Michael Finnissy (*1946)

EXAUDI Vocal Ensemble · James Weeks conductor

Michael Finnissy, 2012-2013 · Verlag Neue Musik
Juliet Fraser, Amy Moore soprano · Lucy Goddard mezzo soprano · Tom Williams countertenor
Stephen Jeffes, Jonathan Bungard tenor · Simon Whiteley, Jimmy Holliday bass

8] Cipriano {10:45}
Michael Finnissy, 1974 · G. Ricordi & Co. Bühnen- und Musikverlag
Emma Tring high soprano · Juliet Fraser, Rebecca Lea soprano · Lucy Goddard mezzo soprano
Kate Symonds-Joy contralto · Stephen Jeffes {solo}, Jonathan Bungard tenor
Jonathan Saunders baritone · Simon Whiteley, Jimmy Holliday bass

9] Tom Fool’s Wooing {18:49}
Emma Tring high soprano, conga · Juliet Fraser, Rebecca Lea, Amanda Morrison soprano
Lucy Goddard {solo} mezzo soprano · Kate Symonds-Joy contralto, conga · Cathy Bell contralto
Tom Williams countertenor · David de Winter {solo}, Stephen Jeffes tenor
Jonathan Bungard, Jonathan Saunders baritone · Simon Whiteley, Jimmy Holliday bass

10] Kelir {15:36}
Michael Finnissy, 1981 · Verlag Neue Musik
Juliet Fraser, Amy Moore soprano · Lucy Goddard mezzo soprano
Stephen Jeffes tenor · Simon Whiteley baritone · Jimmy Holliday bass
'Is not song that arena where the voice is so spectacularly displayed, fuelled by so many breathless propulsions, fantasies, sexualities, and dreams?'
— BRANDON LABELLE, LEXICON OF THE MOUTH

The voice has a central place in Michael Finnissy’s output. His is an art of line, of connective lyric movement spun out over a breath; it is also a deeply humanist art, an art in ardent search of human connection, of which the voice, reaching out from the depths of the body into the world around us, is the primal vehicle. Finnissy’s work manifests across the decades an abiding concern with the complex nature of this most bodily, most physical, most personal of instruments – what it is to give voice, to vocalise, to speak or sing in different contexts and different ways, private or public, as an individual or as part of a collective.

The four works on this recording, spanning forty years, show Finnissian vocality at its most blazingly intense: displays of virtuosity that push mind and body to the limits of their flexibility, reach, stamina and control. The most recent work, GESUALDO: LIBRO SESTO, offers seven ‘fantasies about music, about love and death, about the voice,’ as the composer writes, drawing on fragments of music and on texts from Gesualdo’s final madrigal book in a cycle of almost operatic scope. In the early ‘dramatic madrigal’ CIPRIANO, St Cyprian rigidly resists the carnal temptations of a Demon, played with flamboyant excess by the rest of the ensemble; TOM FOOL’S WOOING (which lay unperformed for almost forty years before the present performance was recorded) is even more vocally extravagant, a celebration of marriage and the joys of eros, incorporating Eastern European love poetry, Spenser’s Epithalamion and an English mummer’s play. KELIR, the most abstract but also perhaps most rawly physical of the four, takes its title from the name given to the curtain onto which shadow-puppets are projected in Javanese wayang kulit {puppet theatre}; by extension, writes Finnissy, ‘it is also a curtain onto which our interpretations of the world, and our fantasies, are projected.’

— JAMES WEEKS

Please see www.winterandwinter.com for detailed accompanying texts, lyrics and further information.
The recordings of *Kelir* and *Gesualdo: Libro Sesto* were generously supported by the following individuals:


We also wish to record our thanks to City, University of London, for the use of their Performance Space for these recordings.

The concert at which *Tom Fool’s Wooing* and *Cipriano* were recorded, a celebration of Michael Finnissy’s 70th birthday, was generously supported by The Hinrichsen Foundation. In addition we wish to record our thanks to the Guildhall School of Music & Drama for the support of this event and the use of Milton Court Concert Hall.
A Production of Winter & Winter

GESUALDO: LIBRO SESTO: Recorded at City, University of London, May 29, 2015 · Recording Engineer: Dave Rowell · Recording Producer: Aaron Cassidy · CIPRIANO, TOM FOOL’S WOOING: Recorded Live at Milton Court Concert Hall London, March 12, 2016 · Recording Engineer: Simon Eadon · Recording Producer: Aaron Cassidy · KELIR: Recorded at City, University of London, Feb. 4, 2015 · Recording Engineer: Dave Rowell · Recording Producer: Aaron Cassidy · Mixed and Mastered at AvR Studio, Steinenbronn, Germany, April 2018 · Mixing and Mastering Engineer: Adrian von Ripka · Album Producer: Stefan Winter

Layout, Photography: Winter & Winter · Images © Wellcome Collection: Robert Fludd {1547-1637} · Executive Producers: Mariko Takahashi, Stefan Winter

EXAUDI Vocal Ensemble on Winter & Winter

also available as download

Stefano Gervasoni »Dir - in dir«
CD N° 910 208-2

James Weeks »Mala Punica«
CD N° 910 239-2

www.exaudi.org.uk
www.jamesweeks.org

For further information please see
www.winterandwinter.com