

WEKA News

Newsletter of the Western Early Keyboard Association

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About the Western Early Keyboard Association

Since 1998, WEKA, the Western Early Keyboard Association, has sought to serve the early keyboard community in 13 western states, but welcomes members from all areas of the U.S. and Canada and the world! WEKA welcomes enthusiasts, both professional and amateur, of the harpsichord, the clavichord, the fortepiano and the organ. WEKA seeks to promote mutual interests, fostering communication and sharing resources. Join us and meet other players, teachers and instrument builders. Make new friends who play your instrument, share expertise and teaching methods, generate new ideas for increasing performance opportunities.

Most importantly, WEKA seeks to create an environment in which children and young keyboard players will be drawn to early instruments and to historical performance.

WEKA is grateful for the guidance and support of our sponsor, **MusicSources**, Center for Historically Informed Performance, Inc., 1000 The Alameda, Berkeley, CA 94707, 510-528-1685, msources@lmi.net

Co-Chair Message

By Barbara King, WEKA Co-Chair

Dear WEKA members,

On June 2, 2007, WEKA held a most successful one-day conference in Seattle. The primary venues were St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral and Queen Anne Christian Church. The morning was devoted to the organ as an historic instrument and the afternoon to the harpsichord and the early piano. We had six superb session leaders and 19 attendees. We gained 13 new members!

In the morning at St. Mark's, Carole Terry, professor of organ and harpsichord at the University of Washington, and Roger Sherman, president of Loft Recordings & Gothic Records, were able to use three organs (Flentrop cathedral organ, Fritts chapel organ and Pasi chamber organ) for musical examples to illustrate historic style and technique. The afternoon began with a master class conducted by Elaine Thornburgh, who teaches harpsichord privately and at Stanford University. We had five well prepared participants who enjoyed performing on Jillon Dupree's fine instrument. This session was followed by the delightful and gifted soprano Nancy Zylstra, who discussed the partnership between singer and harpsichordist. The closing event of the day was a trip to the home of Professor George Bozarth and fortepianist Tamara Friedmann. There we were treated to an extraordinary collection of early pianos and Tamara's incredible playing. The wonderful day closed with a group dinner at a local restaurant. For a more detailed report of the June 2 conference, please see page 4. At the June 2 conference a brief board meeting was held. Board members present were Elaine Thornburgh, Barbara King, Jillon Dupree and Carole Terry. Issues discussed were the website, the need for new board members/chairpersons, WEKA dues, and WEKA affiliations.

Those board members present agreed our current dues have been quite low. They agreed to raise each category of membership dues by \$10 per year. Yearly dues are now \$45 for regular members, \$35 for seniors (over 65), and \$25 for

student members. The board is now finalizing the dues policy, and the spring issue of *WEKA News* will include an updated membership form.

Jillon Dupree and Carole Terry were assigned the task of exploring various affiliate relationships with other organizations. We hope a Seattle Early Keyboard Society might form and become part of WEKA.

Now it is time for me to ask for your help in making sure our organization can continue to provide great programs like we had at the Seattle conference. With your help WEKA can become an even better venue for communication between early keyboard music lovers.

We need volunteers to take on the following:

Publicity Chair

Get the word out about WEKA! We need a volunteer who can publicize WEKA events to our membership and to relevant organizations, publications, and e-mail lists. WEKA's website is an important part of making sure members and others know about the latest happenings. WEKA is very fortunate to have Kemer Thomson volunteering as our web manager, and the San Diego Historical Society generously hosting the website; but we need a Publicity Chair to send Kemer the latest information to post on the website.

Membership Chair

We need a volunteer to recruit and welcome new members and make sure current members have paid their dues. Sandy Petty at MusicSources maintains our membership database; the Membership Chair will check in periodically with Sandy to see which potential members have not yet joined, and which members need to renew, and then encourage those people to join or renew. Depending upon interest and availability, the Membership Chair may also be responsible for adding new members to our newly established Google Group (see p. 15).

Treasurer

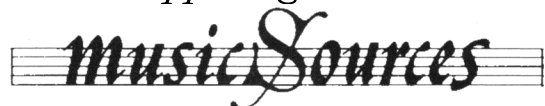
WEKA needs a new treasurer, as Sheli Nan is stepping down from that role so that she can

devote more time to her lively composing career. Sheli also wants to encourage more members to take on leadership roles, join the Advisory Board, and provide fresh ideas for WEKA. Thank you to Sheli for her excellent work as treasurer. She enabled WEKA to sustain a balanced budget while also being gracious to our presenters and hosts.

If you're interested in any of these positions, please contact Barbara King at bp.king@verizon.net.

Our next conference will be on Sunday, June 8, 2008, in Berkeley, CA. Stay tuned for details. If you have ideas for that conference, contact WEKA Co-Chair Elaine Thornburgh at ilana@bardavid.net or (415) 387-6890.

What's Happening at...



MusicSources' 2007-08 season, *Pathways to the Enlightenment*, is full of exciting early music events, including the below concerts of special interest to early keyboard lovers. Please visit <http://www.musicsources.org/events.html> for concert times and locations.

JungHae Kim, harpsichord

A Concert in the Palace of Reason

Friday, October 26, 2007

JungHae Kim, harpsichord, Gilbert Martinez, harpsichord and fortepiano, and orchestra perform rarely heard works of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, featuring a concerto for two harpsichords and the exotic concerto for fortepiano and harpsichord.

Gilbert Martinez, harpsichord

Les Ramoneurs or The Disciples of Rameau

Sunday, December 2, 2007

MusicSources' artistic director Gilbert Martinez performs virtuoso overtures, ballets, imitations of monsters, storms at sea, and other curious airs by Rameau, Daquin, Moyreau, Février, Royer, Balbastre, *et al.*

Benjamin Alard, harpsichord

Sunday, February 10, 2008

Nineteen-year-old Benjamin Alard is the most recent first-prize winner at the Brugges International Harpsichord Competition, the most coveted distinction in the harpsichord world. Don't miss the U.S. debut of this brilliant European artist performing 17th-century French and German works.

Luc Beausejour, harpsichord

Forqueray "Le Diable"

Sunday, March 2, 2008

The West Coast debut of Canada's leading harpsichordist. Here he pays homage to the diabolic virtuoso Antoine Forqueray, as well as presenting musical portraits of Couperin, Rameau and Duphly.

Richard Fuller, fortepiano

Sunday, March 30, 2008

Vienna-based fortepianist Richard Fuller returns to MusicSources with an unusual program which includes works of Balbastre, Pleyel, Jadin, C.P.E. Bach and Haydn.

Laurent Stewart, harpsichord

Sunday, April 13, 2008

Noted for his fiery, sensitive and passionate interpretations, acclaimed French harpsichordist Laurent Stewart represents the "new generation" of specialists of the Grand Siècle. He will perform suites of Louis Couperin and Marchand.

Clavecin en Concert: The Art of the Accompanied Harpsichord in France

Sunday, May 4, 2008

Anthony Martin, Gilbert Martinez, Steve Lehning and soprano Rita Lilly explore the emergence of the harpsichord as soloist accompanied by instruments and voice. Colorful works of Mondonville, Corette, Duphly and Rameau will be heard.

Live at Mission Blue: 4th season

By Kevin Fryer

I've told the story many times now about me and Kathy Perl peering through a window of the incomplete Mission Blue Center in Brisbane. Kathy and I both have long shared an interest in presenting the harpsichord in an intimate and acoustically live setting. The popular "Chattanooga Chamber Series" is Kathy's own contribution to that ideal. The Mission Blue Center was almost finished when we took a peek at the space inside, and we both agreed that it looked promising as a venue for solo harpsichord and chamber music.

That was in the year 2000, and the story continued when the space was completed and the city started having community meetings. Set up with microphones and loud speakers, the amplified voice ricocheted off the walls producing a cacophony of sound all but unintelligible. Just as the city was just concluding that they had an acoustical disaster, I approached them with the idea that the acoustics were perfect. Perfect for live music. The rest is history, as they say, and the City of Brisbane embraced the idea of using this space to showcase some of the finest performers of chamber music.

This year will be the fourth season of "Live at Mission Blue." This season we will join with WEKA in presenting a master class with Jory Vinikour. Mr. Vinikour, based in Paris, has an international career and is familiar to Bay Area audiences from his performances at MusicSources in Berkeley. Mr. Vinikour will appear at Live at Mission Blue on Saturday, March 29, 2008, when he will perform a program mixing Baroque masterpieces with modern works for solo harpsichord. He will also debut a new work by acclaimed French composer Regis Campo commissioned by Live at Mission Blue. The following day, Sunday, March 30, WEKA and Live at Mission Blue will present him in a master class. We plan to have time set aside in the morning for participants to rehearse, giving them an opportunity to get accustomed to the instrument on which they'll be playing and the

acoustics of the space.

Other performances on our series that may be of interest to WEKA members are Saturday, November 10, when we open with Ensemble Mirable Chamber Orchestra featuring JungHae Kim performing the devilishly difficult "Brandenburg V." She will be joined by Janet See: Baroque flute, Carla Moore: Baroque violin, and Joanna Blendulf: Baroque cello.

On Saturday, February 16, 2008, Dutch harpsichordist Jacques Ogg returns to Live at Mission Blue with his fellow countrymen Wilbert Hazelzet: Baroque flute and Jaapter Linden: Baroque cello.

For tickets and information about Live at Mission Blue concerts and educational programs go to <http://www.LiveatMissionBlue.com>

Report on WEKA conference "The Historic Organ, Harpsichord and Fortepiano": Saturday, June 2, 2007, in Seattle

By John Edwards

(First, allow your reporter to mention that WEKA to a New Zealand-born expat signifies a small mischievous woodhen, native to New Zealand, that loves to steal shiny things from campsites but which, as far as I know, is completely non-musical.)

The busy workshop day started, after coffee and pastries, at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral with presentations by Carole Terry, Professor of Organ and Harpsichord at the University of Washington, and Roger Sherman, Associate Cathedral Organist and President of Loft Recordings and Gothic Records. The great 1965 Flentrop organ that dominates the cathedral's east wall, the chapel organ built by Paul Fritts and modeled on 18th-century Dutch organs, and a delightful chamber organ made by Martin Pasi in Roy, Washington, provided an ideal range of instruments for musical examples to illustrate their talks on history and technique. Roger

reminded us that the pipe organ was already at least 1650 years old when the harpsichord was born, but the lineage of the modern organ dates back to the 1400s, when large gothic organs, none of which survive, needed up to 22 pumpers! The Baroque organ too required team work: 5 pumpers and a stop-puller, as well as the keyboardist. Limitations on practice time had two consequences: the development of the art of improvisation, and production by organ builders of clavichords and harpsichords as practice instruments for the home. Roger and Carole explored the qualities of the clavichord, harpsichord and piano keyboards as preparation for organ technique. The clavichord, for example, forces precise regulation of touch while the harpsichord demands precision of onset and release. An unexpected novelty was due to Jack Peters, who exhibited his newly completed clavicytherium.

In the afternoon we moved to Queen Anne Christian Church where, after an excellent lunch (and the most efficient advisory board meeting in WEKA history), Elaine Thornburgh conducted a master class using Jillon Dupree's superb Kevin Fryer 2002 harpsichord based on the 1624 Colmar Ruckers. Elaine emphasized techniques that build on the basis of melody, harmony and rhythm: the role of articulation, of the silence or rests etching the baseline harmonic foundation, and of tied notes and gestural units in the creation of dynamic phrasing. The performances of several conference participants were critiqued, bringing out points of technique and interpretation that were enlightening to all of us.

Nancy Zylstra then discussed aspects of Baroque vocal performance, focusing on how continuo players can support and assist singers in their exploration of early music. She emphasized the value of using one's own vocal palette, and the importance of really getting to the meaning and intent of the words and to let the text be the guide to ornamentation. Ornamentation should come last and grow out of the music. The guide is: Do No Harm.

We then moved to the nearby Queen Anne home of George Bozarth and Tamara Friedman

to savor the sights and sounds of their remarkable collection of pianos. George gave an account of their historical context and Tamara played pieces appropriate to each instrument. We heard, in historical order, their Nanette Streicher 1805 replica, made by Ken Bakeman in 1980; a second Streicher 1815 replica (its design influenced by customer Beethoven), made by Tom and Barbara Wolfe; a charming English 1820 Broadwood; and a massive 1867 straight-strung Chickering grand, once owned by the first territorial Governor of Washington Territory. We were impressed by the range of tonal color brought out by Tamara's touch, something largely lost in the evolution of the modern grand.

After this enlightening day of performance and learning, some of us adjourned to Orapin, a wonderful Thai restaurant. We all agreed that this was a wonderful, memorable day, one which we hope to have repeated in the future.

Many thanks to all who helped make the conference so successful: Barbara King and Jillon Dupree for all their hard work in organizing it; Sheli Nan, Michelle Futornick and Elaine Thornburgh for their helpful input; Susan Jarrett, John Edwards, Deborah Brown, Barbara King, Gerrity Shupe and Jillon Dupree for the delicious food; the many attendees who helped with carpooling; our five excellent master class participants; and all our superb artists for their insightful, witty and enlightening presentations.

Report on Sandra Soderlund Workshop: Sunday, May 6, 2007, in Berkeley

By David Lakritz

On Sunday, May 6, we were treated to a thoroughly delightful and engaging workshop presented by Sandra Soderlund, well-known keyboardist and teacher, on the historical evolution of modern keyboard technique. Sandra was eminently qualified to enlighten us on the subject after having done scholarly research in the field for many years, culminating in the publishing of her recent book *How Did They Play?*

How Did They Teach? A History of Keyboard Technique.

Sandra's workshop was no mere "history lesson" though, as she was able to bring to life many of the figures who made important contributions along the way, connecting the dots on important events over the course of 500 years, and offering us a broad perspective and key insights into the origins of what we take for granted today.

Sandra explained that musicians need to have a historical perspective on keyboard technique and fingering in order to better understand the underlying style of the pieces they are playing, in order to make the music sound as the composer intended. She gave an example of a fingered dance piece by Orlando Gibbons, where the composer chose a particular fingering specifically to enhance the feeling of the dance. Another example was that of a fugue, where proper fingering helped the performer articulate in the right places, thereby bringing out the fugue subject more clearly.

Our first knowledge of keyboard technique comes from the 16th century, when the organ was the dominant keyboard instrument. Most early keyboardists were hired as organists and in fact, instruments such as the harpsichord and clavichord were invented primarily to serve as practice instruments for the organ.

That the organ played such a dominant role is evidenced by the fact that the first published documents on keyboard playing were treatises on organ building. The earliest of these was a treatise published in 1511 by Arnolt Schlick in which he explained how an organist should sit. Interestingly, Schlick himself was blind although he was considered to be an expert on the organ. Schlick also proposed an interesting application for ornamentation—that it be used to cover up tuning problems, especially at cadences.

Another early and important work was Hans Buchner's *Fundamentum* (1525), which is the first extant keyboard method book and believed to contain the earliest known discussion of keyboard fingering. Buchner's fingerings would be considered awkward by modern standards,

such as always requiring ornaments to be played with the third finger; however, he allowed the player the flexibility of playing any voice with either hand.

Sandra told us that in early keyboard fingering the middle three fingers were most often used, and legato was not part of the aesthetic at the time. Nowadays, we take legato for granted as a standard stylistic technique, however, it actually did not come into widespread use until the 18th century.

Much of the early development of keyboard technique was based in nationalism with each country developing its own unique style and interpretation.

Spain became a major contributor to keyboard technique around the middle of the 16th century as it came into its own as a world power. In Spain, unlike other countries, the clavichord was the preferred practice instrument for the organ. The Spanish even developed their own ornaments known as "quiebros."

One of the more interesting keyboard treatises from this period is from Tomás de Sancta María (1565) who described an unusual hand position known as the "cat's paw" because of the manner in which he suggests the hand is to be crooked. Sancta María's work was the first to discuss touch in the history of keyboard playing.

In England, the keyboardists of the 16th century such as Byrd and Bull, whom today we think of as virginalists, actually wrote music primarily for the organ. There are no extant method or keyboard instruction treatises; however, much of their music was published with fingerings. Priscilla Bunbury's *Virginal Book* (1635) was an important publication because of its short and easy pieces, most of which were completely fingered.

The Italians proved to be great sources of ideas about ornamentation. Girolamo Diruta, an Italian monk, wrote a comprehensive two-volume work covering all aspects of keyboard playing called *Il Transilvano* (*The Transylvanian*) in 1593. His was the only other work besides Sancta

Maria's to discuss hand position, although his method is quite different and more comfortable than the latter's cat's paw.

Diruta's premise was that the second and fourth fingers of the hand are "good" and should be used on strong beats, while the other fingers are "bad" and should be relegated to weak beats. His work must have been quite influential because it was reprinted several times and cited in other keyboard treatises of that period.

France made important contributions to the development of keyboard technique. The period from 1650-1750 ("le grand siècle – the splendid century") was particularly important for artistic development in France. The reigning monarchs throughout this period were all supporters and patrons of the arts. Louis XIII was a fine dancer, Louis XIV established academies to retain the French style and Louis XV advocated teaching keyboard to children from an early age. It was during this time that musical styles were unified across the lute, harpsichord, organ and voice.

By the beginning of the 17th century, the lute was the most popular instrument in France and had a major influence on harpsichord technique particularly with the advent of brisé style (broken chords). Dance was also an important influence, even in church music. Legato and even over-legato developed as preeminent stylistic techniques.

The strong emphasis on music and the arts during this period allowed keyboardists to flourish, and many important treatises on keyboard technique were published. Among these were *Livre d'orgue*, published in 1665 by Guillaume-Gabriel Nivers, which included a detailed description of touch, including the first real description of legato; *Les principes du clavecin* by M. de Saint Lambert (1702), which was the first harpsichord method book to appear in France, and the first to address the qualities of playing required by both teacher and student; and François Couperin's *L'Art de Toucher le Clavecin* (1716), which of course was and still is one of the most famous treatises on keyboard technique.

However, it was Jean Philippe Rameau who is

considered to be the most influential French writer on keyboard technique in the 18th century. Rameau published many works covering all aspects of performance. He was one of the first to write about the use of thumb-under fingering for scale passages, and he also wrote extensively on continuo technique.

Very little was published on keyboard technique in Germany during the 17th century. One of the most important works was the Wegweiser organ book (1689) which taught basic technique and exercises and which Bach himself probably used when he learned how to play. It became quite popular and was reprinted many times, although its author(s) remain unknown.

Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg was a friend of the Bach family who published *Die Kunst das Clavier zu spielen* (*The Art of Playing the Clavier*) in 1750, which included a translation of François Couperin's *L'Art de Toucher* into German plus ideas from Saint Lambert as well as his own. He was among the first to describe the staccato touch and wrote extensively about ornamentation and articulation. Because of his unique position, he served as a bridge between the French style and the style of J.S. Bach.

According to Johann Nicolaus Forkel (Bach's biographer), Bach's touch was unique. Notes were released by pulling back on the fingers rather than lifting them off the keys. This became known as "the Bach touch." Like Rameau, Bach also made use of thumb-under fingering for scale passages, in particular when playing in a "difficult" key (a key with more than two sharps or flats). Even in the most difficult passages, Bach kept his hand rounded and only moved it from side to side.

C.P.E. Bach was the best known of the Bach children and the first Bach who was not an organist. He was also the best educated of the Bach children, having attended university in Leipzig and then continuing on to study law in Frankfurt.

C.P.E. Bach was considered to be on the cutting edge of the compositional style of his day. His main idea was that music should "arouse and

instill the emotions”. He is best known for his treatise *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen* (*Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*), which is an excellent resource for understanding 18th-century keyboard technique and performance practice. It was quite popular in its day and was used well into the 19th century, even by Beethoven, who recommended it for his students. C.P.E. Bach wrote that the most important aspects of keyboard playing were a) correct fingering, b) good embellishments and c) good performance.

The workshop concluded with a master class in which students played a number of pieces by 17th- and 18th-century composers. These included François Couperin’s Prelude No. 8, the C Major and Bb Major inventions, and the C Minor Prelude from Book II of the W.T.C by J.S. Bach, and a sonata by C.P.E. Bach. After each piece, Sandra talked about the appropriate keyboard techniques to use to match the relevant musical style.

In discussing the François Couperin prelude, Sandra told us that Couperin’s music, and French music in general, should be played somewhat freely because the French were not as careful about notation as, for example, Bach. In particular, a *prélude mesuré* should not necessarily be played metronomically. Preludes are basically improvisations on chord progressions. They are designed to warm up the fingers and get the performer used to the instrument and the environment, so it is expected that they will be played more freely.

As for the Bach pieces, Sandra commented that the hand should be kept as small as possible and moved sideways across the keys. Articulation should be used in the same way a wind player would use tonguing—to define and project the beat. Also, when analyzing Bach’s music, it helps to think of a piece as a collection of recurring figures such as can be found in the Bb Major invention. Then, by understanding how individual notes contribute to each figure, one can gain some insight into how the notes themselves should be played.

Finally, Sandra shared with us a great story about C.P.E. Bach and how he was always complaining that performers played Adagios too slow and Allegros too fast.

All in all, it was an enjoyable and informative afternoon. Attendees left with a greater historical perspective on keyboard technique and lots of ideas to consider in adapting their playing to fit the style of the period and the music at hand.

The Apprentice’s Tale

By Steve Renaker

When friends ask me what the difference is between a harpsichord and a modern piano, I run through the usual obvious facts: plucked strings vs. struck strings, metal vs. wood frame construction, and so on. They’re both keyboard instruments, and to the casual observer, they’re more similar than dissimilar. But to me, the single most important distinction lies in where they come from; pianos are mass-produced, while harpsichords are built one at a time, and each one is unique.

That fact reflects a market reality, in that pianos outnumber harpsichords in the world by at least a thousand to one. But the result is that one piano looks very much like another, while the harpsichord population of the world is marvelously diverse, with a whole spectrum of instrument styles and sounds and decorative schemes. A well-constructed, beautifully designed, expertly played harpsichord is a *gesamtkunstwerk*, a melding of musical, visual and decorative arts.

I got an up-close look at the world of harpsichord construction starting a year ago, when I began an apprenticeship in the studio of Kevin Fryer, a San Francisco-based builder of 25 years standing who is well known to many WEKA members, as well as the early music world in general. My goal is to become a professional builder with a studio of my own.

How did I become a 21st-century apprentice in such an ancient craft? I’ve been interested in the harpsichord as an instrument for as long as I can

remember, and I took harpsichord lessons in college, but I spent the first 10 years of my post-college career in the software industry, and it wasn't until late 2005, when I moved with my wife and kids from San Francisco to Palo Alto, that I had the opportunity to re-examine the possibility of entering the early music world professionally. I knew that goal was a long way off, so I began with preparatory steps. I started taking lessons with Elaine Thornburgh, an outstanding teacher as well as a great friend, and I set out to build an instrument for myself. I bought a kit from The Paris Workshop, a Ruckers-style Flemish single-manual, the model they recommend for first-time builders. I spent most of the summer putting it together, and it turned out fairly well, considering that I had no idea what I was doing and had never attempted a woodworking project on the scale of a harpsichord; kit-building at home is mainly a matter of persistence and being able to follow complex written directions.

I found the construction process immensely enjoyable and rewarding, and my first thought after finishing the instrument was that I should start another one, building on what I learned with the first one. On further consideration, however, I decided that if harpsichord building was something I wanted to pursue seriously, I'd be better off finding a teacher who could really instruct me in the craft, rather than finding my own way through trial and error. And that was how I wound up in Kevin's studio. I've continued working part-time at my old software company, and the contrast between the two workplaces could hardly be more stark: high-tech, highly abstract on one hand vs. low-tech, highly concrete on the other. It's interesting to have one foot in the new economy and one foot in the old (very old) economy.

At the outset, Kevin outlined several main areas of study we would undertake. These included tool usage, wood and other materials, historical designs, and tuning and temperament. In practice, each of those areas has come into play in various ways. I've gained experience with common tools, such as the hand plane and the

chisel, as well as more specialized ones, such as the spokeshave and the cabinet scraper, and the big industrial ones, such as the drill press and table saw. The sheer number and diversity of hand tools in a harpsichord studio are staggering; any number of times I've pondered some small problem of wood manipulation in the course of a repair, only to discover that Kevin has the exact saw or clamp or unnamed metal object needed to solve the problem. Kevin is a self-described "tool junkie" who has been collecting from garage sales, auction websites, and obscure European manufacturers since the 1970s, and while some items may lie unused for years, it's good to know that when the situation arises, the correct implement is somewhere in the shop.

Kevin also has an extensive collection of schematic harpsichord drawings, and we've spent time poring over diagrams of instruments by great builders of the past and present. We've discussed historical building practices and how they've been adapted for modern use. And I've spent a lot of time learning and practicing the art of tuning, both in and out of the shop. Good tuning skills are critical for a number of reasons. There's no faster way of getting the feel of an instrument than to tune it up. Tuning a harpsichord tells you any number of things about its sound, keyboard action, style of construction and general state of repair. And if you're new in the business, concert tuning is a good way to gain contacts and exposure in the early music environment.

My first project as an apprentice was to bring in the first instrument I built and improve it in various ways, correcting some mistakes I made the first time around and upgrading the jacks and registers. Since then I've spent most of my time on repairs of other instruments—keyboard overhauls, revoicing, and the like. It's fascinating to see the variety of instruments which come through the shop, whether on their way to summer festivals or back to the school or institution where they live. I try to spend as much time as possible playing every instrument in the shop, for the purpose of getting each one's sound in my ear and deciding which parts I like

and which I don't.

My current project is building a Flemish double-manual from another kit, this one from Zuckermann. Kit-building isn't as glamorous as building from an original design, of course, but it's useful for developing many of the skills of the professional builder. Kevin and I ordered the kit with no soundboard, registers or jacks. We'll build the soundboard and registers from scratch, and use jacks from Austin-Chancellor. To see what the soundboard construction process looks like, see

<http://renaker.blogspot.com/>, where I've detailed it step by step. When this instrument is done we'll put it up for sale, and then see what comes along next.

Like most fields of study, harpsichord building is divided between general and specific knowledge, i.e., general woodworking skills on one hand, how to construct a soundboard on the other. As you might expect, general knowledge takes much longer to develop than specific. I'm sure I'll still be working on cutting perfectly shaped plectra long after I've learned the construction processes of every individual element of the instrument, from case to keyboard. Building a harpsichord requires vast stores of patience, a willingness to drastically discard and redo any aspect not up to standard, and above all, the ability to spend endless amounts of time over very minor effects, because the whole instrument is made up of an infinitude of small details, and only by sweating over every single one can a great instrument be produced. If I leave Kevin's studio with any of his exactitude and design sense, it will be worth all the time and effort.

Reflections on The Sylvan and Oceanic Delights of Posilipo, 1620

By Katherine Roberts Perl

It has been awhile since this event took place, but it made a lasting impression on me. Gilbert Martinez outdid himself this year in his opera production for the MusicSources Gala annual

benefit event (May 4, 2007)! He worked out a collaborative effort with musicians and dancers from UC Santa Cruz, along with many local artists—a very large cast of characters and musicians! I cannot mention everyone by name, but the event came off wonderfully, and everyone present thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The three bands were superb: Galileo Project, UCSC Early Music Ensemble and the MusicSources Renaissance Band, including Gilbert as director on spinet and organ.

Vocal offerings were supplied by some fabulous local singers, listed in the program as MusicSources Camerata. The solo recorder player Isabeau Corriveau was great, and added a touch of virtuosity to the evening. The ensembles did a great job—all without conductor; stylish and with an easy rhythmic groove which supported the dancers' movements so well. We had the unusual pleasure of hearing as many as ten plucked string instruments at a time during the evening! It was a beautiful and unusual sound!

The choreography was quite complex at times, and somewhat racy, which was fun! I could definitely imagine this as court entertainment in the early 17th century. I especially want to mention the lead dancer Alessandro Rumie, who played Seбето, a river deity. He was beautiful and sure of himself—riveting in his gestures, facial expressions and timing. The costumes were lovely and playful, which contributed to the overall effect.

It was a great evening, and I'm amazed at how so many diverse artists were able to pull this fabulous production together with relatively few rehearsals! I'm grateful to all of them for donating so much time and effort for our enjoyment and the opportunity to see and hear one interpretation of this rarely heard work! And thanks especially to our own Gilbert Martinez for his ongoing vision and wonderful work in carrying forward the life and financial health of MusicSources, in partnership with the Board of Directors. Laurette would be proud!

CD Reviews: Peter Philips

By Gilbert Martinez

Peter Philips: Harpsichord Works

Elizabeth Farr (original Italian harpsichord by Girolamo Zenti 1658, collection of Keith Hill)
NAXOS 8.557864

Peter Philips: Complete Organ & Keyboard Works, Volume 1

Siegbert Rampe, clavichord, harpsichord, virginals, organ (historic instruments in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg)
MDG GOLD (Musikproduktion Dabringhaus und Grimm) 341 1257-2

Comparison CDs:

Peter Philips: Harpsichord Works

Anneke Uittenbosch, harpsichords
Etcetera KTC 1022

Peter Philips: Harpsichord Pieces

Emer Buckley, (original Italian harpsichord, "F.A. 1677" collection of Kenneth Gilbert)
Harmonia Mundi France 901263

Peter Philips: Keyboard Music

Paul Nicholson, harpsichord and virginal
Hyperion CDA66734

Judging from the liner notes of the CDs named above, poor Peter Philips has long awaited his due. He belongs to a "no man's land" of composers that cannot be pinned down neatly into a nationalistic style and has therefore been overlooked by scholars and performers.

Innocent keyboard lovers know him from his massive pavans and galliards in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book. His intabulation of Giulio Caccini's "Amarilli mia bella" is an evergreen of the repertoire, and aficionados need not ever fear of having to identify its author as Catholic or Protestant, English or Continental, trendsetter or imitator.

A healthy showing on recordings of his keyboard and consort music, and whole CDs devoted to his choral output make his music readily available to connoisseurs far and wide. For those who are curious, any good library will have a copy of

David Smith's beautiful edition of the known keyboard works, in *Musica Britannica*, lxxv, 1999.

The style of his keyboard works round out our picture of the virginalist school and northern composers like Sweelinck, with whom he is reputed to have had contact.

Of the five recordings listed above, Elizabeth Farr's selection is the most recent, and possibly the best distributed. It also has the typical nifty Naxos price tag, so it is likely that those who are budget minded (or lazy) will turn to it before considering the others.

Farr's collection is commendable in that it is well engineered, capturing the original Zenti harpsichord from 1658 most attractively. For this reason she (and Keith Hill, its owner) should be thanked for bringing this instrument to our attention. In one sense, the instrument takes pride of place in this recording. It has a vibrant personality, whereas Ms. Farr has suppressed hers in a way that is at times detrimental. There is little on this recording that will offend, but also little to get excited about.

Perhaps my personal temperament is to seek something on another pole than what is offered here. Most of the tempi are quite slow. I was left wondering after several repeated hearings if the pieces were selected in part because of the lack of technical proficiency by the performer. I detect the use of early fingerings, but at best they sound self-conscious, and at worst tentative and stiff. Numerous technical lapses occur, particularly when bass and treble voices become more active or polyphony becomes more dense. I think her approach is honest, but I detect no rhetoric, or any sense of where things end or begin. Take for example the opening "Fantasia in F". Its polyphony sounds homophonic, like bland chords in slow succession, and its glosses slackened into note-spinning. It is worth commenting that this performance of the "Fantasia in F" is nearly two minutes longer than even the slowest of the other recordings, that of Emer Buckley.

Buckley makes for an interesting comparison, since she plays another famous original Italian

harpsichord, the one marked "F.A. 1677" in Kenneth Gilbert's collection. While her reading is expansive, voices are delineated with a purpose, and cadential ornaments cascade off the page. In short, she is in total command of the music and acts like a convincing orator. Alas, this recording is no longer in print (readers should contact me personally at MusicSources to locate a second-hand copy).

The pavans and galliards move about in a similar way for the rest of Farr's CD. The intabulations of madrigals and chansons will win no new fans.

In Buckley's recording, pavans are strongly characterized, and the galliards dance off the page.

Bringing more authority and technical command is Siegbert Rampe, playing on a number of replica and original clavichords, virginal, harpsichords (including a fabulous Ruckers with a single 8' and 4' from 1637) and two Renaissance organs. Retuning to the above mentioned "Fantasia in F", Rampe plays on an organ, and here the piece glows with life, while inner voices breathe and every point of imitation is brought forth. While Rampe is bound to raise eyebrows in his interpretations, (something goes strangely awry with an added improvised repetition of the tiny "Galliard in G") he plays communicatively, and clearly relishes the sounds of the varied instrumentarium. Although I personally am not convinced of all of his interpretive choices, I eagerly await the arrival of volume two.

Two further recordings invite perusal. They are both available from ArkivMusic.com. Anneke Uittenbosch plays on two attractive-sounding Klinkhammer instruments. Her readings lean much more toward poetry rather than prose, but withstand repeated hearings, especially her lovely "Passamezzo Pavan and Galliard".

Paul Nicholson offers proficient but sterile readings. He is understated to a fault. His is indispensable in that he is the only one to include the variations on Cavalieri's "Aria del Gran Duca".

But let this not be taken as the last word. Whereas Elizabeth Farr could take more risks, I wish Siegbert Rampe could exhibit more restraint. C'est la vie! The curious, and those desirous of learning will find much to value in all of the above recordings. Toss aside my opinion and discover on your own. If there is room in your budget, you should have them all, and listen to them as often as possible. Include Philips in your programs, practice, and share in the discourse proposed by the above artists.

Organ Study Tour of Northern Spain and Southern France

By Barbara King

I have just returned from my fourth European organ study tour. My husband Michael and I spent about two weeks in September visiting organs in Spain and France. Our tour took us from Barcelona and the Mediterranean through the gorgeous farm country of southern France, into the Basque area of France and Spain, through the Pyrenees, along the Atlantic Coast, and finally to the exact center of Spain, Madrid.

These tours are directed by Rena Bakhuyzen Holst, whose organist father, Dr. Dirk Bakhuisen, organized the first tour in 1979. There were 24 people on the tour plus Rena and our bus driver. Only 17 of us played the 22 organs on our schedule. Those who play the organs are expected to play music appropriate to the instruments being played and to play the music reasonably well. This does not mean one must be a virtuoso performer—just being capable is quite adequate. Some of the organists use printed music, some have repertoire memorized and some improvise. The host organists are always accomplished and it is important to respect them and their wonderful instruments. The beginning of each visit began with a performance by the host plus a description of the organ and its history. Each touring organist is able to play every instrument visited, but time at the console is necessarily limited. On this tour the maximum time was about four minutes—enough to get a feel for what the

organs are like. As in a master class, we all listened to one another and learned. These tours are friendly and relaxed. They are of interest to non-players also, as we explore areas where tourists do not normally go, plus we see some of the usual tourist attractions. On this tour, for example, we visited the Gerhard Grenzing organ building firm in the industrial area of Barcelona, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and the Prado in Madrid.

Our organ playing began in Barcelona, which we learned is not only Spanish but Catalanian. We visited a 14th-century Catalan Gothic cathedral housing an organ restored by Gerhard Grenzing probably dating back to the mid-18th century. Neither the builder nor the exact date has been confirmed. This particular organ had two manuals with several divided stops on the upper manual and mean-tone tuning. It also had those wonderful “accessory” stops: *Rosignol* (nightingale; pipes suspended in water), *Trèmol*, *Gaita* (bagpipe), and *Tambor*. According to Grenzing, Catalonia once had a lively organ-building tradition but today has few extant early organs.

Leaving Barcelona, we traveled north to the medieval town of Castelló d’Empúries and along the Mediterranean into southern France. In Perpignan we encountered our first Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (1811–1899) organ from 1857, although it was subsequently restored and altered. Other Aristide Cavaillé-Coll organs were played at St. Sernin in Toulouse, France (1889; 3 manuals, 55 stops, unaltered); S María del Coro in San Sebastián, Spain (1862; 3 manuals, 44 stops, unaltered); San Vicente in San Sebastián (1868) and S Maria la Real in Azkoitia, Spain (1898). These particularly renowned organs, built in immense, reverberant Gothic cathedrals, have the capability of extreme dynamic expressiveness. Without removing the fingers from the keyboards one can with their feet couple manuals, control swell-box shutters and add or subtract reeds. These organs represent the best of the great Romantic French organs and are perfect for the music of composers such as Franck, Widor and Dupré. They are, however,

far from perfect for works of Bach, for example, or even French Baroque composers such as Couperin.

Most of the cathedrals the tour group visited were large Gothic structures with impressive acoustics. Their construction was begun anywhere from the 12th through 17th centuries. The organs in these cathedrals were predominantly 19th-century instruments. However, for example, in Narbonne the four-manual, 67-stop, 89-rank organ was originally built in 1739 by Mouchereau and restored in 1985; in Carcassonne the four-manual, 40-stop, 59-rank gallery organ was built in 1680 by Joyeuse and restored in 1772 by Jean-Pierre Cavaillé and then in 1982 by Formentelli. The few organ specifications given allude to the generally large size of the organs we played. One of the surprises for me was the preponderance of French Romantic organs in northern Spain.



Gerhard Grenzing, Barcelona, with organ showing typical tracker action leading from the keys to the valves which cause the organ to play.

Today in the United States organs are largely standardized. From one organ to the next the pedals are the same size, the same distance from one another and in an ergonomic concave pattern. There are multiple pistons and memory

levels. The actions are largely electro-pneumatic. The pipe organs played on this tour were in no way standardized—no two were alike. The pedal manuals with rare exceptions were flat. Even the few concave pedal keyboards would not meet the American Guild of Organists' specifications. On occasion the pedals were extremely short, allowing only toe-toe pedal technique. Generally, the organs did not have pistons or memory capability. The very large draw knobs required one, if not two, people to assist the organist in registration.



Registrant adjusting stops as Barbara King plays Lemmens' Fanfare on the organ in Cathedral Notre Dame in Dax, France.

All of the organs were tracker instruments, utilizing a purely mechanical system for key action. (It needs to be mentioned that today in the U. S. there seems to be a renewed interest in tracker-action instruments.) Tracker action asks of the organist strong fingers and legs/feet. Some of the organs were more difficult to play than others. Indeed, at S María del Coro, San Sebastián, I was unable to play quick 16th notes in the pedal, even with only a few stops activated, and, furthermore, was having trouble depressing the manual keys.

Our trip ended in Madrid with a visit to a neo-Gothic cathedral completed in 1999 and a magnificent four-manual Gerhard Grenzing organ completed in 1999.

Anyone interested in taking an organ study tour can contact tour director Rena Bakhuyzen Holst

at renatravels@aol.com.

News From Our Members

Ed Kottick

My newly designed Neapolitan harpsichord was exhibited at the Boston Early Music Festival last June.

I was a faculty member in the Zuckermann Harpsichords Workshop last June.

I recently completed building my 50th harpsichord.

After a hiatus of 42 years I am once again playing the trombone!

I am the music director and conductor for *She Loves Me*, a 1963 Jerry Bock show being mounted by the Iowa City Community Theater.

Anne Peterson

Thought you'd all be interested in hearing about my new "octave virginal". It's a copy of a 16th-century German instrument, for small people or maybe the boudoir. The below photo shows it in proportion to me. It has 4 tiny octaves, an octave higher than normal. I hosted a welcoming patio party and informal concert of Renaissance tunes with recorder last June. Fun! Oh, yes, and I just learned from the instrument builder David VanNess that there are only 55 of these in the world! Thank you to David, to Ed Kottick, the kit creator, and to Zuckermann kits.



Anne with her new instrument.

Concert Announcement

Students of Kathleen Scheide will perform J.S. Bach's complete French Suites, BWV 812-817, and the Suite in A minor, BWV 818, Sunday, November 18, at 4:00 pm. The free public program will be in Talbott Hall 1 on the Westminster Choir College campus, Princeton, New Jersey. Student harpsichordists are Fabio Bezuti, Theodore Bickish, Su-Jin Hwang, Alexander Lane, Esther Hyun-Hee Lee, Sierra Oh and Sean Price.

WEKA's New Google Group

WEKA now has a Google Group! This online email group will make it easier for WEKA members to communicate with each other, and for the WEKA board to communicate with members.

By emailing wekagroup@groups.google.com, you can easily send a message to the entire membership. The list is ideal for sharing event announcements and requests for information, such as "Where can I find this CD or book or score?"

This list is moderated, which means that all messages are reviewed before they are sent on to the membership. The list is also private: all requests to join must be approved, and the public cannot see a list of members.

If you're on WEKA's email distribution list, you should have received an email invitation to join the Google Group. Please follow the instructions in the invitation to get started.

If you didn't receive the invitation in your email, you can join by going to <http://groups.google.com/group/wekagroup> and following the instructions there.

To take full advantage of the Google Group features, you need a Google account. It's free and easy to create one (you will be prompted to create one when you respond to your email invitation, or when you visit the signup page above). If you prefer not to create a Google account, you can still be part of the email

distribution list: contact group owner mfutornick@yahoo.com and ask to be added to the list without a Google account.

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