1964), are mainly about his political career in exile, and predate the emergence of the Paget papers.
7. PRO SP 12/164, no. 37, printed here.
8. From David Crankshaw's piece, cited above, n. 2 at p. 30.
9. *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign* xi (1575-77), nos. 1387-91 (Bourne); my thesis, 'Elizabethan Catholicism: the Link with France' (Cambridge Ph. D., 1961), p.99 (Davison).
10. E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd* (London, 1936), p. 41; Harley, *William Byrd*, pp.58, 60, from PRO SP 12/146, no.137.
11. To Lord Paget, 28-vi-1573: Harrison, *art. cit.*, document no. 1 (facsimile at p.56); Harley, *op. cit.*, pp.47 f (facsimile at plate 3, pp.240 f). To Robert Petre, 17-x-1581: Fellowes, *op. cit.*, pp.41-2 (facsimile at p.42); Harley, *op. cit.*, pp.90 f.
12. PRO SP 12/164, nos. 38 and 47.
13. *Under the Molehill*, pp. 30 f; confession in PRO SP 12/164, no. 44. The endorsement to it is in the same hand as those of the three letters, and indeed of a large number of connected pieces.

John Bossy

BYRD'S 'CATHOLIC' ANTHEMS

It is generally acknowledged that many of Byrd's motets set Latin texts which can be construed as reflecting the Catholic community's plight in Elizabethan England. For this we are indebted to the writings of Joseph Kerman, notably his *Masses and Motets of William Byrd* (1981), and of others who have dealt with the topic. 'Vide, Domine, afflictionem nostram' (Behold, Lord, our affliction), 'libera populum tuum' (deliver thy people), and similar appeals abound in Byrd's motets.

While some of Byrd's Latin works were intended for the secret celebration of Catholic rites, many were suitable for recreational or other social purposes, particularly in Catholic households. When, in 1586, Henry Edyall was questioned about musical activities at the home of Lord Paget, the implication being that Catholic services had been held there, perhaps with the Mass being sung, he admitted only to singing songs by Byrd and Tallis, by which he probably meant the motets published in *Cantiones Sacrae* (1575), and denied singing any that were unlawful.¹

A major source for Byrd's music is a manuscript (Bodleian Library MS Mus. Sch. E.423) which belonged to his Catholic friend and patron Sir John Petre.² It is a contratenor part-book of c.1575-89, with 'I. P.' stamped on the cover, and although not limited exclusively to music by Byrd it contains a substantial number of his motets, including half a dozen which he did not publish, together with early versions of pieces printed in *Psalmes, Sonets, & Songs* (1588) and *Songs of Sundrie Natures* (1589), and a number of unpublished songs. The nature of the contents supports the notion that motets might be regarded as part-songs suitable for domestic performance. It also shows that anthems with English words were just as suitable, for among the songs are *Christ rising again*, which appears in seventeenth-century ecclesiastical sources as a verse anthem,³ and the full anthem *Arise, O Lord*.

Byrd may have known Petre as early as 1567/8, when the latter gave a penny to 'Byrdes boye';⁴ but the first clear testimony to Byrd's connection with Catholic patrons follows his return to London from Lincoln in 1572. The Paget papers at Keele University and the Staffordshire Record Office reveal that by the middle of 1573 Byrd was associating with a group of Catholic noblemen, who for some years had been writing their own songs; and it is evident that Byrd's help was sometimes called for: 'I understand you thinke there was a berd sange in my ere' wrote the future Earl of Worcester to his friend Lord Paget.⁵ This is precisely the period when Byrd was composing his early motets, and when he seems to have written his earliest anthems.⁶ It is not usually remarked that some of the latter appear to give voice to the woes of Byrd's co-religionists.

Is the idea tenable that Byrd set English texts, as well as Latin, with that purpose in mind? The early anthems *Arise O Lord* and *O God whom our offences*, with words such as

'wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our misery and trouble?' and 'hear the prayers of thy people', suggest that it is at least possible.⁷ Indeed, the words of a third early anthem, *How long shall mine enemies*, are taken from Psalm 13, to which Byrd turned again in the motet *Exsurge, Domine*, included in *Liber Secundus Sacrarum Cantionum* (1591). The notably 'political' aspect of the motets in this collection and its predecessor, *Liber Primus* (1589) is largely absent from Byrd's motets of 1575, so it may have been in his English works that he first began to explore the possibility of setting words with a double meaning. As it happens, in *Psalmes, Sonets, & Songs* (1588), Byrd published another English version of Psalm 13, with words beginning 'O Lord, how long wilt thou forget / To send me some relief?' Clearly, questions about the way Byrd's texts are to be read must be extended not only from his motets to his anthems, but to his songs as well. Once they have been raised, it is difficult not to see the relevance to Catholics of words such as 'Turn our captivity, O Lord, as a brook in the south', a setting of which Byrd published in his last song collection, *Psalmes, Songs, and Sonnets* (1611).

How much guidance in selecting the texts of his motets and songs Byrd usually had from his patrons, or the priests they helped to sustain, is something about which we know next to nothing. It may nevertheless be supposed that he chose some texts for his own satisfaction, some to please people whose tastes he knew, and some to meet specific requests or for particular occasions. Among the last, for example, is the hymn *Petrus beatus*, which was evidently set for an event of importance to Sir John Petre. The anthems are in a different category, since they may well have been written for Lincoln Cathedral or the Chapel Royal, but we have very little information about the music sung in these places, and know still less about who selected the words of Byrd's anthems though if they were intended either for the Cathedral or the Chapel they must presumably have been acceptable to the Dean or his deputy. There is no difficulty, however, in finding Biblical texts describing suffering and adversity, and they would have been as familiar to adherents of the English church as to Catholics.⁸ If, therefore, Byrd was allowed a reasonably free hand in choosing his texts, he could, without causing eyebrows to be raised, easily have chosen words which, as much as those of his motets, reflected the feelings of Catholics.

1. Public Record Office, SP12/193/63.

2. David Mateer, 'William Byrd, John Petre and Oxford', Bodleian MS Mus. Sch. E.423', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 29 (1996), 21-46.

3. At the beginning of *Christ rising* one of the viols plays the Sarum plainsong 'Alleluia, Christus resurgens'. See Peter le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England 1549-1660*, London, 1967 (repr. Cambridge, 1978), 244.

4. Essex Record Office, D/DP A17

5. Staffordshire Record Office, D603/K/1/5/5; printed in full by Christopher Harrison in 'William Byrd and the Pagets of Beaudesert: a musical connection', *Staffordshire Studies*, iii (1990-91), 51-63. Lord Herbert (i.e. Edward Somerset, later the Earl of Worcester) wrote to Paget about his songs in 1570 or before, but the letter in which he first mentions Byrd probably dates from 1573, the year in which Byrd wrote an extant letter to Paget.

6. Craig Monson, 'Authenticity and Chronology in Byrd's Church Anthems', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xxxv (1982), 280-305.

7. The anthem *O God, the proud are risen*, which contains similar words, is thought to be one of Byrd's later works.

8. This is well illustrated by the anthem *Save me, O God*, which includes the phrases 'avenge thou my cause' and 'strangers are risen up against me'. Once attributed to Byrd, this anthem is now thought more likely to be by Coste (see Monson, 'Authenticity and Chronology', 289-90, Richard Turbet's note on p. 8 of *Annual Byrd Newsletter* no. 4, 1998, and Roger Bowers's letter on p. 27 of *Early Music Review*, no. 42, 1998). Further evidence that Byrd did not write it may perhaps be found in the fact that its highest note is e" flat, whereas Byrd's Anglican music never rises above c" or d" (at written pitch).

John Harley

BYRD'S FRIENDS THE ROPERS

Some years ago John Bennett raised the question of Anthony Roper's connection with Thomas Tallis.¹ In fact the Roper family's association with musicians extends further. The connections I have noticed are outlined below, and, as Lord Dacre has pointed out, they date from after William Roper's withdrawal from public life to 'internal exile' at Well Hall, near Eltham.² I should be interested to hear of any I have missed.

William Roper (1498?-1578) was a Catholic, as were several of the musicians he knew. He was the son-in-law of Sir Thomas More, whose niece Joan Rastall married the Catholic musician John Heywood. In 1551 or 1552 Heywood was associated with Sebastian Westcote, another Catholic, in the presentation of a play. Westcote was probably already Master of Choristers at St Paul's, where John and Symond Byrd, the brothers of the Catholic William Byrd, were in the choir; and he had Peter Philips, Byrd's probable pupil, as a lodger before Philips went abroad on account of his Catholicism in 1582. Westcote witnessed Roper's will in 1576.

Roper was himself an overseer of the will of Richard Bower (d.1561), Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal and a colleague of Thomas Tallis, who was the other overseer of the will and also witnessed it. It is possible that William Byrd was one of Bower's choristers and a pupil of Tallis. The religious inclinations of Bower and Tallis are unknown. Richard Edwards, whose beliefs are also unknown, succeeded Bower in the Chapel Royal; he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1564, sponsored by William Roper and George Fisher.³ The children of the Chapel performed a play at Lincoln's Inn under his direction in 1564/5.

Tallis's widow, Joan, made bequests to William Byrd and Anthony Roper, William Roper's younger son. It was from the Catholic Anthony Roper that Byrd obtained (by 1577) the house at Harlington in Middlesex which William Roper had bought in 1552. In 1591 or 1592 Byrd's son Christopher married Katherine, the daughter of the Catholic Thomas More (Moore), who was a grandson of Sir Thomas More and a cousin of Anthony Roper.

Although the records mostly connect the Roper family with court musicians, none emanates from the court; they are either wills or concern property. In 1580, for example, the trumpeter Edward Elliot of Eltham owed £10.8s. to William Roper's executors, perhaps in respect of property; but since a number of court musicians, including Tallis, had houses at Greenwich and many were often on duty there, it is not

difficult to envisage some of them forming part of a social circle centred on nearby Well Hall. This may have been based largely upon Catholic sympathies; for though Tallis, who links several of the Ropers' musical acquaintances, does not figure in lists of recusants, it is evident that he and his wife were not only tolerant of Catholics but had Catholic friends. Sebastian Westcote, who was not a court musician but had been a yeoman of the King's bedchamber at about the time Tallis entered the service of Henry VIII, was one of them.

There are other Roper connections with William Byrd.

- (1) James Good, William Roper's physician and trustee, with whom he lodged in London in his last years, was the father of Kinborough Good, after whom Byrd named one of his keyboard pavans; both Kinborough and her mother are mentioned in Westcote's will.
- (2) Mary, the wife of Roper's nephew John, was the daughter of Sir William Petre, for whom Byrd wrote another keyboard pavan.
- (3) Lucy Browne, Lady Montagu's daughter, married William Roper's elder son Thomas; Lady Montagu's chaplain was Christopher Byrd's brother-in-law. Lucy was the aunt of Mary Browne, for whom Byrd's song *Though I be Brown* is thought to have been written; Mary married the eldest son of Edward Paston, whose collection of manuscripts contains numerous compositions by Byrd.

A Byrd connection of a different kind forms only a footnote to the above, but is not without interest. In the early nineteenth century Maria Hackett lived at Crosby Place, Bishopsgate, where William Roper had his home for a period from 1547. She was probably the person who unearthed a petition linking Westcote and Byrd's brothers, though she did not know exactly who the brothers were. She seems to have been aware that Byrd's daughter-in-law was a More, and mistakenly thought that the William Byrd who lived near Crosby Place must therefore have been the composer. In fact he was the composer's namesake, of the Mercer's Company. But that leads on to another set of family relationships, which concern the Pagets rather than the Ropers.⁴

It may not be entirely out of place to add a note about Byrd's friends the Pagets. I have recently noticed a letter dated 30 July 1560 about the dispersal of books 'in tyme of the lamentable spoyle of the lybraryes of Englande' written by Bishop John Bale to Archbishop Matthew Parker. 'My lorde Paget and Sir Johan Mason', says Bale, 'are thought to have many notable monuments' from dissolved monasteries.⁵ Did Byrd's connection with the Paget family give him access to these 'monuments'? It would be nice to think so.

1. John Bennett, 'A Tallis patron?', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, 21 (1988), 41-4.

2. Personal communication. Lord Dacre's article on William Roper will appear in the *New DNB*.

3. I am indebted to Andrew Ashbee for this reference, and the one below to Edward Elliot.

4. See John Harley, 'William Byrd and his Social Circle', *Early Music Performer*, 7 (2000), 4-9.

5. Bale's letter is printed in *Cambridge Antiquarian Communications*, being papers presented at meetings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, no. XVII,

being no. 3 of the third volume, 1866-1873 (Cambridge, 1878), 157-173 (the passage quoted occurs on the last page). The volume may be catalogued as *Cambridge Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, vol. 3, 1865-1879

John Harley

MUSIC OF ORLANDO GIBBONS IN EARLY PRINTED EDITIONS: A SUPPLEMENT

My original article on this topic¹ appeared as a separate appendix to the recent book about Gibbons.² Bibliographers never have the final word and although this can be frustrating, it is for the best, because it means that research reveals newly rediscovered sources, and does not stagnate.

Since the publication of my paper, that invaluable tool, a secondhand bookseller's catalogue, suggested a further early printed source of music by Gibbons: *Sacred music, selected from the compositions of Tye, Tallis, Gibbons, Ravenscroft, &c. and adapted to portions of the different versions of the Book of Psalms* (London: Burns, 1842). All six items by Gibbons are from *The hymns and songs of the Church* (London: Wither, 1623) compiled by George Wither, though, as implied by the wording of James Burns's title-page, none of them use the original texts, and Gibbons's rhythms are frequently regularized; two inner parts are also provided, to enable performance in four parts.

"Sing to the Lord" on p. 8 is *Song 3* originally set to words beginning "Sing praises Israel to the Lord".

"O Lord our God" on p. 12 is *Song 47* originally set to words beginning "A song of joy".

"That man is truly blest" on p. 20 is *Song 11* originally set to words beginning "O Lord of hosts".

"To Thee O God of hosts" on p. 21 is *Song 5* originally set to words beginning "Thy beauty Israel is gone".

"O God! my safety and my confidence" on p. 24 is *Song 1* originally set to words beginning "Now shall the praises of the Lord be sung".

"As on Euphrates' banks" on p. 52 is *Song 24* originally set to words beginning "How sad and solitary".

An opportunity to visit the library of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, revealed *A collection of madrigals for three, four, five & six voices, selected from the works of the most eminent composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Carefully extracted from the original books, as preserved in the Madrigal Society*, edited by Richard Webb. 2nd ed. (London: Hawes, 1814). It contains *O! that the learned poets* (p.33) and *Dainty fine bird* (p.63). The British Library holds the first edition (London: Webb, 1808) the title of which mentions fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which was subsequently rectified as above. The madrigals by Gibbons are present in both editions, though at the head of the former piece the first word is 'No!'

1. Richard Turbet, 'Orlando Gibbons: music in printed editions 1625-1925', *Fontes artis musicae* 47 (2000): 42-47.

2. John Harley, *Orlando Gibbons and the Gibbons family of musicians* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

3. *Tudor Church Music* iv (1925) pp. 317-324 & *Orlando Gibbons, Full anthems, hymns and fragmentary verse anthems*, ed. David Wulstan, Early English church music, 21 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1978), pp. 106-122.

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TWO EARLY PRINTED ATTRIBUTIONS TO BYRD IN THE WIGHTON COLLECTION, DUNDEE

In some recent articles I noted early sources printed between 1623 and 1901 that contain pieces attributed to Byrd.¹ (A recurring observation is that many attributions until 1840 have now been shown to be spurious, but at least the compilers, editors or publishers thought they were by Byrd.) Two further sources can be announced. Both are in the Wighton Collection of Dundee Central Library, and in either case the piece attributed to Byrd is the ubiquitous and spurious *Non nobis Domine*.

James Oswald, *A collection of musick by several hands, both vocal and instrumental*. Edinburgh: Oswald, c.1740, p.24. (Location 53668)

Essex harmony. London: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter, [1816], vol.2, p.72. (Location 31976)

Oswald's presentation, reproduced on p. 11, is interesting in that he precedes it with a symphony using the theme of the round for two violins and figured bass. Oswald's music has enjoyed a revival over the last few years. He was also a publisher, working in Edinburgh from 1736-40 before moving south to London.

This edition of *Essex harmony*, a publication descending from one originally issued by John Arnold in the 1760s, can be dated with some confidence despite the omission of the year from the imprint. The watermark is 1816, which indicates no more than a *terminus a quo*. But the imprint also lists the publisher's Dublin premises which, according to Humphries and Smith,³ they occupied only until 1816.

Acknowledgements: David Kett and Brian Clark (Dundee Central Library).

1. "The fall and rise of William Byrd", in *Sundry sorts of music books: essays on the British Library collections, presented to O.W. Neighbour on his 70th birthday*, ed. Chris Banks, Arthur Searle and Malcolm Turner, London: British Library, 1993, pp.119-28; 'Byrd at 450', *Brio* 31 (1994) pp.96-102; with Ota, Diane O., 'Heathen poets', *Annual Byrd newsletter* 3 (1997) p.7; 'More early printed editions attributed to Byrd', *Brio* 35 (1998) p.105.

2. Reproduced in facsimile on p. 11 from the unique copy in the Wighton Collection, Dundee Central Library. The title 'Non nobis', the designation 'Symphony', the tempo 'Allegro', the instrumentation 'Vo 1mo, Vo 2do, Basso' are printed but the two ascriptions to 'Byrd' are in MS.

3. Humphries, Charles and Smith, William C. *Music publishing in the British Isles, from the beginning until the middle of the nineteenth century: a dictionary of engravers, printers, publishers and music sellers, with a historical introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1970, p.158.

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We have added on p. 12 (continuing on p. 13 of the main magazine) an edition of an anthem by James Kempson that takes *Non nobis Domine* as its starting point. Like the Oswald piece on p. 11 – and more sophisticated uses like Mudge's *Concerto 6* and *Concertino 3* by Wassenaer [quondam Pergolesi & Ricciotti] – it shows the canon being used as part of a longer composition. My thanks to Sally Drage for supplying a photocopy. The edition is available full-size at £1 per copy. King's Music also publishes facsimiles of the Mudge & Wassenaer partbooks.

Clifford Bartlett

James Kempson – Anthem from Psalm CXV