

earliest surviving manuscript of carol music, the two-metre carol roll now in Trinity College, Cambridge, containing 13 carols and nothing else. They are taken in the order of the manuscript, with an intermission of various other carols after the seventh carol, the famous 'Agincourt Carol'.

The performances are very cleanly done, with all texts presented complete (which is rare for recordings of this repertory) and all intonation absolutely excellent. With an ensemble of four solo singers and three instrumentalists, Alamire may be more slimline than in the past; but David Skinner directs them with absolute control. That is to say that, even if they do not always fit my own views on the articulation and projection of this marvellous music, they are always on a very high professional level. **David Fallows**

'La Fiesta de Pascua en Piazza Navona'



Animuccia Christus resurgens a 5 **Anonymous/Manni** Anima mia, che pensi? a 3 **Asola** Iesu, nostra redemptio a 4 **Bendinelli** Two Fanfarria **Castillo** Tiento de segundo tono por Gsolreut **Giovanelli** lubilate Deo, omnis terra a 8 **Guerrero/Vega** Si tus penas no pruebo a 3 **Infantas** Victimae paschali laudes **Kerle** Domine, quid multiplicati sunt a 5. **Te Deum** laudamus a 6 **Palestrina** Crucem sanctam subiit a 5. Expurgate vetus fermentum a 8. Haec dies quem fecit Dominus a 8. Victimae paschali laudes a 8 **Razzi/Belcarl** Christo ver'huom' e Dio a 3 **Rodio** Ricercata La mi re fa mi re **Victoria** Ad caenam agni providi a 4/5. Ardens est cor meum a 6. Ego sum panis vivus a 4. O sacrum convivium a 4. Regina caeli a 8. Surrexit pastor bonus a 6. Tantum ergo a 5

La Grande Chapelle / Albert Recasens

Lauda (C) (2) LAU012 (105' • DDD)



Recasens recreates Piazza Navona's Easter procession

This project takes as its basis a Roman Easter procession in and around the Piazza Navona from the church of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli during the later 16th century. As its name implies, this institution was a hub of the city's Spanish community from its foundation at the turn of the 16th century. Although there is an undeniably Spanish flavour to the proceedings (Victoria, unsurprisingly, being particularly well represented), the music recorded here is international in character, in keeping with the practice of the time.

The great strength of a programme such as this is that it encompasses a wide variety of musical genres and types of performance: we hear now an *a cappella* choir, now an accompanied one; now a wind band, now trumpeters blaring out a fanfare; now a dialogue for vocal soloists with continuo, now a festive *Te Deum* with all the trimmings.

The same goes for the pieces themselves: hymns, motets, laude, sequences, responsories, ricercars... It's all wonderfully varied and introduces composers who struggle to find representation on disc (including anonymous ones), but whose works splendidly fulfil the purposes for which they were written. The *Te Deum* just mentioned is by Jacobus de Kerle and was written for performance at the Council of Trent. When performed as here, with proper verve and instrumental finery, the effect of this simple polyphony is undeniable.

Remarkably perhaps for such a varied project, the performances exhibit a rare degree of confidence throughout (whatever the medium), characterised by a fluency and conviction worthy of the best reconstructions. Singing, ensemble, soloists are all first-rate. Most importantly, perhaps, one gets that nearly undefinable sense of occasion that is essential to such an enterprise: whether or not one imagines oneself on the Piazza Navona is a moot point but one has the sense of a single, richly textured event, captured and experienced entire. One of my picks of 2012, undoubtedly.

Fabrice Fitch

'Pater noster'

'A Choral Reflection on the Lord's Prayer'

Bernstein The Lord's Prayer **Byrd** Vigilate **Duruflé** Notre Père **Farrant** Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake **W Harris** Holy is the True Light **Hassler** Cantate Domino **Josquin** Prés Pater noster **Lassus** Ad te levavi. Domine Dominus noster **Palestrina** Ego sum panis vivus. Missa Papae Marcelli - Sanctus **Poulenc** Quatre petites prières de François d'Assise **Purcell** Remember not, Lord, our offences **Schütz** Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes. Vater unser **Stravinsky** Pater noster **Tavener** The Lord's Prayer **Victoria** Popule meus **C Wood** Oculi omnium **Zieleński** Benedicimus Deum coeli

King's Singers

Naxos (C) 8 572987 (68' • DDD • T/t)



King's Singers chart settings of Christianity's central prayer

Built upon the individual verses of the Lord's Prayer and beginning and ending in plainchant, this enterprising collection by the King's Singers chooses settings of individual chants ranging over six centuries of Christian church music, a wonderful tribute to the Christian religion that its creed and teaching inspired so much that is unforgettably beautiful. The music of the most famous composers – Josquin, Palestrina, Byrd Lassus, Victoria and, especially, our very own Purcell – stands out. I was also especially impressed with the settings by the more modern musicians. Stravinsky's *Pater noster* is a surprise (not what you might expect). John Tavener's *The Lord's Prayer* is very beautiful indeed, a real highlight.