

Jason Vieaux, Guitar

CD-Review: Bach Vol. 1: Works for Lute, Azica Records

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ABSOLUTE SOUND JUNE/JULY 2009 ISSUE

With every new recording he makes, Jason Vieaux confirms what the fortunate among us already sensed fifteen years ago, when he was still in his teens: that he would become the leading classical guitarist of his generation. Yet every time I hear his playing, I'm amazed all over again by his exquisite musicianship - by the sensitivity of his address, the profundity of his emotional insight, and the sheer beauty (and variety) of tone he produces on an instrument not at all forgiving of slips. When much is expected, to always give more...isn't that the definition of great artistry?

In this release devoted to Bach's Lute Suites in G minor, E minor, and C minor, BWV 995-997, and the Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E flat, BWV 998 - the first in a series devoted to the music of Bach - Vieaux once again delivers more than what even an old fan like me could have hoped for. The arrangements are his own, and they are superbly fashioned and idiomatic. The playing is suave and stylish, technically immaculate, full of that elusive inner rhythmic life that always distinguishes great Bach playing on any instrument.

Azica's founder Bruce Egge engineered this masterpiece of a CD, capturing all the depth and bloom of Vieaux's sound in a recording of exceptional purity and immediacy.

Ted Libbey