

spirit that is undeniably enjoyable. Those qualities may be stacked up against the competition in complete recordings of the set. The modern-instrument performances by members of the St Martin Academy are in a special category, because they do not hew strictly to the two-violin formula but mix oboes, flute, and violins in various ways through the seven sonatas; moreover, the set is only available now in the large 9-disc box of Handel's chamber works (Philips 470 893). An individual disc in CRD's parallel series (Vol. IV, 3376) gives the set with John Holloway leading in a period style of playing that is a little dated, if smoother than our Brook Streeters. My preference is for London Baroque's integral set, once available from Harmonia Mundi (901389): stylish but altogether artistic and enjoyable.

Certainly no one will go wrong with this Avie release. And I will certainly keep an eye out for more from Brook Street.

BARKER

HARBISON: *Motetti di Montale*

Janice Felty, Margaret Lattimore, mz; Cottage New Music/ David Hoose—Koch 7545—47 min

This is an updated and finally completed orchestration of Harbison's 1980 cycle of songs on poems by contemporary Italian symbolist Eugenio Montale. [The cycle was premiered in Santa Fe in 1980 by Janice Felty, then recorded by Koch in 2002 after another Santa Fe performance, reviewed in November/December 2002 (p 26)—Ed.] I reviewed the second half of the cycle, sung beautifully by Lorraine Hunt on an Archetype release (May/June 1999, probably gone).

It's good to have these arresting songs in their full form, described by their author as a "novel in verse" not intended to be experienced in sections. I liked the second half, and I like the whole set even better (I've never heard Harbison's original version with piano, which doesn't seem to have been recorded). The four books are split between these two wonderful sopranos: Ms Felty gets books 1 and 2, Ms Lattimore books 3 and 4. The voices are similar enough so as not to distract the listener by their differences. Both are exceptional artists. The only relevant comparison with the earlier Archetype recording would be between Ms Lattimore and Ms Hunt (now Ms Hunt Lieberston). Both performances are magnificent, Ms Hunt's a bit richer in tone, perhaps, but that recording must now be considered a supplement to this complete set.

Harbison's wonderful orchestration underlines the colorful tone-painting that I commented on in my earlier review. The writing is atmospheric and expressive, as are Montale's texts

(sung in Italian), but those texts definitely express the longings of a male protagonist. You'll need to forget about gender while listening to this cycle; but that shouldn't bother most listeners. Anyone interested in contemporary vocal repertoire should snap this up post haste.

GIMBEL

HAYDN: *Cello Concertos*; DENISOV: *Death Is a Long Sleep*

Peter Bruns; Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra
Hänssler 98477—59 minutes

Franz Joseph Haydn gives me one overwhelming impression through his music. He must have been a person of consistently good humor and cheerfulness. No tortured genius à la Beethoven he. That's why I'm so pleased to see that Peter Bruns has recorded them. I can't think of another cellist whose own nature so closely matches Haydn's. I compared these readings with the recordings by Yo-Yo Ma with the English Chamber Orchestra and Mstislav Rostropovich with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. In both concertos, Rostropovich is generally the most elegant, almost aloof, while Ma is affectionate and genial. Bruns is more extroverted and obviously enjoying himself. While Rostropovich and Ma and their orchestras play in a more legato style, Bruns is clearly influenced by the period performance practice movement, and he and his orchestra articulate much more and employ stronger accents. He also likes faster tempos in the first and second movements of both concertos. A harpsichord is used in Concerto 1, which probably dates from the 1760s. This has become my favorite set of the Haydn cello concertos.

Edison Denisov (b 1929) appropriates a canon by Haydn for his set of variations *Death Is a Long Sleep*. Avant-garde impressionist techniques alternate with traditional treatments of thematic and harmonic material. I find the work strangely affecting, with an ending that reminds me a little of the last bars of Charles Ives's Symphony 3, and Bruns and company play with great commitment and atmosphere. The booklet notes claim this is the first recording of this work.

MAGIL

HAYDN: *Piano Sonatas 11, 20, 23, 50; Variations in F minor*

Evgeny Korolov—Profil 4060—72 minutes

Korolov is a Russian-trained, Hamburg-based pianist who seems to have escaped notice in this country. His Haydn, as recorded here, is full of color and personality and makes a compelling case for the modern Steinway as a Haydn instrument.

The most rewarding modern piano Haydn playing that I know of is Schiff's Teldec set, full

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HAYDN: A

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