

«Back in 1993 the best brass players of the best Scandinavian orchestras founded the Nordic Brass Ensemble in order to be able to play often enough in good enough company. On their new album the ensemble has collected a conventional selection of Renaissance music but of very unconventional quality. The virtues of modern brass playing shine so brightly that one temporarily forgets to miss the historical instruments. The repertoire consists of Renaissance dances alternating with dusky madrigal arrangements and fanfare-driven “battaglia” pieces. The booklet places the selection in the context of the meeting of the music of the Janissaries with western polyphony, but more correctly the album is about the joy of playing versatile and often fun music together. The fresh arrangements sound stylishly elegant without attempting to be authentic. The shining, smooth and tempered sound at times makes me miss the overtone richness and rattle of historical instruments, but such idle daydreams are soon forgotten when the ensemble plays a voluminous wall of brass sound or a brilliantly precise trumpet figuration. It is especially worth listening to Morten Agerup’s crispy bass lines on tuba and cimbasso, which send the bass register to the listener like a cannon. I slightly miss the genuine Janissaries’ drive in the percussion, which has been dusted clear of the clatter of equal beat and even replaced at times with a tame swing. But so what - the album is really fun to listen to. Whenever the Renaissance dances start to seem too banal, the Nordic Brass Ensemble rushes to the depths of Gesualdo or rises to the heavens of Morales, and they know their business. This is the best brass ensemble album I have ever heard.

As is usual for the label 2L, the album is available in Blue-ray and SACD-multichannel. When played on good equipment the listener has a really great experience of being engulfed by brass brilliancy, and you soon get used to the sound of the percussion sounding from behind you on the multiple channels.»

Kuuntele Uudet levyt 21.10.2016, toimittajana Kare Eskola. <http://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2016/10/21/nordic-brass-ensemblen-saihkyva-renessanssimatka>

EUROPEAN TOUR in digital services: <http://phonofile.link/european-tour>
Pure Audio Blu-ray + Hybrid SACD: <https://shop.klicktrack.com/2l/1001549>