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I DISINVOLTI

EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE



MASSIMO LOMBARDI – *tenor / artistic director*

MASSIMO ALTIERI – *tenor*

GUGLIELMO BUONSANTI – *bass*

MARCO SACCARDIN – *theorbo / baritone*

NOELIA REVERTE RECHE – *viola da gamba / lirone*

NICOLA LAMON – *organ / harpsicord*

THE ENSEMBLE

Founded in 2018, i Disinvolti is an early music ensemble whose main mission is the re-discovery of Italian unedited music, with a special focus on three male voices repertoire from XVII century Venice and surroundings. Each of the group members has active collaborations - as an ensemble singer/player and as a soloist - with some of the most renown early music European groups, such as: Concerto Italiano, La Compagnia del Madrigale, Vox Luminis, Accademia Bizantina, De Labyrintho, Coro e Orchestra Ghislieri, La Risonanza, Odhecaton, Cantica Symphonia, Cantar Lontano, La Fonte Musica, La Cetra, La Venexiana, Ensemble Micrologus. Their debut album has been released by Arcana (Outhere): a «Vespro della Beata Vergine» by Giovanni Antonio Rigatti, recorded as World Premiere in collaboration with UtFaSol Ensemble.



PROGRAMS

I. GIOVANNI ANTONIO RIGATTI - VESPERS FOR THE BLESSED VIRGIN

10 musicians: 3 voices + continuo + UtFaSol Ensemble (cornett, 3 sackbuts)

The Psalms and the Magnificat of Rigatti's 1643 collection offer the backbone of these Vespers for the Blessed Virgin. The program is completed by vocal and instrumental pieces of coeval composers (Banchieri, Usper, Patta, Del Buono, Milanuzzi) and by the proper gregorian chants for the Feast.

II. MONTEVERDI'S HERITAGE

6 musicians: 3 voices + continuo

Claudio Monteverdi and his influence on his subordinates in St. Mark (Giovanni Rovetta and Alessandro Grandi), on his brother Giulio Cesare Monteverdi and on other Venetian composers active in the same period, Giovanni Antonio Rigatti and Giovanni Battista Riccio amongst the others.

III. CRUDO AMOR & DOLCE MORTE

7 musicians: 3 voices + continuo

Amorous yearnings and fatal abandons in a rich florilegium of concertato madrigals and canzonettas, selected within the output of Claudio Monteverdi, Giovanni Antonio Rigatti, Alessandro Grandi, Barbara Strozzi & others.

IV. VULNERASTI COR MEUM

6 musicians: 3 voices + continuo

Anthological program around the Song of Songs. In addition to motets of Monteverdi, Grandi and Rovetta, authentic masterpieces by lesser-known composers are proposed, built around the most sensual of biblical texts.

I. GIOVANNI ANTONIO RIGATTI - **VESPERS FOR THE BLESSED VIRGIN**

10 musicians: 3 voices + continuo + UtFaSol Ensemble (cornett, 3 sackbuts)

The backbone of this «Vespro della Beata Vergine» consists of a selection of Psalms and a Magnificat selected from the reprint - the first edition (1641 or 1642) is lost - of «Messa E Salmi Ariosi a Tre Voci Concertati, & parte Con li Ripieni à beneplacito» by Giovanni Antonio Rigatti, edited in Venice in 1643 by Bartolomeo Magni.

The instrumentation of this collection is mainly for three male voices - two tenors and a bass - with basso continuo, to which is sometimes added an «ad libitum» four-voices choir, superseded in this case by a quartet of wind instruments (cornetto and three sackbuts), following the widespread custom in the XVII century of replacing missing voices with wind or string instruments with similar tessitura. Considered by many musicologists as one of the most important composers of sacred Italian music from the first half of Seicento, Rigatti began his musical path as «puer cantor» in the choir of St. Mark in Venice, serving then as choirmaster in Udine's Cathedral from 1635 to 1637. Back in Venice, from 1639 he has been organ and music teacher for the young ladies of Ospedale dei Mendicanti and Ospedale degli Incurabili. In addition to his musical career, he also cultivated an ecclesiastical one: he attended the Patriarchal Seminary in Venice, becoming sottocanonico of St. Mark in 1647 thanks to the influence of cardinal Gian Francesco Morosini, for whom Rigatti worked as a chaplain since 1642.

Vocal and instrumental pieces of other composers (Carlo Milanuzzi, Giovanni Battista Riccio, Francesco Usper, Adriano Banchieri, Serafino Patta, Gioanpietro Del Buono e Andrea Gabrieli) complete the liturgy of the Vespers, in addition to the proper gregorian chants. Recorded as a world premiere in collaboration with UtFaSol Ensemble, this album has been released by Arcana (Outhere).



II. MONTEVERDI'S HERITAGE

6 musicians: 3 voices + continuo

«Divin Claudio» and his epigones

Claudio Monteverdi has been a pivotal figure in the transitions from the «stile osservato», product of the Renaissance, to the new and daring style of «Seconda Prattica». But he was certainly not the only one to use the new expressive tools: a whole generation of young musicians came in contact with his music and has been formed under his guide at the Cappella Marciana. Monteverdi got there in 1613, aged 46 and already an expert musician: the Vespers has been published three years before, the Sixth Book of Madrigals would have been printed during the following year. His predecessor Giulio Cesare Martinengo left the musical chapel in bad shape, but Monteverdi lifted it out of his condition: he reorganized the structure, bought new scores and hired new musicians, thus bringing it back to the level worthy of one of the most important musical centers in Europe.

From 1613 to 1643, year of his death, some of the best musicians gravitated around Monteverdi, over all Alessandro Grandi (vice-maestro from 1620 to 1627), Giovanni Rovetta (vice-maestro since 1627 and Maestro di Cappella after Monteverdi's death) and Giovanni Antonio Rigatti (since 1621 in St. Mark as a choirboy, from 1639 on has been employed in different Venetian «Ospedali»). Maybe not everybody knows that also Claudio's younger brother, Giulio Cesare Monteverdi, has been a talented composer and organist..

We therefore propose an anthology for one to three voices, narrowly selected to underline common traits and peculiarities of the aforementioned composers.



II. CRUDO AMOR & DOLCE MORTE

CRUEL LOVE AND SWEET DEATH

7 musicians: 3 voices + continuo

«Concertato» madrigals after Monteverdi's lesson

In 1619 Claudio Monteverdi sends to print his Seventh Book of Madrigals, whose title - «Concerto» - is an example of the compositional trend that developed between the 16th and 17th centuries, that is the birth of Basso Continuo. New expressive expedients, in addition to the use of concerted instruments, are explored in every possible form by Monteverdi and other valid composers all over the peninsula, finding however tenacious resistance in Rome, still too tied to Palestrina's polyphonic lesson to fully absorb the new stylistic wave.

Following the path marked by Monteverdi, this anthological program proposes madrigals for one, two and three voices by authors from various backgrounds but all active between the 1620s and 1640s. The aim is, in particular, to underline the oxymoronic relationship of Love and Death: cruel, painful, aching the former - sweet, liberating, releasing the latter.

Music by Claudio Monteverdi, Alessandro Grandi, Giovanni Rovetta, Giovanni Antonio Rigatti, Giovanni Maria Costa, Pietro Andrea Ziani, Barbara Strozzi, Biagio Marini, Giovanni Ceresini.



IV. VULNERASTI COR MEUM

THOU HAST RAVISHED MY HEART

6 musicians: 3 voices + continuo

The Song of Songs: sensual spirituality

Attributed to King Solomon but in all probability composed by an anonymous poet around the 4th century BC, the «Song of Songs» represents a remarkable peculiarity within the biblical corpus: it does not deal with Law, Knowledge or the relationship with the Divinity, but it is a sensual and passionate dialogue between two lovers.

Many words were spent about the interpretation of this text pervaded by undeniably erotic metaphors and similes: for the Jews it is the allegory of the relationship between God and Israel, for the Christians it represents the love of Jesus for the Church, his bride. But in the scope of sacred music this very singular text takes on a further meaning: the bride becomes the Holy Mother, who perfectly fits all those attributes that were previously intended for the beloved (*pulchra, speciosa, columba, friend, sponsa*).

This is a very ancient custom: in the Liturgy of the Hours (inspired by the Rule of St. Benedict, dated 540) the antiphons for the Vespers dedicated to the Blessed Virgin are in fact taken from the text of the Song of Songs.

Music by Claudio Monteverdi, Alessandro Grandi, Giovanni Rovetta, Giovanni Antonio Rigatti, Ignazio Donati, Giovanni Valentini, Giovanni Battista Riccio, Adriano Banchieri, Orazio Tarditi. This program has been recorded in June 2021: it is the second project of «I Disinvolti» and will be available on CD in 2022.

