



Speak, Be Silent

**Music by Thorvaldsdóttir,
Lim et al**

Riot Ensemble

HUDDERSFIELD CONTEMPORARY
RECORDS HCR20CD



New music from Riot Ensemble puts Yorkshire on the map

Huddersfield University's Centre for Research in New Music is one of the most exciting international hubs for contemporary composition and performance. Ten years ago, Huddersfield Contemporary Records was founded to showcase some of the musical output associated with the Centre, and *Speak, Be Silent* is its 20th release. It takes its name from the stunning three-movement concerto by Liza Lim in which Sarah Saviet's violin weaves through a series of intricate textures, from dense brass to gossamer string threads. Lim's exploration of unison and its variants has produced a captivating work that, although different in execution, shares features with other works on this release.

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Israeli composer Chaya Czernowin's *Ayre...* is sustained by strands of sound losing and finding each other in dramatic climaxes that evaporate just as it seems they could go on forever. *Ró* (Icelandic for serenity) by Anna Thorvaldsdóttir is even more ephemeral, with sustained tones coming together to produce glacial harmonics.

These works are brought to life spectacularly by the Riot Ensemble. Its performances are uniformly excellent, combining precision with warmth, understanding and assurance. The recording is incredible – close, clean and big, uncluttered with no hint of brittleness in the upper registers – allowing the manifold sonic nuances to breathe. A most impressive release. **Lisa MacKinney**