Harpsichord & fortepiano

Vol. 8, No. 1 Autumn, 1999

© Peacock Press.
Licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0.
You are free to share and adapt the content for non-commercial purposes, provided you give appropriate credit to Peacock Press and indicate if changes were made. Commercial use, redistribution for profit, or uses beyond this license require prior written permission from Peacock Press.

Musical Instrument Research Catalog
(MIRCat)

BOOK REVIEW

Mozart's Piano Concertos: Text, Context, Interpretation
ed. Neal Zaslaw
The University of Michigan Press, 1996
ISBN 0-472-10314-8

Anyone who expects this book to be the piano concerto equivalent of Zaslaw's *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception* (Oxford 1989) will be disappointed, for it lacks that work's coherent and comprehensive account of Mozart's entire output in the genre. Instead, it is a collection of articles by various authors, and constitutes the proceedings of a symposium at the University of Michigan in November 1989 (yes, 1989: seven years has been a long time to wait). The authors are distinguished musicologists, presenting the results of their current research to a largely professional audience; the non-specialist reader who does not know the field well may therefore find some of the articles of rather esoteric interest. Moreover in such a volume of miscellaneous essays the range of topics covered necessarily reflects the authors' particular areas of expertise, and almost inevitably certain important problems are not addressed at all. For example, there is no discussion of the solo instrument(s) Mozart had in mind for each individual work: it is taken for granted almost throughout (even in the title of the book!) that every concerto, including those written in Salzburg in the 1770s, is for piano rather than harpsichord.

Nevertheless I would urge anyone with an interest in Mozart's keyboard concertos and their performance to persist with this book, for it offers some valuable and thought-provoking new insights. Zaslaw's introductory article usefully summarises the main points, and in particular raises the question of whether (or when) the accompanying string parts were taken by single players, a problem discussed in more detail in Dexter Edge's thoroughly researched essay 'Manuscript Parts as Evidence of Orchestral Size'. Edge concludes that one-to-a-part strings was at least an acceptable 'performance model' for concertos in 18th-century Vienna, although other practices were also known, such as the use of multiple strings in tutti sections but reduced numbers to accompany the soloist. There is more work to be done on this important subject, but it is reasonably certain that, whatever he did in the tuttis, Mozart didn't use a large body of string players in the solo sections as is done nowadays with a Steinway or Bösendorfer. It makes obvious sense, for it would be very difficult to balance a harpsichord or fortepiano against a full orchestra.

Still on the topic of the make-up of the 'orchestra' (if indeed that's the right word), Cliff Eisen examines the surviving performance material from Mozart's earliest keyboard concertos, and concludes that in Salzburg the bass line may sometimes (often? always?) have been played by double bass(es) alone, with no cello at all. This may at first seem a surprising idea, but I can confirm from experiment that it works in practice with a small group of period instruments, although the resulting sound is rather more home-spun than one can hear on recordings by, say, Malcolm Bilson and the English Baroque Soloists. Problems for the soloist (apart from the choice of instrument) concern, at their most basic, the actual notes to be played. Ellwood Derr offers some helpful advice on continuo playing, based in part on recently discovered 18th-century realisations for K.238 and K.415. Eva Badura-Skoda briefly discusses improvised ornamentation and cadenzas, and David Grayson describes some of J.B. Cramer's and Hummel's elaborately decorated versions from the 1820s. As he says, their intention was to update the concertos for a later taste and a piano with a larger range. Their additional ornamentation may strike us as over-the-top, but we should remember that contemporary critics praised Hummel's edition of K.466 for its simplicity, 'achieved at the least possible expense of notes', in a style that was 'not frittered away in unmeaning embellishments'. Perhaps Mozart played like this, too?

Much of this research on performance practice stresses the importance of contemporary sets of parts as primary source material, revealing aspects of the music that a score does not. Christoph Wolff's article on the *Neue Mozart Ausgabe* points out that, because of editorial guidelines formulated in the early 1950s, the *NMA* editions rely too heavily on autograph scores and suppress vital information in the parts, such as solo-tutti markings. One can only agree that in a modern critical edition such omissions are regrettable, and it would be easy to add to a list of shortcomings. It is high time that the printed text of twelve of the concertos was revised to take account of the autograph scores rediscovered in Kraków nearly twenty years ago. There are substantial differences between these scores and the current *NMA* editions, in articulation, dynamics and even notes, by no means all of which are listed in those critical commentaries that have so far appeared. Robert Levin, too, deplores the unfortunate editorial policy of relegating legitimate (and sometimes superior) alternative readings to the critical reports, where they are unlikely to be seen by the average practising musician. As he says, Mozart's autographs are not always free of obscurities or inconsistencies; some, such as the two simultaneous but mutually incompatible harmonic progressions in bar 40 of the slow movement of K.491, obviously need to be resolved, but in my opinion the *NMA* editorial policy is over-zealous in ironing out differences in articulation between one instrument and another, or between several occurrences of the same phrase. Mozart surely knew more than we do about the 'classical' orchestra and what suits each individual instrument; and it would be hard to believe that he insisted on rigid uniformity of phrasing.

The other articles in this volume are chiefly on musical analysis. I have to confess that I did no more than skim quickly through most of them, being rather out of sympathy with accounts of form that describe *what* happens, but don't really get to grips with the more interesting question: *why*? Several authors comment on the analogy between the concerto and the operatic aria, but James Webster argues trenchantly that, unless interpreted so loosely as to become almost meaningless, the analogy is a false one. It stems, of course, from the notion that the essence of both genres is the dramatic opposition of soloist and orchestra. But this is coming to be recognised as an anachronistic view of the 18th-century concerto, whose spirit was co-operation rather than opposition, within what was often a small group of chamber musicians.

Current research, then, is forcing us to re-think some of our basic assumptions about Mozart's keyboard concertos and their performance. Our understanding is still imperfect and patchy, however: much remains to be discovered about these most familiar and well-loved of works.

Richard Maunder

DISC REVIEWS

Couperin:
Music for Harpsichord, Volume 2
Laurence Cummings (with Reiko Ichise, viola da gamba)
Naxos 8.550962

Recorded in the church of St.Martin's, East Woodhay, Hampshire, in early

October 1994, Laurence Cummings' second instalment for Naxos of François Couperin's harpsichord music gives a richly varied programme of the Eighth *Ordre* , plus the Third and Fourth *Concerts Royaux*.
This *ordre* (in b minor) is one of Couperin le Grand's darkest statements and yet, paradoxically, placed directly against the austere beauties are moments of lightness and gaiety. These contrasts are well delineated by Cummings who evidently feels at ease with this music and whose playing is invariably expressive. His part-playing, too, is admirably clear - cf. the Premiere and Second Courantes (Tracks 3 & 4), whilst the *tendrement* direction of the Gavotte (6) is lyrically handled producing a flowing feel of four beats per bar, rather than Couperin's stipulated duple *all breve* Nonetheless, I feel that Cummings is correct to do this - the profusion of melodic *appoggiaturas* alone requires a slightly lower tempo if the ornamentation is to remain unhurried and not snatched.
That last point leads me into one or two minor criticisms. Cummings has a slight tendency to execute left-hand *pincés* in a rather rushed manner (cf. closing bars of *La Raphaele*); the Rondeau, marked *gayement*, could have been a little lighter and faster, whilst the last beats of bars 2 and 6 in the Passacaille are always pushed forward and, though consistently rendered, this becomes rather mannered. In some of the dances from the *Concerts Royaux* Laurence Cummings is joined by the gambist Reiko Ichise. Together they produce some finely integrated playing. For sheer beauty of invention and execution, listen to the Sarabande (22). In that combination of serene nobility and heart-easing melodiousness lies the charm and lasting power of Couperin's music at its finest.

Richard Leigh Harris

J.S.Bach :
Partitas
Robert Woolley, harpsichord
Chandos 0618 (2)

This new 2-CD set, issued last year and recorded at Orford Church, Suffolk, combines scholarship and fresh playing in equal measure and is certainly an impressive addition to the various recorded versions of the Partitas. Recorded on a copy of a Mietke harpsichord made by Bruce Kennedy, the sound is fullsome and resonant without being either too cloying or too sharply acidic; neither is the mechanism at all audible and, for once, everything sounds extremely well.
Woolley's playing is of a consistently very high standard - his especially precise and incisive fingerwork throughout these six Partitas is of a dazzling variety, yet the slower and subtler moments of beauty are accorded their place, too.
The first CD includes Partitas Nos. 1,2 and 6. In the first Partita in B flat, the tempi are carefully judged, with, for instance, the two Menuets taken quite sedately. Even the final Scarlattian Giga (the famous cross-hands one) sounds not like an out-and-out Toccata but a carefully sculpted piece of echoing counterpoint. The opening Sinfonia of Partita 2 is immediately commanding, whilst in the final and famously difficult Capriccio, Woolley sails cleanly through the part-playing to emerge both victorious and to have made no concessions in terms of tempo and clarity, either.
Partita No. 6 in e minor, together with the fourth Partita in D, are the two largest and, indeed, grandest structure in Bach's first volume of the Clavierübung. Again, everything is very cleanly and (on the whole) evenly played and articulated. The highly syncopated Corrente of No.6 is beautifully judged, for example, but the opening Toccata lacks the dramatic and rhetorical qualities which seem to be required of this movement.
In his similarly incisive notes, Richard Jones mentions that Robert Woolley has taken into account various corrections and performance indications that are to be found in several exemplars of the original edition, one of which (Bach's own *Handexemplar*) resides in the British Library. Perhaps this explains the ornamentation in bars 34-36 of the third Partita's Corrente? Whatever the source, it works well, particularly at Woolley's fast and furious tempo, as does the likewise headlong 9/16 Gigue of the fourth Partita, which we are normally accustomed to hearing in rather weighted and careful performances.
A fine release, then, of both thoughtful and scintillating accounts of some of Bach's richest and liveliest dances - dances, however, graced by rare artistry and vision.

Richard Leigh Harris

J.S.Bach:
Six Brandenburg Concertos, BMV 1046-1051
The English Concert/Trevor Pinnock
Bärenreiter Classics & Urtext BA 75 001

I last heard Trevor Pinnock and The English Concert perform all six Brandenburg Concertos together in one evening in Oxford's Town Hall some twenty years ago. It was not the happiest of occasions, chiefly due to the seeming necessity to adopt uniformly fast *tempi* throughout the entire concert. Therefore, it has to be said, my expectations were not of the highest when I received the 2-CD and Urtext score format of Bärenreiter's reissue. The artists remain the same, but their recording made in 1982 has deepened somewhat and most of their *tempi* are now on the safer side of sanity.
The very obvious comment to state about the Brandenburgs as a set, is how extraordinarily fresh they remain; even, hopefully, to the most jaded pair of ears. Bach's level of invention and resultant attainment still seem scarcely credible, especially in view of the fact that he had taken the over-used Italian *concerto grosso* format and breathed new air into it. There are innumerable riches here and something to wonder at (and ponder) in every single movement - the rhythmic juxtapositions of the horn's triplets against the wind and strings' semiquavers in the first movement of Brandenburg No.1, for example, or the alternating and seemingly separated chords of the last four bars in that concerto's *Adagio*. Perhaps the single most moving and exquisite movement of the set is the *Adagio* of No.6, to which Pinnock and his team do full justice; likewise, the cruelly-exposed trumpet and recorder *tessituras* in the second Concerto.
The string sound, particularly in the third and fourth Brandenburgs, I found rather harshly acidic, notably so in *tuttis*, whilst the finale of No.3 seemed too fast, too heavy (in the articulation of quavers) and inclined to slightly crude scrubbing. Energised it certainly is, but I found my mind wandering back to that Oxford concert ...
Pinnock is a persuasive soloist in No.5, brilliant, yet firmly and unshowily supportive as well in his part-role as continuo player. This sensitivity is to the fore in that Concerto's middle movement. A passing curiosity is Pinnock's doubling of the octave A's in the first movement's cadenza (bb.203ff). There is, incidentally, no information given *vis à vis* the players and instruments used.
Last, but certainly not least, I come to the score itself. The lack of liner notes is made up for by a clear prefatory essay by Heinrich Besseler, reprinted (presumably) from the NBA Vol.VII/2 edition of 1956. Also included in the current volume is the Supplement to the fifth Concerto, featuring the shorter version of the first-movement cadenza with an additional note by Alfred Durr, plus the original version of the first Concerto in F. Besseler, quite rightly, refers to the fact that these *concerti* would have been viewed as, essentially, chamber music - one instrument per part; a hybrid where the texture of the trio sonata collided with (and was expanded to) that of the *concerto grosso*, excepting the enlarged ensemble

required for No.1. Engrossing listening and reading!

Richard Leigh Harris

Bach, Vivaldi:
Concerti & Praeludia
Skip Sempé, Olivier Fortin
(harpsichords)
Auvidis Astrée E8645

This compilation, played on two harpsichords, encompasses a variety of transcriptions including new versions of works already transcribed by Bach. The equal billing in the title belies the fact that Vivaldi is represented by only one complete concerto, and that the programme also includes works by Marcello, Reinken and Ernst; the adaptations of the latter two are perhaps particularly welcome, as they shed fresh light on these excellent yet rarely heard works. Many of Bach's own works receiving fresh treatment are twice removed from their instrumental origins, and it is here where the line between transcription and arrangement is most freely crossed. The words 'transcribed', 'arranged' and 'improvised' appear in the programme list and sleeve-note without separate definition, but the professed approach is one of spontaneity and not formality, and these are arrangements in the spirit of Bach improvisation rather than true transcriptions after Bach's more conventional written example.
The sleeve-note extols the virtues of the new authenticity, as practised by Sempé and others, whereby the performer is not bound to the music by textual fidelity alone: that 'the spirit of improvisation counts as much as reverence for the text', and that 'in the act of performance a performer must make the score his own'. These subjective concepts throw up a number of contradictions in the present context, for whilst the soloist as a law unto himself is one thing, duo performers are another entirely, with many different and practical considerations. The note's author is so busy waxing poetical about this philosophy that he offers no actual insight into how Sempé and Fortin have applied it in their approach to two concerted harpsichords. Information about the original instrumentations of the works (which in this case is of particular concern and interest for the listener) is inconsistent and, in a few cases, omitted.

In many ways this recording is outstanding, not least as a blazing proclamation of the power of duo harpsichords. The instruments are by Bruce Kennedy (after Mietke and Ruckers-Taskin), from which Sempé and Fortin elicit a huge spectrum of tonal colour. Their technical command, through the myriad chordal textures, variety of sustain and use of articulation, crafts a different soundscape for each piece which - in most cases - amplifies and resonates (in both senses) the meaning of the music. Some listeners may feel overpowered by the extent of the musical elaboration, and even by the massive sonorities generated by the instruments; indeed, the more sonic resources one has the more danger there is of over-statement, and two harpsichords must be used carefully in order to magnify the musical point, not dilute it. However, Sempé and Fortin also recognise that the whole can be greater than the sum of both its parts; they use the instruments as an orchestral resource (with judicious use of registration), taking on the identity of other instruments - harp, organ, trumpet, guitars - controlling volume and resonance, and amplifying the sound through maximum texture to intensify harmonic and rhythmic impact. The combined sonorities are particularly evident in the concertos of Ernst/Bach, BWV592a (oboe/organ), and Vivaldi/Bach, BWV 593 (two violins/organ): witness, for example, the arresting magnitude of volume achieved in the third movements. It is also the essentially vocal and analytical way of playing which persuades the listener, with fastidious concern for clarifying the musical structure and delineating counterpoint - for example in the fugues, where the second harpsichord doubles the lower voice at the octave to balance the contrapuntal texture.

The slower movements throughout the recording are afforded considerable imagination. The delicate precision with which the players arpeggiate the added chordal textures in the Largo from Bach's Violin Partita, BWV 1005, effects a limpid liquidity, raining down in a filigree of harmonic articulations. The players' improvisatory approach to the music works best in the slow movements, and indeed wherever the harmonic language of two keyboards can develop the music's inherent polyphony. It is here where the listener more keenly senses the beauty of transcription - to return to the original sound world would be to lose the sonic potential of this music. The only somewhat unconvincing slow movement is the Adagio from the Concerto by Marcello/Bach (oboe/harpsichord), BWV 972, where the players seem increasingly uncomfortable with the predominant arpeggiated strumming, and the effect is overwrought and lumpen. There are a few places where Sempé's freedom (distortion?) with the pulse is incongruous as it cannot by definition be sustained in the ensemble: for example in the opening of the slow movement of the Vivaldi Concerto. This propensity for gestural rhythmic flexibility is not however a problem elsewhere, as it might have been, such as in the fugue expositions.

Sempé's solo harpsichord version of the Prelude from the Suite for solo cello, BWV 1010, noted as being improvised, appears to have at least been inspired by Leonhardt's own transcription, recorded in 1980. We are also told simply that Sempé is improvising freely off the original string score in the Largo, BWV 1005 and Prelude, BWV 1006, despite the fact that both performers are involved.

In fact, the A Major violin Prelude which closes the programme appears to try too hard to reconcile the spirit of free improvisation to the ensemble. It was here that I was left wondering about the question of when the score should leave off and improvisation begin, and if, in this case, the players have made the score too much their own. The breakneck speed, whilst it creates an impressionistic sweep and intensifies the *Fortspinnung* virtuosity of the movement, later proves a shade too ambitious, yielding some unhinged passage-work and slapdash chords. The occasional lurching shifts in texture are partly brought about by seemingly random displacements of Bach's melodic contour and from a bass line that seems to fade in and out of focus, such as sudden booming octaves which draw the ear only to disappear unresolved into another register. The accidental dynamic swings, which result when the textural density of harpsichords is not controlled, detract from the plateaux of harmonic stasis so central to the Prelude's character, particularly in disturbing the sustained tension of the pulse of Bach's large-scale pedal points. In attempting to create a radical version of Bach's Prelude which is as different as possible from previous incarnations of the piece - Bach's own versions, as well as those grandiose and over- expressive arrangements of the past - Sempé and Fortin have indeed taken Bach's ideology to a new level, but one where the identity of the performer has almost eclipsed that of the composer.

This album was perhaps destined to be a controversial one for harpsichord aficionados and mainstream listeners alike. However, I must voice an objection to the vicious, wholesale dismissal of the recording by reactionary reviewers, which I fear has unduly prejudiced the market. To so indignantly discount such musical practices as irreverent is not only to miss the point, but ultimately to misunderstand Bach's own musical character as well.

Pamela Nash

Jean-Philippe Rameau:
Pièces de clavecin en concert
Shalev Ad-El (harpsichord), Andreas Kröper (flute), Richard Boothby (viola da gamba)
SY 0006-2131

These performances were recorded in St Michael's Church, Prague, in October 1993, and comprise Rameau's complete collection of five *Pièces de clavecin en concert*. These works were composed for flute or violin, harpsichord and gamba, and were published in Paris in 1741, with a second edition following in 1752. Some discussion of their background and composition can be found in Cuthbert Girdlestone's *Jean-Philippe Rameau — His Life and Work* (2nd edition New York 1969, pp.41-52 & 599-603), as well as in the same author's article about Rameau in *The New Grove* (1980, vol.15, pp.562-3).

Rameau's works only received a brief reference from Georges Migot in Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music* (London 1930, vol.II, p.268), but then, in those inter-war days, French chamber music of the 18th century was little-known and rarely played.

Rameau did not explore a great deal of key contrast in these works, and all except one of the concerts adhere to the same tonality throughout, major or minor. The exception is the first *Pièce*, where the three movements are in E flat major, c minor and C major respectively. The second of these pieces is *La Livri*, which Rameau also arranged as a keyboard solo, and later introduced into Act 3 of *Zoroastre* in 1749.

In the fifth concert, in D minor-major, the d minor second movement, *La Cupis*, was also rescored and introduced into a stage work — *La Temple de la Gloire* — in 1745. There it appears as an *'Air tendre pour les Muses'*, rescored most charmingly for two flutes, two bassoons and pizzicato strings.

Two further specimens of Rameau reworking his materials and presenting them in movements in different instrumental versions might be mentioned. *L'Agaçante* appears in the second concert as a trio, and is also known as one of the composer's solo keyboard pieces. The two versions differ considerably, and no doubt the version for the small ensemble may be preferred in view of the instrumental colour and constrasts of sound that can be heard. *La Timide*, the third movement of the third *pièce*, is a longer movement, in A minor-major-minor, and the central section in the major lost a lot of detail in the composer's solo keyboard version.

The *Pièces* all have three movements, except for No.2, which has four. The movements are of varied length, and some of them reveal some attractive developments and exploitation of thematic material. Notable in this respect are the two opening movements on the second *Pièce*, and the opening movement of the fourth *Pièce — La Pantomime*. Of the slow movements, *La Boucon*, the second movement of the second *Pièce*, is a very lovely and expressive movement. In contrast with this, two movements recall the flavour of the fairground and other rustic frolics associated with outdoor leisure and pleasure — these are the two *Tambourin* movements in *Pièce* No.3, where hurdy-gurdy strumming can be perceived, and *La Rameau* (*Pièce* No.4), where the composer seems to have caused some worry to his 20th-century commentator. Girdlestone wrote curiously of this movement: "This is not one of the most musical pieces in the collection and at first sight it is unpromising.... On further acquaintance it reveals its humour..." (op.cit. p.602). The humour and pleasure can be heard well enough straight away on this new CD, where the spontaneity of the music will easily engage the listener's attention.

Pièce No.5 contains two lovely movements that form tributes to composers Rameau knew: J B Forqueray (1699-1782) and Marin Marais (1656-1728) and his son Roland. This CD provides a very welcome opportunity to hear these rarely played works. The music is not all of supreme quality, and some of it can sound a little scrappy in these trio settings. Nonetheless it reveals the composer's creative interests and inventive talents in writing for a chamber ensemble that was quite popular in France in his lifetime, and in providing music that gave much pleasure at court and in a domestic setting.

The flute used here was made in 1989 based on a Parisian instrument of 1769. The music was recorded at a'414, and the performances are all fresh and vivid enough to offer much happy listening. Occasionally, however, the tone of the flute is a litte too quiet against the harpsichord, whose tone seems now and then to be a little too strong and rather fierce (a little too close to the microphone, that is). The character of Rameau's invention is eloquently displayed, even so, and the stylistic appreciation of his music in terms of tempo and rhythm is very persuasively conveyed.

Perhaps this very welcome CD may encourage other ensembles to explore Rameau's chamber music and other French chamber music of the first half of the 18th century. A good deal of it deserves to be much better known.

Gwilym Beechey

Carl Loewe:
Große Sonate Es-Dur, Op.16 (1829); *Grande Sonate élégique (sic) F Moll, Op.32* (1819-34); *'Le printemps' Sonate pour piano, Op.47* (1824)
Cord Garben, piano
cpo 999 355 2

Empfang mich, schättigter Hann, voll
hoher grüner Gewölbe!
Empfang mich! fühle mit Ruh und
holder Wehmut die Seele!

Ewald v. Kleist

[Receive me, shady grove, full of high green vaults!/ Receive me! Fill my soul with rest and noble melancholy!]

Carl Loewe is best known for his *Balladen* which not only belong in part to an older more declamatory tradition than the romantic Lied but by that very token prepare the way for subsequent music drama. They were a part of Berlin musical life right through the 19th century, as we might know from the important role played by Herr Oluf in Fontane's novel, *Effi Briest*. But Loewe had more ample gifts. His oratorios - especially the later ones with organ accompaniment - *Die Auferweckung des Lazarus* is one of the most successful - remain popular in Germany with their simple direct language still tinged with the fresh harmonies of the *Frühromantik* of his youth. That they were quickly underlayed with English texts suggests that they had some influence on Stainer and his contemporaries in this country. Loewe's piano music, in spite of its technical qualities, has been largely neglected, so that this recording of three of the sonatas by Cord Garben (one of the finest Lied accompanists in Germany today and a specialist in the songs of Loewe) should not go unnoticed by fortepianists. Though Garben himself plays them on the modern piano he is the first to admit that: *"Die zahlreichen für das Hammerklavier gedachten Vortragsbezeichnungen sind auf dem modernen Konzertflügel nicht immer realisierbar. Gewarnt sei davor, die nach heutigem Verständnis großflächige Pedalisierung, die sogar Harmoniewechsel innerhalb des getreteten Pedals nicht scheut, allzu wörtlich zu nehmen."* [The numerous performance instructions conceived in terms of the fortepiano are not always viable on the modern grand. Pianists are warned not to take too literally the blanket pedalling which does not shy away from changes of harmony whilst

the pedal is down.] Garben rightly concludes that what today would indicate sustained pedalling indicates instead punctual use of the pedal throughout the passage in question, something that would apply to the early works of Liszt as well. Even more to the point is this observation concerning the *Grande Sonate élégiaque* : "*Auf weitem Strecken spielt sich in einfachen harmonischen Strukturen ein um Inhalte bemühtes Virtuosenwerk ab, wie wir es in der Zeit vor Franz Liszt nur in den Klaviersonaten Carl Maria von Webers finden.*" [There are long stretches of substantial virtuoso passagework based on simple harmonic structures whose like is not to be found before the time of Franz Liszt except in the sonatas of Carl Maria von Weber.] Too may be contrasted Schumann's *Vollgriffigkeit* descending in part from the Broadwood oriented *Sonatas* and *Studies* of Johann Cramer and which constitutes a virtuosity of a different kind within a denser harmonic context. Not for nothing did Schumann in a moment of neurotic frustration try to cut a tendon in his hand to make his task easier. But Loewe was a pupil of Daniel Gottlob Türk in Leipzig who loved above all the clavichord. He favoured a light-textured music, fiery and sensitive by turns, and his "*weit auseinanderstrekende Akkordbrechungen*" [wide spreading arpeggios], as with Loewe, "*umfassen die ganze Tastatur des damaligen Hammerklaviers*" [cover the entire keyboard of the fortepiano of that time]. Thus the comparatively restrained accompaniments to Loewe's songs are part of his lyrical-aesthetic programme and have nothing to do with a routine or amateurish approach to the keyboard. All this suggests that, however marginal it has become to the modern concert repertoire, Loewe's piano music is an essential part of early romantic fortepiano literature.

For most of Loewe's chief piano works (with two notable exceptions : the *Zigeunersonate* from 1847 and the *Auswanderersonate* from 1869) were composed while Schubert was still alive. The *Große Sonate Es Dur Op 16* is unusual in that the second movement is a setting of a poetic dialogue in two stanzas whose author has remained unknown. The first of them, '*Toujours je te serai fidèle*' is given to a tenor. After an impassioned interlude for piano solo - the 'B' part of the little form - a soprano sings the reply : '*Toujours, toujours, lui répondit Adèle.*' As Garben points out only the *Sonatine mit Gesang* by Louis Spohr would offer a similar solution, though I don't know if Spohr's vocal movement is part of an overall sonata plan or simply a strophic or para-strophic Lied spliced between the movements of sonat(in)a.

Loewe's use of lyric inlay and his occasional adoption of fugue (the finale of the *F Minor Sonata*) and recitative (*E Flat Sonata*) has something of Nägeli's insistence on the refreshing of the formal legacy of the 18th century about it - an extension of rococo or of *galant* connoisseurship rather than the desire to overthrow existing conventions. As might be expected from a student of Türk, Loewe knew not only Haydn and Mozart, Clementi and Beethoven but Field, Dussek and most probably Wölffl as well. Which says much about the grace this music contains. Thus though the scherzo of the *E Major Sonata* is apparently more in the spirit of Schumann (with a distant echo of the *Walzer für die Apolosäle* of Hummel) than in that of Schubert - in fact the relation to popular music in German lands was not the same as in Austria - the fleeting transparency of it has more in common with Parisian taste. Loewe's fragrant dance music has a much lighter feel to it than Schumann's, even in such a work as *Papillons*. It looks foward to *le jeu perlé* of Fauré and of Reynaldo Hahn whose *Premières Valses* seem just a step or two away.

Garben's remarks about the fugue are sufficiently misguided as to need correction : "*Die Sonata schließt mit einer Fuge. Anders als etwa Beethoven in seiner weit gewichtigeren Hammerklaviersonate beginnt Loewe seine Fuge zunächst fast im Stile Bachs. Dann öffnet sich die strenge Form zu größeren Dimensionen, den Bach (b)earbeitungen Busonis nicht unähnlich, um weiderum in stiller biedermeierlichen Bescheidenheit zu schließen.*" In the *Hammerklaviersonate* Beethoven left posterity with an unresolved problem - how to integrate a large scale fugue with a sonata structure. Liszt never really faced it in his fugal sorties allowing his contrapuntal *iter* to overflow in a romantic *o altitudo !* It was D'Albert in the finale of his one piano sonata who was to set matters to rights. Beethoven of course had not grown up playing the *WTC* as had Cramer and Türk and Loewe himself. If he had he might not have felt the need to go to Albrechtsberger who was rooted in the traditions of that Viennese counterpoint which found its highest theoretical expression in the treatise of Fux. Now what Loewe does is much more in keeping with Nägeli's programme for giving new interest to balanced classical forms. His fugue does in a sense begin like Bach though as much like the fugato passages that occasionally crop up in the preludes as like those actual fugues chosen, or about to be chosen, as academic models. More fugato than fugue, more texture than form, Loewe's subject is spun out like elegant passage work based on material that preceded it.

Equally important he puts no more structural or expressive weight on it than suits a sonata coda. That is why the little climax subsides in intimacy. There is little of Busoni in all this or of his fin-de-siècle *Bachbild* - Garben wanted to pay his friend a compliment but chose the wrong one.

The description *biedermeier* is frankly problematic. *Biedermeier* in Germany is associated with a smug and placid middle class culture that was challenged by the *Vormärz* radicals and presumably swept away by the events of 1848. It is a temptation of critics, not all of them Marxist, to see art as a reflection of 'society', or worse, as a reflection of an often tendentious social history, someting encouraged by Heine's book length pamphlet *Die romantische Schule* written to discredit authors suspected of indifference to revolutionary values. But there is another way of looking at things - one much closer to Loewe himself - Schiller's idea that art does not so much mirror everyday reality as reveal a higher sphere reflected in it. Now romantic art in Germany had an intimist side most evident when children are involved which was in no way limited to so-called *Kleinmeister*. In Türk's *Kleine Handstücke für angehende Spieler* one of the pieces is called : *Sei du mein Trost, verschwiegene Einsamkeit !* What else is the atmosphere of Schumann's *Der Dichter spricht*? Or of Schubert's Lied *Winterabend* so bound in mood to the opening of the *B Flat major Piano Sonata ?* Or the cheerful *Abgeschiedenheit* of his *Grillen?* This is to be the world of not a few of the songs of Wolf, of the *Schlichte Weise* of Reger, as well of Webern's *Trakl-Rilke-* and *George-Lieder - Dies ist ein Lied für dich allein* - and as such part of the mainstream of German art. Add to this the mood embodied by Türk's *Sorgenlose Heiterkeit* and Schumann's *Glückes genug* and the artful naïveté of Loewe - not unlike that of the central character in Eichendorff's *Tagebuch eines Taugenichts* - 'the child', after all, 'is father to the man' - becomes amply apparent. Though of course both Türk and Schumann and indeed Loewe himself were also given to exploring the darker more mysterious sides of existence, and that too even in *Kinderstücke:* Türk's *Im Trauterone* - Schumann's *Erster Verlust*. The spirit of Loewe's nature painting lives on in the charming *Reisebilder, Op 11* for cello and piano by Friedrich Kiel, the first of which, *Leise - Nicht schnell*, is prefaced by a lyric, *Zwielicht*, about the gathering dusk from Eichendorff's novel *Ahnung und Gegenwart*.

Characteristic for Loewe is the rustic tone - something better expressed by the French word *champêtre* - there where the 18th century - and to some extent

Beethoven - preferred the arcadian or the pastoral. The sonata *Le printemps* is dominated by this tendency throughout. Loewe or his publisher also gave it a German title, *Der Frühling*, which prompted me to quote the opening lines of Kleist's long poem by that name which was still read in Loewe's youth, though Loewe himself appends this stanza of Uhland - not without relation to it and which was also a favourite of Heine's - to his first movement *Der erwachende Morgen:*

Noch ahnt man kaum der Sonne Licht
Noch find die Morgenglocken nicht
Im finstern Thal erklungen.
Wie still des Waldes weiter Raum!
Die Vöglein zwitschern nur im Traum
Kein Sang hat sich erzwungen.

[The sunlight still can scarce be sensed / the matinbells have yet to ring across the darkclad vale. / How hushed the wide stretched wood! / The birds stilll twitter only in their dreams / No song has yet burst out]

Each of the four movements is provided with captions in French and German though both curiously have the ring of translations. The plan is that of the *Tageszeiten* (as with the text of Friedrich Wilhelm Zachariae which Telemann set in 1759 just three years after Kleist published the second version of *Der Frühling*), though it is a Spring day Loewe revels in, with a long evening of playing and dancing before the sun goes down and 'invites the world to rest'. Sunrise and sunset - once again the scheme lends itself to a quiet beginning and a quiet end. And in this is to be found a hint of quietism, as artfully hidden as in one of Johann Caspar Friedrich's forest scenes. One engaging thing about this music is the rhythmic novelty in the weave of Loewe's rustic tapestries. In the Allegretto *(Naturleben)* the trills and trill-like arpeggios fade in and out of stylised dancing which has much in common with Schumann though with more of the 'light fantastic' about it. For Garben's idea that Schubert is the principal 'influence' on Loewe after Beethoven is ill considered. Loewe has little to do with the *per se* of Viennese romanticism in either sensibility or pianism. Displaced accents, reeling appoggiaturas, bold lydian fourths make the charm of the scherzo *(Gang zu ländlichen Gruppen)* breaking into the lightest of fugatos that might be a pair of butterflies chasing each other in the sunlight. But the first movement has its novelty as well. The transition from the quiet of dawn *(Der erwachende Morgen)* with its twitter of birds to the busily flowing allegro of emerging day *(Morgenfeier)* is worked out by means of trills that gradually become accompaniment figuration, a device that not even Chopin, for all his love of ornamentation, seems to have struck upon. Nor were Türk's lessons on how to construct the subtlest of forms from the simplest of materials lost on his student. The finale *(Tagesneigen)* is another such example. Loewe's exposition is dominated by its cheery first idea, the development and reprise by its dreamy second one to the point that the music gradually slows down. When the first idea properly returns it too has slowed down, for night has fallen and the birds have gone to sleep. Is this a *biedermeier* ending? Only if *'bald ruhest du auch'* be another. For here is a solution that brilliantly reconciles the absolute and the programmatic or, if you prefer, classical *Satztechnik* with the expressive pictorialism of *Frühromantik*. And indeed what Garben sees as Beethoven stylemes - they belong in fact to a common pianism developed and embraced by other composers as well - are drawn away on a lyrical adventure - one that suggests Carl Loewe, the master of the romantic Ballade. The tone is clearly that of Eichendorff and Heine, not of Gellert and Schiller.

As with all genuine music, familiarity with these sonatas takes one beyond the stage of hearing echoes in them of other composers to that of being able to distinguish and to take pleasure in what is special to them in shaping and invention. Loewe facilitates this progress with the negligent grace of his melodies which linger in the mind's ear long after the actual music has ceased to ring. In making this recording Cord Garben thought to fill in an obscure corner of romantic piano music and to pay homage to a composer to whom he is especially dedicated as a Lieder accompanist. In fact he has done an unexpected service to the fortepiano repertoire of which these sonatas should soon become an integral part. I look forward eagerly to hearing them on the instrument for which Loewe wrote them, at which time all those *Vortragsbezeichnungen* will once again be fully *realisierbar*. For apart from their outstanding musical value the *Sonatas* of Loewe are for the fortepianist the most delightful of show pieces.

Tristram Pugin

Chamber Works featuring the harpsichord in the 1920s-30s

De Falla (1876-1946) *Concerto for harpsichord, flute, oboe, clarinet, violin & cello.* (1923-6) The Schirmer Enemble Naxos 8.554366

Poulenc (1899-1963) *Concert Champêtre* (1927-9) & *Suite Française* (1935) Orchestre National de Lille/Elizabeth Chojnacka (harpsichord) Naxos 8.554241

Martinü (1890-1959) *Promenades* for flute, violin and harpsichord (1939) ANALEKTA FL 2 3031

The De Falla and Poulenc discs were both recorded in 1997. The earlier 1993 recording of the Czechoslovakian Martinü is performed by three Canadian musicians : Alain Marion (flute), Angèle Dubeau (violin), and Marc-André Hamelin (piano & harpsichord). It was irresistible to review these three discs together and it has been enlightening to hear the works afresh, in relationship to each other, in the same way as it has been to view the Monet series paintings in the recent exhibitions, although an exhibition of the works of Tamara de Lempicka or Raoul Dufy would perhaps be a nearer visual equivalent.
After study in Paris (1907-14) and then an intense period of large-scale compositions in Madrid, de Falla moved to live in Granada in 1920. The disc concentrates on the composer's output of smaller-scale works from this time although it also includes transcriptions : *Popular Spanish Suite*, here for violin & piano; *Dance of the Corregidor from the Three Cornered Hat*, by David Watkins, for harp; and the cello transcription of *Two Dances from Love the Magician*. The Schirmer Ensemble does offer, however, a broad range of repertoire for anyone wanting a flavour of the instrumental music of this characterful Spanish composer, and even includes two works for soprano, *Soneto a Còrdoba*, accompanied as it should be, by harp, and the surely Ravel-influenced *Psyché* with flute and harp as well as string trio. The *Concerto for Harpsichord, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet & Cello* is in fact the most substantial piece of the recording at nearly 13 minutes in length; in style it is a synthesis of Spanish music, as de Falla admitted, being derived from "ancient Spanish melodies, religious, court and folk tunes". Falla had previously used the harpsichord in his puppet opera *El Retablo*. For the concerto, where the harpsichord has the prominent part, he prefaces the score with the instruction that it should be as sonorous as possible, using, for the most part, all the stops. Landowska gave the first performance, presumably upon one of the large Pleyels, and the instrument used here, with its awesome 16-foot stop, chosen by the Australian harpsichordist Elizabeth Anderson, seems to be of this ilk; to present-day ears it is rather more heavy than sonorous, but presumably faithful to the originally conceived sound. The opening is exciting, but the harpsichord arpeggiation can become trying if individual notes stand out from the overall texture; in the second movement, dedicated to the feast of Corpus Christi,

one receives the impression of a Herculean labour rather than a passionate sacred dance, but the last movement brings a joyful rhythmic zest from all the players.
Wanda Landowska was also the inspiration for Poulenc's concerto (they initially met in 1923, at the first staged performance of de Falla's *El retablo de Maese Pedro*). Poulenc's powerful organ concerto is the first item on the disc, preceding the *concert champêtre*, a not unusual coupling: not that the orchestration for this harpsichord concerto is in any way lightweight with its large string-section (unlike de Falla's one-to-a-part instrumentation) and unusual, military-sounding double-woodwind, piccolo, cor anglais, four French horns, two trumpets, tuba and sizeable percussion section. It is certainly no less a work than the organ concerto, and in fact lasts half a minute longer. The harpsichord is inevitably, and perhaps intentionally, an individual voice bravely avoiding submersion by the masses, but it is well-placed in this recording and comes over clearly if a little delicately. Whereas the CD booklet gives us a whole page denoting every stop of the Paris Notre Dame organ, it only briefly mentions that the harpsichord was made especially for Elizabeth Chojnacka by Anthony Sidey (a Dolmetsch apprentice in about 1960). The first movement is somewhat rushed in places and the style of the third movement is very redolent not only of Handel (which I imagine Poulenc intended), but of Handel played in the 1950s, with little sonority from either instrument or player.
The *Suite française d'après Claude Gervaise* is inevitably fragmented in its make-up of seven short separate dances, but the scoring with its frequency of alternation between wind, percussion and harpsichord tends to compound the patchwork quality of the work. However, it does sport many unusual instrumental combinations and the "tunes" are, of course, familiar and fun.
If the harpsichord is overpowering on the de Falla disc, this cannot be said of the **Martinü** *Promenades* where it is almost too much subdued. In this work it is an equal and characterful solo voice in a fully valid trio, and the four-movement piece is certainly not the miniature baroque pastiche which would describe the Poulenc *Suite française* . I have to declare a rival interest in this CD, as I have recorded the *Promenades* with *Kontraste* for the BBC, and with the *Feinstein Ensemble* for Naxos in 1995 (in which Martinü flute chamber works are also presented, but with a separate pianist and harpsichordist). Hamelin's fine piano-playing on this recording is, perhaps, let down by the lack of both sonority and articulatory accent in his harpsichord playing, which cannot always be supplemented by flute and violin. The rhythms are speedy and efficient, the ensemble tight, and they bring out a cool French suavity which is one important aspect of Martinü's style (he had elected to live in Paris - forced to leave, as de Falla had been at the outbreak of the previous war, when he was black-listed by the Nazis - and it was his habit to make promenades along the banks of the quays of the Seine every afternoon). I detect the influence of Ravel in the third *Promenade*, as in de Falla's *Psyché*.
The very short staccatos, which sound so particularly unpleasant upon the harpsichord, need tempering (whatever the composer's instructions), and all of these more-or-less charmless harpsichord performances beg the question as to how well the player understands the instrument. Perhaps it is the ultimate test to play this emotional and characterful music with witty and and expressive phrasing and articulation, in order to make the music speak as eloquently when the voice is the harpsichord as when it is an oboe or string section - these usually being much better understood by the composer. It goes without saying that it should never sound inferior to the piano. It seems to me that these performances, in varying degrees, do depressingly reinforce Beecham's derogatory comments about skeletons and tin roofs, and that this is the fault of the players more than of the instruments. This is a fascinating area of the harpsichordist's repertoire and most enjoyable listening, which I can only encourage you to try, but do survey the market and build your own "revival kit".

Penelope Cave

Chamber Round-Up

We start with another welcome re-release by Harmonia Mundi of recordings by the excellent London Baroque. In the **Fantasia-Suites of William Lawes (Harmonia Mundi HMA 1901423)** the performers emphasise the pragmatic, conservative side of this composer's musical imagination: although seemingly written for the trio-sonata line-up of two violins, viol and organ, Lawes uses the latter two instruments as additional protagonists, giving the music a greater textural and colouristic fullness than its more modish Italian counterpart. One can imagine a more decadent, courtly performance than given here, embellished less discreetly, thereby putting more emphasis on the *seconda prattica* lines of the violins, which are surely conceived as textless voices by this great song-writer. Nevertheless London Baroque do well, in their own expressive and straight-forward approach, to bring out the predominant mood — that of a gentle English melancholy, which might well foretell the tragic loss of both composer and his royal master. As each Sett follows the same pattern of Fantazia followed by two Aires, this is one of those discs that it does not pay to listen to in a single sitting. Given the high standard of these performances it is a pity that the Fantasia-Suites were not interwoven with other music of the period on two or three discs. The line-up of Ingrid Seifert and Richard Gwilt (violins), Richard Egarr (organ) and Charles Medlam (viol) yet again prove themselves powerful advocates for music that by no means falls into the class of 'easy-listening' Baroque.

Bach shares a number of characteristics with Lawes: both were musicians where the mediaeval meets the modern; both show strong conservative traits; both love playing with counterpoint; and both excell at writing vocal music. The danger in any performance of the ***Musical Offering*** **(Globe GLO 5172)** would be to assume that the abstract beauties of Bach's canons on the page should be similarly treated as abstract in performance. This is a trap which the Schönbrunn Ensemble (Marten Root, flute; Johannes Leertouwer, violin; Menno van Delft, harpsichord; Viola de Hoog, cello; aided by Anneke van Haaften, violin) do not fall into, with performances that by-and-large are full of expression — particularly Leertouwer's violin playing. Just occasionally, as in the opening harpsichord Ricercar (which is also marred by an unnecessary change of registration for the central section), did I feel that there was an underlying stiffness to the performances. The group — sensibly, I feel — have recorded the work in its published order, and therefore the instrumentation on the disc changes kaleidoscopically. Indeed Bach only specified scoring for some of the movements — the trio sonata (flute, violin and continuo) and one of the canons (2 violins). In addition, some of the movements were printed in oblong rather than upright format, perhaps implying keyboard interpetation; however, the Ensemble do not perform all these as harpsichord solo, although both ricercars are played on the harpsichord (the Ricercar a 6 is in open score in the publication, but a later arrangement for keyboard solo exists). This is a very enjoyable disc, not least for the Hemsch copy by Titus Crijnen, one of the most interesting of the new generation of harpsichord makers.

If Bach's *Musical Offering* appeals to *Kenner*, then **Telemann's 4th Book of Quartets (Globe GLO 5146)**, published in Paris around 1752, is definitely geared

towards *Liebhaber*. These works may be delightful to play with friends at home, and one or two might even form part of an interesting mixed programme in a public recital, but by performing these six slow-fast-slow-fast works one after the other, as done here, does the music (and the listener) no favours. There are some great moments, but not enough to keep the listener's attention throughout the whole disc. Recording complete editions in this way is a lazy substitution for programming which involves intelligent thinking. The playing, with over-close recording of Wilbert Hazelet's flute (so much so that in the quiet movements we can hear every intake and release of breath), rather thin-toned string playing from Alda Stuurop (violin) and Wim ten Have (viola), although ably supported by Jacques Ogg (harpsichord) and Lidewij Scheifes (cello), is well-mannered but lacks the flamboyance essential to sell these works.

Some of the same performers — Hazelet on flute, Norde on cello and Ogg on fortepiano — play five **Flute Sonatas by J.F. Kleinknecht (Globe GLO 5135)**. Unfortunately this recording is as tedious to listen to in one sitting as the previous one — five SFF works one after the other. Kleinknecht is not a name likely to be familiar to many (even though Jakob Friedrich was part of a family of musicians) and what could have been an exciting opportunity to show us the merits of his sonatas, trios and keyboard music has been wasted. Hazelet's playing is persuasive and expressive but I cannot fathom the reasoning behind the decision to use a Viennese piano of around 1780 for a recording of music published in Nuremburg (Kleinknecht worked at nearby Bayreuth) some 30 years earlier (1748). I suppose, if you are generous, you could imagine someone playing his music in the 1780s — but then, why not go the full hog and imagine someone playing it on a modern grand in the 1980s? The point is not academic — the piano, and its effect of making flute and cello compete on equally robust terms, disturbs this rather superficial if agreeable music — no more so than in the last sonata recorded here, where the music strains under the weight the performers put it under, a load it was never intended to bear.

A new Musica Petropolitana disc shows how programming should be done. The sixth in a series exploring **Music in the Court at St Petersburg (Opus 111 OP-231)**, it airs a variety of Italian (Tessarini, Paisiello, Sarti, Manfredini) and Ukranian (Khandoshkin and Berezovsky) composers, their music reflecting the rich differences in style available in the late 18th century. Furthermore, string Sinfonia is followed by flute quartet, unaccompanied violin duet and violin/viola duet is followed by flute sonata and violin sonata, and the whole rounded off with a sparkling harpsichord concerto. The quality of the music performed is good, and the warm yet stylish approach to playing, which I have witnessed when this group plays live, is very much in evidence in this recording as well. Without doubt this disc has become a great favourite of mine and is my personal pick of the bunch.

Two re-releases from Deutsche Harmonia Mundi focus on the music of Bach's sons. The playing by Collegium Aureum on a disc recorded in 1978 of **Concertante Sinfonias by J.C.Bach (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 05472 77456 2)** shows how far our tastes in performing this kind of music have changed in the last twenty years. That said, these are elegant renditions of very attractive music. Les Adieux (our old friends Andreas Staier, fortepiano, Hazelet, flute, and Hajo Bäjo, viola) perform the 1788 **Quartets by C.P.E. Bach (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 05472 77464 2)** as a trio, Staier arguing that, as the cello part is not extant (unless it was meant to be read from the keyboard part) it is omitted here as "contrary to the outstandingly progressive composition of the pieces". I cannot say that the resulting effect is happy: for my money a cello would have added some warmth to the tone (the viola by itself sounds unpleasant). The recording was made in 1987 and Staier, somewhat predictably, plays a copy of a '1791 Walter'.

Staier also crops up on the next two discs, the first accompanying Prégardien in Schubert's chilling **Winterreise (Teldec 0630-18824-2)**. It is impossible to review historically-motivated performances of Schubert Lieder without referring to the controversy that has been covered in recent editions of *Early Music*. Following on from a critical review of Schubert discs by Toller (1995 No.3 pp. 523ff), David Montgomery launched a full-scale attack on current 'historicist' performance practices associated with Schubert (1997 No. 1 pp. 101ff), particulary: a) performances employing embellishment; and, b) performances not in strict time. Evidence used by Montgomery to back up his attack is largely the silence of contemporary treatises to mention these practices, coupled with a belief that Vogl's rather extrovert performances of the songs were probably only tolerated by the composer for marketing purposes. Van Tassel (1994 No. 4, pp. 703ff) does much to demolish this second point with a broad-minded appreciation of the ideology behind Vogl's remarkably liberal interpretations of Schubert Lieder. As for the treatises, the evidence Montgomery produces does not really stand up to close examination. The first treatise to be examined by Montgomery is Starke's *Wiener Piano-Forte Schule* (1819-21), but Montgomery's conclusions hardly seem justified by Starke's text, as follows [underlinings mine]:

Montgomery: '...the only ornaments to be added voluntarily by the performer are in vocal music...' [Starke: ' ...there exist even grander embellishments which originate with the player...' True, Starke goes on to say 'many singers are guilty...' but, singers have always been a target for these attacks and there is no reason why in certain genres instrumentalists would not follow their lead.]

Montgomery: '... such procedures apply [to] Bach, Haydn and Mozart and others...' [Starke: 'Our immortal composers Bach, Haydn, Mozart and others have handed down to us these essential ornaments' — a clear misreading of Starke's passage]

Montgomery: '... in any case most ornamentation is notated explicitly by the great composers of late...' [Starke: 'In general, the greatest composers endeavour to write their own ornamentation so carefully into their piano works, that the performer is left little in the way of voluntary ornaments and additions.' This is true when repeats are written out, but there is nothing to make the passage apply more to Schubert as a composer 'of late' than to Haydn and Mozart, where embellishment is now generally accepted.]

Montgomery does not draw attention to Starke's statement concerning the 'enthusiastic applause of the *Mode-Kenner* [those up-to-date with fashion]' for these free embellishments, nor to Starke's statement that ' Many believe that in the course of uncalled-for additions one can allow oneself a certain freedom where the meter is concerned...': here there is a demonstration that, at the very least, Starke's own view that strict tempo is essential was not the only (or even the majority) view at the time. The other treatises mentioned by Montgomery either do not mention free ornamentation (Czerny of 1825 and 1839), are dismissed as being 'old-fashioned' (Swoboda, 1826 who does mention ornamentation in slow movements), or else have 'little to do' with Schubert (Hummel, 1828). Bilson and Levin (1997, No. 4 pp. 715ff; pp. 723 ff) both add their own eloquent responses to Montgomery.

As to the disc in hand, where do Prégardien and Staier stand on these issues? The answer is, rather conservatively. There is no vocal

embellishment and little of the declamatory style Vogl was noted for. Phrases tend to be long and slurring is under-articulated. Arpeggiation of piano chords occurs throughout and there is a moderate pulling around of the tempo — on this last point Bilson has already remarked that *Winterreise*'s accompaniments are much more of the sort to be subjected to this device than the more constant textures found in other Schubert songs. Putting aside historical considerations (and we will only understand what is within the bounds of Schubertian style when we start experimenting with the conventions that we know existed at the time), these are convincing and intelligent readings, with many very moving moments. The Fritz fortepiano played by Staier does justice to the music in a way a modern grand could not. The best thing about this disc is that it allows one to listen to the music afresh: it is now for others to push back the boundaries of modern performance even more. The liner notes are also more imaginative than usual.

The same fortepiano and pianist appear in another Teldec recording, this time of **Mendelssohn's** teenage **Concertos for piano, and piano and violin (Teldec 0630-13152-2)**. The Concerto Köln have decided to use a fairly large string orchestra (6.5.4.3.2) with the soloists battling against it in bravura fashion. This is not the only possible approach to these pieces — I think a chamber one-to-a-part performance would also be valid given that the probable first performance of these pieces took place in the Mendelssohns' own home — nevertheless, Staier and the Concerto Köln provide a dazzling array of tone-colour and virtousity which makes these readings very attractive. As part of the Mendelssohn revival (he is one of the composers whose music has most to gain from the use of early 19th century instruments), this recording will no doubt force a judicious reassessment of these two pieces; they hardly show the composer's immaturity and are, on the contrary, full of bold and exciting ideas. A welcome addition to the catalogue.

A couple of years after Mendelssohn's concertos had been written, the **Pieces for flute and piano** by the Germano-Danish composer, **Friedrich Kuhlau (Globe GLO 5180),** were published. Richard Egarr plays the same Fritz piano which was used in the two previous recordings. Given the variety of instruments available in this period, it is a pity that more instruments, or copies by different makers, could not be utilised by recording companies. Marten Root plays the flute masterfully and Richard Egarr accompanies with exemplary restraint and sensitivity (although in truth the piano is an equal partner in all the pieces). The music is well worth exploring, although the disc would have been even more attractive had one of Kuhlau's piano pieces been substituted for one of the three consecutive flute pieces we have here.

Brahms admired Kuhlau's flute music, the qualities of which unfortunately do not leaven his own **cello sonatas (Opus 111 OPS 30-144)**, which are given a good performance by Peter Bruns on cello and Olga Tverskaya on an Erard fortepiano. Tverskaya sounds much more impressive in this later repertoire than she does in earlier music and proves an powerful partner for the cellist. Nevertheless, I personally find little to connect with in this music, and although one or two passages gain colouristic beauty from the use of period instruments, on the whole I do not think these sonatas succeed. If you are a Brahms fan, judge for yourself. Much more appealing is Tverskaya's performances with a band of chamber musicians (Adrian Chandler, violin; Norbert Blume, viola; Colin Lawson, clarinet; Alberto Grazzi, bassoon) in the **seventh volume of Music in St Petersburg (Opus 111 30-230)**, which particularly focuses on Glinka. Here there is variety of media: wind and piano; piano solo; viola and piano; and violin and piano. Most of the music is by Glinka, but there is also an arrangement by Balakirev and a sonata by Alabiev. Much of the music is salon fodder, but most of it is attractive too. The performances are first-rate and the disc is an excellent addition to the series. Tverskaya plays her beloved Winston copy of a 1823 Brodmann. Imagination is also shown in performing Glinka's *Trio Pathétique* in the wind version for clarinet and bassoon. Well done to performers and record company alike!

P.H.

FESTIVAL REVIEWS

29th *Melbourne International Festival of Organ and Harpsichord*
April 4 - 11, 1999

In these days of shrinking budgets for the arts worldwide, it is a pleasure to experience first-hand the many strengths of one of Australia's oldest continuously running music festivals, which, despite the focus of its title, has lately expanded its activities to include a surprisingly wide range of music and performers. This year represents the 29th annual MIFOH since its inception by founder Sergio de Pieri in 1971. Over the years, MIFOH has featured many of the world's important instrumentalists, primarily, though not exclusively, keyboardists, in some of the fine venues with which the beautiful city of Melbourne abounds. This year's overseas artists included the Basel-based Ferrara Ensemble, the expatriate Australian violinist Stanley Ritchie, the Belgian flautist Barthold Kuijken, the French organist Michel Bouvard as well as your present humble reviewer (harpsichord). They were joined by a legion of musicians from various parts of Australia in presenting music ranging from the 14th to the 20th centuries.

The **Ferrara Ensemble**, a six-member group directed by American lutenist Crawford Young, comprising various singers accompanied by plucked and bowed instruments, presented three of the twenty-two offerings which made up the week-long festival. Their opening afternoon concert was a collaborative effort with local singers Vivien Hamilton and Carol Veldhoven (sopranos), Sue Wuttke (alto), Adrian Phillips (tenor) and Grantley McDonald (baritone) as well as the Australian Renaissance wind ensemble, **La Compania.** Music by Josquin, Isaac, Obrecht, Frye and Morton was presented in the Chapel of Xavier College Chapel in the Melbourne suburb of Kew where, despite a relatively light audience turnout (perhaps the venue was too far from the centre of the action, and not sufficiently accessible by public transport?) the performance set a high standard for the coming week's events. These included further performances by the Ferrara Ensemble, devoted to the 14th century Flemings and Germans, the second programme entitled *A Medieval Tannhäuser.*

The first evening recital, given on Monday evening, found your reviewer presenting a programme of J. S. Bach's music in the French style (French Overture, D major Partita, Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E-flat) with the d-minor toccata (BWV 913) thrown in by way of contrast. This was given in the superb surroundings of the recently-restored Ursula Frayne Memorial Chapel in the suburb of Fitzroy. The harpsichord, receiving its debut after many years on the drawing-board, was a real eye (and ear) opener for performer and audience alike. Built by Australia's doyen in the field of harpsichord making, Alastair McAllister, the instrument, patterned after the nine-foot harpsichord by Johann Heinrich Harraß now in Sondershausen, resoundingly illustrated the maker's vision (and consumate skill) in recreating an original instrument in its pristine state, before the

centuries of wear and tear have conspired to create a travesty of its original capabilities. A good maker, of course, never merely copies, but also brings his own personality to bear on the final result. As Bart Kuijken remarked to the builder, this harpsichord showed a distinctive face. It also amply demonstrated, both sonically and visually, the magnificence and diversity of Australian timber, as well as its effectiveness as a medium for harpsichord making. If audience reaction was any indication, then it is clear that Australia's non-specialist audiences, as well as its die-hard harpsichord afficionados, crave the generous and ample sounds, devoid of clicks, false notes, and other extra-musical jangle, which must have originally inspired generations of composers to produce their finest masterpieces for the instrument. This harpsichord was originally to have been built for the great New Zealand harpsichordist Anthony Jennings, whose premature (and unexpected) death on 30 July, 1995 stunned his many friends and colleagues and robbed the harpsichord world of one of its very finest practitioners. This recital, and the successful completion of the instrument in which he had so much confidence, were offered as a tribute to his memory.

Linda Kent & Genevieve Lacy

Tuesday evening brought us the French organist, **Michel Bouvard** in an impressive programme of 19th and 20th-century symphonic organ repertoire (Mendelssohn: Prelude and Fugue op. 35/1, Franck: Prière, Alain: Litanies, Duruflé: Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain, Vierne: Première Symphonie). This was presented in St. Patrick's Cathedral on the recently refurbished and extended 1962 four-manual organ by the Melbourne firm of George Fincham & Sons.

On Thursday evening the expatriate Australian violinist, resident in the United States, **Stanley Ritchie**, presented a recital accompanied by the expatriate American harpsichordist, resident in Australia, **Linda Kent**, in the chapel of Trinity College. Trinity Chapel, long one of Melbourne's favourite venues for solo harpsichord performance, has lately seen its admirable acoustics drastically altered through the recent installation of a new organ in the centre gallery (by the fine Irish builders Kenneth Jones and Associates of Dublin). For those seated at the rear of the chapel, beneath the gallery, Trinity's once warm and clear acoustic has been replaced by muddled and unfocused sound. Stanley Ritchie and Linda Kent's programme included works by Biber (the solo violin passacaglia, magnificently performed by Mr. Ritchie), and sonatas for violin and continuo by Vivaldi (RV 3), Schmelzer (VI from *Sonate Unarum Fidium*), Leclair (op. 9/10) and J. S. Bach (BWV 1023). Bach's A major sonata (BWV 1015) for violin with obbligato harpsichord completed the programme. Some overly fast tempos, combined with the less-than-clear acoustic, muddied the textures in BWV 1015, although Ms. Kent proved an able partner in both continuo and obbligato roles. Veteran Australian viola da gambist Ruth Wilkinson efficiently doubled the bass line in the continuo pieces.

Similar acoustical difficulties were evident in several other concerts performed in Trinity Chapel. Virtuoso Australian recorder player **Genevieve Lacey,** partnered once again by **Linda Kent** (proving her versatility by playing harpsichord, positive organ, and the big organ with pedal in an orchestral reduction of the Sammartini concerto) presented an interesting programme of transcriptions, including an arrangement of Bach's G major organ trio sonata (BWV 530) and the concerto in F by Sammartini (which Ms. Lacey had performed in Sydney the previous week with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, to great acclaim). The trio sonata transcription, which found Ms. Kent performing two of the three parts on a small positive organ by Knud Smenge, suffered from balance problems: the right hand of the organ part was, to this reviewer, virtually inaudible, and the bass muddy. The sonata *a Cucu* by Johann Jakob Walther found Linda Kent alternating organ with harpsichord (at one moment the sounds of both instruments occurred simultaneously, a mystery which only the knowing look on the face of the page-turner was able to solve).

Melbourne's own **Elysium Ensemble** (Greg Dikmans, flute; Lucinda Moon, violin; and Ruth Wilkinson, gamba and voice flute) was heard on Wednesday afternoon in a programme of French music, *Menage à Trois*, in which the greatness of François Couperin was immediately evident in the company of Boismortier and Hotteterre. The beauty of the playing was everywhere apparent; only the absence of any figured-bass instrument compromised the result, producing numerous bare spots in the relatively transparent French textures.

Other Melbourne-based groups included the **Orpheus Ensemble** (Vivien Hamilton, soprano; Margaret Waugh, cello; and Priscilla Taylor, harpsichord) presenting an attractive Italian programme entitled *The Reign of Love*, much of which appears on their recent recording for Melbourne's Move Records. Vivien Hamilton was a winning presence, ably supported by Margaret Waugh, one of Australia's finest baroque cellists, and Priscilla Taylor, whose contribution suffered somewhat by her performing on a less than ideal harpsichord (its dry and unresonant sound, lacking bloom or sostenuto of any sort, hardly resembling the Ruckers instruments from which it is supposedly derived). In addition, the veteran ensemble **La Romanesca** (Hartley Newnham, countertenor; Ros Bandt, winds, psaltery; Ruth Wilkinson, viol and John Griffiths, lute), celebrating its twenty-first year of existence, presented a programme of music from the court of Margaret of Austria (1479-1530).

Michel Bouvard's twilight concert on Thursday at Christchurch, South Yarra, was devoted to the French Baroque organ repertoire (Louis Couperin, Nicolas de Grigny, Louis-Nicolas Clérambault) and included adroit performances of some excellent music, with Louis Couperin emerging for this reviewer as the star of the show. Also impressive was the recently installed organ by, once again, Kenneth Jones and Associates of Dublin. The precision of its voicing, and the majesty of its pedal reeds, so essential to adequately realising much of the French repertoire, supported and greatly enhanced M. Bouvard's execution of a carefully selected programme. Although primarily known as an early music festival, the eclectic nature of MIFOH was highlighted by the inclusion of an evening performance on Friday in St. Patrick's Cathedral of French Romantic masterpieces for chorus, orchestra and organ. These

included the *Requiem* of Gabriel Fauré, and the *Organ Symphony* of Camille Saint-Saëns, with M. Bouvard as soloist.

Visiting celebrities are always visible in a festival such as MIFOH, but it is the standard of the local performers which provides a reliable reading of the overall health of the indigenous musical scene. Many fine Australian musicians contributed to the success of the 29th festival. In addition to those mentioned above, there were others who (due to my own concert and rehearsal commitments) I was unable to hear in person. These include: organists Calvin Bowman (who, rumor has it, will next year at MIFOH perform all of J. S. Bach's organ works from memory!), and Pastór de Lasala; harpsichordists Luke Green, David McFarlane; lutenists John Griffiths and Rosemary Hodgson; viola da gambist Miriam Morris; counter-tenor Christopher Field, and the ensembles Snakewood (a great title for a string ensemble) and Acord. Some of these participated in the *Early Music Promenade*, performed at various chapels in the suburb of Parkville on Monday, at which time I was busily preparing for my own evening recital.

Karl-Heinz Schickhaus playing the hammered dulcimer (*Ferrara Ensemble*)

Perhaps the major "celebrity" event of this festival was the concert given by the legendary Belgian master of the Baroque flute, **Barthold Kuijken,** accompanied by harpsichordist **John O'Donnell.** The programme (entitled *Flauto Fantastico*) included Handel (op. 1/1a, HWV 379), Telemann (Methodical Sonata in D), C. P. E. Bach (Sonata for unaccompanied flute in a, H 562), and J. S. Bach (BWV 1030 in b). Mr. Kuijken displayed consummate mastery throughout, with tone production, phrasing and articulation all as perfect as one would expect. The C. P. E. Bach unaccompanied sonata provided an object lesson in breath control, while some of the tempos of the Handel and J. S. Bach sonatas would have been simply beyond the skill of a lesser player (for this reviewer, certain of these tempi were beyond the pale, especially the final movement of BWV 1030, and some of the Handel). While Mr. Kuijken's associate artist, harpsichordist John O'Donnell, strove gamely to keep up, his standards, both technical and musical, were scarcely a match for those of his Belgian colleague. Among Mr. O'Donnell's generously apportioned solos (François Couperin and Domenico Scarlatti), the plethora of f minor/Major movements comprising Couperin's 18th *Ordre* seemed perhaps too much of a good thing; while William Bright's Dulcken copy, providing a very different vision of the harpsichord from the McAllister reconstruction of Harraß, sounded harsh and dynamically relentless (although slender in overall volume and tonal colour for an eight-and-a-half-foot long harpsichord), lacking warmth throughout its range, and without much definition in the tenor and bass regions of its five-octave compass. Its monochromatic and nasal sound (quite unlike the original Dulckens of this writer's experience in Vienna, Boston and Washington) blended somewhat uneasily with the limpid purity and expressive and dynamic range of Mr. Kuijken's copy of a Rottenburg flute by Rudolf Tutz of Innsbruck.

The finale to the festival was an interesting pot-pourri of Baroque concertos performed by some of the soloists of the week: Genevieve Lacey (Vivaldi: Recorder Concerto in C, RV 444); Craig Hill and Simon Harris (Telemann: Concerto for 2 chalumeaux in d); Stanley Ritchie (Leclair: Concerto in A op. 7 no 6 for violin); Barthold Kuijken (Blavet: Concerto in a for flute); and Peter Watchorn (Bach: Harpsichord Concerto in d, BWV 1052). The event served as a focal point for the audience to express its general enthusiasm for a week of twenty-two diverse and high-level concerts. A free-lance group, the **Melbourne Baroque Players** (violins: Lucinda Moon, Stephen Freeman, Julie Hewison, Simon Musgrave; violas: Diedre Dowling, Ross Mitchell; cello: Rosanne Hunt; violone: Rosemary Webber) was ably led by Stanley Ritchie, and provided abundant evidence of the extraordinary revolution in standards of baroque playing which has occurred in the twelve years since I left my native shores. In addition, the health and vibrancy of Australian instrument-making was everywhere present throughout MIFOH, evidenced by the work of Alastair McAllister, Alan Todd, Marc Nobel, Bill Bright, Jean-Louis Coquillat (harpsichords); Ian Watchorn (plucked and bowed string instruments); George Fincham, Knud Smenge, Ron Sharp (organs) and, lastly, as an unexpected sad footnote to MIFOH 1999, the legendary Australian recorder and baroque flute maker, Fred Morgan, who was tragically killed in a car accident a week after MIFOH.

Festival organisers David Agg and Victoria Watts ensured that all ran smoothly during an unusually concentrated week. Given the financial restraints under which MIFOH operates, the range and quality of its offerings seemed to this reviewer to be all the more remarkable, comparing favourably with similar events in Europe and the USA which operate on much larger budgets Next year's MIFOH (the 30th festival) in the year 2000 will concentrate, appropriately, on the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, and also highlight Australia's own remarkable roster of musicians. Long may this excellent festival prosper!

Peter Watchorn

Tenth *Boston Early Music Festival*, June 8 - 13, 1999

Having attended every Boston Early Music Festival since 1985 I have found it interesting and instructive to watch it grow and develop over the last fourteen years. BEMF is certainly one of the largest and most influential events of its kind, boasting a saturation-level week of concerts, a major exhibition by instrument makers, music and CD retailers, as well as a list of concurrent events which dwarfs the official concert schedule. Since the first BEMF in 1981, the organisation has weathered economic recession and turmoil as well as shrinking support for the arts in general, emerging in apparent good health in time for century's end. This year's festival has seen the confirmation of lutenists Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs as Festival Artistic Directors. Needless to say, this has resulted in recent festivals featuring a good deal of the work of ensembles with which these musicians are associated. It could even be argued that BEMF has, in recent years, seen a narrowing of its focus in selection of both repertoire and artists, with increasing emphasis both on the 17th century and, not surprisingly, on the lute. A glance at the programmes for the last three festivals, as well as the annual BEMF concert series, shows clearly that the organization is largely committed to a more-or-less stable and unvarying pool of artists. In addition, the centrepieces of

the last three festivals (with which Mssrs. O'Dette and Stubbs have been closely associated) have been fully staged 17th-century operas (once again prominently featuring Mssrs. O'Dette and Stubbs, as well as members of their ensembles, organised into what was once an independent BEMF festival orchestra). The theme of the 1999 festival was *Music of the Mediterranean*, and it included an impressive roster of artists from Europe and the USA.

This year's operatic choice, after a successful run of Luigi Rossi's *l'Orfeo* in 1997, was ***Ercole Ermante*** (Hercules in Love), by Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676), first performed in Paris in 1662. Returning to *BEMF* this year were many of the collaborators from previous years: Robin Linklater (designer), Lucy Graham (choreography) and Jack Edwards (stage direction). Vocal soloists included Nathanial Watson (Ercole), Ellen Hargis (Venus), Claron McFadden (Cynthia), Paul Guttry (The Tiber), William Hite (Hyllo), Donald Wilkinson (Neptune) and Harry van der Kamp (King of Oechalia). The orchestra consisted essentially of the combined forces of **The King's Noyse** and Stephen Stubbs' celebrated ensemble **Tragicomedia.** In addition, for the dance music, baroque oboists Bruce Haynes and Geoffrey Burgess, bassoonist Marilyn Boenau, trumpeters Fred Holmgren and Dennis Ferry and timpanist John Grimes participated briefly. The prominent continuo group included Mssrs. O'Dette and Stubbs, Andrea Damiani, Lucas Harris (lute, theorbo, chitarrone), Alexander Weimann and Peter Sykes (keyboards), as well as Maxine Eilander (harp). After BEMF the production moved to Tanglewood (the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer music programme in Western Massachusetts) for a further performance, and the entire cast will re-assemble for the Holland Festival in Utrecht in late August - early September.

The premier keyboard event of the festival was the recital given by Cologne-based harpsichordist **Andreas Staier** on Wednesday June 9th in New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall. The programme was virtually a re-run of Mr. Staier's recent CD for Teldec entitled *Variaciones del Fandango Español* including music by López, Albero, Domenico Scarlatti, and concluding with the inevitable *Fandango* of Soler. Indeed, the notes included in the familiarly impressive BEMF programe book were simply re-printed from the CD booklet, referring both to the recording and to several works which were not actually part of Wednesday's recital. Mr. Staier displayed for the most part brilliant dexterity (with a certain gratuitous heavy-handedness à la Ton Koopman evident here and there) and, in the slow movements, real pathos and sensitivity. He was well served by the harpsichord, Alastair McAllister's 9-foot long German double-manual instrument inspired by the instruments of Johann Heinrich Harraß. A harpsichord of exceptional power and striking visual and tonal beauty, it allowed Mr. Staier to project his musical ideas forcefully to the furthest reaches of the newly-restored Jordan Hall.

Notable among the remaining evening concerts, was the programme of vocal and instrumental works by Alessandro Scarlatti presented on Thursday by **The King's Noyse** and the **BEMF Violin Band** with singers from the opera (minus top-billed special guest Derek Lee Ragin, who, at the eleventh hour, was made an offer elsewhere he couldn't refuse). The following evening brought the legendary ensemble from Spain, **Hesperion XX,** directed by Jordi Savall and featuring his wife, the soprano Monserrat Figueras. Their programme was devoted to Spanish Songs and Instrumental Variations. Most of the songs were by José Marín (1618-1699), whose adventurous and "exemplary" life was chronicled in the accompanying programme notes. On Saturday the **Boston Camerata,** joined by the **Boston Shawm and Sackbut Ensemble** and the **Harvard University Choir** directed by Joel Cohen, presented a programme of Iberian music transported to the Americas, which produced a standing ovation.

The busy BEMF schedule also included twilight and late-night concerts. These comprised programmes by ensembles **La Luna** (seventeenth century Italian music), **Ensemble Sarband** (sic) (Sephardic songs of medieval Spain, Spanish Jewish music) and **Tragicomedia** (*Festa Napolitana*). In addition **Hesperion XX** performed a Saturday afternoon concert of *folias*, while the quartet **La Colombina** performed two programmes of Spanish vocal music. Organist **Willem Jansen** presented a programme of Spanish organ music on the famous C. B. Fisk instrument in Old West Church. Swedish recorder virtuoso **Dan Laurin** joined harpsichordist **Byron Schenkman** in a programme somewhat alarmingly titled *Virtuoso Explosions in the Italian Style*, which included music by Corelli, J. B. Loeillet, Marais, Telemann and Blavet. Mr. Schenkman contributed as a solo a D major suite of Jacques Duphly, playing a two-manual harpsichord by Boston maker Allan Winkler after Pierre Donzelague, 1711: a beautifully made and sonorous instrument by one of America's leading harpsichord builders. In addition, Byron Schenkman, a former student of Elisabeth Wright at Indiana University, was this year's recipient of the Erwin Bodky Memorial Award, presented annually since 1967 by the Cambridge Society for Early Music. Once a competition, the Bodky is now presented to young performers who are considered to have achieved sufficient prominence to merit the award. Mr. Schenkman is certainly one of America's most active and visible harpsichordists of the younger generation. He is a member of a duo with fellow Bodky recipient Ingrid Matthews (with whom he co-directs the Seattle Baroque Orchestra). Byron Schenkman gave his winner's recital in Gordon Chapel, Old South Church on the fortepiano: the programme was devoted to Haydn (F major Hob. XVI), Mozart (d minor fantasy, K. 397), and Beethoven (f minor, Op. 2/i).

Among the busy roster of **concurrent events,** many of Boston's leading performers, as well as many from different parts of the world, were out in force: the choir of the Church of the Advent directed by Edith Ho (presenting Victoria), the Boston Bach Ensemble (presenting three different Bach programmes including motets for double-chorus, three of the violin and harpsichord sonatas, with the brilliant young Canadian virtuoso, Emlyn Ngai, and arias and duets from various cantatas with soprano Anne Harley and contralto Elizabeth Anker). John Gibbons presented a harpsichord recital devoted to French repertoire, while Thomas Annand gave a Bach recital. Several concerts for two harpsichords were presented: one by Vera Kochanowsky and Thomas McCracken (whose CD of the same repertoire is about to be released on the Titanic label), while Shawn Leopard and John Paul presented Bach's six organ sonatas transcribed for two harpsichords. Also presenting a recital were alumni and faculty of Oberlin Conservatory's Historical Performance programme. There were, of course, too many events to list all of them individually here. What was striking was the generally high level of a large range of concurrent events, without which BEMF would be a much diminished festival.

As usual, the **exhibition** provided a convenient venue for festival participants to meet and examine the diversity of offerings by many of the world's leading makers of historical instruments, as well as CDs, music and accessories. Prominent at the exhibition, as usual, was the work of keyboard instrument builders. Outstanding were the instruments of a number of builders from both coasts of the United States and Europe. Kevin Fryer from San Francisco

displayed his interpretation of the 1624 Colmar Ruckers, a model also exhibited by Marc Ducornet (who recently announced his formal separation from the Zuckermann shop in Stonington). Both makers went to considerable trouble to reproduce the unusually curved bentside of the original (which it seems to me is probably an aberration, since none of the remaining Ioannes Ruckers instruments seem to have it), but both harpsichords were highly successful yet individual reconstructions of a famous and versatile instrument. M. Ducornet also displayed a Grimaldi and a Ruckers single "in the white". Both were pleasing and idiomatic instruments, the Ruckers avoiding the "generic" Franco-Flemish sound, and managing (especially given its disposition of single 8' and 4') to resemble the genuine item quite closely.

John Phillips from Berkeley lived up to his reputation for impeccable workmanship and judicious choice of models, displaying a magnificently chinoiseried instrument after Blanchet (1733) and a copy of a Giusti (1681). Douglas Maple brought a very impressive Italian instrument after Zenti as well as his familiar harpsichord modelled on the Couchet in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Both were instruments of high standard: excellent sound and high quality workmanship: perhaps, given Douglas Maple's remarkably low prices, the best value for money on display at this year's festival. Most impressive, also, was a copy by the Vermont builder, Robert Hicks, of the Stehlin of 1760 in the Smithsonian in Washington, one of the most beautiful surviving French antiques, and one which deserves to be copied more often. Hicks has produced an excellent player's instrument, which well represents the virtues of the original. Allan Winkler displayed impressive instruments after Donzelague and Fleischer as well as a clavichord. Malcolm Rose, known world-wide for supplying historical wire to other harpsichord makers, displayed a very beautiful copy of the anonymous 1667 French instrument in Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, its bold tone belying the apparent delicacy of the instrument's construction.

Hubbard Harpsichords displayed their usual range of successful instruments after Taskin (1770), Moermans (1584, à ravalement), as well as two nearly completed instruments after the Copenhagen Hass, minus the sixteen-foot register. One of these has been recently built for Boston harpsichordist Joseph Payne. Zuckermann Harpsichords from Stonington showed several instruments including a very successful French double and a versatile German single after Vater. As with Hubbard, versions of many of their instruments are available in kit form. Among fortepiano makers, outstanding as always was the work of Rodney Regier from Maine, who featured a five-octave Walther as well his deservedly famous Graf model. Margaret Hood showed her well-known recreation of a Nanette Streicher of 1805. Anden Houben displayed both 17th century French instruments and an interesting *Lautenwerck*, while Andrew Lagerquist presented a pair of large Swedish clavichords. Lastly, Glenn Guittari's *Harpsichord Clearing House* exhibited a wide range of harpsichords, virginals and chamber organs.

BEMF is already planning for the year 2001 (June 12 - 17) when the festival will be devoted to the French influence in Europe. The centrepiece will be a fully staged presentation of a Lully tragedie lyrique (which one remains to be seen). For information on BEMF their website is HTTP://WWW.BEMF.ORG.

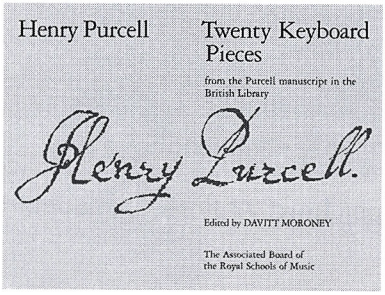
Peter Watchorn

Henry Purcell

Twenty Keyboard Pieces *and one by Orlando Gibbons*

Published for the first time

Edited by DAVITT MORONEY



This is the first publication of the Purcell manuscript discovered in 1993 and now held in the British Library, which includes five previously unknown pieces.

Purcell used this teaching manuscript to introduce the forms and keyboard techniques of his day, and included a well-known prelude by Gibbons to practice correct hand positions and fingering.

The volume has been edited by leading harpsichordist Davitt Moroney, whose fascinating preface illustrates the collection's background and importance.

Five facsimile pages from the original manuscript complete this edition, adding a unique historical document to the Associated Board's catalogue of keyboard works.

ISBN 1 85472 869 5

'The Purcell Manuscript' performed on the virginals by Davitt Moroney is available on CD from Virgin Veritas **VC 5 45166 2.**

ABRSM PUBLISHING

The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (Publishing) Limited

14 Bedford Square London WC1B 3JG United Kingdom
Telephone +44 20 7636 5400 *Fax* +44 20 7637 0234
E-mail publishing@abrsm.ac.uk
Website www.abrsmpublishing.co.uk

CAMBRIDGE

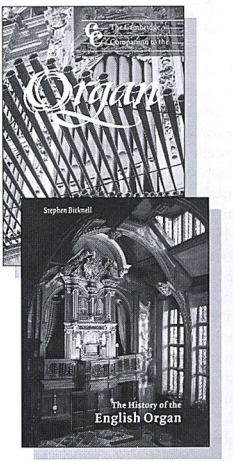
The Cambridge Companion to the Organ

Nicholas Thistlethwaite
and Geoffrey Webber

A *Companion* containing 20 specially-commissioned essays by leading organ scholars. An essential guide to all aspects of the organ and its music.

Contributors: Nicholas Thistlethwaite, Stephen Bicknell, John Mainstone, Christopher Kent, Kimberly Marshall, Edward Higginbottom, Christopher Stembridge, James Dalton, Geoffrey Cox, Patrick Russill, Geoffrey Webber, David Yearsley, Graham Barber, Gerard Brooks, Andrew McCrea, Douglas Reed.

£37.50 HB 0 521 57309 2 354pp
£13.95 PB 0 521 57584 2



The History of the English Organ

New in Paperback

Stephen Bicknell

'It is eminently worthy of purchase by all interested in playing and studying the organ.' *Organist's Review*

'This is a wonderful book, undoubtedly the finest of its kind ever written, and I most heartily recommend it.'
The Organ Historical Society Journal

£17.95 PB 0 521 65409 2 430pp

Cambridge books are available from good bookshops, alternatively to order direct using your credit card, phone UK +44 (0)1223 326050, fax UK +44 (0)1223 326111, or e-mail directcustserve@cup.cam.ac.uk

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS · The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
www.cup.cam.ac.uk

Subscription Details

UK: £12.00, subs direct from the publisher.

US: $24.00, checks only to: Magnamusic Distributors Inc. PO Box 338, Amenia Union Road, Sharon CT 06069

Australia: A$30.00, credit cards or cheques to: Harpsichord & Fortepiano, Elmtree Lane, Chewton, Victoria, 3451, Australia

France: FF125.00, Franc cheques payable to: J J Burbidge, at the publisher's address

Germany: DM36.25, credit card preferred. Subscribe through publisher

Japan: Y2400, credit card preferred. Subscribe through publisher

Rest of world: £12.00. Please send payment in pounds sterling, or send credit card details direct to the publisher.

I would like to subscribe to Harpsichord & Fortepiano

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Tel: _____

Peacock Press
Scout Bottom Farm, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 5JS, UK
Tel: (01422) 882751 Fax: (01422) 886751

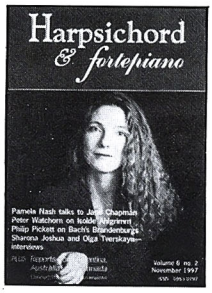
Complete your collection
A LIMITED NUMBER OF BACK COPIES ARE STILL AVAILABLE AT £6.00 pp conti.....

Volume 6 No. 1.

Contents Include

Dance to the music of Time - Penelope Cave
Interview with Richard Egarr
Fortepiano Kapsels Old & New - Martha Goodway
Interview with Kenneth Weiss
Did Couperin ever play a trill before the beat - Claudio di Veroli
Handel's Eight Great Suites for Harpsichord - Gwilym Beechey
The vital role of Humidity - Martin Robertson

Volume 6 No. 2.



A Performance Practice for the 21st Century - Pamela Nash
Isolde Ahlgrimm & Vienna's Historic Keyboard
Revival - Peter Watchorn
Interview with Sharona Joshua
Early Keyboards in Argentina - Claudio di Veroli
The Brandenburg Concertos - Philip Pickett
Interview with Olga Tverskaya
Handel's Temperament - Carl Sloane
Obituary of Ruth Dyson

Volume 7 No. 1.

Keyboard Instruments in Haydn's Vienna - Richard Maunder
Interview with Ronald Brautigam - Alison Holloway
Isolde Ahlgrimm: further details - Peter Watchorn
Performance Practice for 21st. Century (part 2) - Pamela Nash
Christoph B Schmidtchen and his Small Keyboard Tuter - Gwilym Beechy
Underground Movement - Alison Holloway

	Vol 5 No.1	Vol 5 No.2	Vol 5 No.3	Vol 6 No.1	Vol 6 No.2	Vol 7 No.1
please tick the appropriate box for back copies						

The Recorder Magazine

For all those who play,
teach, learn or
make the
recorder

The oldest established magazine of its type in the English-speaking world.

• • • •

Published quarterly

£16 per year

The Recorder Magazine
Scout Bottom Farm, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge HX7 SJS UK

Tel: (01422) 882751
Fax: (01422) 886157