

Early Music

REVIEW

Number 92 July 2003

ISSN 1355-3437

Price £2.50

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Published on the first of each month except Jan. and Aug.
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[Http://www.kings-music.co.uk](http://www.kings-music.co.uk)

UK: £17.50 Europe: £22.50

Rest of World: £35.00 (air) £22.50 (surface)

Sterling cheques made payable to King's Music

French cheques in Euros (€36.00)

US (\$50.00 airmail, \$33.00 surface)

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The Maiden's Prayer and other gems from the old piano stool is reviewed on p. 25. It is an entirely appropriate memorial to Ted Perry. It was his idea; the programme was dreamed up with the booklet-note writer and the pianist, and a month later it had been recorded. That's why Hyperion was such a success: follow a whim and produce a winner. (According to the booklet, the notes reached Hyperion's office a few hours before Ted left it for the last time, two days before he died.)

Delightful though the recording be, it made me think a bit about what we used to call 'authenticity' and now, thanks to John Butt, can abbreviate as HIP. Philip Martin's playing is excellent, but nevertheless its very cleanness and precision is as influenced by the neoclassical style as the whole early-music movement may be (it is now, of course, racing away from that as quickly as it can, despite rear-guard actions from some of our reviewers). I expected the music to sound much more free and, as with some Bach piano-transcription CDs, I was a bit disappointed by its good taste. It may well be possible that, played on 19th-century pianos, the clean style is right. But in the context of discoveries in old piano stools, I was expecting something a little more over-the-top, as one would have played it a few decades ago had one been exploring the contents of old pianos tools. Or is the ideal a performance one by a maiden aunt who can't play quite as well as she thinks she can? But can you record a performance that is less than the idealistic best?

By the time you receive this, BC will have moved to Spain. Fortunately, email communication is as effective between Huntingdon and Barcelona as it was between Huntingdon and Dundee, though we will miss the regular visits we have received over the last year when he was just down the road in St. Ives (the one on the way to which you might meet a man with seven wives rather than artists and sea-surfers). His email remains the same (bci6661@hotmail.com), and as long as the Royal Mail and El correo continue to be tolerably efficient, we will still be receiving his inimitable CD reviews and benefitting from his careful proof-reading, for which his wide linguistic knowledge is particularly helpful, and, of course, his music-setting (on which King's Music depends).

CB

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clifford Bartlett

PIERRE DE LA RUE

Honey Meconi *Pierre de la Rue and Musical Life at the Habsburg-Burgundian Court* Oxford UP, 2003. xiii + 385pp, £75.00 ISBN 0 19 816554 4

While reading this, I've been trying to remember what opera has the phrase 'She's a... honey!'^{*} Without in any way undermining the author's musicological credentials, and without going so far as to be personal about a lady whom I have barely met, a rare feature of the book is that an endearing individuality does come through. She can joke about her 'almost Rabelaisian appetite for lists' (p. 236) and other remarks on that page show that she thinks of her subject matter as music to be sung, which she hopes others will find as exciting as she does, not just as music on the page of the collected works. A major problem is that, since the complete edition (*Corpus mensurabilis musicae*, 97) is quite recent and still not complete, there is as yet no substantial body of writing about his music. Meconi documents clear indications of how La Rue's music is different from that of his main contemporary, Josquin. How do we recognise a composer's style? We can examine the treatment of the pre-existing material, compare imitative procedures, etc, as she does. But we expect to recognise an unknown or forgotten piece by a composer we know from the feel of an individual phrase, sometimes just from a chord, without applying that sort of analysis. The author makes no attempt at defining such individuality – it is perhaps too much to expect it when we still don't know how we make such instant judgments with the better-known composers. And the fallibility of such feelings is shown by the number of reascribed 'Josquin' pieces.

One way a scholar can have an influence that reaches far beyond her subject is to propose new birth or death dates. Unfortunately, although she undermines the belief that Peters *de la Rue* and *vander Straten* were the same person, making La Rue's birth likely to be a decade or so later than is usually given, there is nothing to produce a precise date apart from guessing how old he might have been when he joined the Habsburg chapel in 1492. Meconi is sceptical of the close relationship with Marguerite of Austria that has been deduced from her MS collection of chansons, Brussels Bibliothèque Royale 228, in which La Rue features prominently. She tries to see beyond the documents, none of which say anything about La Rue the man. Judging from the records, he seems well-behaved and a good employee. She sums up the biographical chapter: 'Perhaps he was simply a sanctimonious prig, but it is equally likely that he was a genuinely devout and honourable person – no bloody brawls, no illegitimate children, no inappropriate relations with choirboys – whose religious faith governed his life and generated the lion's share of his work'. [If we hadn't given up com-

petitions because Kathleen Berg always won, we could ask who could supply the longest list in each category.] There are chapters on the Chapel, sacred music, secular music, and influences (in both directions). Appendices give extensive additional documentation and a list of works that isn't self-sufficient enough: not all readers will have easy access to CMM, so references to usable other editions would be helpful.

A few points that I noted.

p. 36. Mention of sackbuts starting the Gradual and playing *Deo gratias* and *Ite missa est* at a mass in Innsbruck in 1503.

p. 41. I was tempted to set our cartoonist on the phrase 'the tenor of courtly life'.

p. 68. What, in modern terms, does *à X heures de nuit* mean: 'at 10.00 at night' implies 10.00 pm. Few clocks had minute hands then, so it is a over-precise, and anyway might it not mean something like 4.00 am?

p. 79. Interesting discussion about who owned the music. Modern copyright laws still need to cover who owns creative work produced for an employer and I'm puzzled by the rights of academic research: in Europe, it's usually paid for by the state, so shouldn't public access be a right without the signing of forms and copyright declarations that some universities demand? The controversy over weapons of mass destruction has shown that governments are happy to quote them without acknowledgment.

Generally, the notated pitch is assumed to be an approximation to sounding pitch. An advantage of the Meconi listing-fetish is some extremely useful tables giving clefs and overall compasses – they would, however, have been simpler to read had the columns showing top and bottom notes been in that order (like the clef list) rather than reversed. There doesn't seem to be any pattern like the later clef-code, but pieces with clefs beyond F4 or C1 rarely use the full compass at the opposite extremity, which suggests pitch adjustment. (cf letter p. 27)

I doubt if many non-specialist readers will go out and buy a copy, however strongly I recommend it. But I hope the waves that spread from its publication will encourage singers to investigate the music and non-singers to buy the CDs that will no doubt be forthcoming. Then you may feel inspired to hunt out this surprisingly readable book.

^{*} My guess is *Lennox Berkeley's* A Dinner Engagement.

RADESCA

Enrico Radesca di Foggia e il suo tempo - Atti del Convegno di studi Foggia, 7-8 Aprile 2000. (Strumenti della ricerca musicale, 5). Edited by Francesca Seller. LIM Editrice, 2001. xx+213 pp, €31.00. ISBN 88-7096-347-0

Foggia is a city and province of Puglia, about 100 miles east of Naples on the Bologna-Bari rail line. Its important

history – the Punic Wars, Hannibal, William II ‘the Good’, (who built the cathedral), Frederick II (the Holy Roman Emperor who struggled in Germany, in Italy, and against the pope and, making his seat there, brought classical culture and the Sicilian school of Italian poetry, etc.) – is also remote with respect to the purpose of the convention held there three years ago: to redefine what Foggia contributed to musical culture at the turn of the 17th century.

Of the biographical studies in the volume, A. Ruscillo’s traces the name ‘Radesca’ (without finding Enrico in the records, or the provenance of the family) and speculates about his early years. D. Fabris makes an alternative hypothesis about his curriculum, considering when he might have been a soldier in Dalmatia, speculating on his possibly Slavic and/or Jewish provenance, and noting that the *Arie alla Romana* (Radesca’s *Primo Libro* of 1605) are really alla Napolitana and can be considered precedents of Florentine monody. R. Moffa concentrates on Radesca’s role at the Turin court and his five books of *Canzonette, Madrigali e Arie* (more monodic but not as melismatic as Sigismondo’s music). P. Balbestrà examines the contemporary musical activity in Cerignola, another town of the province of Foggia, and the composer of sacred music there, Salvatore Sacco, who left Puglia for Naples, Rome and Tuscany.

Several studies describe the historical, political or economic conditions at the end of the 16th century. R. Colapietra believes that the dramatic murder stories (not only Gesualdo’s, but widespread tales of banditry against the wealthy) may have induced Radesca and others to leave Puglia. Despite an influx of immigrants from Albania and Slavic countries, the area was increasingly desolate and violent. Not only Radesca, but also Sigismondo d’India and Filippo Albini (after being active in Naples) all ended up at the court of Turin: the musical scene there is described by S. Saccomani. M. Columbro has researched and documented the musical activity supported by the immensely wealthy Santa Casa dell’ Annunziata, a charitable institution in Naples founded around 1300 – a church, hospital, orphanage, hospice, conservatory. It offered musical instruction not only to its seminarists, but also to girls and to nuns, something especially rare in the Spanish-dominated south. The school also trained and employed organists, including Scipione Stella, Jean de Macque, Ascanio Maione, Gregorio Strozzi and others.

Radesca’s musical style is referred to where possible throughout the book, but M. Giuliani in particular discusses his *Quinto Libro delle Canzonette, Madrigali e Arie* of 1617 in the context of the tradition of printing collections of *laude* between 1507 and then, and the production of ‘profane’ religious music (i.e. in Italian), the highest expression of which are the *madrigali spirituali*. Interesting is the practice of performing such polyphonic works as solo works by omitting the lower voices. F. Cotticelli’s paper ‘Forme della poesia per musica di Radesca’ points out how, despite their disarming brevity, the poems used for his music contains rhetorical figures and an incisiveness that warrants the highest regard.

A useful article by R. Meucci on plucked string instruments used in the Spanish kingdom of Naples explains why the *tiorba* was originally called a *chitarrone*,

the *chitarrino* being the small lute-like *ghitarra* or *ghiterna* described by Tinctoris (1487). A. Carideo’s study about new manuscript sources of *ricercars* of Jean de Macque is a guide to work in progress in the reconstruction of his lost *Ricercari a 4*. The newly found tablature manuscripts in Berlin, together with sources already studied and described in the article, will form the basis of the author’s coming edition of de Macque’s *Opere per tastiera – Ricercari*, vol.1 (Andromeda Editrice).

All the contributions in this book are in Italian but many of the charts, lists, documents, tables, appendices, transcriptions and facsimiles are useful in themselves and do not require translation. I am certainly left with a new awareness of Puglia on the map of Italy’s cultural heritage, and curiosity to explore music which was deliberately more sober and less virtuosistic than that of other schools.

Barbara Sachs

GAMBA SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

The latest batch of publications includes two reissues in computer-set form of the former SP series, the main difference, apart from the change from handwriting to computer-setting, being the inclusion of scores – the Society of old seemed to think that scores were a waste which members should not be charged for. There should be no problems in the updating, and I nearly took them at face value. But I decided to jot down references in the Society’s index and found that the pieces are mis-numbered. ME 196 (formerly SP 5 & 75b) claims to contain William Lawes’ four-part Aires Nos 5 & 318: for 5 read 136. ME 197 (SP 8 & 34) similarly contains Nos 306 [not 22] & 110. It is also puzzling that the Index shows 110 in C minor but it is given here in D minor. Some explanation is needed, not just the note ‘set from Gordon [Dodd]’s manuscript edition without referring back to the original’. ‘No.s’ is printed instead of ‘Nos.’ on the cover. Fortunately the music setting (like the music) is fine. Each costs £2.35.

Tomkins’ consort music is complete in *Musica Britannica* 59, but a separate edition of two three-part Fantasies is welcome (*Music Edition* 189; £1.75). Apart from having parts, it has the four-minim bars that players prefer. There are at least four ways to number them: the new edition heads them 1 & 2, though the cover gives VdGS 13 & 15; MB gives the alternatives of Fantasia XI and XIII or Nos. 13 & 15. Both are for SBB. Ranges are given for before the first piece only, so presumably apply to both – a strange procedure. One final technical quibble: even if the score is not likely to be used as an organ part, it is still useful if two pieces of two pages each are printed as openings without page-turns. The music is of high quality: players who are likely to need music for the combination should certainly have copies. Jenkins’ Fantasias 23 are complete in MB 70. *Music Edition* 190 has nos. 4-6 for TrTB. Use of an organ is plausible, so the score is not a luxury.

Gibbons’ *De La Roye Pavane*, in five parts of which only TrTB are extant, is a challenge that has attracted several completions – the Jaye Consort used to play it, the Society ran a competition some 30 years ago and John Harper printed his own version in MB 48. *Music Edition* 195

(£1.90) has a version by Mark Levy which looks idiomatic.

Music Edition 099 is a consort song by Rosemary Thorndycraft, viol-player, partner of the late George Weigand, and the only composer in this section whose name doesn't end in S (ironic, since she's the only one I haven't used in the possessive). How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? (Psalm XIII) for soprano with Tr T T B viols was written in 1972 (when, I guess, she was or had recently been a student). That was before there was much 'modern-sounding' music around for viols. Rather than guessing if it works, I'll persuade some people to try it out at a summer school and report back.

GERMAN SONGS

Anthony J. Harper *German Secular Song-Books of the Mid-Seventeenth Century: An examination of the texts in collection of songs published in the German-language area between 1624 and 1660*. Ashgate, 2003. viii + 345pp, £47.50. ISBN 0 78546 0642 2

In this solid, workmanlike book the emphasis is firmly on the texts; music takes very much a back seat, and there are neither music examples nor more than passing comment on the settings, even when the author is discussing collections that originally included melodies as well as words. Further, the emphasis is so firmly on central and northern Germany that one might have expected a geographical caveat to have been built into the sub-title: Bavaria, Switzerland, Austria might almost not exist for all the attention paid to them here. Of course, the reader will soon realize that secular song-book publication was mainly a feature of Protestant northern lands; a brief investigation of the reasons why would have been welcome. There is a short section in the introductory chapter, 'Geographical and confessional considerations', but it scarcely disarms this criticism.

These reservations apart, there is much to admire in this scholarly study. The first two chapters are a general introduction and a discussion of 'Pan-German Models: Opitz and Fleming' – two poets whose influence was and remained widespread. The three longest chapters cover The North East, Central Germany, and Hamburg and the North. The volume closes with a short Concluding Review, extensive bibliographies of primary sources and of reference works and secondary literature, and an over-selective index. The numerous lengthy quotations from the various collections, in unmodernized and untranslated German, may tax the ingenuity and patience of many a potential reader. That would be a pity, as much of this material is of high quality and considerable interest. Harper is adept at slipping in fascinating facts and anecdotes of socio-historical worth, and he argues fluently and cogently, calling on a wealth of outstanding research that he has been pursuing over many years in German archives and libraries.

The principal poets he examines are, in the North-East, the little-known Johannes Plavius, and a group centred on Königsberg that includes Simon Dach and Heinrich Albert (Schütz's nephew). In Central Germany,

the most extended chapter, the emphasis falls on Leipzig, with Christian Brehme and Gottfried Finckelthaus in the forefront, and Ernst Christoph Homburg (from Thuringia) and Andreas Hammerschmidt following not far behind. The latter was a musician who, in addition to his own secular and sacred songs, set to music poems by several of his predecessors and contemporaries. David Schirmer was a leading figure at the Dresden court; his 1664 collection, *Singende Rosen*, is one of few to contain music, in this case by Philipp Stolle. Adam Krieger combined the skills of poet and composer and is studied in some depth – as indeed is Johann Georg Schoch, the last poet to be treated in this section.

Chapter 5 is devoted to Hamburg and the North and opens with a study of Johann Rist, an occasional composer as well as poet. Gabriel Voigtländer, Philipp Zesen, Rudolph Wasserhuhn and Johann Christoph Göring, Georg Greflinger and Kaspar Stieler are others who receive more than brief attention. The range of poetic themes is broad, with infinite variations on love, friendship, moral issues, and with occasional excursions into local dialect beyond the expected regional linguistic differences. Humour comes in various shades, subtle as well as earthy. Matters of prosody and nomenclature receive full attention, and time after time one admires Harper's ability to draw valuable parallels and introduce colourful details. The book is equipped with proper, and numerous, footnotes, and I have noted a minimum of misprints and minor slips. Readers of *EMR* must now hope for a comparable study of the music of this wealth of secular songs.

Peter Branscombe

Caldara Cantata: Clori, mia bella Clori for contralto, flute, oboe and basso continuo Edited by Gail Hennessy. Green Man Press (Cal 1), 2003. 24pp + 4 parts, £7.90.

The number of cantatas by Caldara available in modern edition is tiny, so this is welcome on principle as well as for the useful combination and its intrinsic merit. It will, however, present problems to players: a whole movement in the Sinfonia has flute and oboe in unison – there's a test for good intonation and careful phrasing! I presume that the *unisoni* instruction is in the source. BC immediately spotted two editorial problems on the first page. In bar 4, should flute note 5 be a C natural? A problem that arises if 'superfluous' accidentals are omitted is that the performer is not in a position to question the editor's judgment: what seems obvious to one person may not be as obvious to another. Our guess is that the original had no sharp, so it should be treated as natural (whether shown by a round or square bracket depends on editorial policy). There would then be no need to mark the penultimate note of the bar, which has even stronger grounds for being natural – unless, of course, there is a source accidental that has been suppressed. In the next bar, the last four notes should be a third higher, however they are written in the MS: I'm sure that, if they had been in the oboe part, Gail would have played them correctly almost without thought. One final comment: the original vocal clef is not stated nor is the range shown. It would be good to have more cantatas with the same ensemble.

PRB

John Hingeston *The Fantasia-Suites for Violin, Bass viol and Organ* edited by Richard Charteris. PRB Productions (VCo47) 2003. 63pp + 3 parts, \$47.00

One distinguished reader of *EMR* told me that, in preparation for a concert in Huntingdon in 1999 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Oliver Cromwell's birth (Cromwell and Pepys were the only people of note here until John Major), he ploughed through all of Hingeston's music and found nothing he really thought worth playing. My own recollection of his music from my viol-playing days is not quite so negative, though he is certainly not a composer who can match Jenkins or Lawes. PRB are presumably finding customers ready to come back for more, since this is the sixth Hingeston collection it has published. There are nine suites here, each comprising Fantazia, Almande and Ayre. A tenth Suite survives only as a keyboard part. It is a pity that it isn't included here, since Hingeston (scribe as well as composer) suggests that it may be played by a 'Pedall Harpsicord'. The two sources of the set were both copied by or for the composer. Only one is complete, Bodleian Music School D.205-211, so the edition is based on this. E. 382 is an isolated organ part, like the organ part D211 in the hand of the composer. The editor chooses to print the D.211 organ part, which is on the whole sensible; but it is a pity that those players (probably the majority!) who neglect to read the introduction or commentary will miss the fact that E. 382 has dynamics in the Fantazia of No. 9. A note on what sort of organ of the period could negotiate the quick changes required would be useful. Most of the commentary is occupied by listing variants in E. 382: a more interesting alternative would have been to have included a facsimile of it. The other matter that clutters the commentary is the listing of original time signatures, which could have been printed instead of the modern substitutes (or if not, included above the stave). The instrumentation of violin and bass viol is explicit in the sources, but the reference to a harpsichord quoted above suggests that if you don't have an organ, a harpsichord (even a pedal-less one) will do. As usual from PRB, the edition looks appealing: sadly, I didn't set up a meeting with our local players BC and Anne Jordan to play the set through before BC moved to Spain.

Dance Music for Two Lyra Viols: Airs and Dances by William Cranford, Simon Ives, Jo. Bosley & Joseph Sherley edited by Joëlle Morton. PRB Productions (VCo48), 2003. 10pp + 2 parts, \$10.00

This collection is also based on Oxford Music School MSS, in this case D. 245-7, mostly written by John Merro, probably to help his teaching of the choirboys at Gloucester Cathedral. It contains eight of its 120 pieces for two lyra viols, and is a useful introduction for anyone who is just reaching the stage of being able to negotiate tablature in tempo well enough to play with someone else. The edition provides staff-notation score and two tablature parts. Two tunings are required.

Carl Friedrich Abel *Quartet No. 3 for flute, violin, viola da gamba and cello* edited by Roy Whelden. PRB Productions (PRB CL007), 2003. 11pp + 4 parts, \$12.00

Abel is the last viol composer before the 20th century that most of us have heard of. This piece seems to have slipped through the Collected Works (or perhaps was included in a later edition than the editor has seen – it is a very early example of publication-by-photocopy, so such changes may well have been made). The interesting combination may be an attraction, though it would have enhanced sales if the editor had been able to list any other works to play with it. He goes part of the way, though, by quoting that Abel's duties in Queen Charlotte's band included playing viola parts on the gamba, so normal flute quartets could also be played thus. The gamba part lies between the violin and cello, though goes too low for a viola to be a substitute in the first movement. The middle movement is arranged from a solo gamba sonata; the flute is tacet and the violin mostly acts as a continuo filler. The finale comes from the string quartet op. 12/6. The edition is based on Berlin Staatsbibliothek MS 253/10. Another MS owned by Edgar Hunt that has no middle movement and shows other differences was published by Schott in 1951. It's an attractive piece, worth republishing in its fuller form. The editor might have noted that the aria with gamba obbligato that he mentions is published by Fretwork.

FUZEAU

Vivaldi *Sonates pour violon et basse continue Opus II*. Présentation par Nicolas Fromageot. Fuzeau (No 5663), 2003. 2 vols in folder, €28.44

Fuzeau's Vivaldi facsimiles are all interesting. There are several sets of chamber music from MSS and the cello sonatas from MSS and print.* For opus 2, the folder contains the two major editions: Venice 1709 and Amsterdam 1710. The former is the primary source, but quavers and semiquavers are unbeamed. The Amsterdam print is thus much easier for the player, though possibly at the expense of implying groupings that the earlier print leaves open. The detailed differences are presumably the work of the Amsterdam editor or engraver with no fresh input from the composer. Nicolas Fromageot has listed them, which mostly concern the placing of slurs. Fuzeau chooses the Amsterdam edition for its main text. A separate volume gives the Venice version reduced with four pages on one preceded by introduction and commentary, plus the title and first page of a Walsh edition of c.1721. If I have a quibble, it is that the four-to-a-page layout is odd with page 1 on the left and page 2 on the right, corrected at page 36 when a blank 35 is omitted: it looks strange to have the numbers on the inside of the pages and maligns the printer by implying that he had no regard for turns.

* Since writing this, I've seen the Fuzeau set of the Cello Sonatas (No 5254; 34,98), published in 1996. It contains the Paris edition of 1740, the MS on which it was probably based, and two other MS groups, overlapping with the published set and three additional sonatas.

Montéclair *Concerts à deux flûtes traversières sans basses*, 1724. Présentation par Anne Pichard. Fuzeau (No. 5839), 2003. 95pp, €29.80.

I'm no great fan of music for flutes without bass: they are probably best played in private rather than inflicted on all but the most sympathetic public. But these look good of their type. The print is large enough for two players to read one copy: the only visual problem is mastering the clef (G on bottom line). But that's something you have to do to benefit from the economy of buying facsimiles rather than modern editions. The introduction has the usual summary of the composer's life but nothing on the music that follows. The six Concerts were published separately at 35 sous each, though the advert on p. 64 gives a different price. It seems a very risky way of publication such short pieces unless most purchasers subscribed to the whole set. Fuzeau's catalogue also announces two further new facsimiles from the same composer: *Concerts pour la flûte traversière avec la basse chiffrée*, 1724 (No. 5837; €33.84) and *Sérénade ou concert*, dances for treble and bass with optional second treble (No. 5857; €34.79).

Louis-Gabriel Guillemain *Six sonates en quatuor ou conversations galantes et amusantes: flûte traversière, violon, basse de viole, basse continue. Ouvre XII, 1743. Présentation par les étudiants du Ce.F.E. de M. d'Île-de-France. Fuzeau (No. 5818), 2003. 5 vols in folder, €30.14.*

I am remarkably ignorant about Guillemain (1705-70) considering that this is the fifth of his works that Fuzeau has published. He was a violinist, probably a pupil of Somis, who made a good living in Paris yet still managed to live beyond his means. He became an alcoholic then committed suicide – a story that could well have made a romantic novel or opera, perhaps with the story exaggerated by explaining his virtuoso, Paganini-anticipating solo-violin caprices by a selling of the soul to the devil. The editors tell us that these pieces are idiomatic to their instruments, and it certainly seems so from the parts. The English text of the introduction might explain what a Ce. F. E. de M. is; it seems a good idea to give students the editorial experience of doing the background work for the introduction.

Jean-Michael Muller *XII Sonates: Hautbois solo, Hautbois ou violon 1 – Hautbois ou violon 2 – Alto viola – Basse continue. Présentation par Michel Giboureau. Fuzeau (No. 5820), 2003. 6 vols in folder, €37.82.*

On the evidence of the chronological table in the introductory leaflet, very little is known about Muller. He was born in Schmalkalden (about 20 miles south of Eisenach) in 1683 and died at Hanau (near Frankfurt, about 80 miles south-west of his birthplace) in 1743 – the editor might have spared the reader having to consult a map to locate these obscure places. It is odd that he has taken his title from the MS folders that surround the set of printed parts used (at Lund). The title page is more informative: *XII Sonates à un Hautbois de Concert, qu'on doit jouer sur cet Instrument sur tout quand il y a écrit Solo, deux Hautbois ou*

Violons, une Taille, un Fagot & Basse Continue pour le Clavecin, ou Basse de Violon... Premier Ouvrage. The publisher was Estienne Roger; the editor's chronological table gives the date 1712, though the edition reproduced has a plate number, so must be a later printing. The part called *taille* on the title page has *Alto* at the top of each page, and there is a single figured part headed *Organo e Violoncello*. The *taille/alto* part fits the tenor oboe, so these pieces can be played by oboe band: a very useful addition to the repertoire.

Berlioz *Mélodies irlandaises. Les sources... Présentation par Isabelle Poinloup. Fuzeau (No. 5750), 2003. 6 vols in folder, €47.20.*

This is a lavish collection of the source-material of Berlioz's *Neuf Mélodies Imitées de l'Anglais Irish Melodies* (op. 2, 1830), dedicated to their inspirer Thomas Moore. There are facsimiles of the 1830 Schlesinger edition and the 1849 Richault revision. 33 pages become 56, not so much because of musical changes (though there are some). Schlesinger's attempt to economise by printing just the vocal parts for later verses was replaced by printing the verses in full (I'm using 'verse' in the English sense: Fuzeau's French introduction has 'couplets', the English & German 'strophe'). 1830 has a type-rich title page with the title used at the beginning of this paragraph, 1849 is called just *Irlande: 9 Mélodies* and has an image of woman (probably blacker and less clear than intended) which was presumably used separately for each song; unlike 1830, there is no continuous pagination. In 1830, most songs have initial literary quotations, which 1849 drops. 1849 also omits the symbols that head some of the 1830 songs: a sword for *Chant Guerrier*, a cup for *Chanson à Boire* and a tetragrammaton for *Chant Sacré*. 1849 adds two pages to explain the background of the *Élégie à la mémoire du malheureux Emmet*. Additional booklets give full scores for *Chant Sacré* and *La belle voyageuse* (Richault 1842 & 1843) plus a set of MS parts of the latter. We are not told whether this is the complete set or whether doublets are omitted: if the latter, it would have been useful to have known how many of each part there were. The booklet with the editorial information also includes the autograph of the orchestration of *Hélène*. While not strictly relevant, it would have been nice to have Moore's original texts somewhere in the package. This is a bit late for *EMR* but anyone interested in Berlioz will find this fascinating.

RINCK AGAIN

Johann Christian Heinrich Rinck: *Dokumente zu Leben und Werk* edited by Christoph Dohr. Dohr Verlag 2003. ISBN 3-935566-07-3. 288pp + Rinck Fest Köln 2003 Programm (32pp, full colour) + Christian Erdmann Rancke und sein Pianoforte (32pp, full colour). € 27.80

When CB reviewed an edition and CD of some of Rinck's music in June 2003, he had no way of knowing that a book containing almost everything there is to know about him was about to appear. Not only that, but at the very time we were preparing the last issue of *EMR* a festival in

memory of him was actually in full swing in Cologne, including performances of keyboard, vocal, chamber, orchestral and choral works. There appear to be two men behind the whole thing: Christoph Dohr, the editor of the present book and publisher of Rinck's music, and fortepianist Oliver Drechsel, the player on the CD mentioned above and champion of Rinck's works. Rinck's main claim to fame was his preparation of the piano score of Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* for Schott. Some organists and pianists recognised him as a gifted composer (schooled in the Bach tradition direct from Kittel, his one-time teacher) whose principle aim seems to have been the provision of music that would be accessible to players of only moderate talent.

This book contains his autobiography (including an anecdote of him playing a piece with a difficult pedal part as a child, with his father holding on, lest he fell off the organ stool) which is valuable, as much as anything, for the information on Kittel's performing and teaching abilities, including his habit of accompanying chorales in church services in five or even six parts. This is followed by two articles on Rinck's Chorale Preludes and organ music, and then citations of every 19th-century lexicon article known to Herr Dohr. Finally there are two colour brochures, one being the programme for the Rinck-Fest 2003, and the other an impressive study of the fortepiano from Riga which Drechsel used on his CD and in the concerts in Cologne.

It may seem strange after all this comprehensive information that my immediate thought went along the line of 'Now all we need is a book about the music', but that is exactly what should follow. Christoph Dohr has put together a Ph.D. guidebook. The more of Rinck's music that is made available (his library is at Yale, and Herr Dohr undoubtedly intends to add to the list in his own catalogue) increases the possibility for someone to make a proper analytical study of it, and assess Rinck the composer, not the organist.

Vater Rinck has been done proud by this book: practically unknown in our day (at least, he was to me), he was famous enough to receive congratulations on the 50th anniversary of his professional career from a whole list of prominent English organists. Maybe this will draw attention once more to the man and his music. BC
My apologies: last month I included in my review of Rinck's piano music a Sonatine à quatre mains in C (Edition Dohr 23072). When finding somewhere to shelve it after the magazine had been sent out, I noticed that I had erroneously assumed that it was by the same composer as the other two pieces from Dohr. My only excuse is that, having concentrated on the publication that caught my fancy, Rinck's two-part Exercises in all the keys, I was less interested in the two four-hands issues, and just mentioned them in passing. The main value of the Kozeluch is the presence of original fingering. CB

Gwenlyn Setterfield *Niki Goldschmidt: A Life in Canadian Music*. Toronto UP, 2003. xv + 222pp, \$CAN32.00. ISBN 0 8020 4807 2

I was puzzled when this arrived, glanced through the index, found no names that I knew, and assumed that this

was nothing to do with early music. But I was feeling idle, started to read, and continued without stopping until I had finished. I found no more about early music, but was fascinated by the career of a man born near Brno in 1908 and still alive to be artistic director of Canada's year-long millennium artistic programme. He was a pianist and singer (accompanying himself), a conductor (especially of opera, continuing into his late 80s), and an inspired administrator who seems to have been behind much that was good in Canadian musical life for the last 50 years of the 20th century. All festival directors should read it for inspiration.

I'd have appreciated some more solid information and perhaps a chronology; the author might have taken advice from Honey Meconi (see p. 2) about how to tabulate information. It is full of stories. One I think I'd heard before: advice from Richard Strauss (who doesn't appear in the index so I'm quoting from memory) that to learn to orchestrate you should study, not his example, but a quartet by Haydn, the Prelude to *Lohengrin* and all of Bizet's *Carmen*. The other concerns an Eskimo [Inuit to the PC] ensemble who were invited to appear at a festival with the expectation that they would perform native music; but German missionaries had been at work, and instead they performed Bach cantatas.

DISCOVERIES

The items listed here are not discoveries in the sense of music that has hitherto been lost to the musical world but items which I think are unreviewed (though I don't have an index to check) which I found when recently reorganising my work area. Apologies to the publishers.

Alonso Lobo *Lamentationes Ieremiae Prophetiae: Lectio Primo in Officio Tenebrarum Sabbati Sancti* SSAATB. Transcribed & edited by Bruno Turner. Mapa Mundi (A 153)

Telemann *Duetto from Der getreue Music-Meister*. Practicall Musicke Editions (ed. Maurice Rogers). [2 separate publications: in A in alto clef for 2 bass or tenor viols in alto clef (No. 119) or in G for flutes/2 descant recorders/2 treble viols (No. 120)]

Roland Marais *Eight Preludes* transcribed for Harpsichord by Don Simons (PCH Publishing).

Beethoven *A Select Collection of Original Irish Airs... with Symphonies & Accompaniments for the Piano Forte, Violin, & Violoncello*. Vol. II (Nos. 31-60), Musica Repartita (MR 360B). [Facsimile of the 1816 edition by G. Thomson, Edinburgh, 1816.]

These two books received are hardly relevant to *EMR*, though the first author has also written on music in Paris 600 years earlier.

Mark Everist *Music Drama at the Paris Odéon 1824-1828*. California UP, 2002. xvii + 331pp, \$60.00 ISBN 0 520 23445 6

John Daverio *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann & Brahms*. Oxford UP, 2002. xii + 310pp, £40.00. ISBN 0 19 513296 3

Two books that arrived in the last few days and will be reviewed in the next issue are the excellent guide to the keyboard instruments at Fenton House and Maggie Kilbey's *Curtal, Dulcian, Bajón*, along with new editions of Handel etc. from Bärenreiter and Breitkopf and the paperback of *A Performer's Guide to Medieval Music*.

THE WORLD'S FIRST PIANO CONCERTOS?

Richard Maunder

J. C. Bach *Op. 7/5 & 6*, C. F. Abel *Op. 11/2*, Mozart *K.107/1*, Hayes *Concerto 4* (1769), Hook *Op. 1/5*. David Owen Norris (square piano), Sonnerie: Monica Huggett, Emilia Benjāmin, Joseph Crouch 79' 57"
Avie Records AV0014

At the Vermillion conference in 2000 to mark the 300th anniversary of Cristofori's *Arpicembalo che fa' il piano, e il forte* – reported in the July 2000 *EMR* – I gave a talk called 'The earliest piano concertos'. Who first composed a keyboard concerto with the piano in mind, and why was it apparently some 70 years after the piano's invention before anyone did so? The answer to the second question, I suggested, was that the instruments of Cristofori and his followers, with hammers of rolled paper topped with soft leather, lacked the power and brilliance of the harpsichord. As Scipione Maffei wrote in 1711 after visiting Cristofori, 'To accompany a singer or a single instrument, or even in small ensembles, [the piano] certainly succeeds perfectly: though this is not its principal intention, which is rather to be played alone, like the lute, the harp, the six-stringed viol and other softer-toned instruments'. It was only when more robust pianos became available that composers took to writing concertos for them. The first such instruments were made in London by Americus Backers, probably in the late 1760s; sure enough, piano concertos began to appear in London concerts about then, the earliest known reference being to a 'Concerto on the Forte Piano' played by James Hook on 7 April 1768. It may have been one of his *Six Concertos for the Harpsichord or Forte-Piano*, published a few years later; meanwhile, Philip Hayes's *Six Concertos for the Organ, Harpsichord, or Forte-Piano* appeared in 1769, and J. C. Bach's well known *Op. 7* set, 'per il Cembalo o Piano e Forte', in 1770. Which of the three composers was actually the first in the field is not known.

Now a CD of concertos by Hook, Hayes and J. C. Bach has appeared, rather pretentiously entitled *The World's First Piano Concertos*; it also includes one by Abel, and Mozart's arrangement of J. C. Bach's sonata *Op. 5/2* (not *Op. 5/3* as stated on the cover). But, perhaps as a result of a 'Chinese whispers' process, David Owen Norris says that the earliest piano concertos were inspired by the Zumpe square, first made in 1766, and duly plays them on that instrument instead of on a Backers grand, whose existence he does not mention at all. It is hard to believe that such a tiny instrument finally solved the balance problems experienced with earlier pianos, and the argument that the accompaniment of just two violins and cello was specifically designed to match the square's 'delicate tones' simply doesn't hold water. Composers had long recognized that even harpsichord concertos needed a light accompaniment, and the

string-trio scoring had been common in England for some years before Zumpe made his first squares. It is used, for example, in Giuseppe Sammartini's *Concertos for the Harpsichord or Organ*, *Op. 9*, posthumously published in 1754, and in J. C. Bach's *Op. 1* harpsichord concertos of 1763. Thus an accompaniment of two violins and cello is not specific to a piano concerto, let alone to one expressly for the Zumpe square. Faced with a glaring counter-example to his own hypothesis (Hayes's No. 4, for keyboard and string quartet), Norris tries disingenuously to suggest that the viola part was added later, for publication (why?); his arrangement for string trio sounds plausible enough, but he has had to redistribute the string parts in more radical ways than he admits since the viola often plays an essential role in Hayes's four-part texture.

It is difficult to see why Mozart's *K.107/1* is included, except as an excuse to play the Zumpe with what purports to be J. C. Bach's signature on its soundboard. But the argument is again full of holes: although Bach's original of 1766 was almost certainly written for the new Zumpe, Mozart's concerto arrangement (Salzburg, 1772) omits all the dynamic markings from the solo part and must have been intended for harpsichord. And the idea that this particular Zumpe inspired the A minor sonata, *K. 310*, is preposterous: Mozart must surely have had in mind an instrument at least as powerful as the Stein grands he had seen and played in Augsburg the previous autumn. Perhaps it was a Backers?

I'm glad to report, though, that the string playing on this CD is as excellent as is to be expected from Sonnerie. Norris plays with spirit and enthusiasm, but I don't like the way he raises the treble dampers throughout almost all solo passages. It blurs the harmonies, and it completely obliterates the notated articulation, such as the frequent distinction between legato crotchets and quavers alternating with quaver rests. Even after repeated listening, the sound remains unpleasant to my ear. Is this what inspired J. C. Bach and Mozart? I doubt it.

Who *did* write the first piano concerto? It *might* have been one of Hook, Hayes or J. C. Bach; but, as Miklós Spányi has pointed out, a case can be made for C. P. E. Bach's *H. 422* of 1746. Silbermann pianos were certainly used for continuo work in Berlin at the time, and the solo part has dynamics ranging from *pp* to *f*.

Facsimiles of J. C. Bach's opus 1 and opus 7 and of Hook's 6 Concertos are published by Kings' Music.

J. C. Bach: *op. 1* kbd £7.50, vln 1, 2, vlc £2.50 each

J. C. Bach: *op. 7* kbd £10.00, vln 1, 2, vlc £3.00 each

Hook: *6 Concertos* kbd £10.00, vln 1, 2, vlc £3.50 each

RAVENS' VIEW

Simon Ravens

There is a scene in the Ken Russell film *The Music Lovers* in which, having heard the composer play his First Piano Concerto, one of Tchaikovsky's teachers at the Conservatoire walks up the deserted hall to the piano. He sits down and vamps his way through the opening chords, and as he does so he hurls a few 'empty vessels make the loudest noise' insults in Tchaikovsky's direction. Now, although that teacher is supposed to represent the face of stolid conservatism, I remember that about fifteen years ago, when I saw the film, I felt a sneaking sympathy with his opinion. Tchaikovsky's music seemed to be either overblown or twee, and I was interested in neither.

What made me sit up and realise that there really was a composer lurking in between those extremes was the letter scene from *Onegin*. I first heard this a few years ago during the 'Tchaikovsky Experience' on the South Bank, during which Roger Norrington tried to stress that the composer was a classicist at heart. Although the music convinced me, I wasn't convinced by that 'classical' approach, then or now. After the magisterial build-up of David Brown's biographical talk, the *Pathétique* the OAE played in that concert seemed inconsequential. And their encore *Danse des Mirilions* (that's the Fruit and Nut tune for those who know their Tchaikovsky about as well as I do) seemed witty but self-consciously so.

For my own Tchaikovsky penny to finally drop, it has taken a new recording by Jos van Immerseel's Belgian period orchestra Anima Eterna. This isn't the place for another review, so let me just say wonderful, wonderful, wonderful! (I always think that, never mind star ratings, the truest barometer of how a critic really rates a CD would be a simple tally of how many times they have played the recording for pleasure. If this were the criterion then this recording would gain my highest accolade.)

The two works on the disc – the 4th Symphony and the *Nutcracker* – represent the extremes of Tchaikovsky's musical personality and both are embraced convincingly by Anima Eterna. Or at least, they are to my Tchaikovsky-naïve ears: it simply sounds right: emotionally gripping and sonically little short of sublime.

One thing that interests me is how Tchaikovsky-wise ears are likely to hear it. In Grove Music, the response when I have played it to knowing customers has been mixed. One customer, whose mind and ears I respect, immediately questioned the lack of vibrato in the woodwind: where, he asked, did the Leningrad Philharmonic's tradition of 'warm' wind playing come from if it didn't come from the playing of Tchaikovsky's orchestras? My answer, as it tends to be of any question which assumes traditions to have historical validity, was 'Chinese whispers', but I am

hoping that a reader of *EMR* will be able to offer something a little more concrete. Other customers have, more predictably, missed the sheer weight of sound they get with a larger modern orchestra. Early music buffs, on the other hand, have not taken me entirely seriously when I try to flog them Tchaikovsky.

There is a view, I know, that the HIP movement was always likely to reap diminishing returns as it chugged its way down the musical history line towards the present day. There is a logic behind this opinion, I know: the very fact that a shiny new Elkhart trombone is more like the kind of trombone Wagner knew than a Gabrieli sackbut suggests that it is the later music which stands to suffer least from being played on modern instruments. I don't think it is quite as cut and dried as that. Composers such as Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and Wagner were so fastidious about the specific instruments they approved of that we owe it to them to recreate those sounds. More than that, the familiarity we assume to have with the sound of the late romantic orchestra means that I, for one, am invariably spellbound when I have the double-take of hearing those sonorities subtly tweaked by an ensemble like Anima Eterna.

So, as the HIP train has approached the late-romantic station (I have a feeling that this analogy is soon to hit the buffers) there have been plenty of us eager to greet it. The problem is that now it has arrived in town, the record companies with the wherewithal to entertain it have largely packed up shop. (It is noticeable that Anima Eterna's Tchaikovsky (on Zig-Zag, a very minor label) credits not just its financial benefactors, but implies that the players also sponsored the project.) I have a feeling that a good HIP *Meistersinger*, for instance, would revolutionise our image of that composer, but how will that become a reality? In the theatre it is possible that in due course Glyndbourne, with its symbiotic link to the OAE, will bite the bullet and offer us period Wagner, but in the recording studio? Hardly likely. In the meantime, we will be grateful sporadic revelations such as Jos van Immerseel's Tchaikovsky.

One sign of the loss-of-nerve of the record industry was, in fact, the refusal of EMI to record the *Pathétique*, even though most of the other Norrington experiences had been recorded immediately afterwards. I was more impressed by the performance than Simon, and also, though I tend to avoid the word 'classical', find the Letter Scene Mozartian – probably a critical cliché; but I'd read virtually nothing on Tchaikovsky until I put together the exhibition that accompanied that weekend. I'm sorry we didn't get the Anima Eterna disc for review: we got Zig-Zag discs for a few months, then supply stopped. I'd love to hear a HIP *Meistersinger*. CB

MUSIC IN LONDON

Andrew Benson-Wilson

The record company ECM continues to break musical boundaries. Their recent CD, *Morimor*, based on research by Helga Thoene on the *Ciaccona* from Bach's Partita in D minor, presents her notion that it includes quotations from several chorale melodies and is, in fact, an 'epitaph in music' to Maria Barbara Bach. Violinist Christoph Poppen worked with ECM's Manfred Eicher to bring this research to a wider public through a recording with The Hilliard Ensemble. The CD programme was presented in two recent concerts in England, at King's College, Cambridge, and The Temple Church, London (14 May), the latter in aid of the Family Welfare Association. In their concert performance, the five movements of the Partita were first performed straight, with chorales interspersed. Then, after the *Ciaccona*, The Hilliard Ensemble sang a series of eight chorales, which were then 'combined' with the *Ciaccona* in a performance for violin and four voices, with the singers adding chorale phrases, or fragments of phrases, to the violin part. The moving chorale melody 'Den Tod niemand zwingen kunnt', exquisitely sung by Steven Harrold, was repeated at intervals throughout the concert. As the project was initiated by the violinist Christoph Poppen, it might seem churlish to point out that he was not playing a baroque violin, and his playing was some way removed from what *EMR* readers might expect of a historically informed performance, notably in the tone and dynamics used. In the large acoustic of The Temple Church, there was a need for more articulation, with several passages sounding rushed. There was also a general sense that the violin figuration was taking precedence over the underlying harmonic structure, although the arpeggio passages in the *Ciaccona* were pleasantly light and airy, at least at the start. Listening to eight unaccompanied chorales in a row might have been a tall order for an audience, but the Hilliard Ensemble's spectacular singing put paid to any doubts. For this concert, the distinctive tones of their usual countertenor top line were replaced with soprano Monika Mauch – a most impressive singer with a splendidly clear voice. Relegated to an alto role, David James reined in his normally edgy tone producing, along with Steven Harrold and Gordon Jones, one of the most coherent sounds that I have heard from the Hilliards. I will leave it for others to comment on whether the thesis behind this programme is a valid one, but did wonder whether the little fragments of chorale could have been fitted to other pieces without too much difficulty. Only occasionally were more substantial sections of melody heard, and some of the most distinctive passages of the *Ciaccona* seemed not to be connected to a chorale. But as a concert performance, devoid of the more academic interest that might be assumed when listening to the CD, this worked surprisingly well.

I have been a bit wary of Frans Brüggen's conducting in

previous reviews, usually with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. I have often wondered just how much he contributes to the proceedings. But, with his own Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century (Barbican 27 May) he showed that he was capable of taking the reins and producing a performance that was spacious, strong and clearly directed. An interesting pairing of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony and Beethoven's earlier *Eroica* (first performed in Vienna's Theater an der Wien, mentioned in last month's column) allowed Brüggen to delve deep into both works, seeking out hidden corners in a way that was far from predictable. He was not afraid of using rubato to reinforce the structure of the music, and also effectively accentuated little details and exposed fresh insights by careful balance of the orchestral textures. For example, the cello-introduced second subject of the Schubert symphony was nicely understated in comparison with many other interpretations. The writer of the programme notes assumed that the audience would be unfamiliar with performance on period instruments or period style, and made several mentions of the sort of sound that Brüggen would be aiming for. I wonder if this was necessary – I have a feeling that the capacity audience knew what they were in for. My only criticism was the array of strange noises that Brüggen was producing. I have not heard this from him before and I hope it is not a sign of things to come. It was most distracting, even from my seat fairly well back in the stalls.

American countertenor David Daniels is a regular visitor to the Barbican and has built up quite a following, particularly, it would seem, from a specific sector of London life. For his latest visit (1 June) he was accompanied by the Canadian group Les Violons du Roy directed by Bernard Labadie. According to their programme note, this group is 'strongly influenced by current understanding of performance practice of the 17th and early 18th centuries', so the first surprise was that they play on modern instruments. Although they did show some understanding of the techniques of the period in their two instrumental pieces (Bach's First Suite and Handel's Concerto Grosso Op. 6/7) there were just too many odd moments for my liking. The conducting of Bernard Labadie didn't help. His inappropriately grand gestures rarely seemed to translate into much action from the band and his repeated loud sniffs just irritated. His interpretations were far too obvious, with little subtlety or musical depth. He seemed to try to get every possible move into every movement and his consistently drawn out cadences showed too much romantic influence. Tricky moments from the players included overblown oboes (played 'en chamade') producing some horrible yelps at the end of the Forlane, slushy violin playing and some awkwardly incomplete cadenzas in the

Bach Suite. David Daniels sang Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* and Bach's *Ich habe genug*. His singing was relatively restrained in volume, to the extent that some of his lower notes were inaudible. His flexible approach to the rhythmic pulse led to some separation from the orchestra, and he spent much of the time singing slightly behind the beat. There was a lack of colour in his voice, possibly a result of not opening his mouth enough, and his consistent and alarmingly strong vibrato played havoc with intonation, notably making long held notes sound flat. In my last review of Daniels I wondered if I was warming slightly towards his very operatic, almost soprano countertenor voice, but I fear that I have cooled off again.

The Early Opera Company is becoming increasingly inventive, as evidenced by their fully-staged production of Handel's oratorio *Susanna* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (5 June). *Susanna* is one of the more obvious oratorios to convert to opera, with its clearly defined characters and specific locations – indeed, Lady Shaftesbury commented after one of the original opening night that it had a 'light operatic style'. It has a strong advantage over many Handel operas in having a comprehensible story line – the attempted seduction of the beautiful young Susanna by two Elders as she bathes naked, and her rescue by Daniel from their subsequent false accusations. As one of the few Biblical stories to feature a young girl with her kit off, it has always been a popular theme for artists, although it was less often used by composers. This production avoided any nudity (how would the English National Opera have done it, I wonder), but it certainly reinforced Handel's interpretation of *Susanna* as a far from innocent young lass – the work opens with her marriage to Joachim, complete with beating of pulses and swelling of breasts, and the underlying eroticism in later scenes was richly exposed (in the Novello vocal score, the more erotically-charged words were changed). The stage setting was that of *Susanna's* trial, in a vaguely modern, if not terribly British, courtroom – the usher and court clerk, for example, wore brown pullovers and, although one juror was allowed to appear in a purple shell suit, another was prevented from taking his jacket off and sitting in his shirt sleeves. The antics of the jury (eight of whom formed the chorus) were one of the staging weaknesses – they seemed incapable of sitting still, and at one moment towards the end distractingly kept leaping up and down in their seats. This was one example of some over-production that meant that, at times, it was difficult to concentrate on the music. This courtroom setting formed the backdrop for some flashbacks, some acted, some portrayed on a video screen, until the final showdown, when Daniel (in this case transformed into a young girl (Danielle?)) leapt from the audience to challenge the court. The characterisations were well done, with the seductively dressed *Susanna* effectively drawing in the two dirty old men, one of whom had armed himself with camera and binoculars, the better to stalk the young lady. The generally youngish singing cast were very effective, with particular plaudits for Rachel Nicholls in the title role. Her strong, focussed voice made good use of vibrato

and sounded especially seductive in her mezzo register. Rebecca Bottone (a name that caused my spell-checker some concern) was also impressive with her contribution from the audience as the Daniel replacement. Such was the involvement of the audience in the plot, that the two Elders were soundly booed as they came on for their bows, but as singers Simon Kirkbride and Arwel Huw Morgan deserved a better reception. Christian Curnyn's conducting was clean and crisp and well suited to the acoustic and the antics on stage. It was a shame that so many instrumental pieces were overlaid with hectic stage activity. Although there were one or two lapses from the band, their overall standard was good. Netia Jones's design/direction was effective, albeit with a few hiccups. I was certainly more impressed with it than the loudly spoken reviewer sitting behind me who was very scathing.

In already busy months, the Lufthansa and Spitalfields Festivals conspire to fill early music lovers' diaries in June. I couldn't get to the first three of the Lufthansa concerts, but did hear the Chicago born and trained harpsichordist Mizti Meyerson (St John's, Smith Square, Saturday 14 June). I almost immediately regretted not having heard the first three concerts instead – this one was certainly not representative of the high musical standards that I expect from the Lufthansa Festival. I just couldn't make Miss Meyerson out. Her playing was by and large accurate, impressively so in fact, and she had a nice warmed-toned harpsichord to play her programme of French music on. But her increasingly irritating mannerisms, visual and aural, made this a very uncomfortable concert to sit through. First the music. Meyerson plays in a way that reminded of a certain type of female piano teacher who, lacking any innate musicality, has been taught, and teaches, how to apply formulaic layers of self indulgent 'emotion' onto strictly played notes. So, frequently, but particularly noticeably in the Minuets, every phrase was treated as a separate entity, complete with its own initial accelerando, concluding rallentando and separating pause. Every piece ended with the addition of a final isolated note, rhythmically out of step with the preceding rallentando, and sounding just after the usual cadential spread had run its natural course, embarrassingly late and awkwardly prominent, either as a carefully misplaced bass note or, even more oddly, as an inconsequential note somewhere within the final chord. Rather ungainly *notes inégales* were applied self-consciously rather than growing naturally out of the music and being the essential element of *bon goût*. Trills were performed with remarkable precision, but were entirely unsuitable to the flowing and often improvisatory nature of the music. Unmeasured preludes sounded as though they had been very carefully worked out and rehearsed rather than evolving from the starkly written score. Those few final chords that were not given the expansive pause and plink treatment were emphatic and abrupt, notably at the end of the Courante in Rameau's Suite in A minor. The cadence to *La Favourite* from Couperin's 3rd *ordre* was frankly silly. Playing like this would have made uncomfortable listening even via a CD or broadcast. But then there was the weird physical

posturing that accompanied the music. As Meyerson walked on stage, she fixed her face into what I suppose was meant to be a saintly smile, and retained that throughout the whole of the first piece, having carefully positioned the harpsichord so that her face was angled towards the audience. As if that wasn't distracting enough, we then had the ungainly shoulder heave and jiggling head. As with the facial expressions, these quirky bodily movements were usually applied when the music was fairly straightforward – when things got tricky, the smile was replaced by a stern grimace and the eyes were fixed rigidly on the music. At times, she bounced up and down so much that she lifted herself bodily off her seat, using her fingers on the keyboard as leverage – so much for sensitive touch. Of course, we had the 'cadential floating hands' syndrome: in one case, the whole cadential bar was played with one hand while the other was wafted around at shoulder height. Do players really think that this makes an audience think they are terribly musical? To me, it just looks daft. As the concert wore on, the playing and grimacing got even worse. A late addition to her repertoire was to interrupt the flow of the music altogether and turn towards the audience with a 'furrowed brow and raised eyebrow' face before continuing. I tried closing my eyes and listening just to the music. I tried mentally blocking out the sound and concentrating on the weird array of physical gesturing. My companion, who knows a thing or two about harpsichord playing, was eventually reduced to combining both, and left at the interval. An extraordinary performance.

This year's Spitalfields Festival reinforces its already impressive community-based focus by concentrating on the heritage of the Huguenots, settlers in the Spitalfields area in the 16th and 17th century. Indeed, the first organist of the newly built Christ Church Spitalfields (the normal home of the Festival, but closed for restoration at the moment) was the Huguenot Peter Prelleur. In its early life, the Dutch Church in the City of London was used by Huguenots, although Ton Koopman's organ recital there (12 June) of works by Buxtehude, Sweelinck, Byrd, Couperin and Bach didn't reflect that tradition. Such was the improvisatory nature of his playing that I am tempted to write that this was a recital of works by Ton Koopman, loosely based on ideas by Buxtehude, Sweelinck, Byrd, Couperin and Bach. Buxtehude's opening Praeludium in C was treated to an extraordinarily cavalier interpretation, played at breakneck speed with no relaxation for the various interlude sections and fistfuls of wrong notes. Having sold out a 7.00 p.m. concert, I was hearing a 9.00 p.m. repeat; had I not heard other performances by him in the same style, some aspects of it might charitably be put down to tiredness. Fast playing can be exhilarating, but not if it leads to such wild note inaccuracy and blurred and incoherent passages. His habit of adding additional notes in a totally different idiom to the piece being performed also become tiresome, as did his application of a universal Koopman style of ornamentation, again showing no concern for the musical heritage of the composer being performed. His touch is remarkably heavy on the

keyboard – I was sitting about as far away from the organ console as I could get, but could still hear his fingers stabbing at the keys, frequently from several inches above them. When he managed to control his spiky nervous energy, he played with conviction – Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C minor and *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* were both effective, with a nice sense of momentum in the former. Buxtehude's Passacaglia in D minor was also well played, although the meandering ornamented cadence was a let-down. I have praised Koopman's playing on CD several times (his record company quotes my reviews in their publicity), but he can be a most exasperating player to listen to. As long as nobody attempts to copy his style (which, curiously, one or two do), his high risk playing can sometimes work. Like the little girl with the curl, when he is good he is very, very good, but when he is bad, he is horrid.

With the temporary loss of their normal home, The Spitalfields Festival has been turning up in some delightful venues, not least Wilton's Music Hall, hidden away in an alley just off Cable Street (it was the main focus of the 1936 anti-fascist Cable Street Riots). Built in 1858 at the back of a pub, it has gone through several incarnations and was saved from demolition in the 1960s by Laurence Olivier, Peter Sellers and John Betjeman, amongst others. Still only partially restored, it retains the endearingly distinctive Spitalfields architectural setting of bare bricks, unpainted walls and scaffolding (although John Betjeman would have been pleased to note that they have restored the roof). Most of the concerts of the middle week of the Festival were at Wilton's, including a performance of *Dido and Aeneas*, the 'Four Seasons' masque from *The Island Princess* and extracts from *Baucus and Philemon* by the local Huguenot organist and composer, Peter Prelleur, presented by Midsummer Opera (17 June). For entertainment value alone, *The Four Seasons; or, Love in Every Age* masque stood out. With contributions from several composers, including Daniel Purcell and Jeremiah Clarke, this was never going to be particularly musically satisfying, but the bawdy text certainly fitted the Music Hall surroundings. Although there were some issues with the singers, this was well-staged and great fun. Overall the singing was far too romantically operatic for music of this period. Midsummer Music do seem to specialise in the romantic and later repertoire (they are currently giving concerts of Wagner, Berlioz and Stravinsky), so I do wonder why they need to delve into earlier operas*. The female singers featured jowl-joggling pitch-bending vibrato throughout, and all vocal lines were littered with portamento and other romantic devices. The ensemble in *Dido* was out of balance with an over-prominent soprano, although there was a solid and well-tuned bass. However, diction was generally good, although we were asked to remember Dido's 'feet' rather than her 'fate'. The most impressive singer for this repertoire was bass David Soar. The instrumentalists suffered some intonation problems, not helped by the heat and humidity, although there was some very good theorbo and guitar playing from Paula Chateaneuf, particularly for her avoidance of the jazzy

syncopations that are increasingly applied to guitar playing of music of this period. David Roblou's direction was generally effective, avoided excesses, although he allowed the gaps between sections in *Baucis and Philemon* to become rather too long. He was also big enough to admit to a false start being his fault – a nice touch. The acoustics of the Music Hall suited music of this scale very well, even if train noise was a frequent problem.

A double bill of concerts at Wilton's Music Hall on 19 June started with 'Huguenot Voices' with music by Claude Le Jeune, Claude Goudimel, Paschal de l'Estocart and the premier of a new Festival commission by Terry Mann; the singers of Trinity Baroque were led by Julian Podger, and there with a few contributions from four of Fretwork's violists. A slight problem with this concert was the structure: many of the pieces were relatively similar in style, and were sung end to end with not enough of the build up or thread to the concert. Fretwork played a few pieces on their own, but did not join with the singers until the very last piece, and then only made very brief contributions. That was a shame, because the sound of the voices and viols together was impressive. The singers of Trinity Baroque (Rachel Elliot, Kate Hamilton, Clare Wilkinson, Julian Podger, Thomas Guthrie and Christopher Adams) showed how it is perfectly possible to sing chansons and madrigals with occasional vibrato, while still retaining a good sense of pitch and consort. A number of the singers had a natural vibrancy to their voice, but knew how to control and use that when necessary, although one very blatant example of vibrato from a solo singer could, I think, be put down to nerves. They worked well together in various consort combinations, and there were some impressive solo contributions. The Terry Mann piece, 'Umbra sumus', was particularly successfully sung and staged, although it was a shame that the lighting was dimmed so much that the audience couldn't follow the words. Other highlights were the clever linking of music and words in de l'Estocart's 'Quel monster voy-je là' and 'Mais que ferai-je plus au Monde', the soprano lead-in to the opening of his 'Que sont les conseils humains' and the alto lead-in to the final word of the same piece and Le Jeune's lively 'Or veley le beau may' and his gently flowing 'Baise ce pauvre amoureux'.

All six member of Fretwork (Richard Boothby, Richard Campbell, Wendy Gillespie, Julia Hodgson, William Hunt and Susanna Pell) got their chance in the 9pm concert with a performance of their interpretation for six viols of Bach's Art of Fugue. Whether Bach ever intended this work to be performed at all, in the current sense of the word, and, if so, for which instrument or combination of instruments, has long been a matter for debate. But the exquisitely sensuous sound of a viol consort must be one of the most beautiful ways of presenting the complex interplay of individual lines. The sinuous tone of the viol, and the ability of players of Fretwork's calibre to gently inflect the tone and intensity of notes without any one instrument dominating, gives a life and breadth that can be missing from keyboard performance on organ or

harpsichord (but perhaps not clavichord). String quartets have to cope with the practical difficulties, but often display too wide a tonal range, and the contrasting tone colours of using mixed instrument groups can often fragment the polyphonic structure too much. Regardless of the instrumental forces, this was playing at its most sensitive. Without imposing or otherwise coming between the composer and the audience, Fretwork just let the music unfold. Their carefully placed cadences were particularly effective, gently subsiding into a moment of repose. Despite what I guess were tricky climatic conditions, they kept their tuning well, without too much intervention. A very professional performance of one of the world's musical wonders.

David Roblou does, however, have strong ideas on what early singing should be like, so it is possible that the romantically-operatic sound was a matter of deliberate intent, not the usual ignorance or thoughtlessness.

CB

PACHELBEL

Die Freuderfüllten Abends-Stunden

Source D-B Mus. ms. 16478/16 (parts G2 G2 C3 C4 C1 F4)
Perhaps written in praise of a university teacher.

1. The joy-filled evening hours, for which so many true souls long and yearn, have come to comfort us; a thousand lights illuminate the starry sky, and our duty is not to remain silent as we come to say farewell.

6. Almighty, let our beloved teacher, to whom we are so devoted, enjoy many such nights as we are about to have, and let him be free of suffering and tribulation; let him sleep in peace and salvation.

Violin 1 Bars 25 and 26: last four semiquavers EGFE (changed to match Vn 2 in 22-23)

Violin 2 Bar 27: original has B C (changed to match figuring, and Vn 1 at 24)

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J. Pachelbel: Die Freuderfüllten Abends-Stunden

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola 1

Viola 2

Soprano

Continuo

1. Die Freud - er - füll - - - - - ten A - bends - Stun - den so man - cher treu - er Sinn ge
 6. Laß Höch - ster! die - - - - - se A - bends - Stun - den zu samt dem fro - hen Licht, das

5

wün - schet und ver - langt die ha - ben sich nun - mehr zu un - serm Trost ge - fun - den und wie das Stern - Ge
 näch - stens bricht he - ran das teu - re Leh - rer - Herz, dem wir so hoch ver bun - den, un - zäh - lich - mal ver -

9

wolb mit tau - send Lich - ter prangt so mahnt die tie - fe Pflicht uns an, nicht still zu schwei -
 gnügt noch fer - ner schau - en an daß Leid und Un - ga - mach sich weit von hin - nen ma -

13

gen, da sich ein ed - les Fest will zu dem Ab - schied
 che, da - ge - gen Heil und Fried, um sei - - - - - ner Schlä - fe

17 **Ritornello**

nei - gen.
wa - che.

6 6 # 6 4 # 6

21 *tr*

6 5 7 # 4 # 6 6 6 6 4 3

25

6 5 4 3

CD REVIEWS

CHANT

Chants de l'Église de Rome des VIIe et VIIIe siècles Ensemble Organum, Marcel Pérès 56' 19" (rec 1985)
 Harmonia Mundi *Musique d'abord* HMA 1951218 £

This is a re-release of a 1985 recording which marked a significant time for Ensemble Organum where Eastern aesthetics were applied to Old Roman Chant from seventh and eighth century Byzantium. Their collaboration with Lycourgos Angelopoulos of the Greek Byzantine Choir enabled them to give a unique interpretation of this otherwise little-heard repertoire. *Tony Brett*

Jeremias: chant grégorien/chant hispanique
 Jean Pascal Ollivray, Ensemble Vox Clamantis, Jean-Erik Tulve *dir* 72' 47"
 Arion ARN 68602

This generous recording covers the Lamentations of Jeremiah and reflections on the Passion from the matins services of Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week. Whilst mostly based on the *Missel Gregorien* of Solesmes, the tones for the alphabetic acrostics (Aleph, Beth, Ghimel etc.) are taken from the transcriptions by Desclée of Spanish Benedictine sources. The booklet provided with the CD gives the texts and biographies along with a succinct but useful description of the Lamentations and the usage of the acrostics. The recording was made in the Cathedral of Sainte-Marie in Tallinn and has a spacious resonance whose echo is used as a springboard for phrasing. I felt that this caused the pace to seem a little slow. One can effectively argue that the purpose of chant is to present the text clearly and without extraneous nuance from the performer, giving equal importance to every word sung from the liturgy. Vox Clamantis have been true to this and on first playing it seemed to me a pleasant but characterless disc and I felt uncertain how to criticise it. I have had to play it quite a few times and each time I like it better. The emotion of the Lamentations and the Passion is muted by the musicians but comes through in the text and in the chant melodies. The recording is stronger for this but will please those most who give it some time. *Tony Brett*

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

MIEVEAL

From Galway to Galicia: the Celtic Shores
 Altramar 64' 48"
 Dorian DOR-93248

This traces a link between Ireland and northern Spain in a rather more sophisticated way than the music our Basque host played us at the end of May (see last issue, p. 23). But, despite archaeology and analysis, it is still very difficult to find any musical link more obvious than at the spiritual or mystical level. The booklet is impressive (apart from misprints in timings and giving the wrong order of items: the errata note does not mention the latter) and the performances are fine. It won't convince the unconverted, but it is far more plausible than most Celtic Fringe offerings. I've no rowing experience (my navigation of the Cam was confined to punting); I puzzled all the way through the item that clearly wasn't *En silvis caesa* at track 4 to imagine how the Latin verse could aid rowing, and when it came as track 5, the vigorously stressed performance didn't offer a plausible answer. Unless you are linguistically gifted, this disc needs to be heard with booklet in hand. *CB*

The Mass of Tournai; St Luke Passion
 Tonus Peregrinus 69' 42"
 Naxos 8.555861 £

This disc is introduced as 'the earliest complete polyphonic setting of the Mass and the Passion that have come down to us'. I enjoyed the Mass very much. Compared with other performances, it sounds more like a piece of music and less like a historical demonstration, and the music benefits from it. I have slight doubts about hockets being sung chorally, but otherwise the use of eight singers plus conductor worked well. (Why is their picture not captioned so that you can associate names with faces?) Most of the Passion is chant, nicely sung by Benjamin Rayfield (Evangelist) and Francis Brett (Christ) and I'm not so sure that I will want to play it through for the sake of the *turba* sections very often. It is from British Library Egerton MS 3307, probably used at St George's Windsor in the early 15th century. The minimal music is there to give a religious, not a musical experience. But the disc is so cheap that it shouldn't be a deterrent, and it may ease insomnia, relieve stress or convert you to Christianity. *CB*

15th CENTURY

Dufay Missa Puisque je vis The Binchois Consort, Andrew Kirkman 68' 17"
 Hyperion CDA67368
 + **Compère** *Omnium bonorum plena*; **Dufay** *Ave regina celorum* a4; **anon** *Concede nobis Domine, Salve maris stella*

The Mass 'Puisque je vis' has long been considered to be very similar in style to the late work of Dufay, and I am sure that Andrew Kirkman is quite right to directly attribute it to him. The present performance leaves little doubt that we are dealing with a valuable addition to the canon of vintage Dufay. As ever with this ensemble the singing is muscular and clean-cut, with Kirkman's direction bringing out every detail. Opening with the Mass, the recording usefully concludes with a lovely performance of the very familiar setting by Dufay of *Ave regina celorum*, which clearly occupies the same sound world as the Mass. Very different in texture are two anonymous motets *Concede nobis domine* and *Salve maris stella* in which passages of nervous complexity are beautifully negotiated by the singers. Loyset Compère's *Omnium bonorum plena* makes a valuable contribution to this comparison of sound worlds with its understated nobility and measured development. In addition to hearing what is undoubtedly a masterpiece by Dufay, it is particularly valuable to hear works by his anonymous and highly gifted contemporaries. *D. James Ross*

Obrecht Missa Si dederò, Missa Pfauenschwanz A:N:S Chorus, János Bali *dir*
 Hungaroton Classics HCD 31946 75' 58"

Obrecht is just a little early for me, I must confess. The A:N:S Chorus has 14 singers (3434) and they certainly fill the acoustic of the church where the recording was made with the help of the Soros Foundation. Sections in three voices are generally taken by soloists, and work very well. The first mass is a piece of typical contrapuntal ingenuity, with Agricola's tenor split into sections and only finally completely re-united in the final *Agnus Dei*. The second uses less complicated structures and is based on a popular *basse danse*. Without a score to follow these intricacies, and sadly unaware of either of the source pieces, I was forced simply to let the music wash over me, which it did most effectively on a relaxing evening after a hard day at

work. HCD 31772 is another Obrecht CD (two masses and two Marian antiphons) favourably reviewed in *EMR*99). BC This is the first of a batch of Hungaroton CDs received this month, all reviewed by BC; it may be too early for him, but I have an LP of Carver, not much later than Obrecht, on which he is singing. CB

A Songbook for Isabella: Music from the Circle of Isabella d'Este Musica Antiqua of London, Clare Wilkinson mS, Philip Thorby dir 75' 26"

Signum SIGCD039

Music by Agricola, Busnois, Caron, Isaac, Josquin, Ockeghem, Placc & anon

I meant to give this to someone else to review: I've had several early 16th-century anthologies from Musica Antiqua of London and am beginning to find them just a little limited. Not that I don't love the music and its performance. But it was, I think, significant that the pieces that stood out were the instrumental ones – not because I have any objections to Clare Wilkinson, who has a delightfully clear voice and uses it intelligently, but because the music was more striking and individual. Looking down the list of items (and I didn't do this until after I'd played the disc), it is notable that they have the names of composers attached while most of the vocal pieces are anonymous. The latter are all enjoyable, but sound a bit, to repeat the word, anonymous. To hear the players at their most musical try track 2 – *Fortuna desperata*. But elsewhere I don't get the excitement I got from their Josquin disc, partly because that has better music, partly because of its greater vocal variety, even though this disc has the advantage of the marvellously reedy 1500-ish viols. CB

16th CENTURY

Arbeau Orchésographie (1589) Florilegio Ensemble, Alta Cappella, Marcelli Serafini dir 56' 17"

Symphonia SY 02196

This rendition of not only pieces, but recited examples of instructions, from Thoinot Arbeau's dance manual is compelling listening. Indeed, curiously for dance music, it grows on you. The booklet notes says that it is not trying to popularise the repertoire of Orchésographie, but to render an accurate historic version conceived for dancers. This is an engagingly honest description, and perhaps too modest, as I found the versions amongst the most listenable to that I've heard of this repertoire. The instrumentations are limited for each piece, which has a ring of truth about it. In fact,

the repetition builds that compelling feeling. The playing is strong and characterful, and obviously inspired by the underlying movement. With the occasional use of French bagpipe, hurdy gurdy and percussion styles there is an integrity to the sound. The *alta* and *bassa* combinations are played with equal refinement and verve. The recitations from the manual are few and short, not intruding on the musical flow, and interesting to hear – the reader has a very attractive voice. A definite for Arbeau enthusiasts.

Stephen Cassidy

A. Gabrieli The Madrigal in Venice: Politics, Dialogues and Pastorales I Fagiolini, Robert Hollingworth dir 77' 23"

Chandos Chaconne CHAN 0697

A few years ago, Robert Hollingworth paid me a visit, and one of the areas briefly explored was the shelf containing the eight volumes of the A-R edition of Andrea Gabrieli's madrigals. This disc is presumably the result, and excellent it is, both as music and as performance. An unjustly neglected repertoire is here done proud. The 25 items show a wide range of the composer, with a slightly disproportionate emphasis on the larger works. And why not. If you share my belief that one of the most satisfying sounds in music is the mixture of voices, cornetts and sackbuts, don't miss this, especially *O passi sparsi* ar2, two choirs of voice, cornett and 4 sackbuts – though I'm not sure if the voice is on the right part in the upper choir, whose top line peaking on top A looks ideal for cornett to me. (When did the *trombone doppio* reach Venice to permit the four-octave-minus-a-note compass?) If I have one criticism, it is that the singers try too hard to drown the players and vice-versa and what can be a sensuous texture becomes coarsened. One piece by Giovanni is included: we have a chance to hear *Sacri di Giove* ar2 with voices alone and then with 2 cornetts, 10 sackbuts and organ. Perhaps it is as well that it comes at the end of the disc. CB

Tallis Spem in alium – Sing and glorify Chapelle du Roi, Alistair Dixon 20' 02"

Signum SIGCD047

This is an unusual object for two reasons. First, classical 'singles' are rare: around six pounds for 20 minutes isn't very good value time-wise. But *Spem in alium* is a piece that is best heard by itself, at least at home: it takes time to adjust to and from its size and the spacial richness that it creates in the mind of the hearer. The second reason is that it presents both versions of the work: the usual Latin text

and the English *Sing and glorify* given in the earliest source, prepared for the coronation of Prince Henry as Prince of Wales in 1610 and repeated in 1612 for Charles. (This had its first modern performance as part of the BBC's celebration of the ill-fated marriage of the current Prince Charles – by far the best performance of either text that I can remember.) Curiously, I found the English version had more impact than the Latin and felt livelier: I was surprised that it lasted only 15 seconds less. Certainly worth buying. The Cantiones Press publishes scores of both versions: attempts to get review copies haven't yet been successful. CB

The Art of the Lute: the best of Ronn McFarlane 68' 42"

Dorian DOR-90022

Selections from DOR-90129, 90186, 90225, 90242 & 90257

Ronn McFarlane is a lutenist who first came to my attention many years ago as a member of the Baltimore Consort. Like so many other talented members of that ensemble, he has gone on to make a unique personal contribution to the solo repertoire for his instrument. The present 'greatest hits' album draws upon no fewer than six impressive solo CDs. Some of these, like the two albums of Scottish lute music, have brought relatively unknown material to a much wider audience in first class performances which are guaranteed to catch the attention. Others, such as the collection of music by Dowland presents more generally familiar music, but in such impeccable and expressive performances as the refresh our perceptions of it. The selections from 'The Renaissance Lute' and 'Between Two Hearts', a collection of Renaissance dance music, clearly demonstrates his stunning technique and quirky inventiveness, but it was the tracks from 'A Distant Shore', baroque music by Bach, Weiss and Kellner that I found the biggest revelation. Partly because I was unfamiliar with the original recording, but also because of the extreme technical and interpretive demands of the music, I felt that this section of 'The Art of the Lute' most clearly demonstrated why McFarlane's playing is so widely and deeply admired. D. James Ross

The Essential Tallis Scholars 155'

Gimell, CDGIM 201 ££

I hope it doesn't sound too backhanded to say that I was surprised how much I enjoyed this celebration of 20 years of Tallis Scholars recordings. The group is celebrating its 30th anniversary, but the first concert (3 November 1973) was only

seen as the beginning of the group in retrospect, and this anthology has recordings from 1980 to 1998. The first disc is continental, framed by the hackneyed Allegri-based *Miserere* (wasting 12½ minutes) and the Gloria of Brumel's *Missa Et ecce terrae motus*, which sounds better than the Visse version I reviewed last month, though I still prefer Munrow. I particularly enjoyed the early-16th-century repertoire; Josquin's *Praeter rerum* seems a much stronger piece here than Victoria's *Ave Maris* a8. The second disc is English, and once you adjust to soaring sopranos and fractionally slow tempos, it is impressive. The framing pieces here are Sheppard's *Media vita* and Byrd's five-voice mass, both lasting just over 20 minutes: our awareness and acceptance of the validity of melismatic as well as syllabic word-setting over the last half-century is a reverse parallel to the change of taste in the latter part of 16th-century England. CB

Schiarazula Marazula: Italian Dances of the Renaissance Musica Antiqua, Christian Mendoze dir 54' 09"

Cantus C 9605 (rec 1999)

Dances from Mainerio (1578), Munich MS & Farina (Lib. III, 1627)

This is a large collection of famous pot-boilers, played on a large collection of different instruments. The booklet notes declare that the aim was not to make versions to be danced to, but rather to be listened to. Certainly instrumental colour is not in short supply. The result though, as presaged by the notes, seems rather self-indulgent. As one wave recedes, carrying away with it an unexplained ensemble, the next breaks in, bringing in a new instrumental flotsam. There is a frame of mind which one can adopt which enjoys hearing instruments in playful combinations. However, the characteristic which makes it difficult to listen to in more than short stretches is the varying tactus in most pieces. Even though the aim was to create something to listen to rather than to dance to, the whole draw of dance music is lost if the rhythm is not treated as somehow central. It is essential that the body movements so strongly suggested by dance music are in synchronism with what one's ears are sensing. If they are at odds, the result is a physical queasiness, as when making sea journeys (entirely accidentally carrying on an analogy!). This may seem harsh, and indeed others may not be affected in this way, but it meant that listening to a disc of otherwise good playing of pieces I like of old is hard to go through with. For fairness I must point out that this criticism does not apply to the lutes – the lute tracks are very finely played. Stephen Cassidy

17th CENTURY

Buxtehude Membra Jesu nostri Concertro Vocale, René Jacobs dir 71' 52"

Harmonia Mundi Musique d'abord HMA 1951333 £ (rec 1990)

+ Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn

The usual brief for reviewing re-releases is not to say very much. However, on this occasion, I feel obliged to recommend a 1990 recording by René Jacobs: it features some familiar names, including Maria Cristina Kiehr as second soprano, Gerd Türk singing tenor, and no less than Andreas Scholl singing alto. The players are not credited at all. The performances are mannerism-free, and most of the tempi are well suited to the music. The cantata is one which I suggested might have formed the climax of the original cycle of performances: it uses a similar structure, adds a couple of trumpets and a recurring chorus instead of simple ritornelli for two violins, and also ends with a tremendous Alleluia. Suzuki remains my favourite, but this is very good. BC

Carissimi Piangete: cantatas and motets Concerto delle Donne (Donna Deam, Gill Ross, Elin Manahan Thomas SSS, Alastair Ross kbd, David Miller chit

Signum SIGCD040 66' 24"

+ Kapsberger Prelude X & XI & Rossi Toccata VII

This is an admirable exploration of a virtually unknown repertory: Carissimi's motets for three equal upper voices. Several of the pieces are quiet prayers, but the disc also includes the Christmas rejoicing of *Exulta, gaude* and the militaristic swagger of *Cum reverteretur David*. Such motets are far removed from the secular world of the Ferrarese *concerto della donna* that gives the present ensemble its name: presumably castrati would have sung these pieces in Rome, although the performing context remains shadowy. This recording intersperses the motets with better-known cantatas and solos for lute and keyboard. The singing is neatly phrased and the intonation is immaculate; sometimes I wished for a more demonstrative delivery and more attention to detail. Nonetheless this is an important and rewarding release. Stephen Rose

Charpentier Messe à 8 voix et 8 violons et flûtes, Motet 'Miseremini mei' Mária Zádori, Garbiella Jani, Péter Bárány, Zoltán Gavodi, Rozsö Kutik, András Regenhart, István Kovács, Máté Sólyom-Nagy SSAATTBB, Purcell Choir, Orfeo Orchestra, György Vashegyi, dir 58' 17"

Hungaroton Classic HCD 32146

Charpentier Messe pour Mr. Mauroy, 5 Répons Andrea Cserekye, Noémi Kiss,

Péter Bárány, Zoltán Gavodi, Péter Drucker, András Regenhart, István Kovács, András Demjén SSAATTBBB, Purcell Choir, Orfeo Orchestra, György Vashegyi, dir Hungaroton Classic HCD 31869 55' 05"

These two discs include some of the nicest Charpentier performances I've heard in a long time. The singing and playing on both are beautiful, and the recorded sound first rate. I particularly enjoyed the wide range of solo voices (one of the sopranos in the *Messe pour Mr. Mauroy* was a little wobbly, but I got used to it!) and the conductor certainly has the measure of Charpentier's style, timing the links between sections to perfection, allowing one chord to linger in the air for just a few moments before continuing. The 5 Répons are for Holy Week and feature one or two solo voices with instruments. I didn't find they added anything to the disc, and would have preferred some more instrumental music to have been interpolated into the Mass. If the performers are new to you (as most of them were to me), you have nothing to fear, but utter enjoyment. BC

Some readers may, like me, have met the conductor at the London Early Music Exhibition last year. He was full of enthusiasm: I hope he continues to produce recordings like these. CB

De Grigny Premier Livre d'Orgue: La Messe Anne Chapelin-Dubar (organ at Sens Cathedral) 58' 08" (rec 1995)

VMS Musical Treasures VMS 120

This 1995 recording, apparently just released, features one of the finest sets of organ pieces of the 17th century – De Grigny's monumental setting of the Mass dating from 1699. The large-scale Sens organ produces a magnificent sound in a generous acoustic and is well recorded, with the exception of one or two awkward edits. The playing is well-grounded and sensitive, although the 'Basse de Trompette ou de cromorne', for example, gets a bit rushed towards the end, leading to a slip or two. For those that are into such things, I should mention that in the famous 'Tierce en Taille' movement, Anne Chapelin-Dubar, quite correctly in my view, plays the sensually clashing harmonies from the original manuscript rather than Bach's sanitised version of it (this is one of the works that Bach copied out for study). The booklet notes are only partially translated into English and there are no registrations given, although most of them are fairly obvious. There are a number of recordings of this work available with the plainchant verses that would have formed an integral part of the work in its liturgical context, but for those who

just want the organ pieces, this CD is worth considering. Of course, everybody should have at least one CD of de Grigny.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

Fux *Lux Aeterna: Sacred Works* Armonico Tributo, Domkantorei Graz, Grazer Chorschola, Lorenz Duftschmid 54' 24" cpo 999 850-2

This is a lovely CD, alternating short pieces of plainsong (which, obviously enough, formed a major part of services at the Viennese court, where Fux worked) with polyphonic workings of the same texts, works for solo voices and instruments, and sonatas. The five solo singers (not credited on the cover of the disc) are Mieke van der Sluis S, Carlos Mena A, Bernhard Lambauer T, Georg Nigl Bar, and Sergio Foresti B. I listened to the disc several times, purely for pleasure, which is, in itself, a real recommendation. Particular pieces that I enjoyed included the Sonata in G minor K 320, with its striking similarities to a Purcell sonata in the same key, and a beautiful setting of *Ave Regina* K 205. The balance of different genres also worked very well. Recommended. BC

Kapsberger, *Libro terzo d'intavolatura di Chitarrone* Diego Cantalupi theorbo with Claudio Nuzzo duettist theorbo and guitar Marcello Villa Cremona MVC 002 009

This is the CD which until a couple of years ago we thought we might never hear. A copy of Kapsberger's *Libro Terzo* (Rome, 1626) was known to be in private hands in 1928, but resurfaced only recently. In December 2001 it was sold at Sotheby's to Yale University for what I believe was only £10,000. In the same sale a copy of Kapsberger's *Libro Primo* fetched far more, presumably because it was intact. The *Libro Terzo* has six pages missing, lacking Toccata 1.

Assuming he acquired a photocopy straight away, Diego Cantalupi had time for only eight months' practice before making his recording. He plays the toccatas with a suitably free, almost timeless interpretation, but I think it is a pity he introduces so much rubato into the dance pieces (something he attempts to justify in the sleeve notes). The Gagliarda, for example, starts by plodding along at a good, weighty, solid speed, but the following sets of divisions lose time so much that they sound more like unmeasured preludes. The potential for fiery virtuosity is lost in dreamy, 'expressive' playing. The correnti, on the other hand, rattle along nicely, maintaining momentum throughout the moto perpetuo divisions. (They are numbered the wrong way round.)

The music for theorbo is notated in Italian tablature, but Kapsberger adds a figured bass for other instruments to join in. Cantalupi uses this option sparingly, now adding a second theorbo (tuned a tone lower) to add depth and sonority to a toccata, now adding a guitar to bring life and lightness to dances which might otherwise have sounded stodgy. I assume the short strings of Cantalupi's theorbo are new nylon ones, since there are some rather loud, echoey squeaks when he changes position. The deep bass notes of the long strings are noticeably softer than the others. The CD ends with a spirited Bergamasca from Kapsberger's *Libro Quarto*, presumably to make the CD a suitable length. Pity about Toccata 1.

Stewart McCoy

Lully *Atys* (extracts) Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 67' 42" (rec 1987) Harmonia Mundi *Musique d'abord* HMA 1951249 £

This highlights disc offers an agreeable hour in the company of Christie and his team, already sure-footed in this repertoire in 1987. The singers include many who already were or have since become stars of the French Baroque and the orchestra is lead by John Holloway. The contents are listed only on the inside of the cardboard case and the booklet gives a plot synopsis but nothing else.

David Hansell

Monteverdi *Vespre della Beata Vergine* (1610) John Eliot Gardiner, etc. 110' Archiv 073 035-9 (rec 1989) DVD

Such a wasted opportunity. Granted that there is no connection between the work and San Marco, Venice, (where it was recorded), the placing of performers could at least have given some idea of how a Vespers service might have worked in the particular liturgical space and conventions of the Basilica. We see a few soloists and associated theorboes scattered round the basilica, and a choir of teenagers show that the 'tub' (where antiphonal psalms were once sung) can accommodate 13 without undue crowding. But the singers and instruments are arrayed across the front of the performance space as if in any concert hall. The performance (given that it is choral, which creates all sorts of problems – though I suppose that if you have created a Monteverdi Choir, you can't perform a *Vespers* without it) was better than I expected. Outstanding was Mark Tucker's *Nigra sum*: his Italian ancestry helps, but sound and appearance matched. The other tenor, Nigel Robson, sang well, but every time I saw him, I imagined him as a sitcom vicar. The red robes (for a

concert, not a quasi-liturgical performance) looked silly, especially on the young Bryn Terfel. This was an old-fashioned performance even for 14 years ago. At least there were single strings, not an orchestra! Tantalising to see a close-up shot of a singer whose husband could have given a much more Monteverdian and San Markish performance if Archiv would have another crack at it! CB

Pachelbel *Arias & Duets* Mária Zádori, Judit Németh, Gábor Kállay, István Kovács SATB, Affetti Musicali, János Malina, dir 73' 43" Hungaroton Classics HCD 31736

Hot on the heels of last month's lament on the lack of celebration of the 250th anniversary of Pachelbel's birthday comes a disc of some of his most neglected music: small-scale, mostly secular arias and duets, mostly with a pair of violins but some with gamba consort or even an added trumpet. There are 13 works on the disc, from wedding celebratory songs to funeral pieces and odes in honour of local benefactors. They are sung and played very beautifully by the musicians listed above and the *Musica Profana* Viola da Gamba Ensemble. BC

A. Scarlatti *Concerti Grossi* (London 1740); *Cello Sonatas* [op. 5/1-3] Accademia Bizantina, Ottavio Dantone dir; Mauro Valli vlc 63' 58" Arts 47616-2 £

Whether these are or are not by Alessandro Scarlatti (see Peter Holman's review of a previous recording in *EMR* 81), Accademia Bizantina present stylish performances of the six concertos published in London around 1740. There is no standardisation of form, as in other sets of the period, so there are two with three movements, three with four movements and one with five. Four of the pieces are in minor keys. The last piece is strangest of all: two fast movements followed by a Largo and a final Affettuoso. Equally dubious are the three cello sonatas that fill the disc: regardless of what instrument they are played on (the performer decides that the fact they are written in tenor clef suggests violoncello piccolo), these strike my ears as simply being too modern for Alessandro Scarlatti. I wonder at the planning of such CDs: why not break up the sequence of concertos with the sonatas? This is almost like having two different discs. Enjoyable, despite the doubts of attribution. BC

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

G. B. Vitali *Sonate, Passagalli, Artificii*
 Quadro Hypothesis 53' 21"
 Tactus TC 632201

This recording is devoted entirely to the music of Vitali (1632-92) – an interesting and worthwhile project, as Vitali's music occupies an intriguing niche both as the successor to the canzonas of Frescobaldi and as a precursor to the trio sonatas of Corelli. The programme includes music from opus 5, 7 and 13, with self-contained pieces such as the *Passagalli* (1682) as well as several short, multi-movement 'sonatas'. However, despite the detailed booklet notes which hint at a real empathy with the music, Quadro Hypothesis's performances are disappointing, suffering from poor intonation and somewhat unrefined ensemble throughout the recording. The musicians never really seem to develop a sense of group empathy – exacerbated by a recording balance which generally seems to favour the treble viol – and in terms of overall timbre, I was surprised at the use of exclusively 18th century design recorders, alongside 16th and 17th century stringed instruments (lute/guitar, cello). Had the artists opted for violin rather than viol for the second dessus I imagine the case for this would be more convincing. Interesting from a historical point of view, but both performance and recording quality let it down. *Marie Ritter*

Basilicata: A musical journey in the provinces of the Kingdom of Naples Liuwe Tamminga (1570 organ, Salandra and 16th-17th century anon organ, restored 1749 by Rubino, Miglionico) 64' 08"

Accent ACC 21147

Music by Frescobaldi, Greco, Lambardi, Leo, de Macque, Mayone, Storace, Trabaci, Vecchiotti & anon

For two centuries, the Kingdom of Naples was in the hands of the Spanish Hapsburgs and this merging of cultures produced some of the most fascinating music of the 16th and 17th centuries. Using two recently restored historic organs located in what I guess could be called the Instep of Italy, Liuwe Tamminga presents a well thought out programme of music from, or inspired by, Naples. The one oddity is the inclusion of the very English *My Lady Carey's Dumpe*, played on an incongruous registration that includes repeated pedal notes which sound well behind the beat and therefore defeat their (rather dubious) purpose. That aside, the playing is well up to Tamminga's usual high standards, with a nicely controlled touch and a delicacy of articulation that suits the music and the inherently vocal voicing of the instruments. The meantone temperaments of both organs is, of course, essen-

tial to this music and is yet another example of how restored organs in the remotest parts of Italy (to give just one continental example) are still streets ahead of organ restoration in the UK. The pieces are generally light (listen to Vecchiotti's rollicking *Piferata napolitano*, track 10 for an example) and dance- and/or variation-based, with much use of a drone bass. Great fun. *Andrew Benson-Wilson*

La notte d'amore: Music for the Wedding of Cosima II Medici and Maria Magdalena of Austria [1608] Il complesso Barocco, Alan Curtis, Victor Coelho 54' 52"

Stradivarius STR 33636

Music by L. Allegri, Bardi, Caccini, Gagliano, Marenzio, Peri, Sweelinck

We know from their two discs of Monteverdi duets how good Alan Curtis and his Complesso Barocco are at music of this period, and this disc is equally impressive. As with the *Musica Antiqua* of London disc reviewed on page 17, it was interesting to listen blind and note which tracks stood out, and again it was the most famous composer, in this case Marenzio, whose reputation justified itself. The opening *Ballo* by Lorenzo Anerio was also impressive. But the disc works as a whole, including all the music known to have survived from the 1608 wedding (it didn't benefit from a publication like that of the 1589 *Intermedi*), music which may have been performed at it, and other contemporary music of the Florentine court. (Sweelinck creeps in via his *Granduca* setting). The fine programme (thoroughly backed up by its booklet) is persuasively performed; even if you find Italian monody a bit boring, try it. *CB*

Simfonie Romanæ: Roman Trio Sonatas before Corelli Accademia per Musica, Christoph Timpe 69' 35"

Capriccio 67 025

Colista, Lonati & Stradella (McC 2, 13, 20, 22)

I've had problems with this: one machine doesn't recognise that it is there when I try to play it, another will move from track to track but not play anything. I've just found that the cheapest machine in the house will play it, but must defer listening until after this issue of EMR is sorted out. *CB*

Van Varen en Vechten: Shanties of the Dutch East India Company Camerata Trajectina 63' 13"
 Globe GLO 6054

As well as the aesthetic aspect of early music which attracts its listeners, there is also the element of a suggested historic context which adds its own layer of interest. This disc homes right into a specific

point, not only in history but also in geography, commerce and its social consequence. It gives a fascinating insight into the heyday of the hugely important Dutch East India Company. The opening song records the contract negotiations between the skipper and the carpenter from whom he is ordering a new boat. It is rather moving to hear the specific details being argued out – a window on a world. The other subjects of the shanties include the privations of the adventurers and the hopeless cycle of poverty which kept them adventuring; their unrealistic hopes and brutal amusements. This is a fascinating historical record, and although excellently sung is more interesting for this than for aesthetic reasons. This is said not as a criticism – more an inevitable result of a disc of shanties, acknowledging that the whole purpose of a ballad or a shanty is to convey the story or inspire hard work rather than to 'make music' per se. This is a very well thought out programme. The Dutch is expressive to listen to, and the words are well set out in translations so the human story can be appreciated. *Stephen Cassidy*

LATE BAROQUE

Bach Cantatas Vol. 13 Deborah York, Franziska Gottwald, Paul Agnew, Klaus Mertens, SATB, Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir, Ton Koopman *dir* 185' 24" (3 CDs in box)

Challenge Classics CC72213

Cantatas 1, 33, 38, 62, 92, 93, 96, 122, 13

Erato-Warner abandoned Koopman's cantata series in February 2002, but happily the project has now been rescued by Antoine Marchand under the label of Challenge Classics. This volume delves into the riches of Bach's chorale cantatas of 1724-25. It opens with Cantata 1, the same piece with which Harnoncourt and Leonhardt made such a memorable start to their series over 30 years ago. A comparison is unavoidable: whereas Harnoncourt relished the sheer rawness of his oboists and horn players, Koopman's forces perform with such finesse that the piece seems no effort at all. Paradoxically that can make his account less memorable. But for many cantatas in this set, the technical facility of the soloists is indispensable in movements that would sound opaque or convoluted in lesser hands. In Cantata 62, Paul Agnew breezes through a formidable aria, making it sound like an unforced dance. Likewise in Cantata 93, Koopman's sense of pulse gives an infectious momentum to the spinning figures of the opening. Sonority and texture are less important to him: whereas Herreweghe drew out the grave sound of the

trombones in his recent recording of *Cantata 38*, you hardly notice them in the version here. In part this is a result of the recorded sound, which tends to flatten the characters of soloists, obbligato instrumentalists and chorus alike. Koopman seems to perceive the cantatas as everyday pieces to be delivered with dance-like ease, and while this view sometimes stops him from achieving the sustained excellence of Masaaki Suzuki, it is arguably an understanding that Bach himself would have shared. I for one am very pleased that Koopman's series has found new backers and can continue to completion.

Stephen Rose

Bach *Cantates pour alto (BWV 35, 53 & 82)*
René Jacobs, Ensemble 415, Chiara Banchini 59' 03"
Harmonia Mundi *Musique d'abord* HMA 1951273 £ (rec 1987)

This reissue faces strong competition from rival accounts by Gérard Lesne and Andreas Scholl. The playing is alert and Jacobs's singing is elegantly phrased, if a touch hard-edged. It's a shame, however, that *Cantata 82* is given as a textual hotchpotch, using the instrumentation of the bass version but the key of the mezzo-soprano version.

Stephen Rose

Bach *Die Motetten* Gächinger Kantorei
Stuttgart, Bach-Collegium Stuttgart, Helmuth Rilling 95' (rec 1990)
Arthaus Music 101 169 DVD

The motets are not the most obvious category of Bach's music to be enhanced by vision. The Gächinger choir is too big for it to be held in long shot, and the close-ups are neither visually enthralling nor help understand the music. The layout is that of a normal concert, with no attempt to use any visual imagination either to recreate an original performance (difficult, since little is known on the subject) or to offer a modern visual approach. The disc is interesting in including, not just the standard six motets (BWV 225-230), but also BWV 118, Anh. 159, Anh. 160 (without the definitely non-Bachian last movement) and *Der Gerechte kommt um*. Rilling seems intent on making the extra items sound as boring as possible, with unarticulated texts and shapeless phrasing. There is more vitality in the pieces which he and the choir must have performed more often. But I'm not convinced by the stylistic mix of staccato semiquavers (the usual way of getting an amorphous choir to get the notes distinct) and the micro- rather than macro-phrasing adopted from the early habits of baroque orchestras. Most of the discus-

sions of one-to-a-part Bach choir have avoided the motets, chiefly because there is far less information in terms of extant sources and performance circumstances; but listening to this, I was longing for solo voices who could respond directly to the words without being herded into a shape that would inevitably, given the 50 or so singers, produce a duller and over-regimented sound.

CB

Clérambault *Complete Keyboard Works*
Christine Gall org, hpscd 65' 17"
COR 334 802

Clérambault's legacy to keyboard players is tiny – just one volume containing two suites for each of organ and harpsichord. The keys of these suggest that he may have had a larger project in mind (suites in all the keys) but for reasons unknown this was not developed. His idiom is very much the *lingua franca* of the early 18th century – a mixture of French and Italian features, with much imitation of violin figuration even in the unlikely context of a *Basse de Trompette*. And it is the organ music that lingers in the memory, not least because of the instrument used – the spectacular five manual reconstruction of an instrument by the monk/organ builder Dom Bedos de Celles in the church of Sainte-Croix, Bordeaux. All the sounds of the classical French organ are here displayed, ranging from delectable *récits* and the gentle burbling of the *Basse de Cromorne* to the magnificent reeds of the *Grands Jeux*. The playing is all very clean though perhaps a little conservative in tempo at times. But organ buffs especially will want this and may be tempted to reorganise their holiday itinerary. I have!

David Hansell

Dandrieu *Pièces pour Clavecin* Betty Bruylants hpscd 68' 05"
Pavane ADW 7473

Why do recording companies so let down their artists by sub-standard booklets? This specimen features poor layout, poor proof-reading, unidiomatic translation and a very amateurish photograph of the harpsichord that could so easily have been stunning with a decent background and a colour film in the camera. The recital itself draws on Dandrieu's three 'official' collections (he suppressed three earlier ones, though recycled some of the pieces in the final acknowledged book). The playing never really takes wing and to be honest some of the weaker pieces do really need a Koopman-esque approach to bring them alive. Both trills and inequality are rather laboriously handled and the whole effect is dutiful rather than

compelling, which is a shame as quite a lot of thought clearly went into the shape of the programme.

David Hansell

Dollé *Pièces de Viole avec la Basse Continue* Petr Wagner vdg, Jacques Ogg hpscd 70' 35"
Dorian DOR-93246

It is a real pleasure to listen to a recording of baroque viol music unadulterated by multiple continuo instruments and an ever-changing tapestry of backing colours. With a solo player as sensitive as Wagner, and a sympathetic accompanist such as Ogg, the focus is rightly placed upon the character of the music itself rather than the whimsy of the players. Almost nothing is known of Dollé's career: he may have studied with Marais, and most of his six publications are for the tiny *pardessus de viole* beloved of fashionable Parisian ladies in the mid-18th century. Op. 2 (from 1737), however, consists of three suites for *basse de viole* and continuo, exploiting the full range of the seven-string bass in a style that follows the French elegance of Marais rather than the Italianate fire of Forqueray. In some of the simpler dances Dollé's tuneful lyricism anticipates the poised classicism of Gluck, but elsewhere, such as the heartfelt *Tombeau* for Marais, he writes in a more rhetorical mode full of *fantasie*. Wagner and Ogg are persuasive advocates for these pieces, by turns expressively thoughtful and crisply athletic. Wagner's viol is a warmly responsive instrument by Norman Myall that is only occasionally swamped by the decadently resonant Taskin-copy harpsichord. There's also the bonus of an excellent essay by Lucy Robinson that puts Dollé's music into context: highly recommended.

John Bryan

Handel *La Resurrezione* Nancy Argenta, Maria Cristina Kiehr, Marijana Mijanovic, marcel Reijans, Klaus Mertens SSmSTB, Combattimento Consort Amsterdam, Jan Willem de Vriend dir 114' 51" (2 CDs in box)
Challenge Classics CC72120

I thought I had posted this to David Hansell (Anthony Hicks wrote the notes, so preferred not to review it). He told me several times that it hadn't arrived and I blamed the post. But just as I put the final touches on this issue, it emerged; he will review it next month, along with received Anthony Hick's review of a *Messiah* from Diego

CB

Rameau *Castor & Pollux: Choeurs et Danses* Les Arts Florissants, William Christie 69' 32" (rec 1992)
Harmonia Mundi *Musique d'abord* HMA 1951501 £

I reviewed the first release of this highlights disc in *EMR* 53: 'a noble reading of Rameau's emotional epic'. This bargain re-issue comes with a smaller booklet which offers a note and plot summary but no texts/translations. *David Hansell*

D. Scarlatti *Cantate d'amore* Max Emanuel Cencic Ct, Ornamente 99, Karsten Erik Ose dir 60' 31"

Capriccio 67 067

Dir vorrei, Pur nel sonno, Scritte con falso inganno, Tinte a note di sangue

There are four *cantate d'amore* on the present recording, settings of texts (at least partly) by Metastasio from a MS of Spanish provenance in the State Library in Vienna. It may date from the period when Farinelli and Scarlatti worked at the Spanish court. One piece (*Dir vorrei*) lacks an opening recitative, and another (*Pur nel sonno*) has an extra *introduzione*. The ensemble of two violins, cello, double bass, theorbo, archlute and harpsichord is augmented following 'the historical model of usual historical performance practice at the Spanish and Austrian courts where a *colla parte* play of recorders can be traced into the 18th century'. Similarly, the pieces have been transposed down 'in order to make the preserved soprano parts more pliable'. That said, the recording still makes them sound high lying for the singer in question, who I am afraid to say will not rate very highly in my already short list of countertenors. There is no denying that he engages with the emotional content of his texts, and in performance he may well be very convincing, but the sound is more like a fruity contralto I'd expect to hear singing Rossini. The playing, for all my doubts about the scoring, is mostly fine – some of the recording swells in *Dir vorrei* are a little overdone. *BC*

Tartini *Violin Concertos* Elizabeth Wallfisch vln, The Raglan Baroque Players, Nicholas Kraemer 70' 11"

Hyperion CDA67345

op. 1/1, 4, 5, 12 & in C (Berkeley MS)

I've reviewed several of the boxed sets of Italian recordings of Tartini violin concertos (the projected 'Complete Works' will, of course, run for years), and they've been pretty much a mixed bag. This disc has nothing to suggest that it might be the first of a series, but in every way it is superior to any Tartini recording I've ever heard: the soloist is on breathtaking form – if there is a certain roughness towards the end of one very virtuosic passage, it's far less the fault of the performer than of Tartini pushing the poor baroque fiddle just a little too far. In the quiet re-

pose sometimes offered by the slow movements (being Tartini, one is never quite sure what mood swing is lying in wait), she and her wonderful continuo team are as eloquent as can be. One of my favourite discs this month. *BC*

Vivaldi *Le quattro stagioni* Duilio Galfetti vln, mandolin, I barocchisti, Diego Fasolis Claves CD 50-2204 61' 03"

+ RV 128, 151, 363, 425

This is a *Four Seasons* with a difference: described on the back cover as 'a breathtaking performance', Fasolis and company pick and mix ideas from Pisendel's Dresden arrangements and Corrette's recycling of Vivaldi's music to create something which might draw some listeners' breath for the wrong reasons. At first, not having read the booklet, I wondered if my ears were playing tricks, but no, there are recorders twittering in the background of Spring, and there is a hurdy-gurdy grinding away in the peasants' dance; horns introduce Autumn logically enough and there are plenty more 'creative/interpretative' elements, ensuring that this is something of a white-knuckle ride through familiar territory. Underlying the whole thing, however, is a performance of the very highest technical standard: I don't know that I've heard of Duilio Galfetti, either as violinist or mandolinist, but he is a true virtuoso, and the supporting band (strings with oboes doubling recorder, bassoon, horns and hurdy-gurdy, with keyboard and theorbo continuo) play superbly. For someone who might easily be horrified by such things, I was pleasantly surprised: it has nothing to do with HIP for sure, but as pure entertainment it certainly worked for me. *BC*

Vivaldi *La Notte: Concerti per strumenti diversi* Musica Pacifica, Judith Linsenberg & Elizabeth Blumenstock dirs

Dorian DOR-93252 71' 33"

RV 3, 16, 94, 100, 101, 104, 107

Unlike the *Four Seasons* disc reviewed above, this recording of five concertos for recorder, oboe, violin, bassoon, cello, archlute and harpsichord, and two violins sonatas (one arranged for recorder by Judith Linsenberg) somehow failed to set me alight. I don't know if it was the fact that I'd already sat through one disc of slightly over-the-top Vivaldi and this seemed tame by comparison, or if it was just another of those 'Concerti da camera' discs of which there have recently been so many. My criticism is certainly not of the playing, which is excellent. My favourite piece on the disc is the Concerto in G minor RV 107, with its stunning chaconne final movement. *BC*

Al uso de nuestra tierra: Chants et danses du baroque péruvien Música Temprana Voice of Lyrics VOL BL 702 63' 32"

The music survives among nine volumes of watercolours assembled between 1782 and 1785 by an antiquarian Bishop of Trujillo (in Peru, some 300 miles north of Lima) of the life and landscape of his diocese. He not only notated 19 musical items (most of which are recorded here) but gave scoring indications, both verbally and by musical scenes in the paintings. From the description in the booklet, it seems a fascinating document: is it published? The performances have all the verve we expect (perhaps in a rather racist way) of South American music. I'd like to compare the performances with the notation; judging from the booklet, it seems that the players have used current folk practice to see through the Bishop's old-fashioned notation of the accompaniment as a figured bass. It sounds convincing. *CB*

The Beggar's Opera: Original songs & airs

Patrizia Kwella A, Paul Elliott T, The Broadside Band, Jeremy Barlow dir 45' 00" Harmonia Mundi *Musique d'abord* HMA 1951071 £ (rec 1981)

Jeremy Barlow takes nine of the songs Gay used (and he certainly had a knack of picking good tunes) and groups them with other versions, ranging from a 16th-century passamezzo to a French carol (you should be able to guess what those two are). As long as you are happy with the singers being arty rather than folksy, this is certainly worth buying, despite its brevity. *CB*

Concert de Chambre Ensemble Arion (Veronika Winter S, Kay Schumacher rec, Helga Löhrer vlc, Andreas Nachtsheim lute) (2 CDs, one a studio performance the other a live concert) 99' 31"

Marc Aurel Edition MA 971

Blavet, Campra, Couperin, Lully, de Montclair

This is a curious release, perhaps not intended for full international/commercial release. The booklet says very little about the music, nothing about the performers, instruments or pitch and the French cantata texts are translated into German only. The two discs offer different recordings of more or less the same programme – conventional sessions involving the two cantatas and the Blavet Sonata on disc 1 and then a live concert including these and some shorter works as well as some occasional audience noise and a few minor 'moments' on disc 2. The recorded balance on this disc favours the cello rather more than is always desirable. The two cantatas are both terrific

pieces and are performed with a sure sense of style on the part of all concerned. However, I fall out with this ensemble on the basic issue of sonority. Surely this is the world of the *flûte traversière* and the *basse de viole* rather than recorder and cello – I miss the richness of the flute's lower register especially in the Blavet. But I do welcome the unchanging continuo sound (a well-played theorbo) and applaud the fundamental concept of the double discs.

David Hansell

Musik für Johann Wilhelm von der Pfalz
The Splendour of Rhenish Baroque Musica Solare 59' 41"

Marc Aurel Edition MA 20008
Bonporti, Corelli, Handel, Schenck

This derives from the musical activities at the turn of the 18th century at the court of Count Johann Wilhelm, Elector Palatine in Düsseldorf. Johann Wilhelm was a kind of Rhenish Sun King, famed for staging extravagant operas and lavish entertainments and creating a magnificent if short-lived centre of baroque culture. The court counted among its visitors Handel, Corelli, Bonporti and Schenck, all of whom are featured on this recording. Musica Solare is an enthusiastic and talented young ensemble with much to offer; it plays with clarity, style and vitality, and particularly shines in the trio sonatas works (arrangements of Corelli's op 6 and two excellent and previously unrecorded *Concerti a Quattro* attributed to Handel). Darja Grossheide plays both recorder and flute on this disc, and I have to say I enjoyed her recorder playing more; there are a few tuning issues in the works with flute, especially in the Handel sonata. Generally speaking though, all the members of the ensemble are fine musicians with plenty of panache and an intelligent, not-too-fussy approach. I particularly enjoyed Gabriele Nussberger's violin playing. An impressive disc, with a good historical angle.

Marie Ritter

Syrens, Enchanters and Fairies: 18th Century Overtures from the London Stage
Capella Savaria, Mary Térey-Smith cond
Dorian DOR-03251 56' 42"

Arne *Artaxerxes, The Guardian Outwitted, Thomas & Sally*; T. A. Erskine *The Maid of the Mill*; J. A. Fisher *The Syrens*; J. C. Smith *The Enchanter, The Tempest; The Fairies*

English composers of the 18th century suffer from unfair comparison with Handel. Indeed the press they get is pretty much akin to that of the Victorians and Edwardians. The music here, though, reveals that each of the four composers was clearly capable of writing fine music and although Thomas Arne and the Earl of

Kelly need no special pleading, J. C. Smith (son of Handel's amanuensis) and J. A. Fisher might perhaps benefit from a little: Smith wrote *The Fairies* and *The Tempest* for David Garrick's Drury Lane Theatre in 1755 and 1756 respectively, and *The Enchanter*, which held the stage far longer than its predecessors, in 1760. The earlier pieces owe something to the French overture, while *The Enchanter* is more rococo in style. Fisher was a virtuoso violinist, who made his London debut in 1765, and his possible claim to fame is moving to Vienna and marrying Anna Storace, Mozart's Susanna. The production of *The Syrens* sank without trace, but Fisher's overture was very popular. Capella Savaria play these pieces with their customary style and precision. Clearly having been immersed in Galuppi has done them no ill. Thoroughly enjoyable entertainment. Maybe we can look forward to something more substantial from Mr Smith now? BC

CLASSICAL

Cimarosa *Die Cembalasonaten* Martin Gotthard Schneider *hpscd* 74' 20"
Da Camera Magna 77 078 (rec 1969)

This is the library principle of recording taken to extremes: 32 single-movement sonatas by a good but not absolutely top-rank composer, each lasting about 2 minutes (one is only 36 seconds long – has anyone informed the Guinness Book of Records?) by the same player on the same instrument. If any disc is for background listening or occasionally dipping into, this is it. The playing is convincing: clear-cut, unfussy, with none of the obtrusive demonstration of musicality that current style favours, and I think the music is all the stronger for it. I'm less convinced by hearing it all on the harpsichord: alternation with fortepiano would have been interesting. There is a complete two-disc set on modern piano for comparison on Arcobaleno AAOC-93672, which BC seems to have enjoyed rather more than he expected (*EMR* 62, p. 24). CB

Galuppi *Il caffè di campagna* (Mónika González Dorina, Mihály Kálmándi *Concete Fumana*, Bernadette Weidemann *Lisetta*, András Laczó *Bellagamba*, Frano Lufi *Caligo*, Andrea Szántó *Scaffetta*, Vito Martino *Cicala*, Capella Savaria, Fabio Piroa, *dir* 155' 42" (2 CDs in a box)

Hungaroton Classic HCD 31658-59,

Galuppi *Gustavo Primo re di Svezia* Edit Károly Ernesto, Mónika González *Ergilda*, Mario Cecchetti *Learco*, Gabriella Létei Kiss *Dorisbe*, Filippo Pina Castiglioni *Argeno*, Savaria Baroque Orchestra, Fabio Pirona, *dir* 136' 12" (2 CDs)

Hungaroton Classics HCD 32103-04

These two sets represent the opposite ends of the Galuppiian opera spectrum: the first is opera buffa and the other opera seria. They both have three acts and broadly spread the musical interest equally among the roles. *Il caffè* has one duet (in the third act) and each act ends with a chorus, while *Gustavo* has a duet that turns into a chorus, a trio and a quintet at the end. Listening to these recordings without any booklet notes, one would not be able to distinguish one from the other – there is no riotous backslapping in *Il caffè*, and *Gustavo* is more about love than Swedish royal history. The music is light, with the emphasis in the arias less on dramatic character development than on vocal display. In general, the women cope better with Galuppi's sometimes florid lines than their male colleagues. The playing is delightful. The recitatives (often dry and tedious, in my opinion) flow quite naturally between the concerted pieces. Hungaroton are to be thanked and praised for bravely making these two premiere recordings, and I hope they will continue their exploration of Galuppi's music, perhaps with an oratorio next time? BC

Galuppi *Musica Sacra* Mónika González, Judit Németh, Lúcia Megyesi-Schwartz, Krisztina Jónás SASS, Angelica Girls Choir, Savaria Baroque Orchestra, Fabio Pirona, *dir* 65' 44"
Hungaroton Classics HCD 31828

Galuppi's music for the Venetian Ospedali clearly makes ideal repertoire for a choir of girls. The problem with this recording is that the director seems far more interested in effect than the historical integrity of the music – the opening swell-box sounds in the opening chorus of *Confitebor tibi Domine* (the other two pieces on the disc are settings of *Nunc dimittis* and *Laudate pueri*) is a good or bad example, depending on your view point. There is also a considerable difference in vocal timbre between the girls and the mature soloists. Not that this is necessarily historically inaccurate (and the alto fares better than her soprano colleagues), but in antiphonal passages it was just too much. One thing was clear, though: here again Galuppi shows how well he wrote for the human voice. BC

Haydn *Symphonies 90-92* The Hanover Band, Roy Goodman 65' 34" (rec 1992)

Hyperion Helios CDH55125 £

Haydn *Symphonies 93-95* The Hanover Band, Roy Goodman 79' 00" (rec 1990)

Hyperion Helios CDH55126 £

These latest re-releases from Roy Goodman's Haydn symphony series are every

bit as welcome as their predecessors: wholehearted and lively performances, well balanced so that the superb wind solos emerge clearly yet not ostentatiously from the lithe string textures. The harpsichord as continuo instrument, a feature of Goodman's versions of the pre-London symphonies, is tellingly replaced on the second of these CDs by a Broadwood fortepiano. There is abundant affection in these readings, and Haydn's spritely invention comes over with refreshing directness, even if the occasional movement (notably the Menuetto of the *Oxford*) is a bit of a scramble. As usual, clean and atmospheric recordings, and a useful introductory note. *Peter Branscombe*

Haydn Piano Trios vol. 5 Trio 1790 74' 44"
cpo 999 828-2
Hob XV: 24-26, 31-2

This latest issue in Trio 1790's series of Haydn recordings show the ensemble at its best – the balance, sonority and articulation are first rate. The works are entertaining too, ranging from the well-known G major trio with its fiery Gypsy rondo to the two movement trio in the unusual key of E flat minor. The first movement of the latter work has a particularly interesting episode for the violin in B major and the striking use of wide ranging keys continues in its allegro where there is a modulation to E major from the home key of E flat major. The notes provide a good guide to the works and explain the story behind Haydn's original heading, *Jacob's Dream*, for the E flat major movement – the title and the music (with its high violin part) had poked fun at a German amateur violinist with a propensity for playing very high notes near the bridge. Highly recommended. *Margaret Cranmer*

Haydn Arianna a Naxos, Scena di Berenice, Symphony 92 Cecilia Bartoli, Concentus Musicus Wien, Nikolaus Harnoncourt 83' Opus Arte OA 0821 D DVD
Syriate: Portrait of a Festival & rehearsal discussion between Bartoli & Harnoncourt

Here is a Haydn DVD from the Styriarte Festival, Graz, recorded, like the Mozart one reviewed in the May *EMR*, on 13 and 14 July 2001. Again the programme consists of a symphony, vocal numbers, and rehearsal and publicity sequences. Both the latter are too 'bitty', too frenetic in their changes of scene, mood and content. But the performances command respect. Harnoncourt directs an *Oxford* Symphony of blazing intensity, with a supercharged Menuetto that is exciting, though for my taste too eccentric. Cecilia Bartoli isn't quite at her finest – in the *Ariadne* cantata, its original piano accom-

paniment replaced by an early string version (the one by F. W. Hildebrand ?), she seems to be trying too hard to project the drama; this comes out particularly in the closing aria. *Berenice* is more successful, partly because the scoring is Haydn's, but mainly because Bartoli sounds more relaxed, vivid as are her runs. She has poise and poignancy in abundance, and is awe-inspiring in her anger and despair. The *Concentus Musicus* is totally at home with Haydn, and these are exciting performances, carefully considered even in the few places where one could wish a different interpretative decision had been taken. The recording is of high standard, and there's a good essay on the music, though there should surely be timings and fuller source details in the booklet.

Peter Branscombe

Mozart London Sketchbook (1764/5) K.15, Minuets, Contredanses completed by Hans-Udo Kreuels pf 74' 40"
Naxos 8.554769 £

The 39 tracks include two on which Hans-Udo Kreuels is backed by an indifferent Vorarlberg Conservatory Ensemble; for the most part, though, we have Kreuels' piano realization of the little movements (K15a through to K15ss) that the boy Mozart wrote during the London sojourn. There are little gems here (the Andante K15kk and the Adagio K15mm); but also, it must be said, a quantity of unremarkable pieces. There is a short insert note, and the recording and performance are adequate, seldom more than that. For anyone wanting a more polished, less monochrome version of this music, volume 45 of the Philips Complete Mozart Edition includes a broad selection, sensitively edited and attractively orchestrated by Erik Smith, and performed by Marriner and the ASM.

Peter Branscombe

The World's First Piano Concertos David Owen Norris, Sonnerie (Monica Huggett, Emilia Benjamin, Joseph Crouch)
Avia AV0014 79' 57" see p. 8

19th CENTURY

Brahms & Schumann Masses Kölner Kammerchor, Peter Neumann 61' 54"
Dabringhaus & Grimm MDG 332 0598-2
Brahms Fugue for Organ WoO 8, Kyrie WoO 17, Missa Canonica WoO 18 **Schumann Missa sacra op. 147**

Not perhaps entirely relevant to *EMR*, but interesting for the way two mid-19th-century Germans worked with the old-church style. The Schumann mass is the main work, lasting over 40 minutes. It

was written in 1852 with orchestral accompaniment; the organ version used here is a fairly recent discovery, first performed in 1991. Schumann prepared it, and added the offertorium *Tota pulchra es* as a requirement for entering the work for an English competition (so the booklet says: more detail would be welcome. I can't imagine an Anglican competition wanting an ordinary with Marian insert; would any Catholic competition of this period have had the status to draw Schumann?) The work sounds entirely convincing with organ, and I can recommend it to choirs seeking fresh repertoire as well as to listeners. In contrast, the Brahms pieces come from early in his life, his contrapuntal studies aided by Schumann's library of textbooks: Clara gave him a copy of Marpurgh's book on Fugue in 1853. To some extent, the mass movements were studies, though the Benedictus was sung by his Hamburg female choir in 1857. He later used the Mass music in his motet *Warum ist das Licht* (op. 74/1) and destroyed the mass; a copy emerged in 1978. I'm not sure why this 1995 disc has been remarked, but it is certainly worth hearing. The only possible criticism is that the choral sound has the cleanness of current early-music singing, and I wonder if an 1850s style would be a bit more romantic. CB

Mendelssohn Athalia Anna Korondi, Sabina Martin, Ann Hallenberg, Barbara Ochs SSAA, Dirk Schortemeier narrator, Das Neue Orchester, Chorus Musicus Köln, Christoph Spering 63' 19"
Capriccio 67 068

Only the often-recorded Overture and the (in)famous *War-March of the Priests* from the incidental music that Mendelssohn wrote in 1845 for a Berlin/Charlottenburg production of Racine's *Athalie* are available on CD. So Christoph Spering's latest offering is very welcome: there is fine music here, and use of the track-numbers facilitates skipping (on repeated hearings) of the dutiful narrative passages with which Dirk Schortemeier fills in the story between Mendelssohn's ambitious and largely successful choruses. Just the one voice for the various characters weakens the impact of the melodramas. Chorus Musicus Köln has plenty to do, and does it very well; the four soloists are good, if at times over vibrant; and Spering and Das Neue Orchester bring out the freshness and originality of Mendelssohn's invention. A good insert booklet contains not only a long and detailed essay on the work and its background, but the text (not quite as spoken) in German, French and English. Fond schoolboy memories of

hardly re-kindled by the Ernst Raupach translation that Mendelssohn had to work with, but the latter came up with an impressive score.

Peter Branscombe

Mendelssohn *Lieder ohne Worte* Heidi Kommerell *fp*

Audite 97.482

Op. 19/1-2,6; 30/3,5; 38/2,5; 53/1-4; 62/1,6; 67/3,5,6; 85/2,6; 102/5

It's good to be able to hear this very beautiful Streicher und Sohn fortepiano of 1829, which admirably suits Kommerell's sensitive performance of a selection of Mendelssohn's superbly crafted though nowadays rather neglected pieces. I would have like more of them: just under 50 minutes is pretty short measure for a CD that could easily have been half as long again. The programme booklet, however, is a disgrace. Fortepianos have been played and recorded for many years, and there's no longer any need to adopt an apologetic tone for venturing 'into the unaccustomed sound world of an original instrument, where today's standards of technical perfection are lacking'. What is supposed to be imperfect? It is nonsense to suggest that early piano actions are incapable of fast repetition when their depth of touch is much less than that of a modern instrument. One may disagree with such statements in the German essay, but the English version is totally incomprehensible, for the translator obviously knows nothing whatever about piano actions, and invariably mistranslates the technical terms. *Oberschlägige Mechanik* means 'down-striking action', not 'upper-striking mechanism'. 'The keyboard is very free-moving' (what? how disconcerting! – in fact the German means that the touch is very light). Surely anyone with even a passing acquaintance with Viennese fortepianos knows that the correct translation of *Auslösemechanik* is 'escapement action', not the almost meaningless 'release mechanism'. And what on earth is a 'catcher slot'? (Answer: *Fängerleiste*, i.e. check rail). I could go on, but my best advice is to buy the CD for some delightful music on a beautiful instrument, and to throw away the booklet unread.

Richard Maunder

The Maiden's Prayer and other gems from the old piano stool Philip Martin *pf*
Hyperion CDA67379 77' 10"

I mentioned when asking Hyperion for other, more relevant discs that this looked intriguing but I had no excuse to ask for a copy, but they sent one. So I feel I owe them some report on it, mostly music that I'd return instantly to any piano-stool

I found it in when I was young, but of which I'm far more tolerant now. In fact, I must have left a fair number of the pieces untouched in the various piano stools I have known, including even the title piece – its name is familiar, but not that of its composer, Tekla Badarzewska (1834-1861): she published it when she was 17. There were, however, various pieces I had to practice in my childhood: the *Toccatina* in A by Paradies and Dvorak's *Humoresque* – though I never did see where the humour was, probably because I was too heavy-fingered, and as a child I evidently didn't recognize the deliberate wrong note. It also puzzled me why the *Harmonious Blacksmith* was singled out, since from quite early in life I found virtually anything else by Handel more satisfactory. Philip Martin plays 24 pieces ranging in length from Fibich's *Poème* op. 41/14 to Grünfeld's *Romanze* op. 45/1. The booklet notes by Jeremy Nicholas, who planned the programme with Ted Perry and the pianist, are extremely informative.

CB

see also the editorial

VARIOUS

Orgel- und Claviermusik aus der Zips Raimund Schächter (1650 organ Wachau, 1722 Crap organ Pappenheim Kloster and 1756 claviorganum Wettelsheim) 73' 00"
Cornetto CORN10012

Even the most committed fans of early organ music will be forgiven for not having heard of the music on this CD. It includes works by Marckfelner, Loysch and Schnur, and pieces from the *Leutschauer Tabulaturbuch* and the *Notenbuchen* of Johannes Marcus and Anna Susanna Ballzerin dating from the late 17th to the late 18th centuries. All hail from the Zips area of Slovakia, close to the High Tatra mountains and heavily populated by Germans during the 17th and 18th centuries. The Pappenheim organ is only used for the little 3-movement Sonata by Loysch. The Wachau organ (used for 35 pieces from the *Leutschauer Tabulaturbuch* and Marckfelner's two minuscule pieces) has a very lively winding that sings along merrily in the quieter pieces although it causes some grief in the louder and bouncier pieces. I have a feeling that the player could have done more to control the side affects of the winding, both in his choice of registrations (using 8,8,4,4,4,2,Q,M all at once, as in track 11, is asking for trouble) and in the speed of his release of notes. I have not played this organ, so I might be being unfair, but winding like this can usually be controlled by careful use of touch. What is interesting about this CD is the fascinat-

ing sound of a 1756 claviorganum, a combination of a three-stop chamber organ and two manual, two-stop harpsichord and a sound that is rarely heard nowadays. With 30 tracks to demonstrate it, there is plenty of chance to appreciate just how versatile this instrument was. The ability to have an organ bass accompaniment to a harpsichord solo line, or vice versa, as well as the unique sound of the full organ and harpsichord playing in complete harmony, is something well worth hearing. It is a shame that the claviorganum is so rare nowadays. The music may not be of the highest quality, this CD is worth hearing for the claviorganum alone.

Andrew Benson-Wilson

We have also received from Cornetto a companion edition *Claviermusik aus der Zips* (CP0227) a 39-page anthology of pieces for harpsichord and piano. It contains 14 dances from Johann Schnur's *Musikal Büchl* (1756), 16 short peices from the *Notenbuch* des Johannes Marcus (1788), a Sonata in G by Samuelis Loysch (1790), 9 dances from the *Notenbuch* der Anna Susanna Ballzerin (1795) and 4 fugues (for organ but not needing pedals) by Wilhelm Wagner (1815-1887).

Woodworks Tamara Gries *rec 54' 63"*

The Divine Art 25019 (rec 1996)

English Masque Dances, Couperin *Les baricades mystérieuses*, Handel Sonata in C HWV 365, Trio Sonata in F HWV 389, Vivaldi Trio in a RV86 & music by Cronin, Lerich & Zahnhausen

This is an Australian disc dating back to 1997, with, I have to say, something of a home-grown feel about it. The programme is a mix of early and contemporary recorder music featuring Tamara Gries accompanied by various other instrumentalists; in fact it seems that the movements of Rudolf Lerich's recorder trio (1956) have been multitracked by Tamara herself playing all three parts – though sadly this is marred by some very suspect tuning. In the baroque sonatas the recorder playing reveals a fluent finger technique, although the sound and articulation tend towards the heavy and pedantic with little flexibility or variety. This problem filters through to the accompanying harpsichordist and cellist as well (I have my suspicions that the harpsichordist may be playing straight from the realisation, for those that find this an issue).*

There are much better commercial recordings of all the baroque repertoire. But it is good to hear some Australian contemporary pieces – I particularly liked Stephen Cronin's *Suite for Recorder and Strings*, composed in homage to Vaughan Williams.

Marie Ritter

* Surely it is an issue if you can hear it. CB

LETTERS

Dear Sir,

Your 89th issue (April 2003) carried a review of a recent CD of Banchieri's *L'organo suonarino* (Tactus 60202). Obviously it is offensive, and meant to be. I draw attention to some of its shortcomings.

The Facchetti organ at San Michele in Bosco, Bologna, has recently been restored by Franz Zanin. Serafin Rossi, Chairman of Tactus, conceived the happy idea of a CD devoted to Banchieri's important manual. The composer had been organist of the monastery for many years. Apart from an edition in facsimile (Bologna: Forni, 1678), very little of Banchieri's book is available in print. I myself, therefore, prepared most of the transcriptions used for the recording. I also wrote the booklet notes. Unfortunately, your reviewer was too idle to read them.

I explained that Clement VIII's *Caeremoniale episcoporum* had legitimised the long-established custom of substituting chant-free organ music for the Proper. Banchieri was the first to publish pieces of organ music expressly designed for such use. That is the reason why, for the most part, they are short. Clement had also recommended that, during the verses of the Ordinary assigned to the organ, the words should be sung. I pointed out that Banchieri's 'verses are without precedent. He wrote nothing save the words and the bass part. The organist could simply realise the implied harmonies or, depending on his ability, develop imitative points. He can, says Banchieri, display his learned fantasy (*spiegare la dotta fantasia*). Such a display of *dotta fantasia* (whether by way of improvisation *super librum* or of composition) is simply a realisation of the bass: it cannot be called a 'reconstruction of a Mass setting', as your reviewer absurdly supposed.

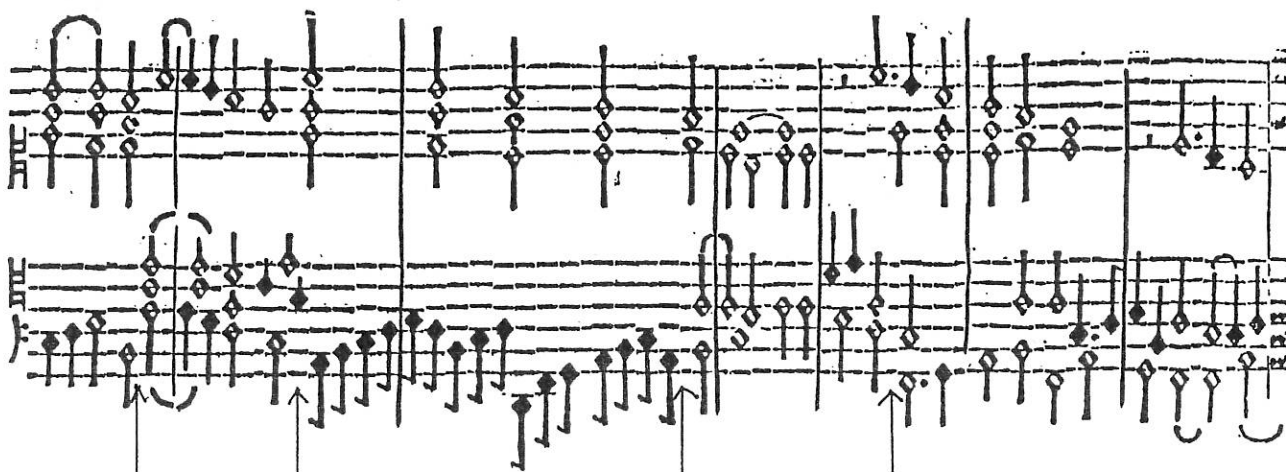
Again, it was quite wrong to say that *L'organo suonarino* specified 'occasions on which the organ ought not to be played'. Such occasions (e. g. the Creed) had, indeed, been specified in the *Caeremoniale*, to which Banchieri made several references. However, as my notes made perfectly clear, he took a wider view of the organist's role than did

Clement. He included two *alternatim* settings of the Creed. In fact, one of these is realised on the CD.

Palpably untrue, and therefore rightly resented, is the statement that I am 'incapable of keeping to any sense of pulse'. The same applies to his other complaints. In the related matters of rhythm, tempo, touch, articulation and gesture, my response to the music is conditioned by a familiarity with the relevant evidence. By its nature, this evidence is variegated. Amongst much else, it includes the actions and other features of historic instruments, old fingering methods, and the many pieces of advice that have come down to us from the composers themselves. Such sources reveal the rhetoric of a past age. In particular, sources relevant to the repertoire in question indicate a flexible approach to pulse.

An introduction to some of this evidence will be of benefit to your reviewer:-

1. In the preface to his *Fiori musicali* (1635), Frescobaldi advised that, even if written in quavers, the openings of his toccatas were to be played slowly, and the speed increased later – *Li principe di tutte le Toccate, ben che siano di crome, potransi fare adagio, e poi second i loro passi farli allegri*. To take but one example, the *Toccata Avanti la Messa Della Madonna* begins with an *arpeggio figurato* in quavers. So too does Banchieri's *Ingresso*.
2. In Banchieri's short Gradual-substitute *Bizzaria del Primo Tuono col Flauto all'Ottava*, progressive increases of speed are indicated (*piu presto* at bar 9, *prestissimo* at bar 17). There are similar markings in *La Battaglia*.
3. In the *Secondo Dialogo*, each phrase is repeated in the lower octave. Banchieri also required that, between each phrase and its repetition, a stop (the 4' *Ottava*) was to be released. After the repetition, the stop was to be added again. Given the nature of 16th-century stop mechanisms, the use of an assistant is unavoidable, and frequent interruptions of the pulse are obviously implied.



4. Even more notable, given the rigorous counterpoint, is the preface to Frescobaldi's *Capricci* (1624). Even here, we are told, the openings (*i principi*) are to be played *adagio, a dar maggior spirito e vaghezza al seguente passo*.
5. The relevant notion of pulse is, perhaps, most clearly revealed in the notation known as *intavolatura di cembalo*. All the notes assigned to the right hand are placed on the upper two staves, those to be played by the left are on the lower. The hands do not assist each other. The result is the performance practice today called *pausa di mano*. The beat is slightly but frequently delayed for expressive effect. There are innumerable instances of this practice. One example will suffice. Consider bars 16–20 of the *Ricercare del decimo tono* from Antegnati's *L'Antegnata* (Venice, 1608). On no less than four occasions, notes which are most conveniently played by the right hand have been assigned to the left. This division between the hands generates four little pauses. All are structurally pertinent. The first pause occurs before the last beat of bar 16: here syncopation is highlighted. The second is before the last beat of bar 17, where the left hand begins a run of quavers. The third, again marking syncopation, is before the last beat of bar 18. The last comes before the third beat of bar 20, where the subject enters in the bass.

Your reviewer claims that the soloist had regular problems with intonation. That was not so. Any problems were occasional and never severe. Moreover, failure to mention the excellent work of the Tactus engineers was reprehensible. Even more so was the failure to comment on the breathtaking tonal qualities of Facchetti's restored masterpiece. The date of the instrument was given as 1524. Even that was wrong. The organ was not completed till 1526. Once again, the information was in my notes.

Your reviewer's extraordinary ignorance should, I think be corrected in public: that is where he has chosen to parade it.

Paul Kenyon

Andrew Benson-Wilson can, if he cares to do so, defend himself against these charges. I am responsible for one of the points you raise: the date of the organ, since I set the headings before the CDs are sent to reviewers. I don't have a copy at hand so cannot check whether it is just a mistake or whether I gave a relevant date other than the completion of the instrument. Our reviews are mostly short and, with limited space and a feel that our audience is on the whole not at the audiophile end of the market, tend to concentrate on the music and performance rather than the recording techniques. So there is no particular significance in lack of comment on the no-doubt excellent work of the engineers.

CB

Dear Clifford,

How nice to read Simon Raven's generous welcoming of our recent St Matthew Passion recording. Taking up one or two of his points, I hope that we can slowly reduce rather than increase the level of vitriol that the Bach controversy (actually, what controversy?) creates. My only

position, backed up by Simon, is that performing Bach's music with solo voices can be a fantastic musical experience; and, like him, I respect – at least at one level – those who perform Bach with choirs out of sheer musical conviction. I do, however, reserve scorn for those conductors that read a selective sentence from one document and then follow up this with knit-your-own musicology in order to justify what is, in the end, nothing but legitimate personal preference.

In fact, the recording has received very little prejudice from supporters of the status quo. It was a pity that George Pratt's review was cynical and lukewarm but his was almost a lone voice in an astounding amount of extremely favourable review across the world (in fact, far more than I had ever dared expect!) So my only hope is that we can stop fighting and perform Bach as we wish to perform it, whether or not we decide to follow what for me is almost incontrovertable evidence. And in fairness to Stephen Pettitt, he was indeed asked to act as something of a devil's advocate in the booklet interview. (If I'm really honest about it, I even admit to altering one or two of his questions!) The point was simply to bring this discussion to the attention of the many listeners who might have a far less developed sense of the issues than most *EMR* readers.

Paul McCreesh

Dear Clifford,

I despair of English if your magazine too succumbs to the intrusive apostrophe: June, p.3, right-hand column, 2nd para, line 9 (but I always enjoy the magazine, and shall hope you DO continue in some form next year). By the way, Fayfax's clef combinations discussed in that paragraph are classic 'in contrabasso' *chiavi trasportati* noted by Barbieri (Grove 7, vol 5, pp 597–600 *Chiavette*) as common especially in Franco-Flemish early 16th century polyphony. He agrees with you that they would normally be transposed up (e.g. by 4th); but Reese (*Music in the renaissance* 1954, p. 249) points out that Glareanus (*Dodecachordon* 1547, 364) remarked Josquin's exception to what 'is customarily done in such cases elsewhere' for his setting of *De Profundis*: 'note how the beginning of this composition presents the expression *De Profundis* to us – with what effect and what gravity...'

Anne Graf

I am very aware of the *its/it's* solecism; it is worrying how often it creeps into first drafts! It's probably survived proof-reading because of contamination with the proper *it's* on the line above. More seriously, a word was omitted at the end of page 12 – one of those computer things where it decides to change spacing of its own accord. There is, however, no doubt what word follows Canon and in a Pachelbel context (though another puzzle is why the *and* was not in italics): I wonder how many read it without noticing the omission. On the transposition issue, you might find Honey Meconi's tables interesting (see p. 2).

CB

Dear Clifford,

One of BC's CD reviews in the last issue opens: 'This disc was recorded in **** but is not dated in any way.' What's your guess – 1930, 1950, 1970? Wrong: the correct answer is 1995.

So now we're expected to be really surprised that a recording made all of eight years ago (Gosh! They were actually playing early music then!) isn't terribly dated and quaint. What a lot of patronising, faddy nonsense this all is, when last year's recordings are more-or-less old hat and nothing but the latest version will do!

Beresford King-Smith

The performance style of Italian baroque music has changed considerably since Italians themselves started HIPping their own music, so the eight years between 1995 and 2003 is probably more significant than, say, the previous eight might have been

VISITING ITALY?

We are arranging an exhibition for Philip Picket's weekend at the South Bank on Nov. 1-2 devoted to Monteverdi and are searching for illustrations. If anyone is likely to be in Mantua or Venice during the next couple of months and would be prepared to keep an eye open for reproducible pictures (or books with pictures that could be extracted), or even photograph Monteverdian sites, we'd like to hear from you: please phone to discuss the sort of thing that is appropriate before you go. 16th-century pictures of the Orfeo myth and of realistic performances of music would also be helpful.

CB

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