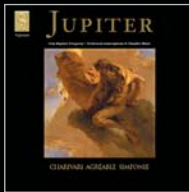


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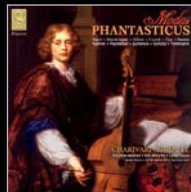
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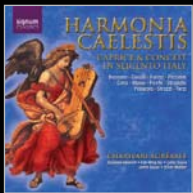
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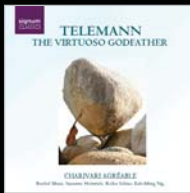
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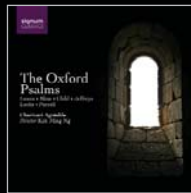
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GIUSEPPE TORELLI (1658-1709)
CONCERTI MUSICALI A QUATTRO, OPERA SESTA

Concerto No. 1 in G major [BC, LA, HB, GD]

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--------|
| 1. | Presto—Adagio | [1.50] |
| 2. | [Allegro] | [1.12] |
| 3. | Adagio | [1.16] |
| 4. | Allegro | [1.44] |

Concerto No. 2 in E minor; arr. K-M Ng

- | | | |
|----|---------|--------|
| 5. | Allegro | [1.38] |
| 6. | Adagio | [1.40] |
| 7. | Presto | [1.13] |

Concerto No. 3 in B minor; arr. K-M Ng

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|
| 8. | Allegro | [1.42] |
| 9. | Adagio | [1.09] |
| 10. | Allegro | [1.25] |

Concerto No. 4 in D major [BC, LA, HB, GD]

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|
| 11. | Adagio | [0.22] |
| 12. | Allegro | [1.00] |
| 13. | Adagio | [1.43] |
| 14. | Allegro | [1.25] |

**Concerto No. 5 in G minor; arr. K-M Ng
[OS, HzB, RS, GD]**

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|--------|
| 15. | Presto | [1.00] |
| 16. | Presto—Adagio | [0.45] |
| 17. | Allegro | [1.36] |

Concerto No. 6 in C minor [BC, LA, HB, IA]

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|
| 18. | Allegro | [2.03] |
| 19. | Adagio | [1.36] |
| 20. | Allegro | [1.26] |

**Concerto No. 7 in C major; arr. K-M Ng
[BC, LA, HB, GD]**

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|--------|
| 21. | Allegro | [1.04] |
| 22. | Adagio e staccato | [1.07] |
| 23. | Allegro | [1.23] |

Concerto No. 8 in F major; arr. K-M Ng

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|
| 24. | Adagio | [0.46] |
| 25. | Allegro | [1.39] |
| 26. | Adagio | [1.20] |
| 27. | Allegro | [1.17] |

Concerto No. 9 in A minor [OS, HzB, RS, IA]

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|
| 28. | Presto | [1.39] |
| 29. | Adagio | [1.02] |
| 30. | Allegro | [1.31] |

Concerto No. 10 in D minor [BC, LA]

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--------|
| 31. | Adagio | [2.11] |
| 32. | Allegro | [0.42] |
| 33. | Largo | [1.19] |
| 34. | Presto | [1.35] |

Concerto No. 11 in B-flat major [KM]

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|--------|
| 35. | Allegro | [1.04] |
| 36. | Largo e staccato | [1.37] |
| 37. | Allegro | [1.32] |

Concerto No. 12 in A major [BC, LA, HB, IA]

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------|
| 38. | Allegro—Adagio | [1.46] |
| 39. | Largo | [1.06] |
| 40. | Allegro | [1.54] |

Sonata à 4 in A minor G46 [BC, LA, HB, IA]

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|--------|
| 41. | Largo—Allegro | [2.56] |
| 42. | Grave | [1.51] |
| 43. | Allegro | [2.24] |

Total Timings [62.30]

CHARIVARI AGRÉABLE
DIRECTED BY KAH-MING NG

STRINGS

Violin: Bojan Ćičić [BC, Leader], Oliver Sändig [OS], Hazel Brooks [HzB], Camilla Scarlett, Linda Hannah-Andersson [LA], Richard Wade, Veronique Matarasso, **Viola:** Rachel Stott [RS], Heather Birt [HB], Hazel Brooks
Violoncello: Gareth Deats [GD] **Viola da gamba:** Ibi Aziz [IA] **Violone:** Elizabeth Harré

WINDS

Oboe: Mark Baigent, Jane Downer, Nicholas Benda **Recorder:** Jane Downer, Mark Baigent **Bassoon:** Michael Brain

BASSO CONTINUO

Theorbo & baroque guitar: Jørgen Skogmo **Chamber organ:** David Bannister, Kah-Ming Ng [KM]

Harpsichord: Kah-Ming Ng

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BOLOGNA, BERLIN, AND BACK

The sixth of nine children of a Veronese customs health inspector, Torelli worked as a violinist at Verona Cathedral before moving to Bologna, where in 1684 he was soon admitted as a *suonatore di violino* to the prestigious Accademia Filarmonica. His subsequent promotion to the rank of *compositore* is marked by several sinfonias which he wrote for some of the Accademia's patronal feasts between 1692 and 1708. His work, however, was not confined to the academy, for he had been, since 1686, a permanent member of the orchestra of the Basilica of San Petronio, starting off on the lowly tenor viola before moving up the ranks to violoncello. This tenure was punctuated by frequent extracurricular appearances in other cities as a virtuoso violinist, somewhat to the chagrin of the church authorities.

San Petronio's *cappella musicale* was renowned for its splendid concerted music dating back to the 16th century, with a focus on winds (provided by the famous Concerto Palatino), and, later on, trumpet and strings. A succession of innovative composers at the helm, notably Maurizio Cazzati, and instrumental virtuosos, including Giovanni Battista Vitali as well as Torelli, consolidated an identifiably Bolognese school of playing. This was

perforce exported to the rest of Europe when the orchestra was disbanded in 1696. For Torelli a safety net after his loss of employment was provided by a network of friends who had once worked with him in Bologna but were about to be or were already established in the musical world beyond the Alps. Torelli's musical fortunes were to become inextricably linked with one former colleague, the castrato Francesco Antonio Pistocchi, who had just moved from Parma to the court of Brandenburg-Ansbach, where Torelli's former pupil, Pietro Bettinozzi, worked as violinist. Pistocchi took up the position of *Kapellmeister* in 1696, and was joined in the same year by Torelli; by 1698 Torelli was *Konzertmeister*. Ansbach proved an important stepping stone on the way to an international career. Torelli went with Pistocchi to Berlin in May 1697 to perform for the Electress Sophie Charlotte, and, taking a leaf out of Pistocchi's book, followed this up by dedicating to her his opus 6 *Concerti musicali*.

Alas, nothing eventuated from the dedication, which was just as well. A career in the court of Brandenburg-Prussia would have been too stifling for Torelli's fertile mind. The Prussians expected their German servants to know their place; visiting artists might have been accorded the status of 'honoured guests', but there is no telling how they

might have been treated once contractually bound to the court. Such a dilemma loomed early on in George Frideric Handel's career, when, after a visit to Berlin ca. 1702, the prospect of being indentured to the Prussian court had to be put to rest before King Friedrich I's gifts and entreaties made rejection too awkward. The Handel biographer John Mainwaring noted that the composer's guardians were concerned that if once he was 'engag'd in the King's service, he must remain in it, whether he liked it, or not; that if he continued to please, it would be a reason for not parting ... [but] if he happened to displease, his ruin would be the certain consequence'. Excuses were offered and the young Handel safely made his escape.

Torelli returned to Ansbach, only to leave in 1699, due, yet again, to financial difficulties; the margrave may have been a noted lover of opera, but his attention and resources were taken up by his military adventures. Together with Pistocchi, Torelli headed for Vienna to perform for the emperor (and to canvass for a gold medallion for the *maestro di cappella* in San Petronio, Giacomo Antonio Perti, who, though three years his junior, had been his composition teacher). When the brief dalliance with an imperial appointment appeared to have come to naught, Torelli returned to

Ansbach to ask to be released from his appointment there. Torelli was pining for Italy, his homesickness brought on no doubt by his 'cursed hypochondria and melancholy, which torments [him] greatly', despite a robust appearance of 'the look of a prince'.

Torelli's longing to return may also have been hastened by news that things were looking up in Bologna. Thus in 1701 he was back in Perti's reconstituted *cappella musicale* of San Petronio, welcomed as a conquering hero with a golden handcuff comprising favourable terms of service as a freelance violinist. He died in 1709, aware of tributes to his virtuosity on the violin, both in and outside Italy, and recognition by his contemporaries as 'a man not only of docile and humble habits but also erudite and eloquent', and bequeathing a legacy of many famous pupils, among them Girolamo Nicolò Laurenti, Pietro Bettinozzi, Francesco Manfredini, and, most significantly, the future *Konzertmeister* at Dresden Johann Georg Pisendel.

Torelli's musical influence still enjoyed some currency as late as the 1730s: his writing served as a model for some movements of Johann Sebastian Bach's published works, viz. the Partitas, and the third Clavier-Übung. It was Pisendel, in the first

instance, who brought his teacher's music to Bach's attention. On his way from Ansbach to perform a concerto with the Leipzig Collegium Musicum in 1709, Pisendel stopped over in Weimar and made the acquaintance of Bach. Bach's awareness of Torelli would have been reinforced by his cousin and colleague in Weimar the town organist-cum-lexicographer Johann Gottfried Walther, who transcribed some of Torelli's opus 8 after they were published that same year. For half a decade after that, Torelli's music served as an inspiration for Bach, as is evidenced in a variety of keyboard and vocal works ranging from Bach's own arrangement (BWV 979) of a Torelli concerto to the oft-revived Hunt Cantata (BWV 208), the sinfonia of which was later to become the first movement of the first Brandenburg Concerto.

THE BAFFLING BRANDENBURGS

In 1719 Johann Sebastian Bach went to Berlin to take delivery of the latest model of a Michael Mietke harpsichord, ordered a while ago by Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. Combining business with pleasure, Bach stayed for over a week, making the acquaintance of Christian Ludwig, the youngest son of the 'Great Elector' (*Großer Kurfürst*) Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg and also half-

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Lauenburg e Butzu &c.

Di

GIUSEPPE TORELLI,
Veronese Accademico Filarmonico, e Maestro del Con-
certo del A. S. il Margavio di Brandemburgo Ansbach &c.

OPERA SESTA.

IN AUGUSTA,
Appresso Lorenzo Kroniger & Eredi del Tesullo Godebio,
per Gio: Christof Wagner,
1 6 9 8.

brother of Friedrich I, the recently-deceased first king of Prussia. Born of a second marriage, fate had elbowed Christian Ludwig out of the direct line of the electoral throne. His margraveship of Brandenburg-Schwedt thus housed a mere cadet

branch of the Hohenzollern dynasty. Nonetheless, he maintained a modest *Kapelle* in Berlin, drawing on players who had left the royal *Kapelle* in 1713 upon the death of Friedrich I. Other players from the same defunct establishment set off for Cöthen, and so paved the way—via their former colleagues in Berlin—for Bach to perform for the margrave in 1719. Two years later Bach threw together half a dozen concertos distinguished by instrumentation of utmost diversity (and improbability), and presented to the margrave a set of *Six Concerts avec plusieurs instruments*. Alas, the dedication brought neither patronage nor commission; worse still, the unusual scoring and the virtuosity required to perform them were too much of a challenge. They lay untouched until a chance discovery some 150 years later, prompting Bach's biographer Philipp Spitta to nickname them the 'Brandenburg' Concertos.

Bach's margrave of Brandenburg is, however, not to be confused with Torelli's employer, Georg Friedrich II, the Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach. This Franconian branch of the Hohenzollerns is descended from the first Elector's third marriage. The Ansbach principality was by no means a bit player in the theatre of *Reichspolitik*, however. The family married well: Georg Friedrich's half-sister Caroline was later to

become the queen consort of George II of Great Britain. Caroline's intellectual inclination was matched by Georg Friedrich's artistic side, for he loved operas, be they Italian or French. Yet, cultured as he was, he remained focused on the internecine wars that he frequently got himself involved in. First of these was the Nine Years' War (of the Grand Alliance, 1688-97), a transatlantic enterprise undertaken on a massive scale to curtail the Sun King Louis XIV's belligerence, but which only succeeded in draining the coffers of all participants. The war ended inconclusively and led to Friedrich's second adventure, the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), again to counter French hegemony. Friedrich never got to see the outcome, cut down as he was in his prime at 25, leaving no issue.

When Torelli dedicated his *Concerti musicali* to Sophie Charlotte in 1698, she had been Electress of Brandenburg for ten years. Sophie Charlotte came from a lineage of impeccable pedigree: she was the daughter of the Elector of Hanover, and was the great grand-daughter, via her mother Sophia of the Palatinate, of James I of England; her brother later became George I of Great Britain. At 16 she was married to Friedrich, who became Friedrich III Elector of Brandenburg in 1688, and the first King of Prussia in 1701; she

was therefore the sister-in-law to Bach's dedicatee Christian Ludwig.

The Berlin in which Sophie Charlotte lived prospered like few other cities (with the exception of London). The population grew from 12,000 in 1670 to 61,000 in 1712, and the economy flourished and allowed the founding of the University of Halle (1694) and Academy of the Arts (1696), which enabled Friedrich III to transform the city into a European centre of culture and science. Sophie Charlotte had a hand in ensuring that her husband signed the foundation deeds for the Berlin-Brandenburg Society of Scientists (now the Berlin Academy of Science) in 1700. The president of the society was her mother's tutor and good friend the philosopher, scientist, statesman, mathematician and intellectual colossus Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, of whom she herself became a disciple and friend.

Sadly Sophie Charlotte was not destined to reign for long. On a visit to her mother in Hanover in 1705, she was struck down with pneumonia, dying at the age of 37. But, unlike her mother, at least she got to be queen. As heiress presumptive to the English throne (thanks to the Act of Settlement of 1701), her mother Sophia had been cheated of queenship by poor timing, dying two months

before Queen Anne of England, her first cousin once removed, finally succumbed to gout. Sophie Charlotte was just as blue-stocked as her mother. According to her grandson Frederick the Great, she was possessed of the 'genius of a great man and the knowledge of a savant'. She was the object of dedication by many other artists (including Pistocchi, who dedicated his pastorate *Il Narciso*, and Arcangelo Corelli, who dedicated his celebrated op. 5 set of violin sonatas), and her great friend Leibniz penned a moving poem when he learnt of her death. He was in turn adored by the queen; even on her deathbed did she not allow her wit to desert her:

Don't grieve for me, for I am about to satisfy my curiosity about things that even Leibniz was never able to explain—space, the infinite, being, and nothingness—and for my husband, the king, I am about to provide a funeral-spectacle that will give him a new opportunity to display his pomposity and splendour!

In her memory, the king renamed her summer residence the Schloß Charlottenburg; it stands today as Berlin's largest palace.

A BEACON OF INSPIRATION REKINDLED

Torelli's significance as a composer has traditionally been historical rather than artistic. Arthur Hutchings, the author of *The Baroque Concerto* (New York, 1961), argued that 'for all his importance and competence, Torelli rarely wrote a movement of striking beauty and originality'. Evidently, Hutchings had not heard a performance of the opus 6 *Concerti musicali*. Until now Torelli's reputation has rested on his 'Christmas Concerto' (no. 6 from the posthumous opus 8 *Concerti grossi*), with his cause being enthusiastically championed by trumpeters. His opus 6's claim to fame lies in being the most historically significant concerto publication before Antonio Vivaldi's opus 3 *L'estro Armonico* (1711) and Arcangelo Corelli's opus 6 *Concerti grossi* (1714).

Italian concerto composers had had great successes in German-speaking lands even before the impact created by Vivaldi's *L'estro armonico*, as evinced by Johann Gottfried Walther's keyboard transcriptions of Torelli, Albinoni, Marcello, etc. When Johann Joachim Quantz (*Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*, 1752) credited Torelli with having written the earliest concerto, he was referring to the opus 6 set,

published in Augsburg, home to some of the finest music scribes, engravers, printers and publishers in southern Germany.

Having achieved a certain celebrity through the support of the Electress Sophie Charlotte, Torelli decided to proclaim his status as Europe's principal concerto composer by re-publishing the opus 6. At around the same time that the Augsburg print—by Johann Christoph Wagner, employing movable type—was being brought out in 1698, Torelli visited the publisher and book printer Estienne Roger in Amsterdam to arrange for the engraving of his opus 7 duos for violin and bass. For good measure—and demonstrating his business acumen—he had the opus 6 set engraved as well, probably to thwart the inevitable pirating at which Roger was notoriously adept. Notwithstanding the reduced number of pages and the conflating of the cello and organo parts into one partbook (surely a cost-reduction exercise), or even the absence of a dedicatory epistle (indication of a self-financed project), and not to mention the potential competition from the Augsburg print, the beautifully engraved Amsterdam edition is a testament to Roger's confidence in the opus 6's commercial viability. Indeed its twelve concertos were suited to a multitude of purposes, providing material for 'academies' (i.e. private

concerts) or less formal gatherings in palaces, monasteries, and private residences; they were just as suitable for use in civic and institutional functions, as in church services.

Not all the concertos are equally adaptable as orchestral or as chamber music, although the A-minor sonata G46 demonstrates perfectly that any attempt to delineate the difference in Torelli's writing between a sonata and a concerto is to quibble over semantics. Three concertos (6, 10 & 12), however, bear the innovation of being inscribed with the first ever rubric for performance for a solo violin—or two solo violins in no. 10—in a concerto publication. Indeed, Torelli was at pains to point out that 'wherever in the concerto you find the word *Solo* written, it is to be played by a single violin. For the remainder, the parts may be doubled, or even re-enforced by as many as three or four instruments to a part'. A no less valid practice was the reduction to an essential core of principal players. Georg Muffat, in his *Auserlesene Instrumental-Music* (1701), allows for making do with a *concertino* set-up, 'should you be short of string players'.

Whereas in this recording we have followed Torelli's instructions to the letter, we have also allowed ourselves to conjecture that Torelli might have adorned his string concertos with the

instrumental colours available to him in Ansbach. Here it is instructive to remember that the instrumentation required of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos bears little relation to the make-up of the humble *Kapelle* of his dedicatee; Bach's scoring of the *Six concertos avec plusieurs instruments* represented a triumph over orthodoxy, and drew on his experience of instrumental playing from the court orchestras of Weissenfels, Weimar, and Cöthen. By contrast, Torelli's four-part string concertos seem decidedly neutral, more akin to a fresh musical canvas on which the performer is encouraged to paint his desired sonorities. By tradition, the task of assigning instruments was left, despite appearances (or title-page instructions), to the discretion of the musical director. This is particularly true of wind doubling and brass interjections, which were the province of the performer, as these were not vital to the compositional integrity of the work.

Torelli's move to Ansbach came about as a result of Georg Friedrich's revitalizing of the court music, which had lain fallow during the margraveship of his predecessor and elder brother Christian Albrecht. Georg Friedrich's shopping expedition to Italy netted several star musicians: not just the alto castrato Pistocchi and soprano castrato Nicola Paris, but also several other singers as well

as the viola da gamba player Carlo Landrini. From closer to home the margrave had already recruited experts on the newly fashionable double-reed instruments: the oboist Lorenz Wilhelm was conscripted in early June 1694, to be joined less than two months later by the three oboe-playing Stollberger brothers (Martin, Michael and Jobst). So when Torelli became *Konzertmeister* in 1696, he would have had at his disposal an opera-ready band, replete with strings and winds (including a

French-style oboe band). Emboldened by our deep immersion in the historical performance practice of the period, we have opted to present the concertos with a panoply of instrumental colours and additions, in the hope that Torelli's inventive inner-part writing might be better heard, his melodic genius more appreciated, and his full stature as a protagonist in the pantheon of concerto composers vindicated at last.

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BIOGRAPHIES

CHARIVARI AGRÉABLE

Charivari Agréable is recognized as 'one of the classiest baroque bands' (The Observer), whose 'musical intuitions are always captivating' (Goldberg). 'Charivari Agréable is one of the most versatile Early Music groups around at the moment; under its benign director, Kah-Ming Ng, it appears to be infinitely adaptable, finding musicians who can fit into any of its many and varied programmes' (International Record Review). The group has been hailed for its 'thinking musicians who treat music of the past

more creatively' via their arrangements of music, 'based on a greater knowledge of the historical and social contexts for the music'. They represent 'a new and very exciting phase of the early music revival, one that enriches the existing repertory and can bring us ever closer to the spirit of the original music' (Gramophone).

The ensemble specializes in the ingenious use of period instruments to produce 'ravishing sonorities and full-bodied textures' (Gramophone)

with 'their powerful cohesion, warm sound, and their eloquent authority' (Diapason). The group has 'carved something of a niche for itself in imaginative and well-thought-out programming'; 'its work is the fruit of both scholarly research and charismatic musicianship, a combination that puts it at the forefront of period-instrument ensembles' (BBC Music Magazine). With a chronological remit spanning epochs from the Renaissance to the Early Classical, the ensemble appears in many guises, from a continuo band, a viol consort, and an Elizabethan mixed consort, to a baroque orchestra and many other surprising—yet historical—combinations.

Charivari Agréable (trans. 'pleasant tumult', from Saint-Lambert's 1707 treatise on accompaniment) was formed at the University of Oxford in 1993, and within the year became prize-winners of an international Early Music Network (UK) competition, made its debut at the Wigmore Hall, and recorded the first of many subsequent live concerts for the BBC, including Radio 3's 'In tune', 'Music Restor'd', and 'The Early Music Show'. Charivari Agréable has since recorded for New York's WNYC, and many other European radio stations, including the European Broadcasting Union. Charivari Agréable CDs have garnered such awards as the Diapason d'Or, Gramophone Editor's



© Felix Wu
(Left to Right) Kah-Ming Ng
Linda Hannah-Andersson
Bojan Ćičić

Choice, International Record Review's 'Best CD of the Year', Classic FM's Christmas Choice', BBC Music Magazine's 'Outstanding CD of the Month', MusicWeb International's 'Recording of the Year 2007' and top-star reviews by Goldberg and Classic FM Magazine.

Apart from hosting an annual summer festival of early music in Oxford, the ensemble regularly expands into Oxford's resident period-instrument orchestra, Charivari Agréable Simfonie. The orchestra has on-going collaborations with some forty vocal groups—choral societies and professional choirs alike—all over the UK, and has been conducted by many musicians of renown, including Sir Charles Mackerras. The ensemble has appeared at all prominent venues in London, including Buckingham Palace; recent and forthcoming engagements include major festivals in the UK, and tours to Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, South-East Asia, Turkey, and the USA.

The music recorded on this CD is performed using editions prepared by Charivari Agréable Publications as well as facsimiles of the original manuscripts located in the British Library, shelfmark Hirsch IV.1665. For details of the ensemble's publications and discography, please visit www.charivari.co.uk

KAH-MING NG

Kah-Ming Ng studied at Monash University, Melbourne (where he obtained a B.E. in civil engineering), the Frankfurt State Academy of Music (as a DAAD scholar), and the London Guildhall School of Music (as an FCO scholar). He then went to Oxford University (as a British Council Chevening scholar), to read for a performance M.Phil. at St Anne's College, and later a D.Phil. at Keble College, where he wrote a doctoral thesis on continuo accompaniment in its social and artistic context. His harpsichord teachers included Elizabeth Anderson (Melbourne), Harald Hoeren (Cologne), Michael Behringer (Freiburg) and Christopher Kite (London). He is a winner of the Guildhall School's Early Music Competition and a Fellow (in Harpsichord) of the Trinity College of Music London. Kah-Ming regularly contributes reviews and articles to leading specialist music journals; he wrote the entries on English and French baroque ornamentation in the revised *New Grove Dictionary of Music & Musicians*. In between his performing and directing, he squeezes in some adjudicating (of competitions and examinations) and lecturing, his most recent position being Course Coordinator & Lecturer in Early Music Studies (2004—6) at the Faculty of Music, Oxford University.



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DEDICATION

This recording is dedicated to Y.A.B. Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, an inspiration and a beacon of hope.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr Glyn Redworth for his decluttering of the notes and the expurgating of purple prose therein.
Abjad Ltd, whose generous support made this recording possible.

Recorded in St Andrew's Church, Toddington, Gloucestershire, 14-16 April 2008
Pitch: A=415Hz, keyboards tuned by Kah-Ming Ng to a 1/6-comma circular temperament

Production, engineering and editing - Adrian Hunter
Booklet notes - Kah-Ming Ng
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SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK
+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: info@signumrecords.com

www.signumrecords.com