ensemble officium

Tientos y Glosas - Iberian Organ & Choral Music from the Golden Age

Diego Xaraba | Manuel Rodrigues Coelho | Francisco Correa de Arauxo

CD aud 97.713

Early Music Review August 1, 2015 (D. James Ross - 2015.08.01)

This CD of freely composed works and diminutions of originals is performed by Martin Neu on the 1735 Corchado organ of the San Hipólito Church in Córdoba. This instrument was recently dismantled and completely rebuilt, restoring its original tuning and temperament but preserving most of the original pipework, so it is able to produce some startlingly original timbres to enhance the music of 17th- and 18th-century Spanish composers Diego Xaraba, Manuel Rodrigues Coelho and Francisco Correa de Arauxo. Drafting in the ensemble officium to provide vocal alternatims allows Neu to present some of the music in a liturgical context, although the CD's promise of Organ and Choral Music from the Golden Age is a little disingenuous as the singers only supply plainchant and two short sections of albeit beautiful polyphony. The highlight for me was Arauxo's Tiento on Morales' Batalla, a work which has been unfortunately lost. Neu makes fabulous use of the venerable instrument's trumpet stops to evoke the full excitement of the 17th-century battlefield.

http://theclassicalreviewer.blogspot.de Saturday, 22 August 2015 (Bruce Reader - 2015.08.22)

Audite's new release Tientos y Glosas – Iberian Organ and Choral Music from the Golden Age featuring organist Martin Neu and Ensemble Officium directed by Wilfried Rombach is something of a winner for all lovers of early Iberian music

This is something of a winner for all lovers of early Iberian music. The recording captures this fine organ in its lovely acoustic superbly. There are excellent notes from Martin Neu as well as a full organ specification and details of tuning and temperament.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

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RBB Kulturradio Fr 14.08.2015 (Peter Uehling - 2015.08.14)

Tientos y glosas

Spanische Orgel- und Chormusik des Goldenen Zeitalters – kundig eingespielt.
Bisweilen mit fehlendem Glanz

In der späten Renaissance- und frühen Barock-Zeit stand Spanien auf dem Höhepunkt seiner Macht. In dem reichen Land blühten auch die Künste, die Malerei eines Diego Vélazquez oder Francisco de Zurbarán, die Literatur von Miguel de cervantes oder Baltasar Gracián – und die Musik? Kaum einer kennt sie. Martin Neu, Organist in Reutlingen und bislang durch zwei CDs zu den nord- und süddeutschen Einflüssen auf Johann Sebastian Bach hervorgetreten, präsentiert auf "Tientos y Glosas" spanische Orgelmusik des Goldenen Zeitalters. Die Komponisten sind heute höchstens Orgelexperten bekannt, damals aber genossen Francisco Correa de Arauxo aus Sevilla oder Miguel Rodrigues Coelho aus Portugal hohes Ansehen, was sich an den Drucken ablesen lässt, die von ihrer Musik erhalten sind.

Großer Reichtum, kleiner Mangel

Die Grundformen der spanischen Orgelmusik sind Tiento und Glosa – dabei ist das Tiento eine freie Form, während die Glosa gregorianische Choräle oder Hymnen instrumental bearbeitet. Insofern gibt es in Spanien die gleiche Aufteilung wie in Deutschland zwischen Präludien, Toccaten und Fantasien einerseits und Choralbearbeitungen andererseits. In Spanien nimmt die Musik bauartbedingt zuweilen eine spezifische Form an: das Tiento de medio registro, in dem auf einem Manual durch Teilung der Lade zwei verschiedene Registrierungen möglich sind – natürlich auch auf dem 1735 gebauten Instrument von San Hipólito in Cordoba, das Martin Neu auf dieser Aufnahme spielt. Mystisches, Spielfreudiges, Strenges, aber auch Zupackendes findet sich auf dieser CD, ein großer Reichtum an Formen und Klängen, von Martin Neu stilistisch kundig eingespielt. Zu bemängeln wäre nur, dass sich die Auswahl auf drei Komponisten beschränkt und das ensemble officium, das zu den choralgebundenen Glosas die Hymnen singt, intonatorisch matt auftritt und einen anderen Stimmton wählt als die Orgel, was zuweilen irritiert.

www.musicweb-international.com October 2015 (Johan van Veen - 2015.10.01)

Organ music by composers from the Iberian peninsula has a special place in the repertoire. Its peculiar style and the specific timbre of the organs for which it was written makes it rather difficult to be performed on organs in other parts of Europe. This inevitably has led to this repertoire being less wel-known than that of other countries.

The music included on this disc is presented as being written during the Golden Age. However, the largest part of the repertoire played here was written when that era - roughly speaking from 1520 to 1620 - had come to an end. Moreover, one of the composers, Manuel Rodrigues Coelho, was Portuguese; in 1580 his country had lost its independence which was only restored in 1640. Coelho published his Flores de musica from which the pieces on this disc are taken in 1620. At that time the country was not in very good shape; it certainly was not enjoying a golden age. Coelho also did not dedicate his collection to Philip II, as Martin Neu writes, but to Philip III; his father had died in 1598. The information in the booklet in regard to the historical context is not very accurate.

Fortunately the information about the music is more reliable. The main genre in Iberian keyboard music is that of the tiento. This is what would be called a ricercar or fantasia outside Spain, and is characterised by counterpoint and imitation. Many tientos employ the medio registro, the 'broken keyboard'. In many organs the keyboard was divided into two halves with different dispositions. This allowed the composer to write a solo part for one hand, often including virtuosic figurations, and a polyphonic accompaniment for the other

hand. A good example is the Tiento de medio registro de tiple de octavo tono by Francisco Correa de Arauxo. He seems to have been more or less self-educated and acquired his skills by studying the works of others. He was ordained a priest and worked for many years as an organist at the collegiate church of S Salvador in Seville. From 1636 to 1640 he held the same position in Jaén Cathedral. In 1640 he was elected a prebendary of Segovia Cathedral. Here he also died in poverty. His organ works are collected in one book which was printed in 1626 and has a clear didactic purpose as the title indicates. This explains why the pieces are arranged in various stages in order of difficulty.

The Tiento tercero de sexto tono sobre la primera parte de la Batalla de Morales refers to another popular genre in Spain: the battaglia. It is an arrangement of a batalla by Morales, the most famous Spanish composer from the first half of the 16th century. His batalla is lost and therefore this tiento by Arauxo is the only way to get some impression of what that piece may have sounded like. The closing episode includes some typical features of batallas: repeated fanfare motifs and echo effects. The Tiento de dos baxones de octavo tono is another brilliant piece with two independent bass parts. As Spanish organs usually didn't have a pedalboard these parts are played on the manuals. The Tiento lleno segundo tono is a late specimen of the genre of the tiento. It has come down to us anonymously but is attributed to Diego Xaraba for stylistic reasons. He was organist at the Royal Chapel in Madrid.

Another important genre is that of the glosas. These are not fundamentally different from diferencias, or - in other languages - divisions, diminutions or passaggi which were frequently written in England and Italy during the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The Tres Glosas sobre el Canto llano de la Immaculada Concepción is one of the best-known compositions by Arauxo and appears in many recordings of Iberian organ music. However, the Hymn to the Virgin Mary which is the subject of these variations is hardly ever sung. It is very nice that here the variations are embraced by a vocal performance of this hymn.

The third genre represented here is liturgical music. In the Catholic liturgy the organ played an important role in alternatim compositions: the verses of the mass or another liturgical chant were performed alternately by the choir and the organ. Here we hear two examples from the only published collection of keyboard music by Coelho, Flores de musica. It is the earliest surviving keyboard music printed in Portugal. According to the title the music is conceived for a keyboard instrument or the harp. It contains 24 tentos (Portuguese for tientos), three for every tone, and also over a hundred verses on various hymns and Kyrie settings. A specimen of the latter are the 5 Versos de Kyrie do 1. tom. The hymn Ave maris stella is also performed alternatim: the organ plays four verses with the cantus firmus moving from soprano to bass.

This disc offers a good survey of the keyboard music written on the Iberian peninsula during the 17th century. The value of this disc is enhanced by the fact that Martin Neu in his choice of repertoire has largely avoided the most obvious. Although Arauxo's music is often played, the pieces recorded here are not among the most frequently recorded, except the Glosas. Coelho's oeuvre is far less known. The collaboration with the ensemble officium in the liturgical pieces is another real bonus. On top of that Neu plays a magnificent organ, one of Spain's larger instruments with two manuals and 35 stops. The tuning is 1/5 comma meantone, the pitch is a=430 Hz. It dates from 1735 and was restored and partly reconstructed in 2006/2007. It proves itself the ideal medium for the music played here.

Footnote
Martin Neu has commented on a couple of points made in the review:
1) King Philip III of Spain was simultaneously King Philip II of Portugal (and of Sicily and Naples, and of Sardinia). As Coelho was Portuguese he dedicated his collection of keyboard works to 'his' King, which explains the reference to Philip II in the liner-notes
2) The 'golden age' (siglo de oro) is a fixed term for a period on the Iberian peninsula. That doesn't imply that it was a time of happiness and prosperity for the people. That is also not suggested in the liner-notes.

Südwest Presse 11.12.2015 (Paul Burkhardt - 2015.12.11)

Wenn das Licht am Himmel tanzt

Martin Neu entfaltet den ganzen Reichtum dieser Orgelmusik, lässt die improvisatorischen Freiheiten, die barocken Stilmerkmale und gelegentlich sogar Rhythmen der iberischen Folklore richtig aufblühen - warme Flöten- und markante Zungenregister. Die waagerecht in den Raum ragenden Trompeten zählen zu den bekannten Merkmalen des iberischen Orgelbaus. Martin Neus Album ist eine beeindruckende Zeitreise zurück in die Barockära und eine faszinierende Klangreise in den Süden, nach Andalusien.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Reutlinger Generalanzeiger Mittwoch, 9. Dezember 2015 (Armin Knauer - 2015.12.09)

Iberische Orgelmusik

Farbenpracht und zarte Andacht

Martin Neu gibt den zupackenden Stücken viel Schwung und bringt ihre synkopischen Rhythmen prächtig zum Tanzen. In den andächtigen Stücken beweist er großes Feingefühl. Die Sänger setzen mit ihren gregorianischen Melodien bewegende Ruhepunkte. Und die historische Orgel selbst entwickelt ein beeindruckendes Flair.

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Musica N° 269 Settembre 2015 (- 2015.09.01)

Martin Neu ha raccolto, nel CD AUDITE, opere di Arauxo, Coelho e Xaraba per eseguirle nella loro patria all'organo della Chiesa di San Hipòlito di Còrdoba. In abbinamento con l'Ensemble Officium, la registrazione rivela tutta l'eleganza del repertorio dell'epoca.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

La Tribune de l'Orgue 67/4 2015 (gb - 2015.12.01)

Un très bon disque de musique ibérique, enregistré sur l'orgue (ancien, restauré) de San Hipólito de Córdoba. Très beaux timbres, registrations imaginatives et, entre autres, une pièce sensationnelle de Diego Xaraba (1652-1715). Une chorale excellente prête son concours.

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Fono Forum November 2015 (Friedrich Sprondel - 2015.11.01)

Quer durch den historischen Garten

Ein Charakteristikum der Orgelmusik ist die historische Breite des Repertoires, von der Notre-Dame-Epoche bis in die jüngste Gegenwart. Und aktuelle Neuerscheinungen überspannen einen großen Teil dieses musikalischen Reichtums.

[…] Martin Neu stellt auf der CD "Tientos y Glosas" Orgelmusik des spanischen "Goldenen Zeitalters" vor. Im Mittelpunkt steht Francisco Correa de Arauxo (1584-1654), der seine ingeniös vielfältige Orgelkunst in einem Lehrwerk niederlegte – was daran erinnert, dass Orgelmusik damals fast ausschließlich improvisiert wurde. Arauxos Lehrbeispiele sind gleichwohl Gipfelwerke, und die Stücke seiner Zeitgenossen Manuel Rodrigues Coelho und Diego Xaraba, mit denen Neu das Programm ergänzt, erreichen nicht ihre Originalität. In lebendig-rhetorischer Spielweise musiziert Neu an der Orgel von San Hipolito in Cordoba, einem charakterstarken Instrument von 1735, dessen Leuchtkraft von einer klar und weiträumig eingefangenen Akustik geadelt wird. Die vokalen Beiträge des Ensembles Officium überzeugen durch warmen Sound; doch nicht immer halten die Sänger die Tonhöhe, was beim Alternatim-Musizieren nicht verborgen bleibt.

www.orgelnieuws.nl 21/01/2016 (Theo Visser - 2016.01.21)

niederländische Rezension siehe PDF!

SRF2 Kultur Montag, 21. März 2016, 22.00 - 24.00 Uhr (Norbert Graf - 2016.03.21)

BROADCAST Fiori musicali: Neue CDs mit Musik für Tasteninstrumente

Das Repertoire für Tasteninstrumente ist besonders umfangreich. Ob für Cembalo, Orgel oder Hammerflügel: Bekannte wie auch weniger bekannte Komponisten haben viel Material geliefert, das noch immer entdeckt bzw. immer wieder neu gespielt werden kann.

Zu hören sind Ausschnitte aus folgenden CD-Produktionen:
Cembalist Diego Ares spielt Antonio Soler
Organist Martin Neu spielt Werke aus dem «Goldenen Zeitaltler» Spaniens
Cembalistin Sonja Kemnitzer spielt Johann Adam Reincken
Organist Masaaki Suzuki spielt Johann Sebastian Bach
Organist Ingo Duwensee spielt Nicolaus Bruhns
Pianist Kristian Bezuidenhout spielt Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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Early Music Review April 2016 (Alastair Harper - 2016.04.01)

The real star of this fine recording is the magnificent 18c organ of the church of San Hipólito, Córdoba, dating originally from 1735 and superbly restored, using most of its original pipework, in 2006-7. Martin Neu puts it through its paces in a well-chosen selection of 17th- and early 18th-century music by Correa de Arauxo (of Seville) and Rodrigues Coelho (of Lisbon), along with an anonymous Tiento from a manuscript in Madrid. This latter opens the disc in fine style, with blazing Trompetas Reales much in evidence. Neu is joined by ensemble officium in two alternatim pieces by Coelho, a gentle Tone 1 'Versos de Kyrie' with schola singing the 'Cunctipotens genitor Deus' chant, and a more extended setting of the well-known 'Ave Maris Stella' hymn, both showing the intimate relationship of organ and voices in 'ordinary' service music of the period. Ensemble officium also provide attractive fauxburdon-like verses of the Marian hymn 'Todo el mundo en general' contrasting with Correa de Arauxo's Tres Glosas. The disc concludes with Arauxo's lively 'Tiento Tercero de Sexto Tono', based on a (lost) Batalla by Morales, itself based on Jannequin's famous chanson, giving the wonderful reed stops another moment of glory. Most enjoyable.

American Record Guide January / February 2016 (Hamilton - 2016.01.01)

Well here's an organ that will knock your socks off—just wait till 3:30 on the first track (Diego in the alternatum tradition—that is where the verses of a hymn or liturgical number are alternately performed by the choir and the organ. The organ is the star of the show; the sounds are just a delight, the flautandos are rich and warm, to say nothing of the mutations (bright sounding stops that cap the ensemble) and the bracing reeds that this kind of organ is known for.

Also notable is the Coehelo 'AveMaria Stella'. Mr Neu is at home with this music, expressing it naturally and fluently, with an expression that comes from the music. I recommend this especially to people who want to hear what an authentic 18th Century Spanish organ sounds like, and what the fuss was all about. Much of this music is not well known, or has not been recorded before. It is good to hear four selections by Francesco Correa de Arauxo played on this lovely organ.

Ars Organi Jg. 67, H.3 (September 2019) (Martin Köhl - 2019.09.01)

Die stilistisch mustergültige Interpretation und eine recht direkte, aber die Raumwirkung nicht verleugnende Aufnahmesituation rücken diese famose Orgel ins beste Licht.

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www.amazon.de 18. November 2016 (- 2016.11.18)
source: https://www.amazon.de/Tientos-Glosas-Ibe...

Customer Review: Fabulous organ music from Spain and Portugal's golden age

'Tientos y Glosas – Iberian Organ and Choral Music from the Golden Age' is the full title of this programme, played on the beautiful and colourful baroque organ of the church of San Hipólito in Cordoba. The main composers here are the Portuguese Manuel Rodrigues Coelho (1555-1635) and Spaniard Francisco Correa de Arauxo (1584-1654), and types of work represented are the Tiento (Spanish ricercar-like piece with elements of toccata or fantasia style) and Glosas (variations, in these cases on Latin hymn melodies). The 'choral' bit of the subtitle simply refers to the sung alternatim verses in the variation sequences.

That's the factual bit over and so, to get to the point, the results are fabulous. The beautifully vivid Cordoba instrument is ideally suited to these dashing examples of Iberian baroque organ music, and Martin Neu's playing is superb – stylish, full of panache and imagination. Of the eight works on the disc, several of them ambitious and extended pieces, my own favourites are: Correa de Arauxo's Tiento y Discurso de medio registro de dos Baxones de Octavo Tono' (better get used to some long titles), a dramatic and colourful work with an almost Bachian opening but developed with increasingly extravagant ornamentation (track 3). Then comes Coelho's 'Ave Maris Stella' (track 4) consisting of imaginative variations on the hymn tune, alternating with sung verses as mentioned above; it sounds for all the world as if inspired by Monteverdi's movement of that title in the Vespers of 1610. Again, the result is splendid.

My last favourite is the final work, Correa de Arauxo's 'Tiento Tercera de Sexto tono sobre la primera parte de la Batalla de Morales', a piece of stunning brilliance, variety and drama. According to its title and the booklet notes, it's based on a lost work by Morales, but that's really a bit of a cheek because, like nearly all the 'battle' pieces of the renaissance and baroque, it owes just about everything to Janequin's wonderful chanson 'La Guerre'. But Correa's development of the work for organ is still a knockout, especially when played like this and on an instrument that couldn't be better suited to the task.

In addition to the three pieces described, the rest of the programme is a well-judged selection varying between excitement and meditation. The Ensemble Officium vocal group, directed by William Rombach, do their job very well, booklet notes are excellent, texts and translations are supplied for the few choral sections, and recorded sound is outstanding. This recording makes such an impact, and the organist's performance is so distinguished, that it had me searching to see what else Martin Neu has recorded. The answer, at the time of writing, is: very little so far. I hope that he and his recording company will be rectifying this in the near future. In the meantime, this is a brilliant and inspiring contribution to the catalogues.