

„gyri gyri gaga”

Rezension der STIMMWERCK-CD in *Early Music Review* 139 (12/2010), 28

What impressed me first was that this well-blended ensemble sounded at complete ease with each other as their distinctive voice-parts intertwined and negotiated complex rhythms. Stimmwerck draws together the countertenor Franz Vitzthum, tenors Klaus Wenk and Gerhard Hölzle, and bass Marcus Schmidl with guest instrumentalist (mainly lutenist) Christoph Eglhuber.

The 27 tracks illustrate in an entertaining way the mingling of popular tunes in single compositions and incorporation of melodies from sacred contexts into secular song. For instance, we are introduced to Ludwig Senfl's *Ach Elslein, liebes Elselein* with most of the narrative sung in soprano-like tones by Franz Vitzthum against the light but rich accompaniment of the tenors and bass.

The quodlibet by Mathias Greiter then intersperses texts and melodies from four tunes well known in their time – *Wann ander Leut liegen. Es taget vor dem Walde, Elslein, liebes Elselein mein* and *Greiner Zanner* – among the four voices to be sung against each other, a feat elegantly achieved here.

For both relaxation and analytical listening this is a beautifully made recording. Scholarship is abundantly present but not paraded. There are notes in German, English and French which draw attention to a few interesting aspects.

The lyrics in the German of their time are occasionally annotated with modern German. But politeness has left their peasantlike flavour untranslated. The mischievous “I’ll show you mine” cover, perhaps best stored spine outwards, should not be allowed to detract from a musical treat.

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