

Ensemble Organum – Signature (1994)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 04 April 2011 08:48 - Last Updated Tuesday, 11 August 2020 09:01

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1. *The Gradual Of Eleanor Of Brittany: Kyrie Orbis Factor* - Gilberte Casabianca
2. *12th Cent Polyphony in Aquitaine (St. Martial De Limoges)* - Dominique Vellard
3. *Chant Of The Church Of Milan: Caticum Ecce Quam Bonum Et Jocundum* - Josep Benet/Josep Cabre
4. *Cistercian Chant (12 Cent Monodies): Alleluia Inter Natos Mulierum* - Marcel Peres
5. *Josquin Desprez: Hymn Pange Lingua* - Marcel Peres/Ens Organum
6. *18th Cent Plainchant Of Auxerre Cathedral: Alleluia* - Josep Benet/Josep Cabre/Malcolm Bothwell
7. *The Chantilly Codex: Adieu Vous Di* - Marcel Peres
8. *The Faenza Codex: J'Ay Grant Desespoir* - Gerard Lesne [play](#)
9. *The Faenza Codex: J'Ay Grant Desespoir* - Marcel Peres
10. *Notre-Dame School: Mass For Christmas Day. Sanctus* - Josep Benet/Josep Cabre/Gerard Lesne
11. *The Play Of The Pilgrims To Emmaus: Antiphon Ego Sum Alpha Et Omega* - Marcel Peres/Ens Organum
12. *Carmina Burana, The Great Mystery Of The Passion: Hymn Gloria Laus* - Marcel Peres/Ens Organum
13. *The Mass Of Tournai: Agnus Dei* - Josep Benet/Josep Cabre/Malcolm Bothwell [p](#)
14. *Chants Of The Roman Church: Office For Good Friday Improperia* - Malcolm Bothwell/
Lycourgous Angelopulos

Organum Ensemble

Marcel Peres – conductor

The Ensemble Organum, the French early-music choir directed by Marcel Pérès, has explored a rich repertory that runs from old Roman chant to Josquin, with occasional detours to examine Sufi and other Middle Eastern traditions. Mr. Pérès's research and his view of history as a fluid

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continuum in which diverse influences mingle have led him to unusual and sometimes provocative ideas about how early church music might have sounded in its time.

Mr. Pérès has argued that ornamentation is the engine that drives this score: an odd assertion, given that medieval embellishment is purely conjectural. But his point, proved repeatedly in the group's performance, is that these unwritten vocal flourishes can define a movement's rhythm and underscore its harmonic tension. His best guess about how those additions should sound can be startling: he draws on the modal turns of Syriac and Byzantine chant, as well as Jewish and Islamic styles, to give this early Christian setting a Middle Eastern accent.

The group has also jettisoned modern notions of refined vocal production. The singing is straightforward and plain, at times even a bit rough-hewn, with no vibrato or unnatural polish, and no sense that a homogenous blend is an absolute value. Even in the chordal settings of the Gloria and Credo, where the group's ensemble was solid and precise, individual vocal timbres rang out clearly. The singers present this music not as a concert choir but as if they were a group of monks making a devotional offering.

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