

Harpsichord & fortepiano

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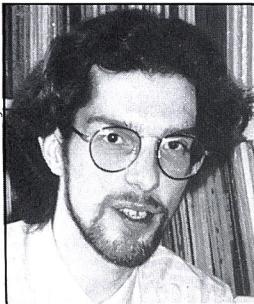
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A Note from the Editor

Sally Anne March



IT is with great pleasure that I introduce the first edition of the newly revived *Harpsichord & Fortepiano* to you. I sincerely hope that the magazine is as you would like it to be. We have tried to bring together things which will interest the widest possible readership and it is our intention in forthcoming issues to maintain a balance between scholarly articles which delve deeply into the many aspects of the study of harpsichords, early pianos, their makers and their music, on the one hand, and on the other, features on contemporary makers, restorers, players and historians—all those who are shaping our understanding of these instruments and the music written for them.

In this first issue the restoration debate looms large. Whether or not to salvage old instruments, to make them playable again after possibly years of neglect, is a question which is much exercising the early keyboard world at present. Some people would like to leave old instruments as they are and try to discover their sound through the construction of faithful copies; others would rather give a voice to the original instruments in order to allow them to speak for themselves. Each approach has its problems as well as its advantages, and *H&F* has tried to assemble some of the arguments on both sides.

The discovery in a Swedish museum of an authenticated (i.e., signed) harpsichord by Michael Mietke was announced in 1991. *H&F* has an article by Andreas Kilstöm, who made the discovery and who has now made a copy of this wonderfully preserved instrument: he fills in details of the construction which have come to light in the last three years and describes the involved process of making a copy using, as far as possible, the original materials and construction methods.

Contemporary music is often regarded as an impenetrable world, far removed from the daily concerns of early keyboard specialists, but Jane Chapman in a fascinating article about two works for harpsichord and electronics describes vividly how new music can both stimulate and inspire player and listener alike. It is important not to ignore this aspect of harpsichord music (why are there no contemporary pieces yet for fortepiano?): expansion of the repertoire will enrich our culture and ensure that the early keyboard retains a central position in the musical life of the twenty-first century.

In the cover article, we interview Christophe Rousset, one of the most exciting of young French harpsichordists, and we also begin our regular pages of disc and book reviews, plus Mimi Waitzman's invaluable series on instrument maintenance.

We hope that you will find something here to interest you. We welcome any items of news and hope that readers will also write with their responses to the first edition and to inform us of any gaps that they perceive in our coverage.

The Editor would like to acknowledge the assistance of Geoffrey Govier and Michael Benenson in the preparation of this first edition, as well as all those who have given their time and effort to making the magazine and its contents a success. Their contribution has been invaluable and is much appreciated.