

Isabella Leonarda (1620–1704) was a remarkable woman. At a time when female composers were a rarity, she was both prominent and prolific. Although she was cloistered (literally: she was a nun) in Novara in northern Italy, the dedications of her published compositions show her to have been extremely well connected. And her music demonstrates that she was well aware of the music of contemporaries like Carissimi and Corelli. These facts would be of merely historical importance, were her music not so engaging: although most of the works recorded here are devotional, they are full of buoyant rhythms, colourful textures and a surprisingly dramatic approach to the texts she was setting – many probably written by Leonarda herself.

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ISABELLA LEONARDA Motets, Trio Sonatas and a 'Cantata morale'

Mottetti a una, due, e tre voci, con violini, e senza, Opera XIII (1687)

[1] *Quam dulcis es quam cara*

11:38

Mottetti a una, due, tre e quattro voci, e alcuni con due violini, Opera VII (1677)

[9] *Bonum est confiteri Domino*

7:26

Mottetti a voce sola, Opera XV (1690)

[10] *Queste ch'a voi consagro: Cantata morale*

7:41

Sonate a due violini, violone e organo, con una sonata a violino solo e organo, Opera XVI (1693)

[14] *Sonata prima**

10:33

Mottetti a voce sola, Opera XV

[19] *Ama mi lesu care*

10:18

Mottetti a voce sola con strumenti, Opera XX (1700)

[24] *Purpurei flores*

6:53

Sonate, Opera XVI

[27] *Sonata settima**

7:04

Mottetti, Opera XIII

[31] *Ad arma*

7:39

TT 69:10

Robert Crowe, soprano [1] [9] [19] [31]

Sandra Röddiger, soprano [9] [10] [24] [31]

Emanuele Breda, violin

Barbara Mauch-Heinke, violin

Daniela Wartenberg, cello

Toshinori Ozaki, theorbo

Sofya Gandilyan, harpsichord

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