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### REVIEW

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Some items to consider



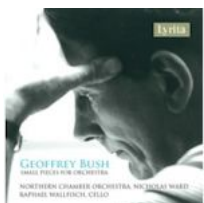
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Lyrta New Recording

**Sibylla: Renaissance Music and New Music**  
 Track details at review  
 Mixtura (Katharina Bäuml (shawms), Margit Kern (accordion), Kai Wessel (alto))  
 rec. 11-14 March 2014, Deutschlandfunk  
 Kammermusiksaal, Cologne, Germany. DDD  
**GENUIN GEN14299** [70:57]

An earlier Genuin recording on which Mixtura also combined music ancient and modern impressed Jake Barlow to the extent of making it a Recording of the Year (GEN13284 – [review](#)). On that album the music of Guillaume de Machaut was combined with that of three modern composers; this time it's the turn of Orlando di Lasso's *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* to be interspersed with contemporary music.

I have to say that although I also liked the previous release, with the exception of one track – [DL News 2013/17](#) – I was much less impressed this time around. I liked the instrumental arrangements of Machaut on the earlier release, but it seems to me that Lasso responds less well to this treatment. Perhaps it reminds me too much of the interpretations of Renaissance music by Jan Garbarek (saxophone) and the Hilliard Ensemble on *Officium* (NMC 4453692) – very beautiful but it always leaves me feeling depressed. I know others revere that recording and they will probably enjoy this new Genuin album more than I did.

After just two minutes of the *Carmina cromatica* which opens Lasso's settings of the music of the Sibyls we have Karin Haubmann's *An der Stimme gekannt* (known by the voice) which we are told in the notes refers to the Cumæan Sibyl who led Æneas to the Underworld, lamenting her fate to fade away gradually until even her voice can no longer be heard. T.S. Eliot prefaces *The Waste Land* with a quotation from *Satyricon*: *Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculis meis vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent: 'Sibylla ti theleis; respondebat illa: apothanein thelo.* (I saw with my own eyes the Sibyl of Cumæ hanging in a jar and with her boys who said 'Sibyl, what is your wish?' She replied 'My wish is to die.')

Granted that the Sibyl did a lot of lamenting, that lamentation is pretty noisy, and the Sibyl's was reportedly particularly noisy – Virgil writes of 'a huge cave, the secret place of the terrifying Sibyl ... from which a hundred wide tunnels, a hundred mouths lead, from which as many voices rush, the Sibyl's replies' (*præsident horrendæque procul secreta Sibyllæ, antrum immane ... quo lati ducent aditus centum, ostia centum, unde ruunt totidem voces, responsa Sibyllæ* .) – I'm sorry to say that for too much of the time *An der Stimme gekannt* is just that – noise.

Annette Schlünz's *Nine Songs* also relate to the Sibylline books, nine in number originally until the last King of Rome offered to buy them but at a reduced price until the Sibyl burned first three then three more and still demanded – and finally received – the same price for the remaining three. I'm afraid that I found these even less tolerable than the Haubmann. We are told that the texts are by contemporary poets but, unfortunately, we are not given them in the booklet. I'm not sure they would have helped but it would have been nice to have them.

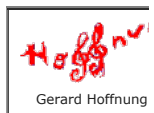
There is one other recording each of Haubmann and Schlünz in the catalogue but I haven't summoned up the courage to try either. This seems to be the only recording of music by Babette Koblenz. Here at the end of the recording was the one contemporary work that I could relate to and enjoy.

I'm sorry not to be more positive about this recording. If you think you may be more sympathetic, try it first from [Naxos Music Library](#) if you can, or sample from [Qobuz](#).

Those seeking Lasso's *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* would be better advised to turn to The Brabant Ensemble on Hyperion CDA67887 – [review](#) – [DL News August 2011/2](#) – or The Hilliard Ensemble on ECM 4538412, on both of which the music is coupled with other works by Lasso. I had to turn to the Hyperion recording for



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**Brian Wilson**

**Track-listing :**

**Orlando di LASSO (1532–1594)** *Carmina chromatica quæ audis modulata tenore* [2:21]

**Karin HAUBMANN (b.1962)** *an der Stimme gekannt* [11:16]

**Orlando di LASSO** *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* Nos. 1-3 [3:01 + 2:24 + 2:10]

**Annette SCHLÜNZ (b.1964)** *9 Gesänge für Countertenor, Schalmei und Akkordeon* Nos. 1-3 [0:57 + 2:18 + 2:19]

**Orlando di LASSO** *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* Nos. 4-6 [1:52 + 2:43 + 2:11]

**Annette SCHLÜNZ** *9 Gesänge für Countertenor, Schalmei und Akkordeon* Nos. 4-6 [2:12 + 1:48 + 1:08]

**Orlando di LASSO** *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* Nos. 7-9 [2:23 + 1:33 + 1:44]

**Annette SCHLÜNZ** *9 Gesänge für Countertenor, Schalmei und Akkordeon* Nos. 7-9 [3:39 + 1:11 + 1:48]

**Babette KOBLLENZ (b.1956)** *Around* [14:11]

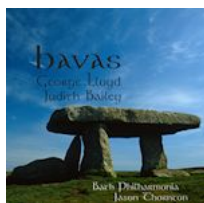
**Orlando di LASSO** *Prophetiae Sibyllarum* Nos. 10-12 [1:49 + 1:41 + 2:23]



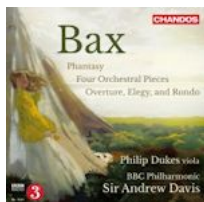
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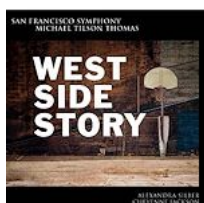
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