

Edward E. Lowinsky (ed.), Josquin des Prez. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1976 (1977). One volume and three 7" records; slipcased. \$55.00.

Josquin des Prez: Missa La sol fa re mi; motets, chansons, instrumental music. Capella Antiqua of Munich directed by Konrad Ruhland. ABC Classics AB 67017 (2 record set). \$15.96.

The rationale for recorded sound collections or archives rests on the documentary nature of recordings. Individually they document events, collectively they document an era. The juxtaposition of print and sound as documents of an event is aptly illustrated by the two items cited here.

The event was the International Josquin Festival-Conference in June 1971, a celebration of the 450th anniversary of the death of the leading composer of his generation and probably of his century. The documents are the proceedings of the conference in print and the workshops and concerts of the conference on records.

All credit is due to Edward E. Lowinsky for conceiving the festival as a meeting of musicologists and performing musicians and to the Oxford University Press (and the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, which underwrote it) for combining print and sound in the collection of proceedings.

Lowinsky points out that the workshops where this meeting took place were an innovation "which has become the model for a whole number of musicological conferences." On the one hand were thirty eminent musicologists who had been given every aspect of Josquin's life and works to investigate. On the other were four renowned performing groups devoted to early music, each of which gave an evening concert, each of which included Mass, motets and secular music to represent the full range of Josquin's work. The innovation was bringing speakers and performers together in the afternoons to discuss and illustrate problems of performance and interpretation: Mass, motet and secular music were the subjects of the three workshops.

Hence the book not only contains the thirty papers (save one) and three additional papers prepared subsequently, thoroughly revised for publication. It also includes the workshop discussions and a symposium on editing the music of Josquin. It further includes footnotes, tables, illustrations, musical examples and index. But best of all, it includes three 7" records, each containing about 15 minutes of music, each taken from one of the workshops. There is really no other way in which the contributions of both musicologists (in print) and musicians (on the records) could have been fairly documented. No need to take on faith the descriptions of divergent performance practice.

As for the concerts, it was originally planned to record them live. This proved contractually impossible, but it was still hoped that each group would record the music it had prepared, and to that end most of

the Masses selected were among those not yet recorded. But the New York Pro Musica soon disbanded and the Stuttgart Schola Cantorum, whose interest in early music is marginal to its interest in the avant-garde, did nothing. There is no indication that the Prague Madrigal Choir has recorded its program, either.

But the Capella Antiqua of Munich, which closed the week with the most sublime performances imaginable, including an unforgettable rendition of the motet Miserere, promptly went home and recorded its entire program (save only the closing 'Mille regretz') for the Philips Seon Series. As such it has been difficult to find, but now ABC Classics have issued it as one of their series of Seon releases. In fact, it includes three more motets and five more chansons than the concert program in order to fill up two records (the Mass occupies only one side).

For our purposes it would be enough to say that one of the concerts is documented on records. But in fact this is one of the world's finest groups devoted to early music, as its prolific series of recordings on Telefunken, Christophorus, Philips and BASF have proved. The renditions are models and the sound is exceptional. ABC Classics has provided unusually quiet surfaces, although not unexpectedly the records are as thin as most American pressings.

One of the group's illustrations in the workshop on motets was 'Absalon fili mi,' which can be heard on the workshop record. But Ruhland also added this work to his recorded program, so we can hear not only the rather spontaneous performance which served to illustrate a point in the workshop but also the finished rendition prepared for recording.

Among the papers which are of special interest to us are Nanie Bridgman's "On the Discography of Josquin and the Interpretation of his Music in Recordings" (how unfortunate that a systematic discography was not considered desirable in this volume, Lowinsky having prepared a quite complete one before the conference was held) and James Haar's "Some remarks on the 'Missa La sol fa re mi'" (the Mass which Ruhland performs). Those who have noted the profusion of Missae de beata Virgine from composers of early times (going back to the plainchant Mass IX) will be interested in the paper on the subject by Gustave Reese, the outstanding American scholar whose death last September closed a remarkable career.

If proof is needed that print and audio go hand in hand to document our world, these two examples are prime exhibits. Their value cannot be overlooked. I might add that librarians might well note the close relationship of the book (with its records) and the record album. Anyone interested in one should be apprised of the other's availability.

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