

# Harpsichord & *fortepiano*

Vol. 5, No. 1    October, 1994

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Musical Instrument Research Catalog  
(MIRCat)

## News in the early keyboard world

# Soundboard

**Purcell discovery:** An manuscript volume of music by Purcell and Giovanni Battista Draghi was sold at Sotheby's on 26 May for £276,500—a world record for any British music manuscript. The calf-bound volume, unearthed in Devon by Lisa Cox, contains twenty-one harpsichord pieces, including a number of unknown or otherwise unattributed works. It is the only known manuscript of Purcell's keyboard music in his own hand and contributes some useful information about fingering and ornamentation. Draghi, an Italian composer who came to Britain in the service of Charles II, served as organist at the queen's private chapel and as music master to the royal princesses. Principally known for his songs, he also wrote a number of keyboard suites. Seventeen pieces by him appear in this volume, and they too may be autographs—Draghi's hand is known only from his signature on a document in the public record office, so the identification remains tentative. The book was authenticated by Dr Curtis Price of King's College, London, who is in the process of preparing the contents for publication.

The Fauna and Flora Preservation Society (FFPS) has launched its **Ebonies and Rosewoods Project**, designed to help preserve the world's diminishing supplies of the beautiful dark woods often employed in the construction of musical instruments. True ebony is now rarely employed—the trade in many species is already illegal in several parts of the world. Brazilian rosewood or Palisander was at one time a highly prized wood for making pianos (by the end of the 19th century it was one of the world's most expensive timbers, fetching as much as £90 a ton). Its advantage is its durability and resistance to warping. It is now outlawed, but Tanzanian rosewood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*), often known simply as African Blackwood, is still frequently used—albeit in small quantities—



Page 10v from the Purcell MS sold at Sotheby's in May. The page illustrated is a previously unrecorded "Prelude" in C, which has autograph fingering throughout.

for the black keys of fortepianos, harpsichords and clavichords. This wood comes from a slow-growing tree whose local name is Mpingo and which is found not only in Tanzania but also in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Madagascar. A reafforestation programme has been established, but a tree can take at least seventy years to reach a harvestable age. Even then 90% of the tree is unusable and is discarded. Sixty-one species are listed by the FFPS as under threat, and the list includes other woods used in keyboard instruments such as walnut, box and maple.

Earlier this year, Indonesia pledged to reduce timber harvests by nearly a third over the next five years as part of a conservation plan. Indonesia has more rainforest than any country other than Brazil and is the origin of Macassar ebony and *Dalbergia latifolia*, another important rosewood.

The FFPS is based in London, and further information about its work can be obtained from The Fauna and Flora Preservation Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR, Tel: (0171) 823 8899 and Fax: (0171) 823 9690.

The **Sixth Biennial Conference on Baroque Music** was held in Edinburgh between 7 and 10 July. Organized by Dr Noel O'Regan of the University music department, the conference covered a wide range of Baroque music subjects. Amongst the papers were several of particular relevance to keyboardists. The weekend's activities included a harpsichord recital by Peter Williams and a tour of the keyboard instruments in the Russell Collection.

The **Westfield Center** (formerly Westfield Center for Early Keyboard Studies) (US) has held its First Annual Symposium, 29 Sept–1 Oct 1994. The symposium was held in Northampton and South Hadley, Massachusetts—Smith and Mount Holyoke Colleges—in a region punctuated by gentle mountains, the Connecticut river, and a cluster of top schools (Amherst College and University of Massachusetts–Amherst are here as well). The presentations were diverse: from early Italian keyboard performance to Chopin performance practice and including insights into Bach and his Lübeck.

**Schubert's piano music** is the subject of a five-day **Schubert Symposium** and Festival of Concerts, co-sponsored by The Westfield Center and The Smithsonian Institution and with support including funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. Keyboard performers include Malcolm Bilson, David Breitman, Seth Carlin, and Penelope Crawford (fp) and discussions will centre on the social contexts in which Schubert composed, the performance practices of his time and Schubert's innovative treatment of harmony, tonality, and form. Concurrent events include a master-class, exhibits, dance classes, concerts of solo works, Lieder, four-hand pieces, choral works, chamber music and, of course, *Schubertiade*. Further information: Lynn Edwards, Westfield Center, One Cottage Street, Easthampton MA 01027-1658 (US).

The Annual Meeting of the **Midwestern Historical Keyboard Society (MHKS)** will take place 18-20 May 1995 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The venue for the annual meeting for several years, Ann Arbor houses the Stearns Collection of instruments and the University of Michigan, where Edward Parmentier and Penelope Crawford teach harpsichord and fortepiano.

MHKS this year has scheduled a **Beethoven Day**, to highlight both the composer's music and the evolution of performance practice since his day. Sandra Rosenblum (*Performance Practices in Classical Music*) is a featured speaker. Details: David Sutherland, MHKS, 801 Miner Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103 (US).

The Westfield Center has put together a steering committee to plan a series of programmes to be presented in 1999, marking the **300th anniversary of the invention of the piano** by Bartolomeo Cristofori. Preliminary plans include an international exhibit of surviving instruments of Cristofori and successors. Preparatory conferences are tentatively planned

for autumn 1996, when scholars, instrument makers and performers would meet to discuss and explore the first period of the piano, c.1675-1775. The steering committee is soliciting expressions of interest and suggestions: Lynn Edwards, Westfield Center, One Cottage Street, Easthampton MA 01027-1658 (US).

**Early Music America's headquarters** is now in Cleveland. With former president Thomas Forrest Kelly joining the Harvard music school faculty, Early Music America has moved to 11421 1/2 Bellflower Road, Cleveland Ohio 44106 (US), Tel: (216) 229 1685. The new president is Mary A Deissler, Executive Director of the Handel & Haydn Society of Boston.

The inaugural meeting of the **British Clavichord Society**, held in Oxford on 19 June, attracted an audience of some sixty people. Clavichord music was followed by discussion of future plans: as well as meetings and publications these include encouraging contacts between players, teachers and makers. The next meeting is on 29 October. For information contact Judith Wardman, 26a Church Lane, London N8 7BU, sending an s.a.e.

**Trinity College of Music** in London has designed a **new harpsichord course** as part of its BMusTCM degree. The four-year course, which started in September this year, aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills for entry into the music profession as an early music specialist. Both academic research and practical know-how are encouraged through classes on the history of the instrument, tuning and regulating, as well as sessions on reading from early manuscripts and 20th-century music for the instrument. There are also classes on the special challenges of teaching the harpsichord, and comparisons between performance practice on harpsichord, clavichord and organ.

**Finchcocks**, at Goudhurst in Kent, is mounting a series of **early piano workshops** during the winter. Details are available from Richard and Katrina Burnett, Finchcocks,

Goudhurst, Kent TN17 1HH, Tel: (01580) 211702, and Fax: (01580) 211007.

**Two harpsichord weekend courses** are being held during the winter, directed by Douglas Hollick. The course looks at the history of the harpsichord, its construction, acoustics and decoration over the centuries, and at the varied repertoire for the instrument. Douglas Hollick is a harpsichord maker and player. As part of the course he will also give a concert, open to the public, which will include a C P E Bach sonata from the collection of US President Jefferson as well as music by J S Bach and French music of the 17th and 18th centuries. Course details: 9-11 Dec., Maryland College, Woburn, Bedfordshire, Tel: (0525) 290688; 13-15 Jan., Higham Hall, Bassenthwaite Lake, Cumbria, Tel: (07687) 76276.

## MUSIC

**New work:** *Hommage à MDCLXXXV* by South African composer Michael Blake was premiered by Paul Simmonds on 11 May this year, in a concert in the Brighton Festival devoted to the music of local composers.

The work is deeply influenced by the music of the Baroque period (especially Couperin and D'Anglebert) as its two movements betray: a "Prélude non mesuré" and then "Chaconne en rondeau". Meantone tuning is used: the composer makes use of a series of thirds for his main thematic material and the theme B-A-C-H also appears. Simmonds used a large single-manual Italian harpsichord by Colin Booth (the piece requires a range F'-f''').

This piece is shortly to be followed by a chamber work for recorder, gamba and harpsichord, commissioned by Trio Basiliensis, and future plans include a harpsichord concerto with the same scoring as the one by Manuel da Falla. Blake's music is published by Bardic Edition, Aylesbury, Tel: (01296) 28609.



**Concerto Première:** The world première of a new chamber arrangement of the harpsichord concerto by the Polish composer Henryk Górecki was given on 22 July by harpsichordist Elisabeth Chojnacka and the Kronos Quartet at the Barbican Hall, London, as part of a concert of new works for chamber ensembles. This work, played by Elisabeth Chojnacka, was also used for a dance piece (called simply *Concerto*) choreographed by Lucinda Childs, of the Lucinda Childs Dance Company, and seen in Britain at the Edinburgh Festival.

Dance has been in the air recently, because an **experimental dance work** entitled *Toccata*, choreographed by Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker for the Rosas Dance Company, and performed at London's South Bank Centre as part of the foreign dance festival *The Turning World*, used four keyboard works by Bach played live by Jos van Immerseel.

## FESTIVALS AND OTHER PERFORMANCES

One of the most unusual festivals to take place this year was "**Claviers d'hiver**", at the château of the Duc de Guise in the Haute-Marne. Organised by Jean-Louis Villeval, at a time of year when most festivals are hibernating, this event devoted to keyboard music included a wide-ranging recital by Gustav Leonhardt, performing little-known works by Storace and Gaspard Leroux alongside masters such as Bach, Sweelinck, Pachelbel, Böhm and Frescobaldi.

It was encouraging to see that both harpsichord and fortepiano were included in the 14th International Piano Festival, held at **La Roque d'Anthéron** in the South of France, in August. The harpsichord was represented by Christophe Rousset [interview, p. 19], Pierre Hantaï and Blandine Rannou, whilst fortepianist Andreas Staier gave a recital of Schubert and Dussek, and Pieter Wispelwey performed all the

Beethoven cello sonatas with Steven Lubin (fp).

The tenth anniversary of the **Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music** was celebrated in June with concerts at St James's Piccadilly and—in a new venture—at the Wigmore Hall. Maggie Cole (hpd) gave a concert in the **Norfolk and Norwich Festival** in May, which also included a concert given by Melvyn Tan (fp) and members of the New Mozart Ensemble. The same ensemble, at full strength, appeared in **Glasgow** on 10 August, when they played Mozart's concertos no. 23 (K. 488) and no. 27 (K. 595). Also in Glasgow were Olga Tverskaya (fp) and soprano Mhairi Lawson, performing Haydn songs and Schubert keyboard pieces.

The **Boston Early Music Festival and Exhibition** will be held at the Boston Plaza Hotel and Castle, Boston, Massachusetts (US), 12–18 June 1995. This biennial event draws heavily from Europe and combines high quality performances, workshops and demonstrations. More than 10,000 people attended the 1993 festival. The centrepiece of this year's BEMF is an historically-informed presentation of Purcell's opera, *King Arthur* (1691) in the Emerson Majestic Theatre, for which the co-artistic directors are Peter Holman (Colchester, UK) and Paul O'Dette (Rochester, New York, US). New this year is a parallel Humanities Forum that brings scholars from the UK and US to present the social history, literature, art history and musicology that contribute to the context of Purcell's work. Information: Kathleen Fay, Executive Director, BEMF, PO Box 2632, Cambridge MA 02238 (US), Tel: (617) 661 1812.

**Pierre Hantaï**, the outstanding young French harpsichordist, will be playing Bach's **Goldberg Variations**—a work with which he is particularly associated—at the Wigmore Hall in London on 19 November. The Trio Hantaï also played during the **XIe Printemps des Arts de Nantes**. Information about the next festival, which takes place in May and June, may be obtained on (+16) 40 69 37 38 or (+16) 36 68 36 44.

**Ton Koopman** will be playing C P E Bach's A major harpsichord concerto in a series of concerts which he is giving with the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, the group he founded in 1979. The tour, in February and March 1995, begins in the Netherlands and then travels to Vienna, Salzburg and Ljubljana. Koopman's performance of this work was heard in Britain in April, when he performed it with the Britten-Pears Baroque Orchestra on Good Friday at the Aldeburgh Early Music Festival.

Concerts at **Fenton House** this year have included a number of solo harpsichord recitals. Gary Cooper, harpsichordist of Trio Sonnerie, gave the first of the season with a mixture of English virginals pieces (on the Hatley virginals) and J S Bach, C P E Bach and Scarlatti on the Shudi-Broadwood harpsichord; Peter Bennett, runner-up in last year's Broadwood Harpsichord Competition (which was won by Steven Devine), used the Vincentius virginals for some fascinating early Italian repertoire, balanced by early Classical works, including J C Bach and Mozart; Motoko Nabeshima also played J S Bach, coupled with W F Bach and Handel, after a first half which focused on 17th-century English music, which she played on the single-strung Italian harpsichord. Other recitals have included The Musicke Company and Charivari Agréable, who played works for virginals and continuo as well as sonatas for gamba and harpsichord by Abel, J S and J C Bach. The series ended with a violin and harpsichord recital by Ingeborg Scheerer and Johannes Geffert from Bonn which included two movements from a sonata by Johann Ernst Bach (1722–77).

## COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS

Two Australian composers won awards in the **Fourth Aliénor Harpsichord Competition** for composers: Mary Mageau for her Concerto for solo harpsichord and strings and Stephen Yates for his *Suite*.

Applications are invited for the £1,000 **Byrne award**, for the performance of the music of Handel. The award is intended for performers at the start of their careers. The deadline for receipt of completed applications is 31 December 1994. Further information is available from Prof. Colin Timms, Department of Music, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT (UK).

**Broadwood Harpsichord Competition:** Open to harpsichord students enrolled at music conservatoires and university music departments in the UK, including those who completed their studies in the summer of 1994, this competition is the second mounted by the National Trust at Fenton House, in association with the Broadwood Trust. The closing date for applications is the end of February 1995, and auditions will be held at the end of April at Fenton House, Hampstead, London, using the historic instruments in the Benton Fletcher Collection of Early Keyboard Instruments. The winner will be offered a prize recital (worth £200) at Fenton House. For full details, send s.a.e to: Fenton House Competition Organiser, 62 Messina Avenue, London NW6 4LE, Tel: (0171) 372 3206.

Olga Tverskaya (fp) and Mhairi Lawson (soprano), who were students at the Guildhall School of Music in London, won the **International Early Music Network Young Artists Prize**, which has led to a number of important engagements, including an appearance at the Edinburgh Festival on 25 August. They are shortly to record a CD with Radio France which will be released in February.

**Sophie Yates** has received a prize from the Czech record magazine *Harmonie* for her disc of French Baroque harpsichord music (Chandos CHAN 0545). This year is the first that the magazine has awarded prizes and Sophie's disc won in the Solo Instrumental category. She has also recorded Spanish and Portuguese music for

Chandos: this disc is reviewed on page 40. Two more new discs, one featuring the music of Purcell and his French and English contemporaries, the other Elizabethan music including Byrd, will be out shortly.

A new edition of Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, prepared for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music by Dr Richard Jones, took the standard publication award given by the Music Retailers Association.

## OBITUARIES

*It is with deep regret that we have to announce the deaths of harpsichord makers David Jacques Way and Peter Whale, and of the player and teacher Christopher Kite.*

**David Jacques Way** was born in Nebraska in 1918 and whilst still in his teens started a private printshop whose success led to his moving to New York City where he founded the Thistle Press (later renamed Clarke & Way). It was through chance that his interest in harpsichord building was aroused, but he went on to make sophisticated instrument kits which became highly respected. He never stopped, and at the time of his death he left a book on tuning very nearly finished. His workshops in Paris and Stonington, Con. (US) will continue to be run by his associate Marc Ducornet. David Jacques Way leaves his wife Katherine, two daughters, a son and five grandchildren.

**Peter Whale**, who died in January this year, was a trained cabinet maker who became involved in harpsichord making at the Feldberg workshops in Kent. He also studied harpsichord construction in Germany at the Neupert factory. When John Feldberg died in 1960, Whale took over the running of the workshop and, with Anne Feldberg, continued to run the business for twenty-two years. Whale & Martin was formed in 1982 by Peter with his assistant Nick Martin, who took over the firm on Peter's retirement in 1986.

Demanding in his work and in his workshop practices, Peter had clear ideas about the reproduction of instruments. He was a keen sailor, and a quiet and private individual. He leaves his second wife Nancy, and a daughter and two sons by his first marriage.

**Christopher Kite**, who died on June 15 this year aged forty-six, was professor of piano, harpsichord and fortepiano at the Guildhall School of Music for twenty years and since 1987 had been Head of Music Studies there. Born in 1947 in Ilford in Essex, he was educated at Oxford (where he took a Classics degree) and as a postgraduate at the Royal College of Music. He made his Wigmore Hall debut in 1972 soon after winning the Raymond Russell Memorial Harpsichord Prize. He was also prize-winner at the Bruges International Harpsichord Competition in 1977. Although he was deeply involved in editing and performing the music of the 17th and 18th centuries, and was versatile in his keyboard accomplishments—no instrument or period style, it seemed, was foreign to his fingers—it was in the music of the 19th century that he was at his most relaxed. He had recently recorded concertos by Chopin, Mendelssohn and Weber with the Hanover Band. At the GSMD he brought a firm and imaginative hand to the courses under his control, and he was always meticulous in his organization. If he was at times impatient with sloppiness and his wit was sharp, he remained always courteous, and his ebullience was only occasionally permitted to surface, as in his love of skiing and fast cars. In 1992 Kite took on the role of Chairman of the Early Music Centre, where his work in developing the Centre was by no means finished at the time of his death. He leaves his wife Ursula and a son, Sebastian.

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*We rely on you to keep us fully informed of what is happening in the early keyboard world. Please send any information to the Editor. All copy for the April issue must be in by Monday 27 February.*