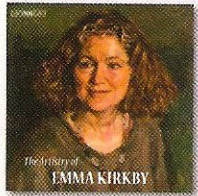


## REISSUE OF THE MONTH



Emma Kirkby:  
deep-set musical  
intelligence



A 60th-birthday tribute to the unique voice of leading light in the early music movement



## 'The Artistry of Emma Kirkby'

Includes works by **Amodei, Ariosti, Bach, Blow, Böödecker, Boësset, Couperin, Danyel, Dowland, Ferrabosco, Graupner, Greene, Handel, d'India, R Johnson, Lalande, Lawes, Moulinié, A Scarlatti, Schimmelpfennig, Schütz, Weldon** and **J Wilson**  
**Emma Kirkby sop** with **Agnès Mellon sop** **John Abberger ob** **Lucas Harris, Jakob Lindberg, Anthony Rooley lute** **Lars Ulrik Mortensen bpd** **Thomas Georgi va da gamba** **Mime Yamahiro Brinkmann vc** **London Baroque; Royal Academy of Music Baroque Orchestra; Theatre of Early Music**  
**BIS** ④ ④ **BIS-CD1734/5 (4h 52' • DDD)**

Note that the title of this four-CD box emphasises "artistry" rather than the "silvery voice" or whatever, as those of collections previously put out by other record companies have done. Emma Kirkby began her current working relationship with BIS in 1999, so this 60th-birthday tribute represents a period in which the novelty value of her unique vocal timbre had long been augmented in the public's appreciation by what really places her in the front rank of early music singers: deep-set musical intelligence made manifest in perfect clarity of diction, an unerring sense of line (including the most tasteful ornamentation) and pinpoint accuracy of movement. Though she never was a purely "straight" singer, there are still few on this earth who can evince such pleasure from as simple a thing as a long-held, vibratoless note.

BIS's selection policy deserves much credit. It would have been easy for them to chuck a few

existing CDs into the box with a bit of new packaging, but instead they have shrewdly chosen from across a total of nine Kirkby releases to give a true picture of her latest decade of work. There are some unusual things: Kirkby has rarely sung in French, but here are *airs de cours* by Boësset and Moulinié; and it is not often that you will hear her offering such characterful play-acting as (egged on by Anthony Rooley's lute) she does in Henry Lawes's *At dead low ebb of night*. There is also an exquisitely pained penitential cantata by Graupner, in a performance not previously released. Elsewhere, there are the expected samplings from lute-song repertory (in which she surely remains unsurpassed), brightly virtuosic Handel motets with London Baroque, and a movingly wise

**'There are few on this earth who can evince such pleasure from as simple a thing as a long-held, vibratoless note'**

account of two of Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres*. Yet it's often in the modest-looking pieces that she's at her most compelling. Robert Johnson's *Full Fathom Five* is 109 seconds of breathtaking stillness and beauty, Böödecker's *Natus est Jesus* a masterclass in how quietly to find variety and meaning in a piece that might have seemed to have little to offer. Artistry indeed, and praise to BIS for recognising how to honour it.

**Lindsay Kemp**

**Emma Kirkby and Jakob Lindberg**  
soprano & lutenist

**Touring the United States**  
with two programs in Fall 2009!

"Music at Twilight"

Songs and Solos from early 17th Century Europe

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

Celebrating the 350th Anniversary of Purcell's Birth

**October 18, 2009**

"Music at Twilight"

Sprague Hall - 4:00pm

Yale Institute of Sacred Music, New Haven, CT

**October 20, 2009**

"Music at Twilight"

Weill Recital Hall - 7:30pm

Carnegie Hall, New York, NY

**October 23, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational - 8:00pm

Boston Early Music Festival, Cambridge, MA

**October 24, 2009**

"Music at Twilight"

Europe Smith Theatre - 8:00pm

Howard Community College

Candlelight Concert Society, Columbia, MD

**October 25, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

West Building, West Garden Court - 6:30pm

National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

**October 27, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

Schwan Concert Hall - 7:30pm

Wisconsin Lutheran College

Early Music Now, Milwaukee, WI

**October 30, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

Polsky Theatre at The Carlsen Center - 8:00pm

Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, KS

**October 31, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

Central Moravian Church - 8:00pm

Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Bethlehem, PA

**November 1, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

Madison Ave. Presbyterian Church - 3:00pm

Saint Andrew Music Society, New York, NY

212-288-8920

**November 3, 2009**

"Orpheus in England: Dowland & Purcell"

South Church - 7:30pm

Music Series at South Church, New Britain, CT

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