



Floating and thrilling: the Lark Quartet with percussionist - and arranger - Yousif Sheronick

atmospheric, partly a manifestation of his interest in opera. In *Little Symphony after Pictures of Roswitha Bitterlich*, his only symphony, Zeisl employs tonal language and dramatic narrative with impressive and penetrating command, especially in the variations of the last picture, 'Expulsion of the Saints'. The score - at turns dark and whimsical (the latter conveyed by solo trombone and horn in the third picture, 'The Wake') - makes one eager to encounter his operas, of which only three complete works and one unfinished piece exist.

Another creation from his Vienna period, *November: Six Sketches* for chamber orchestra again shows Zeisl's heightened ability to evoke landscapes and spiritual imagery. The auras are expressive, haunting, epic and, in the case of 'Rainy Day', subtly impressionistic.

The tragic and folksy qualities that pervade much of Zeisl's music can also be heard in the Concerto grosso for cello and orchestra, an alluring work he wrote in the mid-1950s for Gregor Piatigorsky. The bold soloist here is Antonio Lysy, who manages the tricky writing with aplomb and teams vibrantly with the UCLA players and conductor Stulberg. **Donald Rosenberg**

## 'Arabesque'

**Alabiev** The Nightingale **Arditi** Il bacio **Bellini** I puritani - O rendetemi la speme... Qui la voce sua soave; Son vergin vezzosa **Bizet** Vasco da Gama - Ouvre ton coeur **Dell'Acqua** Villanelle **Gounod** Mireille - O légère hirondelle **Mozart** Ah se in ciel, benigne stelle, K538. Don Giovanni - Non mi dir. Le nozze di Figaro - Deh vieni, non tardar **Rossini** Le nozze di Teti e di Peleo - Ah non potrian resistere **J Strauss II** Die Fledermaus - Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande **Verdi**

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I vespri siciliani - Mercè, dilette amiche (Bolero)

**Olga Peretyatko** sop

**NDR Symphony Orchestra / Enrique Mazzola**

Sony Classical © 88883 73859-2 (76' • DDD)



The Russian soprano Olga Peretyatko is scheduled to go aptly mad during

her Metropolitan Opera debut as Elvira in Bellini's *I puritani* in April. She makes the most of one of those luscious moments of insanity on her solo disc, sending 'Qui la voce sua soave' into glorious flight right up to the high E flat near the end. But everything on this recording captivates. Peretyatko is an artist who commands attention whatever the range or language (here Italian, French and German).

The *Puritani* excerpts reveal a singer ideally suited to *bel canto* repertory. Peretyatko spins the long lines of 'O rendetemi la speme' with supreme control and expressive nuance before jumping headlong into 'Qui la voce', and she's an agile charmer in Elvira's polonaise, 'Son vergin vezzosa'. The other Italian items receive equally affecting and charismatic treatment, from arias for Donna Anna and Susanna to Elena's 'Mercè, dilette amiche' (capped by a penetrating high E this time) from *I vespri siciliani*.

After listening to Peretyatko glisten in *Mireille*'s sprightly waltz 'O légère hirondelle', one can only wonder how long it will take for some opera house to mount a production of Gounod's neglected work for the soprano. She applies the same irresistible vivacity to another rarity, 'Ouvre

ton coeur' from Bizet's ode-symphony *Vasco da Gama*, while also whetting the appetite for her Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with a delightful account of 'Spiel ich die Unschuld vom Lande'. In all the selections, Peretyatko has stylish colleagues in the NDR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Mazzola.

**Donald Rosenberg**

## 'Composing America'

**Adams** John's Book of Alleged Dances - exccs<sup>a</sup>

**Bolcom** Billy in the Darbies<sup>b</sup> **Copland** Two Pieces **Moravec** Piano Quintet<sup>c</sup>

**Lark Quartet** with <sup>b</sup>Stephen Salters bar

<sup>c</sup>Jeremy Denk pf<sup>a</sup> Yousif Sheronick perc

Bridge © BRIDGE9423 (56' • DDD)



In just under an hour, the New York City-based Lark Quartet and three hot friends

identify with and coolly dispatch a broad swath of American music spanning the baby-boomer divide.

Most impressive is Paul Moravec's 25-minute, profoundly conservative, deeply absorbing Piano Quintet, commissioned in 2006 to honour the philanthropist Adam Aronson. Amid the rigorous charting of its blueprinted lines, textures and occasional harmonic ecstasies, there are astonishing moments of physical beauty, such as Jeremy Denk's sumptuous solo opening the second movement.

Most breathtaking is William Bolcom's eight-minute *Billy in the Darbies*, setting Melville's poem (predating his novella) about a handcuffed Billy Budd awaiting death; initially it is perhaps inevitably Brittenish, then yields to reveal a lovely, un-Brittenish surprise sung by baritone Stephen Salters with considerable psychological depth and tonal variety.

Most brilliant is a pithy five-movement set adapted by percussionist Yousif Sheronick from the 10 movements of John Adams's *John's Book of Alleged Dances*, written for the Kronos Quartet and a digitised beat in 1994. The effect is of a floating musical crap game in which the instruments shift around and take the floor at various times, getting down and grimy in the *moto perpetuo* of 'Dogiam' and losing it completely (under immaculate control, of course) in 'Rag the Bone'.

The recording's three-dimensional reality, captured at SUNY Purchase's Performing Arts Center, sounds so magnificent that the whole musical experience actually matches the florid imagination of Andrew Waggoner's booklet-note. **Laurence Vittes**

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