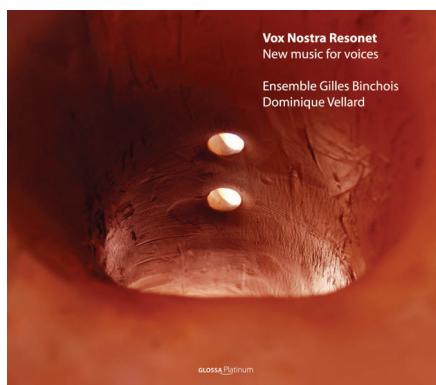


**GCD P32301**

New release information

April 2007

# 'Vox Nostra Resonet' Dominique Vellard


 Vox Nostra Resonet  
New music for voices

 Ensemble Gilles Binchois  
Dominique Vellard

**Vox Nostra Resonet**  
New music for voices

**Ensemble Gilles Binchois**

 Anne Delafosse, soprano  
 Anne-Marie Lablaude, soprano  
 Ana Isabel Arnaz de Hoyos, soprano  
 Christel Boiron, mezzo  
 Dominique Vellard, tenor  
 Raitis Grigalis, baritone  
**Dominique Vellard, director**
**Glossa Platinum**
**GCD P32301**

Digipak

**Programme**

 1-7  
 Les sept dernières paroles de Christ en Croix  
 (D. Vellard)

 8  
 Caligaverunt oculi mei (D. Vellard)

 9-29  
 Stabat Mater (D. Vellard)

 30  
 O vos omnes (D. Vellard)

 31-34  
 Missa Laudes Deo (D. Vellard)

**Production details**

 Playing time: 60'28  
 Recorded at Église Notre-Dame de Talant and  
 Église Saint Jean-Baptiste de Til-Chatel, France,  
 between May 2003 and October 2005  
 Engineered by Robert Verguet, Pierre de Champs  
 and Simon Weir  
 Produced by Anne-Marie Vellard  
 Executive producer: Carlos Céster

 Artwork: oficina tresminutos 00:03:00  
 Booklet essay: Eugène de Montelambert  
 English Français Deutsch Español


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**NOTES (ENG)**

Since 1979 Dominique Vellard has been the inspirational driving force behind the Ensemble Gilles Binchois – nearly three decades of research and performance that have led to the creation of some of the essential recordings in the catalogue, especially of music from the medieval and early Renaissance periods. In more recent years, Vellard has expanded his interests into other repertoires – Southern and Northern India, as well as Spanish and Breton traditions – and he also has quite a passion for composers such as Monteverdi and the lesser-known Guillaume Nivers. In all such vocal explorations he leads the way with his own distinctive tenor voice. However, for his first collaboration with Glossa – and for the label's own desire to create new artistic visions – there is an additional facet of Dominique Vellard's musical character on display. In *Vox Nostra Resonet* Vellard presents himself as the composer of five vocal works (all scored for a small number of voices from the Ensemble Gilles Binchois) for which he has turned to profound religious texts and draws deeply on his own spiritual learnings as much as his experience and interests in monodies and polyphonies from both the Western and the Eastern traditions. Vellard's compositional process – reaching both inside and outside the Western tradition – is documented in an article accompanying this awesome and different disc.

**NOTAS (ESP)**

Desde 1979, Dominique Vellard ha sido el gran motor creativo que ha dotado de inspiración permanente al Ensemble Gilles Binchois. Son ya casi tres décadas de investigación e interpretación, durante las que el conjunto ha producido algunas de las grabaciones esenciales del repertorio medieval y del primer Renacimiento. En tiempos más recientes, los intereses de Vellard han alcanzado también a otros repertorios –del sur y del norte de la India, así como las tradiciones hispánicas y bretonas–, aparte de su abierta pasión por compositores como Claudio Monteverdi o el menos conocido Guillaume Nivers. En todas estas exploraciones vocales, el propio Vellard marca el camino con su inconfundible voz de tenor. Sin embargo, en su primera colaboración con Glossa –que subraya, por otro lado, el deseo del sello de apoyar nuevas visiones artísticas–, Vellard muestra otra faceta más de su inquietud musical: en *Vox Nostra Resonet*, encontramos cinco de sus propias obras vocales (todas creadas para una pequeña selección de voces de su Ensemble Gilles Binchois). Son composiciones que parten de textos religiosos de gran profundidad, en las que Vellard vuelca sus propias experiencias espirituales a través de un lenguaje basado en su interés y conocimiento de las tradiciones monódicas y polifónicas tanto de Occidente como de Oriente. Estos procesos compositivos se documentan en el excelente artículo que se incluye en el libreto de este disco sobrecogedor y diferente.

**NOTES (FRA)**

Depuis 1979, Dominique Vellard a été l'inspiration permanente de l'Ensemble Gilles Binchois, durant près de trois décennies de recherche et d'interprétation qui ont produit certains enregistrements essentiels du répertoire du Moyen Âge et du début de la Renaissance. Au cours de ces dernières années, Vellard s'est intéressé à d'autres répertoires – allant du Sud et du Nord de l'Inde aux traditions hispaniques et bretonnes – qui incluent aussi des compositeurs comme Claudio Monteverdi ou Guillaume Nivers pour lesquels, il a passion bien connue. Dominique Vellard fraye le chemin de toutes ces explorations vocales grâce à sa voix unique de ténor. Mais pour sa première collaboration avec Glossa – répondant aussi au désir de l'une caractéristique de cette maison discographique : créer des nouvelles visions artistiques – Vellard révèle une autre facette de son inquiétude musicale : *Vox Nostra Resonet* présente en effet cinq de ses compositions vocales (créées pour une petite section vocale de son Ensemble Gilles Binchois). Ces œuvres sont basées sur des textes religieux d'une grande profondeur, exprimant les expériences spirituelles de Vellard dans un langage basé sur son intérêt et sa connaissance de la monodie et des traditions polyphoniques occidentales et orientales. Le processus de composition de Vellard est commenté dans un article excellent faisant partie du livret de ce disque différent et bouleversant.

**NOTIZEN (DEU)**

Seit 1979 steht Dominique Vellard als treibende Kraft und Quelle der Inspiration hinter dem Ensemble Gilles Binchois. In diesen nahezu drei Jahrzehnten haben Nachforschungen und Aufführungen zu einigen der maßgeblichen Aufnahmen geführt, vor allem auf dem Gebiet der Musik des Mittelalters und der frühen Renaissance. In den letzten Jahren haben sich Vellards Interessen breiter gefächert und erstrecken sich nun auch auf das Repertoire aus Süd- und Nordindien, ebenso wie auf spanische und bretonische traditionelle Musik. Außerdem hat er eine Leidenschaft für Komponisten wie Monteverdi und den weniger bekannten Guillaume Nivers. Bei all diesen vokalen Erkundungen gibt Vellard mit seinem unverwechselbaren Tenor die Richtung vor. Dennoch steht bei der ersten Zusammenarbeit mit Glossa eine weitere Facette seines musikalischen Schaffens im Mittelpunkt – auch aus dem Streben des Labels heraus, neue künstlerische Visionen zu schaffen. Auf der CD *Vox Nostra Resonet* stellt Vellard sich mit fünf Vokalwerken als Komponist vor, die jeweils für wenige Stimmen geschrieben wurden. Darin wendet er sich tiefgründigen religiösen Texten zu und bezieht dabei die persönlichen Erfahrungen auf seinem eigenen spirituellen Weg ebenso wie sein Interesse an monodischer und polyphoner Musik aus sowohl westlichen wie östlichen Traditionen ein. Sein Kompositionsprozess wird in einem Interview dokumentiert, der dieser eindrucksvollen und außergewöhnlichen CD beiliegt.

## Dominique Vellard on 'Vox Nostra Resonet'

### How did your desire to compose begin and how does your inspiration emerge?

I began to compose seriously back in 1999. Prior to that I always liked making song arrangements or *fauxbourdons*, or writing pieces 'in the style' of, for instance, 14th or 15th century songs. Very often in the medieval field, of course, we need to add some voices or to complete some defective parts. I had no real desire to compose – I didn't think that it was my field. I was a singer, after all, and music from the past is so good, whether it was from composers of the 17th century or Ligeti. Then, one day, in Sheffield in England, I was asked by Peter Cropper of The Lindsays whether there were any chants in existence that could accompany Haydn's *Seven Last Words*. On not finding any interesting pieces in the repertory and whilst being at home, I started writing three-part pieces – for my wife, my daughter and myself. I was a bit surprised to see that it was working and on finishing the compositions I found that they had some sense!

Currently composition for me is a bit like when I sing or conduct in that religious music is very important because the texts are so strong – even if I perform a lot of love or courtly songs and also make arrangements of popular folk music from around the world. I feel that I am writing in the church music tradition, although with my compositions I do not have much contact with the Catholic Church here in France; the traditions of writing and performing here are now quite scarce, certainly compared to those in Northern Europe. The sonority that I am looking for is more for ensemble or professional singers than for choirs and this is less common in France, given the very strong power held by the Boulez school and the avant-garde especially from the 1940s to 1960s. In France we had a very difficult time during the Boulez time. Even if he is a very great composer I think that he has been very bad for creation in France. Now we have two schools, a bit of neo-modern and a bit of neo-tonal. I don't feel very comfortable with that. I do not feel myself to be part of any school. My knowledge comes from areas such as folk music or Indian music and from my experience of early music (although it is only recently that I have been studying the mechanics of renaissance and medieval counterpoint in earnest!). In the beginning I did it just for pleasure, with friends and my family, but I decided to publish it because I finally realized that it had some originality. If I do feel a certain connection with a type of music or sonority from the middle ages, it is only with that, not with individual techniques or composers. At the same time, despite all the awareness of medieval music that I have gained I want to avoid writing pastiche. What I compose comes from my own inspiration. Sometimes when I begin, I can use an Indian mode or a colour but the moment that I begin to compose it is only the beginning of the composition itself that gives the continuation or a style or a colour or a form.

**With the five pieces on the *Vox Nostra Resonet* recording, the texts that you have selected are all profound ones. Did you choose these texts specifically to reflect your compositional thoughts?**

Yes, I think so. For me music must connect to a deep feeling. For me it is never light. Even if



Offenbach is a good composer, his music does not mean anything to me. Nor for me do humour and music fit. Music is a possibility for me to go inside and to understand myself and what I do. If I write music I am sure that it will be with love texts or spiritual texts. I do find inspiration in deep and important texts. For example, when I compose *mélodies* I use texts with which I have deep connections. In the religious sphere, I have written some music on the *Song of Songs* and the Psalms could also act as starting points. I remember singing the Allegri *Miserere* once with the ensemble and then wanting to write my own *Miserere* because I was so touched by the music and by the text. And the same is true with *The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross*, because I loved the Haydn work. For my Mass composition I added tropes (texts which give another light to the Ordinary of the Mass – the Kyrie, Gloria, etc). I did this partly in order to include and play between monophonic and polyphonic music but to also give a special colour to the texts that one knows very well. Before the Sanctus you have the *Laudes Deo* text, which gives the Sanctus another resonance. I wanted to make this contrast and I chose texts that were easy to understand. Similarly, with the *Stabat mater*, even if the listener does not understand Latin, a lot of the words ('dolorosa', 'lacrimosa', 'desolatum') have very strong resonances for people who understand many languages. I write music in order to touch the people with the sonority and with the text. I don't write just to show that I can write music!

**In recent years your performances and recordings have reflected a strong interest in music from outside the Western tradition. What attracts you to these other traditions?**

Mostly it is for the monody. I think our own tradition developed so strongly towards polyphony, counterpoint and harmony that we left this monophonic style aside. Some composers have written monophony, such as Debussy, but with many the melodic aspect can sometimes be a bit poor in terms of the possibilities for ornamentation, to allow for an

interpreter who can provide a lot of power. This is very different in traditions such as in Indian or in Arabic countries where monophony is the strongest point of the culture. For me it has been a challenge to try and understand this music and attempt to integrate this very high conception of monody into my own style and my own inspiration. I am very fascinated by some polyphonic compositions from the oral traditions – from Lithuania and Georgia, for example. With very small aspects of composition they can create very strong atmospheres of music. As a composer, I am almost scared to write 'easy' music, but I would like to write strong music with very simple elements. I am fascinated by the Bartók *Duos for two violins* which were written for students, but it is incredible what can be done with just two voices. Personally, I am more interested in writing three- and four-part music than composing for a full symphony orchestra! These traditions often provide me with much inspiration on a spiritual level, not directly as a form of inspiration. What I know and what I listen to more often serves to act as a kind of revelation of what I am myself and what sound I want.

**Although you are composing now do you continue to perform early music?**

Yes, although around ten years ago I made some changes to the balance of the different kinds of music in the ensemble's concert schedule. If we are now performing a little less medieval music than before, we will continue to do programmes of strong musical interest (with or without known music) such as when we sang English music from the 11th and 12th centuries in a concert in Westminster Abbey in London a few years back. Now the schedule is balanced between medieval, renaissance and early baroque music but I am also trying to include some of my own music in concerts. As a musician I need to sing polyphony (like I need to eat!) and I am fanatical about music by the likes of Monteverdi or Veracini. Of course, we are also continuing to do Latin Renaissance polyphonic repertoire – mainly Spanish, Italian and French – but also including composers such as Ockeghem, Binchois and Dufay. I need to perform soloistic music as well and I am entranced by *airs de cour* from the start of the 17th century with composers like Pierre Guédron and also with *musique mesurée à l'antique*. For me the relationship between text and music is very good here. Likewise I am fascinated by the transition from renaissance polyphony to the early baroque, not just because of the Italian style but also for composers who reach the same level of quality with their monody as in their polyphony. Perhaps there is a connection here with my own compositions! Of course, I am thinking principally of Claudio Monteverdi but also of Guillaume Nivers who was a great – if still unknown – composer. He only wrote music for the church but his chant was incredibly good, likewise his motets and organ music. As I get older I feel that if we are doing early music, we should do it at the highest level possible. It is not like if you do contemporary music where you have to look at all the repertory to understand what is good. With early music because we have the possibility to read and hear everything I think that it is important to give life only to the better pieces.

MARK WIGGINS  
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