TOCCATA CLASSICS

John WORGAN

COMPLETE HARPSICHORD MUSIC

PIECES FOR THE HARPSICHORD
ALLEGRO NON TANTO
A NEW CONCERTO
SIX SONATAS

Julian Perkins
Timothy Roberts

FIRST RECORDINGS

JOHN WORGAN Complete Harpsichord Music

1	***Allegro non tanto* in D minor** (publ. c. 1795)	**3:03**
	Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord (publ. 1769)	**39:09**
	Sonata I in G major	**6:28**
2	I *Allegro*	2:10
3	II *Largo*	1:29
4	III *Presto*	2:49
	Sonata II in C major	**5:53**
5	I *Spiritoso*	2:41
6	II Air: *Affettuoso e dolce*	1:29
7	III *Spiritoso*	1:43
	Sonata III in F major	**8:24**
8	I *Andante Amoroso*	3:22
9	II *Presto*	3:05
10	III *Minuet Affettuoso*	1:57
	Sonata IV in B flat major	**6:39**
11	I *Allegro*	4:58
12	II *Bizzaria*: *Affettuoso – Allegro – Affettuoso – Allegro*	1:41
	Sonata V in E flat major	**5:52**
13	I *Larghetto*	3:04
14	II *A Tempo di Gavott*	2:48
	Sonata VI in D major	**5:53**
15	Sarabande with Variations	

Pieces for the Harpsichord, composed purposely for forming the Hands of Young Pupils to that Instrument (1780)		**23:26**
16	*Allegro* in C major	1:24
17	*Vivace* in C major	0:45
18	*Allegro* in G major	0:48
19	*Tempo di Minuetto* in G major	1:11
20	*Allegro* in D major	2:01
21	Gavot in D major	2:08
22	*Allegro di spirito* in F major	1:35
23	*Andante* in F major	3:29
24	*Tempo giusto e Moderato* in B flat major	2:51
25	*Allegro Moderato* in E flat major	1:50
26	*Allegro comodo* in A major	1:48
27	*Larghetto Affettuoso e Cantabile* in A major	1:47
28	*Allegro moderato* in A major	1:49
A New Concerto for the Harpsichord **in G major** (publ. 1785)		**10:55**
29	I *Allegro*	4:25
30	II *Larghetto e legati*	2:31
31	III Minuet	3:59

Julian Perkins, double-manual harpsichord from the workshop of Jacobus Kirckman, 1772 1–15 29–31

Timothy Roberts, double-manual harpsichord by Klaus Ahrend, 1973, after Dulcken 16–28

TT **76:34**

FIRST RECORDINGS

A MUSICIAN OF THE MOST ECCENTRIC MIND

by Timothy Roberts

This album, and my earlier one of organ pieces,[1] constitute a complete recording of the surviving keyboard music of John Worgan. Most of his harpsichord works have come down to posterity as three printed editions: a set of six sonatas published in London in 1769; a book of thirteen didactic pieces from 1780; and *A New Concerto for the Harpsichord* of 1785.[2] In 1795 a brief *Allegro non tanto* in D minor was included in a posthumous collection of his organ pieces, with a note to the effect that 'This may be played upon the harpsichord'.[3]

Worgan was born just outside the eastern boundary of the City of London and, apart from likely journeys to Cambridge (where he took a Mus.B. in 1748 and was awarded a doctorate in 1775), there is no evidence of his travelling further from London than to visit his modest country home at Richmond-on-Thames a few miles to the west. His first musical instructor was his older brother James, after which he studied with Thomas Roseingrave; it was from Roseingrave that he

> got […] all that such an eccentric enthusiast could give, and from him imbibed a reverence for the genius of Domenico Scarlatti […].[4]

Next came tuition with Francesco Geminiani, who duly became the musician 'than whom he swore no other divinty',[5] while contemporaries also 'credited him for an

[1] *John Worgan: Complete Organ Music*, Toccata Classics tocc 0332.

[2] No copies of any separate string parts – two violins and cello – are known to have survived. But in English chamber music of the period the 'accompanying' instruments are often optional, and Worgan's solo part seems designed to have been playable as a self-sufficient work for harpsichord.

[3] It may be heard as an organ piece on tocc 0332, track 18.

[4] John Sainsbury, *A Dictionary of Musicians*, Vol. 2, 1824, p. 547.

[5] Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, Vol. 2, 1789, p. 665.

exclusive attachment to Handel',[6] as well as enthusiasms for other composers – steps, perhaps, towards his own open-minded, sometimes learned, eclectic and unpedantic habits of playing and composing. Worgan's first church appointments were in the City, at St Katharine Cree (1743) and St Andrew Undershaft (1749), and as a secular organist he succeeded his brother James at Vauxhall Gardens in 1751. On the death of James two years later, he also became organist of St Botolph without Aldgate. He would retain that post, along with the one at St Andrew's, for the rest of his life.[7] If in church he relied largely on his improvisatory skill, the pleasure gardens demanded of him an inexhaustible supply of both organ concertos (some of his own were apparently adaptations of the *Six Sonatas*[8]) and novel songs accompanied by orchestra. Worgan must have had some success with the latter, since during his years at the Gardens (1751–73) he published no fewer than fourteen volumes of his Vauxhall songs.

He was fecund in his family life, too, fathering during the first two of his three marriages no fewer than eleven children, several of whom were to become accomplished musicians. His most eminent son, though, was George Boucher Worgan, the surgeon on Captain Cook's First Fleet. In January 1788 George Worgan arrived in Port Jackson, New South Wales, on board the flagship *Sirius*, along with his square pianoforte[9] by Frederick Beck – the first piano in Australia.[10]

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] The Renatus Harris organ at St Botolph, on which both James and John Worgan played, still exists (excellently restored by Martin Goetze and Dominic Gwynn).

[8] Richard Mackenzie Bacon, 'Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan, Mus.D', *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, Vol. 5, 1823, p. 118. At the time of writing (December 2020) the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* is available online through Google Books; Bacon's lengthy memoir (which surely includes material by Worgan's essayist son Thomas Danvers Worgan) occupies pp. 113–34 of Vol. 5.

[9] The piano came increasingly into favour during the last decades of Worgan's life, and his *Six Sonatas* postdate, for example, Johann Christian Bach's *Six Sonatas for Piano-forte or Harpsichord*, Op. 5 (1765), and John Burton's *Ten Sonatas for Organ, Harpsichord or Piano-Forte* (1767). But despite his sometimes abundant indications of *forte* and *piano* there seems no reason to doubt Worgan's evident preference for the older instrument.

[10] Further biographical information on John Worgan and his relatives can be found in the booklet notes to Toccata Classics TOCC 0332, and (in exhaustive detail) Geoffrey Lancaster, *The First Fleet Piano*, 2006 (available online, at the time of writing, at http://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/32850), especially – on John Worgan – pp. 195–209. In 2019 John Boucher Worgan's piano returned to the UK for restoration by Lucy Coad – Steven Morris, 'First Australian piano comes home to UK after 231 years', *The Guardian Online*, 31 March 2019.

In his day John Worgan was best-known for his brilliant organ-playing, both in church and at Vauxhall, where he won the approval of Handel himself for his performances of the latter's concertos.[11] But *conoscenti* also knew him as a 'most excellent original harpsichord-composer and performer'[12] with a 'bold and full manner of playing'[13] – despite his hands being so 'delicately formed' that 'he deserved some credit for reaching octaves'; and yet 'such was the magnitude of his grasp, that once, when his energy stormed, an electrified madcap exclaimed, "Zounds! the man has three hands"'.[14]

'Three hands' might be a reference to Worgan's liking for the practice of hand-crossing, required several times in his music,[15] and which reflects the influence of Scarlatti. The latter's 30 brilliant and ground-breaking *Essercizi*, printed in London in 1738 or 1739, set alight a veritable craze for his music among English musicians. Thomas Roseingrave had befriended Scarlatti in Venice in 1709, and in 1739 published his own edition of 42 Scarlatti sonatas, including some of the *Essercizi*, as well as other sonatas of which he must have had manuscript copies. It was presumably through Roseingrave that in 1752 Worgan himself was able to obtain a licence directly from Scarlatti in Madrid to publish another volume of his music, this time with (unusually) a title page in Spanish: the *XII Sonatas Modernas para Clavicordio*.[16] In 1772, after Scarlatti's death, Worgan was granted permission for a second volume of *Sonatas Modernas*.[17]

As Julian Perkins suggests below, Worgan seems to have had an empathy for the wilder side of Scarlatti's music. The glee composer R. J. S. Stevens saw him as 'a Musician

[11] Mackenzie Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[12] 'To all Harpsichord Performers' (advertisement), *London Evening Post*, 29 February–3 March 1772, No. 6889.

[13] As reported in an article on Worgan's pupil Charles Wesley, in [?] Clarke, *The Georgian Era: Memoirs of the Most Eminent Persons, who have Flourished in Great Britain, from the Accession of George the First to the Demise of George the Fourth,* Vol. 4, 1834, p. 317.

[14] Mackenzie Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[15] In the fast movements of Sonatas II 5 7 and III 9 as well as in two pieces 23 28 from the 1780 collection.

[16] In Spanish 'clavicordio' meant harpsichord, the clavichord being 'manicordio'.

[17] Worgan owned a Spanish manuscript (now in the British Library) comprising 44 Scarlatti sonatas, from which he selected the 24 pieces included in the two volumes of *Sonatas Modernas*. The second of them ends with the famous repeated-note *Allegro* in D minor, K141 – one of six sonatas that have survived thanks only to Worgan's Madrid connection.

of the most eccentric Mind',[18] and his fellow organist Joah Bates records that in his improvisations

> his imagination was of the original and captivating kind, that his audience often looked on each other with significant astonishment, and remained open-mouthed and breathless for several seconds after the organ had ceased.[19]

A preference for improvisation might account for the modest amount of keyboard music that, in the course of a long career, Worgan committed to paper. It may be that he wished only to publish works that had, to some degree or other, an educational purpose. The *Pieces for the Harpsichord Composed purposely for forming the Hands of Young Pupils to that Instrument with the help of a proper Instructor* (1780)[20] are ordered not only according to their technical difficulty, but also following a 'cycle of fifths', whereby the student is introduced to keys using an increasing number of sharps or flats.[21] Richard Mackenzie Bacon describes not only the 1780 pieces but also the more demanding *Six Sonatas* as 'happy blendings of the "utili dulci" [useful and sweet], excellently qualified to steady the finger',[22] so they (also organised by fifths)[23] may likewise have been intended for Worgan's pupils. (Even Scarlatti's *Essercizi* were designed partly *per addestrarti alla Franchezza sull Gravicembalo*, that is, 'for training yourself in mastery of the harpsichord'.[24]) Finally, the title page of the harpsichord concerto makes its intention clear: it was *A New Concerto for the Harpsichord, with the Parts of Accompanyment, Consisting of Two Violins and a Violon-cello composed by Dr. Worgan. Purposely for the*

[18] R. J. S. Stevens, *Recollections*, spring 1787; ed. Mark T. Argent, Palgrave Macmillan, London/Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, 1992.

[19] Mackenzie Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[20] A number of Worgan's contemporaries published comparable collections of easy pieces, including Georg (Jiří) Benda (sonatinas in his *Sammlung vermischter Clavier- und Gesangstücke*, 1780–87), J. C. F. Bach (*Musikalische Nebenstunden*, 1787–9), Stephen Storace (*Six Easy and Progressive Sonatas*, 1791) and Muzio Clementi (*Six Sonatinas*, Op. 36, 1797).

[21] There are two pieces in C major and then two each in the sharp keys of G and D; Worgan then introduces the flat keys of F, B flat and E flat, before returning to the sharp side for three movements in the more advanced sharp key of A major.

[22] *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

[23] In the first five sonatas, from G through C, F and B flat round to E flat major. The D major of No. VI should, strictly speaking, precede the G major of No. I, but Worgan presumably wanted to place it as the grand finale of the set.

[24] *Essercizi*, preface.

Practice and Improvement of his Pupils, and Others Who are Attaining a Command of that Instrumt.

In 1764 Worgan played at a soirée that had been organised to welcome the famous castrato Giuseppe Manzoli to London. A surviving account does not specify whether Worgan was improvising or playing compositions, but meditates instead on the transience of the performer's eloquence.

> He had scarcely touched the instrument when Manzoli, who sat by the fire at some distance, turned towards him with a look expressive of surprise and delight. As the doctor proceeded in his performance, the Italian drew nearer and nearer the harpsichord; and at last, unable to repress his feelings, threw himself into his enchanter's arms. Such was the fascination of those powers, which, like the dramatic painting of Kean or Garrick, or the eloquence of a Burke, Cicero, or Demosthenes, fade into feeble tradition and vanish.[25]

The Music

The Baroque-style ***Allegro non tanto*** in D minor, Worgan's only minor-key fast movement for harpsichord [1], may be an early work: its first five notes are precisely those that open Scarlatti's *Essercizi*. There are two sections, each repeated, of which the second closes with an echo passage on the upper keyboard.

The compact 30-page score of the ***Six Sonatas***, Worgan's first publication of keyboard music, contains a striking variety of forms and musical styles. Three sonatas are in three movements (fast–slow–fast in the first two and slow–fast–minuet in the third); two in two (an *Allegro* followed by a sort of scherzo, and a slow movement plus a lightweight dance-rondo); then, as Sonata VI, a substantial set of variations in a single tempo.

Sonata I in G major, a compact, whimsical *Allegro* in $\frac{3}{4}$ [2], is marked by strong contrasts of texture, from melody with accompaniment in triplets to energetic figuration punctuated by full chords. It is followed by a similarly brief *Largo* [3], also in $\frac{3}{4}$, that feels like a freely improvised interlude. It passes from G major through E minor to a questioning ending on a B major chord (sounding spicy in the unequal temperament used here). The brilliant Scarlatti-esque $\frac{3}{8}$ *Presto* finale [4] conjures up *opera buffa*, its

[25] Mackenzie Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

quickfire repeated bass notes and sparkling right-hand arpeggios creating an orchestral effect. Each half is repeated, which enables Julian Perkins to throw in extra crushed dissonances and other witty variants in this recording.

The three movements of Sonata II in C major also have the character of an operatic overture, or maybe a succinct symphony by Sammartini. The initial *Spiritoso* [5] is violinistic, its first chord a surprise *coup d'archet* that leads to energetic 'across the strings' figuration. There is a suggestion of sonata form, the 'second subject' being a *piano* melody in the minor mode. Then come whimsical 'Scotch snaps' (short–long pairs of notes) that perhaps poke fun at the *galant* style of the younger generation. Another composer might, from habit, have marked each of the two sections to be repeated, but Worgan apparently preferred a more pithy effect. The slow movement is an affecting 'Air' in C minor [6] – a lovelorn shepherdess pouring her heart out at Vauxhall, perhaps? The finale, in a *Da Capo* (ABA) form, with Scarlattian hand-crossing in the B section [7], returns to the brilliance of the first movement. This time the style is that of a rustic English dance in $\frac{2}{4}$, which inspired Julian Perkins to sign off with the closing phrase of the Sailor's Hornpipe.

After his arrival in Britain in 1762 J. C. Bach introduced new orchestral sounds to London audiences, in his acclaimed operas, concertos and symphonies. The $\frac{3}{4}$ *Andante Amoroso* [8] that opens Worgan's Sonata III in F major, like the first movement of Sonata V [13], shows that he was open to novel influences; the movement suggests a kind of *aria nobile*, complete with sighing figures and chromatic inflections, challenging the player to create a convincing *cantabile* at the harpsichord. The movement ends with a link into the virtuosic and equally orchestral and Italianate *Presto* [9]. Three dramatic chords are the starting signal for a dramatic sequence of sparkling contrasts, among them a jovial figure with leaping quavers; long chains of semiquavers in each hand; explosive bass notes whether on or off the beat; and contrasting woodwind scales that chuckle down and up again in *staccato* thirds. Finally, a slow minuet [10] puts the listener down gently, Julian Perkins' performance on damped strings evoking a guitar serenade by Boccherini.

The *Allegro* 11 of Sonata IV in B flat starts out-of-key, with a (seventh) chord on F that may have been intended to link Sonatas III and IV together. Scarlatti is emphatically present in the leaping melodies, the transparent textures and the dance-like impetus of this fine movement in $\frac{3}{8}$. (Julian Perkins opts to repeat each of the two halves, although the score is ambiguous on that point.) An eccentric *Bizzaria* 12 is also symmetrical, although this time each section is itself split in two, with a curiously questioning *Affettuoso* twice answered by an airily naïve *Allegro*, here played on the octave (4′) strings alone.

The richness of the key of E flat was beloved of Mozart and other late-eighteenth-century composers, and in the Sonata V in E flat major the colours of Worgan's full-voiced *Larghetto* in $\frac{3}{4}$ 13 are enhanced by the unequal temperament set by our tuner for this recording, Oliver Sändig. Once again orchestral textures are conjured up, with phrases on the quieter upper keyboard perhaps suggesting woodwind solos. A light and charming dance then follows, a gavotte in rondo form 14. This kind of elegant, sometimes rustic finale was to become a cliché of later Georgian piano music by such composers as Stephen Storace and Samuel Wesley.

Musical antiquarianism was an important part of musical life in later-eighteenth-century London, with The Academy of Ancient Music and the Madrigal Society (of which Worgan was a member) among the organisations dedicated to reviving the glories of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century music, or to conserving that of the era of Corelli and Handel. By 1769 the sarabande was no longer a fashionable dance, so the robust variations of Worgan's Sonata VI in D major 15 might be seen as a tribute to 'ancient music': rather than separate, contrasting variations in the late-eighteenth-century manner, this piece offers a patterned accumulation of increasingly fast notes in the right, the left, then both hands. The danger in such formulaic schemes is that of each segment starting anti-climactically with the same harmony on which the previous one ended (here, the home key of D). Instead, Worgan creates an ingenious impression of seamlessness by interspersing the theme and variations with a contrasting, rising melody that cadences in the dominant key (A major), before descending nobly into the next variation. He ended the sonata with the sparkling semiquaver arpeggios of

Variation 4, but for this recording Julian Perkins repeats the last four bars as a brilliant demi-semiquaver flourish.

Worgan's ***Pieces for the Harpsichord*** of 1780 are miniatures in the style of his sonatas; untitled, beyond their Italian tempo indications, their mostly paired arrangement suggests that they can be played alone, or together to create two- or three-movement sonatinas. Individually, most of them follow a two-section proto-sonata structure, but, with no repeats indicated, they typically last only a couple of minutes or so. The collection starts with three pairs, each of which links an *Allegro* 16 18 20 with a dance, whether a minuet 17 19 or gavotte 21. The first piece is typical of what is to come, its effortless tunefulness built from phrases of subtly irregular lengths.[26] A fourth *Allegro* 22, with Alberti-like bass figuration and a *dolce* 'second subject', is paired with an *Andante* 23 that hints at the nocturne-like romanticism later associated with the 'London piano school'.

Then comes a lullaby-like *Tempo giusto e Moderato* in B flat 24 that uses up-to-date 'tune and accompaniment' textures, although its rondo form recalls the French High Baroque: an eight-bar melody alternates with three *couplets* in contrasting keys (the third, longer one using dramatic *tremolo* figuration). The pair of this piece, a $\frac{6}{8}$ *Allegro Moderato* in E flat 25, returns to Worgan's ineffably cheerful Italianate/Scarlattian style (with a first-section repeat written out in full). The 1780 collection ends with three pieces in A major 26 27 28 that, as suggested already, seem to have been conceived together as a tiny, four-and-a-half-minute sonata. Their style is close to that of J. C. Bach, a sinking phrase in the third piece adding a sprinkling of Scarlatti.

Bacon's 'Memoir' describes Worgan's ***A New Concerto for the Harpsichord*** of 1785 as

> a curiosity in many respects. It is the only composition of the kind he ever published,[27] and the child of his [old] age. It was also the last of his publications, and although composed at the age of sixty-three, and when he was a martyr to the stone,[28] is yet replete with

[26] For example, in the first half: two, three, two-and-a-half, two-and-a-half, and two bars.
[27] And, today, his only extant concerto.
[28] Kidney stones.

spirit, unblemished by senility or infirmity, and untainted by the lamp.[29] The name of HAYDN would have given this composition the celebrity which the worshippers of a name conspire to establish.[30]

It is hardly surprising that by the mid-1780s, the years of Mozart's mature operas and Haydn's 'Paris' symphonies, Worgan's music 'was considered to be old-fashioned',[31] and his *New Concerto* certainly has strong echoes of the Baroque era: a first movement with a Vivaldi-like ritornello structure 29, a touching, simple air with hints of the Scotch style 30 and a $\frac{3}{8}$ finale in the style of a minuet 31 – a dance that had stayed in fashion for over a century. Yet in the first movement Worgan approaches Classical 'sonata form', with a variety of contrasted melodies and figuration following the outline of exposition, minor-key development (albeit brief) and recapitulation. The Minuet is prolix but has the same tendency; an assiduous analyst might note some similarity to 'sonata-rondo' structure. But of all composers, the witty and 'wilfully odd'[32] John Worgan needs no deep musicological understanding to be understood and enjoyed.

AN EAGLE OVER FALCONS: SOME THOUGHTS ON RECORDING WORGAN'S HARPSICHORD MUSIC

by Julian Perkins

When Timothy Roberts invited me to record some of John Worgan's harpsichord pieces, I reacted with some scepticism. Who was this unknown English composer whose music is littered with unusual figurations, breaches of eighteenth-century compositional orthodoxy and even moments of harmonic kinkiness? I initially thought Worgan's music slightly crude compared to the dazzling harpsichord

[29] I.e., pedantry?
[30] *Op. cit.*, p. 118.
[31] Pamela McGairl, 'John Worgan', in *Grove Online*.
[32] *Cf.* Stephen Pettitt's comment overleaf.

suites I have recorded by his compatriots, James Nares[1] and John Christopher Smith Jnr.[2] Like Alessandro Longo, when he edited Domenico Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas, I even attempted to 'normalise' some of Worgan's more eccentric passages.

Tim endured my doubts with good grace. He pointed out that some moments of apparent crudity are probably parodies, and showed me an instance where Handel's music is as surprising as Worgan's. I was also much encouraged by Stephen Pettitt, record critic of *The Sunday Times*, who wrote to me:

> I must admit that Worgan's music had completely passed me by hitherto, and I'm often a bit cynical about musical byways. But when you played his sonatas live in nightly instalments on YouTube I was beguiled. The ideas are bold and charming, the rule-breakings sometimes outrageous (but surely intended), the parallels with the miniature dramas and virtuosity of Domenico Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas and C. P. E. Bach's experimental music clear. They're a bit odd, make no mistake, but it's a wilful sort of oddity that I found impossible to resist.[3]

Once I had accepted Worgan's 'wilful oddity', I too found his music impossible to resist. It oozes character and could perhaps be described as being in the 'Anglo-Scarlatti' style, in which the robust rhythmic verve one often finds in the music of Thomas Arne and William Boyce is fused with Italianate zest and lyricism. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the demonic *Presto* of Worgan's third sonata [9], where he delights in Scarlatti's trademark gesture of hand-crossing while puncturing extended Vivaldi-esque figurations with explosive bass notes that fire off like cannonballs on the Kirckman harpsichord used in this recording. In the preface to his much-loved *Essercizi per Gravicembalo* Scarlatti speaks of an 'ingenious jesting with art',[4] and this capricious aesthetic impregnates much of Worgan's music.

Yet Worgan's native, English sensibilities are strong. His indulgence in stylistic digression, frequent levity and occasional bawdiness are perhaps comparable to

[1] *Ingenious Jestings – James Nares: Eight Harpsichord Setts*, Avie AV2152.
[2] *Smith & Handel*, Chandos CHAN 0807, which includes Smith's *Six Lessons*, Op. 3.
[3] E-mail dated 25 October 2020.
[4] *Lo scherzo ingegnoso dell'arte*.

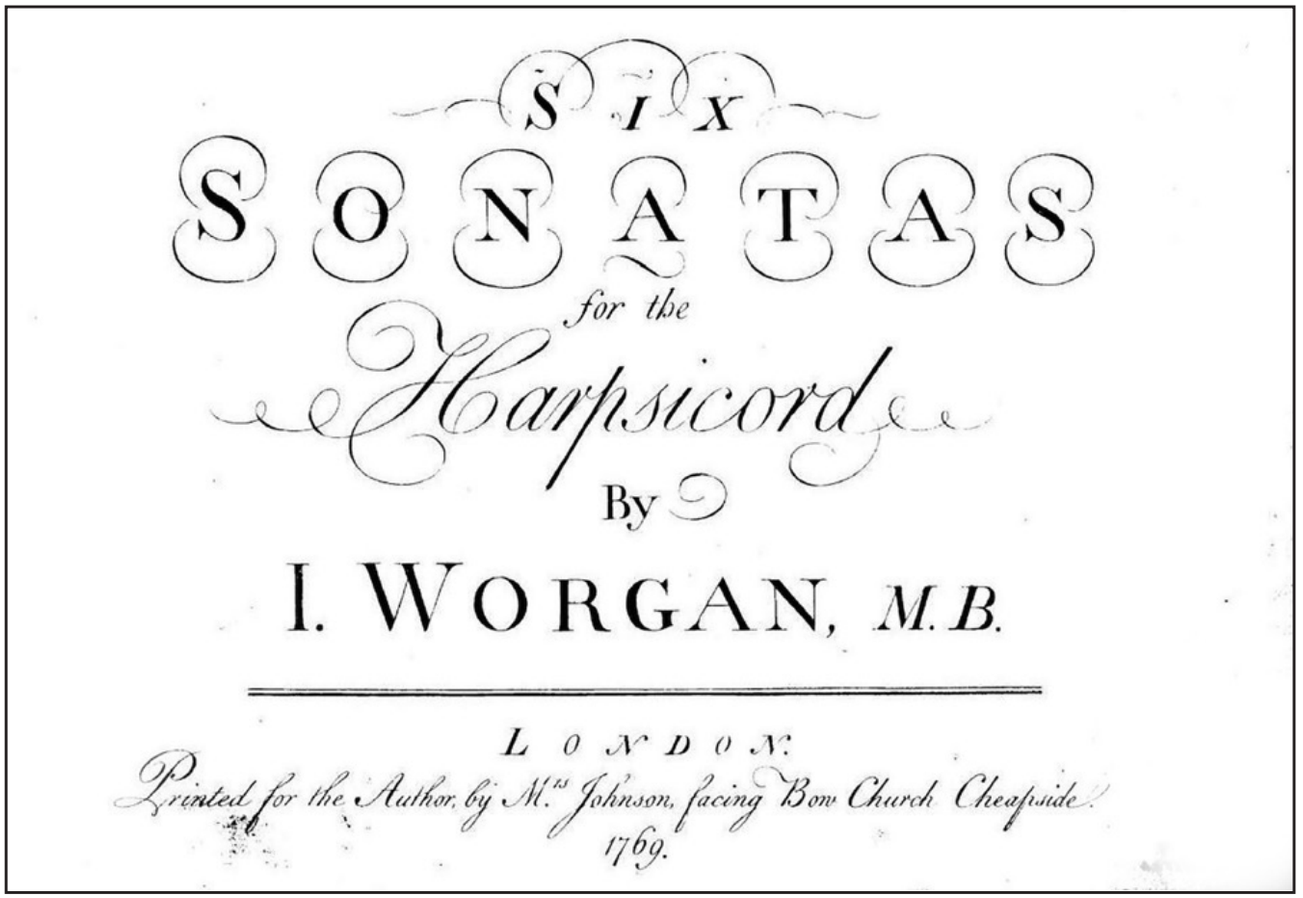
Laurence Sterne's literary phenomenon of the 1760s, *Tristram Shandy*. The short opening movement of Worgan's Sonata I [2] has a tongue-in-cheek quality that evokes *opera buffa*, and this comic *hors d'œuvre* prepares the listener for an assortment of theatrical movements that Timothy Roberts describes as 'a series of *commedia dell'arte* masks until Sonata VI, where Worgan shows his real, honest meat-and-two-veg old-fashioned character'.[5] One can hear the prolific composer of Vauxhall songs in the pathos of the Air of Sonata II [6], *galant* sensibilities in the *A Tempo di Gavott* of Sonata V [14] and the Minuet of the *New Concerto* [31], and the *Bizzaria* of Sonata IV [12] – with its two opposing ideas – encapsulates Sterne's celebrated remark: 'Nothing is so perfectly amusing as a total change of ideas'.[6]

It was a joy to record this music on a double-manual Kirckman harpsichord of 1772 from Dumfries House, newly restored by Huw Saunders. Its age and provenance make it a suitable choice for Worgan's *Six Sonatas* and *New Concerto*. The relative weight and depth of its keyboard action compel the player to engage physically in the sound and create voluptuous sonorities that capture the orchestral textures of the music. This sonic power arises in part from the solid oak case of the instrument, which is in marked contrast to the lighter cases of poplar and cypress commonly found in Flemish and Italian harpsichords – and which makes it a nightmare to move! English harpsichords could even be considered Baroque Wurlitzers: like organs, tonal contrast is achieved more through different combinations of stops than through changes in pitch. How I enjoyed exploring over a dozen sounds, such as the spicy 'Nazard' (officially lute) stop[7] in the *Spiritoso* that concludes Sonata II [7] and a buff effect in the *Minuet Affettuoso* at the end of Sonata III [10], where the dampers of the Nazard register mute a set of strings. In wanting to showcase this sonorous instrument, I was pleased to reach the extremes of its five-octave range: a bottom F in the *Andante Amoroso* of Sonata III [8] and, through ornamentation, a top F in the *A Tempo di Gavott* in Sonata V [14].

[5] E-mail dated 31 July 2020.

[6] *Tristram Shandy*, Book 9, 'A Dedication to a Great Man'.

[7] The 'Nazard' register might also be compared to the Vox Humana, a characterful reed stop present on many Georgian church organs. —TR



The title page of Worgan's Six Sonatas

So why has Worgan's music been largely forgotten? Handel himself admired his playing, Charles Burney described him as 'a very masterly and learned fuguist on the organ',[8] Charles Wesley Jnr was one of his pupils – and he is commemorated by Worgan Street in Lambeth, south London, near the site of Vauxhall Gardens.[9] In the lengthy memoir dating from 1823, 33 years after his death, Richard Mackenzie Bacon lauds this original musician as 'an eagle over falcons', whose playing was 'a perpetual excitement of intense interest in the bosom of the taste, that is an honour to human nature'.[10] Let's hope this neglected eagle can now rise like a phoenix from the ashes of oblivion.

[8] *Op. cit.* (*cf.* note 8 on p. 5), Vol. 4, 1789, p. 665.

[9] Various features in the area are named after people and places associated with Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, which now exists as a (much smaller) public park and city farm. To the north, Worgan Street runs parallel to Tyers Street (presumably after Jonathan Tyers (1702–67), the first impresario of the Gardens), on the east side of which a block of flats called Arne House can be found.

[10] *Op. cit.*, p. 127.

Described as 'exuberantly stylish' by *The Sunday Times*, **Julian Perkins** is Artistic Director of Cambridge Handel Opera and Founder Director of Sounds Baroque. He has performed at the Salzburg Festival, Edinburgh International Festival and BBC Proms, and featured as soloist in concertos with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Florilegium and Orchestra of The Sixteen. Passionate about singing, he has appeared as solo harpsichordist for productions at the Royal Opera House, Welsh National Opera and Northern Ireland Opera. He has taken part in the BBC *Early Music Show* and played at the Wigmore Hall in London, the Lincoln Center in New York and Sydney Opera House. An avid recitalist, he has broken new ground at over a dozen international festivals by giving concerts on the clavichord, and has performed numerous duo recitals for organisations such as the Mozart Society of America, Oxford Lieder Festival and the Royal Opera House. His various recordings have been described as 'monumental' (*American Record Guide*), 'a virtuoso showcase' (*The Guardian*) and 'exemplary' (MusicWeb International).

With Sounds Baroque, Julian has directed performances with artists including Simon Callow, Dame Emma Kirkby, Mark Padmore and Timothy West. He has directed the Academy of Ancient Music, directs annual Baroque projects with the Southbank Sinfonia, and has conducted opera productions for the Buxton International Festival, Cambridge Handel Opera, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Kings Place, Netherlands Opera Academy, New Chamber Opera, New Kent Opera and Snape Maltings, in addition to many concert performances.

He read music at King's College, Cambridge, before pursuing advanced studies at the Schola Cantorum, Basel, and the Royal Academy of Music, London. He is a visiting coach at the Royal Opera House, and gives master-classes for the National Opera Studio, music colleges and universities.

The first harpsichords that **Timothy Roberts** played, as a teenager, were the Kirckmans and Schudis in Fenton House, near his birthplace in Hampstead, north London. It was only in his mid-twenties that he took lessons on the instrument, with Christopher Kite and then Jill Severs. His subsequent career has included many solo recitals, radio broadcasts and recordings for Hyperion, early-music.com, Sfzmusic and, most recently, Toccata Classics. From 1980 through to the early 2000s his international career, in Europe, the USA and elsewhere, was predominantly the fruit of his accompanying skills in ensembles large and small, whether on harpsichord, organ or early piano. He was principal keyboard of the Gabrieli Consort & Players for twenty years and also director of His Majestys Cornetts & Sackbutts, while a particular

interest in British music from Purcell through to the late Georgians led to recordings with his vocal chamber ensemble Invocation, and editions for Stainer & Bell, OUP, the Associated Board and Green Man Press. Partly for health reasons, he has recently diversified into other activities, including composition and arranging, sound recording and editing and (since 2015) accompanying dance at Bird College in south-east London.

Photograph: Anne Bodie

Timothy Roberts (left) and Julian Perkins in front of the tower of St Andrew Undershaft in London EC3, the church where Worgan was organist from 1749 until his death, and where he was buried in the nave.

Also available on Toccata Classics

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'I loved the ambience of this recording. St Botolph without Aldgate is a church that I know quite well: I used to visit quite often when I was working in London. The CD is true to the outstanding sound of this historic instrument. It is of considerable importance to have this CD of the complete organ works of John Worgan played on this particular instrument. As noted above, Worgan was organist here for many years. So, it is a supremely important historical production. I hope that this disc may be the first of a number exploring the music of this important composer.'

—John France, MusicWeb International

'[The] musical language is, as one would expect, thoroughly of a piece with similar works by Handel and other English contemporaries, which makes them quite delightful if not particularly original or profound. They have an able champion here in famed organist and musicologist Timothy Roberts [...]. Most fittingly, he plays these works on Worgan's own instrument at St. Botolph, which (per the booklet notes) claims the distinction of being the organ in England to retain "the oldest collection of pipes in their original positions on their original wind chests." It's hard to beat that for period instrument authenticity, and fortunately the instrument is a very fine one indeed, with a light, crisp tonal palette. The recording is made with ideal clarity; Roberts's booklet notes are highly informative [...]. Complete specifications of the organ are provided. If you are a fan of 18th-century organ literature, do not hesitate to snap up this disc without delay; warmly recommended.'

James A. Altena, *Fanfare*

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Recorded on 6 June 2018 at St Saviour's Church, South Hampstead, London (*Pieces for the Harpsichord*), and on 25–26 October 2020 at Holy Trinity Church, Hoxton, London (*Allegro non tanto*, *Six Sonatas*, *A New Concerto*)

Pieces for the Harpsichord recorded on a double-manual harpsichord by Klaus Ahrend, Veenhusen, Leer, East Frisia, Germany, 1973, after Dulcken

Allegro non tanto, *Six Sonatas*, *A New Concerto* recorded on a double-manual harpsichord from the workshop of Jacobus Kirckman, London, 1772, housed at Dumfries House, Cumnock, Ayrshire, Scotland, restored by Huw Saunders, 2020; tuned in modified sixth-comma meantone by Oliver Sändig

Pitch a′ = 415Hz

Microphones: Calrec CB2001

Production and editing: Timothy Roberts

Mastering: Adaq Kahn

With thanks to Dumfries House and The Prince's Foundation for supporting this project; to Peter and Mary Berg, Terence and Margaret Charlston, Richard Perkins, Jeremy Points, Judith Wardman, John and Anita Weeks, and Hugh and Penny Whitfield for helping to defray its production costs; and, for help of various sorts, Satinder Kaur, Farokh Khorooshi, Gordon Neil, Fr Andrew Newcombe, Fr Paul Nicholson, Dr William Salaman, Huw and Martha Saunders and Dr Ruth Smith.

Cover: the keywell of the Dumfries House Kirckman; the oak case of the instrument is veneered in walnut (photograph by Timothy Roberts)

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