

## The Cracow Manuscript for Viola da Gamba solo (ca. 1655), Volumes 3, 4, and 5: Dubuisson, Nicolas Hotman, William Young

ed. Günter and Leonore von Zadow, Edition Güntersberg, 2020. Vol. 3: Dubuisson (G364), ISMN 979-0-50174-364-3; Vol. 4: Nicolas Hotman (G365), ISMN 979-0-50174-365-0; Vol. 5: William Young (G366), ISMN 979-0-50174-366-7. Each volume, €13.80.

The three volumes reviewed here conclude Güntersberg's five-volume edition of the fascinating Cracow Manuscript. Compiled by an unknown copyist in the mid-seventeenth century, this extensive source has been known to scholars for over one hundred years. It contains 140 pieces, nearly two-thirds of them by Dubuisson, about a fifth by Young, and all but a couple of the remaining items by Hotman. The original manuscript (PL-Wtm R221) is housed in the Biblioteka, Muzeum i Archiwum Warszawskiego Towarzystwa Muzycznego im. Stanisława Moniuszki, and was held by the University Library in Krakow prior to 1945. A facsimile of the manuscript, edited by Gordon Dodd, was published by Minkoff in 1995; it is now out of print and extremely expensive when you do come across a copy. The contents of the Cracow manuscript have been previously published in a modern edition, though not issued as a set. Dovehouse produced decent separate editions, which are still available, under the three composers' names: Dubuisson: *Thirteen Suites for Solo Viola da Gamba* (2 vols) ed. Donald Beecher and Stuart Cheney (VDGS 49A and 49B), 1993; Nicolas Hotman: *Three Suites for Bass Viol* ed. Donald Beecher (VDGS

47), 1994; and William Young: *Twenty-nine Pieces for Solo Viol* ed. Ulrich Rappen (VDGS 46), 1989.

Not much is known of Dubuisson (b. Picardie, 1622/3; d. Paris, 1680/81), but Machy preferred his viol playing to le Sieur de Sainte-Colombe's, according to Stuart Cheney's Grove article. Likely better known to our readers, Nicolas Hotman (b. Brussels, before 1614; d. Paris, 1663) is generally considered the founder of the French viol school. His illustrious students included Machy and Sainte-Colombe. William Young (d. Innsbruck, April 23, 1662) was an English viol player who worked in Innsbruck. His opus ranges from consort fantasias to Italian-style sonatas.

In the introduction to their edition Günter and Leonore von Zadow indicate that, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, they decided to expedite the release of this series to provide viol players with more solo music during this time of isolation. Last year, only months into the pandemic, I reviewed the first two volumes of the set, which consists of sixty-four movements, all by Dubuisson. (See the Summer 2020 issue of the *VdGSA News*.) This series presents the individual items in the original order in which they appear in the manuscript, loosely grouped into dance suites. The separate movements are helpfully numbered in square brackets sequentially by the editors.

Volume 3 rounds off Dubuisson's portion with twenty-seven more pieces by him, including a sizable number of preludes (ten), allemandes (six), and courantes (six), as well as two sarabandes, two fantasies, and one ballet. Interspersed among all this Dubuisson are two giges by Hotman, a prelude by the lutenist Le Moyne, and a courante with variations that is either by Dubuisson or Hotman. Volume 4 contains sixteen movements by Nicolas Hotman, two of which might alternatively be by Dubuisson. These include courantes, ballets, allemandes, giges, and sarabandes as well as a single bouré [sic] and a more obscure dance titled boutade. The final volume is dedicated entirely to music by William Young, twenty-nine pieces in all, comprising roughly equal numbers of allemandes, courantes, and sarabandes as well as two preludes.

Some standout movements from Volume 3 are the prelude [95], allemande [88], courante and variation [70]. The opening of the D-minor prelude [95] reminds me vaguely of Simpson's D-major prelude in the *Division Viol*. The *luthé* texture of broken chords at the beginning eventually gives way to more melodic scalar passages and closes with a rich chordal section featuring some juicy diminished chords and suspensions, finally coming to rest on a melancholy plagal cadence. The active D-minor allemande [88] would not be out of place in one of the early Marais books. It sparkles with a compositional polish that some of the other movements lack. The jovial D-major courante with its variation [70] likewise incorporates enough flourish to enliven a professional performance. I particularly enjoy the playful jumps in register

found in the variation, and could imagine adding further virtuoso *doubles* to follow.

Volume 4, devoted to the music of Hotman, is almost exclusively in D minor apart from the final movement, the *boutade*, which is in G minor. Like the Dubuisson, the pieces by Hotman are on the simpler side, and would benefit from some extemporaneous embellishment. Güntersberg wisely added a second, longer version to the ballet [97] from a tablature source in Kassel (D-Kl 4° Ms. Mus. 108.3). I did find the variant ballet [97A] quite charming, if not as much of a crowd pleaser as Marais's *Grand Ballet*.

In the absence of a continuo part and lacking extensive chordal writing, many of the pieces in this collection sound a bit empty. Nevertheless, there are rich veins to be mined here. I found myself particularly drawn to several of the items by Young (Volume 5), which exhibit somewhat more inspiration and variety than those of the earlier volumes. I found his writing to be the most satisfying of the lot. It has a sense of completeness often missing in the pieces from the previous volumes. The descending improvisatory cascade that begins the A-minor prelude [127] immediately caught my attention as a uniquely Italianate gesture, endearingly out of place in this manuscript. This dramatic prelude brings to mind the *ricercars* of Domenico Gabrielli, likely familiar to cellists. The harmonic scope of the movement is also quite striking, cadencing in B major a third of the way through and traversing several circle-of-fifth progressions over the course of a relatively short movement. The A-minor sarabande [129] also stands out for its particularly sublime character.

Dovehouse's earlier editions hold up well over time and remain a solid, reasonably priced option. However, the Güntersberg books are generally more attractive, on nicer paper with cleaner printing. They benefit from intervening improvements to computer music engraving; Their spacing is better balanced on the page, improving readability and avoiding a small number of mid-movement page turns that occur in the older editions. Thanks to the modernized accidental usage and simplified clefs, reading through the solo works presented in this edition is a pleasant and enjoyable experience.

The past year has no doubt afforded time to explore the deep rich solo repertoire available to us as violists. This edition of the Cracow Manuscript allows us to comfortably peruse a fascinating profusion of solo works. Though not all masterpieces, some are certainly gems worthy of the concert stage, as well as movements accessible to the intermediate student. While the selections by Young impressed me most, there are several selections from all three of these volumes I plan to revisit in the future.

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