

LEO *Dove fuggo à che penso. S'offendesti il mio Signor. Sono piene di serene* • Miguel Ulla (ct); Fernando Reyes (tiorba, archlute, Baroque gtr); Javier Jiménez (org) • HR 262 (Streaming audio: 42:36)
<https://music.apple.com/us/album/leo-6-cantate-spirituale-vol-1/1772045514>

LEO *Vissi nol niego. Tremolanti d'intorno. Adorato Giesù* • Miguel Ulla (ct); Fernando Reyes (tiorba, archlute, Baroque gtr, chitarra battente, colascione); Javier Jiménez (org) • HR 388 (Streaming audio: 48:00)
https://open.spotify.com/album/5T4QpBJ18v486CRT5IMpsF?si=v2WiWTixRmSqW_Abw78mXw

Two volumes from HR Recordings comprise *Sei Cantate Spirituali* by the Italian composer Leonardo Leo (1694–1744). Leo was prominent in Naples as a composer, organist, and educator. Leo composed numerous operas, as well as various other vocal and instrumental works. HR lists this release of Leo's *Six Spiritual Cantatas* as "First World Recording(s)." Scored for soprano voice and accompaniment, the works are cast as monologues, alternating recitative and aria. The vocal and instrumental writing impresses as both highly expressive and sonically radiant. It is clear that the performers have invested a great deal of time, thought, and care into their renditions. Countertenor Miguel Ulla emphasizes an introspective and detailed approach, with a focus on illuminating the text. Organist Javier Jiménez, and Fernando Reyes, performing on a variety of fretted instruments, are sterling collaborators. The unity of artistic vision is quite impressive.

Sad to say, the documentary material accompanying these recordings falls woefully short of the performances. The booklets for each volume include track and artist listings, artist photos, and recording information. There is no information about Leo or the works. Texts and translations are likewise absent. This would be a lamentable situation for a release offering familiar repertoire. For world premiere recordings, it is beyond the pale. It is not too late for HR Recordings and the participating artists to provide the needed written materials, at least via the web. These fine recordings, and those who purchase them, deserve no less. Recommended, with the stated caveat. **Ken Meltzer**

This article originally appeared in Issue 50:1 (Sept/Oct 2026) of *Fanfare Magazine*.