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BOOK REVIEWS

Gerhard Doderer and John Henry Van der Meer, *Cordofones de tecla portugueses do século XVIII: Clavicórdios, Cravos, Pianofortes e Espinetas*. (Portugal: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian 2005). Available from Casa dos Músicos, Porto. www. casadosmusicos.pt
Reviewed by John Collins

This exceptionally well produced and researched volume of almost 500 pages covers Portuguese stringed keyboard instruments of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, (no instruments predating the eighteenth century have been preserved) and is a most worthy successor to Professor Doderer's monograph on Portuguese clavichords of the eighteenth century. Importantly, for those who do not speak Portuguese, the book is bilingual, each chapter being translated into English. It covers all types of stringed keyboard instruments, including 17 clavichords, one square piano, 12 harpsichords, five fortepianos and two bentside spinets. (One fortepiano converted into a harpsichord as late as 1919 by Arnold Dolmetsch is considered to be of Spanish rather than Portuguese provenance for reasons discussed in the text.)

The book begins with an overview of stringed keyboard instruments in Portugal from the Renaissance to the Romantic Era. discussing the probable immediate Italian influence on harpsichord building, instruments with a strongly pronounced national style and instruments with a national style but showing some English influences. Biographical details of the makers and a discussion of the keyboard compass makes for interesting reading. (C to d3 is the most frequently found compass in Portugal, C to e3 is not infrequent, but an extension to f3 is rare and found only in clavichords.)

A separate chapter is devoted to each type of instrument. The fullest information is collated here for each instrument including origin, subsequent history, restoration and current location; a few instruments remain in private ownership but most are readily viewable in Museums. Of great interest to makers will be the highly detailed listings of all measurements, including key dimensions and vibrating lengths of strings.

A chapter on mouldings covers all instruments, with diagrams, followed by a comprehensive glossary of terms in both languages. A series of 109 beautifully produced plates, mostly in full colour, of every instrument catalogued (several are covered by more than one plate) is in the centre of the book; a useful bibliography (although unfortunately many of the articles cited will prove difficult to locate) completes the volume. This book will become an invaluable reference work to all interested in the still relatively unknown world of Portuguese keyboard instruments and their music.

Sandra Soderlund, *How Did They Play? How Did They Teach? : A History of Keyboard Technique* (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, 2007) HMO184
Reviewed by Bridget Cunningham

This book looks at the above questions in a detailed and informative manner and provides a huge amount of information on the craft of playing early keyboard instruments. The whole book is an extremely useful reference book for students, teachers and performers of any early keyboard instrument, to dip into when looking at a particular topic from the early development of instruments until the nineteenth century. It is packed full of fascinating information and draws upon various sources including method books, letters and diaries, and written accounts of lessons and performances.

The book is presented extremely clearly and divided into twenty clear chapters covering various topics from *Early Keyboard Playing in Germany and the Netherlands* through to *A Separate Technique for the Organ* with a brief summary at the end of each. It has translations, quotations, musical examples and drawings, all of which help to set the scene and put the material into context.

The introduction raises quite a few questions about technique and the differences between modern and early performance practice, and states that the purpose of the book is to discover how people played keyboard instruments in the past and to present the contexts in which keyboard works were written and performed. A very useful chronology follows this and lists sources from the *Robertsbridge Codex* to Josef Lhevinne's *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing*. Although this table only lists sources referred to in this book, it is extremely useful in helping players to choose repertoire, look further into a particular area of study, and conduct further research. This is followed by a section on the *Brief History of the Keyboard*.

This is followed by an extremely short and concise section on tunings and temperaments and then a section on notation from Italian tablature to the 5 line staves used today. Then various different types of keyboards are discussed.

The next section in the introduction covers practicing, improvisation, and articulation is covered briefly, mainly focusing on legato touch. The organ and piano are mentioned mainly without a direct comparison to the harpsichord or a plucked keyboard instrument. There is a reference to a fretted clavichord and the point that legato touch is not always possible on it.

The first chapters of the book are organised geographically and trace the developments in keyboard playing in a country from the earliest examples to the middle of the eighteenth century. The first covers *Early Keyboard Playing in Germany and the Netherlands* from Conrad Paumann through to Heinrich Scheidemann. It contains

examples of music, early fingering, ornaments, old and new German tablature, and covers techniques and articulation from the composers. The next chapter focuses on the Golden Age of early keyboard playing in Spain looking at six sources from Juan Bermudo to Pablo Nassarre focusing on fingering, cifra notation, ornaments, rhythmic inequality and position of the hands and other infomation about technique.

The third chapter looks at Early Keyboard Playing in England, while chapter 4 looks at Italy starting from the Faenza Codex up to Vincenzo Manfredini The next chapter, *French Classic Keyboard Playing*, covers many characteristics particular to France such as ornamentation, style brisée for the harpsichord, dance patterns, and gives a typical specification for a large French classic organ. It also shows Francois Couperin's finger substitution and Jean Philippe Rameau's use of modern scale fingering.

Two chapters in the book are connected with Johann Sebastian Bach, with information on his life, the organ, the *Orgelbuchlein* and his role as performer and teacher, all of which gives a fascinating insight into his musical world. The next two chapters trace the transition from the harpsichord and clavichord to the piano as the primary keyboard instrument in the late 18th century, especially considering Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, the transition to the piano in France and England, and Josef Haydn. The following chapter focuses on *The First Pianists* from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to John Baptist Cramer.

The next two chapters examine Ludwig van Beethoven and his contemporaries, as well as the development of the piano, showing the conflicting opinions about the performance of Beethoven's music. The work of the many pianists who lived in the nineteenth century is organised into chapters around the four important figures who were born around 1810 – Felix Mendlessohn Bartholdy, Robert Schumann, Frederic Chopin and Franz Liszt – with the others grouped according to whether they were primarily performers or teachers.

The chapter based around *The Schumann Circle* includes information on Robert Schumann's *Musical House and Life Rules* and details on Friedrich Wieck and Clara Schumann and the point that touch and tone were the primary concern of the members of the circle. The following chapter on Frederic Chopin covers his piano technique and compositions with various letters and information from his students and is hugely informative despite missing the end of the final quote in the summary, which could only be in some copies of the book. The life of Franz Liszt is also covered in great detail, followed by a look at other virtuosi of the day, including Sigismund Thalberg, Louis Moreau Gottschalk, Carl Tausig, Hans von Bülow and Ferruccio Busoni.

Chapters 17 and 18 are based around two national schools – the French and the Russian. The French school focusing on clarity, suppleness, proportion, elegance and tact, also covers Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. The chapter on *Russian Pianism* starts with Anton Rubenstein and shows the development, style of playing and formidable technique characteristic of that country, with Sergei Rachmaninoff as an important example. The following chapter, *Pedagogues* looks at the work of those who made piano teaching their profession and considers piano playing in an analytical way including William Mason and Theodor Leschetizky. Again the drawings are particularly helpful and clearly shown.

The final and shortest chapter concentrates on the separate technique for the organ as organists in the nineteenth century used techniques particular to the organ.The extensive bibliography and index are extremely helpful to further research and for cross-reference. Overall this book is a fantastic source of information presented very clearly and is a "must have" for all performers and teachers of early keyboard instruments.

SCORES

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, *Sämtliche Werke für Tasteninstrumente, Vol. II: Fantasien*. Ed. Pieter Dirksen. (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2006. *Reviewed by Gregory Crowell*

For over thirty years the famous Leonhardt/ Annegarn/Noske edition of the keyboard works of Sweelinck has served as the trusted source for the music of this most significant of Dutch keyboard composers. Why, one might wonder, is another edition called for? Although new sources have emerged that, in themselves, might warrant at least a revised edition, it is in fact a new approach to editing early keyboard music that has prompted those responsible for this newest edition to rethink how this music should be presented to modern players and scholars.? In his excellent introductory notes to this second volume of the series, Pieter Dirksen lays out the criteria for the present edition. These include a desire to present a text for each piece that reflects as accurately as possible an extant source for the music, as opposed to presenting an amalgamation of many sources. This in itself is a significant editorial stance whose time has certainly come. (So-called Urtext editions have all too often blended information from many sources, sometimes resulting ironically in a version of the music that may never have existed in the composer's lifetime.)

The present edition recognizes that Sweelinck's music has come down to us primarily in two forms, i.e., in staff notation and tablature. Since each of these notational systems presents a very different picture of the music, the editors have chosen to treat the modern transcription of the music in a

manner that reflects the sources accurately. Tablature, for example, does not indicate barlines – consequently this edition supplies suggested barlines between the staves for those pieces surviving primarily in sources written in tablature. In the early, six-lined staff notation, measures correspond to the value of a breve (i.e., the value of eight crotchets). This notation is preserved in the present edition, as is a slight space in the middle of the bar, which helps the eye to divide each bar into two halves, a notational refinement also present in the original staff notation.

The editor has taken great care to preserve every bit of information in the original sources that might supply the player with insight into how this music is to be played. For example, the beaming of the original sources is preserved; Pieces preserved in staff notation may have as many as sixteen semiquavers beamed together, providing a graphic clue as to the shape and size of individual musical gestures. The original division of the voices between the staves has also been preserved, a fact that is of tremendous help to the player in working out the division of voices among the hands. Furthermore, the titles conform exactly to those given in the original sources —editorial completions or amplifications are clearly indicated by their inclusion in square brackets. Thus, the only compromises undertaken in this edition are the substitution of dots, extending across barlines, with ties, and the use of modern clefs and staves.

The introductory comments bear the fruit of Dirksen's extensive research into Sweelinck's life and works. All material is presented in German and English and, aside from some infelicities in the English translations, well presented and informative. Each volume has complementary articles on performance practice issues and the instruments at Sweelinck's disposal, and players will certainly want to invest in all four volumes. Furthermore, no attempt has been made to supplant the rather extensive critical commentary in the Leonhardt – Annegarn - Noske edition, which therefore can be used in conjunction with this new edition.

Volume II concludes with a rather lengthy essay by Dirksen on Sweelinck's instruments, and it is perhaps this aspect of the new edition that deserves the most circumspection. Sweelinck was, of course, an organist (details on the organ in the Amsterdam Oude Kerk are given in Volume III), but Dirksen notes that not only did Sweelinck go to Antwerp to procure a Ruckers double harpsichord, but that the lid of this harpsichord has recently resurfaced. Dirksen's assertion, however, that the clavichord played "a negligible role" in Sweelinck's musical life seems rather rash. Certainly there is no evidence of Sweelinck's use of the clavichord, but this is hardly unexpected in the case of an instrument that, until the twentieth century, was virtually never heard in public performance. Dirksen furthermore claims, curiously, that meantone temperament can be realized "only approximately on the clavichord," and that "the demanding and intricately polyphonic keyboard style of the master and his pupils...could not be adequately interpreted on the clavichord, an instrument that was still often triple fretted at that time." These statements will come as quite a surprise to those who have so successfully performed and even recorded this music in quarter-comma meantone on clavichords appropriate to the period. Indeed, the considerable effort Dirksen exerts to assign particular genres and even particular pieces to a specific instrument (organ or harpsichord) hardly seems time well spent.

The respective keyboard compasses of the two instruments are hardly a reliable basis on which to draw such conclusions, given the wide *instrumentarium* available to composers of the time —the organs in the Oude Kerk may well have had an F compass, but there surely was no shortage of C-compass organs, including chamber organs. Nor are distinctions of genre or texture any more useful —one fully expects that the psalm settings or chorale variations might also have been played for domestic devotions, very possibly on stringed keyboard instruments. The truth is, we simply don't know, and perhaps this is as it should be; any attempt to assign instrumentation in these works inevitably limits the rich colour palette and diverse playing styles to which they so beautifully respond. Indeed, the division of Sweelinck's music into volumes that at least give the appearance of being for either organ or harpsichord (sacred or secular, free or studied) seems somewhat restrictive, and should not discourage anyone from obtaining all four volumes, no matter what instrument one may have at one's disposal.

This caveat aside, this edition sets a standard for the faithful and scholarly presentation of a composer's music in a readable, attractive format. Anyone interested in Sweelinck's music will want to acquire these scores right away, and begin rediscovery of this wonderful music.

RECORDINGS

Rafael Puyana Two CD set: vol 1. "The Musical Sun of Southern Europe and vol 2. "Fandangos and other Spanish and Portuguese works" Sanctus SCS 012 and SCS 013
Reviewed by Richard Lester

An interesting compilation of music from Southern Europe has recently been issued by Sanctus. The two CDs under the title "The Musical Sun, Fandangos and other Spanish and Portuguese works," contains works by a variety of 16th, 17th and 18th century composers. I must say that I find the title of the second , "Fandangos", somewhat misleading, there being scant reference in the accompanying notes to qualify such a

designation; and although much of the music has a distinctly modal flavour, there is little connection with either the song or dance versions of the fandango? On CD 2, Rafael Puyana plays historic instruments in the Villa Medici Giulini which includes two pianofortes by Johann Schantz (c 1790 and 1803) and Anton Walter (c 1790-95) and a harpsichord by Andres Fernandez Santos (1728).It should be remembered that piano touch in the eighteenth century evolved from the province of the harpsichord. Puyana approaches the instrument in exactly this way and his playing is generally neat and clean. I do find the tuning of the pianos to be slightly suspect on occasions. That together with an irregularity in voicing on the Schantz, results in a timbre reminiscent of a pub piano rather than the delicate sound that we should expect from a well tuned and regulated fortepiano. It is a great shame that recordings of fortepianos often mislead the public into thinking that this is their distinctive sound; it isn't. I recently played the Johann Schantz fortepiano at the Holburne Museum in Bath which is a delightfully bright instrument with an extremely even and sonorous tone —nothing like what is heard on the recordings.

Whilst much of the music is well played, I do find Puyana's rhythmic control a little erratic sometimes, especially in syncopated figures which lack crispness and momentum; and at other times there is a slight unevenness of touch. This may well be due to the problem of playing on authentic instruments which, owing to their age and despite loving restoration, perhaps rarely respond as well as when they were new. Trills are rather laboured and lack the sparkle that is needed. Nothing on either CD really inspires; it is all a little on the mediocre side and the interest is really in hearing these old instruments, warts and all. Even the Soler sonata is tame in comparison to some of his works and one yearns for some really sparkling playing.

The music on CD 1 features works by Southern European composers which include Antonio de Cabezon, Girolamo Frescobaldi (I'm not quite sure why he features alongside other Spanish composers) and Jose Ferrer —performed on original instruments including virginals, by Baptista Carenonus (1700), an ottavina by Rinaldo Bertoni (1707) and a harpsichord by Andres Fernandez Santos (1708). Copious notes in a generous booklet give informative but occasionally misleading information, including a comment that "melodic contours in the right hand can be enhanced by using old-style fingering (avoiding the use of the thumb) to understand the phrasing of the period." Whilst we can learn much about phrasing from old-style fingering, I should like to explode the myth once and for all that the thumb was never used. It most certainly was used and is referred to amongst others in both the contemporary treatises of Diruta and Banchieri (1593 and 1608) respectively.

Beethoven, *Sonaten für Klavier & Violine, Op. 23, Op. 30 No. 2, and Variations "Se vuol ballare" WoO40.*
Andreas Staier, Pianoforte,
& Daniel Sepec, Violin.
Harmonia Mundi and Beethoven-Haus, Bonn, 2006:
Graf piano (1824) and Violin (Salzburg, c. 1700).
Reviewed by Carol lei Breckenridge

This superb recording is a must for every lover of Beethoven, for two important reasons. First, the instruments used for the recording were in Beethoven's own possession, giving us a window into the sound world in which the composer worked. Second, the performers, pianist Andreas Staier and violinist Daniel Sepec, bring all the drama and expressiveness required of the two sonatas and variation set chosen for the recording. The CD features the Beethoven-Haus' recent (1995) acquisition of one of the violins of the quartet of instruments presented to Beethoven by Prince Lichnowsky, at whose weekly musicales most of Beethoven's piano-violin sonatas debuted. This very violin is considered precisely that played when these sonatas were first performed. The instrument, having been modernised in 1848, has, under the auspices of the Beethoven-Haus, since been restored to its original condition by Michael Baumgartner. Under the nuanced expertise of Sepec, it sounds glorious.

Also housed at the Beethoven-Haus Museum in Bonn is the 1824 piano used for this recording which was loaned to Beethoven by the Viennese builder Conrad Graf. A quadruple-strung instrument, Graf ostensibly offered it to the composer to help compensate for Beethoven's near total deafness by this time. Although from a later date than the works on this recording, it nevertheless provides a rare opportunity to hear an important instrument from the first decades of the nineteenth century. Although much has been made of Beethoven's owning both French (Erard) and English (Broadwood) pianos (as gifts from the builders), it is conceded that he regularly borrowed pianos from Viennese firms such as Streicher and Graf, instruments with a lighter, more nimble action, and a clear, bell-like tone. This particular Graf piano is in excellent tonal shape, with a clear bass and rich resonance.

The two sonatas chosen for this recording are the only minor key piano-violin sonatas composed by Beethoven, and were both composed in the very early nineteenth century (Op. 23 in 1800-01, and Op. 30, No. 2, in 1802). Both exude a fiery, stormy spirit, coupled with moments of surprising tenderness. Andreas Staier and Daniel Sepec fully understand and communicate the rich drama of this music. Particularly in the C Minor Sonata, hammered chords, dynamic and rhythmic surprises, dramatic rests, and urgent, sweeping figuration bespeak that overpoweringly breathless

quality that is so right for Beethoven's "heroic" period. It is absolutely stunning playing.

The Sonata in A Minor is likewise most ravishingly and dramatically played. This reviewer's only qualm is in the rendition of the *"Andante scherzoso piu Allegretto"* movement, where a slightly faster tempo and more playful, spontaneous effect between the two instruments could be achieved. I was also puzzled as to why the fermatas in the last movement were not ornamented (except the first one, written out by Beethoven). Coming as they did before returns of the original theme, it would seem a nice way to extend the suspense just a little longer, thereby surprising the listener even more.

The more light-hearted Variations on Figaro's aria *"Se vuol ballare"* from *Des Noces de Figaro* are a delightful addition to the recording, showing off the technical virtuosity of both performers, as well as some typical Viennese piano stops – most notably the "janissary" drum at the end of Variation 9, which practically lifts the listener off his/her chair. The violin "sighs" in Variation 7 are equally breathtaking.

This recording, dedicated to Mrs. Gerda Nass Taussig, the woman who offered Beethoven's violin to the care of the Beethoven-Haus, is highly recommended not only as an opportunity to hear two historically important instruments, but also to experience powerful performances of some of Beethoven's most dramatic music for piano and violin.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadé.
Complete Piano Trios.
Trio Stradivari: Jolanda Violante, Piano;
Federico Guglielmo, Violin;
Luigi Piovano, Violoncello
CPO (Classic Produktion Osnabrück), 2007.
Reviewed by Carol lei Breckenridge

This marvelous two-CD set of all six of the piano trios by W. A. Mozart, played by the Trio Stradivari (pianist Jolanda Violante, violinist Federico Guglielmo, and cellist Luigi Piovano), sparkles with grace, elegance, and wit. Of particular interest is the use of two quite different pianos and violins for each of the CDs. CD 1 is played on a 1770s Stein piano copy by Saturnino Cisneros, while CD 2 employs a c.1792 Walther piano copy by Paul McNulty. The violin for CD 1 is by Bernardus Calcanius (date not noted), while a 1782 Guadagnini copy by Claude Lebet is played on CD 2. The cello for both CDs is by Sgarbi of 1789.

Keyboard builder Johann Andreas Stein of Augsburg was personally known to the Mozarts. In fact, when in 1763 the family embarked on a Grand Tour of Europe, they first travelled to Augsburg and purchased a small traveling clavichord by Stein. Later on, in 1777, Wolfgang praised Stein's pianos as far superior to any he had up to that time played. However, when he moved to Vienna, the composer bought a piano by Anton Walther, and it was upon this instrument that Mozart performed some of his crowning masterworks, the piano concertos written in Vienna. Walther's pianos possessed a deeper, more resonant and projecting tone than did Stein's, presumably more suited to performance with orchestra.

The Calcanius violin has a correspondingly lighter tone than the Guadagnini, making for a nice balance in the three trios of the first CD: the earliest, the Divertimento, K. 254, composed in Salzburg in 1776, and the Piano Trios, K. 496 and K. 502, both composed in Vienna in 1786.

CD 2 features Mozart's last three piano trios, all composed in Vienna in 1788: K. 542, K. 548, and K. 564. During the Classical era, the piano trio as a genre was composed expressly for musicales in private homes, rather than for public concerts. Aimed at pleasing amateur musicians, they were composed such that all three parts were kept fairly simple. To a degree, Mozart followed this format in his earlier trios, placing the cello in its traditional bass role, as well as giving a predominantly subservient role to the violin. However, the last three piano trios from the composer's pen present a much more adventurous harmonic and dynamic picture, as well as greater equality between the three instruments.

Trio Stradivari excels in all pieces of this two-CD set. Each of the trio members simply sparkles in virtuoso passages, and the balance between instruments is marvelous. The 18th-century piano's timbre matches that of the violin and cello to a far greater degree than does a modern piano, creating wonderful moments of conversation between the instruments. Pianist Violante particularly brings a dramatic flexibility to the score that captures the spontaneity that surely must have occurred in first performances by Mozart himself, including extended dramatic rests and rhythmic nuance for expressive effect.

Violante is also the most adventurous in adding ornamental variants in repeated sections, a performance aspect that is decidedly appropriate to this style, and expected by 18th-century musicians themselves. In fact, Leopold Mozart wrote to a publisher in 1775: "... I should like you to let me know as soon as possible whether you would like to publish some of [my son's compositions] ... perhaps you would like to print clavier sonatas in the same style as those of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach in Berlin, *'mit veränderten Reprisen'* [with varied repeats] ... this type of sonata is very popular." Violinist Guglielmo is likewise a highly expressive violinist, conveying a spirited, gestural gracefulness typifying music of the period. Cellist Piovano is equally effective; one can only wish that Mozart had written more trios after the three of 1788, giving the cello further equality in the ensemble. This set should be on the shelves of every Mozart lover; highly recommended.