This recording presents us with the finest chansons and instrumental pieces of the Spanish Renaissance – the Golden Age which, between the accession of Charles V (1516) to the end of the reign of Philip II (1598), saw the blossoming of an incredibly rich polyphonic output.

Of the **Ensalada** Cervantes tells us that it was “a kind of song in different metres”. These truculent “salads” (thus called because they sound like a culinary mixture) are an Iberian form of the *quodlibet* and the Parisian *fricassées*...

Between the accession of Charles V (1516) and the decline of the reign of Philip II (1556-98), the theatre of Baroque disillusionment, Spain was to know an age of splendour. However, it was a society quite devoid of humanistic *leggerezza* (lightness): in this world there was a violent clashing of two conflicting ideals, on the one hand a religious dogmatism exacerbated by fear of the Papacy, and on the other a liberal humanism. This explains how the severe personages of Pedro Fernández’s *Reredos of Saint Helena* and the more affable and carnal ones that surround *Danae* in the frescoes painted by Gaspar Becerra could exist side by side. Two spaces co-existed on one and the same ground, one of them in the filtered and dark obscurity of the churches, the other encircled like a painting abounding in fruit and flowers, venison and comforting wines. With a presentiment of the tenebrous landscape which was to engulf this kingdom that went as far as to engrave its coins with the motto “*Non sufficit orbis*” (the world is not enough), many of the nobles, artists and merchants chose a life of far from metaphoric pleasure on the occasion of the sumptuous private festivities described in the poems of Esteban Manuel de Villegas.

We find this duality in the work of the Extremaduran Juan Vásquez (c.1510-60), whose music, widely known even before it was published¹, can be alternately joyous and expansive in its secular aspect, or profound and contemplative in its religious one, as in the exemplary *Agenda defunctorum* (Office for the Dead, Seville, 1556). In spite of the high quality of his religious music, it is mainly in his secular polyphony that this Master of the Chapel of the Cathedral of Badajoz, his native town, excelled: it has an elegant simplicity of expression and beguiling freshness, ideal for enhancing the soirée of his protectors. Of his Villancicos i canciones a tres y a cuatro (Villancicos and songs in three and in four parts), published at Osuna in 1551, only a single part has survived. The spirit of these pieces may be retrieved by consulting the *Recopilación de sonetos y villancicos* (Compilation of airs for playing and of villancicos), published in Seville in 1560. This collection contains extremely concise pieces, very often based on the tunes of popular songs, frequently making use of repetition of a thematic phrase in partial imitation in all of the parts. Vásquez, who did not refuse to have his works published without an a lo divino version², introduced a notable innovation, the permanent liaison of the refrain and the couplet. Pieces like *Cavallero, queraysme dexar*, *Ojos morenos*, *Lágrimas de mi consuelo* are all examples of a sober, clear, flowing and balanced polyphonic texture capable of a supple and easy incorporation of popular inspiration.

If Vásquez is an illustrious representative of the Andalusian school, the dynamic vigour of Mateo Flecha (Tarragona, c. 1481-1553) is a striking reflection of the artistic ebullition at the flourishing court of Germaine de Foix and Ferdinand of Aragon, Duke of Calabria, in Valencia where the composer undoubtedly resided between 1533 and 1543. Although he later migrated to the chapel of the Infantas Doña María and Doña Juana near Avila his music remained marked by the colour and spontaneity of the Catalanian School. His extensive production has come down to us thanks to Mateo Flecha the Younger (c.1530-1604) who in 1581 put his uncle’s works in the hands of the printer Jorge Negrino of Prague. This was an anthology entitled *Las Ensaladas de Flecha* (The salads of Flecha), “who was Master of the Chapel of the Most serene Infantas of Castille, Collected by Matheo Flecha his nephew […] with some of the latter's and of diverse authors, corrected by him and given to the printer”. The “diverse authors” in question were Father Alberch Vila, chacón and Bartomeu Cárceres. Of the “salad” (“ensalada”) Miguel de Cervantes tells us in his *Viaje del Parnaso* (“Parnassian Voyage”, ch. 63) that it is a “type of song in different metres”; according to
Juan Díaz de Rengifo’s Arte poética española (44, Salamanca, 1592), it consists of “stanzas in redondillas¹ between which all kind sof metres are interspersed”. Always picturesque in his definitions, Sebastián de Covarrubias explains in his Tesoro de la lengua Castellana o Española (1611) that “it is because in a salad one mixt various greens, salted meat, fish, olives, pickles, preparatories, egg-yolks, borage blossom […] that the name “salad” has been given to a type of song in mixed metres […] and we have numerous and excellent ones by early composers, like ‘el molino’, ‘la bomba’, ‘el fuego’, ‘la justa’, ‘el chillindrón’, etc.”

Although we find precedents for this type of composition in Juan de Triana (fl. 1478), there is a six-part composition by Francisco de Peñalosa partially preserved in the Cancionera de Palacio (No. 311)², and of which Higinio Anglés writes in his edition of Las Ensaladas (Barcelona, 1954)³ that “the cantus firmus and the tenor I sing’Por las sierras de Madrid’, while the bass sings in Latin and the other voices sing different texts always in Castillian to popular melodies”. However, it is Flecha who takes the prize for the purest practice and the consolidation of the genre, which he endows with an alternation of sequences in the madrigalisque and the homophonic styles, always in association with extremely popular romancers⁴ and songs.

The “Salads”, divided into several sections – generally from seven to twelve -, constitute an eminently Spanish form. They united the sacred and the secular and were often sung at Christmas. For example, The War realistically depicts “the valour” of the Child-God come to fight against Lucifer, including onomatopoeias imitating the sound of the drum and the lute.

The same thing is found in The Bomb, which Miguel de Fuenllana (d. c. 1579) arranged for voices accompanied by figured tablature in his Orpheonica lyra (Seville, 1554)⁵. Only six of Flecha’s eleven Ensaladas have survived complete and, inevitably, in their “programmatic accent”, as Anglés puts it, they remind us of Clément Janequin’s La Bataille de Marignán.

The first known mention of Joan Brudieú (c.1520-91) dates from 1538-39⁶. Born in an unknown place in the diocese of Limoges, he established himself in the Cathedral (Seo) of Urgel where he became master of the chapel, although he spent some time in Barcelona (1578) as the chapel master and organist of the church of Santa Maria del Mar. It was in Barcelona that the printer Hubert Gotart published the collection of four-part madrigals entitled Madrigaux du tres reverend Ioan Brudieu maistre de Chapelle de la saincte Eglise de la Sea d’Urgel à quatre voix (1585)⁷. His assimilation of Catalan music and his conscientious settings of the poetry of Ausias March⁸ link Brudieu’s splendid madrigals to the serene and jovial art of Father Serafí and Joan Timoneda. Thus, in En lo mon pus sou dotada the cantus firmus is a melody of a popular cast related to the simple and contained line of the Marial Beatitudes – an elegant way of exploiting his contrapuntal inventiveness.

Compared with the immensity of the vocal repertory, instrumental music in Spain occupied a relatively modest space, as it did in the rest of Europe, although it was of capital importance if one considers the large amount of keyboard music and the contribution of the vihuelists. However, side by side with these repertories there is the admirable Tratado de Glosas sobre Clausulas y otros generos de puntos en la Musica de Violines (Rome, 1553) in which Diego Ortiz reflects on the art of the glosas (ornamented variations) on a small cadential melodic formula (clausula). In the paragraph devoted to plainsong – themes were given this name although they did not necessarily come from the liturgical repertory – he cites various pieces which ha calls Recercadas and in which he demonstrates the best way for the vihuela de arco (bowed vihuela – similar to the viola da gamba) to play the discantus (descant) with another instrument. Among the best known of these Recercadas are the four written on the four-part madrigal by Jacques Arcadelt, O felici occhi miei – the first and the third on the fourth part, the second on the cantus and the fourth, an invention of Ortiz’s making it a five-part madrigal -, and the eight on “plainchants which are commonly called Tenors in Italy”. The Recercada VI on La Romanesca enjoyed particular popularity and, like the whole series based on the popular song Guàrdame las vacas (“Watch the cows for me”), it contains variations filled with charm and rhythmic refinement.

Although everything by Valderrábano is interesting, his Fourth Book (Valladolid, 1547) deserves special attention: here the diferencia (variation) attains to one of its highest summits, for he succeeds in writing over a hundred on the tenor of El Conde Claros⁹. These variations demand great technical prowess from the performer who has to play complex passages ornamented with a profusion of trills, double stopping and other features. As for Alonso Mudarra, he devoted various pieces in his Tres Libros en Cifras para Vihuela (Seville, 1546) to the guitar – the earliest known source of music for the instrument. These three fantasies show a remarkable contrapuntal freedom: full of lyrical grace and imagination, they are fine examples representing a composer that he claimed to offer these pieces merely “to take the chill from the hands”.

RAMÓN ANDRÉS
Translated by Derek Yeotr
1. Some of the works of Vázquez had already appeared in the Silva de Sirenas (Collections of sirens, Valladolid, 1547) of Enrique de Valderrábano (c. 1500-57).

2. The music of the Spanish Golden age, especially when sung, almost always existed in two versions, one secular, the other sacred. Thus, to the same tune, in the same “timbre”, a pious text could be sung in church, while outside it had worldly, sometimes rather picaresque and bawdy words.

3. Besides various metres, the Ensalada often interlaces different languages in its polyphony. An equivalent would be the quodlibet or the fricassee. Darius Milhaud wrote a ballet in the style, called Salade.

4. The redondilla is a stanza of four octosyllabic lines with an abba rhyme-scheme.

5. A late 15th cent. song-book from the period of the Catholic Kings, consisting of 460 different compositions, courtly and popular airs.

6. The romancero is a short epico-lyrical poem in octosyllabic lines with assonances in the even lines. An immense number of these sung and recited poems existed which all Spaniards knew practically by heart.

7. He is mentioned in a Catalan document as “choirmaster Jean Brudieu, a French singer, thanks to the financial support of charitable works”.

8. The modern edition was published in 1921 by Felipe Pedrell and Higinio Anglés, op. cit.

9. A famous Catalan poet of the first half of the 14th cent., the writer of love poems.

10. One of the best known romanceros of the 16th cent.
Matteo Flecha: La Bomba

Bomba, bomba y agua fuera!
Vayan los cargos al mar,
do remedio no se espera.
A l’estaca socorred!

Oh, que la nave se asuela!
Mandad calafatear,
que quizá dará remedio!
Ya no hay tiempo ni lugar,
que la nao se abre por medio!

¿Qué haremos, qué haremos?
¿Qué haré yo, qué haré?
Que yo, que no sé nadar, morirá.
Virgen Madre, yo prometo
rezar con tino tus horas.

Si, Juan, tú escapas,
hierme horas.
Monserrate luego meto.

Yo triste ofrezco también,
en saliendo de este lago,
Adoré a Jesús rezién nacido.
Remedió su advenimiento mil enojos.

Pump, pump, bail out the water!
Heave the cargo overboard,
Otherwise we’re going to sink,
There’s no hope of salvation.
Get help to the main-sheets,
All hands to the helm!

What a situation! Run, run!
Can’t you see we’re lost?
Cut through the rigging.
To lower the sail.

Oh, the ship is shattered!
Caulk up the chinks,
That might repair the damage.

What use is there in swimming?
What use is there in swimming?
Oh, the sea is so rough
That all of us will perish.

Hold on to the barrels and timbers!
But woe is me, what will I do,
All hands to the helm!
What a situation! Run, run!
No veis nuestra perdición?

Esas gúmenas cortad
porque se amaine la vela.
Hazia acá contrapesad!
Oh, the ship is shattered!

Mandad calafatear,
que quizá dará remedio!

Ya no hay tiempo ni lugar,
que la nao se abre por medio!

¿Qué haremos, qué haremos?
¿Si aprovechará nadar?

Oh, que la nave se asuela!
Mandad calafatear,
que quizá dará remedio!

Glass, glass, bake out the water!
Heave the cargo overboard,
Otherwise we’re going to sink,
There’s no hope of salvation.
Get help to the main-sheets,
All hands to the helm!

What a situation! Run, run!
Can’t you see we’re lost?
Cut through the rigging.
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porque se amaine la vela.
Hazia acá contrapesad!
Oh, the ship is shattered!

Mandad calafatear,
que quizá dará remedio!

Ya no hay tiempo ni lugar,
que la nao se abre por medio!

¿Qué haremos, qué haremos?
¿Si aprovechará nadar?

¿Quándo nos veremos? Ojos morenos De bonica color. Soys tan graciosos Que matays de amor, de amor morenos. Ojos morenos, ¿Quándo nos veremos? Ah, me! Mother mine. I was the flower of the town. When I went, mother mine, To sell bread in the town, They all said: fit. What a fair baker's-maid! I was fair, I was the flower of the town.

My ill has a cause, that is certain, But the cause of my ill is not those who condemn me, For it is a cause so just and so good, That it causes effects of the greatest harmony. My ill is an effect, and it is discordant To call it an ill, because love commands That this ill should be a good, although it gives pain; Thus the name “ill” is an uncertain one. For if its effect is good, how can one slander it? If it is an ill, how does it give me such sweet pleasure? Forsooth, in thinking in these extreme terms, My being is diminished and disconcerted, Hence, to give it a name that becomes it best, Let us call it a good ill, which is more just.

The Blessings of our Lady
Most blessed in this world With seven joys, Mother of God, Of seven more you are the heir In heaven, as you deserve. The first is, Virgin pure, In the rank that you possess: More than any other creature You exhale its glory. After God most honoured You are and shall be our advocate In heaven, as you deserve.
Lo segon, Verge benigna,

vos ensemps ab vostre Fill
un voler als dos consigna
l’u de l’altre sou espill.

Sou vos tan glorificada
que sempre sou y serreu,
digna reyna coronada
en els cels, com merexeu.

Lo tercer, Verge sancta,
què’n la cort celestial,
claredat prenue vos tanta
qu’apres Deu mostra tal;
de la qual illuminada,

mes quel jorn del sol no pren,
sou de tots los sancts amada
en els cels, com merexeu.

Lo quart es qu’us obeexen
sancts y sanctes fent honor,
com aquella que’us conexen,
ser mare del Salvador,
y regina premiada,

y deessa coronada
en los cels, com merexeu.

Lo quint es que’us remunera
lo senyor vostres turments,
ab grat vostre sens espera,
d’aquells dons tots temps plasents.

May se pert en vos soldada,
qu’us serveix be l satisfeu,
per ser tant regraciada
en los cels, com merexeu.

Lo sisè es que vestida
sou decors glorificat,
y estau vos molt unida
ab la sancta Trinitat.

Als seraphins axalçada
impetrau lo que voleu,
no us es cosa denegada
en los cels, com merexeu.

Lo setè es que sou certa
que rals goigs may finaran,
ni’n sereu ia mes deserta,
ans per tots temps duraran.

Donchs pregau per nos, amada,
y feu nos amichs ab Deu,

per ser tant regraciada
en los cels, com merexeu.

Lo octè es qu’us ameen
sou consigna del tabi,
qu’es la que vos impressa,
que aquest una sera.

Dis pel nombre de vos confi,

que serreu inmes deserta,
sou de tots los sancts amada
en els cels, com merexeu.

Lo novè es qu’es alata
sou confissió unanimously,
que vos coneguia, amada,
que vos amava.

Semper vos serreu amada
en els cels, com merexeu.

Lo dècim es que’us vols
sobre los cap arribada,
que vos prengui vostre fin.

En los cels, com merexeu.

Juan Vasquez :

Gentil señora mia,

Yo hallo en el mover de vuestros ojos
Un no sé qué, no sé cómo nombrarlo,
Que todos mis enojos
Descarga de mi triste fantasia.

Busco la soledad por contemplarlo,

Y en ello tantos gustos de bien hallo,
Que moriría, si el pensar durase.

Mas, este pensamiento es tan delgado,

Que presto es acabado

Y conviene qu’en otras cosas pase.

Porfio en más pensar,

Y estoy diziendo:

Si esto no acabase!

Mas, después veo que tanto gozar
No es de las cosas que pueden durar.

Juan Vasquez :

Cavallerio, querayste dexar,

Que me dirán mal.

Oh qué mañanaica mañana,

Cuando la niña y el cavaller
Ambos se yran a bañar!

Cavallerio, querayste dexar,

Que me dirán mal.
11 Juan Vasquez: Agora que sé d’amor me metéis
Agora que sé d’amor de cavallero,
Agora me metéis monja en el monesterio,
Ayer Dios qué grave cosa!

12 Juan Vasquez: El que sin ti bivir ya no querría,
Y à mucho tiempo que morir desea,
Por ver si tanto mal se acabaría,
A tu merced suplica qu’ésta lea,
Que no està ya para durar, mas parte,
Sin que d’algún alivio se provea.

14 Juan Vasquez: Lágrimas de mi consuelo
Que aveys hecho maravillas,
Y hazeys,
Salid, salid sin recelo
Y regad estas mexillas
Que soleys.

15 Matteo Flexa: La Guerra
Pues la guerra està en las manos
y para guerra nacemos,
bien será nos ensayemos
para vencer los tiranos.
El capitán de esta lid
de nuestra parte, sabed
que es el hijo de David
y de la otra es Luzbel.
Y podrése decir de él
sin que nadie lo proFORE:
“Quien bien tiene y mal escoge
por mal que le venga, no s’enjoie”
Esta es guerra de primor
do se requiere destreza.
Pregúñense con presteza,
con fífano y atambor.
Farirarirà…
Todos los buenos soldados
y para guerra nacemos,
bien será nos ensayemos
para vencer los tiranos.
El capitán de esta lid
de nuestra parte, sabed
que es el hijo de David
y de la otra es Luzbel.
Y podrése decir de él
sin que nadie lo proFORE:
“Quien bien tiene y mal escoge
por mal que le venga, no s’enjoie”
Esta es guerra de primor
...
La muralla se derriba
por arriba.
Sus, a entrar,
que no es tiempo de tardar,
que el capitán, va delante
con su ropa rocegante
ensangrentada.
Nadie no vuelva la cara.
Sus, arriba, viva, viva!
Los enemigos ya huyen,
a ellos, que van corridos
y vencidos.
Santiago, Santiago!
Victoria, victoria!
Haec est victoria
quae vincit mundum
fides nostra.

The rampart is collapsing
From top to bottom.
Up, go through,
There is no time to lose,
For the captain is in front
With his splendid garments
All bloodied.
Let no one turn back.
Up, get up there, hurrah, hurrah!
The enemy is fleeing,
After them, they are confounded
And vanquished.
Santiago, Santiago!
Victory, victory!
This is the victory
That is won by the faithful
Of this world.

Translation: Derek Yeld