

Canconer de Barcelona

Cor de Cambra, Dyapason/ Teodor Roura

Ars Harmonica 194—77:45

The music of renaissance Spain was often collected in extensive songbooks or *cancioneros*. Some of the most famous of these are associated with the Spanish royal court (such as the *Cancionero de Palacio*) or come from the libraries of famous persons (such as the *Cancionero de la Colombina*, which was owned by the son of Christopher Columbus). The music of this release stems from a unique songbook from Barcelona that contains a mixture of works by well-know composers (such as Mateu Flecha and Martin de Ribaflecha) and works that were probably composed locally in Catalonia. Also interesting is the mixture of sacred and secular works copied in the same manuscript.

On the basis of the repertoire alone, this would be an interesting recording, but the performance is very uneven. The small amateur choir produces a rather thick, unwieldy sound and the pitch is sometimes unsure; the instrumentalists, in contrast, are quite good. The booklet is informative, but the texts are given only in Catalan or Latin (with Catalan translations). There are certainly more polished recordings of similar repertoire from the Spanish *cancioneros* (for example, Dufay Collective, Nov/Dec 2002:228, Hesperion XX, Mar/Apr 1997:291 and Sept/Oct 2001:274), but this is a unique musical view of renaissance Catalonia.

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