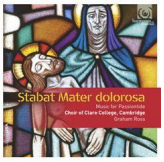
Stabat Mater Dolorosa - Music for Passiontide (2014)



01. Stabat Mater dolorosa 02. O vos omnes 03. Tristis et anima mea 04. O quam tristis et afflicta 05. In ieunio et fletu 06. God so loved the world 07. Quis est homo qui non fleret 08. Caligaverunt oculi mei 09. Ut tecum lugeam 10. Pro peccatis suae gentis 11. The Reproaches 12. Eia, Mater, fons amoris 13. Crucifixus a 8 14. Sancta Mater, istud agas 15. Er nahm alles wohl in acht 16. Ave verum corpus 17. Fac me tecum pie flere 18. Salvator mundi I 19. Christus factus est 20. Virgo virginum praeclara 21. Ne irascaris/Civitas sancti tui 22. Fac me plagis vulnerari 23. Precor te, Domine 24. Christe, cum sit hinc exire 25. Ubi caritas Clare College Choir, Cambridge Graham Ross - conductor

English collegiate choral recordings range from pure Renaissance traditional to crossover oriented, and this one by the Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, under Graham Ross lands right in the sweet spot with a sober but warm tone and a seriousness of intent that does not preclude contemporary compositions, including a pair by conductor Ross himself. The album is the second in a series by the choir devoted to events in the Anglican liturgical year; the first was an Advent disc, and this is entirely devoted to Passiontide, with the music linked together by Stabat mater chants. The polyphonic pieces range from Lassus and Victoria and Byrd to several layers of reimagining of the Renaissance style, from Antonio Lotti through Bruckner, Duruflé, and John Stainer up to the present day. The choir is engaged with the sound and spirit of the music and is capable of great power, even if its outdone in sheer pitch precision by some of its rivals. The easy crossover instincts of the likes of John Rutter are avoided, ironically so inasmuch as none other than Rutter is the producer of this release, and it must be said that he has exploited the ideal sound environment of London's All Hallows' Church to the hilt. In all, an unusually well-unified and persuasive choral release. ---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

The second disc from the choir of Clare College, Cambridge in their series based on the major festivals in the Anglican calendar and, like 'Veni Emmanuel', produced by John Rutter. In this richly varied Passiontide sequence, polyphonic settings of the great texts of Holy Week are interwoven with a plainchant rendition of the mournful 'Stabat Mater': the traditional medieval poem meditating on the death of Jesus and the grief of his mother. ---arkivmusic.com

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