



Clarinetist Carl Rosman with composer Rebecca Saunders, whose *Caerulean* is an extended exploration into trilled multiphonics

'L'Ange & le Diable'

Forqueray Suite No 5 (excs) **Leclair** Sonata, Op 9 No 8 **Locatelli** Sonata, Op 6 No 12 **Tartini** Sonata, 'The Devil's Trill', BG5
Chouchane Siranossian vn
Jos van Immerseel hpd
Alpha © ALPHA255 (68' • DDD)



This disc's title comes from the fact that three of its virtuoso-composers were compared in their day either to an angel (Leclair) or to a devil (Locatelli and Forqueray), while the fourth (Tartini) attributed the extreme difficulty of his most famous composition to diabolical inspiration visited on him in a dream. Fiendishness as a performer does not always translate to composition – Tartini's music is actually often among the most angelic of the 18th century – but the fireworks of Locatelli's solo capriccios (one of which, crawling all over the strings and ascending to dog-bothering pitch heights, ends the sonata included here) certainly make his classification understandable, while the unflinching

elegance that survives the challenging double-stops of Leclair's sonatas is enough to make for a very pleasant visitation indeed.

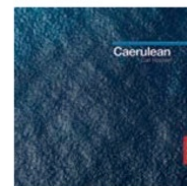
If I had to categorise Chouchane Siranossian in similar terms, I would plump for angelic for the simple beauty of her playing, which belies the toughness of the music by being well-tuned and sweetly turned at every step, with a richly ear-pleasing sound and little sign of technical struggle. If the devil really does lurk among those Tartini trills, there doesn't seem much chance of him knocking her off her stride. Her musicianship is likewise faultless, unconcerned with tricks and quirks but rather on letting her violin do the speaking. This is top-class Baroque violin-playing, reminiscent of another virtuoso made for this repertoire, Giuliano Carmignola.

The non-violinist among these composers is Antoine Forqueray, whose robust viola da gamba compositions are represented by four of the solo harpsichord transcriptions published by his son. Jos van Immerseel is better known as a fortepianist, but here escapes from his unfussy continuo role to produce performances of deep tone and firm momentum. The excellent

recorded sound adds both body and bloom to this gem of a disc. **Lindsay Kemp**

'Caerulean'

Aperghis Damespiel Barrett Flechtwerk^a
Cassidy The wreck of former boundaries
Kagel Elegie. Pieza **Morishita** Skin, Gelatine,
Soot Saunders *Caerulean*
Carl Rosman cls ^a**Mark Knoop** pf
Huddersfield Contemporary Records © HCR12CD
(75' • DDD)



One of the most renowned clarinetists on the new music scene, Carl Rosman has worked closely with each of the composers represented here, in some cases over multiple projects. The extent of the collaboration varies from work to work, as he explains in an illuminating booklet-note, but the sense of pieces written to fit him like a glove pervades the whole. One is particularly struck by his command of breath, whether taken in audible gulps and gasps or inaudibly through circular breathing. It gives these performances a raw edge, even when the music hovers at

the boundary of immobility. Another intriguing feature of this recital is the absence of 10-minute works, which are quite common in solo programmes of this sort: the pieces by Aaron Cassidy and Georges Aperghis are rather shorter, those by Richard Barrett, Rebecca Saunders and Chikako Morishita about twice that length, and the two by Kagel are miniatures.

It is particularly intriguing to compare Morishita's five-movement *Skin, Gelatine, Soot* with Saunders's and Barrett's single-movement forms. The recurrence of repeated patterns, the revisiting of gestural materials across changing time-frames, leads to a very different sense of time passing from Saunders's *Caerulean*, an extended exploration into trilled multiphonics, in which the tension between stasis and detail is (purposely) never fully resolved. The haunting two-note multiphonics that end the piece (evident favourites of Rosman) do so again in Barrett's *Flechtwerk* and Cassidy's *The wreck of former boundaries*, although the wailing agitation that precedes them in the Cassidy entirely changes how they are heard, as Rosman himself remarks. Perhaps the most impressive performance on the disc is the duo with pianist Mark Knopfler in Barrett's *Flechtwerk* – impressive because the episodes of rhythmic and timbral coincidence, and the deviations from them, are equally assured and motivated. The piece's many playful passages had me smiling, but the clarinet cadenza near the end neatly sums up Rosman's energy and sheer physicality. In this repertory, virtuosity can almost be taken for granted, but Rosman – and the composers too – gives us far more.

Fabrice Fitch

'The Kreisler Story'

JS Bach/Kreisler Solo Violin Partita No 3, BWV1006 **Falla/Kreisler** Danza española **Paganini/Kreisler** Caprices, Op 1 - No 13; No 20. **Moto perpetuo Kreisler** La chasse (two recordings). **Grave in the Style of WF Bach**. **Liebesfreud. Schön Rosmarin**. Tempo di minuetto **Poldini/Kreisler** La poupée valsante **Schubert/Kreisler** Rosamunde - Ballet Music No 2 **Tartini/Kreisler** The Devil's Trill **Wieniawski/Kreisler** Caprices - A minor; E flat **Daniel Röhn** *vn* **Paul Rivinius** *pf*
Berlin Classics © 0300784BC (74' • DDD)



At least two challenges face any violinist who plays Fritz Kreisler's music. First, there

are the inimitable recordings by Kreisler himself, *sui generis* and among the glories of the gramophone, to which any pretender must inevitably be compared. Secondly, can the violinist inhabit convincingly the same world and, at the same time, make Kreisler's *Sachertorten* his own?

Daniel Röhn comes as close as I have heard on any all-Kreisler disc since James Ehnes (Analekta, 2/04). There is no attempt to emulate the master's idiosyncrasies – the short bow strokes using the middle of the bow, the continuous vibrato, the portamento, the sharply dotted staccato – but the essential charm, rhythmic vitality, sweet tone and *parlando* phrasing are all there. What's more, the programme mixes the familiar (*Liebesfreud, Schön Rosmarin*) with the less familiar (the two Wieniawski-Kreisler Caprices and the *Grave in the Style of WF Bach*), as well as boasting a world premiere.

This is the first recording of all six movements of Bach's Partita No 3 in E, BWV1006, with Kreisler's piano accompaniment. The Gavotte (the third movement, published in 1912 and recorded by Kreisler) is relatively well known. That and the opening Prelude are arguably also the most interesting movements but no one seems to have previously unearthed the other four. Sadly, the booklet yields no further information. Anyway, for those of us for whom the solo violin can quickly become too much like brown rice and lentils, Kreisler's tasteful additions are a mischievous delight, especially the cat-and-mouse Prelude where the excellent Paul Rivinius comes into his own. It would surely have made Johann Sebastian smile.

The final track of the 21 is Kreisler's own 1911 recording of *La chasse* ('in the style of Jean-Baptiste Cartier', to give the rest of the title, omitted in the track listing) mixed with Röhn and Ravinus's. I'm not sure what we gain from this except to demonstrate that Kreisler was a genius and that Röhn is an exceptionally talented violinist well worth hearing. **Jeremy Nicholas**

'Souvenirs d'Italie'

'Les carnets de voyages du Comte Harrach' Concertos and Sonatas and works by **Caldara, Colista, Fiorenza, Hasse, Leo, Montanari, Piani, Sammartini and Sarro ensemble** / **Maurice Steger** *fl/rec*
Harmonia Mundi © HMC90 2253 (73' • DDD)



Maurice Steger's latest album draws on the manuscript library of Count von

Harrach, an elderly musical and recorder-minded Austrian diplomat who used a six-year posting in Naples to gather a treasure trove of high-quality, expertly curated Italian music. Add Maurice Steger's own curating prowess and what we have here is a feast of stylistic, colouristic and emotional musical worlds, from the sunny grace of Sammartini's F major Concerto and Caldara's lilting *Ciaccona a 3*, with its cheerfully strumming Baroque guitar, to the long lyrical lines and dulcimer colour of Fiorenza's A minor Sonata. In true Steger style, the accompanying booklet's list of employed recorder sizes and models is also as long as your arm, although the only mid-work switch is between two F2 sopraninos (after Bressan and Denner) for Montanari's B flat major Concerto.

On to the performances themselves, and it must be said that some of them probably hold the potential to get the goat of straighter-laced recorder aficionados, given that as usual Steger has taken virtuoso showmanship to its apotheosis; for your amusement try listening to the outer movements of Hasse's *Cantata per flauto* – here an uber-*presto* pyrotechnical tour de force of coloratura – alongside Tabea Debus's still-*allegro* readings that come in at a whole minute longer (TYXArt). Likewise, its central *Adagio* sees him right in there from the off with his ornamentations where others might have begun with an initial no-frills statement.

But that's the thing; Steger is never dull, and while he may go for maximum velocity and more-is-more ornamentation, his attack and articulation are always varied, repeats are never the same and there's warmth and thought behind his every note, regardless of its speed. It's also heart-warming to behold the clear pleasure he takes in his zinging accompanying ensemble, going so far as to afford each of their instruments the same loving documentation as for his own recorders in the notes. Harpsichordist Naoki Kitaya also gets a pint-size but delightful solo spot with Leo's *Toccata* in C major.

In short, it's another Steger cracker of a recording. Well worth seeking out.

Charlotte Gardner

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