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BOOK REVIEWS

Peter Bavington, *Clavichord Tuning and Maintenance*
(London: Keyword Press, 2007) 216 pp. + viii.
Reviewed by Richard Troeger

Clavichords, among their other virtues, are considerably more stable than harpsichords and fortepianos. Owing to the simplicity of the action and the relatively narrow area of soundboard (soundboards notoriously expand and contract across the grain), a good or even mediocre clavichord can appear to be set for plain sailing over the long term, as if requiring nothing but an occasional tuning. But just as a well-maintained piano will considerably out-perform the level that it can achieve under benign neglect, so will a clavichord deliver much more when small details are kept up to par. In fact, there are so many details that can be settled according to the player's preference that, as a colleague once remarked to me, it is only after a clavichord is (nominally) completed that the "real work" can be started. Every variable can have a profound effect on tone and response, particularly in a fine quality instrument.

Clavichords sometimes suffer more than benign neglect, even while in use, and owners too often appear to be unaware of several basic techniques of tuning and other maintenance procedures. (Indeed, I once watched an experienced builder consume most of a pre-concert warm-up time by the incredibly cumbersome method used to tune a clavichord.) Having seen so much distress, I myself published some fifteen years ago a stopgap article on procedures in clavichord tuning; and remembering that experience, I welcome with especial admiration Peter Bavington's new book on clavichord tuning and maintenance, certainly the most compendious of the few publications to have appeared on the subject. (Koen Vermeij published a fine, compact, bilingual manual, *Tuning and Maintenance of the Clavichord* [Bennebroek: Nederlands Clavichord Genootschap, 1992], an effort gratefully acknowledged and occasionally cited by Bavington.) Anyone who has tried to write out a description of a multi-step technical procedure will be impressed by the straightforward (and good-humoured) clarity which Mr. Bavington preserves throughout his book.

Following a brief introduction, the text is divided into four sections. Part One takes the novice through increasingly complex tuning procedures, from "First steps in tuning" (with accounts of wrench types, how to locate a specific tuning pin among the little forest of pins to the player's right, and similar basics) to "correcting mistuned unisons" (a classic and highly practical way of beginning to learn actual tuning), finally up to "Performing a full tuning" and such specific issues as "Fretted clavichords" and "Tuning the four-foot strings."

Part Two covers various maintenance issues, from "Environment and general care" to replacing broken strings, adjusting sticking keys, listing, voicing, and such occasional imponderables as stray noises. Part Three discusses a generous array of tuning schemes, all presented with great clarity in both text and diagrams, and includes temperaments appropriate to various fretting patterns.

Part Four, "Reference," offers addresses for sources of tools and materials, a selective book list, and a glossary, as well as a brief section on fretting ratios. This last is in reference to a concern voiced elsewhere in the book as well: how to determine the temperament built into a fretted action when the builder's intention is unknown—a situation with which those of us who encounter many clavichords are faced surprisingly often—and Bavington has much good advice on this as on all of his subject matter.

Mr. Bavington presents all of this material with the clarity and elegance for which his own clavichords are renowned. Again, this is no mean feat. In particular, his step-by-step tuning instructions at both beginning and advanced levels are admirably clear, as are, for example, his accounts of string replacement and pin-wrapping. *(As a side-note, let me here again go on record as stating that for amateur owners and others as well, the absence of a hole in the tuning pin produces unnecessary difficulty in string replacement. The skill of wrapping such a pin is of course required when dealing with most antique instruments, but to perpetuate the difficulty on modern reproductions strikes this writer as pointless. Tuning pins are commercially available that are made on the antique model but include a hole, and are the most practical choice for many situations.)* I wish also to stress that the book offers useful information for everyone from the hesitant beginner to those of considerable experience. Along the way, the author makes some delightfully unexpected but utterly on-point comparisons, to subjects as distant as

railroad viaducts and breastfeeding. As such a tone would suggest, his approach is eminently practical: a reassuring feeling in a book that is in fact loaded with discussion of diverse temperaments. Bavington's pragmatism is reflected in a passage that every newcomer to tuning should duplicate on a small placard to lay onto the rear hitchplank of the clavichord: "Don't be too fussy: learning to tune by ear is a skill which is acquired gradually—just like learning to play the instrument. Don't get too obsessed with setting a precisely correct temperament: concentrate on the fundamentals... Aim to complete the temperament reasonably quickly and then check it as described overleaf: if it passes this basic check, you have done quite well. You will get more accurate as your skill develops with practice." (Page 41.)

My only caveat is very slight and could be corrected in a future edition—unless, indeed, I happen to have missed it! In discussing retuning a single note, or an entire instrument, that has gone sharp in pitch, it would be useful to indicate that after tuning a string down, most clavichords require that the tuner repeatedly strike the key forte in order to lower the pitch even further, *THEN* pull the string up to pitch—still restriking frequently. Without this, the string(s) will often slacken upon subsequent playing.

A few other particulars: I am glad to see Mr. Bavington advocating use of a strip of cloth, to mute every other string over the entire compass, as a basis for a complete tuning. This elementary procedure seems, in my experience, to be used by relatively few people and it is far preferable to perpetual moving of several mutes. The author is very thorough about many possible small problems that can develop on an instrument, e.g. de-warping a keylever, or adjusting a unison course on a fretted instrument that sounds out of tune on a single note, owing to one or another tangent being out of proper position. I would have been glad to see more detail on the subject of listing cloth, although the presentation covers all essentials, and includes the point so often passed over: that "over-tight, over-heavy listing can stifle the sound of a clavichord, so that the tone seems lifeless and lacking in sustaining power." (Page 94.)

Keyboard Press has done a fine job with the book, which is cleanly and spaciously printed in a handsome typeface, with ample margins and the many diagrams well placed. In short, this is an admirable book which belongs on every clavichordist's bookshelf.

SCORE REVIEWS

Rameau, *Pieces de Clavecin*, New Edition of the Complete Keyboard Works, 3 vols.
Ed. Siegbert Rampe
Barenreiter: Kassel, 2004 BA6581-3
Reviewed by Micaela Schmitz

Vol. I: *Livres* de 1705/6 and 1724, *"La Dauphine"*, and *"Les petits marteaux"*
Vol. II : *Nouvelles Suites*, 1726-7 and Pieces de clavecin en concerts, 1741, adapted for the keyboard, including Rampe's own keyboard version where Rameau has not supplied his own.
Vol. III: *Les Indes Galantes*, reduced by Rameau I 1735/6 to four concerts.

Each volume has a table of contents, and a preface in French, English and German. This includes comments on the meaning of "character pieces"; like the Fuzeau facsimile any source for these attributions is absent. In Volume I, with Livre 1724 is the *Table des Agréments,* which is helpfully repeated in volumes II and III. Volume I also has the pedagogical *"de la mechanique des doigts sur le clavessin"*, which is immediately followed by useful translations in German and English, something lacking in many facsimile editions. Volume II includes Rameau's remarks (also translated) including the new notation (a standardisation of our familiar G2 and F4 clefs). Following the music itself is a critical commentary showing how changes have been made.

The preface traces publications of the music from the first by Saint-Saens (1895-1924), to Jacobi (Barenreiter1958), to Gilbert (Heugel, 1979). Rampe has re-examined the original prints including items Rameau himself added to later editions. While all the prefaces begin similarly, they go on to include other details. In Volume I, Rampe notes that the type of harpsichord Rameau played in 1705/6 and up to 1724 had a smaller range from A1 to c^3, such as Jean Denis, 1648 or even Tibaut (1619); those in Volume II, which begins with the Nouvelles suites of 1726-7, show a difference in range and effect, and here Rampe suggests a Donzelague (as mentioned by Heugel's edition), Blanchet, or Hemsch type instrument. *"La Poule"* in this livre is the first piece specifically requiring two manuals. In Volume III, we have Rameau's own transcriptions from his opera *Les Indes Galantes*.

Rampe reiterates a point mentioned in Heugel: that page turns took higher precedence than the order of performance, which explains why an item such as "*La Poule*" in Volume II occurs between a first and second Menuet on the page. He also suggests, in the E Minor suite, putting "*Tambourin*" last, as it is more of an ending movement, and then suggests that in the D Minor key pieces," Les Cyclopes" ought to be toward the end, certainly not before the lighter "*Le Lardon*" and "*La Boite*." Having "grown up" with the philosophy that "not everything baroque ends big," I'm wondering what others think about this. With regard to "*Le Lardon*", Rampe has taken seriously the French symbol for "repeat what came before only" (two parallel lines, sandwiching a column of dots). This is different from the Italian repeat sign with the line enclosed by dots on both right and left, which signifies repeating the section just finished *and* the section to come. In this edition, Rampe replaces ends of sections that have no repeat with two parallel lines; this results in structures such as AAB (not atypical) but also ABB!

Having a good edition is an investment; to supplement this, a player should make an effort to see facsimiles where they are available. Players should be sure to consult the original "fully orchestrated" *Pieces de clavecin en concerts*. Rampe's transcriptions in Volume III are good solutions and it's very useful to have these all in a row, ready to play, but in good conscience a scholar-performer should see the original to know what instrumental effect is being sought.

I compared this edition to a facsimile I happen to own as well as Heugel's *Le Pupitre* edition by Kenneth Gilbert. Because most of Rameau's music was published in his lifetime with his approval, there are not too many problematic areas or variants. Aside from the lack of translations and the higher price, which I always found a barrier with Heugel there is not much difference in Volume I, so I do not see the point of replacing music already owned. Barenreiter's Volume I has a piece never before published with its facsimile ("*Les petits marteaux*"), but this simple piece alone would not be a reason to buy the volume. However, Volume II-III is indeed the first modern edition to give all of Rameau's original keyboard transcriptions.

Looking at the text of "Le Rappel des Oiseaux", I notice that the Barenreiter incorporates the E1731d source (one that Rameau authorised in the final years of his life) in its notes. Because it had Rameau's authority, it ought to carry some weight, though the changes are really not that major. Barenreiter can be said to be more complete in its sources, and to have shown where these apply through footnotes.

If I were choosing between the Heugel and the Barenreiter, my choice would be the Barenreiter by virtue of it being most current, reasonably priced, having all transcriptions, and including useful information. In comparing with the facsimile, I found no problems — in fact some areas were easier to read, not just because C-clefs were replaced with modern ones. When the "A section" is repeated, often lead-ins only work for the repeated section but not for going on to the "B section"; Barenreiter provides the suggested connection to the correct octave, as any sensible player might do. Facsimiles are beautiful items and bring us close to the composer; but they do not provide details of the other sources, correct obvious errors, or offer useful translations.

I would recommend to players who have yet to buy their Rameau to buy all three; it's really not a savings to buy just one, only to have to buy the other volumes later when inflation has occurred! I would suggest teachers and professionals who are lacking one or more of the original livres to complete their collections, and do be sure to get Volume III, which has Rameau's own opera transcriptions.

Christian Flor, Zehn Suiten. Ed. Edited by Jörg Jacobi. (Edition Baroque EBA 4022) www.edition-baroque.de Reviewed by John Collins]

Christian Flor, near contemporary of Buxtehude, and possibly a pupil of Scheidemann or Tünder, was organist of St Lambert's and St Johannis' in Lüneburg. His preserved keyboard compositions include three organ Praeludia, 11 Suites, 37 Dance pieces and 14 Chorale preludes. The ten suites presented here are taken from an manuscript dated 2nd March, 1687, preserved in the Ratsbibliothek, Lüneburg, and although anonymous in that source have been ascribed to Flor through concordances in the Möllerschen Handschrift, Berlin. Keys used include D Minor (1 and 3), E Minor (5), G Minor (6), F Major (2), C Major (4), which modulates to E Major at the close of each section, A Major (7), E Major (8) and Bb Major (9 and 10). In many works, due to the relation to Renaissance modal practice, the key signatures have one fewer accidental than required- such as one flat

for G Minor rather than two.

The make-up of these suites is considerably more varied than Buxtehude's and Reincken's; the traditional four movement suite of allemande, courante, saraband and gigue is represented by nos. 2 –5, 7 and 8. The courante (or corrente as it is most frequently called (and even) "current" in no. 2) is present in all ten suites, the gigue is lacking in nos. 1, 6, 9 and 10, the allemande in nos. 1 and 6, and the sarabande in no. 10.

No. 1 opens with an 8-bar aria mainly in quavers, and its variation, in semiquavers; no. 6 begins with an allemande-like ballet in flowing semiquavers over a quaver bass. Nos. 4, 7, 8 and 10 open with a praeludium. No. 4 is the most improvisatory with semiquaver and demisemiquaver flourishes as well as minim chords over a tonic pedal; no. 7 opens with broken chords in quavers, covering three octaves, before a motivic sequence sets in; in no. 8 after another broken chordal quaver opening a semiquaver sequence is followed by a longer final section in 12/8 built on rhythmic imitation; no. 10 is based almost entirely on motivic sequences and imitation with artful changes, finishing in C Major, a pause scarcely preparing us for the modulations in the coda.

The allemandes are generally flowing movements in semiquavers, although no. 2 progresses in quavers and in nos. 7 and 8 the stile brisé writing is more marked. The correntes are generally similar to Buxtehude's with many examples of broken chords in stile brisé (although no. 1's is chordal throughout) and the prevalent opening figure being a dotted crotchet followed by three quavers; a variation in continuous quavers is provided in the first suite. The sarabandes exhibit several rhythmic varieties, with insistent crotchet motion in nos. 1, 2, 8 and 9, a more choppy feel to no. 3, semiquaver movement in no. 4, well-marked broken chords in no. 5, and melodic right hand quaver movement in nos.6 and 7, the latter also having stile brisé effects.

Variations, very effectively based on broken chords in stile brisé are included for nos. 1-3 and 8, The six gigues (nos. 2-5, 7 and 8) also exhibit different traits, nos. 2 and 3 being based on broken chords. No. 4 is treated fugally, the second section opening with the subject's inversion, and no. 5 is based on imitation of motifs rather than being fugal, again with inversion at the start of the second section. No. 7, a rare example in 9/8, is quasi-homophonic, although quaver movement is heard throughout, and no. 8, the only example in a dotted rhythm, is treated fugally with different subjects in each section.

The edition is clearly printed and well laid-out to obviate page turns during the middle of a piece, but the informative preface is regrettably in German only and it is a pity that neither the suite in C nor the canzona included in the version of Suite no. 3 from the Möllerschen MS are included in this collection.

There are several stretches of a tenth in the left hand, and an eleventh between bass d and tenor g in the ballet and courant of no. 6, pointing to the use of a short-octave keyboard.

These attractive pieces are worthy companions to the suites of Buxtehude. They are not as difficult as Reincken's but the gigues in particular, as well as the clean integration of the several marked ornaments will offer enough challenges to occupy the player; the suites will make excellent teaching material and deserve to feature in concerts.

Ferdinand de Medici (?),
IV Suite per clavicembalo.
Edited by Jörg Jacobi.
(Edition Baroque EBA 4011)
Reviewed by John Collins

These four suites, now preserved in Florence, were published in facsimile in 1987, the manuscript carrying the ascription Frescobaldi, which can be completely discounted.
De Medici was a prince of Tuscany and great friend and patron of many of the greatest Italian composers of the time, including the Scarlattis, Pasquini and Casini. It has been suggested by Silbiger that he may well have been the composer of these curious suites which were originally in his library. They comprise a total of 15 pieces arranged by key, (A Major, A Minor, G Minor, and D Minor); the editor has chosen to publish these groups as four suites

Each group opens with a prelude. The first prelude is marked *Cantabile con ligature* (tied notes), and opens with two bars of thick chords, before short rhythmic figures are passed between the hands. The ligatures occur in the right hand in eight chords only over semiquavers in the middle of the piece. The prelude for the second group is headed *di Botte, Acciachatture e Ligature* and again contains many eight-note chords with dissonant passing notes; there are actually very few *acciacatture*. The third prelude is a short piece which after a chordal opening moves gently in

quavers, and the fourth is a *Cantabile con Ligature*, which resembles a *durezze* from the early seventeenth century in its opening (i.e. a piece with prepared and unprepared dissonances, frequently composed for use at the elevation of the host at Communion), before quaver movement carries on sequentially to the close. Each grouping contains examples of an *aria alla Francese*, a short, tuneful piece in binary form which is unmistakably Italianate.

There are two arias in the first and second groups; in the latter the first aria includes *acciacatture* and the second one a bar in 5/4. The aria in the fourth group is rather more quirky with several *acciacatture* and a large quaver leap in the left hand from a chord based on tenor F to bass F and back again. There are two toccatas; in the second group the example comes between the two arias, and begins with semibreve chords before developing into those restless figures typical of the early seventeenth century from Trabaci and Mayone onwards, and dotted rhythms. In the third group the toccata commences with right hand figuration over a long held chord, this idea passing from hand to hand in the middle of the piece in Frescobaldian style before a conclusion in crotchet and quaver chords, with suspensions adding harmonic interest. The one dance movement in all of the pieces is the allemande in the third set, which proceeds mainly in quavers or dotted crotchet-quavers. It is quite unlike French or German models, and is far closer to some by Bernardo Pasquini.

The longest pieces in the collection, and by far the most interesting are the two in the form of a *passacaglia*. The first one in the first group being marked *Pastorali* the significance of which is unclear, there being no obvious connection with the traditional *pastorale* movements as found in, for example, the multi-sectional *Passacaglia in D* by Bernardo Storace. The second *passacaglia* (found in the third group) has no further heading. A French influence, rather than that of the earlier Italian *passacaglia* by Frescobaldi, or the later ones by Storace and Pasquini, is strongly evident here.

Both open with thick chords; those in the first one are in even crotchets, whilst in the second one, which commences on the second beat, the opening rhythm is crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver. After the opening the first one proceeds with sequential figures, which contrasts by being in only two or three parts for most of the time, moving towards figuration over longer left hand note values before further sequential writing leads to a recapitulation of the chordal opening. Careful fingering is needed to carry off the highly dissonant suspensions of major and minor ninths in the bass at the close of the first section. The second one is built on a more continuous application of a dactylic rhythm, with interjections of the chordal opening until it closes this most majestic piece, highly reminiscent of the chaconnes or *passacailles* of Louis Couperin and Jean-Nicholas Geoffroy. Both pieces contain liberal *acciaccature* that add further spice to the dissonant accented passing notes.

The edition is clearly printed with the introduction offering useful and interesting information on the music although it is given in German only. These pieces most certainly deserve to be treated as more than curiosities and to be brought into the concert repertoire. Jacobi deserves our thanks for making them available in this highly recommended edition.

RECORDING REVIEWS

Gioacchino Rossini, *Petite Messe Solennelle*.
Carolyn Sampson, soprano; Hilary Summers, alto; Andrew Tortise and William Unwin, tenors; Andrew Foster-Williams, bass; Gary Cooper and Matthew Halls, pianos; Mark Williams, harmonium;
The King's Consort, Robert King conductor.
Hyperion CDA67570, 2005.
Reviewed by James R. McCarty

"And here—ah, now, this really is something a little *recherché*." —Sherlock Holmes, *The Musgrave Ritual*

This *Petite Messe Solennelle* (not *petite* and only intermittently *solennelle*) is an attempted recreation of the 1864 premiere, on the occasion of the dedication of the private chapel of Count Michel-Frédéric Pillet-Will in Paris. Rossini composed this work long after retiring from the world of opera. Hardly one to take theology seriously, he appears to have felt badly that he had not written more for the church. Stylistically, this mass careens from vaudeville to renaissance polyphony to Victorian music hall to baroque counterpoint, with wide and frequent dynamic changes along the way, making for a varied, if vertiginous, listening experience.

Of primary interest to the readers of this periodical will be the keyboard accompaniment, utilising historic instruments.

Gary Cooper plays an 1862 Bösendorfer, Matthew Halls plays a Christopher Barlow copy of an 1826 Graf, and Mark Williams plays an 1868 harmonium by Alexandre-François Debain, inventor of the instrument. Another recording, by the RIAS-Kammerchor, conducted by Marcus Creed (Harmonia Mundi HMC 901724), takes the same approach, making for an interesting comparison. On the Harmonia Mundi CD, the pianos are Pleyels from 1869 and 1858, played by Philip Mayers and Phillip Moll; the harmonium is an 1869 Debain, played by Ryoko Morooka. There is no mention in the notes about pitch or temperament for any of the keyboards.

Mr. Cooper's Bösendorfer is the star of the King's Consort performance, most prominently in the magnificent solo *Prélude Religieux*, a primarily fugal piece written for the Offertory. This track will reward anyone with an interest in pianos of this period. Mr. Halls' Graf, which takes a secondary role in the accompaniment, sounds a bit anachronistic, particularly in the treble range, where fortepianos of that vintage always remind me of the sound of chalk striking a slate blackboard. The Pleyels on the Harmonia Mundi recording are more appropriate as to time and place and are beautifully played. Mr. Mayers's *Prélude Religieux* is the more stately, but his Pleyel lacks the grand lower register of the Bösendorfer.

The Debain harmoniums, which have a positive pressure mechanism rather than the weaker suction type that was so common in American parlours years ago, add yet another element of interest to the already unusual proceedings. As expected, there is not much difference between the harmoniums on these recordings.

Vocally, Marcus Creed's forces are more skilled, and his soloists are much more attractive. His recording also benefits from a more flattering acoustic. The King's Consort employs a somewhat annoying pronunciation of Latin claimed to be employed in France at the time, and occasionally their singing sounds forced. On balance, I prefer the Harmonia Mundi performance. But you really should hear that Bösendorfer.

Philip Glass, Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra
The Concerto Project Volume II
Jillon Stoppels Dupree, harpsichord and The Northwest Chamber Orchestra
Conducted by Ralf Gothóni
Orange Mountain Music: OMM0030
Reviewed by Pamela Nash

This disc, comprising the *Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra* and the *Piano Concerto No. 2, After Lewis and Clark*, is the second in a four-volume series of concerti by Philip Glass on the Orange Mountain Music label. Its release comes three years after the Harpsichord Concerto was written, ending much speculation about how Glass's musical language would translate to the instrument. In fact, the harpsichord proves to be a highly effective medium in a work whose part-jazz/part-baroque soundworld marks a dramatic departure from the "sonic weather" of Glass's extended transformation processes. Of course the signature elements are there, but in a sort of microcosm, where the harmonic rhythm is faster and the motoric ostinatos and arpeggiations develop only briefly and often in unexpected directions. Some listeners may find this compression of the style trite, verging on parody, whilst others will simply welcome its accessibility. At the very least, the piece can be enjoyed for its playfulness and for the idiomatic harpsichord writing. Glass clearly understands the instrument; he has always been an admirer of harpsichord literature and his familiarity with baroque figuration and structures is deftly adapted and woven into his own harmonic and rhythmic syntax.

Not all of Glass's musical judgement in the Concerto is well-advised however. The cartoon-ish "oompah" theme which disturbs the funky jazz groove of the third movement is one of several incongruities likely to incite derision, as is the frivolous ending: surely not the best the composer could muster. In a disproportionately long second movement, overwrought trill sections narrowly avoid caricature, and the doggedly insistent three-against-two writing well overstays its welcome. The movement's overall "cut-and-paste" impression is however a little offset by the principal melody which sounds quite arresting when taken up by the violin against pizzicato bass accompaniment, and the ensuing contrapuntal development is at least enhanced by the intimate feel of the one-to-a-part scoring.

Of all three movements, the first improves

most on repeated listening. Characterised by haunting harmonic undulations, it is the most evocative of the Glass style, but baroque influences prevail and the dark chugging ponderousness is lifted by toccata-like improvisatory interludes, broken chord patterns and a more judicious use of trills. The third movement is an extroverted, bravura piece and a brilliant showcase for the rich "scrunch" of the harpsichord's lower register which is splendidly exploited by Glass. Oompahs notwithstanding, it is the most consistent in character of all the movements; infected by a spirited jazziness and percussive pungency, underpinned by jazz bass lines and punctuated by metrical shifts which show off the articulative powers of the harpsichord. The combination of harpsichord attack and textural density makes the impact of this movement percussive and lush all at once; indeed, this is perhaps the only area of the Concerto which really says something exciting and new about the harpsichord.

Glass's writing for chamber orchestra is beautifully balanced, the transparency of the orchestration bringing the harpsichord into sharp relief at all times. The solo part is further spotlighted by the playing of harpsichordist Jillon Stoppels Dupree, who crosses over between the different worlds with consummate ease, exemplifying clarity of execution throughout. In the third movement, she delineates the jazzy juxtapositions of 4 and 3 in the 7/8 passages with crystalline articulation, whilst in the freer sections of the first and second movements, the broader brushstrokes of her playing reflect 18th-century expressivity, with fluid phrasing and the use of gestural arpeggiation for sonorous harmonic emphasis. Dupree is not afraid to lead the pace with her rhythmic flexibility in these sections, and the ensemble with conductor Ralf Gothóni follow impeccably. Overall the music is imbued with a breadth and spaciousness which might well have been lost in other hands.

In conclusion, it has to be said that, despite the Concerto's charms, Glass has missed the opportunity to do something of real significance for the harpsichord's limited modern Concerto repertoire. However, although it may not join the ranks of Martinu, Martin, de Falla et al., it will at least continue to be a subject of provocation and discourse, and thereby hopefully expand awareness of the harpsichord amongst the world's wider musical audience.

Mention should also be made of the companion piece on the disc, Glass's second Piano Concerto, with Paul Barnes as soloist. Written in commemoration of Lewis and Clark's explorations of America, it is intended to convey energy, determination and the vastness of the land. Glass's banal use of the Native American flute in the central movement is an unfortunate irritation, but there is much to admire in this expansive, reflective work, particularly the different kinds of interplay between piano and orchestra, and the hypnotic polymetric energy of the first movement. Both works on this recording should appeal to anyone who enjoys the quintessential qualities of Glass's music, and perhaps even to those who are as yet uninitiated.

**The instrument used in the recording (the Franco-Flemish) was built by David Calhoun - date not known. It was loaned by Prof. Carole Terry.*

The one used for the 2002 premiere was an 18th century French-style double built by Jillon's husband, Anderson H. Dupree around 1990. He doesn't 'copy' specific instruments.

Le Clavecin Français: Louis Marchand, complete harpsichord works. Louis-Nicolas Clérambault, complete harpsichord works. Nicolas Lebegue, "Les Cloches". Davitt Moroney, 1707 Dumont harpsichord. Plectra PL 20701 TT: 78.44

Le Clavecin Français: Elisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre, Prélude (1687), Pièces de Clavecin (1707). François Couperin, Prélude in D Minor & 2eme Ordre in D Minor. Arthur Haas, 1707 Dumont harpsichord. Plectra PL 20702 TT: 61.23
Reviewed by Douglas Hollick

This is an interesting pair of recordings with two players who are both completely at home in this repertoire playing the same Nicolas Dumont harpsichord of 1707 for the same recording team, and presumably in the same place. The instrument is a particularly fine example of the early 18th-century French harpsichord, and has much in common tonally with the Donzelague of 1711. The bass is full and rich, but overall the sound is drier than the later more voluptuous harpsichords of Taskin, for instance. The upper eight foot is a little more nasal than later instruments, and yet blends perfectly when coupled. This means that there is a good range of colour which is well captured on both recordings; the pitch is A=408 for both, with *temperament ordinaire* specified for Haas,

and very similar but unspecified for Moroney.

Arthur Haas opens with a magisterial Prélude of 1687 by Jacquet de La Guerre, followed by pieces in the same key, D Minor, from the 1707 *Pièces de Clavecin*. Here is a beautifully poised Sarabande, and a fine Chaconne which contrasts the coupled eight foots with the more delicate single upper eight. The Couperin is not quite so satisfying as the Jacquet de La Guerre, although there are many fine individual performances – *"La Laborieuse,"* the Sarabande and Canaries and particularly *"Les Idées heureuses"*. There are slight feelings of rhythmic instability in one or two pieces – the premiere Courante and the Rigaudon for instance – and this can make for somewhat uneasy listening at times.

Davitt Moroney opens with a masterclass in how to play freely from measured notation – a quite superb Prélude to the first Marchand Suite. This has near perfect flow and sense of timing. The succeeding dances are attractive and varied, utilising the different colours of the harpsichord. The Gavotte Rondeau is delightfully poised with sprung rhythms that almost compel one to dance, whilst the Chaconne in this Suite is particularly fine and reminiscent of earlier generations. The Second Suite is not the same quality, although attractive enough. Clérambault is known mainly through his much played organ suites, so this recording is very welcome. The C Major Prélude is probably the best out of the first suite, followed by a sequence of mostly short dances. The second suite in C Minor is more interesting and of higher quality – the Prélude, marked *"Fort Tendrement"*, could perhaps have been a little more tender – a rare misjudgement. The temperament shows its colours much more here, and the suite ends with a lively Gigue. Nicolas Lebegue's *"Les Cloches"* is a fascinating filler on this disc, which at nearly 79 minutes is excellent value.

The Haas recording will be of most interest for the Jacquet de La Guerre and should not be disregarded. They are both fine recordings, but Moroney has the more subtle touch, and often seems to draw more tone from the harpsichord. He also has a superb sense of timing which constantly delights, and I would unreservedly recommend this disc.