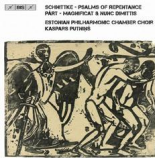


Schnittke: Psalms of Repentance - Pärt: Magnificat Nunc Dimittis (2017)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 01 March 2018 15:23 -

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Alfred Schnittke (1934 - 1998) *Psalms of Repentance* 01 No. 1, *Adam Sat Weeping at the Gates of Paradise/Плакася Адамо предъ раемо съдя* 02 No. 2, *O Wilderness, Gather Me to Your Silent and Gentle Lap/Приимя мя, пустыни, яко мати чадо своё* 03 No. 3, *That Is Why I Live in Poverty/Сего ради нищъ есмъ* 04 No. 4, *My Soul, Why Are You in a State of Sin?/Душе моя, душе моя, почто во гръсех пребываеши* 05 No. 5, *O Man, Doomed and Wretched/Окаянне убогыи человекче!* 06 No. 6, *When They Beheld the Ship That Suddenly Came/Зря корабле напрасно приставаема* 07 No. 7, *Oh My Soul, Why Are You Not Afraid?/Душе моя, како не устрашаешия* 08 No. 8, *If You Wish to Overcome Unending Sorrow/Аще хощеша победити безвременную печаль* 09 No. 9, *I Have Reflected on My Life as a Monk/Воспомянух житие своё клироское* 10 No. 10, *Christian People, Gather Together!/Придъте, христоносении людие* 11 No. 11, *I Entered This Life of Tears a Naked Infant/Наго изыдохо на плачь сеи* 12 No. 12, *(Wordless Humming)/Без слов*

Arvo Pärt (1935)

13 Magnificat 14 Nunc Dimittis

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir Kaspars Putnins - conductor

Alfred Schnittke's *Psalms of Repentance* (1988) are not biblical Psalms but take for their texts a set of non-liturgical poems by a 16th century Russian monk, recounting a story of martyrdom involved with the founding of Christianity in Russia. The work was first performed at ceremonies marking the millennium of that event. The Psalms have gained several performances by top choral groups, tending to support predictions that the late works of Schnittke, often religious, may prove to be his most significant. They build dense polyphony on top of chant-like bases, creating a muscular texture with an effect distinct from that of Arvo Pärt's holy minimalism, also represented on this album by the well-known *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*. Performers can take it in different directions: monumental, more Pärt-like, or, as here, intense and sensuous.

Conductor Kaspars Putnins obtains from the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir a sound quite different from what they may be used to with Pärt, building up tension that is dissipated in the ethereal wordless finale. They're backed by fine sound from the appropriate St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn. Highly recommended, especially as an introduction to the late Schnittke style.

---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

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