

## LINER NOTE FOR *TRUMPET MASQUE*: ABOUT ARRANGING 17th CENTURY MUSIC FOR TRUMPET AND PIANO

The improvisatory music making of both the 17th and 19th-century composer-performer is rooted in a pragmatic, but also impassioned culture of expressing the music through the medium at hand – *ad hoc* in the best sense, when we talk about intentions. In such a culture one has to accept the rough with the smooth, delight in surprises, but also 'fill out' in one's mind where the realisation simply hints at the intention – as such an exercise both for listener and player.

The central position of the piano in the 19th century as medium for transcriptions encourages us to draw on some of the arrangement practices of that era – a natural starting point for a disc such as this. When it comes to the music of the 17th century though, we also have the lessons learnt from a diversity of modern-day performance practices for baroque music – performance practices that, at their best, provide powerful means for clarifying textures, lightening articulation, imbuing dance rhythms with buoyancy, and 'styling' the expression where that is called for, inevitably calling for an approach that is alert to these possibilities too. Perhaps most important is the awareness that the darkening, constant enriching of colour and timbre that characterises so much of the 'romantic' approach, is not always the most effective for chamber-like baroque utterances.

The most obvious (and problematic) dividing line exists in this trumpet and piano project between those works where only the voice-leadings in the melodic line and the bass need to be kept intact (such as the Sweelinck arrangement here), and those works – or parts of works – where the entire contrapuntal texture must be retained sacrosanct (such as the Purcell Fantasy). In the latter case a multi-voiced work must have melodic lines distributed such that the duet medium does not obscure the contrapuntal workings, and yet be free to add a new element of dialogue.

So, in some works lines are merely redistributed for the two instruments, according to the possibilities of the context (eg. the

plaintive Cabanilles work), with the solo piano sometimes providing natural paragraph divisions (eg. the Arauxo Tiento). Here the wide range of declamatory styles of the music provides its own variety and unusual characters in the new incarnation.

In other places textures can be filled out with almost total freedom according to one's felt response to the music (in both the spirit of elaboration and improvisation, eg. *Scocca Pur*). This 'filling out' highlights the problem of octave registration on the piano: added octaves in the piano bass are a good way of rooting a texture and supporting a clarion solo line, but can also hint at laboured Victorian baroque parody; in some works moving freely into, and out of, a 16-foot bass provides delicate negotiating possibilities (especially so in the Muffat Sonata on this disc). Changes in octave registration of the whole texture can also create fresh new colours for the music (eg. the Couperin *Cromhorne*.)

On some occasions the texture seems so open to manipulation that 'extra' counterpoints keep suggesting themselves at every turn (cf. the Monteverdi and Marchand works) – here the thrust and character of the music are too infectious to call for any kind of restraint.

Assuming, in both arranging and performing, a pragmatic and playful approach to realising this richly expressive and interesting music, new guises do not simply reflect *off* the originals – in some cases they are a reflection *on* the music, or simply a reflection *of* it. In some of these works the new version leaps at the ear like a fresh piece, in others the music asks for a kind of personal communication with itself too, rather than with an audience – in the true spirit of so much of baroque music making.

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