



Jean-Philippe Rameau NAÏS Chantal Santon-Jeffery Reinoud Van Mechelen Purcell Choir Orfeo Orchestra György Vashegyi Et al.	GCD 924003	PC: 021
	2 CDs 2017	

György Vashegyi's love affair with French Baroque repertoire continues with Rameau's *Naïs* from 1749 in a Glossa release complete with a characteristically appealing design. Subtitled "Opéra pour la paix" (its prologue, at least, commemorates the 1748 Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle), *Naïs* features demanding and extended leading roles for soprano **Chantal Santon-Jeffery** (*Naïs*) and high tenor **Reinoud Van Mechelen** (*Neptune*), ably assisted by **Florian Sempey** and **Thomas Dolié**, in an everyday eighteenth-century tale of a lovesick god in disguise, a misinterpreted prophecy and an alternative version of the Olympic Games (the score demands much from the chorus and Vashegyi's refined Purcell Choir is up to the mark). Turn to Pascal Denécheau's booklet essay for more about the opera and its context. Rameau was a master orchestrator, no more so than in this *pastorale héroïque*, stuffed full of ballets figurés, airs, minuets, rigaudons and tambourins, and with his Orfeo Orchestra – led by the peerless Simon Standage – Vashegyi harnesses the music's graphic and dramatic energy, complete with giants toppling off mountains, tidal waves swamping jilted lovers, underwater palaces, bucolic scenes (which include that characteristic French Baroque instrument, the musette – here played by Patrick Blanc), and even a chaconne for wrestlers...