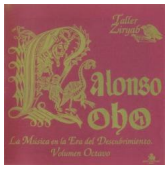
Alonso Lobo - Missa Maria Magdalene, Motets (1992)



Missa Maria Magdalena *01 - Kyrie 02 - Gloria 03 - Credo 04 - Sanctus 05 - Agnus Dei*
Motetes
06 - Responsorium pro defuctis libera me 07 - Vivo ego, dicit Dominus 08 - Credo quod redemptor meus vivit 09 - Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui 10 - O quam suavis est, Domine 11 - Ave Regina Coelorum
Taller Ziryab: Anne Perret (mezzo-soprano), Antonio del Pino (baritone), Catherine Pierron (organo positivo), Catherine Ramona (violas da gamba), Francisco Misas (corneto), José Jiménez (alto), José Enrique Ruiz (bass), José Manuel Acebes (flautas de pico, chirimias), José Manuel López (tenor), Lindsay Wagstaff (soprano), Lucas Pérez (bass), María del Mar Amat (soprano), María Isabel Osuna (viola da gamba), Paul Badley (tenor), Ramón Peñaranda (sacabuche), Robert Hollingworth (baritone), Rosemary Hay (soprano), William Purefoy (alto).

The Spanish school of Renaissance composers, eventually to become one of the most splendid in Europe, was something of a late developer. Although there were significant figures working in Spain in the first half of the sixteenth century, it was really only with the ebbing of the tide of Franco-Flemish musicians at court that the astonishing depth of talent being trained in the local choir schools came to the fore. Amongst the most impressive of these men were Francisco Guerrero (1528–1599) and Alonso Lobo (1555–1617), almost certainly master and pupil.

Lobo’s connection with Guerrero was entirely sustained at Seville Cathedral, where originally Lobo was a choirboy and Guerrero maestro de capilla. Presumably Guerrero taught him. It would have been natural for Lobo to go to school in Seville, since he was born (as recent evidence has shown) on 25 February 1555 in the nearby town of Osuna.

Lobo’s musical language is detectably of a later generation than that of Victoria, even though he

was only seven years younger. The difference between them was probably the training Victoria received in Rome, where he studied Palestrina's compositional method, learning how to control long spans of music without relying on constant changes of texture and harmonic speed. Lobo's style was never purely madrigalian, but a halfway point between it and the calm order of strictly imitative counterpoint.

Lobo repeatedly paid musical homage to Guerrero: of his six published Mass-settings (1602), no fewer than five use motets by the older master as their models – Maria Magdalene, Beata Dei genitrix, Prudentes virgines, Petre ego pro te rogavi and Simile est regnum caelorum. The sixth Mass, O Rex gloriae, is based on a motet by Palestrina. Guerrero's style, as shown in the motet which opens this disc, is more stately, more sonorous than Lobo's. His textures seem constantly to glow from the expert spacing of the chords, while his control over the section which runs to the words 'Iesum quem quaeritis Nazarenum, crucifixum: surrexit' is as masterly as anything in the mid-century European repertory, sustained yet intensely dramatic, unexpected counterpoints and harmonies all making their contribution.

The motets published in 1602 (in manuscript there are many more) were seen through the press by Lobo himself. This print was uncommonly successful – copies of it are still to be found in such important centres as the Sistine Chapel in Rome and Coimbra in Portugal. Furthermore there are five extant copies in Mexico, suggesting that Lobo was a seminal figure in the development of compositional style in the New World.

The motets were published after the Masses and appear under the general title of Moteta ex devotione inter missarum solemnia decantanda, in other words they are devotional works which may be sung during solemn Masses extra-liturgically. ---Peter Phillips, hyperion-records.co.uk

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