

NEW • NOUVEAUTE • NEUHEIT

SCENE
DG



03/11-(5)

Johannes Eccard (1555-1613)
„Mein schönste Zier“
Mass for 5 parts
Motets and Canticas through the
liturgical year

Norddeutscher Kammerchor
Maria Jürgensen, cond.

1 Hybrid-SACD

222[®]
RECORDING

Order No.: MDG 902 1694-6

UPC-Code:



LC06768

Eccard Rediscovery

Johann Eccard was one of the leading sacred composers around 1600, and even today his works are found in well-known collections of Protestant church music. The Northern German Chamber Choir under Maria Jürgensen honors this Thuringian composer on the occasion of the four hundredth anniversary of his death with a recording of his most important choral compositions and his only mass extant in full.

Ecumenical Repertoire

Until he was eighteen, Eccard grew up and received instruction in song in the Protestant environment of his home region. After he had joined the Bavarian court chapel in 1571, he became acquainted with the whole repertoire of Catholic sacred music as well as the secular music at this splendor-loving court. The chapel master Orlando di Lasso instructed him in composition during this time. Eccard briefly returned to Mühlhausen prior to assuming a post under Jakob Fugger in Augsburg. It was here that he wrote the five-part mass "Mon coeur se recommande à vous" going back to a chanson by his composition teacher. Eccard had now found his place in Catholic sacred music, but further advances in his career were not open to him here because of his Protestant faith.

Enduring Reputation

Eccard found a new musical home in Königsberg in 1579. In the employ of the Margrave of Ansbach, the musician built up a Protestant choral society and composed a great many polyphonic sacred songs that met with widespread circulation in published anthologies. Cantional motets in which he combined the motet style with melodies of song character were Eccard's specialty. His Königsberg compositions had such an enduring effect that Johannes Brahms included them in the repertoire of his choirs more than two hundred years later, with this gesture indicating that he valued them just as much as those by Giovanni Gabrieli and Heinrich Schütz.

Ensemble Revelation

In 2005 Maria Jürgensen brought together a good dozen experienced choir singers from throughout Germany to found in the Northern German Chamber Choir an ensemble with high ambitions. The choir debuted with Johann Sebastian Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and since then has mastered an extensive repertoire with works from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century.