with text in 5-point font or smaller. This book is Katzbichler's most recent offering in the field of Bach Studies as volume 40 in their 'Musikwissenschaftliche Schriften' series. I have previously reviewed volumes 36 and 38 in the series, and these were produced in a much more polished way, with a significantly higher degree of editorial control. I am therefore most surprised to find deficiencies in these respects.

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MICHAEL TALBOT
THE CHAMBER CANTATAS OF ANTONIO VIVALDI
Woodbridge and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2006
pp. xiii + 234, ISBN 1 84383 201 1

In recent years Vivaldi scholarship has concentrated on highly detailed studies of specific sectors of the repertory. In quantitative terms, the surviving works are heavily dominated by concertos and related genres (sinfonie, chamber concertos and sonatas). The collected works issued in fascicles under Gian Francesco Malipiero (530 fascicles; Milan: Ricordi, 1947–1971) were limited to instrumental music. The sole focus of the catalogues of Pincherle, Fanna and Rinaldi was also instrumental music. Pincherle's catalogue was a companion to his quite remarkable Sorbonne thesis (1913); and Antonio Fanna's catalogue has served as a foundation for the Malipiero edition.

Among those currently working on Vivaldi, it was Peter Ryom who spearheaded a survey of *all* of Vivaldi's music and examined in detail the differentiating characteristics of the sources. The now ubiquitous RV (*Ryom Verzeichnis*) numbers come predominantly from his *Kleine Ausgabe* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1974). The comprehensive Grosse Ausgabe was issued by Bärenreiter at the end of 2007, the earlier volume (*Répertoire des œuvres*) having been issued in 1986 (Copenhagen: Engstom and Sodring A. S. Musikforlag).

What has all this to do with Talbot's new book on Vivaldi's chamber cantatas? Much of the music-loving public was unaware, until recordings and editions began to appear, that Vivaldi composed vocal music in significant quantity. As a composer of vocal music, Vivaldi has remained all but invisible. If it had been an easy matter to sort out the composer's operas, disembodied arias, mass sections, serenatas (some lost), oratorios (all but one lost) and sacred motets, the remaining volume of the Ryom catalogue would undoubtedly have appeared years ago.

This study of the chamber cantata serves as a companion to the thirty-seven cantatas published by the Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi (a co-sponsor of this book) between 1984 and 2002. As the editor of the cantatas, Michael Talbot is highly conversant with the minutiae of the sources and the particular qualities of individual works. This book complements his study of Vivaldi's sacred music (Florence: Olschki, 1995), which similarly went hand-in-hand with new editions of the relevant works.

Although Talbot sees a modest increase of public interest in the cantata repertory, this is not apparent everywhere. The role of the cantata both in Italy and in the United States is primarily that of a pedagogical piece best suited to sight-reading exams (Italy) and to student recitals (USA), although several of the true specialists in baroque vocal techniques have chosen the cantata to exhibit their best work. In relation to much of the rest of Vivaldi's music, the Venetian composer's cantatas are neither well known nor, in the Institute editions (handsome and careful though they are), widely distributed.

Talbot rightly notes that the genre enjoyed great respect in the eighteenth century (though possibly even more in the seventeenth). Its appeal was based on several virtues. It celebrated the evocative power of the

voice and was well suited to expressions of the glee and pathos of the love-stricken shepherds and nymphs who populated a mythic Arcadia. The cantata lent itself to nuanced allusion – under the veiled anonymity of Arcadian pretence – to amorous relations of the (then) present. It is in getting at this capability (sometimes evident as well in Venetian opera) that Talbot provides one of the most valuable accounts in his book, showing (in Chapter 4) how several of the dozen cantatas Vivaldi composed for Mantua (*c*1717–1718) were actually sung by the royals in whose household he was employed.

The same traits that made the genre so popular between *c*1675 and 1725 also distance it from modern audiences. The Arcadian apparatus is too tortured for urban, post-modern audiences. Universal themes are ultimately present, but they are treated one at a time, in whimsical morsels. Talbot acknowledges that although the repertory is full of musical felicities, Vivaldi's strength was largely in the construction of imagery, rather than in prescribing the aural crystallization of the predictable emotions of jilted lovers or hopeful swains. He notes how Vivaldi's tendency to apply melismas to nouns proves his commission of a grammatical sin belaboured by Benedetto Marcello in his satirical *Il teatro alla moda* (1720). Yet the forty-five musical examples included in the book clearly attest to the fact that Vivaldi could do pathos well when he set his mind to it.

Vivaldi came to the cantata late, both in relation to his own life (the earliest datable work comes from his fortieth year) and in the span of the genre itself. By the 1720s, most composers had moved on. Vivaldi had only just produced his first efforts in the medium. The bulk of the thirty-seven cantatas discussed (mostly one by one) here are from what Talbot labels Vivaldi's 'middle years'. All are solo works of the lyrical variety, the majority for soprano. The works can be dated at first approximation to *c*1731. A few more, preserved in Dresden, are provisionally dated *c*1733, in both instances on the basis of diplomatic study. Since the Italian cantata was a chamber work, no appropriate venue entered Vivaldi's life prior to his stint in Mantua, for while the cantata was a fixture of private music-making in academies, courts and villas, it found no place in churches, theatres or the Venetian *ospedali*. Four further cantatas are regarded by Talbot as spurious for reasons that are adequately persuasive, but an initial discussion of the plusses and minuses of Ryom's approach and classification system seems somewhat out of place in a study of this small repertory.

The Chamber Cantatas abounds in diplomatic information, much of it very useful. The fact that so many of the exemplars are from the poorly documented 'middle period' allows various theories of the composer's peregrinations to be entertained. Those who wish to follow fine-grained narratives on the likes of Papers B 9 and B 48, and on Scribe 10, whose efforts figure in a significant percentage of the pieces, will be well served. These details are important for piecing together the complex mosaic of Vivaldi's life, particularly since documentation for the years between 1729, when Vivaldi went to Bohemia, and late 1733, when he reappeared in Venice, is sparse. Between these times, he is likely to have touched down in many locales. Vivaldi the man was as much a perpetual-motion machine as his fastest Allegro.

Talbot provides no end of adjunct tools for the reader. Among them the thirteen tables, primarily devoted to listings of sources, are particularly useful. The list of the new series of performing editions at the back of the book will also be of value to performers.

One might take issue with the basic premise of the book, which is that although the repertory is very small, it warrants a book because these thirty-seven pieces were written by Vivaldi. Given the sorry state of cantata editions and narratives vis-à-vis the vastness of the surviving repertory, one might ask whether the space would not have been put to better use in a more comprehensive exploration of the genre. Almost all cantatas survive in manuscript, and the vast majority of them are undated. (Prints only appeared when an eager patron was willing to attach his name to a subsidized set of exemplars, so the listing of prints in Table 1.2, rearranged as Table 1.3, is hardly indicative.) A few tens of thousands may lurk on dusty library shelves. Among Vivaldi's near contemporaries, Alessandro Scarlatti probably composed the most (the *New Grove* lists *c*600, but Edwin Hanley's hand-annotated copy of his PhD thesis (Yale University, 1963) on that corpus cites several hundred additional sources). For Benedetto Marcello, I reported 379 for solo cantatas and ninety-six for two voices, as well as eighteen by his brother Alessandro and a dozen by his wife, Rosanna

Scalfi, in *The Music of Benedetto and Alessandro Marcello: A Thematic Catalogue with Commentary on the Composers, Repertory, and Sources* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, 1990). (Benedetto) Marcello's lyricism is often more lyrical, and generally more singable, than Vivaldi's, his ear for assonance sharper. His most memorable essays are, however, his epic cantatas, which mark what may be the peak of emotional expression in the genre, for in some he wrung every ounce of despair imaginable from the medium. Vivaldi was in fact surrounded in Venice by exponents of the cantata – Pollarolo, Biffi, Lotti, Caldara, Gasparini. Yet it appears that he wrote no cantatas for the Venetians.

Talbot discusses a handful of works not by Vivaldi, but only on the basis of their being found in common sources. An initial discussion of Eugen Schmitz's venerable *Geschichte der weltlichen Solokantate* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1914) seems somewhat beside the point. Carolyn Gianturco's seventeen-volume series of facsimiles fills in some important gaps, primarily for the seventeenth century, and many theses of the past generation have probed different portions of the repertory. It is clear, nonetheless, that it would take an extensive collaboration to make a significant dent on the overall cantata repertory. Until such a resource appears, *The Chamber Cantatas* will offer a valuable window on one small portion of this largely elusive quarry.

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EDITIONS

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CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH

THE COMPLETE WORKS, SERIES V, VOLUME 5.1; WORKS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS I

ED. ULRICH LEISINGER

Los Altos, CA: The Packard Humanities Institute, 2006
pp. xxix + 143, ISBN 1 933280 06 9

While C. P. E. Bach's keyboard music has enjoyed a recent renaissance both in performance and in scholarly literature, how many of us could claim ever to have attended a performance of one of his sacred works? How many music scholars could confidently describe his sacred music style? To be sure, his keyboard works provided a special challenge to find systems into which they could be placed to lend them coherence, and they have variously been placed in the contexts of rhetoric, art theories (mannerism) and the aesthetics of landscape gardening (the picturesque). These keyboard works are now associated with a complexity that emerged from his quest for the freedom of individual expression, an aesthetic that arose from Bach's own aesthetics of performance as laid out in his *Versuch*. His idealized performance is the quintessence of a new subjectivity. As such his keyboard music fits neatly into our own rhetoric of the late Enlightenment as the age that finally achieved artistic autonomy and the self-expression of the individual. In a review of 1787, the German critic Carl Friedrich Cramer likened the shapes of this new art that gains comprehensibility and coherence only through the subjective voice of its creator to a 'tragelaph', the mythological figure that embodied the unreal in classical philosophy. But compiled from a variety of mismatching body-parts, the tragelaph equally became a metaphor for heterogeneity of means. In his sacred music, it seems, Bach does something quite different: he creates fantastic tragelaphs of utter *comprehensibility*; works abounding with an immediately obvious heterogeneity of styles, each one advancing the pleasure of listening through the sheer ease of recognition.