Luigi Boccherini - Fandango, Sinfonie & Musica Notturna di Madrid (2006)

Quintetto No. 4 In Re Maggiore "Fandango" Per Corda E Chitarra (G. 448) *1. Pastorale 4:22 2. Allegro Maestoso 6:12 3. Grave Assai - Fandango 11:35*
Sinfonia In Re Minore A Più Strumenti Obbligati Op. 37, No. 3 (G. 517) "Grande"
4. Allegro Moderato 8:18 5. Minuetto Con Moto - Trio 3:42 6. Andante Amoroso 4:09 7. Finale - Allegro Vivo, Ma Non Tanto Presto 4:42
Sinfonia In La Maggiore Op. 35, No. 3 (G. 511)
8. Allegro Giusto 6:21 9. Andante 5:14 10. Allegro Ma Non Presto 4:08
Quintetto In Do Maggiore La Musica Notturna Delle Strade Di Madrid Op. 30, No. 6 (G. 324)
11. Le Campane Di L'Ave Maria 0:41 12. Il Tamburo Dei Soldati 0:35 13. Minuetto Dei Ciechi 2:01 14. Il Rosario - Largo Assai - Allegro - Largo Come Prima 4:34 15. Passa Calle - Allegro Vivo 1:51 16. Il Tamburo 0:28 17. Ritirata - Maestoso 2:37
Le Concert des Nations: Angelo Bartoletti - Viola Bruno Cocset - Cello Manfredo Kraemer - Concert Comedienne, Violin Antoine Ladrette - Cello Rolf Lislevand - Guitar Juan de Udaeta - Castanets Pablo Valetti - Violin Claude Wassmer - Bassoon Charles Zebley - Flute

It has taken a long time for Jordi Savall to get around to the music of Luigi Boccherini, an Italian composer who, nevertheless, looms very large in the old Spanish music of which Savall is such an eloquent advocate. If the AliaVox release Luigi Boccherini: Fandango, Sinfonie & La Music Notturna di Madrid is any indication of Savall's potential in interpreting the music of Boccherini, then it was well worth the wait. Best known outside of Europe for his ubiquitous Minuet in A, Boccherini is often misunderstood as a fancy-pants composer of sugary confections for the court à la Dittersdorf, but anyone who knows his String Quartets, Op. 32, or any of the works belonging to this carefully chosen program already knows that Boccherini's music has some teeth.

The soloists, drawn from within Savall's group Le Concert des Nations, are superb in this music; Bruno Cocset has the all-important cello parts, which Boccherini himself would have played, and lutenist Rolf Lislevand delivers the guitar solo in the Fandango with a dashing, yet sensitive

touch. Boccherini's much-loved, but seldom-recorded La Musica Notturna della Strade di Madrid gets its best ever recording here, stylish in presentation yet not downplaying some of the grit in Boccherini's score. An additional surprise here is a stormy D minor symphony from 1787 worthy of the best proto-Romantic Stürm und Drang efforts one might expect from C.P.E. Bach and Haydn's middle-period symphonies; the A major symphony is a lighter and more typical piece, but is substantial nonetheless.

Boccherini's dance and character pieces sound oddly modern, not in a "Stravinsky-like" sense, but in an "upbeat and contemporary" one. Some of the music, if played with too lush an ensemble, can take on an unintended travelogue-like feel, and one is not sure that Savall fully avoids this in the slow sections of the Fandango. On the other hand, these same portions are also among the most radio-friendly on this disc, and do draw the listener into the music. For those who continue to wonder what the Classical period has to offer outside of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, AliaVox's Luigi Boccherini: Fandango, Sinfonie & La Music Notturna di Madrid offers a resounding, and at times, giddily intoxicating answer. ---Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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