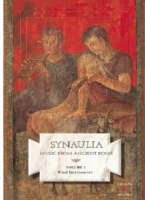


Synaulia - Music from Ancient Rome Vol. 2. String Instruments

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 23 March 2011 19:40 - Last Updated Tuesday, 11 August 2020 10:32

Synaulia - Music from Ancient Rome Vol. 2. String Instruments (2002)



1. *Invocation To Mercury*
2. *Ludus*
3. *Ode To The Lyre*
4. *The Villa Of Mysteries*
5. *Synphoniaci*
6. *Orpheus*
7. *Lyra And cithara*
8. *Erato*
9. *Sambuca Silences*
10. *Sacred Step*
11. *Syriac Dance* [play](#)
12. *Pandura*
13. *Cithara And Sambuca*
14. *Tiasus* [play](#)
15. *Pheobus*
16. *Cordae Obliquae*

Synaulia is a team of musicians, archeologists, paleorganologists and choreographers dedicated to the application of their historical research to ancient music and dance, in particular to the ancient Etruscan and Roman periods.

First of all, you wouldn't hear real re-created music from Roman sources. The correct title of the CD could be "Music by Walter Maioli Composed in Antique Roman Style and Played on Reconstructed Instruments". You would hear reading and singing of lyrics by Horatio and Ovidio in Latin, sounds of ancient lyra and cithara and really magical sound of the ancient angular harp (track 16 - Cordia Oblique). So as scientific project this CD is very interesting and because of it I gave it 5 stars. CD was made with love to the listeners. Beautifully illustrated book (about the history of string instruments in antique world) included with it. I never saw such luxurious edition of CD like this before. One statement of the author couldn't be read without a smile: "... Nero was a fair and WELL-BALANCED man, an artist, patron of the arts and GENIAL performer...". The author really loves Ancient Rome. And the love is blind...

If you want to hear real re-created antique music (including music by Mesomedes of Crete, musician of the Roman emperor Hadrian) I could recommend you CDs by Ensemble De Organographia ("Music of Ancient Greeks" and "Music of Ancient Sumerians"). Their restoration of antique world music is the best!!! P.S. You could try also CDs (released in Europe) by Ensemble Kerylos and Annie Belis "Ancient Greek Music" (label K617) and by Musica Romana "Mesomedes" (maxi-single with the music by Mesomedes of Crete) and "Symphonia Panica" (you could find them on Emmuty Records website). ---Sergey Lenkov

This CD is an exploration of ancient Roman music utilizing what is known by scholars and putting this knowledge into a performance practice. The CD is presented in the form of a booklet (with a nice cover taken from one of the frescos in the Villa of Mysteries) of 33 pages that provides an excellent introduction to origins of music and the instruments that are being played in these recordings. The booklet is nicely illustrated with photographs of the instruments played in these recordings and depictions of them in ancient sculpture and paintings.

The music played on this CD does not come from any ancient compositions but have been composed based on what is known of ancient Roman music and performance. The man behind this CD and an earlier one based on wind instruments (two tracks of which were used in the film Gladiator) is Walter Maioli. He is described as an artist-researcher and has given concert performances of ancient music. This music on the CD is described in detail in the booklet and what instrument(s) are being played. There are purely instrumental tracks and some that include chanting by one or more performers. The first track, Invocation to Mercury, includes a text from book 5 of Ovid's Fasti and one of the love poems is the basis of the Erato track. While stringed instruments are dominate in this collection, drums and cymbals are also plays in some of the compositions, notably in the first and fourteenth tracks. There is a variety to the music:

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some for multiple instruments, some demonstrating the playing of string instruments and those with chanting providing with an overall sense of what ancient music sounded like. So while this CD is a scholarly attempt to re-create ancient music it is also entertaining to hear. You can use your imagination to be transported back in time, reclining on a couch following dinner in a richly decorated triclinium. I recommend this disc to anyone interested in ancient music and its recreation. ---D.A. Wend

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