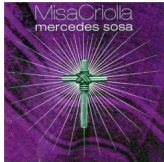


Mercedes Sosa - Misa Criolla (1999)

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01 - Kyrie 02 - Gloria 03 - Credo 04 - Sanctus 05 - Agnus dei 06 - La anunciación 07 - La peregrinación 08 - El nacimiento 09 - Los pastores 10 - Los reyes magos 11 - La huída
Artists: Mercedes Sosa - Vocals Chango Spasiuk - Accordion Poppi Spatocco – Piano
Nicolás "Colacho" Brizuela - Guitar Oscar Giunta - Double Bass Jaime Torres – Charango
Chango Farías Gómez - Bombo, Percussion Rubén Lobo - Percussion Asociación Coral
Lagun Onak Estudio Coral DeBuenos Aires Carlos López Puccio, Mario DeRose – director

Ramirez' Creole Mass is a daring fusion of Catholic liturgy and Latin American folk music. This particular performance is made even better by the presence of José Carreras as lead singer. Carreras seems to have a personal feeling for this music and uses the power and control of his voice without ever becoming inappropriately operatic. The mass features a wonderful variety of folk instruments -- like the mandolin-like charango and the quena, a breathy Andean flute -- along with lots of percussion. The composer on piano and harpsichord is backed by a mixed chorus from Spain.

Although the music is ostensibly folk, Ramirez slyly inserts jazzy riffs and rhythms (into "the Credo," for example), and a great deal of classical drama into almost every section. "The Gloria" -- which is appropriately glorious, full of percussion and strumming, huffing folk instruments -- is a vocal tour de force for Carreras; he varies his voice from almost a whisper to quiet intensity and shouts of devotion.

The second half of this 44-minute disc is made up of Christmas songs. "Navidad en Verano" is for male soloist, piano, and chorus. It's pretty, if not outstanding in the manner of what comes before and after it. "Navidad Nuestra" is a song cycle about the Nativity from the Annunciation to the flight of the mother and child into Egypt. It has a folk flavor, sometimes being whimsical. The best songs in the cycle are "Los Reyes Magos" which brings together all the folk, jazz, and

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classical influences into one triumphant yet danceable celebration. "La Huida," which closes the cycle and the album, is a song of flight and anguish with muffled hoofbeats for percussion, a subdued chorus for accompaniment, and Carreras, who is allowed to cut loose with passion and sadness. An unforgettable disc. ~ Kurt Keefner, Rovi

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