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## Record Reviews

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## Record Reviews

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MESSIAEN: *St François d'Assise*. José van Dam (St François), Dawn Upshaw (L'Ange), Urban Malmberg (Frere Léon), John Aler (Frere Massée), Akos Banlaky (Frere Sylvestre), Tom Krause (Frere Bernard), Dirk D'Ase (Frere Rufin), Guy Renard (Frere Elie), Chris Merritt (Le Lépreux), Arnold Schoenberg Choir, Hallé Orchestra cond. Kent Nagano. Deutsche Grammophon 445 176-2 (4 CDs).

*St François d'Assise* is the *opus summum* of Olivier Messiaen's life. Not only because it is very nearly his last major work (he composed it between 1975 and 1983), but because it embraces in one vast, refining apotheosis almost everything in his music: it sits atop and glorifies his career just as much as he intended that career to be a glorification of his god.

Messiaen avoided calling the work an opera. Instead, *St François d'Assise* bears the legend 'Scènes franciscaines en trois actes et huit tableaux'. As a staged oratorio it blurs formal boundaries, but the essence of the piece is simpler yet: it is an extended (five-hour) ritual, a gesture of religious devotion. Messiaen's intention – 'an act of temerity', he said – was 'to describe, scene by scene, the infusion of grace into the inner soul of one of the greatest of all saints'. His means are relatively straightforward: *St François* progresses by alternating long melismata in the strings, often supported by ondes martenot, with Messiaen's ecstatic birdcalls – it's almost that simple. And like the arcane mysteries of Galina Ustvolskaya's music, *St François* is a private act, a communication between initiates and their deity; listeners are irrelevant.

To some extent, that likewise makes criticism redundant. You can't judge the piece according to the standards of dramatic development that stage presentation might suggest, and begrudging its harmonic near-stasis is similarly pointless. And yet, in spite of everything – in spite of its length (or perhaps because of it), its ascetic abstraction, its circumscribed musical language – *St François d'Assise* has an emotional intensity that makes it more affecting than anything else in Messiaen's *oeuvre*: my only live encounter with the music brought me to tears – the first time ever I had felt any genuine emotion in his music.

Listening to the work at home on CD, and with the best will in this world, it is difficult to

keep one's attentiveness tenterhooked on the music with the same concentration (phones ring, cars pass, dogs bark). Although the sheer sincerity, the dignity, of the music is still directly communicative, the repetitive nature of much of *St François* eventually begins to irritate rather than hypnotize. The constant irruption of Messiaen's beloved birds (he reckoned he had included virtually all the calls he had notated in the course of his long life) threatens to reduce them to mannerism. You have to be there, to participate in *St François* and be swept along by it; compact discs can convey the excitement only as approximately as television does the thrill of a sporting event. Here the 119-part orchestra and 150 choristers the score requires are an indulgence, not a necessity; in performance they offer their own contribution to Messiaen's sense of joyous extravagance.

The attenuation of its impact is not through any fault of this passionate recording, made live at the Salzburg Festival in August 1998 (though doubtless patched here and there). José van Dam is heroic in the title role, which he created in 1983, Dawn Upshaw is a radiant Angel; and the other soloists are marked by varying degrees of excellence. Nagano, who studied the score with Messiaen for months, maintains the pace expertly, despite the occasional *longueur* – this must be one of the best things he has done. And the Hallé Orchestra, now safely handed over to Mark Elder, should put up their xylophone player for a mention in despatches.

Martin Anderson

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OHANA: *Office des Orales; Messe*. Choeur Contemporain and Musicatreize dir. Roland Hayrabedian. Opus 111 OPS30-246.

Roland Hayrabedian is well established as one of France's leading conductors of vocal music, having founded the Choeur Contemporain d'Aix-en-Provence in 1978 and the vocal and instrumental ensemble Musicatreize in 1987. With a repertoire ranging from the Renaissance to the contemporary, he is particularly noted for his interpretations of new music and has recorded many of the vocal works of Maurice Ohana – the present CD being the most recent.

Hayrabedian's other recordings of Ohana's vocal music include the composer's last completed work *Avoaha* (1991), for mixed chorus, 2 pianos, percussion, and *Lys de madrigaux* (1976) for female chorus and ensemble, also available on Opus 111 OPS30-109. Prior to Ohana's death in 1992, Hayrabedian made a number of recordings under the supervision of the composer, all of which are still available: the oratorio setting of Federico Garcia Lorca's poem *Llanto por Ignacio Sanchez Mejias* (1950) for baritone, narrator, mixed chorus and orchestra, coupled with the 1967 chamber opera *Syllabaire pour Phèdre* (Calliope CAL9877); *Swan Song* (1988), *Nuit de Pouchkine* (1990), *Tombeau de Louise Labè 'O beaux yeux bruns'* (1990), all for 12 voices SATB, are coupled with the choral dyptych *Lux noctis-Dies Solis* (1981-88) for four choral groups, organ and percussion (Calliope CAL9876); and the composer's setting of Renaissance Spanish texts, *Canigós* (1954) for mixed chorus and ensemble, is coupled with Stravinsky's *Les noces* (Pierre Verany PV787032).

The human voice is central to Ohana's work and the key to understanding his musical thinking. Representing the single largest group in a prolific output spanning more than five decades, the vocal works, dramatic and non-dramatic, reflect the development of a style which owes as much to the composer's Spanish, Andalusian roots as to his French training and environment and immersion in the Medieval and Renaissance repertoire. Ohana's vocal works are among those most admired by another of France's leading composers of the post-World War II era, Henri Dutilleul, who particularly praised *Office des Oracles* for its vital angularity and brilliance of sound-colour. In his vocal writing Ohana explored not only many unorthodox techniques of vocal production, including the disintegration of text into onomatopoeic phonemes and morphemes, but expanded the range of melodic expression by incorporating third-tone microintervals to enhance conventional temperament. A distinctive feature of Ohana's musical language, third-tones are found in the traditional music of many Mediterranean cultures but are particularly characteristic of Andalusian Flamenco and certain types of African folk music. These cultures also influenced much of Ohana's treatment of rhythm, his approach to percussive texture in the voice, as well as in the instrumental medium and percussion.

Completed in 1974 for Les Fêtes Musicales de Sainte Baume Festival, *Office des Oracles* was one of the first of Ohana's works to be composed for amateur as well as professional singers. The

vocal force comprises more than 60 singers; a quartet of female soloists (two sopranos, a mezzo and a contralto) and two mixed choirs, one of 40 voices which includes two boy soloists, and another of 16 in which male voices predominate. They are supported by an instrumental ensemble of 14 players comprising flutes (doubling piccolos), clarinets, trombones, violin, viola, piano, organ and a large percussion section of pitched and unpitched skins, metal and wood. Divided spatially into three groups, each of which is directed by their own conductor, the voices and ensemble are dispersed among the listening public so as to avoid the conventional separation between performers and audience. Implicit in the liturgical associations of the work's title is the intention that all those present should be involved in a communal, ritual celebration, whether performers or audience, celebrants or communicants.

In the manner of a pseudo-liturgy lasting more than 40 minutes, *Office des Oracles* 'consults' a succession of 'oracles' from 'Alpha' to 'Omega' posing the question as to the direction, purpose and meaning, if any, of musical art. The work is an allegory of the compositional problems of contemporary music. Although the composer's implicit question is serious, the oracles, as might be expected, answer only in riddles, some of which are more comic than solemn. After a short introduction the composer consults the oracle of his own dreams in the second movement, 'Oniracle' (an invented word which compresses 'onirique' and 'oracle') but quickly passes on to address two mythical monsters, a dragon and a minotaur. Instead of inspiring fear, the three-headed dragon of the third movement is made to look merely ridiculous, producing mocking laughter (in the choral groups) through the uncoordinated movement of its heads, an effect which is created through the free superimposition of the three vocal and instrumental groups in aleatory counterpoint. Similarly the minotaur of the fourth movement is unable to produce an answer, remaining trapped in its labyrinthine, Cretan prison. In the fifth movement, 'Son Chango', the composer seeks a solution from the African god Chango whose forest is reputed to possess magical attributes; the replying riddle suggests that ritual and magic may provide a possible answer. Still inconclusive, the composer wonders, in 'Meteoracle', if a weather forecast might enlighten him, but the oracle of the sixth movement warns of an approaching storm. In movement seven he consults the gypsies to see whether his future and compositional fortune will be revealed in their Tarot cards, but to no avail.

The following movements suggest a more cynical criticism of the paths found by other composers. In a playful jibe at Messiaen, 'Interrogation aux Oiseaux' parodies bird-song, not a feature of Ohana's own language. He may well be questioning the validity of such paraphrases as the way forward for musical composition. Another untypical technical procedure, an open aleatory form, is used in the ninth movement 'Ecriture automatique', which caricatures the process. Alluding to the divination technique of automatic writing, the movement comprises several blocks of material which can be performed in any order or freely superimposed (the blocks included a section satirizing Tartini's famous 'Devil's Trill' sonata). The tenth movement 'Oroscope' borrows text from the horoscopes of a French tabloid newspaper. Passing from oracle to oracle, only the penultimate movement reveals the closest suggestion of a solution to the perennial problem of composers. A substantial solo for female voice comprises this eleventh movement named for 'Pythié', Apollo's priestess at the oracle of Delphi. The spiritual heart of the work, the oracle of the God of the Muses implies that the answer to the composer's quest lies in the lyrical expression of the human voice. Matching 'Alpha' as a prologue, 'Omega' is a contemplative epilogue in which more than 30 chant-like melodic fragments are superimposed in a web of pianissimo aleatory counterpoint.

Ohana's *Messe* (Mass) explores ritual expression in a more conventional context. Composed in 1977 in response to a commission from the Avignon Festival, the Mass requires two female soloists (soprano and mezzo), a mixed choir and small instrumental ensemble comprising oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, organ and percussion. It exists in versions for concert as well as liturgical performance. It is the concert version, whose instrumental requirements are slightly smaller, which is here recorded, although the number of movements is slightly greater. In liturgical performance an 'Epître' (epistle) is inserted between the 'Gloria' and 'Alleluia', and a 'Psaume' (psalm) occurs between a 'Trope' and 'Sanctus'. The Trope is also to be repeated after the Communion, the work being concluded with a second hearing of the 'Agnus Dei'. The concert version comprises: Entree, Prelude, Kyrie, Gloria, Alleluia, Trope, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. One of his most personal, compositional statements, Ohana's Mass includes some of his most expressive vocal writing.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An earlier recording of Ohana's Mass was made by the Choeur et ensemble de Radio France, conducted by Guy Reibel (Erato STU71482).

The influence of plainchant and techniques of early counterpoint, such as organum, conductus and discant, which permeate so much of his work as a whole, are particularly focused in the Mass. Although he often eschewed the use of recognizable text, Ohana was particularly attracted not only to the phonetic sound of Latin but its archetypal and sacred properties. The Trope is a celebration of quasi-improvisatory vocalization in which text is abandoned in favour of syllabization. Traditional techniques of psalmody, antiphonal and responsorial singing are adapted to a language that incorporates third-tone microintervals, conventional temperament and layered, aleatory counterpoint.

Caroline Rae

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GERHARD: Concerto for Harpsichord, String Orchestra and Percussion; Nonet; Concerto for Piano and Strings (Roberto Gerhard 7). Ursula Dütschler (hpschd), Albert Attenelle (pno), Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya c. Lawrence Foster, Auvidis Montaigne MO 782107.

GERHARD: String Quartets Nos.1 and 2. Kreutzer Quartet. Metier MSV CD 92032.

GERHARD: Concerto for Orchestra; Symphony No.2 (original version). BBC Symphony Orchestra c. Matthias Bamert. Chandos CHAN 9694.

GERHARD: Symphony No.4 'New York; Pandora' (suite). BBC Symphony Orchestra c. Matthias Bamert. Chandos CHAN 9651.

Roberto Gerhard's life encompassed both his early years based in his native Catalonia and, after his country's defeat in the Spanish Civil War, exile in England – an exile which turned out to be permanent and, in many respects, permanently difficult. This interaction of immense talent with fairly intractable surrounding circumstances is charted in these recordings. They amount to an illuminating journey through the musical world of 'Gerhard in England' – a world within which, for reasons partly instinctive and partly relating to opportunities around him, Gerhard was always experimenting. He was doing so with state-of-the-art technical apparatus to hand, plus superb training (first with Felipe Pedrell, then with Schoenberg) and a wonderful native musical inheritance – but experimenting just the same. These discs proclaim the composer's magnitude and mastery. They also show how uneven the success rate of his individual works was liable to be.

Take, for instance, the Harpsichord Concerto which begins the latest CD in Auvidis's com-

prehensive survey. The idea of Gerhard being commissioned in 1955 by that formidable scholar of early music and Gerhard's fellow-resident in Cambridge, Thurston Dart, is delicious. The outcome was rather less so, although you can sense how both parties had thought that the idea had potential. Thanks to Pedrell's scholarly example, Gerhard had substantial knowledge of the keyboard tradition of early Spanish music. So why would some judicious, Baroque/serial cross-fertilization not engender fruitful results? I don't think the performance here is to blame: the style is plain vanilla, but the playing is competent enough. The evidence is rather that the work itself is a disappointment. The velocity, wit, and trenchant *élan* of Gerhard's music at its best are strangely absent.

Yet those same qualities sizzle throughout the Nonet that Gerhard composed next year. He scored it for an ensemble of four woodwind, four brass (including tuba) and a roguish interloper, an accordion. The result is a *tour de force* where Schoenberg seems to dance the *sardana* with some local musicians at a Barcelona street corner (the music is as wonderful, and wonderfully unlikely, as the idea sounds). The earlier Piano Concerto of 1951 is even more impressive in its fusion of Gerhard's Iberian heritage with idiosyncratic serial technique. The darkness of the slow movement's lament for the country to which Gerhard could not return has a sombre power, entirely comparable to that of the *Divertimento* by another anti-Fascist political exile: Béla Bartók.

Gerhard's First String Quartet was a work in progress throughout this period: its first movement was written in 1950, the rest completed in 1955. The only criticism to be made of the Kreutzer Quartet's otherwise exemplary performance is that the First Quartet here sounds, rather more than perhaps it should, like a work of two halves. While the last three movements deploy the series as an impulse to expression, the first movement's more autonomous approach (where Gerhard judged the intervals between the notes themselves to do enough of the talking) has the players sounding less convinced, and less convincing. They're very good elsewhere, especially in the ultra-intense lyricism of the slow movement. And they sound equally at home with the design (single movement) and manner (non-stop starburst) of the Second Quartet of 1962 – qualities that were to become central to Gerhard's later works.

The most celebrated of these remains the Concerto for Orchestra. Its première in 1965 helped to launch a fever of late and rather disin-

genuous Anglo-Saxon enthusiasm for Gerhard's music, relating inversely to the quarter-century of substantial indifference that he had lived through until then in his adopted country. (Why do composers have to be ignored and patronized until they're conveniently old, whereupon they're then lionized to the point of gush? Tippett had to put up with a similar charade.) Thirtysomething years on, the Concerto's limitations and strengths each now seem more distinct. The catherine-wheel virtuosity and interest in abstraction are a world away from the powerful expressive agenda of a work like the Piano Concerto. Yet the work's response to Varèse's example remains as spectacular as ever, with the Varèsian idea of an incandescent collective orchestral lava-flow here transmuted into a musical trajectory of airborne lightness and mobility.

Great fun, isn't it? Now try the Second Symphony. Gerhard completed the original version of this in 1959 and then, nearly ten years later, set about revising it for a larger orchestra (this version, left incomplete at Gerhard's death in 1970, is known as *Metamorphosis*). Bernard Benoliel's informative sleeve note makes a convincing case for the original version as being truer to itself in musical terms, a thesis that's memorably borne out when you hear the work itself. Why, one wonders, did Gerhard decide he was unhappy with it as it stood? The style relates to that of the First String Quartet's opening movement – the Gerhardian serial method in autonomous-note mode, without the need to risk dressing itself up as something else. How beautifully the first movement's introductory statement of the series sets up, without fuss, the musical trajectory that's to follow. And how unerringly Gerhard is able to keep different musical strata in play at once – moving in parallel at different speeds, while intersecting with shining vividness.

The second Chandos disc by the BBC SO under Matthias Bamert presents a similar, if inadvertent scenario of a glamorous firework display followed by a genuinely illuminating corrective. An aura of extraneous gloss envelops the Fourth Symphony of 1967, whose origins in a commission from the New York Philharmonic inform every bar. The gestures are brilliant, brilliantly judged, and play blatantly – if subconsciously? – to the gallery. How inconsequential they sound alongside the suite from *Pandora*, the ballet that Gerhard wrote to a commission from the Ballet Jooss in wartime England in 1943. This magnificently strong score takes the newly exiled Gerhard's immediate repository of working

material – Catalan folk tunes and dances – and deploys them in a way that abstractly transcends their local connotations to tell, with startling vividness and strength, the story of the Pandora myth. Falla's example is here developed a remarkable stage further by his single true successor in Spanish music. You're left with an inescapable sense that, whatever experiments were to follow, the Catalan roots were what counted. And I'm sure the composer of the Fourth Symphony would have insisted that it wasn't so simple.

Malcolm Hayes

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JOHN McCABE: Symphony No.4, *Of Time and the River*; Flute Concerto. Emily Beynon (fl), BBC Symphony Orchestra c. Vernon Handley. Hyperion CDA67089.

Vernon Handley's interpretation of John McCabe's powerful and concentrated Fourth Symphony, *Of Time and the River*, is as authoritative as one would expect of the conductor who gave the world première with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in Australia on 16 March 1995. An important facet of the work is its preoccupation with Time and different tempi occurring at the same time: hence, the long-held D at the start of the symphony keeps the work firmly rooted in that key whilst the fizzing clarinets and violas create a real sense of the *Allegro deciso* tempo marking. This aspect led the composer to title the work after the Thomas Wolfe novel, which also concerns a sense of the passing of time and the different levels on which this works. John McCabe's real achievement here is to have created such an exciting and original-sounding piece: anyone coming new to this Fourth Symphony could be forgiven for assuming it was McCabe's First, so vital and fresh are the ideas it contains! Vernon Handley and the BBCSO play it with total commitment and breathtaking accuracy: the sovereign authority of their performance carries all before it. There has not been a more accomplished first recording of any British orchestral work in recent years.

In a typical confounding of expectation, John McCabe's one-movement Flute Concerto of 1990 is amongst his biggest and most volatile works. The composer has said that the sea, whether calm or in full flood, is a major source of inspiration behind the concerto, and this accounts for the sparkling and at times tempestuous nature of the piece. Emily Beynon plays with all the required brilliance of tone and extreme virtuosity at the service of an innate musician-

ship. Orchestra and conductor also deserve praise for their contributions to a glorious performance. The finely detailed and lavishly illustrated programme notes by Guy Rickards are also a real bonus. This Hyperion release fills an important gap in the McCabe discography but there remain many more in his distinguished series of orchestral works as yet unavailable on CD, not least the three piano concertos and the First, Third and Fifth symphonies. On the evidence of this disc, Hyperion should lose no time in getting the BBCSO and Handley back into the recording studios to set down more McCabe!

Paul Conway

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BERG: Sonata, op.1. SCHOENBERG: Three Piano Pieces, op.11; Six Little Piano Pieces, op.19; Five Piano Pieces, op.23; Suite for Piano, op.25; Piano Piece, op.33A; Piano Piece, op.33B. WEBERN: Variations, op.27. Peter Hill (pno). Naxos 8.553870.

Here's an example of the (often deservedly) maligned record industry at its best: superb budget-price value, and quality in every department. The recorded sound – clear, yet comfortable and unexaggerated – is about as good as you can get. Peter Hill contributes a booklet note which compresses much information and food for thought into just three lucidly written pages. Oh, and he plays the music too.

In Berg's Sonata, he keeps phrasing and pace on a tight-ish rein; voices the harmony to emphasize its acuity rather than its lushness; sets the music on a purposeful trajectory, rather than let it wallow in *fin-de-siècle* torpor; and judges the coda's mournful slowing down of harmonic rhythm quite beautifully. Webern's Variations, too, shine like jewels. Hill takes the music (and its classical affinities) at face value, refuses to sentimentalize or over-pedal it, and judges its interaction of strict technical procedure with subtle shifts of pace to near-perfection.

Within the pages of this magazine, Hill has described Maurizio Pollini's way with Schoenberg's piano music as 'glacial'. I think this tells us more about the upside of his own very different line of approach than about the supposed downside of Pollini's. Throughout, Hill combines crystal-clear articulation with beautiful piano sound. The op.19 Pieces come across not as febrile miniatures but as substantial statements: the opening chord of No.6, resonating on each repetition like a funeral bell for the dead Mahler of Schoenberg's inspiration, is a small miracle in itself. The interplay of dialectics

and fantasy in the op.23 Pieces and op.25 Suite comes across unerringly: the Suite's Gavotte and Musette are a coruscating delight, the Gigue at once controlled and impulsive.

Perhaps something is missing – the sheer scale of vision, for instance, which makes Pollini's recorded Schoenberg, harder-edged though its style may be, such a masterly feat of high altitude musical mountaineering. Hill's Schoenberg interpretations climb far higher than the mere foothills, and their fusion of imaginative argument with sonic appeal is strongly convincing. My one criticism is that, coming to these works for the first time, you would perhaps not sense from this recording that Schoenberg is one of the two greatest composers of the 20th century (along with another beginning with S). But with so much light shed on the music, from such an individual and thought-provoking angle, I'm in no mood to complain. Buy, and listen enthralled.

Malcolm Hayes

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PÄRT: *Spiegel im Spiegel; Für Alina; Spiegel im Spiegel; Für Alina; Spiegel im Spiegel*. Vladimir Spivakov (pno); Sergej Bezrodny (pno); Dietmar Schwalke (vlc); Alexander Malter (pno). ECM New Series 1591.

PÄRT: *Fratres; Tabula rasa; Symphony No.3*. Gil Shaham (vln); Adele Anthony (vln); Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra c. Neeme Järvi. DG 457 647-2.

KANCHELI: *Lament*. Gidon Kremer (vln); Maacha Deubner (sop); Tblisi Symphony Orchestra c. Jansug Kakhidze. ECM New Series 1656.

It is a great shame that ECM felt the need to release the first CD listed above, as it provides extremely thin gruel indeed and is suggestive of a desire to cash in on Pärt's current popularity at the expense of any aesthetic criteria. Clocking in at just over 50 minutes, the disc offers three interpretations of *Spiegel im Spiegel* (two for violin/piano, one for cello/piano) together with what the liner notes refer to as two phases of Alexander Malter's several-hour 'improvisation' on *Für Alina* for solo piano. In fact 'improvisation' is stretching it a bit: the original two-minute piece is merely repeated with slight variations to phraseology and register, with a more liberal use of the opening pedal point. But let us be thankful for small mercies – ECM could have released the entire 'improvisation'. (One cannot help

wondering what Pärt's ECM stablemate, Keith Jarrett, might have done with the same material.)

There is something about Pärt's music that tends to bring out a hitherto untapped poetic side, thus the soloist Gil Shaham in the liner notes the latest addition to DG's 20/21 series:

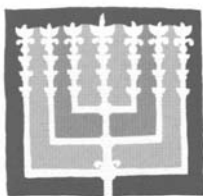
... I was driving through the desert in Utah. *Tabula rasa* was being played on the radio. There in the middle of the desert, his music suddenly made sense... I sensed a connection between the music and the loneliness of the landscape... The music is somehow very religious and basic.

Can anyone imagine the following: 'I was cycling past Buckingham Palace when I first heard *Répons*... there in the heart of London, his music suddenly made sense'. No, nor can I. Regardless of whether he thinks Pärt's music is basic (it is not), Shaham certainly does not have the measure of *Fratres*. Both the use of *rubato* in the moto perpetuo introduction and *portamento* in the main body of the work flies in the face of the score and it totally out of character with the music. *Tabula rasa* fares rather better, simply by the fact that the interpretation is based on the score as notated by Pärt. The exhilarating cadenza of the first movement, in particular, is brilliantly executed, whilst the expanding melodic arcs of the second movement's mensuration canon are allowed to slowly unwind into silence. The transitional Symphony No.3, heavily indebted to Pärt's study of early music and Gregorian chant, is given a beautifully detailed reading by its dedicatee, Neeme Järvi, whose evident love for the score is communicated throughout.

Giya Kancheli's sixth album for ECM New Series, *Lament* (subtitled 'Music of mourning in memory of Luigi Nono for violin, soprano and orchestra') sets the *Strophen* ('Stanzas') of the German-Jewish poet Hans Sahl (1902-1993), who also provided the inspiration for *Exil*. The poem's themes – of displacement, identity, and memory – find an unusually sympathetic recipient in Kancheli, who responds with his characteristic juxtaposition of lyrical contemplation and sudden, agitated outbursts. His penchant for high voices, embodying an ideal of innocence or purity, is memorably realized here by the stunning, childlike soprano voice of Maacha Deubner and the glacial harmonics of violinist Gidon Kremer.

Peter Quinn

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