

Palestrina, Gombert, Lassus, Victoria □ – Song Of Songs (2009)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 14 April 2018 12:22 -

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01 – Jacob Clemens non Papa: *Egos flos campi* 02 – Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: *Osculetur me* 03 – Anonymous: *Antiphon: Dum esset rex* 04 – Francisco Guerrero: *Surge, propera amica mea* 05 – Nicolas Gombert: *Quam pulchra es* 06 – Anonymous: *Antiphon: Nigra sum* 07 – Orlande de Lassus: *Veni, dilecte mi* 08 – Tomás Luis de Victoria: *Vadam et circuibo* 09 – Anonymous: *Alleluia: Tota pulchra es* 10 – Francisco Guerrero: *Ego flos campi* 11 – Jean Lhéritier: *Nigra sum* 12 – Anonymous: *Antiphon: Laeva eius* 13 – Rodrigo de Ceballos: *Hortus conclusus* 14 – Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: *Nigra Sum* 15 – Anonymous: *Antiphon: Speciosa facta es* 16 – Sebastián de Vivanco: *Veni, dilecte mi* 17 – Francisco Guerrero: *Trahe me post te* 18 – Anonymous: *Antiphon: Iam hiems transiit* 19 – Tomás Luis de Victoria: *Vidi speciosam*

Stile Antico: Alto Vocals – Carris Jones, Eleanor Harries, Emma Ashby Bass Vocals – Matthew O'Donovan, Oliver Hunt, Will Dawes Soprano Vocals – Alison Hill (tracks: 1, 4, 19), Helen Ashby, Kate Ashby, Rebecca Hickey Tenor Vocals – Andrew Griffiths, Benedict Hymas (tracks: 2, 5, 8, 11), Peter Asprey, Tom Herford

Stile Antico's third recording won the 2009 Gramophone Award for Early Music and reached the top of the US Classical Chart. The beautiful and erotic texts of the Song of Songs, a love-poem traditionally attributed to King Solomon, inspired the great composers of the Continental Renaissance to some of their most ardent music. This rich selection traces an emotional arc from the intensity of the Flemish masters to the most vivid, madrigalian motets by Vivanco and Victoria. ---stileantico.co.uk

The members of the British vocal ensemble Stile Antico, founded in 2001, have an exceptionally pure and youthful sound. In previous albums the group has explored English music of the Renaissance, and here it turns to sixteenth and early seventeenth settings of texts from the

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Song of Songs by a variety of continental composers. The selections include some of the masterworks of high Renaissance polyphony, including music by Nicolas Gombert, Orlande de Lassus, Jacob Clemens non Papa, Francisco Guerrero, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, and Tomás Luis de Victoria. The works by lesser composers, including Jean Lhéritier, Rodrigo de Ceballos, and Sebastián de Vivanco are no less impressive and affecting, especially in performances as polished and attentive as these. The elaborately polyphonic textures that prevail are effectively shown off and are kept from becoming too much of a good thing because they are interspersed with monophonic plainchant antiphons that serve as refreshing aural palate cleansers. The ensemble sings with immaculate intonation and an impressively broad expressive range. The group works without a conductor, and the sensitivity and attention that that demands of each member pays off beautifully in these performances, where they seem to operate as a single organic entity. The sound of the SACD is clean, but atmospheric and nicely ambient. The only caveat is that, through some anomaly of recording, some initial consonants, particularly "s" and "ch," have a percussive punch that works against the prevailing tone of smooth serenity. ---Stephen Eddins, AllMusic Review

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