


events available to visitors to Geneva and most left with favourable impressions. One connoisseur, however, noted in 1758 that while Fritz had ample tonal purity and virtuosity he sometimes lost his rhythm owing to his excessive ornamentation – an informative insight into mid-eighteenth-century performance practice.

As a composer, Fritz, perhaps revealingly, dedicated nearly all his printed works to foreigners. Copies of his publications can be found in Danish, Swedish, Belgian, German and American libraries (the last of north Italian provenance). These were generally well received. From Amsterdam, the great violin virtuoso Locatelli appreciated the merits of the Op. 2 Sonatas, which are the subject of this recording, but also sent the composer some friendly advice on how to improve Sonata No. 5 was published in 1748, probably in Geneva. Its dedicatee was the young Prince Frederick III of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg, who may have been a pupil of Fritz's during a study stay in Geneva. The sonatas were stated to be suitable for violin or transverse flute, as was common at the time, a well-known example being Locatelli's sonatas. Stylistically, the works are transitional between Baroque and Classical. I was sometimes reminded of Tessarini, though Fritz's works have more substance. While not melodically memorable, the sonatas are agreeable enough. In some of the sonatas, the final movement has a theme and variations structure and the hitherto continuo-only harpsichord is given some interesting obbligato passages. These movements are the highlights of the set.

On this recording, a Baroque flute is employed throughout, accompanied by harpsichord and cello. The musicians play period instruments, but no details are provided of when they were made or by whom. A specialist in period-instrument performance, Claire Genewein studied at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and in the Hague with Barthold Kuijken. Her doctoral dissertation was on Galuppi's performance practice and she plays in several renowned European Baroque orchestras and ensembles. However, she also champions modern music. Apparently she was awarded a special prize by Karl-Heinz Stockhausen for a performance of his *Zugenspitzentanz* for piccolo. (Stockhausen on the piccolo – surely the audience deserved a prize!) Genewein's playing of Fritz's Op. 2 is near flawless. Like that of Fritz, her tone is pure and her virtuosity is beyond doubt. She adds quite a deal of stylish ornamentation, but, perhaps unlike Fritz, always keeps in touch with the underlying pulse. Nicoleta Paraschivescu, ably supported by Maya Amrein, plays the continuo parts with taste and restraint but seizes the opportunities for display offered by those *concertante* final movements and proves herself a very fine musician.

This disc would make a lovely gift for flautist friends and others, too, should find it surprisingly enjoyable. *Andrew O'Connor*

Fritz New
Flute Sonatas, Op. 2 – No. 1 in C; No. 2 in D; No. 3 in A; No. 4 in E minor; No. 5 in D; No. 6 in G.
Claire Genewein (transverse flute); **Maya Amrein** (cello); **Nicoleta Paraschivescu** (harpsichord).
Guild GMCD7330 (full price, 54 minutes). Website www.guildmusic.com  *Producer/Engineer* Andreas Werner. Dates October 13th-15th, 2008.

It is likely that few *IRR* readers (or indeed contributors) have ever heard of Gasparo Fritz (1716-83) – I certainly had not. From Nicola Schneider's comprehensive booklet notes, we learn that he was a Swiss composer whose violinist father emigrated from Germany. His real name was Kaspar Fritz (presumably he thought 'Gasparo' sounded more cosmopolitan). Some would think it odd that Fritz remained his whole life in the city of his birth, Geneva, as this Calvinist enclave was in Dr Schneider's words 'not well disposed to his art'. Fritz was well known as a violinist and had been a pupil of the highly influential G. B. Somis in Turin. Attending musical performances by Fritz was apparently one of the few artistic