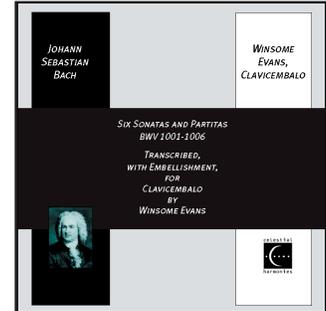


celestial harmonies

johann sebastian bach
six sonatas and partitas
bww 1001-1006
transcribed, with embellishment, for
clavicembala by winsome evans
celestial harmonies 14268-2
double cd - 0 1371 14268 2 3
file classification: classical



the artist

Winsome Evans is an Associate Professor in the Music Department at the University of Sydney, Australia, where she lectures in a broad spectrum of music history, composition and performance courses. These cover Western classical, traditional and popular styles which range from the early-mediæval period through to the present day. The basic underpinning to every area of her lectures is an informed, research-based focus on historical practices. Her teaching in various styles of mediæval, renaissance and, particularly, baroque historical performance practice and research has been seminal in developing the skills of outstanding student musicians, many of whom have taken up careers in early music, locally and internationally.

Her teaching is complimented and enhanced by her own performance, composition and research activities with the ensembles which she both directs and performs with, such as The Renaissance Players (Australia's first and longest-standing early music ensemble), Sydney Baroque, Baroque Guild, Young Opera and The Beggar's Opera. In the first of these, she has performed on over 30 instruments, as well as arranging and/or composing over 2,500 items since its inception in 1966/67.

In 1980—for her services to music—Winsome Evans was awarded the British Empire Medal (B.E.M.) in the Queen's Honours List, as well as the New South Wales Jaycee's Award; and, in 1985, the Order of Australia Medal (O.A.M.).

Winsome Evans's other works on Celestial Harmonies, recorded with The Renaissance Players, are *Of Numbers and Miracles: Selected Cantigas de Santa Maria (13091-2)*, *The Sephardic Experience, Vols. 1-4 (19911-2)* and *Testament: Archangels' Banquet/Shepherds' Delight (14197-2)*.

the project

Following a custom common at the time, Johann Sebastian Bach was, throughout his life, a prolific transcriber and rearranger of his own and his contemporaries' compositions. The music on these recordings should not be classified simply as arrangement, and certainly not as interpretation, but rather as translation, or metamorphosis, from one medium (unaccompanied solo violin) to another (solo harpsichord) with Bach himself as the only model.

The aim here has been, firstly, to create a body of music which is suitable for the harpsichord, the keyboard instrument Bach preferred for his own transcriptions and, secondly, to model its components on the textures, the compass range, the harmonic, contrapuntal and rhythmic procedures which Bach used in his various transcriptions, as well as in his large-scale works for the harpsichord. The third aim was to perform these transcriptions/transformations with the ornamentation and embellishment (graces and passage work), the fingering, the articulation and registrations of his style, in the manner of his time.

Bach's music is always polyphonic, whereas the violin, by nature, is not. Winsome Evans's idea was that Bach's music is originally abstract/theoretical music existing in a space without instrumentation to begin with. She wanted to bring out what in her belief was the full character of the pieces—the bass lines, voices and embellishment had to be added to what was thought to have been multi-layered music in Bach's mind at the outset. The score is the result of this effort, and Winsome Evans's own recording should be considered as just the beginning of the process of breathing new life into the works. It should be noted that Bach was a violinist himself, and that he acted responsibly and in his own best interest when he issued the six works as he did. Nevertheless, there is an open character to be taken for granted in Bach's entire body of works, allowing for different views and interpretations (and additions as it were). After all, Bach's works have a long history of being adapted and rearranged, which has mostly turned out to be a good thing. From Ferruccio Busoni to Switched-On Bach, the Swingle Singers to Glenn Gould or the Modern Jazz Quartet, no Western classical composer has inspired—for better or worse—so many different approaches over the past century, since recording has allowed us to know what people are doing.

This double CD recording and pocket score (206 pages incl. a facsimile of the 1720 autograph) are also presented in an attractive black box (14268-5). The performance score is also available upon request from Celestial Harmonies.

