

UNEQUAL NOTES

The Inégales Newsletter

Editor: John Byrt

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Editorial

The last few months have been an important time for my *inégales* work. Catherine Bass's recordings have strengthened the performance side and a generous review by Clifford Bartlett in his *Early Music Review* is giving the scholarly side some welcome oxygen. The 1996 Inégale Day which was held, under the auspices of the South West Early Music Forum, at East Devon College on Saturday November 23 was not so ambitious as some previous ones, but was nevertheless a resounding success. In my aptly this describes the situation in early music! Are you really qualified to theorise about *inégales* if you haven't heard them being used outside a few French minuets? Last Saturday we sang through seven choruses from the *Messiah* and listened to a handful of arias (including 'Rejoice greatly'): all sung *inégale*. Below you can read how we experimented with various styles of singing and various tempi. As always on these occasions there was general agreement that this style is easier to sing than the usual one and by the end of the afternoon no one was prepared to put the case that this did any kind of damage to Handel's music. On the contrary, the idea that *Messiah* was sung *inégale* at its first performance in 1742 seemed consistent with the impression given by Anselm Bayly in 1771 that inequality had been rife in Handel's day, though going out of fashion by the time Bayly wrote:

The scholar would do well to practise the marked divisions carefully free of any motion with the chin, first slow, then by degrees quick, avoiding to mark them unequally, unless so directed with a peck by the composer....Marking divisions

unequally, without leave of the composer, often produces an ill effect alone, but especially in parts, while one sings the division equally, and another unequally.¹

At the end of the day a school-teacher came up to me and said - "that was marvellous, can I do this with my children now?" I tried to keep the irony out of my voice when I replied: "sorry, this will take decades to be accepted". I think one of the sad things about this work is to think how much more our children would enjoy playing the 17th and 18th century repertoire if they were allowed to use *inégaies*. But even when in the past examining boards have ventured into this field (as Trinity did in a recorder piece some years back) the imagination shown by the board was not always matched by the examiners themselves.

More on Christie's *Fairy Queen*

Some time ago (UN5, Sept 95) I wrote about William Christie's use of inequality in the opening music to his *Fairy Queen* recording. My listening to these CDs must have been a bit selective, I'm afraid, because it was only recently that I discovered that there's a *lot* more inequality in this recording! It appears mainly in instrumental numbers, as nos. 40 and 44, but there are also some vocal numbers with *inégaies*. Some parts of the Drunken Poet sequence (no 6) have it and in 'Come all ye songsters' (no 9 - sung by Thomas Randle) the passage at the top of p. 33 (Novello VS) is slightly swung. Randle also sings with clear *inégalité* (and very well) in the two songs for the Chinese Man (nos 46 and 48). In both airs, however, evenly written and dotted quavers seem to receive the same style of performance.

Taken overall Christie's use of inequality is adventurous since in 1989 the possibility of *inégaies* in English music was still at the knife-edge of scholarship. Nevertheless I find the way in which Christie plays about with *inégalité* a bit perverse sometimes. In the trio 'May the God of wit inspire' (no 11) the voices sing *égale* but the instrumental echo is *inégaie*. Conversely in 'Here's the summer, sprightly, gay' (no 37) the instrumental introduction is *inégaie* but the voice sings *égale*! I feel that Christie uses *inégaies* more as an extra colour for his palette than as an integrated feature of baroque style. Too often this performance plunges into stylistic anachronisms which undo the good done by his *inégaie* experiments. I am thinking of the Kingsy, legato, sound of the chorus 'Now join your

¹ Stephen Hefling: *Rhythmic alteration in 17th- and 18th-century Music* (New York, 1993), p. 53.

warbling voices' (no 13a), the extreme tempi (nos 7, 29, 50 and 51 are unacceptably fast) and quirks like the drunken lurch at the beginning of the Drunken Poet scene, which sounds as if it came from the sound track of Bugs Bunny.

On the other hand Christie has a more natural feel for *inégaies* than anyone I know and he shows how effective the style can be in Purcell, not just in the usual French-style 3-time movements (e.g. no 6) but also in French 2-time (no. 3) and even in C time (e.g. no 9 which sounds excellent).

Catherine Bass and some fine *inégaie* recordings

Catherine Bass researches in biology at Exeter University and, like her husband Geoffrey, is a keen solo and choral singer. Both of them were present at the first Inégale Day (UN 1, May 1994) and have been keen *inégaie* aficionados ever since. Catherine has sung solo for me in a variety of works including the Kodaly Te Deum and Haydn's Paukenmesse. In September she and I started working on *inégaie* interpretations of some Handel and Purcell arias. We made a cassette which is now available (see back page). It has the following airs:

Purcell - 'Hark how all things' **and** 'Hark the ech'ing air' from *The Fairy Queen* and 'Bid the virtues' from *Come ye sons of art*.

Handel - 'O had I Jubal's lyre' from *Joshua*, 'As when the dove' from *Acis and Galatea* and 'Rejoice greatly' from *Messiah*.

In spite of the prevalence of *inégaies* in Christie's recording the two airs that we chose from the *Fairy Queen* are not given the unequal treatment by him. On the contrary, they are both sung at a breakneck speed at which inequality would be impossible. In 'Hark how all things' we went straight away for a relaxed, French 3-time tempo: instead of Christie's crotchet = 145 we take it at crotchet = 108. All quavers, whether dotted or not, are done in a tripletty rhythm, but the dots are treated as rests². In 'Hark, the ech'ing air' we go at about crotchet = 80 instead of Christie's hectic crotchet = 108. Why these fast tempi? Surely we must be getting a soprano burn-out equivalent to that of big-band trumpeters - I wouldn't be surprised if they all have heart-attacks at 41. And what sort of pleasure is the audience supposed to get from these performances? They'll certainly get to the bar quicker, that I'll concede.

² As described by Bacilly, see my forthcoming article 'Writing the unwritable': *Musical Times* (Jan. 1997).

In 'Bid the virtues' it was not only the *inégaies* and the tempo which had to be sorted out, there was also the question of mood. I have felt for some time that it is a mistake to imbue baroque music with 'inner' emotions which really belong to the 19th century, so we have tried to make everything 'outward'. We tried to prevent 'Bid the virtues' becoming a religious meditation and instead to bring out the visible elements in it, especially the Virtues & Graces sitting round the altar. Purcell's music emphasizes the showy words. There are brilliant divisions (unequal runs) on 'round', 'great', 'eternal' and graphic musical motives from 'prayer' (very serious for a moment) and 'conversing' (voice and oboe answer each other).

The divisions in 'O had I Jubal's lyre' presented no problem to Catherine from the very first moment. At crotchet = 78 the semiquavers had a crispness that you never get normally. And through the *inégalité* (and tempo) the shape of the divisions seemed unusually clear, instead of being a blur, as usual. Over and above all this, of course, the music really swung and one could hardly resist getting up and dancing.

'Rejoice greatly' often streaks along like an express train. I am thinking particularly of the Leppard recording with Felicity Palmer. The audience is left feeling gob-smacked. Is this really what Handel intends? We take it at about crotchet = 80 and we keep this tempo throughout the middle section. This middle section did present problems since we had to decide whether to keep the inequality at the semiquaver level and keep the quavers equal, or whether to let the inequality move to the quavers, as it does, in effect, in the 12/8 version. In the end we took the former option.

A sympathetic hearing from Clifford Bartlett

It was extremely gratifying to read the following in the respected Early Music Review (November 96). Clifford has been very supportive of my work and the extent of his influence became clear when I received two orders for my publication on the day after his Review came out, one from Frankfurt!

John Byrt *Notes inégales - a European style*. Tiverton, the author, 1996. 2 vols (74 + lxxxiii pp), £20.00. ISBN 0 9526446 1 6 etc.

This is a simply-produced, comb-bound, A4 publication, photocopied on one side of the page only, but using a clear computer type - a sensible way

of circulating with a degree of informality some of the fruits of long investigation into the subject. As I have mentioned before, Byrt is concerned that our perception of *notes inégales* is far too restricted and he sets out his arguments here with clarity and force, focussing on the allemand. He takes as his starting point the question: why are Couperin's allemandes played *inégales* but not Bach's, since their style is not very different; is it by accident that we starve Bach of *inégales*? The appendix volume is more varied, with comments on a tape (costing £6.00) containing *inégales* performances of Bach, reactions to it from various people, and a reproduction of an article Byrt wrote in 1967 together with Robert Donington's comments on it. I like the consultative nature of this project. Reaction has mostly come from performers rather than scholars, who seem less willing to commit ideas in progress to print. I'm not sure how much I believe in the omnipresence of *inégalité* outside France. My instinctive reaction is to be sympathetic for keyboard music but to assume that it developed there as a way of lightening notes that other instruments and voices lightened in other ways. This should be read in conjunction with Byrt's news-letter Unequal Notes (£2.00 a year). I like the way he responds to items he hears on the radio, including *Woman's Hour*, relating them to his topic. I think that he needs more input from serious scholars who are sympathetic but sceptical. It's a subject of vital importance to late-baroque performance - how late is another matter for discussion. When did the French (let alone anyone else who practised *inégalité*) stop swinging: was it guillotined out of existence in accordance with the revolutionary belief in liberty, fraternity and equality?

I would query the idea that inégalité could apply to keyboard music but not music for other media. Surely the baroque was a time when instrumental and vocal styles merged - especially in the work of JS Bach and Handel? I like Clifford's practice of making the adjective agree with the noun in phrases like 'inégales performances' and I've decided to start doing the same.

REPORT on INEGALE DAY 1996 in association with the South West Early Music Forum
November 23 1996 at East Devon College, Tiverton
led by John Byrt

After **Catherine Bass** had sung 'Hark, how all things' the chorus then rehearsed 'And the glory of the Lord' *inéga*le, which is in similar style and

tempo. Then we tried 'The Lord gave the word', which I stuck my neck out by describing as German in style. We aimed for a Gallery-style vulgarity.

The *inégle* divisions in Catherine Bass's extremely convincing 'Rejoice greatly' were a challenge that the other singers took up with alacrity in 'And he shall purify'. I think this was the most memorable and significant part of the day. There was much discussion about how to sing the semiquavers. The tempo was crotchet = 68-70. If we ran out of breath could we breathe at the 'joints' in the divisions (see Ex 1a) and if so was this, as Paul Roberts asked, only a voluntary break or a compulsory one? When we started singing in earnest it seemed that breath was not so much of an issue as we had thought. Were people taking snatch breaths every 8 notes, as had been suggested? or were they doing the melismas in one breath after all? To my ear it sounded as if the melismas were getting split up into tiny two-note units and that the voice was 'dancing' on the breath (see ex. 1b).

Ex. 1a

Ex. 1b

In the end it seemed that this style of singing didn't require as much breath as the usual 'equal' style.

To show the difference between evenly-notated *inéga*les and dotted *inéga*les Catherine performed 'Thou art gone up on high' (see bars 22-25). We then turned to 'His yoke is easy' with its crucial dot in bar 2. Does this mean a snatched breath? In the end we focussed more attention on the crotchets near the end (bar 38) where I asked people to get away from a modern-style legato and to give an attack and a decay on each note. This seemed to work.

Though I wanted to prevent any discussion from developing too far and taking over from the music some very good points were made. Geoffrey Pope pointed out that style in music is very much a matter of fashion and

tends to consist of a reaction against the habits of a previous generation. Ronald Payne mentioned that even today special traditions of performance exist - e.g. in cathedrals - and therefore it is dangerous to generalize about performance practice in Handel's day. And each venue had its own acoustic. Dublin cathedral acoustic was probably quite different from that of the Foundling Hospital.

What particularly pleased me was that after an hour or so the singers settled into a style which was very close to what I have been carrying in my head for some time: slower tempi, a stronger pulse and more relaxed, earthy style. People seemed to accept this without much protest, in fact the early sing-throughs brought out spontaneous murmurs of approval such as I am becoming used to on such occasions: seems so natural! much easier to sing!

Correspondence

Another article of mine is due to appear in the January 1997 issue of The Musical Times, entitled 'Writing the unwritable'. Since it deals with the keyboard suites of Purcell and Croft I thought I'd better send a draft to Christopher Hogwood for his approval, since he has edited this material for Stainer and Bell. I also sent a draft to Colin Tilney, since I refer to him as is the only harpsichordist who has recorded the fugue from Handel's D minor suite totally inégale. Below are extracts from their replies.

from Christopher Hogwood, Cambridge

30 August 1996

It is very good to hear from you, and especially with the MT article. I am just trying to tidy up the new Purcell Society keyboard works volume, so this is all very apposite and, if I may, I will add you to my list of references for inclusion in that volume under Performance Practice.

I agree with you that the very differing texts do lead to interpretations that Fritz would have hated - however ...

The new Purcell autograph MS which is in the BL doesn't actually add anything to the argument, I fear; I had rather hoped that our problems might have been solved in his own hand!

As for Handel, I have never understood why he was so punctilious one minute and so slap-happy the next. However, with vocal parts I have

begun to feel that dotting them to agree with instrumental doubling parts tends to get a vocal effect which is awkward and frequently harmful to the words; I have started to like the slightly "easy" effect of each party going their own way. Anyway, many thanks for letting me see this version, and I look forward to the eventual publication. Do tell me if you have any other things up your sleeve that might impact on Purcell's keyboard style.

from Colin Tilney, Toronto, Canada

9 November 1996

Thank you for the article. I am an instinctive, unanalytical player, on the whole, lazy perhaps, and would never have dreamed of working out the various dotted and undotted combinations in the Handel D minor allegro! Besides, if you were that punctilious, the music would have gone clean out of the window, to my mind: all you would hear would be a determination to be somehow "correct", and if Handel doesn't sound improvised, he doesn't sound at all. So I expect I considered the question for about two minutes maximum....

Incidentally, I think you will hear on my Purcell recording (LP: Archiv 2533415; CD : Archiv 447 154-2) that I adopt the same carefree attitude to all five allemandes you mention.

Synchronization in Beethoven

from Joyce Harbottle, Bristol

August 1996

Joyce attended my first Bristol Day and has developed a keen interest in rhythmic alteration.

Your article "More on Post-Baroque Inequality" in UN 8 (June 1996) was so interesting that I was prompted to study the Beethoven pieces mentioned, to see what I could find out about them for myself. Here's what I came up with.

Sonata No 14, Op 27 no 2, 'Moonlight' 1st movement

"The idea of synchronisation [of triplets and dotted rhythms] in the 'Moonlight' is ... strange," you write. I experimented as suggested, playing this movement, synchronized, very slowly, then at my usual speed, and in each case the result, to my ear, was "cheap and nasty" - an undistinguished etude in arpeggios, perhaps. The music has to go at quite a clip to make any sense when synchronized, I found. The melody, what there is of it, vanishes at a slow-to-medium pace! Beethoven's marking is

Adagio sostenuto and, whilst I agree that our idea of *Adagio sostenuto* is likely to differ from his, we can't justifiably reinterpret it as, say, *Allegro vivace*, can we? Another point is that, whichever edition we use, the music is always written out in three definite parts: the bass, in octaves; the accompaniment, in triplets; and the melody, notated distinctly with 'tails up'. In each appearance of the dotted rhythm against the triplet, the two parts look like this:

To play this rhythm synchronized is to distort it.

Sonata No 2, op. 2 no. 2 - 4th movement, 'Rondo'

I have two copies of this: the Schirmer Urtext edition edited by Carl Krebs as long ago as 1898 and an ancient Litolf edition, edited by Louis Köhler and Winkler. In Krebs's version of the Rondo we have

while Köhler and Winkler notated them as in the 'Moonlight' (see above). How about tempo? The 'Moonlight' is *Adagio sostenuto*, the Rondo is marked *Grazioso*. How *grazioso* is *grazioso*? Köhler and Winkler suggest crotchet = 144; Krebs doesn't give a metronome mark.

The 'Moonlight' was written in three 'parts'; the Rondo has two - a melody, really an elaborate chromatic scale in triplets, and accompaniment, in chords, featuring the dotted rhythm. These 'parts' readily swap places between bass and treble, and are sufficiently distinctive to be audible whether played synchronized or unsynchronized. Technically, there's little difference in complexity between the two ways. The main deciding factor, therefore, seems to be: what sounds best? Does it add excitement to the music to play this passage unsynchronized, or would that merely result in unwarranted jerkiness?

My personal preference is for Krebs's synchronized interpretation. There's sufficient rhythmic impetus already in the music: except in bars 64 and 65 (where the figure still moves from a weak beat to a strong one) this triplet/dotted rhythm clash always appears at the last beat of a bar. On the first beat of the next bar, the chord sounds alone briefly whilst the melody pauses and 'takes a breath' before continuing its restless movement about

the keyboard. And since the piece is marked *grazioso*, the fewer bumps in it, the better.

Filling in Bach's thirds

from Colin Booth

27 November 1996

Colin enclosed photocopies of the autograph of two of the 2-part Inventions.

I enclose the D major for you to give your views on the slurring. On glancing through the volume, there are not many where any slurring occurs, but there is this D major one, and another where he puts a few long slurs over 12 semiquavers, quite deliberately. (Very Chopin!)

You have commented before on the two versions of the C major invention. The autograph, however, seems to me to show how the two versions arose. It is quite clear that Bach wrote it in semiquavers, and then he (probably) went back and squeezed in extra notes to produce the so-called triplet version (see ex. 2).

This is surely a nice example (if you are of the right mind!) of the natural 18th century tendency to fill in falls (and in this case rises) of a third by a linking notes for the sake of elegance. If one assumes that it would have originally been played with a swing anyway, the process is far more natural.

The D major invention has 3 instances of a cadential fall of a third, each time notated differently: firstly with an inserted grace-note; secondly without anything; thirdly by Bach's little sign (post D'Anglebert) for a grace-note. It was so common for such falls to be notated without anything, but for the player to fill in, that the teaching purpose of no. 1 is perhaps further clarified. I don't know how old WF was at the time. Perhaps very young?

Finally I am coming to think that there may sometimes be a correlation between how one plays the little grace-notes at such cadential points, and the underlying rhythm of the piece. You know the argument which is particularly contentious in F. Couperin, and thence in Bach ... if you follow what FC says in *L'Art de Toucher* to the letter, the little grace-note should be an appoggiatura, and be stressed and played on the beat in every case (I don't believe this). But perhaps if the rhythm is swung, it would automatically be shortened, but played straight if the rhythm is not swung. In other words, play **tum**-ti-tum in the first case, and **tum**, tum, tum in the second. In fact, in this invention, I prefer the first, whether the semiquavers are swung or not. So perhaps it's rubbish. All unprovable. Damn.

The question of slurs in Bach is a fascinating one. I have lately been playing the inventions with the semiquavers not only inégales but detached (at a slow tempo). If a detached style was normal, then these long slurs could simply mean legato. Another possibility is overlegato, (holding notes for longer than written length to produce something like chords) an interpretation that I heard Gustav Leonhardt suggest when he lectured at Buckfastleigh some years ago. He certainly recommended it for the F minor invention but oddly he also recommended overlegato for the C minor and D minor ones which have no slurring! I find overdotting convincing in the Organ partita 'Christ der du bist', ('partita' 2, where the LH resolves into 2-part texture), the toccata 1 in D minor, (BWV 913, bar 5), the minuet in French suite 2 and the prelude 'Ich ruf' from the Orgelbüchlein.

As to your other point, in my next MT article I suggest that cadential appoggiaturas in Croft suggest equality. Relevant?

Miles Kington on Bach and jazz

More of my correspondence with Miles during the 60s. This took place when Miles was jazz critic of the Times and played the bass in 'Instant Sunshine'. He doesn't write on music now which is a shame for these letters are all-too-rare explorations of the no man's land between jazz and classical music.

Many a time I have started to answer your long and interesting letter (UN9) but on each occasion foundered in swamps of speculation ... but now I have another pretext for writing to you. Last week, on Friday, I was herded into a television studio with William Mann, Jacques Loussier and

James Greenwood (a jazz critic of the Daily Mail) for Late Night Line Up, on which we were expected to thrash out the problem of Bach and jazz. Thanks largely to Loussier's bad English and his tendency to talk interminably in Gallic generalities, nothing was thrashed out at all, but I thought I ought to tell you. His line of argument, as it loomed through the wordy fog, was as follows: I like Bach, Bach's contemporaries used to improvise, this is now dead but I am trying to improvise on Bach in a modern manner. My complaint is that his jazz improvising is rotten. His answer was to ask why I called it jazz - "I am just playing music". Well, to me it sounds like rotten jazz. Mann tried to bring up the unequal quaver business but this was beyond Loussier's power to translate (or traduce, as he put it) and he thought Mann was talking about printer's errors.

Before I go off and explore your bibliography, I would like to descend into one last swamp of speculation. One of the few ways in which comparisons with jazz might help in your field is a consideration of the attitude to jazz performances by the musicians concerned. In classical music it is impossible not to be struck by the place of honour given to the text, and I don't mean just the sacrosanct nature of the actual notes but the concept of the piece as a whole. I am sure that at the back of his mind the classical performer always has an image of the original pages from which he can depart so far and no further, in terms of which it is difficult note to think. In jazz, there is little incentive to think in terms of written shapes - when a soloist plays a rhythmic pattern, he never conceives how it might be written down or how it relates to his solo as a whole, only as an instinctive passing development. (Grammar?)

In other words, when he dots notes, he doesn't make them into exact dotted quavers or the first two thirds of a triplet; not thinking in terms of written shapes allows him to use infinite gradations of dottedness, as it were. On the other hand, a classical text has to use the few written conventions that there are and there are no possibilities of departing from them unless the player knows that the tradition allows him to. Now, is it part of your theory that in Bach's and pre-Bach days there was a tradition of personal interpretation of rhythms which was not reflected in the way music was written? I think there's an interesting distinction here between interpreting the written notes in a certain way and writing down the played notes in a certain way. Because even if you agree that Rameau's music was not played as written, you may still conceive of the difference in too rigid a way if you think the written notes came first and the interpretation

afterwards. (When I say you, I mean one). For instance, one can realise that a jazz score's rhythmic patterns are not played as written without realising that the difference varies depending upon the speed, quavers becoming more dotted the slower the tempo is.

To get back to my question, I can't help feeling that the music of your period does have a bearing on jazz in that the written remains may have been only one among many manifestations of music rather than the all-important master-version they later became. I find it hard to put into words, but I feel that music was then more fluid, more personal, less formalized and monumental than it became. The gradual abandonment of the perpetual beat and the improvised aspect may have made it easier to create grand masterpieces and on that account can be called an advance, but other things seem to have been lost at the same time. The trouble is that it is very difficult to look back now and say just what was lost. It would be nice to say, the things that jazz still has, and I think it may be true. The steady beat and the improvised aspect of jazz automatically disqualify it from creating the grand structures which critics love, but they also give it the chance to achieve things which classical music has not been able to since your period. There may be no value in this analogy, but I remember being very impressed at Oxford when I was told by A French lecturer that the common conception of a language getting better and better more and more adaptable, over the years was a fallacy and that in many ways mediaeval French was a more flexible tool than modern French.

Well, I'm afraid I certainly have landed a swamp on your breakfast table, so I will end up with something more concrete. I have recently been forcibly reminded of your 'heretical' views on Chopin because while trying to learn several mazurkas I have listened on the radio to one or two pianists mazurking - Colin Horsley and Vlado Perlemuter are the ones I remember. It may be solely due to my barbaric jazz grounding but I couldn't help feeling that the way they constantly varied the beat, almost from bar to bar, was utterly wrong and that it was tearing the guts out of the music. I also feel instinctively that Chopin's alternation between dotted quavers plus semiquavers and even quavers is often arbitrary, which suggest that the true rhythm is somewhere in between - this would certainly seem to fit in with your heresy. Incidentally I have also become irrationally fond of Clementi's piano sonatas, but I'm damned if I can explain this on jazz grounds. Except that he has a weakness for going into passages of triplets which is common weakness in jazz.

Plenty of food for thought here. The chicken-egg question - which came first, the sounds or the written notes? - is very relevant to the problem of inégales. And you are so right about 'the place of honour given to the text'. 'Monumentality' is one of the qualities that early music has to fight against today: the recording industry's hype creates a mood of gravitas which destroys the informality that baroque performances would have had.

Another Bristol Day Excuse me for mentioning again my forthcoming lecture to the Continuing Education department of Bristol University. On January 25 1997 my subject will be 'A new look at Handel' and I shall be covering the use of *inégales* in English keyboard music of the time with special reference to Handel's suites. Then I shall explore the Brookes Passion and other choral works including the *Messiah*.

NOTES INÉGALES, A EUROPEAN STYLE: I have recently completed this summary of my conclusions on *inégales*. It is a 37,000 word document with a 40,000 word appendix. This includes some material from THE CASE FOR INÉGALES IN J.S.BACH, which I produced in 1993, and which it now supersedes.

In the course of this study I examine previous *inégales* scholarship, identifying some faulty reasoning. I investigate the history of the allemande, comparing French allemandes with non-French ones, to see if there is any significant difference between them. I sift through documentary evidence for or against *inégales* from Italy, Germany and England and, using this evidence, assemble a conjectural International Metre-Inequality Table. I look into the vexed question of written dotting in the context of *inéga*le performance. Finally I try to come to some conclusions in this highly controversial field. The appendix includes notes on my Bach recordings and other *inéga*le performances. There is a series of conversations on *inégales* with West-country performers and scholars. Included also is a facsimile of an early paper of mine on triplets and semiquavers in Bach with copious comments by the late Robert Donington. I review Donington's statements on inequality in the light of subsequent scholarship. With accompanying cassette (*Notes inégales*, a breakthrough?) it costs £20, including postage and packing.

BACH CASSETTE - Notes inégales, a breakthrough? - contains recordings of 15 pieces by JS Bach, including allemandes from the suites and partitas, preludes and fugues from the 48 and two chorale preludes. It costs £6, including postage and packing.

UNEQUAL NOTES - the NEWSLETTER

The Unequal Notes newsletter is a quarterly in which I include samples of my research and give news of articles, lectures and conferences on *notes inégales*. If you would like to receive the Newsletter regularly, kindly send me an annual subscription of £2.00 payable on 1st September. Cheques made out to John Byrt please. Back numbers of UNEQUAL NOTES 50p each.

JUST OUT! *Inégalité in Purcell and Handel* for voice and harpsichord by Catherine Bass and John Byrt. Cassette: price £4. **Purcell** - Hark

how all things / Hark the ech'ing air / Bid the virtues; **Handel** - O had I
Jubal's lyre / As when the dove / Rejoice greatly.

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