

## HERMAN STRATEGIER

Herman Strategier (1912-1988) was an eminent musician, composer, conductor, organist and teacher. He studied at the Roman Catholic School of Church Music in Utrecht, where his instructors included Johan Winnubst, Fons Dusch and Hendrik Andriessen. After completing his studies Strategier held various positions as conductor and organist in churches in Arnhem and Zeist. He was also organist of St. Catherine's Cathedral in Utrecht for a considerable time. Strategier taught at the conservatories of Rotterdam and Utrecht, the Roman Catholic School of Church Music and the Institute of Musicology at the University of Utrecht.

He was the conductor of the renowned Nederlands Madrigaalkoor in Leiden from 1959 to 1973, to whom he introduced innovative and interesting repertoire; his own compositions also appeared frequently in their programmes.

Herman Strategier composed a large quantity of different styles of works, writing more than four hundred pieces for extremely diverse combinations of instruments. A large amount of his music was composed for use in the Roman Catholic liturgy, although Strategier also composed many secular works for chorus, both accompanied and a cappella. One of his most important works is the Arnhemsche Psalm, an oratorio composed on the occasion of the tenth annual memorial of the Battle of Arnhem in 1944.

Strategier's works also contain a large number of works for orchestra, concertos for solo instrument and orchestra included. He was also very much involved with chamber music.

Although Strategier was initially influenced as a composer by his teacher Hendrik Andriessen, he nevertheless developed a musical idiom that was completely his own and that yet betrayed the influence of the French composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that he so admired.

This CD contains a selection of the works that Strategier composed for various chamber and orchestral groupings. It demonstrates the versatility of a composer who was always willing to compose music for unusual combinations of instruments, for he considered this to be a challenge. A large quantity of his music is today performed by professional as well as amateur orchestras and ensembles.

Musique pour faire plaisir was Strategier's motto: music is supposed to give pleasure to mankind. He made his own contribution to music in his own modest, practical and effective way.

## SEXTET FOR FLUTE, OBOE, CLARINET, BASSOON, FRENCH HORN and PIANO

The Sextet for winds and piano (1951) is once again very much French in mood and sound. It is one of the almost forty chamber music works that Strategier composed for a great variety of instrumental combinations. Alongside a poetically free opening for clarinet and flute (quasi una cadenza), there is a profusion of surging melody for all six instruments to be enjoyed in the first movement, as well as a sunny musical temperament that is characteristic of the works of Poulenc and Françaix. In the second movement a Debussy-like flute solo develops into a play of different instrumental lines, after which a comically spiced waltz floats in that briefly seems playfully to refer to Ravel's La Valse. Dreaminess and coquetry alternate teasingly. Liveliness and musical humour are continually present in the dance-like but always melodious final movement.