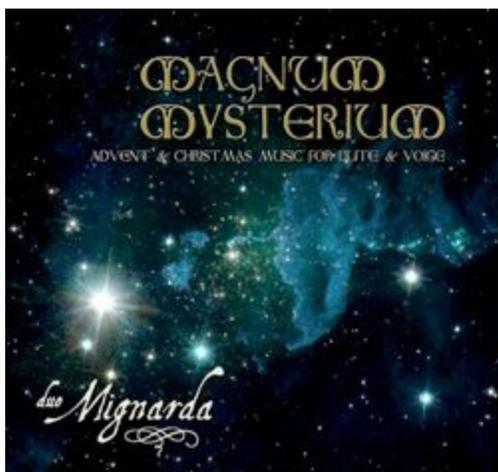


CD Review —**Duo Mignarda: *Magnum Mysterium***

by Hannah Schoepe



In their latest album, *Magnum Mysterium: Advent & Christmas Music for Lute and Voice*, the Cleveland-based Duo Mignarda creates a sense of historical purity — the perfect tranquil holiday setting. Released on the group’s personal label, the CD was recorded in Immaculate Conception Church and the Shrine Church of St. Stanislaus in Cleveland in 2016. Mezzo-soprano Dona Stewart and lutenist Ron Andrico are joined by double harpist Frederick Lautzenheiser, who adds texture and color to several tracks.

Across the album’s sixteen tracks, the music spans from the 15th to 17th centuries and features settings of the Christmas responsory text “O magnum mysterium” by Cristóbal de Morales, William Byrd, Adrian Willaert, and Tomás Luis de Victoria, as well as chants, motets, and German hymns.

The Duo specializes in music that combines folk and Western styles, with interpretations that follow the Renaissance ideal of “moving the passions” of the listener. Both performers display exceptional musicality, making this historical music accessible and enjoyable.

In addition to her work with Mignarda, Stewart has performed and recorded with Cleveland’s Baroque Orchestra, Apollo’s Fire. This album showcases her pure voice. She creates a calm sense of contentment, perfectly in tune with the lute throughout. Andrico, a performer of historical and theatre music for more than 30 years, sounds effortless, beautifully harmonizing with Stewart’s voice.

This album is fitting for any Christmas setting, whether a fancy dinner party or enjoying a fire in a log cabin in the woods. The elegant lines and folksy flair will appeal to a wide

audience. For those who would like to learn and perform this music, Mignarda is also publishing an edition of all the repertoire on the album.

Click [here](#) to purchase the CD.

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