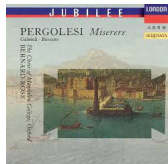


Pergolesi – Miserere (1991)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 13 March 2016 16:58 -

Pergolesi – Miserere (1991)



Giovanni Bassano 1 *Ave Regina* 4:03 Giovanni Gabrieli 2 *Hodie Christus natus est*, motet for 10 voices 4:24 3 *Plaudite, psallite, jubilate Deo*, motet for 12 voices 4:12 4 *Virtute magna*, motet for 12 voices 5:04

Andrea Gabrieli

5 *Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius*, motet for 10 voices 3:38

Pergolesi - *Miserere*, in C minor (2 settings, both spurious)

6 *Miserere mei, Deus* 3:38 7 *Et secundum multitudinem* 5:53 8 *Tibi solo peccavi* 3:05
9 *Ecce enim in iniquitatibus* 2:57 10 *Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti* 1:24 11 *Asperges me hyssopo* 3:44 12 *Auditui meo* 2:44 13 *Averte faciem tuam* 2:59 14 *Cor mundum crea in me, Deus* 3:05 15 *Ne projicias me a facie tua* 5:20 16 *Domine, labie mea aperies* 2:52 17 *Quoniam si voluisses* 1:22 18 *Sacrificium Deo* 1:58 19 *Benigne fac* 4:40 20 *Tunc acceptabis* 3:47

Richard Gowman – Organ (1-5) Ilse Wolf – soprano (6-20) David James – countertenor (6-20)
Rogers Covey-Crump – tenor (6-20) Richard Stuart – baritone (6-20) Simon Lawford – Organ (6-20) Magdalen College Choir Oxford Bernard Rose – conductor

I hadn't heard this setting of the *Miserere* before. Bernard Rose, the director and author of a succinct note, draws attention to the fact that, like so many other pieces, this one has been thought to have been wrongly attributed to Pergolesi. Stylistically, Bernard Rose argues, there are too many points of similarity between the *Miserere* and Pergolesi's celebrated *Stabat Mater* for them to have been written by different composers. I found the similarities striking, too, especially in the earlier numbers of the *Miserere* which is, by the way, a very attractive work. It comprises 15 sections in which solos, ensembles and choruses succeed one another. The date of composition isn't known but since Pergolesi's life was singularly brief (1710-1736) we have a very good idea within a decade or so.

There are many good points about this performance not the least of which is the presence of a fine quartet of soloists; I was especially pleased to hear Ilse Wolf, again; her impeccable

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musicianship is an asset and her voice sounds as fresh and youthful as ever. David James (alto), Rogers Covey-Crump (tenor) and Richard Suart (bass) sing their solos well and are nicely blended in ensemble. The Magdalen College Choir also make the right sort of contribution though I wish they had made just a little bit more of their choruses; there is also a tendency for the altos to overemphasize the penultimate notes of their phrases. It's a mannerism common among English cathedral and chapel choirs but I find it too obtrusive for comfort and musically unnecessary. The movements are well contrasted, rhythmically, texturally and in respect of colour; particularly striking, perhaps, is the trio, "Sacrificium Deo" with its pizzicato accompaniment, and the soprano solo, "Benigne fac", to which an obbligato oboe is added. The remainder of the work is for strings and organ continuo, ably executed by the Wren Orchestra and the organ scholar Simon Lawford respectively.

A rewarding issue, by-and-large, and one which should make wide appeal. The recording is clear, though perhaps not quite as immediate as it might have been, and my pressing was adequate. Full texts in Latin and English are included on the reverse cover of the sleeve.

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