

# THE SIENA LUTE BOOK

## Sixteenth-century Italian lute music

Jacob Heringman (lute)

Avie AV 0036 72:03 mins . . . . . £ £ £



The works in this collection are taken from two Tuscan sources of the 16th century: a lute book

compiled in Siena, and another anonymous manuscript (now in the Dolmetsch Library in Haslemere). Most of the works selected by Jacob Heringman require a six-course lute, and some a seven-course, but we are given no information as to the instrument(s) actually used. In the case of the *La Spagna* dances (tracks 13 and 14) only the decorated top line is preserved and Heringman has skilfully reconstructed the missing fundamental tune, to great and lively effect.

It has to be said, though, that the disc gets off to a rather slow start, and there is a curiously hesitant version of a fantasia by Francesco da Milano (track 3) which, far from sounding freely rhapsodic, reminds one of an awkward rehearsal. Again, the closing *Gagliardas* fail to convey the spirit of a dance. In fact, Heringman's usual panache is heard only in selected items: a difficult contrapuntal fantasia (track 7) is excellently negotiated; another long fantasia probably by Dentice (track 10) is touchingly played with a fine sense of architecture; and the performance of the anonymous 'Passemazo del Giorgio' (track 8) builds up a rare sense of excitement. *Anthony Pryer*

**PERFORMANCE** ★ ★ ★

**SOUND** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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