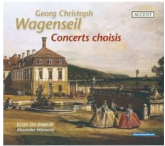


Georg Christoph Wagenseil - Concerts choisis (2008)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 11 July 2011 19:27 - Last Updated Sunday, 29 June 2014 14:10

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1. Concerto for oboe, bassoon, winds, strings & continuo in E flat major, WWV 345: Allegro assai 2. Concerto for oboe, bassoon, winds, strings & continuo in E flat major, WWV 345: Andantino più tosto Allegro 3. Concerto for oboe, bassoon, winds, strings & continuo in E flat major, WWV 345: Presto [play](#) 4. Concerto for harp & strings in F major, WWV 281: Allegro 5. Concerto for harp & strings in F major, WWV 281: Andante 6. Concerto for harp & strings in F major, WWV 281: Tempo di Minuetto 7. Concerto for fortepiano, violin & strings in A major, WWV 325: Vivace 8. Concerto for fortepiano, violin & strings in A major, WWV 325: Larghetto 9. Concerto for fortepiano, violin & strings in A major, WWV 325: Tempo di Minuetto 10. Concerto for flute, strings & continuo in D major, WWV 342: Allegro [play](#) 11. Concerto for flute, strings & continuo in D major, WWV 342: Largo 12. Concerto for flute, strings & continuo in D major, WWV 342: Allegro vivace
Echo Du Danube Alexander Weimann - director

Dutiful Viennese court kapellmeister Georg Christoph Wagenseil may be viewed by some as having attained a special level of faceless mediocrity in respect to musical history, enjoying a position somewhat above that of the long-lived, enormously productive, and equally obscure Adalbert Gyrowetz. That some of Wagenseil's works have been mistaken for Mozart and Franz Joseph Haydn attests to some extent of their relative quality, and his Concerto for alto trombone is a mainstay for that instrument. Likewise, Wagenseil's G major Harp concerto -- merely a suggested alternate instrumentation for what is otherwise a harpsichord concerto -- has found considerable traction among harp players. While there is a harp concerto included on Accent's Georg Christoph Wagenseil: Concerts choisis, it is not the familiar one in G but a second, previously unknown harp concerto in F major recovered through the dogged persistence of this album's coordinator, Michael Dücker. The other concerti -- for fortepiano, flute and oboe, bassoon, and winds -- are also "new," rescued from the heaps of manuscript found at Castle Kromeríz in the Czech Republic. All are expertly rendered by Dücker's group Echo du Danube, a period chamber group that specializes in music of the eighteenth century, under the direction of Alexander Weimann.

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This is strong advocacy for Wagenseil as a composer; he was not a minor figure in his time, being Johann Joseph Fux's last and favorite student, not to mention his successor in the courts of Vienna. Wagenseil did struggle with lack of recognition in the court, and once worked for a period of two years without being paid, and when he died in 1777, Mozart served as his replacement. He composed between 65-80 symphonies, about 30 concerti (mostly for harpsichord), about 10 operas, sacred music, and numerous chamber works and keyboard pieces. The perceived downside of his reputation rests on his pre-classic approach, which seemingly always retains some vestige of the Baroque, heard most prominently in the Flute Concerto in D major heard here, and his tendency to resort to quickie finales and predictable formal schemes. Luckily for Echo du Danube, that tendency isn't present in the four concerti heard here; all four sound strikingly fresh and resonate with the energy of a good group attempting to erect a new edifice on a reputation thought to be a known quantity. The Harp Concerto does stand out, particularly in its understated, mostly minor-key Andante, and the opening Allegro of the Flute Concerto is also noteworthy in its use of Baroque harmonic sequences and slight sense of aggression.

Accent's Georg Christoph Wagenseil: Concerts choisis does succeed in providing a renewed perspective on Wagenseil's artistry and helps clarify why Haydn and Mozart both found him a composer of such great interest. It is easily recommendable to those who appreciate eighteenth century chamber music and should come as a welcome surprise even to those who have already written Wagenseil off as a non-contender. ---Uncle Dave Lewis , Rovi

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