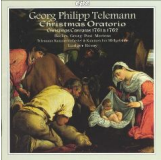


Telemann - Christmas Oratorio • Christmas Cantatas 1761 & 1762 (Remy) [1996]



Die Hirten an der Krippe zu Bethlehem TWV 1:797 The Shepherds At The Crib In Bethlehem (Christmas Oratorio) 1. Choral – *O Jesu parvule* 2. Shepaherd's Song and Acompagnato. *Hier schläft es, - o wie süß!* 3. Aria – *Hirten aus den golden Zeiten* 4. Chorale- *Zwingt die Saiten in Kithara* 5. Acompagnato- *Der Lowe wiegt in seinen Klauen* 6. Duet and Chorus I – *Kehre wieder, holder Friede!* 7. 2 Chorals – a. Choral. *Das hat er alles uns getan* b. Choral. *Des dank ihm alle Christenheit* 8. Acompagnato. *Die Pestilenz darf ferner* 9. Aria. *Schönstes Kind aus Juda Samen* 10. Choral. *Wir Christenleut* 11. Acompagnato. *Ach seht! Das Kind erwacht.* 12. Chorus. *Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe* Christmas Cantata 1761 TWV 1:1334 13. *Quote. Siehe! Ich verkündige euch große Freude* 14. Acompagnato. *Was für ein Glanz!* 15. *Quote. Siehe! Ich verkündige euch große Freude* 16. Chorus. *Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe* 17. *Recitative. Der Heiland ist uns heut gebohren* 18. Aria. *Frohlocket, ihr hoffenden gläubigen Frommen!* 19. *Recitative. Auf! wirf den Schleyer weg* 20. Chorus. *Ihr Himmel, Erd und Meere* 21. Chorale. *Der Friede Gottes wohnt in mir* Christmas Cantata 1762 TWV TWV 1:262 22. Chorus. *Der Herr hat offenbaret* 23. Chorale. *Lobt Gott, ihr Christen allzugleich* 24. Aria. *Schmachte nicht mehr, Kreis der Erden* 25. *Recitative. Bedeckte sonst nur Finsterniß das Land* 26. Chorale. *Er wechselt mit uns wunderbar* 27. Aria. *So jauchzet, o Sünder, ihr sollet nicht sterben* 28. Chorus. *Der Herr hat offenbaret seinen heiligen Arm* Constanze Backes – soprano Mechthild Georg – alto Andreas Post – tenor Klaus Mertens - bass Michaelstein Chamber Choir Telemann Chamber Orchestra Ludger Remy – conductor

CPO's Georg Philipp Telemann: Christmas Oratorio consists of three choral works that come from the last part of Telemann's voluminous oeuvre. The oratorio *Die Hirten an der Krippe zu Bethlehem* ("The Shepherds at the Crib of Bethlehem") dates from 1759 and has a libretto by poet Karl Wilhelm Ramler, who also contributed the text to Telemann's great masterwork *Die Auferstehung und Himmerfahrt Jesu*. It is a short oratorio, and CPO has filled out the disc with a pair of Christmas cantatas that post-date it, *Siehe, ich verkündige Euch* (1761) and *Der Herr hat offenbaret* (1762). When Telemann composed the last of these cantatas, he was 81 years of

age!

Listeners who are familiar with the cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach will find Telemann's work in this genre comparatively clear of Bach's busy counterpoint and a little closer to the vein of Handel, but also not like him. Although Telemann often recycled cantata texts, he seldom saw the need to reuse musical themes as did Bach. Telemann's seemingly inexhaustible supply of compelling melodic ideas is astounding in the pieces heard here, especially when one considers that at this point he was well past composing his 3,000th work. Although the music makes for pleasant, even somewhat easy, listening apart from the words, once one delves into the cantata texts the listener gets a sense of how well the music fits them. The harmonic coloring of *Der Herr hat offenbaret*, which is a little darker in tone than the other two, is an aspect of the music that becomes additionally moving as the performance unfolds.

These performances are led, and the editions made, by harpsichordist Ludger Rémy, who has done a lot to revive Telemann works that are unknown. The soloists are very good, particularly bass-baritone Klaus Mertens in the oratorio. For some reason the opening of *Die Hirten an der Krippe zu Bethlehem* is a little tenuous and tepid, but about 10 minutes in the disc takes off and is of consistent excellence to the end. For those who already know some of Telemann's sacred music, Georg Philipp Telemann: Christmas Oratorio will prove a delight, and to others seeking an introduction to it this is a good place to start. However, for those who are just seeking a novel bit of Christmas music to vary the Yuletide diet, this is an excellent choice; from the very first notes on the disc it is immediately apparent that this is Christmas music even if one has never heard it, and has no idea who or what it is. ---Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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