



four parts individually, though never with the character of solo passages. In fact, the unison sections sung responsorially by female and male voices (Recordare, Jesu pie) recall rather the chorus of an ancient Greek tragedy: the individuals dissolve in the representation of the community, whose unison singing has a strophe/antistrophe structure.

Including Cherubini de facto in the canon of nineteenth-century opera composers, many interpreters have employed large forces and operatic verve, aimed at rendering a colossal and tremendous picture of the Day of Judgment (as depicted, for instance, in Verdi's *Dies irae*). Bernius's reading of the score avoids this oversimplification, offering instead a diverse yet nuanced palette accurately shaped according to the characteristically bare gestures of Cherubini's music (such as the unearthly tone produced by the high non-vibrato unison on the words 'Rex tremendae majestatis').

Another point of great interest on this Carus disc is the inclusion of one movement that is missing from all previous recordings of the work. The text of the Tractus ('Absolve, Domine'), which Cherubini did not set to music, appears here sung in Gregorian chant by the Schola Gregoriana Tübingen (track 3). In this respect, Bernius takes into account a specific indication by the composer, who at the end of the Graduale in the autograph score wrote: 'Follows the Tractus, sung by the choir. Immediately after the Tractus one says the *Dies irae*'. Due to a translation mistake in the Peters edition (ed. Rudolf Lück, 1964, page 10), this annotation has been often misunderstood: in a recent monograph on Cherubini's sacred music it is still erroneously claimed that, according to the composer, the *Dies irae* should begin immediately after the Graduale (Oliver Schwarz-Roosmann, *Luigi Cherubini und seine Kirchenmusik* (Cologne: Dohr, 2006), 200). Unfortunately, the booklet notes by Wolfgang Hochstein – who also edited the score used in this recording (Luigi Cherubini, ed. Hochstein, *Requiem in c* (Stuttgart: Carus, 1996)) – do not explain or even mention the presence of the Tractus in the disc. The listener is thus unable to judge the propriety of such a plainchant insertion in between two movements of Cherubini's setting.

Although one might have wished for a few more details in the liner notes, this finely recorded Carus super-audio CD offers a splendid account of Cherubini's C minor Requiem. This is not limited to the creation of an appropriate sound (though this is more than achieved with the high performance standards of Bernius's period-instrument ensembles), but also involves informed choices such as the reintroduction of the Tractus and an awareness of the composer's tempo indications. In helping to restore the original liturgical framework in which the work was conceived, such measures pay a fitting tribute to Cherubini's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

FABIO MORABITO



Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2012
doi:10.1017/S147857061200019X

RAPHAEL COURTEVILLE (*fl.* c1675–c1735), WILLIAM CROFT (1678–1727),
GIOVANNI BATTISTA DRAGHI (c1640–1708), GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759),
NICOLA FRANCESCO HAYM (1678–1729), JOHANN CHRISTOPH PEPUSCH (1667–1752),
HENRY PURCELL (1659–1695), JOHN WELDON (1676–1736)

MUSICAL LONDON c. 1700: FROM PURCELL TO HANDEL

Philippa Hyde (soprano), Oliver Webber (violin) / The Parley of Instruments / Peter Holman
Chandos CHAN 0776, 2010; one disc, 76 minutes

This disc sets out to illustrate what Holman describes in the accompanying booklet as the 'great change in English music' that occurred in the fifteen years between the death of Purcell and the arrival of Handel in 1710 (9). While this is essentially a story of the increasing influence and ultimate domination of the Italian



style over the English, Holman's choice of music also aims to show that the stylistic traffic was not one-way – that foreign composers who came to live in London also adopted an English accent.

This is undoubtedly the case with the music of Giovanni Battista Draghi at the start of the disc. Draghi came to London in the early 1660s with a group of Italian singers to establish an Italian opera house in London, a venture which was not successful, and on 12 February 1667 Pepys heard him sing an act of an Italian opera from memory. Draghi's Trio Sonata in G minor (in its premiere recording) is typical of the pre-Corellian Roman sonata and shares many features with the works of Lonati and Colista that appear alongside it in its English source (GB-Lbl Add. MS 33236). However, it also betrays familiarity with – and admiration for – English music of the 1660s, in particular the sectional nature, harmonic contortions and striding bass parts of the fantasias in Locke's 'Broken Consort' and 'Consort of Fower Parts'. Draghi's song 'Where art thou, God of Dreams?', which opens the disc, was composed for the stage play *Romulus and Hersilia* in 1682; it displays his compositional maturity and skill in setting English words, qualities that are familiar from his great Cecilian ode 'From Harmony, from Heavenly Harmony' (1687). However, rather than being a response to Purcell's music, Holman suggests that in this song it is Draghi who is leading the way, stimulating Purcell to 'modernise' English vocal writing (liner notes, 9).

The inclusion of Purcell's 'Tell me, some pitying angel' (*The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*) provides a mature example of the resulting style. Hyde's vocally assured performance is full of shifts of mood, and the ending is particularly effective; however, I find the opening too self-possessed emotionally, and as a result Mary comes across as indignant rather than a 'mother most distressed'. Two works from 1687 complete the scene setting for 'Musical London' before the death of Purcell: a fine, thoroughly Purcellian symphony song by the London organist Raphael Courteville, 'Creep softly, purling streams', and a suite in D minor by Nicola Matteis, the first Italian violin virtuoso to settle in England.

The 'great change' that had occurred in English music within the space of twenty years is illustrated by Handel's *Venus and Adonis*, HWV85 (c1711), and a 'Chandos' anthem (dated 1716) by Roman emigré cellist Nicola Haym; the extent to which music by these composers can be considered to be English at this date is of course debatable, but the significant factor in both cases is that the works have English texts. That of Handel's *Venus and Adonis* is by John Hughes, with whom the composer corresponded in July 1711, and, although the authorship of the music has been questioned, the work is generally considered to be Handel's first setting of English words. The music for the two arias survives, that for the recitatives requiring reconstruction, in this case by Peter Holman. It is the recording of these recitatives that justifies the otherwise somewhat misleading label 'premiere recording', since a recording with different reconstructions of the recitatives performed by Gemma Bertagnolli and Zefiro was released in 2010 (*Venus and Adonis*, Sony/Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 8869763032), and the arias are also included on The Brook Street Band's *Handel's English Cantatas* (AVIE AV2153, 2008). The bittersweet first aria is very effective, but I find the second rather weak: the text – 'Transporting joy, tormenting fears' – is dashed through at such a pace that the opposition of the emotions expressed does not have time to register, and I imagine that to a contemporary audience familiar with Purcell's 'If love's a sweet passion', the perfunctory setting of the line 'pleasure blends with pain' can only have prompted a renewed sense of loss at the death of the English Orpheus.

Nicola Haym came to London in 1700, and the anthem 'Have mercy upon me, O God', a setting of Psalm 51, was composed in 1716, when he was working for the Earl of Carnarvon (later Duke of Chandos). Holman's booklet notes describe the musical style as 'half Corellian and half Purcellian' (12), but I cannot hear any English accent in the music. It is very easy on the ear but much of it is inappropriate for the penitential text; indeed, a harmonic shift to the relative major at the words 'for I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me' is so inappropriate that it suggests that this movement (and perhaps more of the anthem) may be a contrafactum. Haym's setting of English also contains some badly misplaced accentuation that would cause even a Handel admirer to blush.

The inclusion of 'c. 1700' in the title of this disc puts a metaphorical finger on a moment in English musical history that is for many people something of a black hole between the familiar sound worlds of Purcell and Handel. What sort of music were English composers writing at the turn of the eighteenth century? A sym-



phony song by William Croft and an instrumental suite by John Weldon give the beginnings of an answer to this question. Croft's 'For rural and sincerer joys', which sets a text from Colley Cibber's *Love Makes a Man* (1700), is thoroughly Purcellian and displays Croft's close study of and admiration for Purcell's sonatas and odes. (Rather puzzlingly, Holman describes the first movement as 'a miniature French overture', but both the music and the performance are unquestionably Italianate.) Weldon was a pupil of Purcell for around a year while at Eton in 1693, and in his Suite in D minor the dissonances in the overture, the melodiousness of the minuet and the canon 'Two in One' over a ground clearly pay homage to his teacher.

The music on this disc makes a varied and interesting programme, but it does not reflect its title: both the date 'c. 1700' and the subtitle 'from Purcell and Handel' imply an exploration of music composed between 1695 and 1710, when in fact the disc contains mainly music composed before and after these dates, and only two pieces from 'c. 1700' (Croft and Weldon). While I find the 'back-story' provided by the music of Draghi and Courteville the most musically rewarding, the under-representation of music from 'c. 1700' does lead to the unjust conclusion that English composers merely aped Purcell in the decade following his death, before Handel showed them a new path. A broader picture of the adoption of Italian styles by English composers before the arrival of Handel could perhaps have been provided by the inclusion of one of the violin sonatas published by Daniel Purcell (1698) or Croft (1699). In these works the Italian style is mediated not by Henry Purcell but by Gottfried Finger, the Moravian viol player and London resident, whose travels in Italy inspired a set of sonatas published in 1690. Moments in the Croft sonatas also sound rather Handelian – and that is the point that could perhaps have been made.

The story of how the Italian style came to dominate English music at the start of the eighteenth century is complex and fascinating, and cannot of course be told by the music on a single recording. With seven works appearing in 'premiere recordings', this disc offers many new insights into this story and makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of a period of music history that is often left in the shadows.

SILAS WOLLSTON



Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2012
doi:10.1017/S1478570612000206

IGNAZ JOSEF PLEYEL (1757–1831)

PIANO TRIOS

Trio 1790

cpo 777 544-2, 2011; one disc, 72 minutes

As was the case with his former teacher Joseph Haydn, Ignaz Pleyel's output of keyboard trios peaked in the 1790s. The earliest trio on this release, the Trio in E minor Ben 435, was one of six works that appeared in 1788, the set quickly being brought out by no fewer than six major publishing houses in that year and often reprinted thereafter. But then the trios Ben 441 (C major) and 442 (F minor) formed part of a group published in two sets of three in 1790 and 1791, and the other piece on this disc, the Trio in A major Ben 448 (1794), is one of no fewer than eighteen trios that Pleyel wrote for George Thomson in that decade. Thomson is well known for his role in commissioning folksong arrangements from the likes of Kozeluch, Haydn and Beethoven. While Pleyel participated in this project, which eventually yielded several hundred arrangements, his eighteen trios for Thomson also included movements based on Scottish airs.

Indeed, the representative of this group of works, the Trio in A major, might be a good place for a listener to start with this CD. It is the middle movement, a 'Rondo Ecossois' in A minor, that features the local colour, and one can easily imagine the relish with which players across Europe would have tackled it, since it is not hard for present-day listeners to grasp its picturesque attraction. The tune is syntactically 'lame', unexpectedly sitting down at cadence points, and its unison presentation by the three players emphasizes the material's lack of tractability. Nor can there be any coda at the end – the tune simply stops,