

**Gottfried Finger
Sünching Manuscript
Sonatas 3 and 5 for two bass viols and bc
Güntersberg G335 and G337**

Some twenty years ago a collection of music in Schloß Sünching near Regensburg began to attract the attention of musicologists, and one extensive manuscript in it for two bass viols will be of particular interest to readers of this journal. Fred Flassig, whose definitive study of German bass viol music in the eighteenth century will be familiar to many of us, and Robert Rawson, who has worked intensively on Gottfried Finger, were given access to the anonymous manuscript and believe the pieces to be by Finger, citing, amongst other factors, concordances with a *Pastorelle* in the Bodleian Library. They date the pieces to around 1670, before he came to London, during his association with

Sheet music reviews are coordinated by Jenny Tribe, 63 Leckhampton Road, Cheltenham, Glos, GL53 0BS (email jenny_tribe@hotmail.com). Please send any music direct to her. If you are interested in joining the panel of reviewers, Jenny would be pleased to hear from you.

Music reviews

Bishop Liechtenstein-Kastelkorn's musical establishment at Olmütz (now Olomouc) in Moravia, where Biber also worked.

What is unresolved is whether there is a continuo part missing. The chordal nature of our instrument and the particular style of writing around the turn of the century mean that a figured bass part, as any keyboard player who knows this music will tell you, is often close to superfluous. In Marais' first book of *Pièces de viole* of 1686 we see how the typical eighteenth century viol suite with accompaniment gradually emerges from its seventeenth century solo model. Most pieces in the set work well in either incarnation. Similarly August Kühnel in his preface to the *Sonate ô Partite* of 1698 writes that the first three trios and the four last solo suites can be played with or without continuo. This seems very much the ethos of Finger's sonatas, which lend themselves to either performance option. Editors Günter and

Leonora von Zadow have taken Robert Rawson's advice about the missing bass part and commissioned harpsichordist and musicologist Wolfgang Kostujak to add one. This consists mostly of taking the lower of the alternating viol parts and adding some figures, but now and again he has decided to make a first inversion into a root position, sometimes even an octave lower than necessary, giving the music a heavier texture than perhaps intended. But his fugal imitations are invariably ingenious and convincing. Setting aside the slight discomfort of not knowing exactly what the composer had in mind, these are attractive, wonderfully idiomatic sonatas, fun to play through and, as so often, we can be grateful to Edition Güntersberg for widening our knowledge of the solo repertoire with their useful and scholarly editions.

More please!

Charles Medlam
