

CARTER: *Cello Sonata; Figments 1+2; Enchanted Preludes; Scrivo in Vento; Gra; Con Leggerezza Pensosa; Fragments 1+2; Elegy*

Johannes Martens, vc; Joachim Kjelsaas Kwetzinsky, p; Tom Ottar Andreassen, fl; Andjei Maevski, cl; Anders Nilsson, Yi Yang, v; Anders Rensvik, va
2L 54—66 minutes

CARTER; BARBER: *Cello Sonatas;*

SANFORD: *22 Part I;*

THOMAS: *Cantos for Slava*

Matt Haimovitz; Geoffrey Bursleson, p
Oxingale 2015—66 minutes

Elliott Carter is an amazing person. He has lived through both world wars and the rest of the century while maintaining his compositional ardor. When one considers how the first war cut off the inspiration of so many great composers, it seems wonderful that he was not affected in that way.

The Cello Sonata was one of his earlier works, the first where he incorporated his interesting method of keeping a tempo going and altering the rhythmic relationships around it. Martens and Kwetzinsky play it with great accuracy. One really feels the relations between the rhythms, and there is great clarity and enjoyment in their interpretation. This is a rather special release in that way.

Joining the sonata are a large number of Carter's recent pieces, the two *Figments* for cello solo, the *Enchanted Preludes* for flute and cello, *Scrivo in Vento* for flute solo, *Gra* for clarinet solo; *Con Leggerezza Pensosa* for clarinet, violin, and cello; the two *Fragments*, and an arrangement of the 1946 *Elegy* for string quartet. This youthful group is very accomplished in their handling of this material, with its virtuosic elements and its atonal relations of different voices in the same instrument. It is a valuable collection.

Haimovitz and Bursleson play their program from a different point of view. To begin with, their release is called *Odd Couple*, the idea being to combine two instruments that are quite different. The point of view of the players seems to take an expressive and improvisatory way. That works all right in Samuel Barber's beautiful sonata, where romantic expression is the norm. When it comes to Carter, however, the way Haimovitz, in particular, imposes rubato on certain passages and the way they both have of ignoring the precision of a passage for expressive purposes makes the sonata pretty confusing to the ear.

The other two pieces work somewhat better. The program opens with David Sanford (b. 1964) whose two-movement piece works itself into a sort of semi-jazz style with virtuosity

and a good deal of fun. At the other end of the program we have Augusta Read Thomas (b. 1964), known as Gusty to the guys (who write separate program notes to show their independence from each other). Her four *Cantos* are attractive pieces written in memory of Rostropovich. The guys play very well, but the Carter is notably unclear.

D MOORE

CHAUSSON: *Concerto;*

FAURE: *Violin Sonata 1*

Jeremy Denk, p; Soovin Kim, v; Jupiter Quartet
Azica 71243—61 minutes

Ernest Chausson is known by only a few works, but those are quite popular. The *Concert* (concerto) has a dozen past reviews in ARG. I can't claim to have heard them all, but this is as fine a performance as I've ever encountered.

The work itself is glorious. It is extraordinarily sensual, with lush waves of sound and melody—a celebration of beautiful sounds tempered with just enough Gallic restraint to keep excess at bay. Each movement is based on a few tones heard at the outset, manipulated and developed in a masterly fashion. And each movement here is magnificently performed, with a delightful sense of the architecture of the whole. I am especially impressed with pianist Denk, who blends with the strings better than any I've heard. His sound seems part of the strings rather than a contrast to them.

In Fauré's sonata, Kim and Denk are excellent, delivering a fully idiomatic, committed performance. This is also a popular work, with several excellent recordings available. You may have your favorites, but this is as fine as you're likely to hear. The Azica recording has excellent sound and is one of the finest chamber music recordings I've encountered in recent years.

KEATON

CHEDEVILLE: *Hurdy-Gurdy Pieces*

Robert Mandel, hurdy-gurdy; Pal Nemeth, fl;
Ensemble le Berger Fortune/ Pal Nemeth

Hungaroton 32540—67 minutes

This is evidently the fourth disc in a series with the hurdy-gurdy as a solo instrument. All involve Pal Nemeth and Robert Mandel as soloists. All are listed as world premiere recordings.

Nicolas Chedeville (1705-82) was born to a French family of musicians. He grew up as a musician and instrument maker under the instruction of his uncle, Louis Hotteterre. By the time he was about 20 he was an oboist in