

more about why it had that title, but although the title is translated correctly in the preface, including the 'two' missing from the front cover, there is no mention of any story behind the 'eyeglasses' themselves. However Beethoven, who played viola, and his close friend and amateur cellist, Baron Nikolaus Zmeskall von Domanovecz, both had poor eyesight by the time this piece was written, and would have needed their spectacles to play it.

Although the piece was written around 1796 it was not published until 1912. Elizabeth Macdonald has again transposed it to a better key (now in G major) and shared out the parts to make it more of an equal duet. She has added chords and changed some figurations where they would have been impossible on a viol, using instead the sort of Abel-type arpeggiated patterns which sound effective and are relatively easy to play. I really enjoyed playing this piece but am sorry that it only includes one movement (Allegro) and for some reason (unspecified in the preface) Elizabeth has not included the Minuetto and Trio.

The edition includes a score and two separate parts, and the print in the parts is nice and big! The Mozart is laid out with a blank page to avoid turning in the middle of the last movement, but in the Beethoven, the one (long) movement stretches to three and a half pages, so a quick turn is necessary, and is put in after a *molto rit*, a pause (fermata), and a quaver rest – perhaps the price one has to pay for clear parts in large print!

I look forward to playing these duets again soon, and getting to know them better.

Alison Crum

**Sainte-Colombe, Pour la basse: the pieces for Viola da Gamba solo from the manuscript M.3 of the Bibliothèque municipale of Tournus.**

**Edited by Günter and Leonore von Zadow.**

**Edition Güntersberg, G231, Heidelberg**

This is the first modern edition of the manuscript of music for solo seven-string bass viol discovered in the municipal library in the small French town of Tournus in 1992. The discovery was celebrated in 1995 by a conference and a concert there, emphasising the importance of Sainte-Colombe as a key figure in the development of the French viol, and as the teacher of Marin Marais. Although some solo pieces by Sainte-Colombe are found in the Panmure collection in the National Library in Edinburgh, the Tournus manuscript contains far more pieces, and, given its quality as a fine presentation copy, can be regarded as the more definitive version of those pieces that appear in both collections. A facsimile of the Tournus manuscript was published by Minkoff in 1998, but it is not easy to play from because of its small format and very dense notation. The present modern edition is a beautifully clear and accurate modern transcription, reproducing all the distinctive features of the manuscript, but thankfully reducing the great array of clefs in the

original (up to five in any one piece) to the more manageable standard bass and alto clefs. It contains nearly 150 pieces (a very small number of items in the manuscript having been omitted because they are by other composers). A very informative Introduction (in German and English) provides a concise explanation.

Sainte-Colombe needs no introduction to players of the French bass viol: his large set of *Concerts à deux violes esgales* (first published in 1973, from a fine manuscript copy in a hand very similar to that of the Tournus manuscript) is rightly regarded as amongst the best music for the instrument. The solo pieces in the Tournus collection are unmistakeably in the same imaginative, sometimes unpredictable, style. Both the *concerts* for two viols and the Tournus manuscript are arranged by key (starting with the largest number in D minor, followed by D major, G major and minor, and C major – there is no C minor in Tournus). But whereas the duet music was arranged in 67 separately numbered and descriptively-titled concerts, often structured continuously despite dance-style subsections, the Tournus manuscript consists of free-standing pieces with just a simple label (prelude, a range of typical dance movements, or merely *petite pièce*), from which a performer would no doubt construct a suite of choice. Only a few pieces in Tournus have evocative titles, such as *La persiliade* (presumably persillade, a parsley and herb-based sauce served with meat).

Relying on just one instrument, the Tournus collection naturally has less scope for dramatic contrast than the *concerts*. The technical demands on the player are also often more modest: a number of preludes and dances require little or no chordal playing, but still have plenty of the fast unmeasured small notes, notes perdues, and long unmeasured passages so characteristic of Sainte-Colombe. As we would expect, the low A string is used extensively, sometimes (as in the astonishing *Allemande*, no.54) creating a dramatic chordal and rhythmic build-up which takes you very far away from the original dance movement into much darker territory. The pieces where Sainte-Colombe uses his rich harmonic language stand out – upwards of 10 of the preludes, most of the sarabandes including the final *sarabande en passacaille*, many of the allemandes, and some other dances. But we also find a more light-hearted *pianelle*, a prelude with echoes, and a *vielle* (hurdy-gurdy) where scordatura tuning is used to create the appropriate rustic drones. Phrasing is indicated by means of slurs and ornaments, but only rarely is any fingering provided. A few pieces have indications of bowing, scrupulously reproduced in the Güntersberg edition: in the courante no.88, and in a few other pieces, the bowings are given in full, possibly added by a diligent but less experienced performer. In sum, this is a totally clear and reliable edition of one of the most important volumes of solo music for the bass viol.

Thomas Munk