Antonio Vivaldi - Stabat Mater (Celibidache) [1959]

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1. Stabat Mater 2. Cujum animam 3. Pro peccatis suae gentis 4. Eja Mater 5. Fat ut ardeat cor meum 6. Amen Marga Höffgen - contralto Orchestra A. Scarlatti di Napoli della RAI Sergiu Celibidache - conductor

Vivaldi's early career as a composer was devoted mostly to instrumental works. Then, in 1712, when Vivaldi was in his mid-30s, he was commissioned to write the Stabat Mater included here for the church of Santa María della Pace in Brescia. Current scholarship indicates that it was his first sacred work. Then as now, the singer was a male, although we don't know whether he was a castrato or a countertenor. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this Stabat Mater doesn't feature the soloist at the expense of the instrumentalists, whose music is nevertheless kept to a modest scale. Modesty also figures in the work's thematic content, as the music of the first three sections is recycled in the second three. Virtuoso display and extreme emotion are absent in this work, which is attractive, balanced, and above all, devout. ---Ray Tuttle, classical.net

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