

Vivaldi – Nisi Dominus – Stabat Mater (Spinosi)

Written by bluesever

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01 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Nisi Dominus 02 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Vanum est vobis 03 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Surgite 04 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Cum dederit 05 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Sicut sagittae [play](#) 06 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Beatus vir 07 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Gloria Patri 08 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Sicut erat in principio 09 - Nisi Dominus RV803 - Amen 10 - Crucifixus RV591 11 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Stabat Mater dolorosa 12 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Cuius animam gementem 13 - Stabat Mater RV621 - O quam tristis 14 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Quis est homo 15 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Quis non posset

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16 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Pro peccatis suae gentis 17 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Eia mater fons amoris 18 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Facut ardeat 19 - Stabat Mater RV621 - Amen

Philippe Jaroussky - countertenor Marie-Nicole Lemieux - contralto Ensemble Matheus Jean-Christophe Spinosi - conductor Theatre des Champs-Elysees, Paris, 6 decembre 2008

I came to this CD following up rumors of excellence, but you should probably know before I begin to second the praise I've heard for it that I would even listen to Sunday school blather set to music by Vivaldi were it sung well. I treasure his sacred music, finding in it an emotional ebullience, reflectiveness, and emotional power that on occasion can outstrip even the music of Bach.

This is French Vivaldi--meaning the ebullience is turned down (just) a notch, the sensuality, suavity, and `poetry' turned up. The solo voices are the principal features and strengths of these performances. Philippe Jaroussky's counter-tenor voice is as close to a female contralto as I've heard (more silver alloyed with the normal copper), which suits the music well. Not until the last strong note of the Nisi Dominus do we hear his true gender emerge. It also creates a stunning close mix with contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux in the brief Crucifixus, the middle work of the program. Lemieux is the star of the Stabat Mater, a noticeably darker work in theme (Mary at the foot of the cross) and musical color. This is more difficult music to perform successfully,

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depending as it does on illuminating detail within dark shadows. The orchestra handles the lighting wonderfully, while Lemieux secures the foreground with a voice at least as strong Jaroussky's, perhaps stronger.

The instrumental textures from the period strings are as light and crisp as autumn leaves. Solo cello and doubled violin passages are wonderfully alive with color. The spirit of Aerial dominates the Nisi; a darker one, the Holy Spirit or some earthly counterpart, controls the Stabat. The recording engineer is open to each in turn. You won't find better Vivaldi anywhere. ---Bob Neill, Editorial Reviews

The countertenor Philippe Jaroussky wields his sweet-toned, radiant voice to emotive effect, displaying both a rapid-fire coloratura technique and a poignant, lyrical expressiveness, particularly haunting in "Cum dederit." In the more austere Stabat Mater, Marie-Nicole Lemieux sings with a gripping sense of drama, her darkly rich, agile contralto illuminating the text with anguish and passion. ---Vivien Schweitzer, music.barnesandnoble.com

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