

ディスコグラフィアー掲載

ディスコグラフィアー 【2019No.127】 (HP 掲載)

分類 : SACD/CD

作曲家 : J.S.Bach

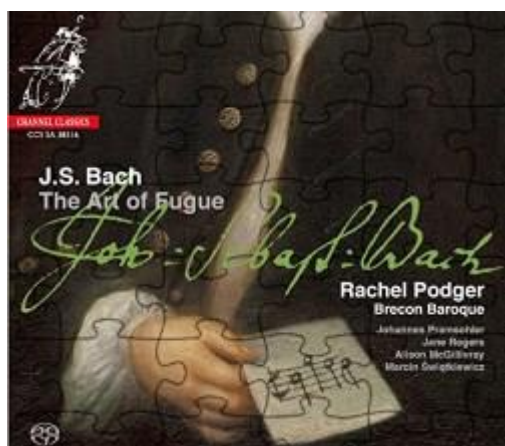
曲名 : Die Kunst der Fuge

演奏 : Rachel Podger / Brecon Baroque

発売 : Channer Classics

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概要 :



収録曲 :

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750) *The Art of Fugue*

Brecon Baroque (Johannes Prahmsoler (violin, viola); Jane Rogers (viola); Alison McGillivray (cello); Marcin Świątkiewicz (harpsichord)); Rachel Podger (violin, director)

rec. December, 2016, Church of St Jude-on-the-Hill, London DDD

CHANNEL CLASSICS CCSSA38316 SACD [1:11:08]

ネット上の解説を、長くなりますが、下記に引用します。

“Bach’s *Die Kunst der Fuge*, BWV 1080, was written during the last decade of his life, the 1740s. He did not specify the instruments to be used—exclusively, or even by preference—when performing this unfinished work. But some combinations of textures, timbres and registers are clearly more appropriate than others to convey the ways in which Bach placed fugue at the centre of his melodic invention. Six saxophones and a drum would be no good, for instance.

On this excellent CD, Rachel Podger and her Brecon Baroque employ the more

conventional mix of strings rich in colour and ample in range of register: violins (one doubling with viola), violas and cello with harpsichord. This most definitely works. Such spring and momentum as that to be heard, for example, in *Contrapunctus* 13 [tr.16] are aided immeasurably by this blend of textures. The fact that the first autographs of the *Art of Fugue* are in open score—one voice to a staff—has invited the conclusion that the work was more of an intellectual exercise than something to be performed and heard. It is tempting, though, to imagine that Bach wanted to leave such a monumental work when he died lest a sense of how he had arrived at his achievements die with him. Podger's approach is one based on the celebration that this is music with an inbuilt emotional response, and that it prizes beauty arising from cold conception.

This work is made up of 14 fugues (14 is, of course, a significant number for Bach) and 4 canons in D minor. They are variations on the single subject, which is heard at the start—and by and large become ever more complex. The term *contrapunctus* is usually used for each of the fugues. This suggests that Bach conceived the work to explore, to demonstrate, how far counterpoint could go. How far the germ of a single subject can—using fugue—result in a work rich in emotion and melody. And should be appreciated as much for this as for its... mathematics. One of the first impressions you may have when listening to this truly accomplished performance is that Podger and her group have chosen—and successfully arrived at—a blend of the immediate, the down to earth, the accessible on the one hand; and an uncomplicated yet admiring sense of the elevation innate in every note on the other.

Nothing needs to be dressed. *Tempi* can be safely taken at a 'human' pace without the risk of the music's sounding mundane. Notes can be grouped (like the heavy syncopation in *Contrapunctus* 2 [tr.2], for instance) in such a way that the natural is profound, the simple is full of meaning.

Yet these amazing 18 movements are never treated perfunctorily; or even with a lack of awe. This might be seen as consistent with Bach's Lutheranism... so great is the glory and profundity of the object of worship or regard that it needs no exaggeration in asserting its claim. The emphasis for Podger—ultimately—is on the humanity of the *Art of Fugue*. On how melody, harmony and the ineluctable "march" of a musical idea in its context imply an equally inescapable sense that the music is as inevitable as is our ageing. One hears this at its most moving in the final *contrapunctus*.

Bach's wisdom in this work is to the fore. Yet it is not a wisdom emanating from

resignation, but from humble certainty. It is all too easy to hammer this aspect of the *Art of Fugue* and thereby draw its teeth. Podger and Brecon Baroque do not do this.

In part, such a good balance is achieved by these performers' concentration on the individual sounds of their instruments, on their individual timbres, on the times when they are most comfortable with attack, and when with *legato* playing and so on. This love of pure sound is evident, for example, in *Contrapunctus 6*, which acknowledges the rhythms of the French style current in Bach's lifetime.

Podger and Brecon Baroque also approach the work as a whole. Its architecture is clear. Each individual *Contrapunctus* is where the players'—and our—attention is directed throughout its duration. Its own development is paramount (listen to the sense of progress in the fugue of, say, *Contrapunctus 9* [tr.6]). Yet by the end of *Contrapunctus 14*, we realise how far we have come.

This tactic moves the enterprise a long way from running the risk of asking listeners to make sense themselves of what might otherwise be perceived as the succession of a dozen and a half discrete variations on the same idea. Infinity really can be found in a grain of sand.

The order of the *Contrapuncti* on this CD is 1 to 4; the Canon alla Ottava; *Contrapuncti 9, 10*; then 5 to 8; then 11; the Canon alla Duodecima; *Contrapunctus 12*; the Canon alla Decima; *Contrapunctus 13*; Canon per augmentationem in contra motu; then the final (14th) *Contrapunctus*. This is because Podger has chosen to group everything by the type of fugue: Simple, Double, Counter, Triple and Triple/Quadruple.

The accompaniment from the cello or harpsichord is part of the whole, not the act of an enthusiastic onlooker bent on demonstrating their perhaps dubious involvement. The approach taken by Podger and the four other players fosters a sense of dialogue and interaction. Further, there is a sense of shared goals. This co-involvement can be heard well, for example, in *Contrapunctus 7* [tr.10]. Lines weave and intertwine. Podger and Brecon Baroque achieve a level of curiosity, though, as if no-one knows what is coming next. This is not mere freshness and spontaneity on their part, but honesty and adherence to Bach's understanding of counterpoint. Each figure makes best sense when it is part of the whole.

The acoustic (the SACD version was used for this review) is up to the usual high standard of Channel Classics: rich, reverberant and supportive. At the same time, the sense of space promotes dignity rather than spectacle; the instruments are closely miked. The booklet has an illuminating essay by John Butt on the context

of the *Art of Fugue* and place in the repertoire. All in all, this performance is one to be sought out: it will repay repeated listening.”

フーガの技法は、[My Sonic Signature Gold の導入\(12\)](#) と [My Sonic Signature Gold の導入\(13\)](#)でも報告していますが、演奏のスタイルには自由度があるようで、それぞれに個性があります。本 CD は比較的オーソドックスな演奏ですが、録音が 2015 年と新しく、現代の解釈で演奏されているように感じます。ライナーノーツには、詳しい録音やマスタリング、モニター機器まで記載されており、最新の機器が使用されていますので、音は極めて鮮明で、チェンバロの音などはごく自然に捉えられています。

以上