

gram best in samplings rather than in one gulp, but it is a valuable exploration of early Baroque Italian devotional music, most of it not previously available on records. Full texts and translations, in a slightly eccentric booklet.

BARKER

The Mission

Aranes, Bocanegra, Polanco, Salinas, Sanz, Milan, Arbeau, Cabezon, Willaert, Caroso, Zepedes, Anonymous
Norwegian Wind Ensemble; Nordic Voices/ Mark Bennett—LAWO 1061—60 minutes

This recording consists mostly of Spanish music of the 16th to early 18th centuries. There are two items from the New World: one from Peru (published in 1631) and one from Mexico (also from the 17th Century). Lively dance music predominates. Many listeners will recognize the Canarios y Zarabanda by Gaspar Sanz (1640-1710) from its use by Joaquin Rodrigo in his *Fantasia Para un Gentilhombre* (1954). And the strophic chanson 'Belle qui Tiens ma Vie' attributed to Thoinot Arbeau (1520-95) appears in Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite* (1926). It is sung here unaccompanied and followed by a set of variations on it by Antonio de Cabezon (1510-66).

The performances here are not musicological exercises but modern concert arrangements by trumpeter Stian Aareskjold, who plays in the Norwegian Wind Ensemble. The group was founded in 2003 and combines period brass instruments with modern woodwinds, double bass, theorbo, baroque guitar, and percussion. Purists may find fault, but one can hardly help but be entranced by the infectious exuberance and consummate artistry of these performances. The standard could not be higher.

Nordic Voices is a six-voice ensemble founded in 1996. They are heard individually and in combination in several of these tracks. Mark Bennett, the conductor, studied trumpet with Michael Laird at the Royal College of Music in London, where he became interested in the natural trumpet and baroque performance practice. He has performed with the English Concert, London Brass, Baroque Brass of London, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and the English Baroque Soloists. Stian Aareskjold, in addition to his work as performer and arranger for the Norwegian Wind Ensemble, has played with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, various Norwegian baroque ensembles, and the English Concert.

GATENS

Lamento

Romina Basso, mz; Latinitas Nostra
Naive 5390—65 minutes

As the leading form of chamber music in Italy through much of the 17th century, the cantata proved a kind of laboratory for Baroque composers—much like opera, only significantly smaller in scale. Working on such a small canvas, as it were, required librettists to compress the drama to an essential moment of feeling such as a lament. For this reason, the *Lamento* forms an important category in this repertory. Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna* (1623), fourth on the program, serves as the perfect illustration. With the words "Lasciatemi morire" (Let me die), the lament opens at the crucial moment of Ariadne's suffering at the hands of her beloved Theseus. The way Monteverdi captures the moment musically through prolonged dissonance is arresting, as though he were using his art to exaggerate slight contours of feeling. The effect is overwhelming in the performance of Romina Basso and the continuo group Latinitas Nostra.

Dinko Fabris suggests in his notes that *Lamento d'Arianna* served as a model for later composers of laments. If that means they were driven to experiment with harmony and rhythm, he is right. The program opens with Luigi Rossi's *Lamento della Regina di Svezia*—a dramatic monolog representing the misery of Queen Christina on the death of her husband, King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. The dramatic use of rhythm here to evoke Queen Christina's agitation is typical of the *stile concitato*. Barbara Strozzi's (1619-77) *Lagrima Mi* is permeated with chromaticism and wide leaps that seem to convey the suffering and agitation inherent in the text. Through dramatic changes of harmony and rhythm in *Lamento in Morte di Maria Stuarda*, Giacomo Carissimi (1605-74) affects the Queen of Scots's excruciating anticipation of death in the moments before her execution. Thus, Carissimi is able to force his listener into a kind of spiritual union with the Queen's fate.

In all of this, Romina Basso and Latinitas Nostra show complete command of nuance. Basso's ability to subtly shade her dynamics and tone color is absolutely gorgeous. It is exactly the kind of care this music demands; and the continuo players contribute to the dramatic character of these cantatas, too, as though they were another voice following the