

## Reviews

edited by Elizabeth Macdonald

### Anonymous, Aires & Symphonys, Opera Tunes and Lessons for viola da gamba solo (London, ca. 1710)

ed. G. and L. von Zadow. Edition Güntersberg, G220, 2012, ISMN 979-0-50174-220-2. €16,00.

### Johann Gottlieb Graun/Hesse, Sonata in C major, viola da gamba, b.c.

ed. M. O'Loughlin, G. von Zadow. Edition Güntersberg, G225, 2012, ISMN 979-0-50174-225-7. €19,00.

### Johann Christian Bach, Four Sonatas for Cembalo/Pianoforte and Viola da Gamba

ed. T. Fritsch, G. von Zadow. Edition Güntersberg, G226 (Sonatas I, II), ISMN 979-0-50174-226-4; G227 (Sonatas III, IV), ISMN 979-0-50174-227-1. €17.50 each.

Since its beginning in 1998, Edition Güntersberg from Heidelberg has made a point of making available music centered around the viol—solo sonatas, concertos, chamber music, and consort music—at a time when there were no other versions in print. Now their catalog is extensive and impressive. Günter and Leonore von Zadow should be commended for their practical and affordable editions. In these recent releases from 2012, the publishers have had the additional help of authorities in their respective fields.

## G220

The *Aires & Symphonys*, or in the more complete title *A Choice Collections of ye most favorite Song tunes, Aires & Symphonys out of the late Operas, Curiously contriv'd & fitted to the Bass Viol by the best Masters*, was published by John Walsh of London in 1710. This puts us in the area of expertise of Peter Holman, whose excellent book *Life After Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010) tracks down every viol player and composer in Britain. The

Güntersberg edition features an introduction by Holman, and as in his book, he identifies the (anonymous) Masters as one Pietro Chaboud, a member of the Italian Haymarket Theatre orchestra, and sometime chamber music partner of Pepusch. He also identifies the Italian operas, the sources of the fifteen aires (there are no symphonys), and the dates of their London productions. The composers of those operas are Giovanni Bononcini, Francesco Conti, and Francesco Mancini, among others.

The unaccompanied pieces are designed for the amateur viol player and are a reflection of the rage for Italian opera at the time. There are some chords and some written-out ornamentation. The editors have changed the clef from treble played down the octave to alto clef, and the introduction deciphers the ornaments. The white-hot popularity of Italian opera in London drove the publication of arrangements for flute, violin, and keyboard, and it is fascinating to see that the viol was also represented.

Included in the original and in the Güntersberg edition is *A Suit of Lessons for the Bass Viol*, not lessons at all, rather twenty-seven dances—Corrants, Jiggs, etc.—some of which are quite challenging. They confirm that Signor Chaboud, who played flute and bassoon in the Haymarket orchestra, was a very good viol player.

## G225

The C major Sonata by Graun/Hesse takes us to the world of the Berlin court of Frederick the Great, and in this edition the preface is by Michael O'Loughlin, author of *Frederick the Great and His Musicians: The Viola da Gamba Music of the Berlin School* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008). Johann Gottlieb Graun (b. 1702 or 1703) was Frederick's concertmaster and a prolific composer. He wrote a number of pieces for the viol, even though Frederick's head had been turned by the cello. The viol was still being played by a forceful virtuoso named Ludwig Christian Hesse, the son of Ernst Christian Hesse who studied with Forqueray and Marais in Paris. The son, Ludwig Christian, was famous for his formidable technique, and though there are no compositions by him, there are transcriptions in his hand, and it is thanks to his influence that there are so many pieces written for the viol by the Berlin composers Graun, C. P. E. Bach, and Christoph Schaffrath.

Until the massive library of manuscripts, thought lost during the Second World War, was returned to the Sing-Akademie in Berlin in 2001, there was only the Hesse transcription of the Graun C major sonata for gamba and b.c. available. The Güntersberg edition is the first to include both versions, and O'Loughlin's theory is that the Hesse version is somewhat simplified, perhaps for the fingers of the Prince. It is still quite demanding, with Graun's trademark thirds and sixths in evidence. It is valuable to have this chance to compare both versions of this remarkable and virtuosic sonata. The score for the edition is not realized, and it also includes a bass part with figures.



