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which, with Minguillon's vihuela accompaniment, caresses each line of these poems. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

### *Passeggiata Musicale*

Da Vinci, Cara, Dalza, Josquin, Janequin, Tromboncino, others

Alta Early Music Ensemble

Ayros 7—48 minutes

Although hired in 1482 by the Duke of Milan to join the court as a *musician*, Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519) today is known for his skills in numerous arts and sciences such as painting, sculpture, engineering, and architecture. In this program the Alta Early Music Ensemble honors Leonardo's legacy in several ways: creating pieces that expand melodies from his short musical "rebus" puzzles, drawing on poetic texts by his contemporaries, performing frottoles by his professional colleagues (Cara, Tromboncino, and others), and even including the viola organista, a bowed keyboard instrument that Leonardo designed. More about that later.

The ensemble's cornetto player Gustavo Gargiulo is the arranger for seven pieces, and he uses raw materials of music and text very effectively. For instance, in 'L'Amore La Sol Mi Fa Remirare' he takes Leonardo's clever b(l)ending of the scale's syllables into Italian words and makes a sinuous interlace of alto voice and cornetto over a ground bass.

The performances are very fine, ranging from the gay sparkle of 'Un Cavalier Di Spagna' by Francesco Patavino (1478-1556) and the rollicking drinking song 'Chi Vuol Berevere' (a Romanesca arranged by Gargiulo from a manuscript in Pesaro) to the melancholy of 'Mille Regretz' by Josquin Des Pres (1450-1521) and the wistfulness of 'L'Amour, La Mort Et La Vie' by Clement Janequin (1485-1558), a reflection on the intermingling of death in life and tears in laughter.

The booklet contains photos and descriptions of two uncommon instruments, one rare and one unique. The first is the lira da braccio, very popular in the Renaissance, regarded as a cross between the medieval vielle and the baroque violin, and on which Leonardo was a virtuoso. The 2017 Krzysztof Obst instrument used here is a copy of an instrument from around 1510.

The second is the viola organista, known from Leonardo's 1489-1492 sketches and notebooks and best described as a multi-octave

instrument that uses round bows activated by a keyboard. Yes, you read that correctly: "round bows activated by a keyboard". From a distance it looks like a harpsichord. "Leonardo never built it and for over 500 years few attempts were made to bring this project to life, but none of them fully succeeded. In 2012 Slawomir Zubrzycki, Polish pianist and constructor, built the first concert Viola Organista and started a new chapter of its history, introducing it to concert halls and festivals in Europe." You'll hear it here played by Zubrzycki, and you can see it in videos at <http://www.violaorganista.com>

Notes, texts, translations.

C MOORE

### *Milano Spagnola*

Maurizio Croci, hpsj, org; Evangelina Mascardi, vihuela—Arcana 481—61 minutes

16th Century Spanish music is brought to life in this excellent recording pairing the vihuela, a six-course Spanish instrument that is the direct precursor of the guitar, with the harpsichord and organ. Consistent with the music of the day, for which instruments were often not specified, this combination is delightful. The vihuela, plucked without fingernails producing a preponderance of lower harmonics, nicely complements the bright, high harmonic content of the harpsichord in the ensemble pieces presented here.

Duo pieces alternate with solos from each performer, giving each a chance to shine, which they definitely do, and this keeps the listener from tiring of too much of the same sound. Enriquez de Valderrabano's 'Cuatro diferencias sobre la Pavana' and 'Soneto lombarda' are played as lovely solos on the vihuela, with lovely, clearly rendered divisions from Mascardi's able fingers. Spanish courtier and composer Luis Milan's 'Fantasia de tento' is played on the harpsichord with great fluidity and style by Croci—what a pleasure it is to hear music by this composer played on a keyboard instrument!

Another notable track is Antonio de Cabezon's 'Diferencias sobre la Gallarda Milanese' where the duo reaches its highest peak on the recording with rippling passage-work trading off between instruments, demonstrating their excellent control and musicality.

In short, this recording is very well done. Pieces from composers both well known (Cabezon, Valderrabano, Milan) and less well known (Werrecore, Borrone) take the listener

back over four centuries. Talk about time travel! Give me more of this!

MCCUTCHEON

### *17th Century Hapsburg & Bohemia*

Vicki St Pierre, a; Sacabuche/ Linda Pearse  
ATMA 2798—63 minutes

The glorious sound of a sackbut (sacabuche) consort is the first sound and perhaps the most prolific sound on this release. Catherine Motuz, Maximilien Brisson, Peter Christensen, and leader Linda Pearse seldom play entirely on their own but combine with solo voice, strings, and cornetts in a program of concerted motets and sonatas.

The opening work ‘O Dulce Nomen Jesu’ by Giovanni Felice Sances (c. 1600-79) stands as a perfect illustration of the concerto-like style that dominates the program. The motet opens with a sinfonia for sackbut consort, an adaptation of the original setting for viols. The piece unfolds in alternating passages for the consort and St Pierre, who sings over a continuo of theorbo (Daniel Zulunga) and organ (Raul Mondada) until the end, when everyone comes together on the final phrase, “Tu verus deliciarum Paradisus”.

Similar concerto-like relationships are on view in the anonymous 8-part Sonata, now with the brilliant sound of cornetts (Matthew Jennejohn and Etienne Asselin) and violins (Martha Perry and Tanya LaPerriere) against the rich sound of the sackbuts. The 3-part Sonata by Philipp Jakob Rittler (c. 1637-90) pits Motuz’s sackbut against the violins—beautiful! The 7-part Sonata by Georg Piscator (c. 1610-after 1643) is stunning for its chromatic shifts and strong, rhythmic motives—I love it!

This program ends as it began, with a concerted motet. Federico Cauda’s ‘Laudate Pueri’ is full of joy—a multi-sectional composition that gives opportunities for florid singing and playing to nearly every member of the ensemble. Texts and notes are in English.

LOEWEN

### *Cervantes Homage*

Delia Agundez, s; Capella de Ministrers/ Carles Magraner—Capella de Ministrers 2151—61:33

This collection of Spanish songs and instrumental music has the subtitle “Light and Shadow from the Golden Age”. Magraner has selected music to illustrate the frequent musical references in Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*, especially Book II, as in Chapter 46, when the knight

errant plays a lute to comfort Altsidora, who responds by singing a ballad, accompanying herself on the harp.

Rather than the large ensemble that Magraner uses for his medieval recordings, this quartet of an excellent vocalist, Delia Agundez, accompanied by Magraner (viola da gamba), Robert Cases (guitar and theorbo), and Sara Aqueda (renaissance double harp), evokes the intimate musical occasions described by Cervantes. Aside from a few of the better known instrumental selections, most of the song selections are new to me and include a number of anonymous selections. The booklet includes full texts and translations, but I wish it were not glued into the case.

BREWER

### *The Sweetest Songs— Baldwin Partbooks III*

**WHITE:** *Domine, non Est Exaltatum; Portio Mea*; **BYRD:** *Tristitia et Anxietas; Peccavi Super Ne Perdas cum Impiis*; **MUNDY, J:** *In Te Domine Speravi*; **ANON.:** *Confitebor Tibi Domine*; **PARSONS:** *Domine quis Habitat; MUNDY, W:* *Memor Esto Verbi Tui*; **SHEPPARD:** *Confitebor Tibi Domine*; **DAMAN:** *Confitebor Tibi Domine*

Contrapunctus/ Owen Rees  
Signum 633—67 minutes

This recording is the third and, according to director Owen Rees, the final one from the vocal ensemble Contrapunctus in the series devoted to music from the Baldwin Partbooks, a source now in the library of Christ Church, Oxford. John Baldwin (d 1615) was a lay clerk at St George’s Chapel, Windsor and later a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. He compiled his partbooks from 1575 to 1581. His purpose appears to have been the preservation of outstanding examples of Latin church music that had become liturgically obsolete after the English Reformation. The books contain nearly 170 works from a broad swath of English composition from the generation of Robert Fayrfax (1464-1521) to composers like William Byrd, contemporary with Baldwin. Some of the pieces are unique to this source. The tenor book is missing, so that part must be reconstructed for pieces that survive in no other sources. That is the case with six of the motets on this recording. Five of the tenor parts were reconstructed by Rees and one by Jason Smart.

The plan of the series has been to present on each disc a program on a devotional theme. The first volume, “In the Midst of Life” (Signum 408; J/A 2015, p 211) was on the sub-