



(LEMS 8075)

Renaissance Noël

VOX RENAISSANCE CONSORT

Valentin Radu, Conductor

Christmas motets, carols, dances & Noëls by Monteverdi, Gabrieli, Praetorius, Victoria, Corelli, Purcell & others, for voices & period instruments

A Note from the Maestro

A long time ago in a far-away place, a little boy fell in love with the magic of the regal Renaissance costumes and angelic voices, complemented by the small instrument ensemble that comprised the famous “Coro Madrigal,” founded and directed by the legendary Romanian conductor Marin Constantin.

The boy grew up, left Romania and arrived in America at New York City’s Juilliard School, where he was privileged to pursue his dream of becoming a conductor. He was thrilled to be a protégé of Richard Westenburg, teacher and conductor, with a larger-than-life reputation at Juilliard, at Lincoln Center and throughout North America. Westenburg and his trusted assistant, Patricia Handy, taught him the tools of the trade of the art of choral conducting.

Some years later—on December 5, 1987—in the snowy woods of Paoli, Pennsylvania at the Daylesford Abbey, Vox Renaissance Consort came to life and with it, the fulfillment of my dream of having my own “Coro Madrigal.”

This Christmas recording represents a musical statement by Vox and myself, who together strive through performance to bring back something of the uplifting beauty and

spirit of Europe's Renaissance masters. I am grateful for the inspiration their music stimulates in us and I would like to dedicate this recording to all those who have helped us make it come to life and, most especially, to my two mentors Marin Constantin Richard Westenburg Marin Constantin and Dick Westenburg. Please enjoy!

---Valentin Radu

TRACK 1

Veni, Veni Emmanuel

A capella chorus

A capella chorus A capella chorus A capella chorus A capella chorus A capella chorus
Veni, veni Emmanuel! Captivum solve Israel. Qui
gemit exilio, privatus Dei Filio. Gaude, Gaude,
Emmanuel! Nascetur pro te, Israel!

O come, come, Emmanuel! Ransom captive Israel,
which mourns in exile, deprived of God the Son.
Rejoice! Emmanuel will be born for you, Israel!

TRACK 2

Psallite

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

A capella chorus

Psallite, unigenito, Christo Dei Filio. Redemptori
Domino puerlo jacenti in praesepio. Ein kleines
Kindelein liegt in dem Krippelein. Alle liebe
Engelein dienem dem Kindelein und singen ihm
fein, Psallite!

Praise Christ the only son of God, our savior and redeemer, a babe lying in a manger. A little infant lying in the manger. All the loving angels worship the child and sing his praises.

TRACK 3

Hodie Christus natus est

Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612)

Double chorus and ensemble

Hodie Christus natus est. Hodie Salvator apparuit.
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli, Laetantur Archangeli
Hodie exultant justi, dicentes: Gloria in excelsis
Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born. Today the Savior appears.
Today angels sing upon the earth, And archangels

rejoice. Today the just exult, saying: Glory to God in the highest and, on earth, peace to men of good will. Alleluia.

TRACK 4

Green Sleeves to a Ground

Anonymous Renaissance Melody

Recorder, cello and theorbo

TRACK 5

Wie schön leuchtet uns

der Morgenstern

Michael Praetorius (1571-1612)

Soli, chorus and ensemble

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern voll Gnad und Wahrheit von dem Herrn, du süsse Würzel Jesse. Du Sohn David aus Jacobs Stamm, mein König und mein Bräutigam hast mir mein Herz besessen, lieblich, freundlich, schön und herrlich, gross und erlich, reich von Gaben, hoch und sehr prächtig erhaben.

How brightly shines the morning star, full of grace and truth from the Lord. Thou, sweet Rod of Jesse, Thou, Son of David of Jacob's lineage, my King and my Bridegroom, Thou, risen, loving, friendly, beautiful and lordly, great and glorious, rich with gifts, holy and splendid, hast possessed my heart.

TRACK 6

Christmas Suite, Op. 6, No. 8

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

PART I: Vivace—Grave—Allegro

Ensemble

TRACK 7

Puer natus in Bethlehem

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)

Soli, chorus and ensemble

Puer natus in Bethlehem, des freuet Jerusalem. Hier liegt es in dem Krippelein; ohn' Ende ist die Herrschaft Sein. Gelobt seist Du, Herr Jesu Christ, der Du als Mensch geboren ist, zu dieser heil'gen Weinachtszeit, Sei Gott der Herr gebenedeit. Alleluja.

A boy is born in Bethlehem, for whom Jerusalem rejoices. He lies in a manger. He, who reigns without end. May you be praised, Lord Jesus Christ, for you are born as Man. At this holy Christmastime, may the Lord our God be blessed. Alleluia!

TRACK 8

Laudate Dominum

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Soli, double chorus and ensemble

Psalm 116: Laudate Dominum omnes gentes; Laudate eum omnes populi. Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus. Et veritas Domini manet in aeternum. Gloria Patri, et Fillio, et Spiritui Sancto, Sicut erat in principio, Et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Praise the Lord, all you nations. Praise Him, all you peoples. For His mercy upon us is confirmed and the truth of the Lord remains in eternity. Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning, Is now; and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

TRACK 9

Christmas Suite, Op. 6, No. 8

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

PART II: Adagio—Allegro—Adagio

Ensemble

TRACK 10

Pat-a-Pan

Bernard de la Monnoye (1641-1728)

Male chorus and percussion

*Guillo pran ton tamborin, toi, pran tai fleute,
Robin, au son de tes intruman, Turulurelu,
Patapatapan, Je dirai Noël gaiman.*

Willie, take your drum, Robin, your flute, to the sound of these instruments, Turulurelu, Patapatapan, I will merrily say, "Merry Christmas!"

TRACK 11

Coventry Carol

Shearmen and Tailors, 15th Century Traditional

A capella chorus

Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child. By, by lully, lullay.
O sisters too, How may we do For to preserve this
day This poor youngling For whom we do sing,
By by, lully lullay! Lully, lulla...

TRACK 12

Magnificat

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

Chorus and continuo

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum et exultavit
spiritus meus. In Deo salutari meo.*

*Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae ecce enim
ex hoc beatam me dicens Omnes generationes.*

*Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est. Et sanctum
nomen Ejus. Et misericordia Ejus a progenie in*

*progenies timentibus Eum. Fecit potentiam in
brachio Suo. Dispersit superbos mente cordis Sui.*

Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimissit in anes.

*Suscepit israel puerum suum, recordatus
misericordiae Suae, Sicut locutus est ad Patres
nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.*

*Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in
principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula
saeculorum. Amen.*

My soul glorifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in
God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowliness
of His handmaiden. Henceforth all generations
shall call me blessed. The Almighty works marvels
for me; Holy is His name! His mercy is from age to
age, toward those who fear Him. He puts forth
His arm in strength and scatters the proud-hearted,
casts down the mighty from their thrones and raises
the lowly. The hungry He has filled with good
things, and the rich He has sent empty away. He
protects Israel, His servant, remembering His mercy.
The mercy promised to our fathers, unto Abraham
and his sons forever. Glory be to the Father, the Son
and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is
now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.

TRACK 13

O Magnum Mysterium

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1549-1611)

A capella chorus

O Magnum mysterium et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum, iacentem in praesepe. O Beata Virgo, cuius viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Christum. Alleluia.

O, great mystery and admirable sacrament, That animals witnessed Our Lord's being born, and laid in a manger. O, Blessed Virgin, whose womb deserved to bear our Lord, Christ. Alleluia.

TRACK 14

Christmas Suite, Op. 6, No. 8

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

PART III: Vivace—Allegro

Ensemble

TRACK 15

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

A capella chorus

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen aus einer Würzel zart wie uns die Alten sungen, aus Jesse kam der Art, und hat ein Blümlein bracht, mitten im kalten Winter wohl zu der halben Nacht.

Das Blümlein so kleine das duftet uns so süß, mit seinem hellen Scheine vertreibt's die Finsternis. Wahr'r Mensch und wahrer Gott, Hilft uns aus allen Leide, rettet von Sünd und Tod.

There is a rose sprung from a living shoot as the old ones sang to us, from Jesse came the lineage, and brought forth a little flower, in the midst of the cold winter, when the night was half over.

The little flower that smells so sweet, with its pure radiance illumines our gloom. True Man and true God, help us, your people, save us from sin and death.

TRACK 16

Christmas Anthem

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Soli, chorus and ensemble

Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy
which shall be to all people, for unto you this day
is born a saviour which is Christ the Lord.

Glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all
people.

Glory to God on high and on earth peace,
good will towards men. Hallelujah! Amen.

TRACK 17

Ave Maria

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1549-1611)

A capella chorus

Ave Maria, gratia plena! Dominus tecum.

*Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus
ventris tuis: Jesus! Sancta Maria, Mater Dei! Ora
pro nobis, peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis
nostrae. Amen.*

Hail, Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the
fruit of your womb, Jesus! Holy Mary, Mother of
God! Pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of
our death. Amen.

TRACK 18

O ce veste minunata

Traditional Romanian Carol

A capella chorus

O ce veste minunata, din Betlehem ni s-arata.

Astazi s-a nascut cel far de-nceput, cum au spus
prorociei. Mergind Iosif cu Maria, savirsind,
calatoria. Intr-un mic locas ling acel oras s-a nascut
Mesia. Pe Fiul in al sau nume Tatal l-a trimis in
lume. Sa se nasca si sa creasca sa ne mintuiasca.

Oh, what wonderful news from Bethlehem
they have predicted. Joseph and Mary make their
journey to that small town where the Messiah was
to be born. The son the Father sent into this world
to save us and redeem us was called Messiah.

Valentin Radu, Founder, Artistic Director and Conductor of the Ama Deus Ensemble and Camerata Ama Deus Chamber Orchestra and Vox Renaissance Consort, has led numerous orchestras and vocal ensembles in Europe and the U.S., including the Hungarian National Philharmonic, Bucharest, Arad, Oradea Philharmonics, the Budapest Chamber Orchestra and the Romania National Radio Orchestra. In 1996 he conducted the Bucharest Philharmonic in Handel's Messiah, and in 1997 led the Romanian National Radio Orchestra in Handel's Acis and Galatea (both English language premieres). He has conducted the Ama Deus Ensemble in various programs ranging from motets and madrigals to authentically-staged Renaissance operas performed on original instruments.

Since 1997, he has led the Ama Deus Ensemble and Maestro Dan Grigore, legendary Romanian pianist, in their annual Viennese Gala concerts in Philadelphia and the Ama Deus Ensemble in its yearly Good Friday performances at Cathedral Basilica of SS Peter and Paul and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, in Philadelphia.

Valentin Radu and the Ama Deus Ensemble have recorded for a number of labels, featuring such masterpieces as Handel's Judas Maccabaeus, Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Mozart Requiem, Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Verdi Requiem and Beethoven Ninth and Missa Solemnis for Lyrichord; Handel's Messiah, Acis & Galatea, Water Music and Royal Fireworks, Vivaldi's Gloria and Magnificat and J.S. Bach's B Minor Mass and Magnificat. Their discography also includes: A Baroque Christmas, A European Christmas, A Renaissance Noel on the PolyGram label and the current one for Lyrichord., and Glad Tidings, released on both the Warner label and Sony Classics.

Born in Romania, Valentin Radu began his music studies at age four. At six he made his first concert debut. In 1973, at 16, he won the prestigious Rome Piano Competition, and Saarbrücken Organ Competition. In 1980, he won the silver medal (gold was not awarded!) at the Bach International Competition in Leipzig. Maestro Radu holds Doctoral and Masters degrees from the Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Music degree from the Bucharest Academy of Music. In 1976, he founded and conducted Juvenes Musici, a chamber orchestra under the auspices of the Bucharest Philharmonic. In 1980 he founded "The Juilliard Bach Players" chamber orchestra and initiated the "Bach at Juilliard" concert series at New York's Lincoln Center. In 1984 Valentin Radu was invited to inaugurate and later (in 1985) made the first and only LP solo recording on the newly re-built organ of the Imperial Chapel of Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna. The original instrument, built in 1721, was the one on which Mozart himself performed during his 12 years as Vienna's Court Musician.

In addition to being a classical music scholar and artist, Valentin Radu is equally accomplished in jazz performance as a conductor and a solo performer. In December 1998, he conducted the Bucharest Philharmonic in a Gershwin Centennial Gala concert, featuring the Rhapsody in Blue (with Maestro Dan Grigore), An American in Paris,

and Porgy and Bess. In November 1999, Radu conducted the Arad Philharmonic in a centennial concert featuring works by Duke Ellington and George Gershwin.

Since May 2000, Maestro Radu has conducted extraordinary jazz concerts in Bucharest, with the “Sound” group, featuring singer Teodora Enache and Romanian jazz legend Johnny Raducanu.

In May 1999, Radu participated in the historic visit to Romania of Pope John Paul II. In September 2004, he was invited to be the sole performer at a special U.N. gala in New York honoring the President of Romania. In December 1997, Radu was awarded the Golden Apple by New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. In February 1999, the Romanian Music Critics’ Association named him “1998 Musician of the Year.” In April of 2003, Radu was bestowed the title of Honorary Citizen of the City of Bucharest by the mayor of his native town, who is presently Romania’s President.

On December 20, 2005, Valentin Radu received the highest civil award of Romania: The Grand Officer of the Order of Cultural Merit (Romanian equivalent of The French Legion of Honor or British Knighthood), in recognition of his life achievement in the arts and his efforts as “Cultural Ambassador” of Romania. Radu became the seventh, and youngest, recipient of this most prestigious award in the history of Romania.

In addition, since 1994 Radu has been music director and organist at Arch Street United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, and since 1995 has served as music director of Devon Preparatory School in Devon, Pennsylvania.

Vox Renaissance Consort

Valentin Radu, conductor

SOPRANO: Kristen Conrad, Sarah Davis, Darlene Kelsey, Andrea Smith, Clara Thorne

ALTO: Lois Babbitt, Bronwyn Fix-Keller, Inna Lobanova Heasley, Fran Bjerneby Kraemer, Meghan Williams

TENOR: Walton Carson, Michael Go, Dennis Kalup, Paul Marchesano, Paris Nesbitt, Matthew Valent, Dana Wilson

BASS: Daniel Kenworthy, Brian Middleton, Daniel Schauble, Richard Shapp, Evan Thomas

Rainer Beckmann, recorder Vivian Barton Dozor, gamba & baroque cello

Robert Spates, violin I Daniel Boring, theorbo & lutes

Mandy Wolman, violin 2 Bronwyn Fix-Keller, harpsichord

Patricio Diaz, viola

Reviews of the Vox Renaissance Consort

“There was a feeling of theater as the performers strode up the center aisle in fur-trimmed cloaks and velvet gowns.” Main Line Times

“Tight ensemble singing” Chestnut Hill Local

“Distinguished by its range and level of musicianship... agility and infectious spirit.” Philadelphia Inquirer

“...conductor Valentin Radu approached the work with an awareness of the tone painting, the drama and even theatricality of the writing...He built relationships to challenge the mind and ear.” The Philadelphia Inquirer

“Volcanic...A fine connoisseur of the Baroque.” Die Presse, Vienna

“Radu conducted his singers with a sure hand...” The New York Times

Since its founding by Valentin Radu in 1987, Vox nine countries. Its varied programs have ranged from Renaissance Consort, with its lively, costumed motets to spritely madrigals, and have included fully performances of Renaissance vocal music and staged Renaissance opera (Monteverdi’s 1607 instrumental interludes, has delighted audiences in “L’Orfeo” at the Annenberg Center, a Philadelphia premiere). Vox Renaissance Consort has performed in many famous venues such as Saint Mark’s Basilica in Venice, Saint Stephen’s Cathedral in Vienna, the Salzburg Cathedral Votivkirche and Saint Anne’s Church, the Strasbourg Orangerie Palace, and the Princess Hall of the Marburg Castle, in Germany.

American venues include appearances at Carnegie Recital Hall in New York, the National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia’s historic Old Saint Joseph’s Church, Philadelphia Museum of Art, the State Museum at Harrisburg, Daylesford Abbey and countless others. Vox has recorded two albums, including A Renaissance Noel on the PolyGram label and the current one for Lyrichord. Vox Renaissance Consort had the honor of performing as special guest of former Romanian President, Emil Constantinescu at Carnegie Hall in New York for the gala concert in his honor.

Producer’s Note

This was a wonderful project and demonstrates, in my view, the best of what Valentin Radu and his Philadelphia Vox forces do: assemble a charming choral program with the best voices, singing glorious Renaissance music. The accompanying ensemble—period instrument string quintet plus inventive harpsichord and gamba—was augmented by lutes and theorbo to bolster the continuo and delightful solo recorder to highlight the treble. The group—these players and the superb choral forces— had already enjoyed the benefit of several live performances throughout Philadelphia by the time of the recording, just prior to Christmas 2009. Indeed, they had recently given this program at our recording venue, the lovely Old St. Joseph’s Church in Philadelphia’s historic Society Hill. Founded in 1733, and rebuilt on the site a century later, this is the oldest Roman Catholic Church in the city and provides a beautiful acoustic for Renaissance music. It was a lovely experience.

John Ostendorf

1. Ancient Chant: Veni, veni Emanuel (0:57)
2. Praetorius: Psallite! (1:00)
3. Gabrieli: Hodie Christus natus est (2:15)
4. Traditional: Green Sleeves to a Ground (4:08)
5. Praetorius: Wie schön leuchtet uns der Morgenstern (2:26)
6. Corelli: Christmas Suite, Op. 6, No. 8, Part I (3:35)
7. Scheidt: Puer natus in Bethlehem (2:32)
8. Monteverdi: Laudate Dominum(3:19)
9. Corelli: Christmas Suite Op. 6, No. 8, Part II (2:54)
10. De la Monnoye: Pat-a-pan (1:16)
11. Traditional: Coventry Carol (1:47)
12. Pachelbel: Magnificat (5:26)
13. Victoria: O magnum mysterium (3:45)
14. Corelli: Christmas Suite, Op. 6, No. 8, Part III (2:41)
15. Praetorius: Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen (2:31)
- 16 Purcell: Anthem (8:23)
- 17 Victoria: Ave Maria (1:54)
18. Traditional Romanian Carol: O ce veste minunata (2:45)

TOTAL TIME: 53:42

Credits:

John Ostendorf, producer

Stephen J. Epstein, recording engineer

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