

Royal Recorder Concertos - Music from the Court of King Frederik IV (2013)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 21 April 2018 13:26 -

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Graupner: Overture (Suite) in F Major, GWV 447 30:54 1. *I. Largo* - *II. Allegro* 7:42 2. *III. La Speranza: Tempo giusto* 3:09 3. *IV. Air en Gavotte* 5:28 4. *V. Menuet* 3:26 5. *VI. Air* 6:49 6. *VII. Plaisanterie* 4:20

Scheibe:

Recorder Concerto in B-Flat Major 10:21

7. *I. Allegro* 3:37 8. *II. Adagio* 3:22 9. *III. Poco allegro* 3:22

Graun, J G: Concerto for Recorder and Violin in C Major, GraunWV Cv:XIII:96 8:36

10. *I. Allegro* 2:27 11. *II. Adagio* 3:42 12. *III. Allegro* 2:27

Graupner: Recorder Concerto in F Major, GWV 323 8:55

13. *I. Allegro* 3:31 14. *II. Andante* 1:54 15. *III. Allegro* 3:30

anon.: The Princess's Suite (arr. M. Prochaska for recorder and orchestra) 14:20

16. *I. Ouverture* 3:26 17. *II. Allemanda* 1:39 18. *III. Courant I-II* 3:52 19. *IV. Saraband* 2:03
20. *V. Vivace* 1:27 21. *VI. Folie d'Espagne* 1:53

Schickhardt: Recorder Sonata in C Minor, Op. 8, No. 4 1:41

22. *Recorder Sonata in C Minor, Op. 8, No. 4: III. Piu vivace (Bonus Track)*

Bolette Roed (Recorder) Arte dei Suonatori (Ensemble)

There have been CDs of 'Danish' Baroque orchestral repertoire before, notably from Concerto Copenhagen, but there's certainly room for more. I put 'Danish' in inverted commas because none of these composers of 'Music from the Court of King Frederik IV' (actually from that of his son Christian VI as well) was actually Danish, and only one of them, Johann Adolph Scheibe, worked in Denmark. Mind you, most of the repertoire of the 18th-century Danish court perished long ago in a succession of fires, so it is reasonable to include works by Graupner and JH Graun, who were both popular there, while the Schickhardt recorder sonata whose third movement is offered at the end, seemingly as a taster for a future disc (the whole sonata can be downloaded from Dacapo), was dedicated to Frederik.

None of the works here would qualify as a lost masterpiece. All feature the recorder prominently and are competently written in the light-spirited German style of the 1730s and '40s, which is to

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say pretty much that of Telemann. Graupner in particular, with his six-movement overture-suite and three-movement concerto, is firmly so; but while pleasant enough, his music rambles and sadly lacks Telemann's personality and wit. Scheibe, remembered today mainly as a biter of JS Bach, offers a recorder concerto with a hint of galant to it, and Graun's characterful double concerto has a rather romantic Adagio. The programme is completed by a suite of anonymous dances orchestrated for this recording from guitar pieces in a manuscript that belonged to Frederik's daughter Princess Charlotte Amalie.

Unsurprisingly, the project is the brainchild of recorder soloist Bolette Roed, whose playing is cleanly articulated and stylish. This is not a particularly virtuoso programme for her, and the well-judged primus inter pares balance with the ever-excellent Polish string players of Arte dei Suonatori eloquently reflects the fact. ---Lindsay Kemp, gramophone.co.uk

In her introduction to this SACD, soloist Bolette Roed writes, "Have you ever wondered which music was played on the recorder in Copenhagen at the time when Bach reigned in Leipzig, Telemann in Hamburg, Handel in London, Vivaldi in Venice and Couperin in Paris?" Actually, I haven't ever wondered that, but now that she brings it up...! The composers represented on this disc (with the possible exception of Anonymous) were not Danes, although their music appears to have been played in Denmark during the reign of Frederik IV, which began in 1699 and ended with his death in 1730. Johann Adolf Scheibe actually lived in Denmark, although he didn't arrive there until a decade after Frederik IV's death. Reading the booklet that comes with this release, we learn that the Danish did not have a national Baroque style, but looked, at different times, to France, Italy, and Germany to shape their tastes. The German influence is strongest in the works offered here, with Italy taking a close second, and France third. In fact, if I had listened to this music blind, I would have guessed that Handel or Telemann composed at least some of the movements, if not the entire works.

Diehard Baroque collectors will recognize these names, except perhaps for Johann Christian Schickhardt, who is represented by a single sonata movement as a bonus track. (Dacapo invites you to go to their website and download the rest of the sonata.) Everything is a success here, although some things are more successful than others. I was especially taken by the Vivaldi-like slow movement of Christoph Graupner's Concerto in F, which has the recorder singing peacefully over an accompaniment of plucked strings. At 1:55, it's a dainty little thing. Another highlight is the closing "Folie d'Espagne" from The Princess's Suite, so named because it was assembled from the music collection of Princess Charlotte Amalie, who was Frederik IV's daughter. In this movement, the famous "La Folia" theme makes an appearance

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and is subjected to quirky variations. The Suite's assembly was carried out with taste by Henrik Bøggild, and arranged for orchestra by Maciej Prochaska. The tiny movement by Schickhardt brings the disc to a gentle and wistful close—just perfect. Little on this SACD will quickly impress itself on your memory, but still, this is an excellent disc for late-night listening, as record reviewers of the not-too-distant past used to advise their readers, perhaps euphemistically.

Arte dei Suonatori is a Polish ensemble. Their contribution features lively rhythms and light textures—all the better not to bury Bolette Roed's instrument. As for Roed, her temperament is a little reticent, but she has excellent control over her difficult instrument, and makes many a pleasant and intriguing sound. I'm not sure how "royal" these concertos truly are, but if you give them your attention, the performers will make you feel like a king. ---FANFARE: Raymond Tuttle, arkivmusic.com

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