

CD HotList

New Releases for Libraries

Cristóbal de Morales

L'Homme armé Masses; Magnificat secundi toni

De Profundis / Robert Hollingworth

CORO (dist. Naxos)

COR16221

We all know the common story of the Renaissance or baroque composer who, though successful and highly regarded in his or her name, had fallen into complete obscurity by the mid-19th century, only to be rediscovered with the advent of the early-music movement in the middle of the 20th. The

reputation of the brilliant Spanish composer Cristóbal de Morales followed a somewhat different trajectory: after a very promising early career, Morales became essentially unemployable due to some kind of illness (whether it was physical, mental, or both remains a matter of conjecture). At the cusp of what seemed to be a return to form — he was being considered for the chapelmastership at Toledo — he died, still in early middle age. This recording by the world-class De Profundis ensemble focuses on Morales' two parody Masses based on the popular song "L'Homme armé" — one in Phrygian mode and the other in Ionian (or what we would now call the major scale). The first is a fairly conventional four-voice Mass setting, while the latter is denser and more experimental. The program is rounded out with a lovely performance of one of his Magnificat settings. As always, De Profundis present a much richer vocal sound than one might expect from an all-male group.

