

**LAKS:** *Quartet 3*; see Collections

**LAMBERT & CAMUS:** *Airs*  
Il Festino/ Manuel de Grange  
Musica Ficta 8027—64 minutes

This fine recording presents a selection of works from two leading figures of what we used to call the air de cour: airs accompanied by lute, usually with elaborately varied doubles for the voice. Even today this remains a almost unknown repertoire, in spite of the fact that dozens of printed collections from the period are now available through the National Library in France.

Michel Lambert (d. 1696) is better known than Sebastien le Camus (d. 1677; the former was a singer himself, the latter an instrumentalist, playing viol and theorbo). The airs by Lambert are drawn from a late, large collection published in 1689, with more than 200 pages of music, where the airs, for one to four voices, are preceded by instrumental ritornellos (no instruments named, and in the range of any of the instruments that might play the dessus—violin, but also flute or oboe).

This is my first acquaintance with the work of Manuel de Grange (lute, theorbo) and his vocal ensemble; they have two other recent discs for Musica Ficta. The instrumental playing is stylish and the sound lush. All the individual voices are beautifully produced and expressive, and the combination is well tuned and rich. To my non-French ears, the pronunciation and shaping of the poetry seem optimal. All in all, an excellent presentation of worthy repertoire. Don't miss it.

T MOORE

**LISZT:** *Hungarian Rhapsodies*;  
see SAINT-SAENS  
*Piano Sonata*; see CHOPIN

**LITTLE:** *Woefully Arrayed & Reprise; Kyrie; Gloria; Wasted and Worn; That Time of Year*  
Heinrich Christensen, org; Stanbery Singers,  
Tallis Society Choir, Vox Futura/ Andrew Shenton,  
Philip Simms  
Navona 6113—70 minutes

The choral music of Australian composer Jonathan David Little (b 1965) is intricate and polychoral in the manner of large-scale works from the late Renaissance and early Baroque. His use of split choirs to create thick, vertically imposing harmonies takes us back to works like Thomas Tallis's 40-part 'Spem in Alium'. Add in the composer's 21st Century inclina-

tions, which include a lot of funky internal rhythms and ornamentations, and you get a composer who doesn't sound like anyone else.

The program begins with *Woefully Arrayed*, a sacred work written in 2014 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the National Boy's Choir of Australia. It is the composer's longest, most imposing appropriation of Renaissance polyphony at its polychoral extreme. I can't argue with the majesty of the composer's intentions or with the overwhelming sound achieved by the singers. But I must report that 25 minutes of it was more than I could take. It is just too thick, too repetitious, and too static for me *not* to shut down. And—as if the first 25-minute encounter isn't enough—the same piece is heard *again* in an "abridged" version that takes another 12 minutes. That's all they could come up with to round out the program?

I will say, though, that when the composer shortens his stroke and intensifies those interior rhythms and ornaments, the results are far more interesting. The 10-minute Gloria to Little's Mass is quite striking; medieval and modern influences come together in some interesting ways. 'That Time Of Year', text by Shakespeare, will get your attention as well.

The choir blazes its way through the repertoire with big, glossy, undifferentiated sound that dovetails nicely with the music. The booklet is helpful to the point of including diagrams as to how to position your forces in a church or hall should you want to stage a polychoral extravaganza of your own someday.

GREENFIELD

**LLOYD:** *Symphonies 6+7*  
BBC Northern Symphony/ Edward Downes  
Lyrita 1135—73 minutes

George Lloyd (1913-98) was from St Ives, Cornwall. He studied composition with Frank Kitson and Harry Farjeon and attended Trinity College London. He completed his first symphony at age 19 and two more a year later, but his true early passion was Italian opera, which he picked up from his opera-loving father. His first opera, *Iernin*, appeared in 1935 and *The Serf* in 1938. All those works were performed under the young Lloyd's baton—*The Serf* in Covent Garden. All were well received, but it was the operas that established Lloyd as a major British composer.

A career as an opera composer appeared to be Lloyd's destiny, but World War II changed everything. He was serving on a naval