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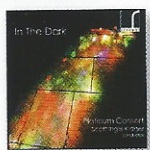


SEPTEMBER 2012 £4.80
USA \$9.99/ CAN \$9.99

sensuality of Schoenberg's *Das Buch der Hangenden Garten*. Gerhaher and his pianist Gerold Huber capture both qualities with great sensitivity to Schoenberg's own responses to the poetry of Stefan George. On to three Haydn songs whose performances reveal the intensity behind the genteel pathos – and on again to Berg's *Altenberg-Lieder*. These are a response to Schoenberg's own liberation of dissonance, and are played and sung with deeply affecting beauty, through the distant ranges of Gerhaher's baritone.

The recital comes movingly full circle with a performance of Beethoven's *Adelaide* newly revelatory in the context of all we have heard. *Hilary Finch*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



IN THE DARK

Bates: Tenebrae; Victoria: Versa est in luctum; Ecce quomodo moritur; MacMillan: Miserere; plus works by Anerio, Lotti, Lassus, Purcell etc

The Platinum Consort/
Scott Inglis-Kidger
Resonus RES 10110 58:04 mins
Download only: available at
www.resonusclassics.com

The Platinum Consort sing two to a part, using virtually no vibrato. That makes the pristine tonal balance and

BACKGROUND TO...



Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623)

During his short musical career, Thomas Weelkes composed some of the finest

madrigals and anthems of the age. The son of a clergyman, Weelkes took up the post of organist at Winchester College in 1598. Here, he composed the two volumes of madrigals which show off his skill and affinity for vocal writing. At some point between 1601-1602, Weelkes became the organist and choirmaster of Chichester Cathedral. But despite a promising start there, his ever increasing drinking problem and fondness for swearing and blasphemy led to his dismissal.

pure tuning achieved on the opening track here, Felice Anerio's *Christus factus est*, all the more laudable. This intimate music-making draws you in gently but ineluctably.

The sudden shortening of note values in Lotti's *Crucifixus* is neatly and unfussily negotiated, and conductor Scott Inglis-Kidger allows the two sopranos an affecting crescendo as the piece climaxes, though he generally keeps the singing within a fairly narrow range dynamically. That's arguably something of a drawback in the two works by Victoria, both of which are strongly charged emotionally. More variation in dynamics, and slightly sharper shaping of the text, would help the listener engage further with these intensely expressive pieces.

The *Tenebrae* sequence of the young British composer Richard Bates is more vigorously projected, with specially strong contributions from the basses. There's some lovely writing here, the soaring soprano solo at 'Insurrexerunt in me viri' particularly impressive. MacMillan's *Miserere* is probably the most demanding piece technically. The sopranos rise to the challenge of the exposed singing at 'Amplius lava' and the awkward trills MacMillan writes on 'mea' and 'me' in that section.

This interesting, sensitively sung programme, recorded with gleaming clarity, is available in a variety of download formats, including cover art and full documentation.

Terry Blain
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



LOVE'S MADNESS

Works by Purcell, Johnson, Pepusch, Locke, Ravenscroft and traditional songs
Dorothée Miels (soprano); Lautten Compagny Berlin/Wolfgang Katschner
Carus 83.371 75:46 mins

BBC Music Direct £13.99
Madness and passion run through this selection of songs and instrumental numbers by Purcell and his English contemporaries, with Bess of Bedlam, Ophelia, and Dido, spurned queen of Carthage, among the deranged divas in the spotlight.

German soprano Dorothée Miels (above, right) and the Berlin Lautten Compagny treat this repertoire as part of a popular, stage-musical tradition, Purcell being the Restoration's answer to Andrew Lloyd



PURCELL PASSION:
Dorothée Miels
has theatrical flair

Webber (indeed, the two composers went to the same school, albeit three centuries apart). The performers swing, swagger and romp their way through this kaleidoscopic sequence, Miels transforming from airy sprite to suicidal queen with convincing ease. Most effective are the ballads and lighter, folksy numbers, where Miels's agile voice enchants; less compelling is her account of Dido's lament, which lacks that last ounce of intensity and gravitas.

Purists may find the ensemble takes a few too many liberties, orchestrating these pieces with a battery of percussion, wind and stringed instruments, but there's no denying that it's all done with terrific style and bravura. The plush recording flatters the voice but words are occasionally lost in the echo and the overall effect is rather too churchy for the theatrical numbers. Still, a very fine album. *Kate Bolton*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



ROYAL RHYMES AND ROUNDS

Works by Henry VIII, Cornyshe, Gibbons, Britten, Elgar et al
The King's Singers
Signum SIGCD 307 65:50 mins
BBC Music Direct £12.99

Music for and by kings and queens: that's the focus of this new King's

Singers Diamond Jubilee-inspired collection. King Henry VIII is the first regent featured, his own *Pastime with good companie* kicking off the recital. The anonymous *Hey, trolly lolly lol!* is positively lubricious, a saucy rugby song *avant la lettre*. Is it a little primly delivered by the King's Singers? Possibly. But the sound this ensemble makes is beautifully balanced, and you could take dictation from their impeccable enunciation. These are considerable benefits.

Queen Elizabeth I's reign yields more serious content, in the shape of John Benner's Dowland tribute *Weep, O mine eyes*, whose melancholy and desire for oblivion are sweetly rendered in the King's Singers' performance. Of the three pieces adulating Queen Victoria, Elgar's 1899 part-song *To her beneath whose steadfast star* is the most interesting. It forms part of a collection featuring 13 composers, and Elgar conducted it himself at the queen's 80th birthday breakfast.

A fresh-toned, lively account of the 'Choral Dances' from Britten's 1953 opera *Gloriana* marks the reign of the current monarch. A new commission, Paul Drayton's *A Rough Guide to the Royal Succession (It's just one damn King after another...)* concludes the programme. It's droll, but at 12-plus minutes perhaps better experienced live than on record.

Overall, this disc from the King's Singers is a notably intelligent, enjoyable Jubilee offering.
Terry Blain
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

ANDRINE EXPILEY