

American Record Guide

independent critics reviewing classical recordings

US \$7.99
March/April 2023



nized that it's often hard to believe more than one player is involved. My appreciation for the rhythmic intricacy, and for the ease and technical skills of these artists, rose when viewing online videos of the 12-minute *Kaleidoscope* and the 11-minute *Belo Horizonte*.

FALKENBERG: *Moons Symphony; Reflections;*

DEBUSSY: *Clair de Lune*
London Voices/ Ben Parry; Leo Jemison, treble; Daniel Koek, t; Amanda Lee Falkenberg, p; Nicole Stott, narr; London Symphony/ Marin Alsop

Signum 730—48 minutes

This is Australian composer-pianist Amanda Lee Falkenberg's foray into space-inspired music. Moon-inspired, that is. Her 42-minute *Moons Symphony* has 7 movements, each named for a moon of our solar system: Io, Europa, Ganymede, and so on, ending with Earth Moon. Each comes with Falkenberg's own texts (included), sung by the fine choir London Voices. Much of the 'Earth Moon' finale centers on the clear solo voice of treble Leo Jemison.

As one might expect, the music tends toward the epic and often reminds us of Holst's famous suite. Also included is Falkenberg's own performance (on piano) of Debussy's 'Clair de Lune' and a reading of Falkenberg's poetry by NASA astronaut Nicole Stott.

FOX: *Trostlieder in Widerwertigkeit des Kriegs; A Spousal Verse; Canti del Carcare; Preluding; Song*

Exaudi/ James Weeks
Kairos 22005—62 minutes

Choral works by Christopher Fox (b 1955), extremely challenging for both singers and listeners, given courageous performances by the 10-voice ensemble Exaudi. I find much of the program just plain weird and not rewarding, but the big piece offers more. The 4-stanza, 27-minute *Trostlieder in Widerwertigkeit des Kriegs* (Comfort Songs in the Absurdity of War, 2015) deals with the horrors of the 30-Years War of the 17th Century.

GRILL: *Introduction; Mahatma Gandhi; Martin Luther King; John Lennon*
Czech Chamber Philharmonic Pardubice/ Marek Stilec—Grill 0—20 minutes

This small collection of music by Stanley Grill

bears the title *Ahimsa*, which is the concept (in Hinduism, Buddhism, etc) of causing no harm to any living thing. Thus the work titles, which bear the names of leaders whose cause was peace. The music is, of course, peaceful but not without attractive melodies and harmonies. The playing by this orchestra is lovely and heartfelt.

GUBELMANN: *Buenos Aires Prelude; El Rio de las Estrellas; La Flor del Amor; Nacido del Silencio; Eternal Movement; The Warrior Gene*
Daniel Gubelmann, sax; Christian Rosli, p; Marc Jenny, db; Marius Peyer, perc; Musikkollegium Winterthur

Solo Musica 407—50 minutes

Music for jazz quartet and string orchestra, composed or arranged by Swiss saxophonist Daniel Gubelmann. Much of the music shows the influence of composer Daniel Hector Montes, with whom Gubelmann studied composition in Argentina.

LEENDERS: *Requiem; Te Deum; Mass, in Simplicitate; Toccata; In Principioli Mass, Choralis; Sommer; In Grenzland; Tralectum; 3 German Lieder*

Claudia Couwenbergh, Florence Chong, s; Vincent Kusters, b; Irina Trajkovska, va; Hans Leenders, org

Aliud 126—75 minutes

Hans Leenders (b 1965) is on the faculty of Maastricht Conservatory (Netherlands) and an organist and music director of a number of choirs and festivals. He has been composing since 2003; as far as I can tell, this is the first album of his own works. Leenders is organ soloist in his *Te Deum* and *Toccata*, and organ collaborator in several other selections. Claudia Couwenbergh is the rich-timbred soprano in the Requiem and (with pianist Charlie Bo Meijering) in a grim Sonnet (2018). Florence Chung is the light-voiced soprano in *Missa Choralis*. Vincent Kuster is the seemingly effortless baritone in *Missa in Simplicitate* and (with pianist Meijering) *3 German Lieder*. All of the works are lovely. Texts, no translations.

MACKEY, S: *Beautiful Passing; Mnemosyne's Pool*
Anthony Marwood, v; Sydney Symphony/ David Robertson—Canary 22—67 minutes

Two very dramatic, complex, and personal works by Steven Mackey (b 1956). Both deal with the topic of memory. The 25-minute