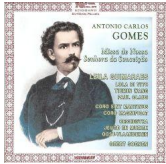


Antonio Carlos Gomes - Missa de Nossa Senhora da Conceição (De Mayer) [2004]

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 12 May 2016 16:05 -

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01 Kyrie 02 Gloria 03 Laudamus 04 Domine Deus 05 Qui Tollis 06 Qui Sedes 07 Cuius
Sancto Spiritu 08 Gloria Leila Guimaraes - Soprano Lola di Vito - Mezzo-Soprano Tie
Min Wang - Tenor Paul Claus - Baritone Coro Magnificat di Ursel (Choir) Coro Sint Martinus
di Drongen-Baarle (Choir) Karolien De Meyer - Choir Master Orchestra Jeugd en Muziek in
Oost-Vlaanderen Geert Soenen - Director

The piece is certainly an interesting one: the Missa de Nossa Senhora da Conceição was composed in Brasil in 1854 when native composer Carlos Gomes was only 18 years of age. What one hears is not a Latin Mass setting with a Brazilian accent so much as a deliciously trashy, sub-Verdian romp through the mass text, redolent of Italian opera. Gomes' sprightly and tubthumping setting of the "Gloria" is about as appropriate to the occasion as would be playing a Rossini overture at someone's funeral. But it proves that even at age 18 Gomes was a true believer in Italian opera, and he would eventually travel to Italy and enjoy great success as the composer of *Il Guarany*, the greatest Verdian opera that Verdi did not write.

However, that is probably all one can deduce about the Missa de Nossa Senhora da Conceição from this wretched performance. It is not a terribly demanding work to play, but apparently it is beyond the abilities of the Orchestra Jeugd en Muziek in Oost-Vlaanderen, which for non-Flemish speakers would be the Music Student Orchestra of East Flanders. The solo singers are both over the top while not wholly in command of their parts. However, it is the chorus that grabs one's attention here; the sopranos frequently slide off the rails, and in the "Kyrie" the vowels in the word "eleison" is sung severally by some singers as "ee" and others as "ay." In unison passages, the chorus sounds like a crowd. Applause follows every movement of this Mass; there are almost three minutes of it at the end of the reprise of the "Gloria." What would possess any classical company to produce such an obvious "party record" like this is beyond comprehension.

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If Louis Moreau Gottschalk's lost "Clermont Mass" is ever located, then a good performance of Gomes' Missa de Nossa Senhora da Conceição would make interesting filler for that. Nevertheless, this is anything but a "good" outing, and about the only thing "good" about Gomes: Missa de Nossa Senhora da Conceição is that the sound here is better than average for the label Bongiovanni. If one simply cannot resist this offering, then by all means proceed, but bring a handkerchief, as tears will flow, albeit not prompted by the emotional impact of this reading. --- Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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