

original of England's baroque composers; these concerti grossi, the works for which he remains best known, are not even strictly original works at all. All twelve are based on keyboard sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti, sonatas which had been published shortly before to a rapturous reception in England and across the Continent—though it is worth noting that twelve of the movements in these concertos do not have counterparts in the Scarlatti sonatas, and are quite probably original insertions. The lionization of originality is largely a modern development, however, and during Avison's day borrowing other composers' music was both accepted and expected. Avison may not have been creating anything new, but his settings demonstrate both his admiration and his comprehension of Scarlatti's work, and what they lack in originality they make up for with insightful instrumental expansion and (at times) tasteful editorial reduction. One is tempted to give Roy Goodman's Brandenburg Consort almost equal credit with the composer for the success of this recording; his group's vitality and the warm but detailed quality of the recorded sound put this music in a marvelously flattering light. Highly recommended.

Franz Schubert. *Die schöne Müllerin.* Max van Egmond; Penelope Crawford. Musica Omnia mo0107, 2006.

The story behind this song cycle is well known, and almost too romantically perfect: the young poet William Müller (1794–1827) wrote the poems but lamented that he would never be able to come up with melodies to give them the musical settings they deserved. He wondered if perhaps someday his poems would be found by a “kindred spirit” who might “hear the tunes behind the words” and set them accordingly. His concern seems almost comically misplaced today, but he never met the man who turned his poems into one of Western music's most enduring monuments, and he died (at a tragically young age, of course) without ever hearing Franz Schubert's settings of either *Die schöne Müllerin* or *Die Winterreise* (another of his poem cycles). This new recording is part of a series by the Musica Omnia label focusing on music of the Romantic era, played on period instru-

ments. One normally associates the period instrument movement with music of the medieval, Renaissance, and baroque periods, but in recent years there has been an expansion of interest in the instruments and performance practices of the period directly after the high classical, before the fortepiano was widely replaced by the pianoforte and before woodwinds and even strings had completely assumed their modern configurations. On this recording, the celebrated baritone Max van Egmond is accompanied by fortepianist Penelope Crawford, and both perform admirably. Crawford's accompaniment is exquisite, and the tone of her fortepiano is surprisingly robust. Van Egmond sings with great expression and intelligence, but there are moments (especially at higher pitches) when his intonation is just a bit suspect. In his middle and lower ranges, however, his voice is richly powerful. Recommended.

Antonio Vivaldi; Georg Philipp Telemann; Joseph Bodin de Boismortier. *Concertos.* Fioritura. Centaur CRC 2784, 2005.

The six concertos presented here (four by Vivaldi, and one each by Telemann and Boismortier) are all written in the “chamber” style pioneered by Vivaldi during the early part of his mature career. Instead of placing a solo instrumentalist in opposition to a large orchestra, these pieces require each player in a relatively small ensemble to serve alternately as soloist and as accompanist to the others. The Vivaldi sonata (in C major, RV 801) that is also included on the program is offered because of its structural similarity to the concertos. The Rochester, New York-based Fioritura (a chamber ensemble formerly known as The Publick Musick) plays all of these works with admirable flair and they are beautifully recorded, and while there are occasional moments of unsure intonation in the strings the performances are all quite exciting. Particularly enjoyable are the ensemble's accounts of the Boismortier E minor concerto and of the Vivaldi C major sonata, which (rather unusually) features both recorder and transverse flute as solo instruments. The D major Vivaldi concerto, nicknamed “Del Gardellino,” is filled with