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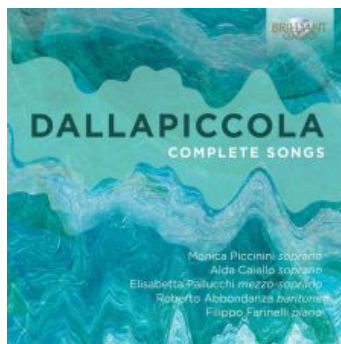
## DALLAPICCOLA Complete Songs

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Given that the voice dominates Dallapiccola's output, it always seems surprising that he wrote so few songs. A handful of early efforts were among the works he withdrew in the early 1930s as his politically engaged, anti-Fascist stance developed: they are not included here, in accordance with his wishes. His acknowledged works include only two original song-cycles: Rencesvals (1946), written for Pierre Bernac with Poulenc as accompanist, which elides the medieval 'Chanson de Roland' with a depiction of France's suffering during the occupation; and Quattro Liriche di Antonio Machado (1948) for high soprano, which looks at new life and a new world through imagery that links the coming of spring with Columbus's discovery of America.

In the late 1950s, however, he undertook a two-volume collection of 17th- and 18th-century songs and arias for the International Music Company in New York, realising the figured basses of the earlier songs himself and transcribing the fully worked-out accompaniments for

Author: Tim Ashley



DALLAPICCOLA Complete Songs

### DALLAPICCOLA Complete Songs

Italian Songs of the 17th and 18th Centuries - Vol 1; Vol 2

(4) Liriche di Antonio Machado

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the later numbers. Two big scenes from his own 1942 edition of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* were included, along with familiar songs like Giuseppe Giordano's 'Caro mio ben'. Purists might jib at the shading of much of this repertoire towards art song; but at a time when most realisations of 17th-century music aspired to lush Romanticism, Dallapiccola proved admirably austere, reducing the accompaniments to the sparsest of gestures and allowing the vocal lines to emerge in all their expressive glory. On its own terms, it's a remarkably beautiful achievement.

This marks its first outing on disc. The set's star is its pianist, Filippo Farinelli, whose playing is impeccably lapidary and pointillistic throughout. The singing can be variable. Mezzo Elisabetta Pellucchi sounds grainy and is better in declamation than lyricism. Soprano Monica Piccinini, wonderfully silvery, and glamorous-sounding baritone Roberto Abbondanza are both outstanding. Abbondanza gives us a reflective *Rencesvals*, very different from Dietrich Henschel's angrier approach with pianist Axel Bauni on Orfeo. Alda Caiello, in her sole contribution to the set, is smokily moody in the *Quattro Liriche*: Mojca Erdmann, rapturously sensual on the same Orfeo disc, is marginally preferable here. Even so, this is a hugely important issue, despite its occasional flaws.

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