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VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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The Viola da Gamba Society of America is a not-for-profit national organization dedicated to the support of activities relating to the viola da gamba in the United States and abroad. Founded in 1962, the VdGSA is a society of players, builders, publishers, distributors, restorers, and others sharing a serious interest in music for viols and other early bowed string instruments. VdGSA members receive a quarterly newsletter and this annual journal, and have access to the many activities and valuable resources of the Society. The website provides additional information on the annual Conclave, instrument rentals, the microfilm lending library for researchers, and other offerings.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The articles in this volume of the journal represent two very different approaches to historical narrative. Natasha Roule's examination of the interaction between the musical establishment of Henry VIII and cultural and political considerations (in the words of the reviewer) "blends information taken from known musicological sources with recent historical writings, popular and scholarly, to good effect." It does not present new findings but pulls together what is known to create a broader picture.

Thomas Fritsch, in contrast, presents entirely new material concerning the career of the seventeenth-century German violist and composer Conrad Höffler, whose *Primitiae Chelicae* (1695), consisting of twelve suites for viola da gamba and bass, is his only known work. Those unfamiliar with his music might sample Guido Balestracci's recording of the first six suites (Symphonia SY 01186). Fritsch has prepared a new edition of these suites, but the introduction is printed only in German. We felt it appropriate to present that introduction here in English translation. Höffler worked at the court of Weissenfels under the direction of Johann Philipp Krieger (1649–1725), whose challenging viol parts are a tribute to the abilities of his colleague. Johann Beer (1655–1700) also figures prominently in this story. He was a gifted singer, violinist, and harpsichordist and a prolific writer on music. His satirical novels often feature musicians in humorous situations.

In keeping with our efforts to document current research we present a detailed conference report by Thomas G. MacCracken on the Michaelstein Conference held in November 2010. We have included Ian Woodfield's annual list of published recent research, as well as reviews of recent publications.

Robert A. Green

PASTIME WITH GOOD COMPANY: MUSIC IN THE MAKING OF MAGNIFICENCE AT THE COURT OF HENRY VIII, 1509–47

Natasha Roule

Abstract

Henry VIII was a musician himself and encouraged the pursuit of music among his courtiers. He hired foreign musicians and bought large quantities of instruments in order to establish a program the envy of any Renaissance prince. Music served a diplomatic and political function, as well as encouraging social interaction. Life as a court musician could be precarious, as royal treatment of Jews and the execution of Mark Smeaton demonstrate.

By his thirtieth birthday, King Henry VIII had good reason to feel pleased. He had recently shown himself to all of Europe to be a magnificent and munificent ruler at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in France, where he had negotiated an alliance with his greatest political rival, Francis I. Never mind that the alliance would never be realized. Henry was at least able to leave France knowing that the rumors were true: he was much more handsome than the French king, and incomparably accomplished in all the social graces necessary to be an ideal ruler. Henry spoke French, Latin, and Spanish fluently. He attended mass three times daily, if not more. He was an excellent horseman and unbeatable jousting. And not only was he a noteworthy musician, but his own musical compositions were played and heard at the English court and beyond.¹

Henry knew that the proper use and execution of music was an essential quality in a Renaissance ruler. A king's reputation as patron of the arts and his skill in music were as important as his ability to engage in successful diplomacy. Music functioned as an audible and visual symbol of wealth and cultural sophistication

¹ Sebastian Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII. Selection of Despatches written by the Venetian Ambassador, Sebastian Guistinian, and Addressed to the Signory of Venice, January 12th 1515, to July 26th 1519*, trans. Rawdon Brown (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1854), 2:312–3.

that glorified courtly and kingly splendor. However, music was not confined to the professional stage: it facilitated and even served as social and political conversation among courtly amateurs. An understanding of music as a means of defining personal, social, and political image enriches the meaning of the early English Renaissance and the king who ruled it.

Political instability during Henry's early life may explain in part his passion for splendor. Less than a decade before Henry's birth in 1491, his father, the Lancastrian Henry Tudor, won both victory and the English throne over Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth. Henry Tudor's marriage to Elizabeth of York united the two families whose names represent the primary characters of the Wars of the Roses. Nevertheless, several Yorkist insurgents made claims to the throne during the first decade of Henry VIII's life. The faction led by Flemish clothing modeler Perkin Warbeck, who pretended to be the murdered Richard, Duke of York, is perhaps the most remarkable.² Political tension occasioned by these claims likely made a marked impression on Prince Henry. His zeal for magnificence must be seen as part of his scheme to make clear to all subjects that he alone was almighty king.

As the younger of two brothers, Henry was not destined for the crown until his elder sibling Arthur died in 1502. Nevertheless, Henry's childhood education encouraged him to embody the ideal prince. The lesson of his first tutor, John Skelton, that "athletes are two a penny but patrons of the arts are rare" was as important as the tutor's advice to "peruse the chronicles; direct yourself to histories; commit them to memory."³ The combination of such lessons imbued Henry with a powerful sense of chivalry and honor as well as of duty; he was the risen Arthur, and his kingdom Camelot re-born.⁴

The practical study of music comprised a crucial element in the education and lifestyle of a prince. Contemporary ideals codified

² David Starkey, *Henry: Virtuous Prince* (London: Harper Perennial, 2009), 74–5.

³ Cf. D. R. Carlson, "The Latin Writings of John Skelton," *Studies in Philology* 88.4 (1991): 1–125. Quoted in Starkey, *Henry*, 127.

⁴ Theodor Dumitrescu, *The Early Tudor Court and International Musical Relations* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 36.

in Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (1528, Venice) beseeched aristocrats to "cultivate a taste for music."⁵ If they could not sing or play an instrument, they should at least be able "to listen to harmony" so that they might "appreciate [music] more intelligently than others...for the modulations of music have no significance for ears that are unaccustomed to them."⁶ Henry took Castiglione's advice seriously. He began study of the lute by the age of ten with Frenchman Giles Dewes, who was also his French tutor.⁷ Giles's dual role as musician and instructor epitomizes the inherent relationship that music enjoyed with other intellectual pursuits of the nobility. Henry also mastered "the recorders, flutes, virginals;" sang; and practiced the "setting of songs, making of ballets, and did set two goodly masses, every of them five parts, which were sung oftentime in his chapel, and afterwards in diverse other places."⁸ The king began composing early in life; he may have completed his "two goodly masses" by the age of nineteen, and likely wrote four-part pieces as early as 1501.⁹

Henry exceeded Castiglione's musical expectations, for not only did the king develop his own musical skills, but he also cultivated a musical court with unprecedented enthusiasm. Henry was an avid instrument collector. In 1530 alone, he purchased six shawms of varying sizes, two sackbuts, and several virginals.¹⁰ It is impossible to judge the extent to which instruments of the royal collection were played and when, for the inventory of Henry's possessions taken in 1546 after his death records damaged as well

⁵ Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (1528), trans. George Bull (London: Penguin Books, 1967), 122.

⁶ Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*, 122.

⁷ Starkey, *Henry*, 180.

⁸ Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII* (c. 1550), ed. Charles Whibley (London: T. C. and E. C. Jack, 1904), 1:19.

⁹ Jane A. Bernstein and John M. Ward, "Van Wilder, Philip," *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2007–2010), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed 17 July 2010).

¹⁰ Eileen Sharpe Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians, 1485–1547: Their Number, Status, and Function" (PhD diss., New York University, 1986), 68.

as whole instruments.¹¹ Nevertheless, the zeal with which Henry enlarged his instrument collection signifies his desire to portray himself as a great patron of music.

Henry's success in overseeing the establishment of the viol in England represents one of his most significant musical achievements. The 1547 court inventory record of "Spanish vialles" in Henry's instrument collection suggests that Spanish musicians brought viols to England as early as 1501 when they accompanied Catherine of Aragon for her wedding to Henry's brother Arthur.¹² However, a reference to viols performing with other "strange," or foreign, instruments in a 1511 pageant indicates that the instrument maintained exotic connotations a decade after its arrival in England.¹³ That no names accompany the instruments in court records renders it impossible to confirm how common a sight or sound the viol was at the English court during the first decade of Henry's rule.

It was not until the arrival of Flemish musicians Matthew, Philip, and Peter van Wilder between 1515 and 1522 that viol players became established at court. The van Wilders were primarily lutenists. Matthew left court or died in 1517; Philip, however, formed the first permanent viol consort at the English court with the Dutch or German viol players Hans Hossenet and Hans Highorne, who both arrived in England shortly after the van Wilders.¹⁴ The creation of this three-part consort corresponds approximately with the compilation of the Henry VIII Manuscript, a collection of 139 pieces, 33 of which are attributed to Henry.¹⁵ Thirty-four pieces in the collection, including several by the king,

¹¹ Judith Blezzard and Frances Palmer, "King Henry VIII: Performer, Connoisseur, and Composer of Music," *The Antiquaries Journal* 80 (2000): 258.

¹² Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court, 1540–1690* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 70.

¹³ Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 92.

¹⁴ Dumitrescu, *Early Tudor Court*, 80.

¹⁵ John Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 4.

suggest instrumental performance because they lack texts.¹⁶ The collection demonstrates a growing interest in consort music in England, perhaps accelerated or satisfied by the newly arrived viol players.

This interest reached its zenith in 1540, when the six Italian viol players Alberto da Venezia, Vincenzo da Venezia, Alexander da Milano, Ambroso da Milano, Romano da Milano, and Joan Maria da Cremona arrived at Henry's court.¹⁷ Records refer to this six-part consort as the king's "new vialles," while the Flemish players are listed as the "old vialles," emphasizing the novel impression that the Italian consort and its music made in England.¹⁸ The first written reference to the Italian viol players appears in a record of Anne of Cleves's personal expenses, when the queen awarded the Italians fifteen pounds on July 4, 1540. Anne may have been personally supporting them, since they did not receive their first payment from the king until several months after their arrival.¹⁹ Despite its uncertain start, the viol consort became a permanent addition to Henry's musical realm.²⁰

By Henry's death, the English court possessed fifty-four viols and lutes as well as an impressive number of crumhorns and recorders.²¹ Choirboys of the Chapel Royal, as well as young singers of St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, studied the viol and performed at court during Henry's later years and after.²² Beautiful purfling and the occasional vibrantly variegated coats of arms adorn many extant late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-

¹⁶ Ray Siemens, "Revisiting the Text of the Henry VIII Manuscript (BL Add MS 31,922): An Extended Note," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 14.3 (January 2009): 5.4.

¹⁷ Ian Woodfield, *The Early History of the Viol* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 155.

¹⁸ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 75.

¹⁹ Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 78.

²⁰ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 77.

²¹ Annette Otterstedt, *The Viol: History of an Instrument*, trans. Hans Reiners (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle, 2002), 39.

²² Woodfield, *Early History of the Viol*, 213–15.

century English viols.²³ These designs express the pride that the viols' owners felt for their possession of the instrument, which by the early sixteenth century was already so popular in continental courts. Indeed, the importation of several viols in the 1520s, when Charles V—accompanied by his musicians—visited England, may have offered Henry a chance to implement the latest continental fashions.²⁴

Like members of the viol consort, most of Henry's musicians were of foreign origin. Not only their presence, but also their efforts to import continental musical manuscripts and instruments, helped foster an international atmosphere at court. Such cultural interactions enhanced Henry's own image as a magnificent ruler throughout Europe.²⁵ Many of Henry's musicians, including the Italian viol players, were of Sephardic origin.²⁶ Some, such as the recorder-playing Bassano family, established musical dynasties that enjoyed English royal patronage even after the Civil War.²⁷ Instrumental variety accompanied religious and ethnic diversity. Musicians who formed the "King's Musick," the secular and courtly ensemble that entertained in great halls and private chambers, played myriad instruments. Lords and ladies danced to consorts of rebecs and recorders or to shawms improvising over a sackbut's slow-moving cantus firmus. Trumpeters and fife-and-drum bands announced occasions of majesty with simple, monophonic music.²⁸ Vocal pieces resounded in the Chapel Royal for masses and other religious ceremonies.²⁹

Despite their foreign origin and meaner social status, musicians enjoyed intimate interaction with the royal family. Philip van

²³ See Michael Fleming, "Viol-Making in England c. 1580–1660" (PhD diss., The Open University, 2002; published as CD-ROM by the author, 2002), 2:F01–F38.

²⁴ Dumitrescu, *Early Tudor Court*, 46–7.

²⁵ Dumitrescu, *Early Tudor Court*, 9.

²⁶ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 82.

²⁷ Roger Prior, "Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court," *The Musical Quarterly* 69.2 (Spring 1983): 253.

²⁸ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 36–7.

²⁹ Otterstedt, *The Viol*, 40.

Wilder, who wielded great authority over music in the Privy Chamber, taught the lute to Henry's children Mary and Edward throughout the 1530s and 1540s.³⁰ Due to the eclectic nature of the pieces within the manuscript, it has been suggested that the Henry VIII Manuscript served as an instructive manual for the royal children.³¹ Regardless of the manuscript's original purpose, music remained an important aspect of the daily lives of Henry's offspring. That Mary's virginals were tuned regularly in 1537 and 1538 suggests frequent playing into her twenties.³² Henry would have wanted the best for his children, and musicians were essential components in a Tudor's upbringing. Their importance is illustrated by the fact that the greatest increase in court musicians occurred during the formation of the households of Henry's children from 1521 to 1525 and in 1540.³³

Fortunately, Henry's children inherited his belief in the importance of music. As queen, Mary Tudor was, according to the Venetian ambassador Giovanni Michiel, "a very great proficient in music, playing especially on the harpsichord and lute so excellently" that "she surprised good performers, both by the rapidity of her execution and method of playing."³⁴ Michiel praises Mary's performance capabilities in the same breath as her talent at needlework. The chronicler Edmund Hall likewise listed young Henry's musical talents among other archetypal kingly gifts, such as Henry's ability to wrestle, dance, and hunt.³⁵ Musical skill was thus one of many equally important accomplishments that raised a ruler to the level of perfection.

The close and constant interaction between musicians and patrons helped create a court of remarkably accomplished and enthusiastic amateur musicians. Every Tudor played the lute at least and

³⁰ Dumitrescu, *Early Tudor Court*, 85.

³¹ Dietrich Helms, "Henry VIII's Book: Teaching Music to Royal Children," *The Musical Quarterly* 92 (2009): 131.

³² Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 73.

³³ Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 183.

³⁴ Giovanni Michiel, Ambassadorial report to the Venetian Senate, 13 May 1557. Cf. footnote 3 in Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 163–4.

³⁵ Hall, *Triumphant Reigne*, 1:19.

sang at sight.³⁶ The son of Thomas Cromwell, English statesman and, temporarily, Henry's chief minister, studied both the lute and virginals.³⁷ When not attending to matters of religion and state, the powerfully influential Cardinal Wolsey entertained himself and others by playing the lute and dancing.³⁸ Members of the court derived great pleasure from communal music-making. Henry himself often sang with one of his close friends, Sir Peter Carew, who had a "pleasant voice."³⁹ The king may have intended his aristocratic friends as well as his hired musicians to play the instruments belonging to his massive collection.⁴⁰ Thus the boundary between performer and listener blurred at Henry's court. Music was not merely a spectacle, but an integral part of everyone's life.

Italian organ virtuoso Reverend Dionysius Memo illustrates the degree of familiarity between musicians and the royal family. Henry and Catherine of Aragon enjoyed listening to Dionysius's private concerts for up to "four consecutive hours" at a time.⁴¹ They awarded the musician with "such marks of delight...as to defy exaggeration;"⁴² indeed, Henry loved the organist's music more "than words can express."⁴³ The love of Henry's daughter Mary for the musician especially demonstrates the tone of interaction between royalty and musician. According to Sebastian Guistinian, the Venetian ambassador at the English court, the two-year-old Princess Mary one day caught sight of Dionysius while in a room with her father: "the moment [Mary] cast her eyes on the Reverend D. Dionysius Memo, who was there at a little distance, she commenced calling out in English, 'Priest!' and he was obliged to go and play for her."⁴⁴

³⁶ Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 37.

³⁷ Stevens, *Music and Poetry*, 274.

³⁸ Starkey, *Henry*, 367.

³⁹ John Vowell, *The Life and Times of Sir Peter Carew*, ed. John Maclean (London: Bell and Daldy, 1857), 39.

⁴⁰ Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 183–4.

⁴¹ Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 97.

⁴² Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 97.

⁴³ Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 98.

⁴⁴ Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 161.

However, a darker musical scene lay behind Sebastian's quaint and cheery anecdotes. The execution of the virginal player and organist Mark Smeaton illustrates the potential danger of intimate interaction between musicians and royal patrons. While awaiting her execution in the Tower of London, Anne Boleyn informed her guard that recently prior to her imprisonment, Mark had declined to answer her inquiry into his well-being. Anne had rebuked him, saying, "You may not look to have me speak to you as I should do a noble man, because you be an inferior person." Mark answered equivocally, "No, no, madam, a look sufficed me; and thus, fare you well."⁴⁵ His ill-chosen words encouraged rumors of an illicit romance between himself and the queen. Provoked by torture or threat of torture, or perhaps, as historian Suzannah Lipscomb has claimed, by a vain effort to gain self-glory, Mark confessed thrice to the affair, and was condemned to death.⁴⁶

Mark transgressed his status as musician by taking advantage of the intimacy his profession allowed him with the queen. Lipscomb posits that Sir Thomas Wyatt, a poet and a statesman at Henry's court, reflected Mark's transgression of social status in his poem, "In Mourning Wise." Wyatt laments to the dead musician, "A time thou hadst above thy poor degree...a rotten twig upon so high a tree hath slipped thy hold and thou art dead and gone."⁴⁷ Rosy tales of the favor of Dionysius juxtaposed to Mark's macabre end demonstrate the precarious position of royal musicians as well as their integration in court spectacles and cabals alike.

Religious politics endangered the Jewish musicians working under Henry's patronage. By 1540 at least nineteen Jews of Ashkenazi and Sephardic origin played among the king's musicians.⁴⁸ Despite increasingly stringent persecution of Jews on the continent, England maintained a lax policy of Jewish oppression. Indeed, the English regarded Jews as ideal servants because they

⁴⁵ Suzannah Lipscomb, *1536: The Year That Changed Henry VIII* (Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2009), 78.

⁴⁶ Lipscomb, *1536: The Year That Changed Henry VIII*, 79.

⁴⁷ Thomas Wyatt, "In Mourning Wise," in Lipscomb, *1536: The Year That Changed Henry VIII*, 79.

⁴⁸ Prior, "Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court," 253.

served neither the Pope nor Martin Luther.⁴⁹ However, in the early 1540s Henry began to seek a political alliance with the Spanish king, Charles V. So as to prove himself a Christian worthy of the anti-Semitic Spanish ruler, Henry had several crypto-Jews living in London investigated and incarcerated. However, Spanish ministers feared that Henry's scheme would attach to the proposed alliance negative memories of the Spanish Inquisition and requested that the Jews be released.⁵⁰

Henry's Jewish viol players were likely affected by their patron's brief but strict religious policy. The first Jews were arrested in the December of 1541. It is therefore especially interesting that the Sephardic consort players suddenly and seemingly inexplicably departed in the spring of 1542, and then returned in 1543 after the release of the imprisoned Jews. More telling, as the scholar Roger Prior points out, the Spanish ambassador at Henry's court, Eustace Chapuys, wrote that "however well [the Jews in England] may sing, they will not be able to fly away from their cages without leaving some of their feathers behind."⁵¹ The reference to song strongly suggests that Chapuys was referring to musicians. Prior posits that the Sephardic musicians were in fact imprisoned in 1541, but released before the other imprisoned Jews because of their status as royal musicians.⁵² The musicians' departure from England despite their release illustrates the instability of the foreign musician's position at court.

Lack of talent or failure to satisfy royal tastes also proved the downfall of many aspiring musicians. The Venetian harpsichordist Zuan de Leze journeyed to England seeking Henry's patronage but was dismissed after his first performance. Public humiliation and no doubt personal stress provoked the musician to hang himself with his dagger-girdle that night.⁵³ Zuan's death serves as a reminder of the dependence of musicians upon noble patronage for a

⁴⁹ Prior, "Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court," 263.

⁵⁰ Prior, "Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court," 260.

⁵¹ Prior, "Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court," 260.

⁵² Prior, "Jewish Musicians at the Tudor Court," 261.

⁵³ John Izon, "Italian Musicians at the Tudor Court," *The Musical Quarterly* 44.3 (July 1958): 330.

living. However, it also illustrates how highly Henry's patronage was perceived and valued by musicians as far away as the Mediterranean. Zuan's death ultimately reveals Henry's success in using music to project a self-image of political might across Europe.

Sounded spectacle allowed Henry to flaunt his potential and glorify his triumphs. The greatest booms in hiring musicians corresponded to periods of major political activity, such as the French War in 1513 and the French rapprochement in 1528.⁵⁴ Henry applied his own musical talent to politics at home. He played several instruments and sang at a meeting with Venetian ambassadors in 1517 at Richmond.⁵⁵ Flemish envoys were amazed that same year when, throughout the two hours of dancing following a banquet, Henry did "marvellous things, both in dancing and jumping, proving himself, as he in truth is, indefatigable."⁵⁶ The envoys left more "bewildered than otherwise by this entertainment, and everybody [did] nothing but talk of it, and [said], that never was a finer or more sumptuous one given in England."⁵⁷ By merging spectacle with diplomacy, Henry found a showy way to demonstrate his cultural grace and physical strength.

Henry's musical family also catered to his political ambitions. The performance of his four-year-old daughter Mary on the virginals before visiting French officials likely functioned as a political maneuver towards an alliance with France.⁵⁸ Similarly, Thomas Cromwell gained an audience with Pope Leo X on a royal diplomatic mission to Rome by singing for the latter with two English companions. The Pope "marveil[ed] at the straungenes [sic] of the song, and understanding that they were Englishmen, and that they came not emptie handed, willed them to be called in."⁵⁹ Music

⁵⁴ Pearsall, "Tudor Court Musicians," 183.

⁵⁵ Stevens, *Music and Poetry*, 276.

⁵⁶ Nicolo Sagudino, Letter to Alvise Foscari, 11 Jul. 1517. Cf. footnote 7 in Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 2:102.

⁵⁷ Sagudino, Letter to Alvise Foscari, 11 Jul. 1517. Cf. footnote 7 in Guistinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, 2:102–3.

⁵⁸ Stevens, *Music and Poetry*, 276.

⁵⁹ John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, rev. ed. (London, 1583), 2:1178. Quoted in Dumitrescu, *Early Tudor Court*, 1.

functioned as a diplomatic gift, the essential step towards achieving political conversation. Henry's older sister Margaret played the clavichord and lute during a meeting with her future husband, James IV, in Scotland. Throughout the performance, James remained "apon his kne always barrheded."⁶⁰ On another visit, James played "the clarycordes, and after of the lute, wiche pleasyd [Margaret] varey much, and she had great plaisur to here him."⁶¹ Margaret and James used musical conversation to inform one another of their respective refinement of character.

Social communication and diplomatic talk were inextricably related. An imbroglia at court in particular accentuates the flexibility of music as palliative as well as weapon. When Archduke Philip of Burgundy visited the English court in 1506, Catherine of Aragon insisted that he dance with her. Philip, deep in conversation with Henry VII, declined, and in so doing humiliated Catherine in front of the court. To divert those present from Catherine's embarrassment, Henry's sister, Mary, gave an impressive performance on her lute and clavichord.⁶²

Music at the Tudor court was at once familiar and exotic—one of the many talents of a perfect king and his family, but also a precious continental importation. Its dual character rendered it an invaluable tool in communicating Tudor cultural and political prowess to foreign visitors and English subjects. As such, it pervaded the lives of amateurs and professionals and bound them in a mutually dependent relationship; just as the court patronized musicians, musicians cultivated the court. The splendor of Henry's court derived from the constant exchange of roles between spectator and performer. How different from the remote modern stage, the physical no man's land that separates audience from performer! Henry above all deserves commendation as the catalyst of an intensely rich musical atmosphere that continued to thrive for centuries after his death. Music of the English Renaissance owes

⁶⁰ John Leland, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, 2nd ed. (1770), ed. T. Hearn, 4:285. Quoted in Stevens, *Music and Poetry*, 269.

⁶¹ John Leland, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, 4:284. Quoted in Stevens, *Music and Poetry*, 269.

⁶² Starkey, *Henry*, 209.

much to the man whose driving passion was to transgress the role of patron to be an active musician himself.

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**CONRAD HÖFFLER: CHAMBER
MUSICIAN AND VIOLIST DA GAMBA AT
THE COURT OF DUKE JOHANN ADOLPH I
OF SAXE-WEISSENFELS**

**Thomas Fritsch
English Translation by Christine Kyprianides**

Abstract

Conrad Höffler's *Primitiae Chelicae* (1695) consists of twelve suites for viola da gamba and bass. This introduction to a new edition of this work presents new material concerning his career as a court musician in Weissenfels and his personal life, derived from archival sources as well as the testimony of his colleague Johann Beer, a prolific writer. From this material it is clear that Höffler was well respected for both his musical abilities and his personal qualities.

By kind permission of the author and Edition Güntersberg, publishers of the music edition in which the original article appears as a preface.

I was sixteen years old, and had just begun my cello and viola da gamba studies at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music, when I found an original edition of twelve gamba suites from 1695 in the reading room of the venerable library of the council-school in my hometown of Zwickau. The composer's name, Conrad Höffler, meant nothing to me, and with an enthusiasm typical of youth I decided to become better acquainted with my newfound treasure. I invested a small fortune in a photocopy of the print, which was remarkable for its ability to roll up tightly as soon as it was placed on a music stand. The music itself was difficult, but it appealed to me and was so inspiring to practice that in the end I chose it as the subject of my diploma thesis.

When the Güntersberg music publishers requested a preface to their edition of Höffler's gamba suites a few months ago (now available as G211), I realized once again that biographical information about Conrad Höffler had scarcely been touched. The

search for traces of Höffler's life was indeed fruitful, and the more details I discovered in the ensuing weeks, the closer I felt to this man with whom I share enthusiasm for the viola da gamba and its repertory.

Today I live among the vineyards of the Unstrut Valley, in the neighborhood of Höffler's home; looking from the window of our house, we can see the Neuenburg, which served as a hunting lodge for the dukes of Saxe-Weissenfels during Höffler's lifetime. My article is a tribute to an outstanding gambist and an appreciation for the gift of his music.

* * * * *

“Hoeffler (Conrad), a chamber musician from Weissenfels at the end of the past century, born in Nuremberg, published in his 48th year 12 Suites for viola da gamba and figured bass, engraved in copperplate, and printed in elongated folio format.” This brief entry in Johann Gottfried Walther's *Musicalisches Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1732) sums up the output of an important seventeenth-century gambist.

Conrad Höffler was probably born on January 28, 1647, in Nuremberg, the son of Hanns Höfler, a yarn dyer, and his wife Elena, and baptized in the Evangelical-Lutheran parish church of St. Lorenz on January 30. He began his musical training in his hometown in his youth under Gabriel Schütz, the gambist and cornettist, whom Johann Mattheson considered “one of the best masters in the Holy Roman Empire.”¹ Gabriel Schütz (1633–1710) had spent more than six years in Lübeck, studying the English style of gamba playing with Nicolaus Bleyer, who had himself studied with William Brade and Thomas Simpson. In 1655, Gabriel Schütz had left Hamburg for further music study in Italy, but got no further than Nuremberg, and stayed there for nearly fifty years as a member of the Nuremberg town musicians. Schütz became a renowned gamba teacher and was an important link between North Germany, which was dominated by the English, and the southern German states. His students included Johann Philipp Krieger, born in Nuremberg in 1649.

¹ Johann Mattheson, *Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte* (Hamburg, 1740).

Conrad Höffler received his first appointment as musician to the Bayreuth court, where Johann Philipp Krieger was serving as Chamber Organist and later also as Kapellmeister. Margrave Christian Ernst of Brandenburg-Bayreuth, from the beginning of his rule over the Frankish principality of Kulmbach-Bayreuth (October 1661), had sought fame as a general. His massive military investments led to a financial crisis at the court in 1672. As a loyal subject of Kaiser Leopold I, Margrave Christian Ernst was the first imperial sovereign to take the field against France in the summer of 1672. Both Krieger and Höffler recognized the signs of the times: Krieger offered his resignation (which was refused) and started off on an educational tour of Italy; Höffler was hired by Johann Wolfgang Franck, Hofkapellmeister in Ansbach, and entered into a new position as court musician and gambist in the court of Margrave Johann Friedrich of Brandenburg-Ansbach on August 29, 1673. Franck's lord had sent him to Bayreuth on a recruiting trip, and Franck's written account of his personal conversations there reveals some fascinating details: he was instructed not to hire just any musician from the Bayreuth court, but specifically charged with negotiating an exchange of Conrad Höffler and another unnamed musician with the Ansbach court. During his discussions, Franck learned that Höffler and the other Bayreuth court musician received salaries of 182 and 152 Reichsthalers (it is unclear who received which sum), and with unusual emphasis, stressed that "after a great deal of persuasion" both finally accepted under the following conditions: 100 florins wages, 52 florins for expenses, the *privilegium exemptionis* (exemption from the excise tax), and equality with the other court musicians, chancery clerks, and trumpeters. Apparently Franck had to haggle with Höffler and his colleague, and ended up having to augment the sum of his original offer to cover the costs of relocation. To his employer, Franck attempted to justify his compliance in the negotiations by portraying his concessions as utterly submissive requests on the part of the musicians, and by understating the quantity of their household goods, mentioning in addition that the Bayreuth

court had also covered the moving expenses upon their entry into service.²

Since Höffler found himself continuously misled by Franck in Ansbach regarding the fulfillment of the agreements, in the third year of his service to the Margrave he submitted a petition of resignation. In it he complained that the court musicians were badly treated by both court and city officials—“the lowest of them as well as the highest consider the musicians as unbearable thorns in their side”—and that he was constantly and capriciously both insulted and threatened. The arbitrary infringements described in the letter must have reached the ears of the Margrave, for accusations of abuse of office against the musicians seem to have been an everyday occurrence throughout his domain: their rations of firewood were completely withdrawn, their alcohol allowance was reduced, the allotment of wine for the ducal communion and other occasions was halved, and “the stipulated *privilegium exemptionis* (in regard to the wine tax) in reality rescinded.” The wine tax was a fee on retail wine, and Franck had specifically promised Höffler an exemption from this tax.

Höffler points out that he had been promised equal treatment to that of his service in Bayreuth, but despite lower wages in Ansbach he was serving in church and court and also in the theater; the latter had not been required of him in Bayreuth. He complains that spiteful officials relentlessly maligned the court musicians with slanders and false accusations (“*falsa narrata*”) to the Margrave, and with the exception of the Margrave, the musicians had “not one single patron or benefactor, to whom we could protest the improprieties and seek redress,” and therefore, through no fault of their own, had fallen into disgrace. In the last section of his resignation petition, Höffler openly declares that Franck had enticed him with empty promises to leave a good position for a worse one, and that not once in Ansbach had he experienced the respect and esteem customary at even the smallest and least important of courts. While Höffler, in the language of the time, “humbly begs his lord’s most gracious dismissal,” he openly assumes that the request will result in his dismissal. Höffler’s petition of resignation, as far as

² Curt Sachs, “Die Ansbacher Hofkapelle unter Markgraf Johann Friedrich (1672–1686),” *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 11, no. 1 (Oct.–Dec. 1909), 105–37.

can be determined, is the only extant evidence of his personal life, and is of surprising candor. The Margrave granted the demand and released Höffler from the Brandenburg-Ansbach service on March 28, 1676.

Within a few short months, Höffler had taken a position as musician in the ducal ensemble in the court of Duke August of Saxe-Weissenfels in Halle an der Saale, and his name is mentioned for the first time in a list dated August 8, 1676. On November 2, 1677 his boyhood friend Johann Philipp Krieger followed him and became court organist and assistant Kapellmeister. The court was located in a four-wing complex of buildings on the Domplatz, built in Italian Renaissance style in 1531 by Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg; Duke August named it the *Neue Residenz* (New Residence) in 1644. From here, August of Saxe-Weissenfels (born 1614), son of the Saxon Elector Johann Georg I, governed as both the Protestant administrator of the archdiocese of Magdeburg and, from 1657, the newly established secundogeniture Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels. The music- and art-loving Duke cultivated a brilliant cultural life at court and established a vibrant opera theater in the New Residence. Members of his musical establishment included Philipp Stolle, David and Samuel Pohle, Christian Ritter, and Johann Beer, in addition to Höffler and Krieger. Beer joined the court as an alto on October 8, 1676, only a few weeks after Höffler had begun his service. His autobiography³ in the form of a chronicle, begun in 1679 and continuing until his death in 1700, provides a unique collection of data on the court chapels of Halle and Weissenfels.

Höffler found the working conditions as a member of the court ensemble at Halle the best he had yet experienced, musically and artistically, as well as in regard to the standard of living. However, in the fourth year of his service this idyll was shattered: on June 4, 1680, Duke August died at the age of fifty-six. With his death, the 1648 Peace Treaty of Westphalia, involving the archdiocese of Magdeburg's cession of territory, came into effect; from then on, Halle was under the control of the Electorate of Brandenburg. The duke's son, Johann Adolph I, had to move his court to Weissenfels, some twenty-five miles farther south, and Halle lost

³ Johann Beer, *Sein Leben von ihm selbst erzählt* (Göttingen, 1965).

both the *Residenz* with its opera, and the court artists. The removal of the court unfortunately coincided with a sudden and widespread outbreak of the plague. At the end of July 1680, “many died in and around Dresden, and then it began by degrees in Leipzig; consequently sentinels were guarding all the routes,” wrote Johann Beer, who was proceeding on a journey to Halle through Zeitz and Weissenfels on August 7, 1680. “At that time the contagion in Leipzig gained the upper hand, and dread grew increasingly from day to day in the surrounding cities.” Considering the geographical proximity of those cities to Leipzig, the terror of their citizens is comprehensible, given the much larger distance that the plague had quickly covered in moving from Dresden to Leipzig.

“On the 17th of this month [August, 1680] Duke Johann Adolph moved his court from Halle to Weissenfels. God speed him and his servants on their journey! Our chapel is thus scattered far and wide. Only six of us are left in Weissenfels. The others are gone, some to Lower Saxony, others even to Sweden.” In fact, after the dissolution of the duke’s ensemble in Halle we find former members in Gotha, Dresden, Zittau, Jüterbog, Berlin, Sweden and Italy. The personnel remaining in the court ensemble on arrival in Weissenfels were Johann Philipp Krieger (“Capellmeister”), Daniel Döbricht (Debricht, “Discantist”), Johann Flemming (“Discantist”), Johann Beer (“Altist”), Samuel Grosse (“Tenorist, Theorbist”), Donat Rössler (“Bassist”), Johann Hoffmann (“Violinist”), and Conrad Höffler (“Violdigambist”).⁴ Contrary to Beer’s account, we find evidence in 1680 of eight former ensemble members of Halle still in the Duke’s service. Flemming had just entered the Halle chapel in 1680, shortly before the move; Beer possibly neglected to count him. Döbricht’s salary “begins [in Weissenfels] from Easter 1681.”

From the Feast of St. Michael (September 29) 1680, Höffler’s name is found on the employment list of the Weissenfels court, as are most of the ensemble members. Beer was himself a later arrival, as he recounted: “On December 6th of this year 1680, I moved from Halle to Weissenfels with my wife and child, my brother and a housemaid during an unbelievably bitter cold spell.

⁴ Eva-Maria Ranft, “Zum Personalbestand der Weissenfelser Hofkapelle,” *Beiträge zur Bach-Forschung* 6 (Leipzig, 1988).

It took us from 10 o'clock in the morning until 12 at night to cover the 4-league distance; then we could not enter the gate and had to spend the night in the so-called House of the Eleven Thousand Virgins in front of the Saale gate." This was not an inn, but in fact the chapel of a sanctuary. We can only imagine the hardships of such trips, and Beer's images become more vivid when we read his account of another journey begun on December 17 to Schloss Rammelburg in Lower Harz [approximately 52 miles from Weissenfels], with additional cold, snow, wolves, and the appearance of the Great Comet⁵ in the skies.

When Höffler took his position in Weissenfels in late summer 1680, his new workplace was still under construction, as the rebuilding of the palace was only half finished. Schloss Neu Augustusburg (New Augustusburg Palace)⁶—named after the first duke of Saxe-Weissenfels—had been reduced to its foundations by the Swedish army during the Thirty Years War, and the restoration of the building was only finished in 1694 with the paving of the courtyard. The appearance of the city of Weissenfels was also changing: this included the improvement of roads, the paving of streets and squares, the building of stately homes, the installation of a system of pipes supplying water to the palace complex, and the expansion of the old palace gardens to comprise an important pleasure garden. A new, stricter fire ordinance prohibited barns and thatched roofs within the city walls, and required all citizens to take part in the fire brigade, in order to protect the growing commercial prosperity of the city.

"On December 23 in the year 1680 ... Johann Philipp Krieger, as *Capell-Meister à part* and Conrad Höffler, as *Cammer- und Instrumental-Musicus ... ex anno et supra* Christian Keyserling" were installed in Weissenfels. The art-loving Duke Johann Adolph, like his father before him, had made a fortunate choice by putting the direction of his ensemble into competent hands. During his forty-five years in service in Weissenfels, Krieger took the court chapel to a high musical level, and the ensemble enjoyed considerable renown far beyond the borders of the dukedom.

⁵ Kirch's Comet C/1680 V1 [also known as Newton's Comet, it was the first comet to be observed by telescope].

⁶ Because there was already a Schloss Augustusburg in the Electorate of Saxony, it was necessary to differentiate the two names.

Höffler wrote proudly, "...I live in a chapel second to none in Europe in its excellence and musical knowledge (I speak without a hint of objectionable boasting)...." The court opera, which from 1685 was located in the newly built theatrical hall (*Comödien-Saal*), also experienced a new period of growth.

Attempts to reconstruct Höffler's personal life have remained incomplete. The evidence consists almost entirely of the records of baptisms, marriages, and funerals in Weissenfels. Höffler was married twice. His first wife Maria was buried on November 15, 1689; she died after giving birth to Georg Gottlieb, who was "baptized in urgency" on October 21, 1689 and buried ten days later. (Georg Caspar Wecker was one of the godfathers.) We do not yet know when the marriage had taken place. Maria is mentioned in the Weissenfels baptismal records for the first time as a godmother on February 8, 1685, as "EheLiebste" (wife) of Conrad Höffler. However, Johann Conradt, the first son born to Maria and Conrad Höffler in Weissenfels, had already been born on December 19, 1683. (Johann Conradt's godparents included among others Johann Philipp Krieger and Johann Beer.) Because there is no entry in the Weissenfels marriage register, it must be assumed that the wedding took place outside of Weissenfels, either in the hometown of the bride or before the August 1680 move to Weissenfels. Conrad and Maria had five children in Weissenfels between 1683 and 1689 (Johann Conradt, Helena Elisabeth, Johann Christian, Johann Christoph, Georg Gottlieb); the second and fifth were buried as newborns. Among the godparents of Johann Christian Höffler was Margaretha Justina Händel, the wife of Georg Friedrich Händel's elder half-brother Car(e)l.

Just over a year after Maria's death, Höffler remarried. The marriage entry is in the church registry in Taucha (near Hohenmölsen), a village only five miles from Weissenfels: "1691 / On Tuesday, January 27, after the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, were joined together Herr Conrad Höffler, Duke of Saxony's highly placed chamber musician, widower of Weissenfels and my second daughter, Anna Magdalena. *Deus bened. sicut illis ex alto.*

[May God bless them from on high.]”⁷ The entry was written by Höffler’s father-in-law, Pastor Adam Medel. He must have been somewhat confused by the events, as the notated dates were contradictory: January 27, 1691, fell on Saturday, not Tuesday. The Feast of St. Paul’s Conversion was celebrated on January 25, which in 1691 was on Thursday. Perhaps Pastor Medel associated the feast day with a Sunday, and therefore mixed up the days in the ledger. Exactly nine months after their wedding night, on October 28, 1691, Anna Magdalena and Conrad Höffler baptized Sýbilla Magdalena, and chose as one of the child’s three godparents her grandfather, Pastor Adam Medel, an unusual selection at that time.

Joy and sorrow arrived together in the Höffler family: on September 22, 1693, Anna Magdalena Höffler delivered twins; the first-born child was baptized Sophia Christina two days later. Information about the twin sister or brother is found in the Weissenfels obituaries for September 1693: “Stillborn infant child of Mr. Conrad Höfler [*sic*], the Duke of Saxony’s chamber musician, brought to the cemetery by the midwife Susana and laid to rest without ceremonies.” The last child of the couple, Margaretha Elisabeth, was born on October 14, 1695.

Altogether we find Höffler mentioned six times as godfather in Weissenfels between 1681 and 1692; for instance, on October 3, 1691, he stood for Johannes, the son of Johann Beer. Parents usually asked their nearest relatives and prominent citizens as godparents for their children. In Weissenfels, Höffler lived a considerable distance from his own family, and the fact that he was often asked to serve as godfather demonstrates the high esteem in which he was held by his colleagues.

As stated in Johann Beer’s account, the “Cammer Musicus und Violdigambist” Conrad Höffler died on August 19, 1696 in Weissenfels, and according to his obituary he was buried on the evening of August 22. His widow survived him by nearly fifteen years; her funeral was held on the night of April 26, 1711.⁸ One month after Höffler’s death, Johann Beer was named guardian of

⁷ The biographical article on Höffler by Karl Heinz Pauls in earlier editions of *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* contains incorrect information on this point.

⁸ The death notice gives Magdalena Catharina as first names; probably the marriage and death notices give incomplete names of Höffler’s second wife.

his “two surviving sons from the first marriage” by the principality’s government. (Probably this referred to the children Johann Christian and Johann Christoph, born October 3, 1686 and October 1, 1688 respectively.) Beer was obligated as godfather only to Johann Conradt, the eldest of the three surviving children of the first marriage; his assumption of the additional responsibilities may well be considered an act of friendship to the deceased Höffler.

With his *Primitiæ Chelicæ*, published in 1695 most likely at his own expense, Conrad Höffler established a monument to himself. The complete title of the print reads as follows: “*PRIMITIÆ CHELICÆ*, or Musical Firstlings comprising 12 Suites for solo Viola da gamba in different modes together with their Basslines, arranged according to the newest style in Instrumental music and humbly dedicated and composed in honor of the illustrious Duke and Lord Johann Adolph, Duke of Saxony [...] his most gracious



Title page of Conrad Höffler's *Primitiæ Chelicæ*

With thanks to Ms. Doreen Busch for pointing out the entries in the Weissenfels church registries.

Prince and Lord, by His Highness's Chamber Musician Conrad Höffler, Nuremberg. In the year 1695."⁹

In his dedication to Duke Johann Adolph I, Höffler emphasizes that the printed harmonies are a reflection of the music that he had performed for the Duke's pleasure. During the fifteen years following the establishment of the court in Weissenfels, Höffler had been occupied in satisfying the Duke's musical tastes, and the music that has been handed down to us is the sole testimony to Höffler's expert gamba playing. Höffler was well aware of the significance of his engraving and skillfully chose his words, transforming their submissive character into an allegorical image: "Some may offer you gold, silver, or other precious materials. I can only give copper, nonetheless, whenever such as your Serene Majesty, whose most lenient rays of mercy are like the Sun, finds it worthy in your fair sight, there is no doubt that otherwise ordinary bronze will be changed into gold." Furthermore, we can take from the dedicatory text that Höffler had the encouragement and support of "several famous masters" for the publication. What could be more likely than for Höffler to have had Johann Philipp Krieger and Johann Beer in mind? Krieger, who like Höffler was born in Nuremberg, had printed and published his works throughout the 1680s and 90s with Wolfgang Moritz Endter, a successful Nuremberg book printer, editor, and publisher. Endter could well have been involved in the printing of the *Primitiæ Chelicæ*. The support of Johann Beer is evident; his Latin quatrain praising Höffler is on the title page engraved by Christian Romstet, with Höffler's portrait.

Christian Romstet (Romsted, Rumstet, 1640–1721) was an important illustrator and engraver in Leipzig, and both burghers and members of the nobility ordered copperplate portraits from him. He prepared two sketched portraits of Heinrich Schütz, the second of which was done when Schütz was court Kapellmeister in

⁹ *PRIMITIÆ CHELICÆ, Oder / Musicalische Erstlinge / In 12. durch unterschiedliche Tone eingetheilte Sviten Viola diGamba Solo samt / ihrer Basi, nach der ietzt florirenden Instrumental-Arth eingerichtet / Und /Dem Durchlauchtigsten Fürsten und Herrn / Herrn Johann Adolphen / Hertzogen zu Sachsen [...] seinem gnädigsten Fürstn und Herrn / zu unterthänigsten Ehren dediciret und componiret / Von Hochbesagter Seiner Durchl. Cammer-Musico / Conrad Höfflern / Noribergensi. Anno M DC XCV.*



Portrait of Conrad Höffler, from his *Primitiæ Cheliceæ*

Dresden; it was printed for his funeral, together with the memorial sermon. Romstet also made portraits of Johannes Olearius, the senior chaplain of Duke August of Saxe-Weissenfels in Halle, in residence at the Weissenfels court from 1680 until his death in 1684; and the Lutheran theologian August(us) Pfeiffer, who was highly esteemed by Johann Sebastian Bach. Höffler therefore chose a well-known and admired artist for his portrait, someone whose work would honor and lend importance to the sitter. The beautiful engraving, lavishly designed with numerous musical instruments (more decorative than representative), shows us Höffler's thin face in his forty-eighth year.¹⁰

On the bottom edge of the page is an added inscription of ownership by a certain Joannes Christophorus Schrapovius, repeated in a similar form on the title page of the text. Schrapovius came from Zwickau and presumably attended the local Latin school there.

¹⁰ Robert Eitner and Curt Sachs misinterpreted the inscription "Æ T[at]is 48." in the accompanying script, which resulted in the attribution of a wrong date of birth.

Later, in the nearby city of Glauchau, he established a *Winkelschule*, an alternative private school; after this was prohibited, he became a Baccalaureus (third-level teacher) at the regular Glauchau city school and held that position until his death in 1768. As the date of acquisition, “Sept 27 [1754],” indicates, the Höffler print came into the possession of the Zwickau council-school library (*Ratsschulbibliothek Zwickau/Sachsen*) during the rectorship of Christian Clodius (rector 1740–1778), presumably as a donation, although it was possibly a purchase, which would explain Clodius’s penciled entry “?gl” (later erased).¹¹ There is no way of determining why Schraps, who was probably born about the time of Höffler’s death, owned a copy of the gamba suites or if he was himself able to perform the music. At the very least, the excellent condition of the print would suggest that it was seldom used and that Schraps was the sole owner. By the time it entered the council-school library, Höffler’s music had gone out of fashion.

Returning to Johann(es) Beer and his preface beneath the Höffler portrait, his pertinent remarks read as follows:

“Höffler, whose exterior appearance you now see, is appealing because of his spiritual liveliness, but even more so because of the artistry of his hand. He has changed the rules, just as he has captivated the ears with his lyre, for (to my amazement) he has been able to form his own style.”

At first sight, this text is puzzling. The key to understanding it lies in the musical-aesthetic attitudes of Beer and Höffler. Johann Beer (Behr, Bär, Bähr, Ursus, 1655–1700) came from Sankt Georgen im Attergau and entered the court ensemble in Halle as an alto just a few weeks after Höffler. In 1680, he was one of the ensemble members who moved to the new Residence in Weissenfels. On the Saturday before Easter, 1685, according to his own account, he took over the position of “concertmaster” of the ducal ensemble, for which he negotiated “an extraordinary appointment,” an exclusive contract. On December 6, 1697 he additionally took on the duties of ducal librarian. His life ended tragically: during a bird-shooting expedition “the shotgun of Captain Barthen unexpectedly discharged,” blowing off oboist David Heinrich

¹¹ For this information I thank Gregor Hermann of the Council-School Library in Zwickau, Saxony.



Page of music from Höffler's *Primitivæ Chelicæ*

Gasthoff's lower lip, and striking Beer in the neck. Although the lead bullet was removed, Beer died nine days afterward. With his death, the Residence lost a multi-talented artist: musician, composer, wood-carver, poet, writer, and music theorist. His literary works, published under his own name and a variety of pseudonyms, would have filled a small library and included chivalric romances and comedies as well as autobiographical, theological, political, satirical, historical, and musical-aesthetic works.

In Chapter 11 of his book *Musical Discourses* (*Musicalische Discurse*), published posthumously in 1719, Beer formulated his musical credo: "Do the rules follow the ear, or does the ear follow the rules? This issue has long been debated by numerous critics, who have spared no pains to establish the fundamental nature of music.... If the ear or the beauty of music comes indeed from the rules, it would be as if the mother is born of the daughter: *quod est absurdum*. Furthermore, how can one formulate a rule regarding something that does not exist? Can a surveyor measure a plot of land that is not there? Were you named Hans before you were born? Therefore, my absolute *perpetuum asserere*: the rules are derived from the ear, not the ear from the rules. You may dispute it as long as you like, whether music sounds well because it follows the rules, or that the rules are made because one hears first of all

whether it sounds well or ill. Here is my assertion: music comes first, before the rules.”

And what do we read in Höffler’s “Brief Notice to the Musical Reader” (*Kurtze Erinnerung an den Musicalischen Leser*)? “I bring this, my first work, into the light of day, and at the same time open myself up to criticism. But this fear is not great enough to limit my intentions unnecessarily.... I have treated regular fugues as irregular and vice versa, irregular as regular, and have not bound myself to a rule that might go against my conscience when they leap over the walls of the musical cloister and alter the mode.” Those who have reprimanded Höffler for breaking the rules of counterpoint (as did Alfred Einstein, for example) should reconsider. Höffler and Beer were linked not only through their proximity as friends and colleagues, but also by a shared musical-aesthetic point of view. They were connected in spirit, and in his preface Beer recognized with awe how Höffler had freely treated the rules of composition in the *Primitiæ Cheliciæ* and thereby created his own inimitable style.

Höffler’s words regarding his own regular and irregular fugues require an explanation, and this we find in Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg’s *A Treatise on the Fugue (Abhandlung von der Fuge*, Berlin, 1753): “A fugue, the characteristic elements of which are properly arranged according to the rules, is called a regular fugue—*fuga propria* or *regularis*. A fugue in which these elements are not so arranged but rather are arbitrarily handled is called an irregular fugue—*fuga impropria* or *irregularis*.” According to Marpurg, “in all fugues, five characteristic elements are to be distinguished”: the “leader” [opening statement] and “companion” [answer] (for *Dux* and *Comes*); the “restatement” (for “the arrangement by which the opening and the answer are heard alternately in the different voices”); the “counterpart” (for the “composition that is set against the fugue theme in the remaining voices”); and the “connecting passage” (for segments between the different executions of the fugue theme). As regards counterpoint, there can be no greater freedom in a fugue than the deference of a mathematically clear organization to the dictates of the ear. Or in the words of Beer: “The rules are derived from the ear, not the ear from the rules.”

As a precaution, in the “Brief Notice to the Musical Reader” Höffler defends himself against possible accusations of plagiarism, in his choice of melodic material as well as longer musical passages. However, he recognizes his occasional musical borrowings: “It is not forbidden for the pastor to rework another’s text.... They are also mistaken who, with all too shallow comprehension, claim that imitation is nothing more than mere copying.” To counter the risks inherent in his endeavors, Höffler explains that he has “arranged the suites according to the now-flourishing instrumental style.”

Höffler’s twelve suites contain no notated ornaments with the exception of a single trill, in significant contrast to August Kühnel’s *Sonate ô Partite ad una ô due Viole da Gamba con il Basso Continuo*, which appeared just three years later. According to Höffler’s remarks, such notation would require additional oral instructions. He nonetheless assumed that ornaments would be added, leaving them up to the sensitivity and discretion of the individual player.

In 1695, at the time of his first printing, Höffler had planned to publish another work, but there is no evidence that he was able to bring his plans to fruition before his approaching death. The *Primitiae Chelicae* exemplify Höffler’s musical prowess and place him along with August Kühnel and Johann Schenck among the leading viola da gamba players of the late seventeenth century.

RESEARCH REPORT: VIOL SYMPOSIUM AT KLOSTER MICHAELSTEIN

Thomas G. MacCracken

In the spring of 2000, two research conferences devoted entirely or largely to the viol took place in quick succession in Italy and Scotland, as I reported in these pages later that year.¹ During the following decade the only comparable gathering, so far as I know, was a symposium held in 2002 as part of that year's *Tage Alter Musik* festival in Herne (Germany).² Meanwhile, since 1980 a small non-profit organization in the former East Germany has been presenting an annual series of scholarly gatherings, each one devoted to a different type of musical instrument. After focusing on nearly every other kind of wind, string, and keyboard instrument, in 2010 they decided to turn their attention to the viol, resulting in an event entitled "Repertoire, Instruments, and Construction of the Viols."

The conference was held from November 19 to 21 at the headquarters of the sponsoring organization, the Kloster Michaelstein Foundation, which is located in a former Cistercian monastery near the town of Blankenburg, in the Harz Mountains region, about halfway between Hanover and Leipzig. Participants were both housed and fed within the abbey complex of half a dozen nicely renovated buildings, an arrangement that was not only effi-

¹Thomas G. MacCracken, "Research Report: Conferences in Magnano and Edinburgh," *JVdGSA* 37 (2000): 68–83. A dozen papers from the former event, all in English, were subsequently published in Susan Orlando, ed., *The Italian Viola da Gamba* (Solignac: Edition Ensemble Baroque de Limoges; Turin: Edizioni Angolo Manzoni, 2002); see the review by Herbert W. Myers in *JVdGSA* 41 (2004): 69–74.

²These papers were also published, several years after the event itself, in Christian Ahrens and Gregor Klinke, eds., *Viola da gamba und Viola da braccio: Symposium im Rahmen der 27. Tage Alter Musik in Herne 2002* (Munich and Salzburg: Musikverlag Katzschichler, 2006). Despite the title, three-quarters of the articles concern viols and their music, including a number of interesting and important contributions by well-known researchers, builders, and performers; however, only two of the nineteen are in English.

cient but also provided welcome opportunities for socializing between the officially scheduled activities. These included, in addition to morning and afternoon paper sessions, an extended lecture-recital on the first evening and on Saturday a well-attended public concert offering a varied assortment of works featuring the viol, performed by Artist-in-Residence Paolo Pandolfo, several of his former students, and some of the conference speakers. In fact, the symposium itself was the culmination of a year-long group of events presented by Kloster Michaelstein under Pandolfo's direction, beginning with a midwinter recital and continuing with a springtime masterclass weekend in collaboration with Wieland Kuijken and a Summer Early Music Academy for strings both bowed and plucked.

Nearly half of the two dozen speakers—and most of the approximately 50 other participants—hailed from Germany itself, with the rest coming from elsewhere in Europe, along with a handful from the U.K. and the United States. A majority of the papers presented during the three-day weekend concerned various aspects of the viol's repertoire, while the remainder dealt with the instrument itself, either as physical object or social phenomenon. Pandolfo's opening remarks on "The Spirit of the Viol" ranged the most widely, touching on its historical origins and evolution, its technical versatility as both a melody and a chordal instrument, and the place of improvisation in its repertoire. Speaking for the most part extemporaneously, he offered some reflections on the viol's revival in the twentieth century, which as he pointed out has progressed through four main generations of players, exemplified respectively by August Wenzinger, Wieland Kuijken and Jordi Savall, Pandolfo himself and his contemporaries, and finally their students now emerging as young professionals. After emphasizing the importance of learning both from the historical sources and from interaction with the instrument itself, he concluded by asserting that "the viola da gamba was and is the perfect instrument, on which you can do everything," and that it does indeed have something worthwhile to say to our modern world.

Later that morning, in her talk on "Historical and Modern Playing Technique on the Viol," Annette Otterstedt (widely known as the author of *The Viol: History of an Instrument*, published by

Bärenreiter in 2002) returned to one of Pandolfo's points, noting that early revival players were mostly cellists with limited access to original source material, some of whom wrongly regarded the viol as an easy instrument. Yet even today certain gambists fail to heed the technical advice of historical writers, as she creatively demonstrated by contrasting projected excerpts from their treatises with a series of images and clips taken from videos currently available on YouTube, though with the players' faces cropped out to preserve their anonymity.

Tina Chancey's presentation on "The Pardessus de Viole: Gender and the Politics of Virtuosity" combined speaking and playing as she explored some of the implications of Barthélémy de Caix's duets for two *pardessus de viole*, which she has both recorded (with Catharina Meints, Dorian DIS-80150) and written about in the 1996 and 1997 volumes of this journal. Two questions in particular caught her attention initially: why are these pieces technically so much more difficult than anything else written for this smallest member of the viol family, and who would have played them originally? While it is true that the *pardessus* was mainly a women's instrument in mid-eighteenth-century France, the larger issue is whether the kind of brilliant virtuosity found in these duets was considered somehow inherently masculine in that culture; Chancey concluded that it was not, being instead equally consistent with traditional modes of female accomplishment that had held sway since the Middle Ages.

Perhaps the most interesting lecture of the conference's first day was a report by the Berlin-based bow maker (and gambist) Hans Reiners on the surprising lack of documentation for Johan Schenck's activities in Düsseldorf, where he held a court appointment for many years beginning in 1696. After a thorough review of the available source material, and invoking the German proverb that "One can easily miss the keyhole by looking for it where it isn't," Reiners proposed that the celebrated gambist and composer instead served his princely employer mostly *in absentia* while actually living in Amsterdam (where all his music was published), an arrangement that conferred prestige on both parties without requiring much real work by Schenck.

After dinner Simone Eckert spoke about “The Lübeck School of Gambists Before and Around Buxtehude,” offering a survey of both players and their repertoire and concluding that there is ample evidence for the existence of such a school, with roots going back two generations before the publication of Buxtehude’s trio sonatas in the 1690s. Herself an active gambist and director of the ensemble Hamburger Ratsmusik, Eckert then performed a short recital of representative pieces by Thomas Baltzar, Peter Grecke, and Buxtehude, accompanied by the expatriate American harpsichordist Michael Fuerst, with whom she has recorded this repertoire on a prize-winning 2005 CD entitled *Lübecker Virtuosen* (Thorofon CTH 2474).

Three of the seven papers heard on Saturday dealt with viol makers and their surviving instruments. Klaus Martius led off with an introduction to “Viol Building in Nuremberg,” where he is currently conservator of musical instruments at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, whose collection includes about a quarter of all extant viols made in that city. The best-known and most prolific Nuremberg viol maker is Ernst Busch, active in the middle decades of the seventeenth century, about whom Martius had spoken at a previous Michaelstein conference. On this occasion, therefore, he chose to concentrate on Matthias Hummel, from whom seven basses dating from 1688 to 1714 are extant, in addition to numerous instruments of the violin and lute families. Although none of these viols still has its original neck, several have retained their pegboxes, which reveal that they originally had only five strings. (At the end of the talk one member of the audience said he would like to know how such instruments were tuned, to which Martius simply replied, “So would I.”) The same is true for one of the two known basses by Hummel’s younger contemporary, Leonhard Maussiell, whose surviving output also includes half a dozen smaller instruments that may originally have been an early type of viola d’amore without sympathetic strings, though all are presently set up as treble viols (some with five rather than six strings).

Later in the morning Friedemann Hellwig, the retired former conservator of musical instruments at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, discussed a number of “Questions about the Viols of Joachim Tielke” arising from his work on a revised and expanded

second edition of his father's pioneering 1980 monograph on that maker (Günther Hellwig, *Joachim Tielke: Ein Hamburger Lauten- und Violenmacher der Barockzeit*), which at the time of writing this report has just been published by Deutscher Kunstverlag of Berlin and Munich. Out of more than 75 surviving basses, a total exceeding that of any other viol maker of the historical period, a handful are significantly smaller than the rest, with body lengths measuring just under 60 cm. Assuming that their string lengths were in the usual proportion to body size, this suggests they were made to be tuned about a whole tone above the then-prevailing norm, for example something in the neighborhood of A466 (high organ pitch) as opposed to A415 (chamber pitch). Hellwig also provided a brief introduction to Tielke's students, imitators, and successors, notably Johann Heinrich Goldt, who was a grand-nephew of Tielke's wife Catharina Fleischer.

Changing the focus from Germany to England, after lunch I offered an introduction to half a dozen lesser-known contemporaries of Richard Meares in a paper entitled "Before Barak Norman: English Viols of the Late 17th Century and their Makers." Though surviving instruments are not plentiful and biographical information even scarcer, I was able to provide at least some details about the activity of each of these craftsmen (in alphabetical order: William Addison, Thomas Cole, Thomas Collingwood, George Miller, John Pitts, and John Shaw) and to show slides of seventeen viols—all basses—that are either signed by or attributed to them. Some of these are now in museums, but others continue to be played professionally, including three here in the United States.

As it happened, the Saturday afternoon session included two other papers delivered in English, just before and after mine, both of which explored the period of the viol's historical decline. Richard Sutcliffe, an American gambist living in Belgium (some of whose research on the *pardessus de viole* and its literature was published in the 2000 and 2001 volumes of this journal), described ways of "Retuning the Viola da Gamba in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries," considering not only the transition from six- to five-string *pardessus* but also subsequent developments such as the *viole d'Orphée* and heptachord, all of which grew out of efforts to better compete with the violin and cello. He also discussed a

number of very late pieces from German-speaking areas of Europe that call for a “viola da gamba” tuned either to a D-major chord or in fifths like a tenor violin. The English musicologist Peter Holman (also well known as director of the ensemble The Parley of Instruments) then looked at activity in England during the same time period in his “After Abel: The Viola da Gamba in Britain in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries,” successfully debunking three common myths: that Carl Friedrich Abel was the last professional gambist, that his viol was literally buried with him in 1787, and that thereafter nobody played the instrument until the 1890s. As evidence to the contrary, Holman named a series of cellist doublers and active amateurs who kept interest in the instrument alive throughout the nineteenth century, though not always playing music originally written for it. This paper expanded on a chapter toward the end of his book *Life After Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch*, which coincidentally was published (by Boydell & Brewer) the same week as the conference and offers an interesting and in-depth survey of both professional and amateur performers throughout the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth centuries.

The gala concert on Saturday evening, held in the abbey’s former refectory, brought together a diverse group of rarely heard works featuring various types of viols, by eight different composers. Perhaps the least obscure of these, yet hardly mainstream repertoire, were a pair of Haydn baryton trios, in which the lead line was taken by the Italian gambist Guido Balestracci. Three other pieces on the program may be familiar to at least some readers of this report, if not to the larger world of early-music devotees, either from recordings or their own studies and performances. The concert opened with Pandolfo and his former student Balestracci playing Christoph Schaffrath’s Duetto in D minor, and Pandolfo alone began the second half with a suite by Carl Friedrich Abel, all of whose solo music he has recently recorded on the Glossa label. The grand finale was Handel’s cantata *Tra le fiamme*, in which the brilliant viol part was performed by the English gambist and Baroque cellist Robert Smith, another Pandolfo alumnus who was that day celebrating his thirtieth birthday.

In between came works unlikely to be familiar to more than a few specialists, including three more compositions for soprano (Caroline Pelon), obbligato viol, and strings. One of these was an aria, “Frena le belle lagrime,” that Abel wrote for a pasticcio opera called *Sifari* on which he collaborated with Baldassare Galuppi and Johann Christian Bach; here the instrumental soloist was the French gambist Amélie Chemin, still another of Pandolfo’s protégées, who elsewhere doubled on cello for the Haydn trios. The other vocal pieces were both sacred works—by Johann Baptist Schiedermayr (an organist and choral director in Linz during the early nineteenth century) and an otherwise-unknown composer named Weisnit—that Richard Sutcliffe had edited from manuscripts found at a Swiss monastery, and in which he himself played the solo part. Finally, in the middle of the program’s second half, one of Barthélémy de Caix’s difficult duets was ably rendered by American pardessus specialists Chancey and Sutcliffe.

The concluding day of the conference featured a pair of papers on the viol in Vienna in the morning, and a three-part presentation centered on the baryton in the afternoon. First, the musicologist and violinist Dagmar Glüxam described “The Juxtaposition of Viol and Violoncello at the Viennese Court,” where the former instrument was used until the early 1730s, both in mixed ensembles with violins and for obbligato lines in vocal arias, although after the arrival of Attilio Ariosti and the brothers Giovanni and Antonio Maria Bononcini around the turn of the century such parts were increasingly given to the cello. In “The Viennese Viol Tradition” the scholar Hartmut Krones, himself a lifelong resident of Vienna, confirmed this scenario but noted that the viol continued to be used for solo pieces and chamber music in both aristocratic and middle-class circles well into the second half of the eighteenth century.

After lunch the Milan-based luthier Pierre Bohr offered some “Workshop Reflections on the Construction of the Baryton,” accompanied by numerous photos of extant instruments in all their sometimes bewildering variety. Guido Balestracci then briefly demonstrated his baryton made by Bohr (already heard the previous evening in the Haydn trios) before sketching “The Path from Viol to Baryton: Historical Aspects from a Player’s Perspective,”

in which he touched on the baryton's distinct Baroque and Classical phases, the varying number of strings found on historical barytons, and the interaction of the instrument's playing technique and its repertoire. Dieter Gutknecht, a retired musicologist based in Cologne, then provided a more detailed outline of the repertoire surviving in seventeenth-century manuscripts and from eighteenth-century Vienna and Esterházy, noting that many players from both periods evidently preferred to improvise their performances, whose content has therefore been lost to history.

To conclude the conference, Bettina Hoffmann (an active performer on both viol and cello as well as author of a recently published Italian-language book on *La viola da gamba* [Palermo: L'Epos, 2010]) set forth the evidence found in musical scores, treatises, and paintings of the Baroque period for "The Viol as a Chordal Continuo Instrument," demonstrating various possible approaches by applying them to the bass line of a Telemann sonata movement for which Tina Chancey supplied the melody on pardessus.

The foregoing summaries cover only about two-thirds of the presentations, passing over with regret a short welcoming concert by gambists Bettina Hoffmann and Katharina Schlegel as well as papers on the sound esthetic of the viol (Kathrin Menzel), the acoustical function of the soundpost in viols (Murray and Patsy Campbell), the use of the viol in cloisters (Hermann Ullrich) and in Eastern Europe (Klaus-Peter Koch), and by composers including August Kühnel (Ulrike Harnisch), Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel (Bert Sigmund), and Handel (Wolfgang Ruf), as well as in early-seventeenth-century Italian chromatic music (Martin Kirnbauer).

Plans are underway to publish all of the conference papers, suitably illustrated and in some cases revised but for the most part of course in German, in a future volume of the well-established series *Michaelsteiner Konferenzberichte*. These publications can be hard to find in American university music libraries, and are not easy to locate from internet booksellers either, though in principle they are all available by ordering directly from the Kloster Michaelstein Foundation in Blankenburg. (There used to be a complete list on their website, but as of this writing the URL for that page returns a message of "Not found . . . on this server.") In any case, foundation

staff members Monika Lustig and Ute Omansky deserve our hearty thanks for successfully organizing this event, with its wide variety of interesting talks on different aspects of an instrument that holds an important place in the modern world of early music and is of special interest to the readers of this journal.

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE VIOL

Ian Woodfield

This bibliography is intended as a concise guide to recent research related to the viol. It lists books, articles, dissertations, selected reviews, published papers, and major scholarly editions of music. Research on any aspect of the viol (and related instruments such as the baryton) will qualify for inclusion. A sign of the changing times, this list incorporates an increasing number of on-line citations. Suggestions for additional entries in any language would be most welcome. They should be sent to Ian Woodfield, School of Creative Arts, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast BT7 1NN, Northern Ireland, or e-mailed to <i.woodfield@qub.ac.uk>.

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REVIEWS

John Cunningham. *The Consort Music of William Lawes 1602–1645*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2010. xxiv, 350 pp. ISBN 978-0-95468-097-8. \$95.

The advent of a new book on the consort music of William Lawes, eye-catchingly jacketed in a reproduction of the recently discovered portrait on which the more famous half-length copy in Oxford (traditionally said to represent the composer) was based, will have whetted the interest of many readers of this journal. True, Lawes has been pretty well served by writers over the past fifty years. Murray Lefkowitz’s revelatory monograph (1960), David Pinto’s penetrating study of the consort and dance music (1995), and a collection of essays edited by Andrew Ashbee (1998) have all helped to consolidate his standing as the creator of some of the most bold and innovative chamber music of his time. But now that critical editions of the greater part of his output are available, as well as some admirable and stylish recordings, there is room for fresh assessments. Having completed a doctoral dissertation on Lawes’s consort music (University of Leeds, 2007) and published articles on some of its lesser-known aspects—notably the pieces for harp consort and for lyra viols—John Cunningham is in many ways well placed to respond to this challenge.

Arguably a subtitle such as “A Study of the Autograph Manuscripts” would have made the book’s character more readily apparent. As it turns out, Cunningham says nothing about the rediscovered portrait, but merely cites in a footnote to his preface the article by Dr. Russell Blacker and David Pinto in *Early Music* 37 (May 2009) that brought it to the notice of the music world. The preface sets out essential facts of Lawes’s life, followed by a couple of paragraphs of reception history (including appreciation of Arnold Dolmetsch’s role in the early revival of Lawes’s music) and a statement of aims and objectives (“to address several issues concerning Lawes’s music not dealt with in previous studies, and to build upon the existing body of knowledge to advance our understanding of Lawes as a composer”). It also outlines the book’s plan. First, there will be an account of the select group within Charles I’s music establishment for which Lawes is believed to

have composed many of his chief instrumental works. Next, Lawes's autograph manuscripts will be re-examined, with the purpose of discovering what they can reveal about the chronology of his works and the compositional processes involved in their creation. The author's findings will then be applied to each of the main branches of Lawes's chamber music in turn: the lyra viol trios; the "Royall Consort"; the viol consorts of four, five, and six parts; the fantasia-suites for one or two violins, bass viol, and organ; the harp consorts; and the duos for bass viols and organ. Despite containing information that is not repeated elsewhere, such as details of the composer's court appointment, this preface is not covered by the otherwise excellent index, and its physical separation from the main body of the text by acknowledgements, abbreviations, and a note on editorial procedure may cause some readers to skip it. This would be a pity.

In Chapter 1 Cunningham draws on recent research in order to sketch the nature and organization of Charles I's musical establishment, especially the group of "Lutes, Viols and Voices" that performed in private parts of Whitehall Palace where only privileged persons were allowed entry. Lawes was appointed to this group in April 1635 in place of the lutenist John Lawrence. It is noted that provision was in place for the care and tuning of organs in the king's lodgings—an important consideration if fantasia-suites or bass viol duos with organ were to be played there. The lack of contemporary descriptions of such music-making makes it difficult for Cunningham to add very much color or substance to what others have written, and his unwillingness to indulge in fanciful speculation is commendable. Nevertheless the reader is largely left to guess at the extent to which Lawes—who took part in the masque *The Triumph of Peace* as a countertenor singer and theorbist, and whose idiomatic writing for lyra and division viol suggests he was no mean practitioner with the bow—would have been involved in rehearsing and playing the compositions that form the subject matter of this book.

Chapter 2 scrutinizes the surviving autograph manuscripts, including the songbook, British Library, Add. MS 31432 (which contains some pieces for solo lyra viol but no instrumental consort music). Several reveal their royal associations by having their

leather covers stamped with the Stuart arms in gold. Probably no more than a decade and a half separates the earliest manuscript from the latest, yet some quite striking variations in the composer's handwriting are apparent, for example in the forms of clef he uses or the way he signs his name. There can be no question that a comprehensive investigation of how Lawes's characterful music script and signature changed, either over time or because of the nature of the task, has been badly needed, and the author is to be congratulated for undertaking this detective work so capably.

Cunningham argues that the two folio score books, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Mus. Sch. B.2 and B.3, mainly contain compositional drafts: that is to say, they are not retrospective compilations. The drafts in the former seem to date roughly from between 1633—they include music for *The Triumph of Peace*, first performed in February 1634—and 1639, and those in the latter from between 1638 and 1640. Perhaps the most significant redating proposed is of the Bodleian partbooks and organ book, MSS Mus. Sch. D.238–40 and D.229, which are assigned to the period c. 1638–41, though it is accepted that some of the pieces they contain—notably the fantasia-suites for one and two violins, bass viol, and organ—had probably been composed before Lawes's official court appointment. Light is thrown on the lyra viol partbook (sole survivor from a set of three) in the Houghton Library at Harvard University, which Cunningham dates to c. 1630–33. Lefkowitz located this just in time to add a postscript to the preface of his book on Lawes, but the article he intended to publish about it did not materialize. It contains eighteen trios for three lyra viols by Lawes in autograph tablature, as well as eight anonymous pieces copied by an unidentified scribe. The Shirley partbooks, British Library, Add. MSS 40657–61—believed to date from between c. 1625 and 1633—are confirmed as containing the earliest examples of Lawes's musical handwriting. Into them the budding composer copied music by Sandrin (Pierre Regnault), Vecchi, Marenzio, Monteverdi, Lupo, White, Coprario, Ferrabosco II, Ward, Ford, and Ives, and a few pieces of his own: some three- and four-part aires, and a five-part fantasia and “In [n]omine” (later renamed *On the Playnesong*). It has occasionally been thought that Lawes had a hand in some other early Caroline

manuscripts such as British Library, MS R.M. 24.k.3, Bodleian Library, MS Tenbury 302, and Oxford, Christ Church, Mus. MSS 725–7, but Cunningham dismisses these suggestions. One minor quibble concerns the “distinctive signs” at the beginning of Ives’s aire for lyra viol, “M^{ris} Anne Forests Choyce,” in Christ Church MS 727 (see p. 110). Though their meaning is debatable, they are not—contrary to Cunningham’s claim—the same as the *segno* in MS R.M. 24.k.3, the purpose of which is to show the exact point where repetition of a second strain begins in some of Coprario’s fantasia-suites. Although the profusion of graphological detail, and the caution that surrounds some of the author’s conclusions, does not make for easy reading, this chapter is probably the most important in the book. The inclusion of more than sixty well-reproduced facsimiles—snapshots, as it were, of the composer at work—helps one to follow the arguments. There is also a useful appendix of “Source Descriptions” that contains inventories of all the autograph manuscripts, laid out with exemplary clarity.

Chapters 3 to 8 discuss each of the main categories of Lawes’s works in turn. They are illustrated by over fifty music examples, generally well chosen and well presented, though the idea of highlighting “sighing motifs” by enclosing them in oblong boxes, as on pp. 141 and 243, should perhaps have been resisted. Much of the chapter on the lyra viol music is a revision of the author’s article in the *Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* 43 (2006), but it is no bad thing to have material repeated here in slightly different form. Cunningham sees pieces for solo viol as having been “largely composed for and played by amateurs,” whereas duos and trios were mainly the province of professionals. No doubt there is truth in this antithesis, though one can well imagine musicians like Ferrabosco and Dietrich Stoeffken delighting courtly audiences with their solo playing. One difficulty with any investigation of the ensemble repertory is that out of more than fifty known lyra trios by Lawes only six survive whole. With autograph material limited to the isolated partbook at Harvard, our knowledge depends heavily on secondary sources, such as Christ Church Mus. MSS 725–7 and a partbook in the Dolmetsch collection at Haslemere, MS II.B.3. Cunningham gives an authoritative account of the relationships between these sources and the variant

versions of some pieces that appear in them. He discusses viol tunings, such as the triadic “harp-way” tunings that Lawes helped to bring into vogue and the “eights” tuning used in the majority of his trios, but (presumably deliberately) is silent on the subject of lyra viols with sympathetic strings. (Peter Holman’s important essay “‘An Addicion of Wyer Stringes beside the Ordenary Stringes’: The Origin of the Baryton,” in *Companion to Contemporary Musical Thought*, ed. John Paynter et al. [London and New York: Routledge, 1992], pp. 1098–1115, is not mentioned.) Yet Lawes must surely have been aware of such instruments. Coprario, his teacher, had restrung and probably played on a “lyra” in 1610 belonging to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury—perhaps the one made for him by George Gill, an applicant for a royal privilege of adding wire strings to gut-strung instruments “for the bettering of the sound.” Ferrabosco provided the court with “a new Lyra” in 1623 and “a greate Lyra” in 1627, both of which were evidently not ordinary viols; and Daniel Farrant, Lawes’s viol-playing colleague in the king’s private music, was credited by Playford with having made viols “to be strung with Lute Strings and Wire Strings, the one above the other.” If one were looking for music designed to exploit the magical resonance of sympathetic strings, the trios of Coprario, Ferrabosco, and Lawes that employ the “eights” tuning—giving nominal string pitches of *d'-a-d-A-D-A'*—and exploit the sound of unisons on adjacent strings would seem to be a promising starting point.

Much of the discussion in these chapters centers on textual matters, particularly where there is evidence of Lawes having revised his music. The “Royall Consort” naturally elicits comparisons between the “new version”—the splendid assemblage of suites for two violins, two bass viols, and two theorboes that Cunningham dates to c. 1639 on the basis of its position in Lawes’s score book, MS Mus. Sch. B.3—and the “old version”—the rather amorphous collection of four-part airs on which most of the later movements were based. In this case, revision chiefly meant re-scoring the old tenor and bass lines for a pair of bass viols. The order in which the revised movements appear in the sources is of interest, given a growing tendency to perform suites of airs in a hierarchical progression from gravest to lightest; so too is the accretion of entirely

new movements such as fantasias and echo airs. Cunningham points out that the new Fantazy in D minor “comes early in the main sequence” in MS Mus. Sch. B.3, ahead of other pieces in that key, whereas its counterpart in D major—the only piece in the collection in which both theorboes are required to use a bottom diapa-son course tuned to *A'*—was apparently “somewhat of an afterthought” and “does not have the same corresponding pride of place at the head of the D sequence.” On the other hand it should be noted that the latter *is* given pride of place in what Pinto has called “the well-connected set” of partbooks copied by Stephen Bing, Oxford, Christ Church, Mus. MSS 754–9. Despite the order of composition, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that Lawes wanted to crown the sequences of D minor and D major pieces in his “Royall Consort” with these fantasias.

Cunningham praises Lawes’s music for viol consort as “an impressive testament to his ability to compose flexible and imaginative pieces within a contrapuntal framework,” but his commentary on this rich and relatively well-known repertory occasionally verges on the simplistic. Discussing the composer’s “daring use of harmonic shifts, especially in codas,” he quotes the final measures of the second fantasia from the six-part set in F with the comment: “A perfect example of this is found at the end of Fantazy [VdGS No.] 93 in F which moves from a cadence in the tonic to a short coda introduced by an augmented chord in second inversion” (pp. 152–3). But that “cadence” is hardly a cadence at all, and nothing is said about the remarkable manner in which it has been approached. The “marvellous organic growth from the ground up” (in Pinto’s vivid phrase) that has begun with the two bass viols in measure 28, the infectious gaiety of the syncopated imitation and eighth-note figuration, and the way the contrapuntal and harmonic fabric from measure 33 onward replicates itself in varied form eight measures later (from measure 41 to the corona signs), all combine to suggest the Caroline equivalent of an impromptu, devil-may-care jam session, which breaks off abruptly and dramatically on the last eighth of measure 46. After this, the first chord of Cunningham’s example (a first inversion, not a second, of the augmented triad on *A*^b, resolving onto a second inversion of an F minor triad) comes as a shock, like the peripeteia of a Greek trag-

edy. What ensues is pure pathos. A dragging concatenation of strongly placed discords, and repetitions of the poignant fall from D \flat (the flattened sixth of the scale) to A, leave no doubt that Lawes wanted to affect listeners' emotions profoundly.

At several points in the autograph scores of the viol consorts it is apparent that the composer changed relatively simple lines into florid ones by adding eighth-note figuration. Cunningham observes that the six-part *Fantazia*, *Aire*, and *In Nomine in B \flat* are "full of emendations" in Mus. Sch. B.2, and points to a passage in the *In Nomine* where Lawes scraped away three of the original lines and wrote new versions over them. On pp. 172–3 he offers a partial reconstruction of the former; but the fact that the recovered lines sometimes make nonsense when set against the *cantus firmus* (e.g. Tenor I, measure 32) rather undermines confidence in its accuracy.

A slightly more revealing piece of detection involves the ending of the first movement of *Fantasia-Suite No. 8 in D* for violin, bass viol, and organ (pp. 195–6). At measures 139f, it seems, Lawes originally wrote a series of half notes in the upper stave of the organ part, producing a chain of 6/3 triads with the bass viol; but he smudged this out while the ink was wet and substituted a canon at the unison between the violin and organ. Cunningham attaches much importance to this particular movement, even going so far as to call it "perhaps *the* pivotal piece in Lawes's oeuvre" (p. 211). In it he sees the composer "exploring the possibilities of elaborate divisions in both violin and bass viol." From a performer's point of view, on the other hand, the interplay among all three instruments is as important as individual dexterity. Just before the closing measures that Cunningham quotes, a florid figure—a gradually ascending sequence of upward-leaping sixths—undergoes a process of progressive augmentation, being heard first in sixteenths (violin, measure 134), then eighths (organ left hand, measures 135–6), then quarters (organ right hand, measures 136–8), and finally half notes (bass viol, measures 139–44, with the canonic melody of violin and organ descanting above). What does this tell us about the balance of timbres between strings and chamber organ that Lawes had in mind? On the basis of its unique inclusion in his score book, MS Mus. Sch. B.2,

Cunningham presents a well-argued case for Lawes having composed this fantasia in about 1638 to take the place of an earlier (and now lost) movement, at a time when he was preparing new autograph parts of his sixteen fantasia-suites in MSS Mus. Sch. D.238–40 and D.229. (Presumably the flamboyant passage inserted into the first movement of the A minor fantasia-suite with two violins, which Cunningham quotes on pp. 207–8, dates from around the same time.) The author goes on to ponder the question of cross-influence between Lawes and Jenkins during the decade or so when both were composing fantasia-suites for violins, viol, and organ and were starting to incorporate passages of division-writing into them. Mutual influence there must surely have been, despite differences in temperament and circumstances between the two men.

Chapter 7 is devoted to Lawes's compositions for "the Harpe, Base Violl, Violin and Theorbo." Rejecting earlier ideas that the harp parts were meant for a gut-strung triple harp, Cunningham opts firmly for an Irish harp with thirty-eight or more strings of brass wire. (His reasons are given more fully in his article "Some Consorts of Instruments are sweeter than others': Further Light on the Harp of William Lawes's Harp Consorts," *The Galpin Society Journal* 61 (2008), pp. 147–76.) This instrument would have had a partly chromatic range from *D* to *d'''*, but retuning of some strings might have been needed between suites. Few people have investigated this repertory in as much depth as Cunningham. He does however make some assertions that should not be allowed to pass unchallenged. First, Francis Forcer's lessons "for the Treble, Bass-Viol, and Harp" first appeared in the 1678 edition of Christopher Simpson's *Compendium of Practical Musick*, not (as stated on p. 222) in that of 1667, when Forcer was only seventeen. Secondly, the description given on pp. 228–30 of the structure of Lawes's D minor saraband—which he based on the melody of his song "O my Clarissa, thou cruel faire"—is unsound. Admittedly the autograph partbook does not say how many times the violin needs to repeat its melody before embarking on divisions. Nevertheless Lawes's intentions are clear enough. In the first double variation (A1-A2-B1-B2) the violin should play both strains of the tune again with repeats, while the bass viol begins the divisions.

Only when the second double variation is reached (A3-A4-B3-B4) does the violin play its divisions (alone in A3 and B3, in duet with the viol in A4 and B4). Cunningham's scheme results in some disagreeable counterpoint in the first double variation, and detracts from the impact of the violin's divisions in the second. The movement's structure is correctly shown in the transcription on pp. 287–92 of Lefkowitz's book.

To two of his pavans for harp consort (*Musica Britannica* 21, nos. 9 and 10) Lawes attached the names of Cormack MacDermott, the Irish harper, and Coprario. The most credible explanation of this still seems to be Peter Holman's conjecture that the harp parts are short scores of pavans by the two composers in question, to which Lawes added florid violin and viol parts, with the theorbo taking a thoroughbass role. Holman wrote: "Since the originals of both pieces are lost, we cannot be sure how much of them is retained in Lawes's versions. Lefkowitz described [these two pieces] as consorts 'upon a bass theme' by Cormack and Coprario, but the example of Lawes's pavan and alman for two bass viols and organ based on Ferrabosco (ii) makes it likely that their harp parts contain the original pieces more or less complete. [...] It is also possible that the harp part of [the Cormack pavan] is a unique survival: an original solo harp piece by a 17th-century Irish harper." Cunningham quotes part of this passage on p. 237, but then turns Holman's conclusion on its head by stating: "This seems to confirm Holman's suggestion that only the theorbo part of [the Coprario pavan] contains the original composition." In this context it should be remembered that Coprario, too, was familiar with Irish harps. Early in James I's reign he and Cormack had both served the Earl of Salisbury; and in 1613 Coprario and the queen's Irish harper, Daniel Callinder alias O'Cahill, traveled together to Heidelberg for Princess Elizabeth's wedding in the entourage of Ludovick Stuart, Duke of Lennox—the same Lennox who as Lord Steward at the time of the queen's funeral in 1619 entertained the French ambassador extraordinary, the Marquis de Tremouille, with supper at Whitehall, followed by dramatic and musical events including a concert given in the late queen's bedchamber by "the Irish-harpp, a violl, & mr [Nicholas] Lanyer, excellently singinge & playinge on the lute." Cunningham speculates that the harpist

and violist on that occasion may have been Philip Squire and Ferrabosco; but could they perhaps have been Daniel O’Cahill and Coprario? Lawes’s most demanding pieces for harp consort, such as the two “homage pavans” and the D minor Fantazy, may likewise have been intended for performance in Charles I’s privy chamber before a select group of auditors, as Cunningham suggests.

The author also envisages much the same function and audience for Lawes’s pieces for two bass viols and organ, for which he proposes a date of c. 1638. Seven such pieces survive, all found in autograph sources: two pavans, four almans or aires, and a corant. Most (perhaps all) were based on earlier consort pieces. The organ part of the G minor pavan, for example, is a reduction of Lawes’s four-part pavan, VdGS No. 101, one of the miscellaneous airs associated with the old version of the “Royall Consort,” while that of the C major pavan uses the outer parts of a five-part pavan by Ferrabosco. Transmogrifications of this sort are grist to Cunningham’s detective mill, as is the curious case of the C major aire that Lawes left incomplete in both his score and organ book. As a rule in these duos the borrowed piece is continuously present in the keyboard part, providing a foundation on which Lawes superimposes two viol parts of equal compass and prominence. Their lines may be slow and ardent, or playfully inventive; but when a strain is repeated they break into nimble figuration, which tends to become more extravagantly brilliant as the piece proceeds. In the autographs Lawes describes the C major pavan and alman as “sett to the Organ and 2 division Base Violls,” or “Sett for 2 Deuision Basses to the Organ,” and Cunningham states that “these are the earliest references to a ‘division viol’ ”(p. 253). This may be so, though it should be noted that in London, Royal College of Music, MS 921 (a manuscript made for Sir Nicholas Le Strange), Jenkins headed a group of his own aires “2: DIVIS: BASES. AND ORGAN,” and that these pieces “appear to have been in circulation as a group by the late 1630s” (p. 252). One suspects that the term might already have been coming into use among violists and instrument makers by the mid-1630s. Cunningham waxes quite philosophical on the rival merits of improvised and composed divisions, and on the “role of notation” in composition and perfor-

mance; but there seems to be no question that at their best Lawes's pieces for two bass viols and organ represent variation-writing of a high order.

This is an ambitious and wide-ranging book. Its investigation into Lawes's autograph manuscripts is invaluable, and the refinements it proposes in the chronological ordering of his compositions will need to be taken into account by future scholars. What one misses most, perhaps, is a sense of just how extraordinary Lawes's music can sometimes be. Music lovers seeking insight into the composer's creative mind may not necessarily find what they are looking for here. But it would be unfair to fault the author for failing to do what he did not set out to do. On the jacket the publisher justly claims: "This book will be of interest to scholars working on English music in the Early Modern period, but also to those interested in source studies, compositional process and the function of music in the Early Modern court." On its own terms, Cunningham's study deserves to be esteemed as a scrupulous and positive addition to musicological literature.

Christopher D. S. Field

Peter Holman. *Life After Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch.* Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2010. xxii, 394 pp. ISBN 978-1-84383-574-5. \$90.

Some years ago I heard the Dutch cellist Anner Bylsma recount a highly imagined tale of a visit to the "last gamba player in existence," creeping up to a creaking door, opened carefully to reveal...C. F. Abel, about to be buried with his gamba, an instrument then hopelessly out of date. Abel's death in 1787 has been a convenient date for marking the end of the viol era and the triumph of the violin/cello family, like the death of the last native Cornish speaker in 1777 putting an end to a language that had been dying for some time.

Peter Holman's excellent new book, part of Boydell & Brewer's series *Music in Britain, 1600–1900*, paints quite a different picture of the time both before and after Abel, who was definitely *not* buried with his viol. The premise of the book is that the gamba continued to be played throughout the nineteenth century,

and though musical tastes changed tremendously during that time, there was a continuous line to the famous Dolmetsch concerts that heralded the early music revival in 1889. It is a readable and valuable story of composers, instrument-makers, performers both professional and amateur, and the place of the viol in British society. It is a big area to cover, until now largely overlooked. This is a well-researched book that anyone interested in the viol will want to read.

The author begins with the date of Purcell's last complete fantasia for viols, August 31, 1680, but in his introduction Holman provides a quick earlier history of the viol. Within a few pages, the decline of the viol is noted, actually the decline of the treble and tenor viols, ground that Mr. Holman has covered before in his *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court, 1540–1690* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). The first chapter, "Professional Players in Restoration England," deals with foreign visitors, mostly from Germany, eager to learn the techniques of English viol players. August Kühnel visited in 1682, and he may have played his new duets with another recent arrival, the Moravian Gottfried Finger. Kühnel returned to Germany but Finger stayed to join James II's Catholic chapel. Holman carefully delineates how the style of Finger's compositions shows English influence. It is fortunate that Philip Falle (1646–1742), diplomat and viol player, was able to travel in France and the Netherlands around the turn of the eighteenth century. His great collection of viol music was bequeathed to Durham Cathedral (GB-DRc), and Holman takes us through connections with Finger and "Mr. De Ste Colombe Le Fils," and the wide-ranging music preserved there.

As Holman documents in Chapter 2, with the rise of the middle class in the eighteenth century there was a thirst for culture. The bass viol lost the aristocratic connections it once had and became a mainstay in amateur music clubs, particularly in Oxford and Cambridge. Here the argument for an unbroken line gets a bit weaker. Gambas, cellos, and basses have had their names mixed up, and any player today has had to explain the different names and instruments. "Bass viol" can mean double bass or bass viola da gamba, or even cello. There is "bass violin" to confuse matters. Someone attending a concert might not count the number of pegs or know

the differences between the cello and the gamba. Holman demonstrates that people continued to play the gamba, often playing current music, such as flute or violin solos transposed down an octave.

It could not happen in other countries, but in England a coal merchant and viol player could become a concert promoter. Such was Thomas Britton (1644–1714), who played in his own concerts and entertained Handel. In Chapter 3, “Immigrants in Early Eighteenth-Century London,” Holman tracks down the mystery of who would have played the viol parts that Handel wrote in London in 1724, particularly for the Parnassus scene in *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, HWV17. It is an elaborate story and a detailed look at this exotic work. The player in question was David Boswillibald, a double bass player with connections to Geminiani.

In Chapter 4 Holman uses what he calls the cult of the exotic as an important reason why some people continued to play the viol. Exoticism usually implies borrowing from other cultures, such as the Turkish effects in Mozart’s *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, so it is an overstatement to describe as exotic what is merely colorful and eccentric. His chapter centers around Frederick Hintz, a Moravian immigrant and a prolific instrument-maker. Hintz advertised his instruments in 1763: gamba, English guitar, mandolin, viola d’amore, dulcimer, solitaire, lute, harp, cymbal, trumpet marine, and Aeolian harp. Why was he making tenor viols in the 1760s? They were probably made for women or children to play as bass viols. Hintz was a part of the Moravian Brotherhood, with their interest in music-making and beautiful craftsmanship. Along with old instruments, the eighteenth century saw an interest in newly invented instruments, such as the *pandola* and the *viola angelica*. Some invented an instrument in order to be the only one who could perform on it. There is the tragic-comic story of John Joseph Merlin (1735–1803), inventor of inline skates, who played the violin while roller-skating and was unable to “retard his velocity” as described by Thomas Busby in his *Concert Room and Orchestra Anecdotes of Music and Musicians, Ancient and Modern* (London, 1825), with predictable results. Holman meticulously evokes a London teeming with activity and search for amusement.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the central character is Abel, and the heart of Holman's book is a serious look at the man and the music. The Grove Music Online (Walter Knappe et al.) has only a few paragraphs on Abel, his involvement in concert life in London from 1759 with J. C. Bach, his comfortable place in society, the Gainsborough connection, with a rather dismissive view of his music as "generally genial, energetic and light-hearted...there is little trace of deep emotion." Abel was one of many German musicians and instrument-makers flooding into England to escape the Seven Years' War, supplanting Italian musicians, and creating an interest in instrumental music. In a short time he came to dominate London's musical life for nearly thirty years. Chapter 5 documents his early concerts in England when he also played harpsichord, cello, and the pentachord, a five-string cello invented by Edward Walpole, elder brother of Horace. It was the gamba that made him distinctive, and he soon dropped the other instruments. To the frustration of researchers, most surviving advertisements for the Bach/Abel concerts do not include full programs, rather informing Abel's patrons that he would include a "solo" on the viola da gamba. Because the viol is both a melodic and a chordal instrument, was there an accompanying instrument in these concerts? Abel's surviving solo gamba music, carefully detailed by Holman in Chapter 6, includes both solo music with many double-stops, and some with solo line and continuo or with unfigured bass lines. For the bass instrument, Abel seems to have preferred the cello, as written for in the Countess of Pembroke Sonatas (GB-Lbl, Add. MS 31697), though the modern edition has changed it to two violas da gamba (C.F. Abel, *Sonatas for Two Violas da Gamba from the Countess of Pembroke's Music Book*, ed. B. Capleton, 2 vols. [West Malvern: Asclepius Editions, 1995, 1997]). Did Abel prefer a cello accompaniment because there were more cellists available, or did he and his audiences enjoy the contrast of the two instruments? It gives a context to Andreas Lidl's duets for the same combination (A. Lidl, *Three Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Violoncello*, ed. D. Beecher [Hannacroix, NY: Dovehouse Editions, 1997]; A. Lidl, *Six Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and 'Cello*, ed. H. Miloradovitch [Albany, CA: PRB Productions, 1998]). An astonishing idea put forward by Holman is that Abel probably

played the viola parts in string quartets on the gamba, which gamba players today could well try for themselves.

Holman includes much description of Abel's playing and of his relationship with Gainsborough. After a visit from Abel, Gainsborough was moved to write: "I'm sick of Portraits and wish very much to take my Viol de Gam and walk off to some sweet Village where I can paint Landskips and enjoy the fag End of Life in quietness & ease" (*The Letters of Thomas Gainsborough*, ed. John Hayes [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001], 70). Gainsborough's portraits of Abel are discussed, and it is amazing to realize that the painter owned three Jaye viols and two Barak Normans, as well as a lute and a theorbo.

Many thought that Abel's best playing was displayed in his improvisations, deftly moving through chordal progressions, as in his Prelude in D minor, WKO 205. An obituary includes a description of Abel among friends: "it was a few only of his intimate Friends in private who were Witnesses of his most wonderful musical Powers, to come at which, a Bottle or two of good Burgundy before him, and his Viol di Gambo within his Reach, were necessary" (*St. James's Chronicle*, 28-30/6/1787). The subject of Abel's drinking is also mentioned in the Grove article, but anyone who has read W. T. Parkes's *Musical Memoirs* (London, 1830) would not think Abel's consumption out of the ordinary. Abel enjoyed his social standing and probably would have written more music if not for that, but Holman reminds us that with eighty-six compositions for the gamba, he is the most prolific for that instrument after the Baroque period. Holman gives a good description of the manuscript sources of Abel's often-overlooked solo and chamber music. His one major vocal work, *Frena le belle lagrime*, scored for soprano, obbligato viola da gamba, strings, and continuo, certainly deserves another look, and perhaps will survive the rather poor review the work received from Burney.

Many will know the beautiful portrait from 1760 of Miss Ann Ford (1737–1824), later Mrs. Philip Thicknesse, by Gainsborough (in the Cincinnati Art Museum). She is sitting with legs crossed, wearing a bright dress, holding a cittern, with her left elbow resting on a pile of music. In the background is a bass viol, her main instrument. Her other instruments were the guitar, triple harp,

musical glasses, and pianoforte, and specifically not the harpsichord, the normal realm for female musicians. Her style of performance was described by William Whitehead: “You would be desperately in love with her in half an hour & languish & die over her singing as much as she does herself.” For Holman, her performances embodied sensibility, the readiness to feel and express emotion through art espoused by Rousseau and Sterne, and it was more effective to use the viol for that, and not an instrument for showy virtuosity, such as the harpsichord or violin. She was regarded as Abel’s successor on the viol, for a few brief years, and is one of many interesting characters in Holman’s book. Elizabeth Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (1737–1794), and her cousin Margaret Georgiana, Countess Spencer (1737–1814), were prominent aristocratic lady viol players, and Holman traces their connections with Abel. He ties together manuscript collections, instrument collections, and amateur and professional players to demonstrate that in the nineteenth century the instrument never died. Perhaps players today take up the viol today for exactly the reasons Holman mentions: the beauty of the instrument, its expressiveness, and its rarity.

There were revivals of “old” music before Dolmetsch. The Academy of Ancient Music was founded in 1726. The nineteenth century saw an interest in manuscripts and prints of consort music, but only keyboard versions were published at the time. It took a German, Prince Albert, to feature a concert of Renaissance music on supposed “ancient” instruments in London in 1845. Holman singles out writer and historian Mary Louisa Armit (1851–1911) for first noticing English consort repertoire, and for recognizing the importance of John Jenkins. She used manuscripts from Bodleian Library, and may have played the viol herself. Could she be the unsung heroine of the early music revival?

Elizabeth Macdonald

John Jenkins. *Fantasia-Suites: II* for three viols (tr, B, B). Transcribed and edited by Andrew Ashbee. *Musica Britannica*, vol. 90. London: Stainer and Bell, 2010. ISBN 978-0-85249-916-0. Score

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John Jenkins Fantasia-Suites: II extends Andrew Ashbee's already considerable contributions to the viola da gamba repertoire of mid-seventeenth-century England. While many of us have played Jenkins's consort music of three to six parts, the composer's eight sets of fantasia-suites for various combinations of viols and organ are probably less familiar. The genre's development reflected the desire of composers and performers to combine the already popular fantasia with one or more dance movements such as the almain, galliard, and corant. In his well-crafted Introduction, Ashbee notes that "the three-movement pattern seems to have originated in the 1620s in the household of Charles, Prince of Wales (later Charles I), with the 24 examples composed by John Coprario. By the mid 1630s his pupil William Lawes had added two more series. John Jenkins was a good deal more prolific than either, for by his death in 1678 he had produced nearly 80 such works." This form—earning the designation "fantasia-suite" in the twentieth century—included an opening fantasia followed by two dance movements, one in duple and one in triple meter.

The primary focus of the present edition is the nine fantasia-suites classified in the *Thematic Index of Music for Viols* as Group III for treble viol, two bass viols, and organ. These works were most likely composed during the 1630s and 1640s when Jenkins enjoyed the patronage of the Derham and L'Estrange households. An additional Appendix includes twenty-nine pieces, limited to extant bass parts from a set of divisions for treble viol and two bass viols. These parts, given their stylistic characteristics, were probably composed sometime after the 1660 Restoration of Charles II.

As Ashbee discusses in his thorough Notes on the Sources, the nine fantasia-suites are found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Mus. Sch. D.241-4 and D.261. "D.241-4 comprises four string partbooks ... [including] string parts for three series of fantasia-suites by Jenkins: Viola da Gamba Society Groups III (complete), V (five of eight suites), and VI (complete). Groups III and VI were copied by [an] unidentified scribe while those from V were added by [Edward] Lowe. Organ parts to Groups III and VI

are in Bodleian MS Mus. Sch. D.261, which appears to have been regarded as part of the same original set.” The source for the twenty-nine pieces in the Appendix is MS 515 housed in Yale’s Beinecke Library in New Haven.

As with his earlier editions of Jenkins’s oeuvre, Ashbee’s latest monograph achieves the standards long associated with the Musica Britannica Trust. The Preface (in English, French, and German) offers a brief biographical snapshot of the composer’s life and background on the fantasia-suite as a genre. The more detailed Introduction expands on this discussion, providing a comprehensive listing of Jenkins’s eight collections of fantasia-suites that includes the number of suites and instrumentation for each group. Especially useful for modern performers are the footnotes provided for each set identifying the availability of modern editions or plans for forthcoming editions. Following these observations, Ashbee devotes considerable attention to probable dating and compositional characteristics of the Group III fantasia-suites that make up the majority of the edition. Ashbee argues that the substitution of the galliard with the “more up-to-date corant” and the “complexity of the division writing” (suggesting the quarter note as the beat) indicate the Group III fantasia-suites were composed at a later date than the Group I and II collections. Finally, the compositional approaches taken by Jenkins are considered, including his use of fugal writing and motivic development; application of divisions, double stops, and chords to vary texture; treatment of metric modulations and harmonic explorations; and issues of formal design offering valuable insights to both scholars and performers.

The decisions made in preparing the current edition are clearly identified in the Editorial Method section. Again, Ashbee is sensitive to both scholars and performers, confirming that the original note values from the source manuscripts have been retained and providing prefatory staves to “show the original clefs and signature at the start of each suite or set.” This is followed by a discussion of the conventions applied to accidental treatment, editorial ties, and scribal errors and omissions. The logic and specificity of Ashbee’s editorial procedures is echoed in the Notes on the Textual Commentary. The coupling of these elements with the meticu-

lously prepared Textual Commentary results in a transparent transcription that should inspire confidence in both academic and performance circles.

In the Notes on Performance, Ashbee argues convincingly that Jenkins intended the upper voice in the fantasia-suites to be performed on the treble viol (although the violin could be used as a substitute). Also included is a discussion of the Organ Parts, Tempo and Metre, Dynamics, and General Comments that suggest, “the uninhibited use of vibrato mitigates against the clear contrapuntal textures required by this music. A discreet use of vibrato to colour long notes or to highlight a melodic line, however, can be very effective.” Finally, three plates are reproduced allowing readers to view examples of the treble viol and the organ parts from the MSS 241 and 261 respectively, and the final page of the extant bass viol part from MS 515 (which includes Jenkins’s signature).

The edition is handsomely bound in a rich red hardcover binding and an appropriately heavy paper stock for the pages. Each suite is arranged in score form that includes staves for Treble Viol or Violin, Bass Viol I, Bass Viol II, and a grand staff for the Organ. The scores are neatly spaced with three to four systems per page leaving adequate room between the systems.

Performers will be pleased with the availability of separate string parts. Two sets have been prepared. The first includes Suites 1 to 5 while the second contains Suites 6 to 9. The fonts used in the parts are appropriately sized and spaced to facilitate comfortable reading even for those whose eyesight requires enhancement. No page turns are required for any of the pieces, and measure numbers are clearly marked at the beginning of each system. While a slightly heavier paper for the parts, and individual part covers made of heavier stock (instead of the single cover for all three parts), would have been nice, the quality of the parts is more than satisfactory.

The music presented in *John Jenkins Fantasia-Suites II* is stunning but quite challenging. While the quarter note carries the beat, sixteenth and thirty-second notes abound. The bass viol parts contain numerous double stops and chords. Jenkins’s complex polyphony as well as the shifts between dupla and tripla passages

demand rhythmic and metric precision. Viola da gamba performers engaging the fantasia-suites will never again suffer from fear of flying: frequent excursions above the frets occur in all parts. The highlight for the bass viols (pun intended) occurs in Suite No. 2 in A Minor, where the second bass viol soars to a death-defying cadential embellishment culminating on F5 (Example 1).



Example 1. Jenkins: Suite No. 3 in A Minor, Fantasia, mm. 39–40.

Despite the challenges, Jenkins's fantasia-suites are well worth the time invested, satisfying on both an intellectual and aesthetic level. For those interested in the art of improvisation or divisions, Jenkins's works are an invaluable resource to be studied, practiced, and performed. As Christopher Simpson explains in *The Division-Viol*, "*Diminution or Division to a Ground*, is the Breaking, either of the *Bass*, or of any higher Part In this manner of Play, which is the perfection of the *Viol*,... a man may shew the Excellency both of his Hand and Invention He that hath it not in so high a measure as to play *ex tempore* to a *Ground*, may, notwithstanding give both himself and hearers sufficient satisfaction in playing such Divisions as himself or others have made for that purpose; in the performance whereof he may deserve the Name of an excellent Artist; for here the excellency of the Hand may be shewed as well as in the Other, and the Musick perhaps better" Jenkins's treatment of this "perfection of the *Viol*" in his fantasia-suites is a tour de force of compositional ingenuity and virtuosic display. Perhaps most revealing from a pedagogical standpoint are the dance movements. Each of the nine fantasia-suites includes an Almain and a Corant. With the exception of the first suite, these binary-form dances are composed with the first strain of each section played in its basic form (Example 2).

In the second strain, Jenkins embellishes all of the viol parts with divisions (Example 3). These divisions, however, are more than just the diminution of individual lines in the first strain. Each

Example 2. Jenkins: Suite No. 7 in D Minor, Almain, mm. 1–2.

voice in the opening stretto begins with the same arpeggiated motive derived from thematic material of the first strain. The bass viols extend this motive more faithfully while the treble viol, after repeating the initial arpeggiated figure an octave higher, “borrows” and embellishes the tonicizing C# from Bass Viol II’s second measure in the first strain. This is sophisticated music that will continue to reveal its depth with continued playing and study.

Example 3. Jenkins: Suite No. 7 in D Minor, Almain, mm. 10–11.

All nine suites begin with a fantasia that, as Ashbee notes, opens “with an extended fugal section as carefully worked out as anything in his viol fantasias.” Similarly, Jenkins’s treatment and development of his subjects is as varied and creative as the subjects themselves. Many of the fantasias begin with the familiar canzona rhythm. Others, however, seem to either echo or anticipate “old friends” from the viol consort repertoire. The opening theme of the Fantasia from the third suite (Example 4) seems to recall Byrd’s *Fair Britain Isle* (Example 5) and look forward to Purcell’s *Fantasia No. 9 a4* (Example 6). Nonetheless, it can be argued that Jenkins’s theme exceeds the affective weight of his “col-

leagues,” emphasizing both the minor second associated with grief and the diminished fourth associated with death.



Example 4. Jenkins: Suite No. 3 in A Minor, Fantasia, mm. 1–4.



Example 5. Byrd: *Fair Britain Isle*, mm. 1–4.



Example 6. Purcell: Fantasia No. 9, mm. 1–3.

The transcending moment of the edition is the seventh suite in D minor. As Ashbee suggests, it “is undoubtedly one of Jenkins’s finest works. Its magnificent opening is a marvelous example of sustained growth and expansion from a single idea, having that breadth and dignity so characteristic of Jenkins’s music, and blends a subtle use of chromaticism (present even in the opening motif which employs both the major and minor sixth above the tonic), imaginative treatment of suspensions, and the continual interplay of long chains of melodies” (Example 7). Once again, consort players may experience *déjà vu* recalling the striking unison transformed to a minor second dissonance that Gibbons employs to open his Fantasia No. 3 *à 6*.

Jenkins’s breathtaking introduction is extended for forty-four bars without a definitive cadence. What follows is a sequence of increasingly complex divisions. The motive from the introduction, however, is not abandoned. It permeates the divisions, functioning as a *cantus firmus* that is passed between viols in a manner reminiscent of the *Browning* variations. In fact, the final divisions of Jenkins’s fantasia seem to echo the triumphant conclusion of

Example 7. Jenkins: Suite No. 7 in D Minor, Fantasia, mm. 1–8.

Byrd's *Browning*, shifting to a tripla flurry of diminutions supported by the now organ-voiced cantus.

The music offered in *John Jenkins's Fantasia-Suites: II* is both technically and intellectually demanding. It displays a compositional depth that invites viola da gamba players to study, play, perform, and revisit with ever-increasing returns. The exemplary quality of this edition coupled with the availability of the parts for performers make this a collection to be savored.

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Ted Conner is a Professor in the Music Department at Muhlenberg College, where he teaches courses in music history and directs the Collegium Musicum and Jazz Improvisation Ensemble. He received a B.M. in Jazz Studies from New England Conservatory, a B.A. in Social Sciences from the Johns Hopkins University, an M.M. in Music Theory from the University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. in Music History and Music Theory from the University of Connecticut. He is Artistic Director of Nights Black Bird, an early music ensemble in which he plays viola da gamba and lute; Nights Black Bird has concertized throughout the northeastern United States. As a jazz performer, he leads the award-winning Ted Conner Quartet, in which he plays guitar and guitar synthesizer. His articles have been published in *Theory and Practice*, *In Theory Only*, and *The Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America*. He has also transcribed and edited a number of early music editions including John Moss's *Lessons for the Basse-Viol (1671)*, volumes I and II (Dove House Editions) and treble viol editions of John Playford's *The Division Violin* in two volumes (VdGSA). His edition of Robert Jones's *The Second Booke of Songs and Ayres* is being released by PRB Publications later this year.

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