

seen) live, the results could hardly fail to invigorate—this is where a DVD would surely score over a CD.

Websites

Alpha www.alpha-prod.com

Analekta www.analekta.com

Avie www.avierecords.com

Berlin Classics www.edel.com

Challenge Classics www.challengerecords.com

Channel Classics www.channelclassics.com

CPO www.jpc.de/jpcng/cpo/home

Evil Penguin Records www.evilpenguinrecords.com

Flora www.kelys.org

Genuin www.genuin.de

Globe www.globerecords.nl

Linn www.linnrecords.com

Maya Recordings www.mayarecordings.com

Red Priest Recordings redpriest.bandzoogle.com

Zig-Zag www.zig-zag-territoires.com

doi:10.1093/em/cat049

Daniel Trocmé-Latter

Bach keyboard music

Three years ago, the *Daily Telegraph* declared that although ‘The world is not suddenly going to stop listening to (or performing) Bach’, the classical CD was doomed (Rupert Christiansen, ‘Is this the final curtain for classical records?’, 1 June 2010). Although this journal is not in denial about the decline in CD production in recent years, the fact that it continues to publish numerous reviews in each issue is surely encouraging. J. S. Bach, in particular, seems to buck the trend: reviews of Bach recordings have appeared in most *Early Music* issues of recent years. This review continues in that vein by considering no fewer than 18 releases (a total of 28 discs) of Bach keyboard music, including the last three volumes of Margaret Phillips’s complete Bach organ works, David Sanger’s final recording, and four interpretations of the *Goldberg Variations*.

Most recently from organist and organologist Harald Vogel comes **Johann Sebastian Bach: Frühe Orgel Werke** (Dabringhaus und Grimm MDG914 1743-6, *rec* 2012, 74’). The CD notes tell the story of the Schnitger organ on which this collection was recorded, from its origins in a Hamburg monastery, its purchase and move in

1816 to St Peter and St Paul’s Church, Cappel, its use in Helmut Walcha’s legendary Bach recordings of the 1950s, to its subsequent decline and recent restoration, making it today one of the best preserved north German instruments from before 1700. Vogel’s accompanying notes (in English and German) are authoritative, providing information about manuscripts as well as descriptions of each piece and choices of registration. The performance has spirit and variety; *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, BWV727 has a mournful quality while the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV565 is exciting, although some phrases are interpreted differently (note-wise) from other recordings (perhaps Vogel has relied on a particular source for this performance). Although not true of BWV565, many of Bach’s early works are underheard, and Vogel has done us a service by making this recording.

Bach changes...: Historische Transkriptionen für konzertierende Orgel und barocke Soloinstrumente (IFO Classics ORG7239.2, *rec* 2010, 62’) is, as its long title suggests, a set of Bach transcriptions by Eberhard Klotz, performed by Thilo Muster on the organ, Gawain Glenton on the cornett, Daniel Hauptmann on the Baroque violin and Frans Berglund on trumpets. It is a good way of showcasing the magnificent 1985 organ by Jürgen Ahrend (modelled on a Silbermann) and its diverse timbres, and although on seeing the playlist one may imagine this to be a bit of a populist recording, one does not come away after listening to it with that impression. The ‘Air’ from the Orchestral Suite no.3 has some surprising ornamentation, but the piece lends itself remarkably well to the organ. The playing is careful but passionate, and the culmination of four instruments in *Canon duplex a 4 voci* (after BWV1087) is an exciting finale. The notes are in German, English and French, except, for some reason, the history of the organ, which remains untranslated from the German.

The musical balance in **Johann Sebastian Bach: Intégrale—vol.3** (Syrius SYR141428, *rec* 2009, 79’) does not come across quite so well. Organist Helga Schauerte demonstrates the capabilities of the instrument well, but the recording is rather quiet and the pedals sometimes come across too heavily. The organ (Trost, 1717) is a historical treasure, but sadly the acoustic is not much to write home about. The recording is also apparently available on DVD (according to the order form at the back of the CD booklet).

Framed by the Prelude and Fugue in E♭, BWV552, **Johann Sebastian Bach: Dritter Theil der Clavier Übung** (Gramola 98854/55, *rec* 2009, 90’) is an audio-documentation of one of Bach’s most inspiring collections. The third part of the *Clavierübung* is assumed to have been published to coincide with the 200th anniversary of

Martin Luther's sermons in Leipzig, to which the many chorale preludes based on Lutheran hymns are testament. Ludwig Lusser chooses to double-dot the Prelude in E \flat all the way through, but the tempo is such that the detail is drowned out in some semiquaver passages and the playing becomes a blur of notes. The same is unfortunately true of the Duetto no.1, BWV802: virtuosity appears to be there at the expense of detail. There are also plenty of majestic moments, however, such as those in *Aus tieffer Noth*, BWV686 and *Wir gläuben all an einen Gott*, BWV680. The St Polten Cathedral organ provides an array of sounds from which Lusser chooses with care.

Italian harpsichordist and organist Lorenzo Ghielmi is the performer on **Johann Sebastian Bach: Trio sonatas** (Passacaille 967, *rec* 2010, 79'). The playing is confident and makes for good listening on the whole. Minor disappointments include the late speaking of the pedals in the Adagio of BWV525 (by up to a semiquaver), and the slightly rushed triplets in the D minor Vivace (BWV527). Much of the playing is energetic and crisp, and the combination of clarinet and tremulant in the first movement of BWV528 produces an interesting, if unconventional, sound. The notes (in English, German, Italian and French) include a quote attributed to C. P. E. Bach that these trio sonatas 'will survive every revolution in musical taste'. So far, so true...

Margaret Phillips concluded her set of the complete Bach organ works in 2010, and this review considers the final three volumes in the series. **J. S. Bach: Organ works vol.VI** (Regent Records REGCD307, *rec* 2008, 152') is played on the famous Müller organ in the church of St Bavo, Harleem and on a 21st-century Parisian instrument in Young's temperament by Bernard Aubertin, specifically designed for playing the music of Bach. Phillips has chosen a mixture of preludes, fugues, trios, concerto arrangements and chorale preludes for these discs, and she provides authoritative notes on each piece. The Prelude in E minor, BWV548 is performed in a deliberate and measured fashion, while a virtuosic flurry of activity emerges from the Fugue. The echo of this church is immense, and this becomes obvious in both versions of *Valet will ich dir geben* (BWV735 and 736). Both are spectacular pieces, and they receive full justice from performer and instrument alike. In BWV736 a magnificent and muscular sound is produced. Pedal reeds are used liberally, but by the end of the Prelude and Fugue in B minor, BWV544 the sound can become a little overbearing, in spite of the grandeur of the performance. Likewise, ten-and-a-half minutes of 32' reed in the Toccata in E, BWV566, played at St-Louis-en-l'Île, Paris, ends up feeling like too much. The Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, BWV542 brims with energy and is

one of the highlights of this disc. Equally exciting is the Passacaglia and Fugue, BWV582 on **Organ works vol.VII** (Regent Records REGCD308, *rec* 2010, 146'). The Fugue on the Magnificat, BWV733 is another highlight of this volume, although the pedal entry towards the end of the piece could be more audible. The first movement of the Concerto in C after Vivaldi uses a 4' stop in order to maintain the relationship between the accompaniment and solo part (originally for violin). The shift from C minor at the end of the first disc to the C minor at the beginning of the second is a little surprising because of the difference in temperament between the Hildebrandt (1728) and Silbermann (1735) organs. There is also a great deal to be said about **Organ works vol.VIII** (Regent Records REGCD328, *rec* 2009, 152'), which intersperses the Neumeister Chorales with various other works. Phillips masters the pedal solo at the end of the Fugue in D, BWV532ii, and *Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder*, BWV742 demonstrates the quiet end of the 1727 Christian Müller organ's dynamic range. Phillips picks her programmes carefully, nearly always beginning and ending each disc with a bold and impressive work. However, the last piece on the final disc is an exception. The Prelude BWV569 is described by Phillips herself as 'rather slight', and it is certainly unexpected to end the collection with a quieter piece, especially as this work may not necessarily be by Bach. But it serves as a humble conclusion to a magnificent compilation.

Bach: Organ works (Euridice EUCD 59, *rec* 2010, 213') was David Sanger's last recording before his untimely death at the end of May 2010. Officially released in Cambridge in May 2011, this marathon three-disc set forms part of Sanger's never-fulfilled complete organ works of Bach, most of which he had learnt a student. These discs present a number of works from the Neumeister collection, as well as a selection of free compositions. The accompanying notes by Swedish organist Hans Fagius are informative and very detailed. Sanger's sense of tempo is impeccable, and the 1720 Heiko Lorenz organ produces a rich variety of colours. The Fugue in G, BWV577 is one of the most enjoyable performances, and *In dulci jubilo*, BWV729 is a perfect balance of excitement and control. The pace is just right for Bodin Church (Norway), a small building, but one in which the use of the pedal reeds never feels like too much.

It is interesting to discover how many of these works lend themselves to harpsichord performance. Luc Beauséjour begins **J. S. Bach: Famous works on pedal harpsichord** (Analekta AN2 9970, *rec* 2010, 63') with the Toccata and Fugue in D minor. It is a spirited beginning, but there is a lack of stamina towards the end of the fugue, and the sustained chords which produce such an exciting climax on

the organ do not quite pull it off here. Other problems with such adaptations manifest themselves throughout the rest of the CD. The chorale melody of *Wachet auf*, BWV645 does not penetrate the accompaniment in the way it can on the organ. The possibilities of the pedal harpsichord, however, are considerable, and some pieces work exceptionally well, including the Prelude and Fugues in G, BWV541 and G minor, BWV535. This is no doubt partly due to the fast and constantly moving writing in these works that is lacking elsewhere. Beauséjour produces a rich, almost piano-like quality at times, such as in the Fugue in C major, BWV545. Some beautiful sonorities emerge from *Liebster Jesu*, BWV731. The Passacaglia and Fugue, BWV582 is mesmerizing.

Johann Sebastian Bach: Die Kunst der Fuge (Cantando 2019, *rec* 2009, 79') is performed by clavichordist and teacher Nicole Hostettler. The playing is precise, and enjoyable to listen to, although some of the higher notes on this instrument (Thomas Steiner, 1993, after Hubert, 1772) sound pinched—especially the high A—which can be quite distracting. 'Contrapunctus XIV' is left incomplete, and Hostettler simply fades out. The accompanying notes are in French, German and English, although it is unclear why quotations by C. P. E. Bach and others are translated into each language while the citation from François Roberday's *Fugues et caprices* (Paris, 1660) remains in French.

There are three discs in Peter Watchorn's **J. S. Bach: The six French Suites, BWV812–817; Little Preludes, BWV924–943** (Music Omnia MO0402, *rec* 2011, 162'). These are proficient but not showy performances, the highlight of which is probably the Sarabande from Suite no.3 in B minor. The Sarabande from the sixth Suite in E major, with its beautifully lyrical lines and balanced trills, is performed with particular sensitivity. The similarities in character and style between a third Sarabande—that from the Suite no.5 in G major—and the Aria from the *Goldberg Variations* are noteworthy. The Prelude in F major, BWV927 is a miniature gem.

Remarkably, in the short time since Francis Knights's 'Seven Goldbergs' review (*Early Music*, xxxix/1 (2011), pp.126–7), four more recordings of the *Goldberg Variations* have appeared. Three of these are played on double-manual harpsichords, one on the organ. Classified as the fourth part of the *Clavierübung*, the variations were, as Steven Devine suggests in the notes to his **Bach: 'Goldberg' Variations** (Chandos CHAN0780, *rec* 2010, 79'), conceived by Bach as a musical legacy in the *galant* style, much in the same way as the *Art of Fugue* was a summation of his life's work in his own unique contrapuntal style. Devine's precise and sensitive playing makes

for enjoyable listening. Variation 29 is less strict in tempo than it could be, but this actually works rather well. Devine performs on an instrument by harpsichordist and harpsichord-maker Colin Booth, after a 1710 single-manual model. Playing on another of his instruments, Booth himself recorded his interpretation of the *Variations* a matter of months after Devine had done so, in **J. S. Bach: Goldberg Variations** (Soundboard SBCD210, *rec* 2010, 74'). The notes (if you can find them!—they are hidden in an unconventional place in the CD case) are informative and stimulating. Booth's commentary states that the disc 'presents a sincere attempt to offer some fresh suggestions for what Bach ... might have expected the music to sound like—for those who think this is a matter of interest or importance.' Booth's aim is to free performers from the interpretative 'straitjacket' that may arise from a literal reading of the score, especially given the increased emphasis on period authenticity in recent decades. Booth's ornamentation is deliberately freer and more frequent than is often the case, the reason being, he states, because Bach left no clear indication on the matter. Booth has written extensively on the subject of Baroque notation, so inevitably the CD notes end up sounding at least partially like a plug for his 2010 book *Did Bach really mean that?*

Some of the brightest playing in this group comes from Blandine Rannou's **J. S. Bach: Variations Goldberg** (Zig-Zag Territoires 111001, *rec* 2010, 90'). However, the opening Aria is extremely slow, very ornamented, and incorporates a surprising amount of rubato, to the extent that one easily loses track of the pulse. Partly because of the fact that the first track lasts almost seven minutes, this performance spills onto two (rather short) discs, divided between Variations 15 and 16. Aria issues aside, the performance is animated and vivid, the faster variations teeming with energy. For some reason the final Aria is performed at a faster tempo.

Johann Sebastian Bach: Goldberg-Variationen (auris subtilis AS-o 5051-2000, *rec* 2010, 57') is performed by the rather eccentric organist Franns Wilfried Promnitz von Promnitzau. Disappointingly, the notes accept without question Forkel's now distrusted myth from 1802 that the Variations were presented to Count von Kayserlinck as a cure for his insomnia. One of the reasons Promnitz von Promnitzau cites for recording this piece on the organ is that the instrument is able to give a greater variety of colours than the harpsichord. True as this may be, the recording does not get it right. The opening Aria is unbalanced; it is performed on two manuals and pedals, but the registration choice of the left hand at times dominates that of the right hand. Having said that, the choices of registration for Variation 22 are more pleasant

to listen to. Unfortunately, listeners are given extra aural 'colour' in the form of noisy registration changes, especially between Variations 15 and 16. But the major downside of this CD is that, although the playing is sprightly, it is also very scrappy. The occasional slip can be forgiven, but there are too many here to merit pardon. In a bizarre twist at the end, the organ blower is cut off during the final Aria. This is no doubt intended to conjure up an image of the sleepy Count von Kayserlinck (or perhaps Johann Theophil Goldberg?) finally drifting off, but the effect it has on the listener will resemble something between a snigger and a grimace. If you have not stopped listening by then, be warned: the last few seconds of the disc contain something even more perplexing. Probably not worth €16.

The final solo keyboard release here is **Bach: 6 Partitas** (Polyhymnia Records PH0908, *rec* 2008/9, 152'), by Finnish harpsichordist Elina Mustonen. She seems to have a slightly irritated expression on her face in the cover photo, but this does not come through in her playing. The sound she produces is very confident, and is driven at all the right times (for example, the Capriccio from the Partita no.2 in C minor). The meandering Allemande from the Partita no.4 in D major is lyrical, although not without focus. Mustonen lends the third Partita in G major the vitality it needs, especially the Praeambulum and Corrente, while giving the Gigue a great shot. The Toccata of the Partita no.6 in E minor brims with passion. Her booklet notes, in Finnish and English, consider all the partitas in turn, although in their published order rather than that in which they are performed on the CD.

The accompanying notes to **Johann Sebastian Bach: Concertos pour clavecin BWV1052, 1053, 1055, 1056** (Cypres CYP1661, *rec* 2009, 62') come across as slightly pretentious in their English translation, to the extent that it reads like a parody at times: 'and by harpsichord should be understood: Bach and his sons'. Reading through this clumsy translation, the performers' take is that Bach's concertos should be performed with small forces, and that Bach's music contains the emotions and sentiments of his own family life and career. Béatrice Martin and Les Folies Françaises, under the direction of Patrick Cohën-Akenine, take pride in being historically informed, and the notes therefore give a brief history of the harpsichord and of the harpsichord concerto. Their performance is vigorous and driven throughout, but most especially in the first movement of the Concerto in D minor, BWV1052.

Websites

Analekta www.analekta.com

Auris Subtilis www.auris-subtilis.de

Cantando no website

Chandos www.chandos.net

Cypres www.cypres-records.com

Dabringhaus und Grimm www.mdg.de

Euridice www.euridice.no

Gramola www.gramola.at

IFO Classics www.ifo-classics.com

Musica Omnia www.musicaomnia.org

Passacaille www.passacaille.be

Polyhymnia www.polyhymnia.com

Regent Records www.regent-records.co.uk

Soundboard www.soundboard-records.co.uk

Syrius no website

Zig-Zag Territoires www.zig-zag-territoires.com

doi:10.1093/em/cat052

Austin Glatthorn

Haydn: music for strings and winds

A recent internet search of 'Joseph Haydn' returned 6,870 results for recorded music. While this number may suggest that musicians have more-or-less contributed all they possibly could to the corpus of Haydn recordings, the majority of the CDs found in this review suggest that there is still scope for additions to this genre, especially in the case of works that have been recorded infrequently. The collection of ten recordings here constitute an eclectic range of music by Haydn: a number of early concertos for strings and organ, late symphonic works, and an assortment of chamber works for various instruments that span the entirety of the composer's career.

Paul Badura-Skoda is featured on the only disc of solo keyboard music in this group, **Joseph Haydn: Sonates et variations pour le pianoforte** (Arcana A352, *rec* 2008, 68'). The piano that he chose to play is from his own collection, built by Johann Schantz around 1790. In his accompanying liner-notes, Badura-Skoda argues that 'Especially in the sonatas of his early and middle periods Haydn allowed considerable leeway to the interpreter in matters ranging from choice of ornaments to virtual invitations to interpolate free cadenzas'. Whilst acknowledging the inherent challenges facing any interpreter of this music, Badura-Skoda suggests that many current pianists cannot contribute to these pieces in a way that Haydn