

# CAREY BEEBE HARPSICHORDS

Construction \* Maintenance \* Tuning \* Hire

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inc. THE HARPSICHORD CENTRE

HARPSICHORD NEWS BRIEF . . .

1st August 1983

My trusty old rattletrap of a typewriter came to a sticky end recently when it became gummed up on a self-adhesive label, and so I am now enjoying typing to you on a new machine that I don't need to tear my hair out to use. (At last I have a sign that even looks a little like a musical sharp - # !) Also, I have managed to find an envelope labeling system that enables me to type addresses only once, and then photocopy onto labels, instead of me spending two days typing directly onto envelopes. The Marvels of New Technology . . .

We do, however, remain convinced that the only 'improvements' in the harpsichord this century have been rediscoveries of earlier understandings and practices.

The Modern Harpsichord by Wolfgang Joachim Zuckermann was published in 1969, and went through three printings in a short time. Many people have asked us to try and obtain this book, but it is now out of print and will never be reprinted. The book caused considerable controversy, and because of its sharp criticism of the 'modern' German builders, it was banned in that country. The book's central theme - that harpsichords should be made today as they were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries - has been so widely accepted that to be fair to the current scene, the book would have to be completely rewritten. This Wolfgang Zuckermann has refused to do. When I met him in Washington DC on my recent trip to the States, he mentioned that reprinting it today would give a completely misleading impression of the modern instrument. On the US second-hand market, prices as high as \$70 and \$80 have been reported. I am aware, however, of copies in libraries in Australia for those who would like to read the book.

We have more than enough to do making harpsichord 'kits', but the increasing difficulty our customers are having in finding decent materials has initiated the Zuckermann Painting Kit. The results obtainable from our oil paint are far superior to that from the enamels and acrylics that are the only kind of paint one can buy here. We have tested a number of materials, and the kit contains the best we could find for the purposes. Everything [even a very fine skunk hair brush] is included except turpentine. The kit costs \$ 95, which is probably less than the components would cost if you could find them all. The color card we have shows the 18 historic colors for our paint, which is sold separately to the kit (\$ 11 per pint).

Our Open Weekend is coming up soon, and we hope to have several instruments on show, as well as a few under construction. A highlight of this year's show will be the cherry Fortepiano - at this time somewhere on the Pacific with a Flemish XII that I built at Zuckermann headquarters in Stonington, Connecticut, and several instrument kits destined for builders all over Australia. Bring your music with you! (Or use some of our books from the Zuckermann Catalogue of Music.) We are also planning a small concert as part of the weekend, and I hope to be able to present a short slide lecture on the many instruments I managed to examine recently along the East Coast of the US. We are aiming for a nice Spring weekend in October, and will send you details as soon as the date is finalised.

Many people have written telling me of their construction of instruments, and one of my great pleasures is being able to meet so many of you during my travels and see your work first-hand. However, it may be some time before I manage to make it across to meet those of you in Perth! I would be very pleased to receive a photograph of your instruments for the album I am assembling now, showing quite a variety of both people and early keyboards from around the continent.

Sole Australian Agent for ZUCKERMANN HARPSICHORDS INC.