Carl Heinrich Graun – Te Deum • Motets (2006)



Te Deum for Soloists, Chorus & Orchestra *1. Te Deum laudamus (Chorus, Soli S/A/T) 2. Te gloriosus (Chorus, Soli S/A/T/B) 3. Te per orbem (Tenor solo) 4. Tu Rex gloriae (Chorus S/A/T/B) 5. Tu, ad liberandum (Soprano solo) 6. Tu ad dexteram Dei (Chorus S/A/T/B) 7. Te ergo quaesumus (Mezzo-Soprano solo, Tenor solo) 8. Salvum fac (Bass solo) 9. Et rege eos (Chorus, Soli S/A/T/B) 10. Dignare, Domine (Soprano solo) 11. In te, Domine, spreravi (Chorus S/A/T/B)* Three Motets For Chorus & Basso Continuo *12. Herr, ich habe lieb die Statte deines Hauses 13. Lasset uns freuen und fröhlich sein 14. Machet die Tore weit*
Monika Mauch - Soprano Elisabeth von Magnus - Mezzosoprane Bernhard Gärtner - Tenor Klaus Mertens - Bass Basler Madrigalisten - choir L'Arpa Festante - orchestra Fritz Näf - conductor

When one considers the differences between the Te Deum for soloists, chorus, and orchestra of Carl Heinrich Graun, composed in 1757, and the three motets that round out this album, from between 1721 and 1725, one appreciates the achievements of J.S. Bach all the more -- and not just because Bach was the greater composer. In fact, Bach held Graun's music in high esteem. The striking thing is how much musical style changed in those 35 years. Graun's music, at least as exemplified by these works, changed with it, whereas "old Bach" took the more conservative but in a way more radical step of working the old style out to its theoretical limits. In the Te Deum, orderly Baroque processions of chords are plainly a thing of the past. A continuo would be superfluous, and the Munich-based Baroque orchestra L'arpa festante does not use one. The sunny mood, uncomplicated diatonic harmonies, playful spirit, and expansive tunes all sound as though they could have come out of music by Haydn or the young Mozart two decades later. Graun alternates choruses, containing very attractive passages in which a quartet of soloists trade phrases and join together into charming ensembles, with deliberate, operatic arias. There are a couple of big fugues, and these are already triumphal and essentially ornamental, rather than reverential as they were in Bach. The three motets for chorus and continuo, on the other hand, though they lack the density of Bach's motets, draw their energy from contrapuntal constructions. When these break into fugues, the device seems an integral

part of the language. They are lovely devotional pieces, especially Herr, ich habe lieb die Stätte deines Hauses (Lord, I love the spaces of your house, track 12), and they're worth the purchase price of this disc. The singers of the Basler Madrigalisten bring a splendid combination of warmth and textural clarity to the motet texts, and their musicianship throughout is of a high level. L'arpa festante, under conductor Fritz Näf, has a smooth, polished style a bit reminiscent of that of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra of yore; it seems a bit restrained for a work written with the intent of celebration (of the Prussian military victory over Austria in 1757), especially in view of the fact that Graun omits the trumpets and drums often associated with the Te Deum text. There is a pair of horns, but here they don't leap to the fore like they should. Counterbalancing this is marvelously deep sound from CPO; for the listener, the illusion of being present in Basel's St. Martin's Church is very strong. Recommended for listeners interested in the early development of the Classical style. ---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

download (mp3 @320 kbs):

yandex mediafire ulozto gett bayfiles

back