

ADOREMUS IN AETERNAM

Michael Overbury, Collins organ (1974), Worksop Priory Church
Herald HAVPCD 375 [79:20]

★★★★



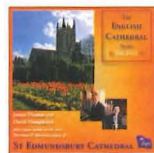
This recording is subtitled 'an historical survey of music for use in the Mass and at Benediction', and that it just what it is; the sleeve notes are succinct and informative. Most pieces are a couple of minutes in duration. Michael Overbury's playing verges on the metronomic throughout, but uses the Collins organ's neo-classical voicing well. A good sense of form comes in the lengthier Bach *O Lamm Gottes unschuldig*. In Messiaen's *Le banquet céleste* and Boëllmann's *Adoro Te* gently undulating timbres work best and Overbury's understated interpretation is most effective. Explore these works for their liturgical insight.

MATTHEW POWER

THE ENGLISH CATHEDRAL SERIES VOL. XVII

James Thomas and David Humphreys, Harrison & Harrison organ (2010), St Edmundsbury Cathedral
Regent REGCD 383 [66:01]

★★★★



Sample here the 2010 Harrison & Harrison organ without duplicating too much repertoire that you might already own. This thoughtful programme showcases a very English organ. Such music is represented by Stanford (Fantasia & Toccata op.57), Bridge, Darke and Elgar; Howells's third *Rhapsody* (David Humphreys) exhibits necessary grandeur. James Thomas lends considerable dignity to Cocker's *Tuba Tune*, abetted by the all-new Harrison solo Tuba. Messiaen and Roger-Ducasse are handled well, but without pretence of Gallic accent. All the fine playing here is, like this regal instrument, placed at the service of the music, and is all the better for that.

MATTHEW POWER

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH ORGAN MUSIC VOL. 4:**PAUL PATTERSON**

Michael Bonaventure, Harrison & Harrison organ (1962),
Coventry Cathedral
Sfz Music SFZMO 212 [65:46]

★★★★★



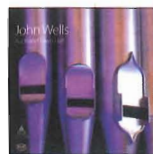
For sheer drama, volume four reaches new heights in this innovative series. It pairs Paul Patterson's expressionistic language with the vitality of the 1962 Harrison & Harrison organ in Coventry's cavernous cathedral. From the opening bars of *Tsunami*, this is music and playing that grabs us by the ears and whisks us on a journey of vivid intensity. The aleatoric nature and graphic score of *Games* (1977) involves the player in constant invention; here two different interpretations are presented. In this piece Bonaventure explores outlandish stop combinations which expand the scope of the music. His playing is virtuosic, the music fascinating.

MATTHEW POWER

JOHN WELLS

Klais organ (2010), Auckland Town Hall
Atoll ACD 641 [76:25]

★★★★



Spirited playing from Auckland City Organist John Wells in a varied programme makes this debut of the new Klais organ in the town hall interesting and attractive. Standard works include Buxtehude, Stanford ('*Marcia Eroica*' from *Four Intermezzi* op.189), through Liszt (*Weinen, Klagen* variations) and a sparkling rendition of Vierne's *Naiades*. Contrasting pieces include *Poèmes pour orgue* by Tadashi Yamanouchi and Sowerby's wistful 'Air with Variations' from *Suite for Organ*. Wells's own *Kokako Fanfare & March* shows off the glass Kōauau and hand-carved Pūkāea ranks which imitate Maori instruments. Unmistakably by Klais, this organ has an individuality of voice, which makes for enjoyable listening.

MATTHEW POWER

CHORAL CDS**JOHANN HERMANN SCHEIN: ISRAELSBRÜNNLEIN**

Dresdner Kammerchor / Hans-Christoph Rademann (dir)
Carus 83.350 (2CDs) [94:32]

★★★★★



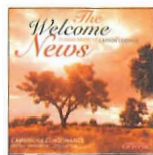
This collection of Schein's motets in the Italian madrigal manner is almost entirely of texts derived from the Old Testament. Published in 1623, a few years after he was appointed Thomaskantor at Leipzig, they remain among the most significant achievements of German music in the first half of the 17th century, only matched by the works of Schütz. Rademann and his forces have a thorough grounding in this music (they have made four recordings of Schütz) and here give exemplary readings that are a constant delight as well as being a spiritually profound experience.

PHILIP REED

CARSON COOMAN: THE WELCOME NEWS

Cambridge Consonance / Jeffrey Grossman (dir)
Gothic G 48280 [65:58]

★★★★



At just 30 years old, Carson Cooman's opus numbers are already stealing towards the 1,000 mark. These mostly recent motets were written after the delivery of two very large works: *The Acts of the Apostles* and *The Revelations of Divine Love*. They are, as ever, muscularly singable and embraced as such by Jeffrey Grossman's well-drilled but not over-drilled choir. There is a freshness and spontaneity that recalls university glee clubs of a bygone age but delivered with both intimacy and weight: a near-ideal recording. Interestingly, it's the slightly older pieces, including 2001's *Wherein Our Blessing Stand*, 2003's *Faith, Hope, Love* and the 2008 *Man Proposes, but God Disposes* for Royal Holloway and the British Embassy in Washington that stand out, as if recent writing has been a little shadowed by the two master (monster?) pieces.

BRIAN MORTON