Alison Balsom – Italian Concertos (2010)

Antonio Vivaldi - Violin Concerto in A Minor, RV 356 *1. I. Allegro 02:37 2. II. Largo 02:34 3. III. Presto 02:35* Benedetto Marcello - Oboe Concerto in C Minor
4. I. Andante spicato 03:11 5. II. Adagio 04:25 6. III. Presto 03:05
Tomaso Albinoni - Oboe Concerto in B-Flat Major, Op. 7
7. I. Allegro 02:38 8. II. Adagio 02:35 9. III. Allegro 02:11
Domenico Cimarosa - Oboe Concerto in C Minor
10. I. Introduzione (Larghetto) 02:40 11. II. Allegro 02:08 12. III. Siciliana 02:24 13. IV Allegro giusto 02:38
Antonio Vivaldi - Violin Concerto in G Major, RV 310
14. I. Allegro 02:13 15. II. Largo 03:04 16. III. Allegro 02:32
Giuseppe Tartini - Trumpet Concerto in D Major, D. 53
17. I. Allegro 03:52 18. II. Andante 02:53 19. III. Allegro grazioso 03:04
Tomaso Albinoni - Sonata da chiesa in D Minor
20. I. Adagio 02:24 21. II. Allegro 02:03 22. III. Largo 01:56 23. IV. Allegro 02:04
Alison Balsom - trumpet Scottish Ensemble

The recital of Baroque music on a modern trumpet hasn't been much cultivated since the days of Maurice André, who pretty much cornered the market for many years. Young British trumpeter Alison Balsom here enters the field with a quite competent performance and should find strong success among buyers looking for modern engineering. Undeniably photogenic, Balsom has performed a good deal of crossover repertory and is a favorite among listeners of Britain's crossover-oriented classic FM radio. Here, however, she plays it relatively straight. Most of this music, it's true, was not originally for the trumpet, but that wouldn't have stopped any Baroque-era trumpeter. Except for Tartini's Trumpet Concerto in D major, D. 53, she relies on transcriptions of music for violin or oboe. The two kinds of originals produce pleasingly contrasting results. The oboe is closer to the trumpet in its capabilities and allows Balsom to display her clean, precise tone. She doesn't have quite the sparkling power of André in the Tartini concerto, but the oboe concertos by Benedetto Marcello and Tomaso Albinoni are attractively done. The adaptations of Cimarosa oboe pieces by Australian composer Arthur

Benjamin are more of a historical curiosity than an ongoing thing. The main attractions are the transcriptions of violin works, two by Vivaldi and one by Albinoni. The Vivaldi concertos, especially, contain passagework that's difficult to execute on a trumpet, and Balsom, working from her own transcriptions, never loses focus; it's her accuracy rather than her power or even her considerable beauty of tone that sets her apart from her predecessors. Worthwhile even for those with André collections. Brief booklet notes are in English, German, and French. ---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

To follow up her acclaimed album Haydn Hummel Trumpet Concertos, the phenomenally gifted Alison Balsom turns her attention to Italian composers, with a selection of concertos originally composed for violin or oboe by Vivaldi, Albinoni, Tartini, Cimarosa and Marcello.

It's a typically elegant affair: Balsom's bright tone and tight phrasing on the opening Allegro of "Vivaldi's Violin Concerto in A Minor" gives way to more subtle work on the Largo, with a series of delicate, feathery trills. Similarly, her nimble fingering on the opening section of Albinoni's "Oboe Concerto in B flat Op. 7 No. 3" is supplanted by long, poised notes on the Adagio section. An eloquent performance. ---Andy Gill, independent.co.uk

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