Parthenia In-Violata: Twenty Pieces for Harpsichord and Viola da Gamba (London, ca. 1625)

ed. Günter and Leonore von Zadow. Edition Güntersberg (G452), 2025. ISMN 979-0-50174-452-7. €18.00.

The title is so inventive, it was inevitable that someone would have to come up with a way to use it. Four hundred years ago, two enterprising men in London did just that. Robert Hole, engraver, and John Pyper, printer, assembled and published a collection of fashionable pieces, selected to appeal to those with the means for a bit of entertainment in their leisure time. Taking advantage of the popularity of an earlier collection of keyboard music, *Parthenia* (ca. 1612), engraved by William Hole, likely an older relative of Robert's, the forty-page collection in landscape orientation was titled *Parthenia In-Violata* or *Mayden-Musicke for the Virginalls and Bass-Viol.* The Latin title translates into English as "Maidenhead Undefiled," or could be taken more loosely as a description of the two instruments.

The sole extant copy of this engraved edition survives in the Drexel Collection of the New York Public Library. It can be viewed online on the library's "Digital Collections." The NYPL published a facsimile, edited by Thurston Dart with a forward by Sydney Beck, in 1961. At the same time, Dart edited a modern edition for Peters "for Harpsichord or Piano with Bass-Viol or Violoncello ad libitum." Güntersberg's timely new edition offers an accessible option for twenty-first-century amateurs.

The collection contains twenty numbered pieces, originally published without naming any composers, though Dart did manage to attribute seven of the pieces: one to John Coprario, two to John Bull, and four to Edmund Hooper. These pieces, most of which are dances, are simple keyboard music with a bass part added for the viol, which largely duplicates the left hand of the virginalist. The editors Günther and Leonore von Zadow have produced a clean modern score that retains many of the features of the original. It includes the seventeenth-century keyboard fingerings, though it converts the numerals originally used for the left hand to the system used today. In accordance with the function of the viol part, it is printed below the keyboard part in the score, as it was in the original. (This new edition also includes a separate viol part to facilitate reading for both players.) The keyboard ornaments appear as diagonal strokes, sometimes through note stems, sometimes above or below the note heads, giving the performer some leeway for interpretation. As an accommodation to modern players, barlines have been regularized, and the dances in triple and compound meters are notated with dotted values rather than colorization or blackened notes used in the seventeenth century.

This is a nice thing to have for intermediate players, and playing along with the left hand of the harpsichord could be a good prelude to playing as part of a continuo team.

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