



George Frideric Handel SILLA Sonia Prina, Sunhae Im Vivica Genaux, et al. Europa Galante Fabio Biondi – violin & direction	GCD 923408	PC: 021
	2 CDs	
	2017	
Also available: GCD 923405 George Frideric Handel – IMENEO Europa Galante/Fabio Biondi		

No Handel opera is as enigmatic as *Silla*. His fourth London opera, it was composed in 1713 to a libretto by Giacomo Rossi, also the librettist of the composer's first great London triumph *Rinaldo* (1711). And that is just about the extent of any certainty on the subject. It might have been premiered in 1713 in London in a private concert at the Queen's Theatre, but even this remains unconfirmed. This is one of Handel's few historical operas, being concerned with Plutarch's account of the latter part of the life of Lucius Cornelius Sulla, who after taking Rome became a tyrannical despot who murders his opponents, before suddenly retiring to his country estate to enjoy his leisure. The libretto being somewhat weak, it leaves *Silla* an unlikely candidate to regain a place in the repertoire, but it definitely contains lots of thoroughly rewarding music. Handel himself utilized a significant part of it in his next opera, *Amadigi di Gaula*.

Fabio Biondi and **Europa Galante** join an overwhelming vocal cast headed by a fantastic **Sonia Prina** in the title role, with **Martina Belli**, **Sunhae Im**, **Vivica Genaux**, **Roberta Invernizzi**, **Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli**, and **Luca Tittoto** also excelling in their respective parts. Biondi's ensemble perform with their trademark elegance and precision in a recording made in the Konzerthaus in Vienna over three days in January 2017.