

Claudio Monteverdi - Flaming Heart (2006)

Written by bluesever

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1 *L'Orfeo: Orfeo: Prologue* 5:42 2 *Luci Serene E Chiare* 3:48 3 *Anima Mia, Perdona* 5:21 4 *Symphonia: Tempo La Cetra: Tempo La Cetra, E Per Cantar Gli Onori* 9:17 5 *Ahi Come A Un Vago Sol Cortese Giro* 5:15 6 *Con Che Soavita, Labbra Adorate* 5:12 7 *L'Orfeo: Orfeo, Act II: Sinfonia* 1:21 8 *Ch'lo T'Ami, E T'Ami Piu Della Mia Vita* 8:02 9 *Se Pur Destina E Vole, "Partenza Amorosa": Se Pur Destina E Vole* 8:10 10 *Parlo, Miser, O Taccio?: Parlo, Miser'O Taccio?* 4:43 11 *Volgendo Il Ciel Per L'Immortal Sentiero* \square *Movete Al Mio Bel Suon: Volgendo Il Ciel Per L'Immortal Sentiero* \square *Movete Al Mio Bel Suon* 10:59 12 *Longe Da Te, Cor Mio* 2:59 13 *Piagne E Sospira, E Quando I Caldi Raggi: Piagn'E Sospira* 5:08 I Fagolini: David [Lute Miller / Baroque Guitar] (Chitarrone) Catherine Martin (Violin) Matthew Halls (Organ) Jan Spencer (Violin) Richard Campbell [Viola da Gamba] Joy Smith (Harp) Anna Crooks (Soprano) Carys-Anne Lane (Soprano) Clare Wilkinson (Mezzo-Soprano) Nicholas Mulroy (Tenor) Nicholas Hurndall Smith (Tenor) Louise Hogan (Violin) Matthew Brook (Baritone) Giles Underwood (Bass Baritone) Eligio Quinteiro (Chitarrone) William Hunt (Bass Viol) Peter McCarthy (Bass Viol) Catherine Pierron (Harpsichord) Joy Smith (Harp, Continuo)

Monteverdi's eighth and final book of madrigals appeared in Venice in 1638, 19 years after its predecessor. If it hasn't taken Rinaldo Alessandrini and his *Concerto Italiano* quite that long to complete their version, it's still been a protracted process - the first two discs of the set were made in the late 1990s, but the third was recorded last December. Alessandrini's approach to this music, though, has remained consistent, and the finely honed dramatic pointing of *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, with which the set begins, is just as vivid as the way in which the later, less theatrical settings are presented. There's real excitement here, a sense of this music being stripped of its historical accretions and presented in its original primary colours, even if some of Alessandrini's interpretative decisions, such as the liberal addition of percussion to some numbers, will upset historical purists.

Yet *Concerto Italiano*'s stylistic liberties might seem a model of scholarly rectitude alongside Rolando Villazon's singing on Emmanuelle Haïm's disc. Villazón makes few concessions to

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17th-century style and, in both Combattimento and a selection of settings from the seventh book of madrigals, launches into Monteverdi's achingly expressive tenor writing as though it were Puccini. Most of the results are ravishing (Villazón's account of the 1624 *Si Dolce e 'l Tormento* is haunting); a few others are more questionable, but it is always hugely enjoyable.

As anyone who has experienced a concert by Robert Hollingsworth and I Fagiolini, the group he founded 20 years ago, would expect, their first Monteverdi disc takes a very different approach from that of either Alessandrini or Haïm. Their sequence ranges widely: opening with La Musica's aria from the prologue to the opera *Orfeo*, it then extracts numbers from the fourth, fifth, seventh and eighth books of madrigals, as well as returning to *Orfeo* for the purely instrumental *Sinfonia*, to provide a cooling interlude. It's put together with imagination, wit and profound admiration for the expressive power of Monteverdi's word setting, and every number is performed with the same combination of sterling virtues. ---Andrew Clements, theguardian.com

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