

Review of Ancient Airs For Brass & Organ
Summit DCD 250



How times change! It seems not long since poor Respighi was being criticized for habitually arranging the works of other composers. Now comes a new arrangement, by Phil Snedecor, for organ and brass, of Respighi's Ancient Airs and Dances, which are themselves arrangements of 15th- and 16th-century Burgundian and Italian composers' lute music.

Snedecor's arrangements of seven movements ... work well — often very well. The new work opens in grand style with a bravura performance of the [Gagliarda](#) (Vincenzo Galilei) from Suite 1, No. 2. Often sounding like imposing ceremonial music, it is exhilarating with plenty of bite and attack, a mighty closing organ swell and well-conceived interplay of organ and brass parts. ... Organist William Neil grasps his opportunity to shine in his solo showpiece, the [Passacaglia](#) from Suite 3.

Of the other transcriptions, the [Bach Christmas Oratorio](#) excerpts sound... quite magnificent.

"[Como poden per sas culpas](#)"... enters with a bang... with dueling between two piccolo trumpets accompanied by chiming bells and rhythmic percussion. This track is worth the [price](#) of the CD alone.

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