

NAXOS

Alessandro
SCARLATTI

Euridice dall'Inferno
La concettione della Beata Vergine
Ars Lyrica Houston



Euridice dall'Inferno 13:41

- 1 Recitative: Del lagrimoso lido 0:56
 2 Aria: Se d'Averno la fiamma m'accende 5:27
 3 Recitative: Se la maga tua lira 1:19
 4 Aria: Non mi tormentar più 2:32
 5 Recitative: Io la morte incontrai 1:12
 6 Aria: Mi consola la speranza 2:14

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 Barrett Sills, Baroque cello
 Richard Savino, Archlute
 Matthew Dirst, Harpsichord

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 Richard Savino, Archlute
 Matthew Dirst, Harpsichord

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Matthew Dirst, Harpsichord

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- 13 Sinfonia 3:41
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 16 Recitative: Sile, gratia (*Bass*) 0:27
 17 Aria: Nam triumphi Jucundos honores (*Bass*) 1:57
 18 Recitative: Tantum audes ô serpens (*Soprano*) 0:26
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 20 Recitative: Ex Auerni latebris (*Tenor*) 0:50
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 22 Recitative: Silete jam silete (*Alto*) 0:25
 23 Trio: O! Quantum erratis (*Alto, Tenor, Bass*) 0:38
 24 Aria: Accepto furore (*Alto*) 1:48
 25 Recitative: Aligeri exhibeant modo (*Alto*) 0:43
 26 Aria: Nundum Sydera micabant (*Alto*) 2:30
 27 Recitative: Ergo haeresis cedat (*Tenor*) 0:20
 28 Aria: Coeli stellae si furores (*Tenor*) 2:05
 29 Recitative: Quid tentas – Aria: Cede fuge superstitione (*Soprano*) 1:12
 30 Recitative: Gaudete gentes (*Alto*) 0:25
 31 Aria: Conceptam virginem (*Alto*) 2:46
 32 Recitative: Sed quo haeresis pergis? (*Alto, Bass*) 0:35
 33 Aria: Gratia vincis (*Bass*) 1:19
 34 Recitative: Fremit serpens (*Alto*) 0:18
 35 Chorus: Quae est hodie concepta (*Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass*) 1:23

Archangel Michael Melissa Givens, Soprano
 Grace Gerrod Pagenkopf, Countertenor
 Hersey Joseph Gaines, Tenor
 The Serpent Timothy Jones, Bass

Alan Austin, Baroque violin
 Jonathan Godfrey, Baroque violin
 Barrett Sills, Baroque cello
 Dennis Whittaker, Double bass
 Scott Horton, Archlute
 Matthew Dirst, Harpsichord

Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725): Euridice dall'Inferno • Cello Sonata No. 2 in C minor

Toccatà in A major • La concettione della Beata Vergine

Alessandro Scarlatti, the great master of Baroque *opera seria*, was even more highly regarded by his aristocratic patrons for his exquisitely crafted chamber cantatas. Over the course of an exceptionally long and productive career, he wrote more than six hundred such works for performances at the homes of wealthy Roman patrons, including the exiled Queen Christina of Sweden, Prince Francesco Maria Ruspoli, and cardinals Benedetto Pamphili and Pietro Ottoboni, whose insatiable appetite for cantatas brought the genre to its apex. Virtually all these cantatas are about love, its joys, perils, risks, and rewards, and in their librettos one finds familiar figures from history, myth, and the pastoral world of nymphs and shepherds.

Both sources of *Euridice dall'Inferno* carry the date 17th June 1699, situating it in the middle of Scarlatti's output, just after his decisive turn toward *da capo* procedure in aria design. (The tripartite *da capo* form, which includes a return to the first section of music and text, gives the singer an opportunity to embellish freely the melodic line while reinforcing the aria's fundamental *Affekt*.) One of Scarlatti's finest cantatas, *Euridice* consists of three beautifully calibrated recitative-aria pairs which explore the eponymous nymph's uncertain fate in the underworld. Scored simply, for soprano and continuo (melody instruments are the exception in this repertoire), the work nevertheless conveys a wide range of emotion, from despair to hopefulness. In contrast to better-known operatic treatments of this tale, Scarlatti's heroine is no blushing bride. Though still vulnerable and dependent on Orpheus' musical powers to win her release, this Euridice projects courage, steadfastness, even fearlessness as she awaits her lover's rescue.

Though comparatively few in number, Scarlatti's surviving instrumental works are filled with idiomatic melodies and figuration. The *Sonata in C minor for cello and continuo*, one of a set of three such works, is by turns darkly brooding and intensely sweet. Its four-movement form, well established by this time in the

violin sonata repertoire, is expanded on this recording with a reprise of the second movement *Allegro* after the very brief closing *Presto*.

As was common in Scarlatti's day, the sources for his cello sonatas leave the exact instrumentation of these works to the performer's discretion. Baroque cellos came in various sizes, from the normal four-string instrument familiar today to the smaller five-string *violoncello piccolo*, which was popular among the Italians and Germans (Bach specified it for several works, including one of his cello suites). This recording features a four-string eighteenth-century Italian cello with a continuo that includes an Italian-style harpsichord, archlute, and violone.

Scarlatti turned toward keyboard composition fairly late in life, having tired of the intrigues of Rome and Venice and semi-retired to Naples, where he remained active composing oratorios and operas on commission. His works for keyboard include a few dozen toccatas plus some variation sets, sonatas, and fugues. The *Toccatà in A major* is cast in two parts: an initial *Allegro* section with a variety of figures and repeated hand crossings (a technique Alessandro's son Domenico would later exploit), with a sprightly *Giga*.

The *Oratorio on the Conception of the Virgin Mary* is one of only two surviving Latin oratorios by Scarlatti. First performed in Rome in 1703, the work recycles music from one of the composer's earlier Italian-language oratorios: *I Dolori di Maria Sempre Vergine* (Naples, 1693), which is no longer extant. Its old-fashioned scoring, for SATB soloists with two violins and continuo, contrasts with the standard four-part string complement of most oratorios from this time. Its libretto, in contrast, was utterly pertinent in 1703: *La Concettione* promotes the doctrine of Mary's immaculate conception, which at the dawn of the eighteenth century was not yet a settled issue.

This doctrine, whose theological roots go back to the Middle Ages, became a kind of theological lightning-rod in Counter-Reformation Rome, which

sought to distinguish itself in the strongest possible terms from the heresies of the Protestants. At its core was the idea that Mary, though conceived “in the way of all flesh”, was born without original sin. During the seventeenth century especially, this doctrine was challenged both from within and from without, leading to several papal pronouncements on the matter and a number of sympathetic artistic treatments of the issue, including musical compositions.

Lingering doubts about the state of Mary’s fetal soul were effectively silenced by Pope Clement XI (Giovanni Francesco Albani), who in 1708 made the Feast of the Immaculate Conception a holiday of obligation, thus insuring compliance (i.e. attendance at Mass on this day) among the faithful. As luck would have it, Albani shared a common history with Scarlatti: they were both active at the artistic *Accademia* founded by Queen Christina, whom Scarlatti served as *maestro di cappella* from 1679 to 1684. For most of the next two decades Scarlatti’s theatrical ambitions kept him elsewhere, but in 1703 he returned to the Eternal City, where he found the theatres shuttered by papal decree. Like most of his contemporaries, he turned to oratorios and cantatas on commission for wealthy ecclesiastical patrons such as Ottoboni and Pamphili. *La concettione della Beata Vergine* was probably first heard at one of their palaces, or perhaps at the Oratorio del Crocifisso in the Church of San Marcello, the epicentre of Roman oratorio performances since the early seventeenth century, and most likely on 8th December, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Oratorios from this time tend to comprise two more or less equal parts. This work is no exception, though its two parts are quite brief, with barely five arias apiece and just a few short ensembles. In comparison to Scarlatti’s other works in this genre, *La concettione della Beata Vergine* seems like only half an oratorio; and indeed, the sources suggest that its lost predecessor was longer. The final chorus of *La concettione* (the only movement that involves all four singers) was clearly meant to conclude this work; its emphatic quatrain, with deliberately inverted syntax at the end, precludes any more text: “*Quae est hodie concepta/a crimine*

immunis/laetitia communis/triumphat Maria.” But most of the surviving parts arrive at the final word of text and then fall silent on the dominant chord (necessitating the invention of a few bars of music for this recording), while the continuo part cadences, then continues in a new metre and key. Whoever adapted the old music to the new libretto seems to have realised, only after copying out several bars of the next section from the lost earlier work, that he had gone too far. Why he failed to correct the mistake and supply a final cadence in the other parts remains a mystery.

In musical style as well, this oratorio is a departure from the Scarlattian norm. Its cheerful, straightforward melodies and mostly diatonic harmonies suggest an original written perhaps for a school or a confraternity with modest musical forces. One other inevitable issue with a *contrafactum* (a work whose music originated with another text) is the sometimes awkward fit of old music and new words. Most problematic in this regard in *La concettione* is the aria *Conceptam Virginem*, whose languid melody and dark key of B minor are at odds with the song of praise announced in its text. And yet, the remarkably brief and punchy *Cede fuge superstio* seems tailor-made for its text. The other arias fall somewhere between these two extremes.

The anonymous libretto is allegorical, not dramatic, and hews closely to the central points of a doctrine dear to the Catholic faith. At the outset, Grace (alto) asserts that Mary, from the moment of her conception onwards, was untainted by original sin. The Serpent (bass), finding this notion preposterous, taunts Grace and throws down the gauntlet: Heresy (tenor) will do his bidding on earth, sowing doubt and discord among the faithful. The Archangel Michael (soprano) intervenes, reinforcing Grace’s doctrinal line, which is developed mostly by the latter in a series of arias. In the end, both Heresy and the Serpent reluctantly capitulate, much as those who doubted the doctrine — including sizeable numbers of clergy — were forced to acquiesce as the Church pressed its case for Mary’s immaculate conception.

Ars Lyrica Houston



Founded in 1998 by harpsichordist and conductor Matthew Dirst, Ars Lyrica Houston is a group of primarily Houston-area musicians who perform Baroque music using period instruments. Ars Lyrica's distinctive programming favours little-known dramatic and chamber works that merit revival, and its home series "sets the agenda for imaginative period-instrument programming in Houston", according to the *Houston Chronicle*. Ars Lyrica's numerous premières include the first American performance of Handel's *Il Trionfo del Tempo e della Verità* and local premières of Jacopo Peri's *Euridice*, John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, Handel's *Flavio*, and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*, among other works. These pioneering

efforts have attracted international attention, and Ars Lyrica has begun touring with select chamber programmes. More information on the ensemble can be found at www.arslyricahouston.org.

Matthew Dirst

Harpsichordist Matthew Dirst is the first American to win major international prizes in both organ and harpsichord, including first prize at the American Guild of Organists Young Artist Competition (1990) and second prize at the Warsaw International Harpsichord Competition (1993). Founding Artistic Director of Ars Lyrica Houston, Dirst also serves as Associate Professor of Music at the University of Houston's Moores School of Music. His degrees include a PhD in musicology from Stanford University and the *prix de virtuosité* in both organ and harpsichord from the Conservatoire National de Reuil-Malmaison, where he spent two years as a Fulbright scholar. His performances of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* have enjoyed wide critical acclaim.

Barrett Sills

Cellist Barrett Sills has won prizes in international cello competitions in France, Germany, and Brazil, and is heard frequently on Baroque cello, viola da gamba, and modern cello. His diverse musical life includes regular performances throughout Texas as a member of several ensembles whose repertoire ranges from Renaissance to contemporary music. As recitalist, he has concertized on three continents and toured South America as Artistic Ambassador; he has also been a touring artist for the Texas Commission on the Arts. Principal cellist of the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet orchestras, he is often a featured soloist with the Houston Ballet and has played solo viola da gamba with the Houston Symphony. He is artistic director of Camerata Ventapane, which presents chamber music in Houston and in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

Melissa Givens

Soprano Melissa Givens has been praised by audiences and critics alike for her rich, liquid tone and intelligent, musical interpretations and is noted for her expressiveness and elegance on the stage, in a repertoire ranging from the Baroque to the contemporary. She has appeared in a European tour as a soloist with the Houston Symphony Chorus, with solos in Mozart's *C Minor Mass* with the Victoria Bach Festival, the title rôle in Handel's *Esther* and as Mary Magdalene in Handel's *La Resurrezione* with Ars Lyrica Houston. In addition to her frequent work with Ars Lyrica, she performs regularly with the Bach Society of Houston and the Austin-based choral ensemble Conspirare. She serves on the voice faculty of Houston Baptist University and can also be heard on her solo compact disc, *let the rain kiss you*, available at www.melissagivens.com.

Gerrod Pagenkopf

Countertenor Gerrod Pagenkopf has won critical praise for his “elegant bearing and sweet, even sound”. His operatic rôles include Oberon in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the title rôles of Handel's *Rinaldo* and Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Actéon*. He is a frequent soloist with the Houston Bach Society and Mercury Baroque, including performances of Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, *St John Passion*, *St Matthew Passion*, and Handel's *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*. With Ars Lyrica he has sung Hagar in Alessandro Scarlatti's *Hagar and Ishmael* and Fileno in Handel's *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno*. A Wisconsin native, he completed his undergraduate degree in Music Education at the University of Wisconsin in May 2003 and his master's degree in voice at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, in 2006.

Joseph Gaines

Tenor Joseph Gaines has been a member of the young artist programmes of Sarasota Opera (2006), Central City Opera (2007), and Glimmerglass Opera (2007). He returned to Glimmerglass Opera in 2008 to perform Pontio Pilato in the first full North American staging of Wagner's *Das Liebesverbot*. Grants and awards include a Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarship, the McGlone Award for Outstanding Young Artist at Central City Opera, and a William M. Sullivan Foundation Award. *Opera News* praised his 2007 Indianapolis Opera début in *Falstaff* and other notable 2007 débuts included *Messiah* with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Gaines studied singing at the University of Houston and the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Leipzig.

Timothy Jones

Bass-baritone Timothy Jones has featured in productions with the Michigan Opera Theater, the Lake George Opera Festival, Opera Idaho, the Shreveport Opera, Opera Southwest, the Pensacola Opera and the San Antonio Lyric Opera. He has also appeared with the symphony orchestras of Houston, Dallas, Charlotte, Shreveport, Colorado Springs, Laredo, San Antonio, Lansing, and South Arkansas. He made his New York début as a recitalist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in February 2000. Associate Professor of Voice at the University of Houston, he is a champion of opera, the concert stage, chamber music, solo recitals, and premières of modern compositions. He has performed throughout the United States, Mexico, South America, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, and Canada, and is known for his intelligent musicianship and engaging personality.

Instruments

Alan Austin, *Baroque violin*

School of John Hardy, London c.1780, *tracks 13-35*

Jonathan Godfrey, *Baroque violin*

Antonio and Girolamo Amati, Cremona 1625,
tracks 13-35

Barrett Sills, *Baroque cello*

Giuseppe Guadagnini, Como 1765, *tracks 1-10, 13-35*

Deborah Dunham, *Violone*

Dominik Zuchowicz, Ottawa 1983 (after Hans Vogel,
Nuremberg 1568), *tracks 7-10*

Dennis Whittaker, *Double Bass*

Kennedy School, London 1750, *track 35*

Scott Horton, *Archlute*

Sandi Harris & Stephen Barber, London 2001
(after Matteo Sellas, Venice 1630), *tracks 13-35*

Richard Savino, *Archlute*

Anna Radice, Bologna 2004 (after Magno
Tiefenbrucker, Venice c.1650), *tracks 1-10*

Matthew Dirst, *Harpsichord and Organ*

John Phillips, Berkeley, CA 2006
(after Florentine prototypes), *tracks 1-12*
John Phillips, Berkeley, CA 1978
(after Ruckers-Taskin 1646/1780), *tracks 13-35*
Bennett-Guittari organ, Rehoboth, MA 1998
(after 17th-century German models), *tracks 13-35*

Euridice dall'Inferno

1 Recitative

Del lagrimoso lido
su l'infocate arene,
Orfeo, caro consorte,
mi lasci, e m'abbandoni,
preda d'eterno duolo e non di morte.
Qui, dove inalza il trono il foco eterno
possono gl'occhi tuoi sgombrar l'orrore
e le fiamme d'Inferno:
non devi paventar,
s'ardi d'Amore.

2 Aria

Se d'Averno la fiamma m'accende,
più m'abbruggia il foco d'Amore.
Dell'abbisso le strane vicende
non m'han tolto la fede dal core.

Euridice in the Underworld

1 Recitative

On the burning sands
of the mournful shore,
Orfeo, dear consort,
you leave and abandon me,
prey to eternal grief – not death.
Here where eternal fire raises the throne,
your eyes can dispel the horror
and the flames of hell:
you need have no fear
if you burn with love.

2 Aria

If the flames of hell burn me,
Love's fire consumes me still more.
The bleakness of the abyss
has not robbed my heart of constancy.

3 Recitative

Se la maga tua lira
 da moto ai sassi,
 et anima le piante,
 ancor fermerà l'ira
 qui de Numi d'Averno,
 e a forza del tuo canto
 nei Regni della Morte,
 a mio pro s'apriranno
 queste tartaree porte;
 benché un alto decreto
 tal natura gl'infuse
 star aperte all'entrar,
 e all'uscir chiuse.
 Vieni, non paventare
 del Trifauce il latrato:
 vedrai la mia fè viva
 ingrembo ai morti;
 vedrai Euridice essere
 amante ancor, benché infelice.

4 Aria

Non mi tormentar più,
 Lasciami in pace tu almeno Amore.
 Mille sfingi e mille mostri
 stanno sempre a me d'intorno,
 Né mai spunto in questi chiostri
 del bel giorno lo splendore.

5 Recitative

Io la morte incontrai
 per esserti costante,
 e per fuggire d'Aristeo gl'insulti
 alla fuga mi diedi, e con le piante
 premei su'l lido erboso
 un angue velenoso,
 qual con rabido dente mi punse
 e in un istante l'avvelenato l'umore
 portò la morte al core.

6 Aria

Mi consola la speranza,
 che un esempio di costanza
 possa un dì trovar pietà.

3 Recitative

If your magic lyre
 moves rocks
 and gives life to plants,
 it will stop even here the wrath
 of the powers of Hell,
 and by the force of your singing
 in the kingdoms of death,
 these Tartarean gates
 will open for me,
 though a high decree
 has fashioned them in such a way
 that they stand open to enter,
 and closed to go out.
 Come, be not afraid of the barking
 of the three-fanged beast:
 You will see my faith alive
 in the bosom of the dead;
 You will see that Euridice is
 your lover still, although unhappy.

4 Aria

Torment me no longer,
 leave me in peace at least you, Love.
 A thousand monsters and spectres
 surround me continually,
 and the welcome light of day
 never penetrates these cloisters.

5 Recitative

I faced death
 to be constant to you,
 and to flee the outrages of Aristeo,
 I took to flight, and among the plants
 on the grassy banks
 I trod on a venomous snake,
 which with rabid tooth pierced me,
 and in an instant the poisonous phlegm
 brought death to my heart.

6 Aria

The hope consoles me
 that my example of constancy
 could one day find mercy.

Se spietata è per me l'etra,
spero sol nella tua cetra
che mi ponga in libertà.

Oratorio sopra la Concettione della Beata Vergine

Part 1

13 Sinfonia

14 Alto Recitative

Linquite maerorem,
geminatè beata fideles gaudia
Laetitias gestire novis non taedeat orbem
Virgo salus nostra sine labe concepta est.

15 Alto Aria

Dum Mariae scintillat Lux
Vile nihil amet spes.
Magna nobis cum sit dux
votis adsit nulla lex.

16 Bass Recitative

Sile, gratia, Sile.
vix conceptam Mariam
Licet totam possideas
nundum tamen vicistis

17 Bass Aria

Nam triumphì Jucundos honores
Magno pendes cocyti tyranno
ruinas, terrores.

18 Soprano Recitative

Tantum audes ò serpens
Ego Michael jam adsum
Acherontis furores nescit gratia timere.

As the heavens have spurned me,
my hope is only in your lyre,
that it may set me free.

English translation: Rosalind Halton

Oratorio on the Conception of the Blessed Virgin

Part 1

13 Sinfonia

14 Alto Recitative

Put off your sadness,
redouble your blessed joys, you faithful!
May the earth not cease to thrill with new delights,
A virgin, our salvation, has been conceived
without corruption.

15 Alto Aria

While the Light of Maria sparkles
may Hope love nothing base.
Since she is our great guide,
let there be no limit to our prayers.

16 Bass Recitative

Silence, Grace! Silence!
Perhaps you possess Maria whole,
though she's barely been conceived,
nonetheless you have not won yet.

17 Bass Aria

For you will account these happy honors
of triumph as defeats and terrors
for the great tyrant of Cocytus.

18 Soprano Recitative

O serpent, do you dare so much?
I, Michael, am now here,
Grace does not fear the anger of Acheron.

19 Soprano Aria

Qualis noctis fugat bella
Phoebe coma matutina
Talis gratia divina
Frangit anguis terga fera.

20 Tenor Recitative

Ex Auerni latebris magnam detis tutelam.
Ego Haeresis feram cruda bella Mariae
Hujus fidi cultores pereant disperdantur.
Pereant disperdantur quicumque est
nostro numini rebellis.
Exul, profugus erret in speluncis,
serpentis concavi hac poena reus.

21 Tenor Aria/Tenor-Bass Duet

Fida comes sum,
ruentis coelum
quoties minatur
verum numen adoratur
forte columen serpentis.
Eya ergo quid tardamus
nondum natam oppugnemus
insidiantes ejus gloriam obscuremus.

22 Alto Recitative

Silete jam silete
Quid bellum intentatis
Nihil timet Maria
Illi Deus gratia Coelum assistit.

23 Trio

O! Quantum erratis
Conatus et vires sunt nulli
quos vani tentatis
o quantum erratis.

Jam nos non erramus
sunt fortes quos modo tentamus
Jam nos non erramus.

24 Alto Aria

Accepto furore incauti cessate.
O misso Livore unanimi
honore Mariam adorate.

19 Soprano Aria

Just as the morning beam of Phoebus
puts to flight the wars of night,
so does divine Grace
smash the snake's savage back.

20 Tenor Recitative

From the depths of Avernus, give your great assistance.
I, Heresy, shall wage cruel wars upon Maria,
may her faithful devotees perish and be dispersed!
May whoever is a rebel against our will
perish and be dispersed.
May he wander an exile, a fugitive among caves,
adjudged by this punishment from the curving serpent.

21 Tenor Aria/Tenor-Bass Duet

I am the faithful companion,
whenever the overthrower of Heaven
threatens, the true deity
is worshiped,
the powerful head of the serpent.
So come, why do we delay?
Let us attack her yet unborn,
let us plot to blot out her glory.

22 Alto Recitative

Be silent now, be silent!
Why do you try to make war?
Maria fears nothing,
God, Grace, and Heaven have stood by her.

23 Trio

O, how you err!
Your plots and might are nothing
which you attempt in vain,
o how you err!

We do not err!
They are brave deeds which we are now attempting,
we do not err!

24 Alto Aria

Reckless ones, receive [God's] anger and cease!
O let Envy go and worship Maria
with unanimous honor.

Part 2

25 Alto Recitative

Aligeri exhibeant modo
grata concerta coelo.
Et dum magno cinctus terrore
Virginis totus infremet plausibus orbis
Terra pariter coelicis redundet gaudiis.

26 Alto Aria

Nundum Sydera micabant
nondum ager dabat flores.
Nazarenae fortunatae
cum donaveram amores.

27 Tenor Recitative

Ergo haeresis cedit,
non sic movebo bella.

28 Tenor Aria

Coeli stellae si furores
Dum armatis contra me.
In me curas et dolores
Jam crudeles excitatis
nil turbatis meum cor
Mihi Pluto dum assistit
cor resistit et armatur firma spe.

29 Soprano Recitative and Aria

Quid tentas quid moliris,
Lues Erebi insana, cede.
Cede fuge superstitio
Et pudendo praecipitio
huic luci terga da.
Surge redi pulsa fides
Et thesauro coeli dives
Jam conceptae templa da.

30 Alto Recitative

Gaudete gentes
Plaudite populi
Decidit roris cumulus beatus
Fonte signato scateat unda coeli.

Part 2

25 Alto Recitative

May the winged ones now form their choirs,
so pleasing to heaven.
And while the whole globe, girded with great awe,
shakes with virginal applause, so let the earth resound
in equal measure with heavenly joys.

26 Alto Aria

The stars were not yet shining
the field did not yet yield its flowers
before I declared my love
to the fortunate woman of Nazareth.

27 Tenor Recitative

Therefore let Heresy yield;
I shall not wage war this way.

28 Tenor Aria

Stars of Heaven, if you marshal
your rage against me,
if you arouse anguish and cruel
anxieties against me,
[still] you do not trouble my heart
as long as Pluto is at my side,
my heart resists and is armed with solid confidence.

29 Soprano Recitative and Aria

What are you up to, what are you attempting?
Yield, you mad Calamity of Erebus!
Yield, flee you superstition!
And turn your back on this light
with your shameful flight.
Arise, return, you exiled Faith,
and rich in the treasure of heaven,
establish sanctuaries for her who is conceived.

30 Alto Recitative

Rejoice, you nations!
Applaud, you peoples!
A blessed cloud of dew has fallen.
Let heaven's water gush from the sealed fountain!

31 Alto Aria

Conceptam virginem
 Valde honoris tollite canticis.
 Canite cimbalis psallite cytharis
 Valde honoris tollite laudibus
 Valde decoris tollite laudibus.

32 Alto/Bass Recitative

Sed quo haeresis pergis?
 Quo draco infide tendis?
 Indoli fabricator Mariae ferus hostis
 Cogor sydereis recessisse portis.

33 Bass Aria

Gratia vincis Jam cedamus
 Pono sceptrum triumphale.
 Vivet odium immortale
 Victa quamuis cessat manus.

34 Alto Recitative

Fremet serpens fremit haeresis dira
 Felix orbis respira.

35 Chorus

Quae est hodie concepta
 A crimine immunis
 Laetitia communis
 Triumphat Maria!

31 Alto Aria

Praise greatly the conceived virgin
 with songs of honor.
 Sing with cymbals, strum with zithers,
 Raise her up greatly with praise of her honor,
 Raise her up greatly with praise of her beauty.

32 Alto/Bass Recitative

But where are you going, Heresy?
 Where are you headed, faithless Dragon?
 Maker of idols, fierce enemy of Maria that I am,
 I am compelled to step back from the sidereal gates.

33 Bass Aria

Grace, you are winning, now let us yield,
 I set down my triumphal scepter.
 An immortal hatred shall live on
 even if the defeated force leaves off.

34 Alto Recitative

The serpent roars, dire Heresy roars!
 Breathe again, o happy world!

35 Chorus

She who was conceived today
 free from crime,
 our common joy,
 she triumphs: Maria.

English translation: Richard Armstrong

Editions: *Euridice dall'Inferno* edited by Rosalind Halton for Cantata Editions

La concettione della Beata Vergine edited by Matthew Dirst

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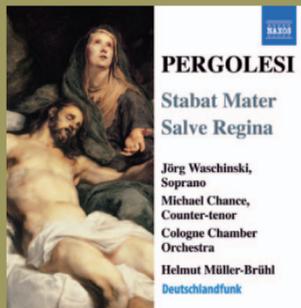
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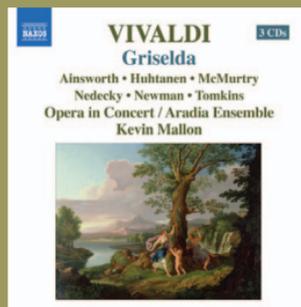
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For its Naxos début Ars Lyrica presents première recordings of two of Alessandro Scarlatti's vocal works: *Euridice dall'Inferno* and *La concettione della Beata Vergine*. The Houston-based early music ensemble has gained praise for its "zestful music-making" (*Houston Chronicle*). Its period instrument performances reveal the brilliance and depth of Scarlatti's expressive and highly theatrical music, which is enjoying renewed interest as the composer becomes increasingly recognised as the peer of Baroque masters such as Handel and Vivaldi. Supplementing these are two equally accomplished instrumental pieces.

Alessandro
SCARLATTI
(1660-1725)

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|
| 1-6 | Euridice dall'Inferno (Cantata)* | 13:41 |
| 7-10 | Cello Sonata No. 2 in C minor | 8:08 |
| 11-12 | Toccatà in A major for Harpsichord | 4:51 |
| 13-35 | La concettione della Beata Vergine (Oratorio)* | 31:01 |

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A detailed track list can be found on page 2 of the booklet

The sung texts can be found in the booklet, and can also be accessed at
www.naxos.com/libretti/570950.htm

Tracks 1-12 recorded at Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Houston, U.S.A.,
on 20th September, 2006; tracks 13-35 recorded at Moores Opera House,
University of Houston, on 10th and 11th August, 2005

Producer: Keith Weber • Engineer: Shannon Smith • Booklet notes: Matthew Dirst

Cover image: *Orpheus and Eurydice* by Giovanni Antonio Burrini or Burino (1657-1727)
(Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria / The Bridgeman Art Library)

8.570950

DDD

Playing Time
57:41



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Booklet notes in English
Disc made in Canada. Printed and assembled in USA.

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