



Meine harpsichord? A Zuckermann of course!

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HARPSICHORD NEWS BRIEF

SPECIAL BACH BIRTHDAY ISSUE March 21 1985

Published as an aid to the development of public awareness of fine early keyboard instruments and their music.

CAREY BEEBE HARPSICHORDS

Construction * Maintenance * Tuning * Hire
1 Gallipoli Street, Hurstville, N.S.W. 2220. Telephone (02) 570 8541
inc. THE HARPSICHORD CENTRE

AUTHENTICITY + EARLY KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

The most exciting musical phenomenon of our time has been the discovery and repossession of that vast part of our heritage which we now call 'Early Music'. But the revival of Early Music would have been impossible without the instruments demanded by the music. To play early music on modern instruments is like translating poetry--you get some of the sense, but little of the texture, transparency, and timbre the composer had in mind. With profound respect for the old instruments, constant research among surviving antiques, and constant improvement in our own technology, we have sought to make our instruments the finest early keyboard instruments available today.

A gentleman from interstate visited Hurstville the other day--the steady stream of visitors from all over keeps me from feeling out of things. He asked the inevitable question: "What instruments have you copied yours from?" It would have delighted him, no doubt, if I could have said, "We copied this one from the famous little Flemish at Yale, and this one from the 1769 Taskin, and this one from the Domenico in New York..." and on and on.

With every edition of Zuckermann instruments, more has been stolen from the old builders--'copied', if you will--until today we don't think any builder incorporates more of the old ways than we do. Tapered tuning pins, solid lids + bottoms, soft iron + red brass wire, and tapered unencumbered jacks are all part of our instruments. But the reasons for this copying have not been a desire for 'authenticity'--still less to make fake antiques. It is just that we have not been smart enough to figure out a better way to do things than the old builders worked out in the three hundred years of the Harpsichord's heyday.

Adapting modern tools and technology to accomplish the ends of old builders has been difficult. Compared with the technology of the eighteenth century, modern machinery and tools are often clumsy and frustrating. A skilled craftsman with simple hand tools, if he is really skilful, can do many things more quickly and efficiently (unless your quantities are very large) than the modern machinery. Many materials and skills that were common in the eighteenth century are no longer available to us, and the search for acceptable substitutes has sometimes taken years.

Those modern builders who advertise that they make 'exact copies' of old instruments amaze and bewilder us. They are evidently much smarter than we are--or else they are much less familiar with the old instruments. In our humble opinion, it can't be done. Most of the 'copies' don't even look like the original historic model, let alone feel or sound anything like it.

Nor would a sensible person want to do it. We would rather copy the very central idea of all honest builders, ancient and modern; Using the materials available, and all the knowledge and sensitivity and research and awareness we can muster, make musical instruments for the sound and action of which we take complete responsibility. Curiously enough, this point of view results in our instruments being much closer to the antiques than any of the so-called 'copies'.

Well, so be it.

But the fame and prestige of the Zuckermann "kit" instruments has brought about a problem for us--our imitators. Many a person who might cheerfully tackle a "kit" that did not promise much is reluctant to try something where the results can be very fine indeed. I don't know what to do about this, save to say that there are other kits surfacing in this country which do not offer you such a challenge (and some of them cost as much as ours). In fact, there are kits available from which it is impossible to make anything decent at all, designed, evidently, for people who have a low opinion of themselves. We have decided that since there is nothing we can do for such people, we just won't worry about them. The Zuckermann "kits" challenge you to make the finest possible musical instrument, and we can promise you that nothing about our "kits" will forbid that ambition.

You are welcome almost anytime by appointment to come and play the variety of fine "authentic" early keyboard instruments that are here, as well as see those under construction, and judge for yourself. At the moment, the following instruments are here; Triple-Fretted Clavichord, Italian Harpsichord (almost complete), English Bentside Spinet (complete), and another (under construction), Flemish Single Harpsichord, French Double Harpsichord, New French Double Harpsichord (now being decorated) and Fortepiano. These fine instruments are also available on hire for studio work, as well as concerts and recordings for discerning musicians. We also stock supplies for decorating, maintaining, tuning, moving and playing early keyboard instruments.

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HOW TO AFFORD YOUR HARPSICHORD NOW -- Celebrate Bach's birthday by building your own Harpsichord

Every week, I open a letter that asks what kind of credit facilities we have available, and I sometimes regret we neither offer layby nor accept any form of plastic money. For many years now, the brochure has detailed our only finance plan--fifty percent deposit with order, balance before delivery. Until last November, we were fortunate to be able to hold prices for eighteen months. But now the upward spiral appears to have started again, first with our dollar continually dropping, and then increased freight costs and prices jumping again in the States. I scratched my head and thought it was time to seek professional help on behalf of those people who desperately want to own one of our instruments, but never seem to have saved enough before the price has risen.

I spoke with Ross Whatson, who recently finished building his Italian Virginal that he kindly loaned for exhibit at last year's Open Weekend. During daylight hours, Ross is a Branch Manager for that bank whose managers are seen on the TV saying 'Yes' for loans in their sleep. Ross confirmed my impression that the best form of finance for a Harpsichord is a Personal Loan. As a practical example, if you had borrowed \$4000 over two years for the New Flemish Single Harpsichord at the beginning of this year, you would now be building your instrument. With a monthly repayment of just over \$200, covering total charges of \$865 over the two years, when one considers the new price of \$5000, you would own the instrument now, have your savings for other immediate uses, and would have effectively saved over \$100 .

There is a good chance that a friendly chat at your local bank branch will let you find how easy it is to obtain a personal loan to buy your Harpsichord now. The banks are vying for business, and personal finance from all the banks is available for any worthwhile purpose, even if you're not a customer. Ross is able to give anyone advice during office hours at the Spit Junction Branch of the Commonwealth Bank (02) 969 6566. When you visit your own bank manager, remember to take the brochure. The pictures might just make it easier to explain to him what a Harpsichord is.

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THE INSTRUMENT LIST -- Early Keyboard Instruments currently for sale

A new service for Australian Harpsichord enthusiasts. Phone (02) 570 8541 for details of these instruments.

Zuckermann Triple-Fretted Clavichord Carey Beebe 1981 Aust flowers on soundboard matching stand + carry case	#01 NSW	\$1750
Zuckermann Triple-Fretted Clavichord Honduras mahogany carefully built, fine tone	#02 NSW	\$1000
Dolmetsch Ottavina Spinet 1963 with legs + carry bag. Ideal portable instrument, delrin plectra	#03 NSW	\$1200
Neupert Cristofori Harpsichord, Upper man 8'4"; Lower 16'8". 5 pedals, 2 handstops for buff. Needs work	#04 NSW	\$1000

detach here & return * * * * *

< > I enjoy receiving the News Brief, but please alter my address details.

< > I'm not on your mailing list, but would like to be. Please add me to it. Name:.....

< > Hearing the good news about early keyboard instruments depresses me. Please delete me from your mailing list, even though it's free. (Shame!) Address:.....

< > Please send me a copy of the latest Music Catalogue with order form. Place:.....State:.....PC:.....

< > I own an instrument. It is a Please send me your Parts & Accessories Price List.

< > Please reserveseats @ \$25 for the TUNING & TEMPERAMENT WORKSHOP.

< > Please rush me details of how I can build my own fine early keyboard instrument from Zuckermann materials. [*] PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY [*]

COMING EVENTS

Mark these dates in your diary!

- Sydney Saturday March 30 8pm Hurstville THE COMPLEAT SPINET
 Carey Beebe, English Bentside Spinet - Music by Anon, Bull, Byrd, Gibbons, Purcell + Handel
 A grossly neglected instrument, this programme aims to return the Spinet to its former peak as the main domestic keyboard instrument of c18th England. The instrument features the historic action of pearwood jacks with crow quill plectra in holly tongues sprung by boar bristle. There will be Carey's usual amusing verbal programme annotations, and opportunity for interested persons to play the instrument after the recital.
 Admission - \$ 8 for supper Advance Reservation Essential - (02) 570 8541
- Melbourne April 12 - 14 Toorak Uniting Church + Hall EMU (Early Music Unlimited)
 A biennial festival of fourteen concerts of mediæval to baroque music played on authentic-style instruments. Artists include Alison Crum (viola da gamba - England), Carl Fudge (clavichord - USA) and Australia's leading early music group, Capella Corelli with Paul Plunket (baroque trumpet). Instruments including Carey Beebe's now famous Flemish Single Harpsichord (Australia's most travelled Harpsichord), English Bentside Spinet, and Triple-Fretted Clavichord will be used in performances and be on display during EMU.
 Further Information - Lyn Hawkins (03) 211 5210
- Melbourne May 10 - 17 FIFTEENTH MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ORGAN & HARPSICHORD
 Highlights this year include the first Australian performance of the complete Handel concertos for organ, as well as the complete 'Goldberg Variations' played by Swiss Harpsichordist Christiane Jaccottet. Hear the stunning New French Double Harpsichord, resplendent in its Japan Silk color and gold leaf decoration. The Festival brochure has Bach and Handel blowing their birthday trumpets.
 Further information - for a brochure write to MIFOH PO Box 92 PARKVILLE VIC 3052 (03) 329 8810
- Sydney Sunday May 26 10am sharp - 4.30pm Hurstville THE HARPSICHORD WORKSHOP II - Tuning + Temperament
 Resist the temptation to buy one of those silly electronic tuning boxes. In this second workshop, you will learn how to focus your hearing, and the tuning of a variety of useful temperaments will be demonstrated as well as practical considerations discussed. Carey Beebe will explain in layman's terms historic development and the need for careful choice of temperament for particular repertoire. Essential for all Harpsichordists--no previous knowledge assumed. A few people might like the opportunity to have a supervised practice tune! Bring along your enthusiastic questions.
 Admission - \$ 25 (byo meat for bbq lunch) Advance Reservation Essential - (02) 570 8541
- Boston USA May 30 - June 9 BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL & EXHIBITION
 What a year! Two international conferences, the world's major exhibition of period instruments by over 130 craftsmen, the period instrument premiere of Bach's 1725 version of St John Passion, Trevor Pinnock playing the New French Double Harpsichord, Anner Bijlsma ('cello) with Malcolm Bilson (Fortepiano) playing a Beethoven programme, and a Heinrich Schutz Quadricentennial Celebration.
 Further Information - write to 25 Huntington Avenue Boston MA 02116 USA

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TERCENTENARY MUSIC FOR THE HARPSICHORD - - - Bach, Handel & Scarlatti

In any music shop, you may find a little Bach and less Handel. You might be able to get some Scarlatti by having the shop order from the publisher--and then you will wait and pay an exorbitant mark-up. No shop here carries a decent stock of harpsichord music that you can buy off the shelf, but we do attempt to stock some of the more popular titles at Hurstville. You can, however, celebrate the Bach/Handel/Scarlatti Tercentenary with some music from the Zuckermann Catalogue, reported in recent News Briefs to be a collection of the more worthy editions of harpsichord music selected from publishers around the world, that you can now buy here for the No-frills American retail price, converted to Australian currency. Send for your free copy of the complete Catalogue, and we will include an order form explaining how it works. Here are some Tercentenary titles available on order from the Catalogue, with the price in \$US (at the present date, add about 40% for conversion--you only pay postage ex Hurstville--prices subject to change):

"J S Bach" by Albert Schweitzer <Dover>	650 musical examples, two volumes, each	\$US 5.00
"Johann Sebastian Bach" by Philipp Spitta <Dover>	definitive work, set of two hard cover volumes	\$US 35.00
"The Music of Bach" by Charles Sanford Terry <Dover>	concise, non-technical guide	\$US 2.25
J S Bach -- "Keyboard Music" <Dover>	includes French & English Suites, Partitas, Goldbergs etc	\$US 7.95
J S Bach -- "The Little Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach" <Kalmus>		\$US 7.50
G F Handel -- "Sixteen Suites" <Kalmus>	two volumes, each	\$US 5.00
G F Handel -- "Six Sonatas for Violin & Continuo" <Barenreiter>		\$US 10.00
Domenico Scarlatti -- "Sonatas" <Le Pupitre>	complete in eleven volumes, each from	\$US 37.75 to 61.75

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NEW INSTRUMENTS & ACCESSORIES FROM D Jacques Way & Zuckermann Harpsichords Inc.

Bach's favorite instrument was the clavichord, and the parts for our New Fretted Clavichord are almost ready to be shipped from Stonington. Range of 51 notes, C-d''' fully chromatic, the case is made of alder, which finishes to a rich tan and gets darker with age. [Complete Parts \$1000]

Coming soon from the Paris workshop is the instrument taking Europe by storm, our New Student Harpsichord. Three choirs with stop levers to the front, five-octave compass, turned beech stand. This will be available only as a finished instrument.

We promised to make an outer case for our Alaskan yellow cedar Italian Harpsichord several years ago, but we couldn't figure out how we could get you to put it together without skyhooks and wind anchors. Shortly to be available, we will put it together for you, complete with music desk built in, sliding fallboard, outrageous prop stick, and wild turned stand.

The New Flemish Harpsichord now has three choirs (2 x 8', 1 x 4', buff--same disposition as our Flemish Double), and the transposing keyboard gives you the complete compass for all of Bach's works. [Complete Parts \$5000]

The New Flemish turned stand is available for earlier instruments in Honduras mahogany [\$425]. Earlier French Double Harpsichord owners can now have the elegant Louis-XVI style stand with its boxes with medallions, grand oak moulding, and six turned + flute legs [\$975]. Our padded canvas covers, proven in across the Nullabor trials, are custom made for any instrument [\$300].

Our new twelve page brochure has details and pictures of the instruments, as well as enough commentary to answer most of the questions you are likely to have about our design philosophy and building practices. A copy is yours for the asking--just phone, or use the coupon below.

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SPECIAL INVITATION TO MELBOURNE HARPSICHORD ENTHUSIASTS

I will be in Melbourne with instruments for both EMU + the Festival, and would like to meet you. I can be contacted in Melbourne during those times on (03) 484 2922. Please leave a message with Elizabeth Beebe, and I will return your call. CB

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CAREY BEEBE HARPSICHORDS

SOLE AUSTRALIAN AGENT FOR
ZUCKERMANN HARPSICHORDS INC.
 Since 1951, over 40,000 instruments world-wide.

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