

would use to such great effect in so many of his soulful arias.

This album, entitled *Handel in Italy: Vedendo amor*, features Spanish countertenor Miguel Ulla, who manages (unlike some other countertenors I've heard in this and similar repertoire) to create some significant differentiation even among predominantly lyrical singing in the three cantatas: *Siete rose rugiadosa*, *Dolce pur d'amor l'affanno*, and *Vedendo amor*. His collaborator, Fernando Reyes, skillfully performs solo instrumental pieces as, effectively, entr'actes separating the cantatas from each other and providing some aural relief from what would otherwise be, with a constant countertenor timbre, too much of a good thing.

Reyes provides a kind of minimal accompaniment for Ulla with a plucked string sound that might actually recreate a late 17th-century/early 18th-century Italian version of what evolved into 19th-century salon music—capturing the way some people (perhaps upper- and upper-middle-class families) would have enjoyed music in their homes. He performs on this disc using the theorbo, the lute, and the guitar. All in all, it is a different and, in small doses (for these ears, at least), somewhat refreshing way to experience this music and Handel's genius. Recommended. **Keith R. Fisher**

HANDEL *Siete rose rugiadosa*, HWV 162^{1,2}. *La resurrezione*, HWV 47: Prelude². *Dolce pur d'amor l'affanno*, HWV 109a^{1,2}. *Rodrigo*, HWV 5: Menuet²; Sarabande². *Il trionfo del tempo*, HWV 46: *Crede l'uom*^{1,2}. *Vedendo amor*, HWV 175^{1,2} • ¹Miguel Ulla (ct); ²Fernando Reyes (thb, lt, gtr) • HR 327 (51:42)

If I may be so bold, I would postulate that Handel's sterling career as a composer of so many wonderful operas would have been highly unlikely, perhaps even unthinkable, had he not capped his youthful studies and mastery of music composition with a lengthy sojourn in Italy. There, in addition to soaking up sunshine and various other delights, he absorbed the Italianate, cantabile style that he