

Johann Sebastian Bach – Weihnachts Oratorium (Fasolis) [2011]

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CD 1: 01 - 09. *Cantata I for Christmas Day* 10 - 23. *Cantata II for the second day of Christmas* 24 - 36. *Cantata III for the third day of Christmas* CD 2 : 01 - 18. *Cantata IV for New Year's Day* 19 - 29. *Cantata VI for Epiphany*

Lynn Dawson – soprano Bernhard Landauer – countertenor Charles Daniels – tenor Klaus Mertens - bass Coro della Radio Svizzera Barrocchisti Diego Fasolis – conductor

Diego Fasolis and his marvelous orchestra 'I Barrocchisti' are providing a true service to all baroque music lovers with a series of stunning SACD recordings for the German Arts label and this set of Bach's cantata masterpiece is no exception.

The six cantatas come alive in Fasolis' no nonsense readings that are swift and energetic but never lose sight of the big picture. The famous opening sequence of the First Cantata sets the tone for proceedings which move along quite merrily; particular praise is here due to the Swiss radio Chorus who are infectious in their full throated and high spirited singing.

As already indicated, this is a swift interpretation rather in keeping with today's rough and tumble world and although there are superior readings from such luminaries as Sir John Eliot Gardiner and Karl Richter, I must place Fasolis amongst the top five or so of those conductors who have something new to say about this beautiful and timeless work. The Arts engineers have produced a superb sound picture which is further improved if one has SACD equipment and the notes also provide some interesting historical points. The mid to budget price is an additional teaser for those wavering to make that purchase. --- Gerald Fenech, classical.net

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