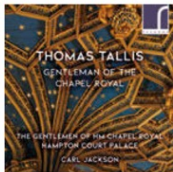


The vocal parts cover the short refrain-like dialogues between the three characters while orchestral interludes vividly portray the various transformations, culminating in the flounder's turbulent rejection of the wife's demands. The mix of raw, dialect text and highly seasoned music won't be to everyone's taste – this is indeed early 19th-century culture trying on the musical costume of a later time. But the performance in this radio recording is first-class: collectors in search of something that stands determinedly apart from what you might expect of new music at the end of the 1920s should not hesitate. **Arnold Whittall**

Tallis

'Gentleman of the Chapel Royal'
Mass for Four Voices. Missa Puer natus est nobis. In pace in idipsum. Loquebantur variis linguis. Miserere nostri Domine. Si enim iniquitates. Suscipe quaeso Domine
The Gentlemen of HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace / Carl Jackson
Resonus © RES10229 (68' • DDD • T/U)



The Chapel Royal's place within English music can hardly be overstated: during the reigns of the later Tudors its membership was a roll call of the most illustrious composers. One of these was Tallis, who probably composed the seven-voice *Missa Puer natus est* for it (it is widely believed that a meeting between the Chapel Royal and its Spanish counterpart, the Capilla Flamenca, was somehow involved). So it is fitting that the Mass is the centrepiece of a recording by one of its modern incarnations, alongside a handful of motets and responsories, and the somewhat earlier four-part Mass.

All these pieces are exceptionally well served in the discography, especially the seven-voice Mass. It's a luxury enjoyed by few pre-Baroque pieces, and one cannot help but listen to any new reading in that light. Everything is performed two-to-a-part by the men and the sound is pleasingly compact (worth mentioning, given how much seven-part music is involved). Where the music shapes itself and gives them clear leads (particularly in the four-part Mass) things go well, but in the seven-part music the impression is midway between a read-through and an interpretation. There are certainly idiomatic moments (the final *Agnus Dei* of *Puer natus est*, for example) but too

often textures are static, with little sense of architecture or pacing. The blend of the pairs of voices isn't always secure (try the penultimate chord of the four-voice Mass), with inevitable consequences for the overall sound and the projection of complex textures, and the tempo chosen for the *Miserere nostri* means that passing dissonances are unnecessarily emphasised. On the whole, the less ambitious music is the better served.

Fabrice Fitch

'Paris Madrid'

Albéniz Leyendas - Asturias Barrera/Calleja
Granadinas Bretón La jota de la Dolores **Dupont**
Mandoline Falla Siete Canciones populares españolas **Granados** Tonadillas en estilo antiguo **Massenet** Élégie **Ravel** Vocalise-étude en forme de habanera **Rodrigo** Adela. Aranjuez mi amor. Coplas del pastor enamorado. Coplillas de Belén Sor Cuando de ti me aparto. Sin duda que tus ojos **Tárrega** Capricho árabe. Recuerdos de la Alhambra
Sandrine Piau sop **Charles Castronovo, Rolando Villazón** tens **Liat Cohen, Gil Weynsbort** gtrs
Erato © 9029 56937-2 (80' • DDD • T)



Israeli-born, Paris-trained and, as a guitarist, naturally steeped in the Spanish repertory, Liat Cohen here sets out to 'tell the wonderful love story that binds together France and Spain'. The story may not be new but what's interesting is how much on this generous recital isn't actually associated with the guitar. There's a 'medley' that joins a pair of popular zarzuela duets, rousingly sung by Charles Castronovo and Rolando Villazón. The second number, 'Granadinas', is especially fun, with the tenors sounding slightly inebriated.

Miguel Llobet's arrangement of Falla's *Canciones populares* has been recorded before, but the set is usually sung by a soprano. Castronovo does a lovely job. His baritone tone has the quality of luxuriously soft, mahogany-coloured leather, and he's sensitive to the music's various folkloric nuances. I quite like the slight breathiness of his sound in 'Nana', for example, and the way it heightens the song's comfortingly intimate character. The French songs (originally for voice and piano), too, are all charmers. Sandrine Piau sings the Ravel ravishingly, and she's more impressive still in the three parts of Granados's 'La maja dolorosa'. The first drips with

gorgeous melancholy, and how effectively she uses her lower register in the third.

Cohen is a sensitive and colourful partner throughout but I have mixed feelings about her playing in the solo pieces. The throaty tone she brings to the melody of Tárrega's *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* is fetching but *Capricho árabe* is far too heavily accented. And while it's admirable she's made her own colourful transcription of Albéniz's *Asturias* (rather than playing Tárrega's), it wants more fire. I'm also on the fence about the vocal arrangement of the slow movement of Rodrigo's *Concierto*; it's beautifully sung but a little cheesy, like something you might hear in a television advertisement. Fly to Aranjuez ...

Texts are provided but, sadly, no translations. **Andrew Farach-Colton**

'Portraying Passion'

Ives Five Songs (orch J Adams)^a. The Unanswered Question^b **Paus** Hate Songs^b **Weill** Die sieben Todsünden^b
Tora Augestad mez **Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra / Christian Eggen, Joshua Weilerstein**
LAWO © LWC1164 (73' • DDD • T/U)



If you find yourself torn between a smoke-and-whisky-pickled cabaret take on Kurt Weill's ballet-with-song *Die sieben Todsünden* ('The Seven Deadly Sins') and a sleek operatic version, the Norwegian mezzo-soprano Tora Augestad might offer an appealing compromise. Trained both in jazz and classical styles, with a new-music-focused career that straddles the two, Augestad gamely walks the line in Weill's darkly sardonic parable about capitalism. Singing in the original high key, she starts off playing the straight man to Joshua Weilerstein and the Oslo Philharmonic's knowing, white-faced clown. But if she starts at a remove, as though watching the action from high above, as the Annas' situation intensifies she gradually becomes more involved, culminating in a 'Neid' of grotesque cruelty – tonally distorted, a forced musical confession. The shift highlights the duality of a piece about split selves, enacting the subtle tug and pull as Anna I presses her advantage over Anna II.

Augestad's is an efficient, adaptable voice, as we hear in a programme that also includes Marcus Paus's *Hate Songs*