



From Darkness Into Light: Musica Secreta bring a wonderful radiance to Lamentations by Antoine Brumel

The programme features two substantial settings of *Lamentations* unique to manuscripts from Tarazona Cathedral. Of these, the *Lamentationes Jeremiae Feria VI* (Holy Friday) are the more immediately striking – the letters in particular: ‘Beth’, sung here with slightly wet final consonants, then a sumptuous ‘Ghimel’ showcase the singers’ unhurried and impassioned tone to the full. The programme also includes Peñalosa’s *Missa L’homme armé* interlaced with a pair of his motets and two from Francisco Guerrero (1528-99). Comparing Peñalosa’s *Sancta Maria, succurre miseris* to the direct and imploring performance by Gothic Voices (Hyperion, 2/94) highlights New York Polyphony’s richer, imploring tone but also the warmly resonant space of Princeton Abbey, where they allow more space between phrases until the final triple-time section inspires a little flurry. The effect is stunning.

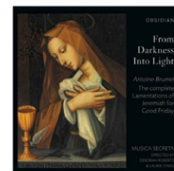
Two standout pieces are the *Stabat mater* by Pedro de Escobar (fl1507-14), a short but arresting setting of the first two verses. Rich and vibrant in texture, it again

draws on this ensemble’s deep palette of vocal colours. The second is the *Credo* from *Missa L’homme armé*, which sits like a declamatory jewel in the middle of this disc. Previously known only by The Orlando Consort’s brighter, sparkling performance (Harmonia Mundi), it is here taken slightly slower and with more gravitas. However, with only six surviving cyclic Masses by Peñalosa, not all of which are yet represented on disc, my gripe is that this *Missa L’homme armé* is incomplete, lacking its five-voice *Kyrie* and the *Sanctus/Benedictus*. While not musically problematic, it is something of a shame not to have the opportunity to hear the whole thing, especially considering the quality and beauty of performance in the other movements. **Edward Breen**

‘From Darkness Into Light’

Anonymous Ave maris stella. Jesus autem cum ieiunasset. Multiplicati sunt qui tribulant me. Salve regina. Verbum caro factum est a **4 Brumel** Lamentationes Hieremiae prophetae, in feria sexta Parasceve **Compère** Paranympheus salutem virginem **Josquin** Recordare virgo mater

Moro Sancta Maria succurre miseris
Musica Secreta / Deborah Roberts, Laurie Stras
Obsidian © CD719 (73' • DDD • T/T)



A tale of two Florentine manuscripts copied by the scribe Fra

Antonio Moro leads the intrepid musicologist Laurie Stras to create another superb album with Musica Secreta. The first manuscript yields the complete Lamentations for Good Friday by Antoine Brumel (c1460-c1512), previously recorded by The Tallis Scholars (Gimell, 9/92), when only the verses beginning with letters Heth and Caph were known. Stras’s discovery almost doubles the length of the work and delightfully complicates its function. Falling, now, into five sections, liturgical performance seems unlikely, pointing instead to devotional use. Musica Secreta begin rather carefully, the almost equal part-ranges suiting their mix of female voices as singers’ personalities