



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

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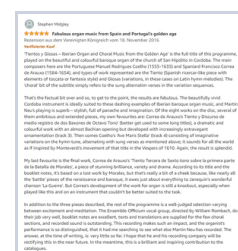


Customer Review: Fabulous organ music from Spain and Portugal's golden age

'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.



Stephen Midgley



Fabulous organ music from Spain and Portugal's golden age

Rezension aus dem Vereinigten Königreich vom 18. November 2016

Verifizierter Kauf

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