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Cunningham, John

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Andrew Ashbee, *The Harmonious Musick of John Jenkins: Volume Two: Suites, Airs and Vocal Music* (London: Toccata Press, 2020) ISBN: 978-0-907689-47-8; hardcover price £45 (£35 if you buy from Toccata!)

John Jenkins (1592–1678) stands as one of the most important composers in seventeenth-century England. Born during the reign of Elizabeth I, his long life witnessed the accession of the Stuart line, bloody Civil War, Interregnum and Restoration. Although perhaps best-known for his viol consort music (where he excelled), Jenkins wrote in many of the main genres of his time. His consort music built on the traditions established by William Byrd; he engaged with the music of Coprario, and later William Lawes, but most clearly trod a path descended from Alfonso Ferrabosco II. While his music was clearly known in courtly circles, Jenkins did not gain a place in the Royal Music until 1660, when at the age of almost 70 he was appointed as a lutenist in the Private Music (although no lute music by him is known). Instead much of his working life was spent in country houses in East Anglia, especially in the royalist households of the Derham and L'Estrange families; later he resided with the North family at Kirtling, Cambridgeshire, teaching the young Roger North, from whose pen several accounts of the composer survive. Thanks largely to Ashbee we know a great deal of Jenkins and his music. The first half of Ashbee's comprehensive study of the Jenkins's life and works was published in 1992.¹ At the risk of over-stating the obvious, and to quote the publisher's blurb, this sequel is indeed 'long-awaited'. In that first volume Ashbee presented a detailed biographical account of Jenkins followed by an exposition of his music for viol consort. The second volume examines the rest of Jenkins's vast output. No small task.

The sub-title of 'Suites, Airs and Vocal Music' belies the breadth of material covered in the book across its fourteen chapters. Ashbee includes as Appendix 2 a complete catalogue of the composer's works: it runs to over a thousand; the airs in three parts alone number 204, the music for lute 564. Not all of these are major works, of course. On one hand we have the weighty fantasia-suites and viol consort fantasias: on the other extreme the short ditties for lute largely aimed at the amateur market. Some of his music was evidently not widely known, found only in single sources. Nevertheless, the sheer number of sources to contain Jenkins's music is indicative of his reputation and influence. Appendix 1 lists the sources in which this vast output is found: they number over 150 manuscripts now housed in libraries across the world, as well as 19 printed sources from 1648 to 1682. (These numbers do not include the references to lost sources and works, also given in Ashbee's lists.)

The almost three decades since the publication of Ashbee's first volume (now available in paperback) has seen the publication of a substantial number of the major works: the 78 fantasia-suites are, for example, all now included in the Musica Britannica series: volumes 78 (2001), 90 (2010), 104 (2019), all edited by Ashbee; 103 (2018), edited by Peter Holman and John Cunningham. Indeed, the wonderfully complete bibliography given by Ashbee lists no fewer than 35 modern editions of Jenkins's works, 21 of which were published since 1992. The select discography lists over 150 pieces that can be heard across 37 recordings. It is an extremely helpful list to have, though it is decidedly less helpful that no details of the recordings are given beyond the ensemble and the CD number. And while no dates are included, I suspect that most were issued also since the early 1990s: the best among them (I suggest) are The Parley of Instruments' *Late Consort Music*, Fretwork's *Complete Four-Part Consort Music*, and Phantasm's recordings of the five- and six-part viol consorts. Apart from the viol consorts there are no complete recordings, but there is enough to get a broad aural sense of Jenkins's music. The discography documents the availability of the music, though many of the recordings are hard to find (and expensive when they are found, second-hand) and are not available on streaming platforms: an increasing issue as even laptops today tend not to come with a CD drive as standard. That aside, the documentation of the recordings is excellent to have.

Ashbee approaches his assessment of this vast repertoire by genre. The first half or so of the book (Chapters 1–6) is given over to an assessment of the fantasia-suites: the 78 suites arranged into eight 'Groups' (I–VIII). (Indeed, the Boydell website gives 'The Fantasia-Suites' as the book's subtitle.) Ashbee's first chapter sets the scene by offering a contextual introduction to the genre and Jenkins's place within it. As noted, all of the Jenkins suites are now available in modern critical editions in the Musica Britannica series; though no complete recording is available, examples are available from each group.² Fantasia-suite was a term coined by Thurston Dart to describe English suites comprising a fantasia and one or two dances. The genre was invented in the early 1620s by John Coprario in the household of the then Prince Charles (later Charles I), for one and two violins, bass viol and organ following the pattern fantasia-almaine-galliard. Arguably the best-known examples are the sixteen suites by William Lawes, written in the 1630s. It was, however, Jenkins that had the most sustained engagement with the genre. Jenkins's fantasia-suites often survive in late sources that offer little if any indication as to when they were written. Mostly written for country houses, rather than the court, Jenkins did not specify violins for his treble parts leaving them open to being played on either viols or violins. The groupings of the suites (I–VIII) are intended to suggest a broad chronology based on the compositional and stylistic traits, most obviously the replacement of the terminal galliard with the more modern corant and the incorporation of

¹ *The Harmonious Musick of John Jenkins: Volume One: The Fantasias for Viols* (London, Toccata Press, 1992).

² Volumes 78 (2001), 90 (2010), 104 (2019), edited by Andrew Ashbee; volume 103 (2018), edited by Peter Holman and John Cunningham. My review of MB 104 appeared in the last issue of this journal.

virtuosic divisions. Many of the groups also show Jenkins's concern with tonal order, often basing the suites on ordered tonics.

Chapter 2 deals with the earliest suites, those for treble, bass and organ (Groups I and II), which Ashbee argues were composed in the 1630s or 1640s and 'played in the Derham and L'Estrange households alongside the suites by Coprario (and perhaps Lawes)' (23). Jenkins's thin organ parts (in contrast to the more densely textured accompaniments of Coprario especially) may also be an indication that he felt as a non-keyboardist that it would be best to convey his intentions and allow the performer fill in the rest: the later suites all tend to have figured continuo parts rather than written-out organ accompaniments. Jenkins was clearly influenced by the suites of Coprario in the seventeen suites of Group I and perhaps also too by William Lawes in the ten suites of Group II. However, Ashbee highlights the madrigalian approach of Coprario in contrast to the 'more architectural model of Ferraboso II' (25). In the Group II pieces Ashbee hears more of the influence of Lawes, for example in the use of canonic imitation between the upper parts in suite no. 1. The nine suites for treble, two basses and organ comprising Group III are the subject of the following chapter. While in Groups I and II Jenkins followed the fantasia-almain-galliard structure of Coprario (though the galliards are titled as 'Ayre'), in Group III Jenkins began to abandon the out-moded galliard in favour of the corant. The Group III suites introduce a great deal more divisions. Ashbee rightly identifies no. 7 as 'undoubtedly one of Jenkins' finest works' (48). The chapter ends with a brief overview of the 29 pieces for treble and two basses for which only one bass part tantalisingly survives. Chapter 4 surveys the suites for treble, bass and organ of Group IV and the seven suites for two trebles, bass and organ of Group VI. Ashbee notes the stylistic relationship between the two Group IV suites and the Group III and VI suites, owing to Jenkins's 'extensive and elaborate divisions' (54): they must almost certainly be the pieces described by Roger North and Christopher Simpson as typical of Jenkins's 'high flying vein'. The Group VI pieces are given a *terminus ante quem* of the late 1650s. Here Ashbee notes the different emphasis placed on the airs, which are 'clearly intended to balance with the fantasias' (66). Chapter 5 examines Groups V and VII. The former (for two trebles, two basses and organ) comprise eight suites, found complete in only a single source (BL, Add. MSS 27550–4), which is dated 1674. However, Ashbee argues based on style that Jenkins likely composed them for his colleagues in the Private Musick in the newly restored court in the 1660s. These suites, however, show a significant reduction in the use of divisions and Ashbee makes the interesting correlation with Jenkins's viol consorts. The fifteen fancy-air suites of Group VII are similar in style, though at times approach something of the emerging trio sonata; they are, however, dealt with briefly. Chapter 6 deals with the ten Group VIII suites for three trebles, bass viol and continuo. The scoring is somewhat unusual in Restoration England, and seemingly introduced by the German violinist Thomas Baltzar, who arrived in London in 1655. Baltzar was appointed to the court in 1661, expanding the number of violinists in the Private Musick to three. The group presumably played Baltzar's suite in C for three violins and continuo: evidently Jenkins was inspired to write his suites for the ensemble too. They surely rank among Jenkins's finest music and deserve to be better known.

The remaining chapters deal with a diverse range of genres. Chapter 7 ('Airs and other instrumental works') offers context for the development of the air, especially with two equal trebles: as Peter Holman has shown, Maurice Webster seems to be the important link in the chain for bringing the SSB scoring to the English court. Indeed, Ashbee details the significant changes that occurred in dance music in England in the 1630s. Having prepared the ground, Ashbee looks next at Jenkins's airs for two trebles, two basses and organ (Chapter 7): a highly important group of 32 'Ayres' probably composed in the 1640s in East Anglia. The context was the staunchly royalist households of his patrons, the Derhams and L'Estranges. It is in this collection that we find the evocatively programmatic 'Newark Siege'. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of a further 16 airs for the same scoring but with continuo. The first bass part has not survived. Ashbee places them among Jenkins's late works but sees them as lacking cohesion. The airs in four parts are the subject of Chapter 9. They mostly survive in a single source (Och, Mus. 367–70), compiled by John Browne, Clerk of the Parliaments. He seems to have compiled the manuscript in the late 1630s or early 1640s. Ashbee argues that many of the Jenkins pieces were originally written for a consort of four viols. Others are representative of the SSTB scoring introduced from Germany by Maurice Webster and taken up by composers such as William Lawes and Charles Coleman. The airs in three parts (Chapter 10) are divided into two groups: the ten airs for treble, tenor and bass; the 204 airs for two trebles and bass. Ashbee attributes the disparity in numbers to the survival of sources but also to the change in fashion in the 1630s after which the latter scoring dominated. The next chapter deals with the two-part airs. There are 168 airs by Jenkins that survive in that treble and bass format. Two-part music was commonplace in seventeenth-century England, though the repertoire has received relatively little attention, in part because of its amateur links and in part because it is seen as ephemera.³ Several of these pieces are also found in other scorings (Table 7 offers several examples). It would have been interesting to read more about this arrangement process.

Ashbee begins the chapter on the music for bass viols with an overview of the development of the division repertoire and that for two bass viols and organ. Jenkins's oeuvre includes 54 pieces for bass viol; given his reputation as a performer it is hardly surprising that he ranks among the most prolific. His most interesting

³ See John Cunningham, 'A Meeting of Amateur and Professional: Playford's "Compendious Collection" of Two-Part Airs, *Court-Ayres* (1655)', in *Concepts of Creativity in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Rebecca Herissone and Alan Howard (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2013), 201–32

music in this category is for two bass viols, though most survive without the organ accompaniment. The music for lute and viola da gamba is discussed in Chapter 13. As with most of his contemporaries Jenkins wrote a substantial amount of pieces for (or arranged them for) lute and viola da gamba: over 250 survive. The solo music tends to be quite trivial, aimed at amateurs, much as those published in the various editions of Playford's *Musick's Recreation*. The ensemble lute and viola da gamba music is much more interesting musically. Much of it doesn't survive, however, as is evidenced from references in sale catalogues and the like. Those sources that do survive are often incomplete, lacking more parts than they contain, such as the tantalisingly incomplete in MS II.B.3 of the Dolmetsch Family Library in Haslemere, one part of otherwise unknown lute and viola da gamba trios by Jenkins, Lawes and others. The final chapter deals with the vocal music. Jenkins was primarily an instrumental composer, and it is hard to disagree with Roger North's conclusion (quoted by Ashbee) that the vocal music doesn't rival it. The numbers fade when compared with many of his contemporaries. Between 30–40 vocal pieces are known by Jenkins: 28 of them survive complete or largely so, perhaps the best-known of which is his wonderful elegy on the death of William Lawes published in *Choice Psalms* (1648). Ashbee concludes his study with a brief postscript considering the reception of Jenkins's music. He ends with an evocative analogy comparing Jenkins's music to the East Anglian landscape, which well sums the composer and his contemporaries, only a snippet of which I'll reproduce here: 'Avoiding the dramatic scenery explored by a Lawes, a Locke or a Purcell, his music is generally smooth and undulating' (231).

Sequels often have a tendency to disappoint, the more long-awaited the more acute that feeling can be. Not so in this case. Over the course of 231 pages Ashbee takes the reader on a journey through a lifetime of music. There is too much to discuss it all in detail; his representative selections are well-chosen and apposite. The discussions are amply illustrated with 82 music examples; readers will find useful too the various tables detailing the survival of Jenkins's works in important manuscript collections. Taken together Ashbee's two-volume study is an impressively comprehensive account of Jenkins, the man and the music. As was the first volume, this second instalment will be essential reading for anyone interested in English music of the seventeenth century and will no doubt feed into other larger-scale narratives in due course.

John Cunningham 1.1.21