

CATHERINE ROBBIN

One of the busiest, most-requested singers in North America, Canadian-born Catherine Robbin has achieved international acclaim. At ease in a wide range of vocal music, she is particularly noted for her masterful interpretations of Baroque and Romantic literature. She has performed under the batons of conductors in New York, Chicago, Washington D.C., Montreal, Toronto, London and Paris.

Her recital CD on Marquis Classics (ERAD 113) was called "impressive," "a real find," and her voice praised as "warm, agile, supple, and above all highly expressive."

THIRTEEN STRINGS

Founded in 1976 by Brian Law and a group of musicians from the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Canada, to perform Baroque music, Thirteen Strings has developed into one of Canada's foremost chamber orchestras.

HANDEL

Lucrezia

SCARLATTI

Salve Regina

VIVALDI

Nisi Dominus

CATHERINE ROBBIN

mezzo-soprano

THIRTEEN STRINGS

BRIAN LAW, Conductor



MARQUIS
CLASSICS

Lucrezia • George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

This cantata was composed during the three years Handel spent in Italy, from 1707 to 1710, probably when he was at the Court of Florence, under the patronage of Ruspoli.

Lucrezia is the most accomplished and ardent of the secular cantatas written by Handel in Italy. It has extraordinary emotional range and intensity, with ten changes of mood and tempo, reflecting the passion of the story of Lucrezia.

Lucrezia is raped by the Roman commander Tarquinius. In the cantata, she first calls upon the gods to avenge her. Then she reflects upon the shame she feels, and seeks consolation from the gods, declaring that she will call on the furies of Hell if the Heavens do not aid her. She curses Tarquinius, demanding his ruin and destruction. Her pleas are unanswered and in despair, she commits suicide, vowing revenge from beyond the grave.

This arrangement of the cantata, for mezzo soprano and strings, was written by Raymond Leppard for Janet Baker.

Salve Regina • Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

Domenico Scarlatti, son of Alessandro Scarlatti, is remembered today mainly for his keyboard sonatas. He was born in Naples, but moved to Venice in the late 1700s. In Venice, he met Handel, and legend says the two composers faced each other in a public organ and harpsichord competition organized by Cardinal Ottoboni. (Legend also records that Handel was considered the better organist; Scarlatti the better harpsichordist.) It is known that they knew and admired each other.

Scarlatti spent the last years of his life in Spain, where he composed the *Salve Regina*. This prayer addressed to the virgin is beautifully expressive, with compelling melodic lines and harmonies, and exquisite detail, all characteristic of the best of Scarlatti's chamber music writing.

The *Salve Regina* is written in A major and has six sections and a concluding "Amen": *Salve regina*; *Ad te clamamus*; *Ad te suspirans*; *Eja ergo*; *Nobis post hoc*; *O clemens, o pia*; *Amen*.

Nisi Dominus • Antonio Vivaldi (1678 -1741)

Vivaldi spend most of his life in Venice, although he traveled widely. He was known as the “red Priest” because of his distinctive red hair and membership in the clergy (he was ordained in 1703). In contrast to Handel, who achieved wealth and fame during his lifetime, Vivaldi was almost unknown when he died in 1741 and was buried in a pauper’s grave.

The *Nisi Dominus* for solo voice and instruments in nine movements takes the text of Psalm 126: “Nisi dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laborant qui aedificant eam” (Except the lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it).

The work is in nine sections: Nisi Dominus (Allegro); Vanum est vobis (Largo); Surgite (Presto/Largo); Cum dederit (Largo); Sicut sagittae (Presto); Beatus vir (Andante); Gloria Patri (Larghetto); Sicut erat (Allegro); and Amen (Allegro).

CREDITS

Recording Engineer
Assistant Engineer
Digital Editing
Executive Producer

Anton Kwiatkowski
Paul Kwiatkowski
Dave Burnham
Earl Rosen

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Marquis Classics
30 Kenilworth Avenue
Toronto, Canada M4L 3S3

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All selections The logo consists of a circle containing the letters "MA" above "PL".

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