Rameau - Pigmalion - Les Grand Motets (2008)



CD1 1. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Ouverture 2. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 1. Fatal amour 3. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 2. Pigmalion, est-il possible play 4. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 3. Que d'appas! - Ô Vénus 5. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 3. Quel prodige! 6. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 4. Du pouvoir de l'Amour 7. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 4. Air. Gavotte gracieuse / Menuet. Gavotte gaie / Chaconne vive. Loure très grave / Les Grâc 8. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 4. Sarabande. Tambourin / Cédons, cédons à notre impatience 9. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 5. L'Amour triomphe 10. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 5. Pantomime - Deuxième pantomime 11. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 5. Règne, Amour 12. Pygmalion, acte de ballet: Scene 5. Air gracieux - Ballet général 13. Le Temple de la Gloire, fête lyrique: Air gay 14. Le Temple de la Gloire, fête lyrique: Air gay CD2

Deus noster refugium, grand motet for soloists, chorus, 2 oboes, violin, viola & continuo: 1. Deus noster refugium 2. Propterea non timebimus 3. Sonuerunt et turbatae sunt 4. Fluminis impetus 5. Deus in medio ejus play

6. Conturbatae sunt gentes 7. Dominus virtutum nobiscum 8. Venite et videte opera Domini 9. Arcum conteret 10. Dominus virtutum nobiscum Quam dilecta, grand motet for soloists, chorus, 2 flutes, 2 violins, viola & continuo (or organ): 11. Quam dilecta tabernacula tua 12. Cor meum et caro mea 13. Etenim passer invenit sibi domum 14. Altaria tua, Domine virtutum 15. Beati qui habitant in domo tua 16. Domine, Deus virtutum 17. Domine virtutum, beatus homo In convertendo, grand motet for soloists, chorus, 2 flutes, 2 horns, violin, viola & continuo: 18. In convertendo, Dominus 19. Tunc repletum est gaudio 20. Magnificavit Dominus 21. Converte, Domine 22. Laudate nomen Dei cum cantico 23. Qui seminant in lacrimis 24. Euntes ibant et flebant

Greta de Reyghere, Nicole Founiè, Sandrine Piau, Veronique Gens & Isabelle Desrocher - sopranos Jean-Paul Fouchécourt - contratenor Jean-Paul Fouchécourt & Hervé Lamy -tenors Marcos Loureiro de Sá -baritone Stephan Imbodem - baiss Le Concert Spirituel Hervé Niquet – conductor

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The contents of both these discs were recorded in 1992 and issued separately towards the end of the decade in the U.S. at full price. This is their first reissue, as far as I can tell, and one hopes this release will draw attention once more to some truly impressive performances.

Any performance of Pigmalion rises and falls by the talent of its eponymous hero, for its three female roles are minor. Fortunately, Jean-Paul Fouchécourt was engaged for the part. He has sometimes been described as an haute-contre, though the meaning of the term has been hotly debated of late. Suffice to say that if it refers to a high tenor voice employing no falsetto, and used to convey an emotional range from sweetly lyrical to brightly heroic in French music, then Fouchécourt fits the bill. He excels equally in the expansive vigor of "L'Amour triomphe," as well as the delicate but elaborate coloratura of "Règne, Amour." Niquet cuts him no slack, setting a daunting pace for the latter, but Fouchécourt easily triumphs.

He can also be heard in the opening movement from In convertendo, Dominus, on the second album. Niquet casts the three surviving grands motets (a fourth survives only as a fragment, and is not included) from strength, with the likes of Stephan Imbodem and Véronique Gens among his other soloists. His conducting is alert, rhythmically buoyant, and attentive to both musical and word values, as the multi-tempo hurdles of "Converte, Domine" show. Details are never lost, but neither is momentum. The choral and orchestral work of Le Concert Spirituel is first-rate, with a precision that doesn't rule out a refined color palette.

A relatively short but informative essay is included, but don't expect a libretto and translation here. Virgin only includes the title of each cut, in the requisite French or Latin. The sound quality is excellent, however, spacious yet close enough to really catch the voices and instrumentals well. --- Barry Brenesal, arkivmusic.com

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