



Throughout history, much of Bach's music has proved ripe for transcription or arrangement; reception has consistently been mixed, as doubtless it will also be for the recomposition concept. One camp will marvel at Gregson's creative ingenuity, whereas the other will reject out of hand his tinkering with such a landmark collection. I'll happily respect both opinions and remain firmly on the fence!

ROBIN STOWELL

SALUT D'AMOUR**SARASATE** Introduction et Tarantelle**ELGAR** Salut d'amour **KREISLER**La Gitana; Tambourin chinois **DVOŘÁK**

Songs My Mother Taught Me (arr.

Kreisler) **MILSTEIN** Paganiniana**TCHAIKOVSKY** Mélodie **WIENIAWSKI**Scherzo-Tarantelle **RACHMANINOFF**Vocalise **FALLA** Danse espagnole (arr.Kreisler) **GRASSE** Wellenspiel **ERNST**Die letzte Rose **BRAHMS** Contemplation**Sueye Park (violin)****Love Derwinger (piano)**

BIS 2382 (SACD)

A joyous and lovable disc of virtuoso violin sweetmeats

Having given us Paganini's Caprices for her disc debut, Korean-born



Sueye Park doesn't hide her virtuosity



Sueye Park essays an even trickier sequence of genre pieces and virtuoso solos. The title piece by Elgar, the Dvořák-Kreisler *Songs my mother taught me*, Tchaikovsky's *Mélodie* and the pay-off, the Brahms-Heifetz *Contemplation*, are nicely phrased and beautifully played.

Sarasate's *Introduction et Tarantelle* is sweetly sung, then dazzlingly dispatched, Park having fun and revelling in her youthful virtuosity – she was 17 at the time. In Kreisler's *La Gitana* she gets the ersatz gypsy style at the start and the salon style in the rest; his *Tambourin chinois* is rhythmically superb in both the main theme and the contrasting central section.

Wieniawski's *Scherzo-Tarantelle* scintillates; the Falla-Kreisler *Danse espagnole* is delectably spoof-Spanish; and Grasse's *Wellenspiel* is delightfully delicate, like gossamer. Milstein's solo *Paganiniana* is mostly terrific – one brief passage could have been retaken; fearsome difficulties are brushed aside and in slower sections she communes with her 1758 Ferdinando Gagliano. Ernst's solo 'Last Rose of Summer' Variations are so well done, with superhuman harmonics, that for once they are a joy.

Only Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise* disappoints: it cries out for vocal treatment, with at least some parlando bowing. In places her vibrato gets in the way. To have a pianist called Love as accompanist in a programme called *Salut d'Amour* is almost too good to be true, but he plays his part masterfully. The sound quality is first-rate. I look forward to the next Sueye Park CD.

TULLY POTTER

SONGS OF THE CELLO

– HOMAGE TO PABLO CASALS

BACH Cello Suite no.1 in G majorBWV1007 **BEETHOVEN** Cello Sonatano.3 in A major op.69 **SCHUMANN**

Träumerei from Kinderszenen op.15 (arr. Trinkhaus); *Widmung* op.25 no.1

RUBINSTEIN Melody in F major (arr. Popper) **SCHUBERT** An die Musik D547**TRAD** Song of the Birds (arr. Casals)**Taeguk Mun (cello) Chi Ho Han (piano)**

WARNER CLASSICS 0190295633134

Sumptuous playing despite a somewhat upside-down programme

Still in his mid-twenties, Taeguk Mun is a cellist with an impressive string of first prizes to his name. His solo debut disc features a rather strangely balanced programme that nonetheless shows off some accomplished and sensitive playing.

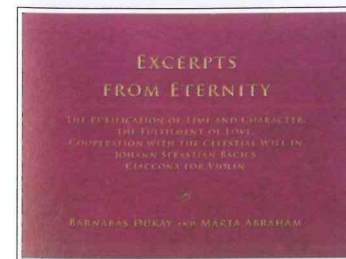
The two big works come first. In Bach's G major Suite, Mun allows himself the odd interpretative quirk, capriciously delaying the last note of the Allemande and making almost too much of the lower open strings' sonorities in the Courante, but generally he keeps a light touch in a perfectly tuned but otherwise unremarkable interpretation.

Pianist Chi Ho Han's immaculate articulation commands attention in the Beethoven, highlighted by the bright and immediate recorded sound. Ensemble is excellent, trills are tight and neat and the timing is kept impressively taut in the Scherzo. After some eloquent playing from Mun in the short Adagio cantabile there is a nice feeling of dialogue in the finale.

Mun, who moved from South Korea to New York in 2007 and studied at the Juilliard School and the New England Conservatory, particularly shines in the two Schumann miniatures, beautifully capturing the subtlety of the mood change in *Widmung* and playing *Träumerei* with a sumptuously full tone. His slow and expressive *Song of the Birds* brings the disc to a poignant close.

JANET BANKS

NEIDA NAVEE

**Excerpts from Eternity****Barnabás Dukay, Márta Ábrahám**

148PP (+CD) ISBN 978-963-12-8865-0

BIOBACH-MUSIC €67

+20PP EXAMPLES BOOK €11

LONG ROLL OF SHEET MUSIC €29

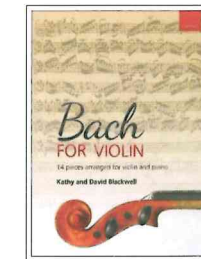
Bach's Chaconne or Ciaccona, which ends his D minor Partita for solo violin, is surely his greatest single movement. In this book, subtitled 'The Purification of Time and Character, the Fulfilment of Love, Cooperation with the Celestial Will in Johann Sebastian Bach's Ciaccona for Violin', composer and musicologist Barnabás Dukay and violinist Márta Ábrahám come perilously close to Romantic mumbo-jumbo, but they are justified in comparing Bach's edifice to the Taj Mahal and I find their actual exegesis fascinating – though I wonder how even a genius such as Bach would have found time to pack as much meaning into every note and interval as they imply.

They start with the statement that the Chaconne consists of 64 variations of four bars each, making up 33 formal units of one, two or three variations. They identify 5 single units, 25 pairs, and 3 units of 3 variations each. Along the way they deal with heptatonic

scales and tell us the symbolic meaning of each interval: for example, the 2nd is 'mediator of the spiritual worldview', the 5th 'tunes its listener to recognise the universality of existence', the 7th 'expresses a higher level of consciousness' and the octave 'is the manifestation of the so-called superego or primordial ego in music'. Specific variations are linked to months of the year.

We are told about the Golden Ratio and Bach's possible use of cabalistic techniques. Apparently his mother Elisabeth Lämmerhirt's family became followers of an Anabaptist mystic, Esaias Stiefel. So we are asked to believe that in addition to his known delight in numerology, Bach dabbled in mysticism. As it happens, I first encountered the Chaconne through Adolf Busch's famous recording, in which he takes the listener on an extraordinary journey into the realms of spirituality. I am sure Bach intended this almost ecstatic dimension. I just worry a little when we move into the sphere of exotic beliefs.

The detailed analysis throws up many points to ponder, such as the way the Chaconne reflects echoes of the earlier movements, especially the Allemande and Sarabande. The individual variations and groups of



variations are carefully considered. Scholars and amateurs alike will gain from this study, although of course the violinist's role is to weld the Chaconne into a coherent physical entity.

The book comes with a practice score in the same Imperial Octavo format (11.5 x 8.25 ins), as well as a rolled-up score, 6ft 10ins long and available separately, that can possibly be hung on the wall. I suspect it will be welcomed by players, as it makes the structure of the Chaconne very clear. There is also a CD on which Ábrahám plays the whole Partita: her performance is very deliberate and didactic, far too slow for me at virtually 40 minutes – she takes 17:17 over the Chaconne. Perhaps her approach is intentional and is meant to chime with the performance suggestions on page 28 but I am not convinced.

TULLY POTTER

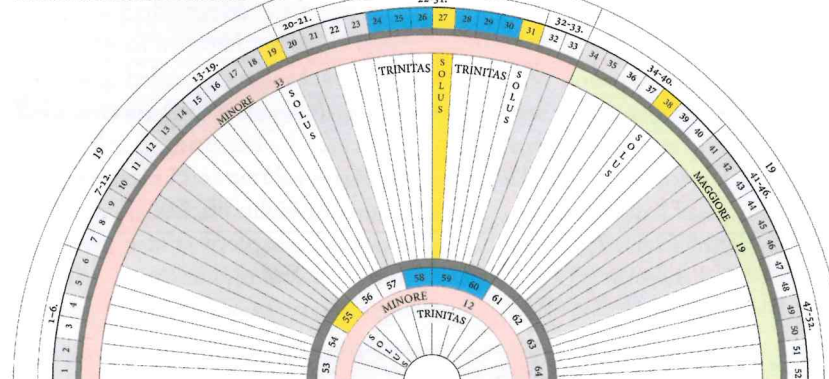
Bach for violin: 14 pieces arranged for violin and piano
Kathy and David Blackwell

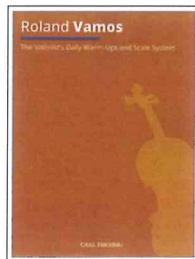
24PP ISBN 978-0-19-351901-5

OUP £12.95

Bach for Violin is a book of 14 pieces which, apart from the Gigue from the E major Partita, are all arrangements of works by Bach which were written for instruments other than the violin. Let's think about that for a moment – we are being presented with a volume which purports to be an introduction to the music of J.S. Bach, but almost none of the pieces were actually written by Bach in the form in which they are offered here. Sacrilege! Well, not really. Throughout his life, Bach constantly transcribed and arranged music – both his own and other

This diagram illustrates the intricate structure of Bach's Chaconne





people's – to suit the occasion and the available forces. Likewise, in selecting and arranging these pieces, Kathy and David Blackwell have produced an entirely appropriate and beautiful collection for students of the violin to discover and enjoy.

As well as learning familiar tunes, such as music from the Cello Suites and some of the more recognisable cantatas, there is a chance to get to know some new repertoire. There are arrangements of arias from some of the lesser-known cantatas, all of which contain passages that are so perfect for the violin that it is hard to believe they weren't originally conceived with the instrument in mind.

The bonus of many of these arrangements is that they require the violinist to learn how to be an accompanist as well as a soloist. There is a real sense of partnership between the violin and piano, and as you might expect, the piano part is sufficiently demanding to need a good pianist to carry it off. Luckily, audio files of the piano accompaniments are available to download (free of charge) from the Blackwells' website, which also contains – what a fantastic and generous idea – cello parts as an alternative or additional part for some of the pieces.

The only piece in the collection which doesn't seem to work as well as the rest, is the Bach/Gounod *Ave Maria*. The dynamics in the violin part follow those in Gounod's original version for violin (or cello), piano and organ, rather than those in the now more familiar vocal version. The sudden drop in volume midway through some of the phrases will feel slightly unsettling to those who are singing along with the *Ave Maria* in their heads. But the relaxed attitude in this book towards Bach's original choices of key, instrumentation and

articulation, meant that I felt happy to scribble in some dynamics which suited me better.

This is an absolute gem of a book. It is beautifully set out and easy to read, the suggested fingerings are helpful and the choice of repertoire is stimulating and inspiring. The recommended ability level is 'around Grades 4–7' and in my mind it's a book which would be perfect to present to any post-Grade 5 student, as it contains pieces which are accessible enough to inspire and enthuse, as well as those which will challenge and extend. It is also a volume for the teacher or more advanced student to leave on the music stand and play through in its entirety with a visiting pianist (or with the audio files) or simply to dip into in a spare moment. In short, this is thoroughly recommended.

CELIA COBB

The Violinist's Daily Warm-Ups and Scale System

Roland Vamos

165PP ISBN 9781491153765

CARL FISCHER \$14.99

This weighty publication combines 'The Daily Sixteen' and the 'Scale System' devised by Roland Vamos in one volume.

The 'Violinist's Daily Sixteen' finds its origins in the African-American neo-Romantic composer and concert violinist Clarence Cameron White's *The Violinist's Daily Dozen: Twelve Special Studies for the Development of Correct Finger Action in Violin Playing*. These are a set of hand-setting exercises dating from 1924. White also published *A System of One Octave Scale Studies for the Violin* (1915). Vamos has taken the former and added his own additional exercises,

edited those by White, and included guidance on how they should be used to best effect. This has been used as a preface to Vamos's own scale system, where he 'introduces three- and four-octave scales by teaching two-octave scales in one position, going up chromatically through seven positions; starting on the first, second, third and finally fourth fingers in major and melodic minor'.

The two-octave scales are followed immediately by the accompanying arpeggio in the home key, followed by a first inversion of the subdominant arpeggio, and ending with a minor 6th in the home key that leads up a semitone into the next scale. The section on three-octave scales takes us through each scale with a wide array of slurring patterns and articulations in a continuous flow, leading to the arpeggio section that explores another variety of slurring patterns. The four-octave scales follow a similar system to those of three octaves in the major and minor keys of G, A flat and A.

The scale system does not explore double-stopped scales, nor scales in harmonics, so is not a replacement for the Flesch system, but it does provide a comprehensive way to work at scales and bow control. The exercises at the start are also well worth exploring.

My main issue is that, given the number of pages it fills, it may have been more user-friendly had it been spiral-bound rather than having a traditional spine – I needed to resort to pegs to hold my copy open on the music stand when using it. It is not an expensive volume and I can imagine that many violin teachers of mid-range to higher-level students would find it a useful resource to have in their library, as would many first-year college students studying the violin.

MATHEW LEE