Gabriel's Greeting - Medieval English Christmas Music (1993)

1. Gabriel fram even king 2. Rondellus: Salva nos, stella maris 3. Estampie: Miri it is 4. Rondellus: Salve, Virgo virginum 5. Rondellus: Ave Maria, virgo virginum 6. Rondellus: Procedenti puero 7. Rondellus: Ecce mundi gaudium 8. Rondellus: Ut iam cesset calamitas 9. Gabriel fram evene king (untexted realisation) 10. Instrumental piece 11. Motet: Vide miser et iudica / Vide miser et cogita / Wynter 12. Estampie 13. Ther is no rose of swych vertu (a 2) 14. Ther is no rose of swych vertu (instrumental) 15. Lolay, lolay. Als y lay on yoleis night 16. Nowell, nowell, nowell! This is the salutacyon of the angell Gabryell Vivien Ellis (voice), Jocelyn West (voice), Stevie Wishart (fiddle, voice, symphonia), Jim Denley (percussion), Paula Chateauneuf (lute).

Most Christmas CDs churn out the usual favourites but this collection takes us back to almost a millennium ago and has a special fascination about it. These are almost unknown tunes but Sinfonye's interpretations certainly rise to the occasion.

As Wishart espouses in his notes, the secular music coming from England is limited but has a distinctive character of its own. Here, the most substantial piece is 'Lolay, lolay, Als I lay on Yoleis night', discovered at the Cambridge University Library, ten minutes of triads and dual time notes that make for some fascinating listening. This is definitely a disc for the brave adventurer into that unknown Christmas territory. --- Gerald Fenech, classical.net

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