

THE SONGBOOK OF HIERONYMUS LAUWERYN



VARIOS

Egidius Kwartet & Consort

Et'cetera KTC 1314
2006 - 90:03 min.

This recording contains all 25 Dutch polyphonic songs in the private songbook compiled in Bruges between 1495 and 1507 by the Flemish businessman and art-lover, Hieronymus Lauweryn. The collection, dominated by French chansons (63 of them) and some Latin pieces, includes such famous names as Josquin, Loyset Compère, Johannes Ghiselin and Hayne van Ghizeghem. The Dutch songs are all anonymous save for one attributed to “Laurentius D.A.” (possibly Lauweryn himself).

This genre flourished in the early 15th century principally around Bruges, but had suffered a long period of silence until a revival began around 1500. In this sense, Lauweryn’s book was quite avant-garde, as it pre-dated the earliest 16th century Dutch song collection by about 40 years. However, many of the songs, most of them for three voices, some in the doleful courtly love tradition and others jollier or simply risqué pieces, are older works. Only a few betray the latest musical or literary fashion of around 1500. The inclusion on this set of some French chansons and Compère’s *O vos omnes* allows the listener to make some interesting comparisons.

This recording continues the Egidius Kwartet’s tradition of well-constructed and meticulously crafted recitals of 15th and 16th century polyphony. The four singers are joined by the soprano Susan Jonkers and a consort of recorders, viols and lute, allowing some interesting combinations of sounds. Their refined renditions are sure to win over many who may consider Dutch an unmusical language.

A true delight. **CHRISTOPHER PRICE**