

G065

The Viol No. 2

April 2006

Dietrich Buxtehude *Violadagamba Solo* (Facsimile and Edition) G065

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These volumes from Edition Guentersberg continue its series of viol music with some fine editions of solos and duets for bass viol. In most cases a facsimile of the original is available, giving the player all the information.

The editions are, as we have come to expect from Edition Guentersberg, excellent, with informative prefaces and editorial decisions clearly marked in the main score. This process is very sensible in the volumes reviewed here, based as they are on single sources. The continuo realisations are discreet and idiomatic, and there are multiple versions of the bass part to allow for varying continuo combinations.

The authorship of the Buxtehude *Violadagamba Solo* has long been disputed, and I can see why; the piece is rather uninspired when viewed next to the trio-sonatas and the other pieces involving solo viol. The similarity of the figuration to that in the famous *Jubilate Domino* is put forward as a reason to confirm Buxtehude as the author (the source does, in any case, clearly attribute the piece to Buxtehude), but the lack of interplay between the solo part and the continuo, as well as the unadventurous harmony and lack of contrast are not typical. Perhaps it is best to accept the opinion of the editors ...*doubts as to the authorship should not prevent one from playing this beautiful and, in the viola da gamba literature, unique work.*

The 'Solo' is in a fairly typical mid-seventeenth century 'patchwork' form, having an opening *Sonata* with more or less constant semiquaver scalar figuration; a triple-time section comes next, whose passagework is rather similar to that of the *Sonata*. A duple-time *allegro* follows, which sounds as if it might turn fugal, but the bass part resolutely avoids imitating the solo part. The piece ends with a slightly perfunctory 'adagio'.

No great technical demands are made on the player; there is the occasional foray above the frets (to d). The infrequent chords are all straightforward. The bass part is extremely simple, being purely a harmonic support for the solo part and having minimal thematic input. I think it would be best performed without another bowed bass.

Andrew Ken

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G065 Buxtehude Solo
G033 Köh. Samben deos
G062-63 } Abel 6 Easy Son.
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