



Goldenthal

Double Bass Sonata^a. Brass Quintet No 2^b.
Three Pieces for Solo Piano^c.

String Quartet No 1, 'The Stone Cutters'^d

^aTom Chiu, ^bConrad Harris *vnls* ^cLih-Wen Ting *va*

^dMariel Roberts *vc* ^aTim Cobb *db* ^bStephen Gosling,

^cGeila Perach *pfs* ^bExtension Ensemble

Zarathustra © 00-2 (39' • DDD)

^cRecorded live 1974



Elliot Goldenthal pits his astringent new String Quartet No 1, *The Stone Cutters*,

published in 2013, against three works from his days in the mid-1970s working with John Corigliano and Aaron Copland. Inspired by Robinson Jeffers's 1938 poem about 'foredefeated challengers of oblivion' and other victims of creative torment, Goldenthal's new 13-minute work was originally scored for soprano and quartet. It has moments of Bartókian abandon and could not have been written without late Beethoven and the serialists, but the experience is no less memorable for that, especially as played with a stratospheric sense of spiritual ecstasy by Tom Chiu, Conrad Harris, Lih-Wen Ting and Mariel Roberts.

Goldenthal's Sonata for double bass and piano, which he describes as 'a 1945 Bugatti racer grumbling into life', begins by tuning the E string down to its lowest possible pitch; after that, dedicatee Tim Cobb and pianist Stephen Gosling conspire over the course of 10 riveting minutes of dialogue, much of it jazz-inspired and dominated overall by the double bass's striving for a more lyrical voice, to set up and beautifully reach a touching, bittersweet moment at the end, in which the piano is subjugated to a final, secondary role.

Also included are Goldenthal's golden *tour de force* Brass Quintet No 2, in a superb, previously available recording by the Extension Ensemble; and the seven lyrical, romantic minutes of his Three Pieces for solo piano, recorded live by Geila Perach at the Manhattan School of Music in 1974.

Laurence Vittes

Levering

Furies^a. *Il mare dentro*^b. *Drinking Songs*^c.

Partite sopra ciaccona^d. *Parallel Universe*^e

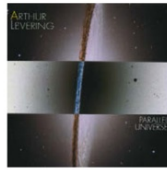
^aKrista River *mez* ^bFranziska Huh, ^cAmanda

Romano *hps* ^dDonald Berman, ^eJohn McDonald

pfs ^cScott Wheeler *cond* ^bBoston Modern Orchestra

Project / Gil Rose; ^aSequitur / Paul Hostetter

New World © 80750-2 (53' • DDD)



Arthur Levering has been active as a composer for more than three decades,

during which time he has created works full of enchanting and vibrant soundscapes. This recording, performed to the dramatic hilt by the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and other superb artists, focuses on pieces from the past decade, confirming his continued exploration of colourful territory.

All the works have titles suggesting a narrative but what's most intriguing is the composer's ability to maintain a constant flow of organically shaped material. *Furies* (2006), for example, rumbles and glistens, with Stravinsky-like wind textures and motoric rhythms, tolling of bells and ominous flourishes. The aura in *Il mare dentro* (2008) alternates between menacing and dreamy as it evokes the motion of the sea, even quoting Debussy's *La mer*, as if that music were naturally wedded.

The tonal roots often anchoring Levering's art are most apparent in the four *Drinking Songs* (2005), charming and heartfelt evocations of verses in English, Latin, French and Middle English. The collection is scored for mezzo with two harps and two pianos, giving the songs distinctive, sleek ambiances, with hints of gamelan.

Levering uses an old form with imaginative depth in *Partite sopra ciaccona*, in which two pianos dart about their respective keyboards (based on material from *Furies*) and engage in antagonistic volleys and bell-tolling at the extremes. The disc derives its name from *Parallel Universe* (2004), a gripping theme and variations for string orchestra marked by anxious swirls and urgent interweaving of thematic lines.

Donald Rosenberg

Lieberson

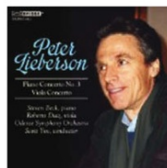
'Music of Peter Lieberson, Vol 3'

Piano Concerto No 3^a. Viola Concerto^b

^bRoberto Diaz *va* ^aSteven Beck *pf*

Odense Symphony Orchestra / Scott Yoo

Bridge © BRIDGE9412 (56' • DDD)



Even in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, traditions welcome renewal.

The concerto, for example, received a jolt of energy from Peter Lieberson, two of whose works in the genre are treated with dramatic

flair and expressive vibrancy on this exceptional disc. Both the Piano Concerto No 3 and Viola Concerto deserve a regular presence in concert halls.

The piano concerto, written for Peter Serkin, exemplifies Lieberson's ability to take tried-and-true elements and build narratives that keep the ear on edge or exert haunting impact. The three movements pay homage to literary works by Neruda, St Francis of Assisi and Charles Wright, but only as starting points in a series of typically urgent Lieberson sonic adventures. Soloist and orchestra are often at absorbing odds, only to coalesce in passages rich in texture and thematic development. Lieberson's occasional penchant for soaring lyricism – so in blossom in his *Neruda Songs*, composed around the same time – is present here, especially in the central 'Canticle'. The propulsive nature of much of his writing dominates the outer movements, with spicy harmonic ideas adding surprising flavours.

The Viola Concerto is no less compelling, in part because Lieberson revised the 1993 score in 2003 to add a new poetic section to open the finale. The work embraces the viola's dark-hued character while traversing a range of emotional states and formal settings. Pianist Steven Beck and viola player Roberto Diaz are dynamic, rhapsodic soloists in collaboration with the fine Odense Symphony Orchestra, under Scott Yoo.

Donald Rosenberg

Mamlök

Confluences. 2000 Notes. Polyphony I.

From My Garden. Rhapsody. String Quartet No 1^a

Spectrum Concerts Berlin; ^aArmida Quartet

Naxos American Classics © 8 559771 (57' • DDD)

Recorded live in the Kammermusiksaal of the

Philharmonie, Berlin, February 1, 2013



On February 1, 2013, at the Berlin Philharmonie's chamber music hall,

Spectrum Concerts Berlin and the Armida Quartet presented a retrospective of Ursula Mamlök's music. Played alongside Janáček, Wolf and Mendelssohn, the concert celebrated the composer's 90th birthday and unofficially marked her return to the city where she was born and from which she was expelled in 1938. By complementing and to some extent overlapping the four volumes of Mamlök's music already out on Bridge, Naxos has confirmed the importance of a delicate, highly tuned voice with a minimalist's flair for pace and flow.