

CD

International
Record Review
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Choral Works

Lobo *Lamentationes Ieremiae Prophetarum. Regina caeli laetare. Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui. Ego flos campi.*

Vivanco *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam.*

Assumpsit Iesus Petrum. Missa

Assumpsit Iesus (ed. Abelló). Cantate Domino canticum novum.

Musica Reservata de Barcelona (Roser Garrell, Isabel Juaneda, sopranos; Jordi Abelló, Mercè Trujillo, countertenors; Albert Riera, Antoni Trigueros, tenors; Jordi Blanco, Tomàs Maxé, basses)/**Bruno Turner**.

La Mà de Guido LMG2045 (full price, 1 hour 8 minutes). Texts and translations included. Engineer Lorenç Balsach. Date April 10th-22nd, 2001.

The young Catalan group, Musica Reservata, has been making a name for itself over the last few years. It has developed a consistency of sound but by working with guest conductors, has achieved an admirable flexibility. This recording is the result of recent collaboration with Bruno Turner, whose interests are clearly reflected in the chosen programme, and whose guiding hand is, as it were, audible in the excellent sense of pacing throughout.

While the *Lamentations* by Alonso Lobo (c1555-1617) are perhaps the most impressive work on the disc, everything here is a gem. The singers shape Lobo's Hebrew letters with tremendous panache, showing a real understanding of the composer's melodic writing. There are, at times, slight lapses of tuning and moments of insecurity, but they are attributable to the enthusiasm of the singers for the music and do little to detract from this beautifully shaped performance. Lobo's three motets are also very fine works, particularly *Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui*, whose ethereal tracery celebrates the Feast

of the Descent (February 24th), when the Virgin came down into Toledo Cathedral and presented a chasuble to Bishop Idefonso in the year 666 (the rock upon which she stood is still there, by the way, visible to any tourist).

It is to be hoped that this recording will also encourage further interest in Sebastián de Vivanco (c1551-1622), whose music has not yet been given its due. His voice contrasts strikingly with Lobo's, and while the singers seem to lose impetus somewhat in *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam*, the shining *Missa Assumpsit Iesus* elicits some of the finest singing on the disc. The joyous *Cantate Domino* is rightly left for last. This is a stunning piece, crowned by the composer's realization of the Psalmist's vision of the plenitude of the earth.

Ivan Moody