

The Clarinet

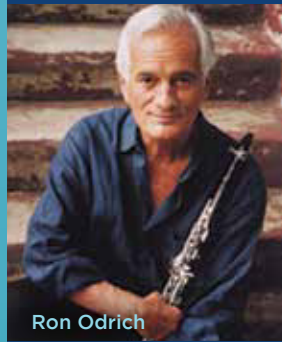
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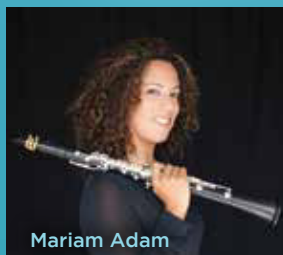
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Mariam Adam



Han Kim



Stanley Drucker



Franklin Cohen



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Wonkak Kim



Mark Nuccio



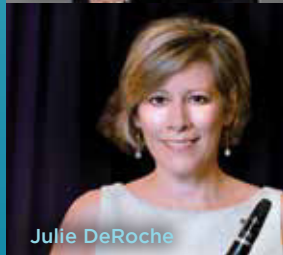
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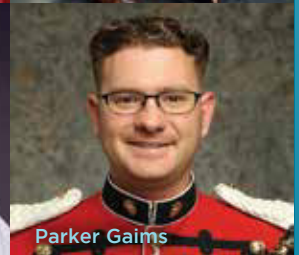
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Ricardo Morales



Milan Rericha



Parker Gaims



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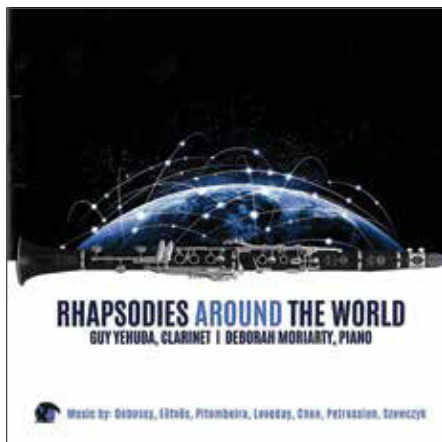
Anton Rist



Laura Grantier

Manuel Gómez and the Gomez-Boehm Clarinet | Interview with Theresa Martin | Don Suhor Adaptive Clarinets | Lillian Poenisch and Jeannette Scheerer | The Bohlen-Pierce Clarinet

piano. C. Debussy: *Première Rhapsodie*, M. Eötvös: *The Three Alicids*, L. Pitombeira: *Parish Ode*, C. Loveday: *Heatwave*, C. Yao: *Through Waters, By The Mountains*, M. Petrossian: *Timkat Song*, P. Szewczyk, *Luminous Rhapsody*. Blue Griffin Recording BGR 441. Total time 61:16.



Guy Yehuda, an Israeli-American clarinetist, has an impressive career which includes winning the top prize of several international competitions. He has collaborated with many top composers and performers in chamber music concerts, and has appeared as a soloist in many prestigious venues. Deborah Moriarty, piano, has studied at Curtis, Juilliard, and New England Conservatory and has earned several awards. Both artists are affiliated with Michigan State University.

Yehuda states that the Debussy *Rhapsodie* is the inspiration for this CD, noting:

This piece is considered to be one of the most important early 20th century French compositions for clarinet and a wonderful example of impressionistic writing. I chose this piece to become the “template” for all other new pieces sharing the same identification of “rhapsodie.”

He further adds that this recording “presents six newly-commissioned works for clarinet and piano. Composers from six different continents pay homage to Debussy by exploring new approaches to the rhapsodic form.”

Following Debussy’s work, each of the six new rhapsodies have interesting

information in the liner notes relating how their work was created and its relationship to Debussy or the title “rhapsodie.” Also, there are rather extensive well-written biographies of the composers. *The Three Alicids* by Melody Eötvös (Australia) refers to three sea birds on the Machias Seal Island near the coast of Maine. There is a musical reference to the opening theme of the Debussy and also to water, reflecting the 1910 Great Paris Flood. There are passages that depict bird calls created by Yehuda’s incisive articulations. Later the pianist repeats a pattern reminiscent of water while the clarinet part has long and sustained lines, similar to the Debussy.

Parish Ode by Liduino Pitombeira (Brazil) uses a compositional technique of deep intertextuality which he defines as “systemic modeling.” This piece reflects a somewhat tonal approach and there is frequent use of chromatic lines in the clarinet. It is free, quixotic, and diverse.

Heatwave by Clare Loveday (South Africa) was written during one of the hottest and driest summers on record in southern Africa. I find the work somewhat “jazzy” both in the rhythmic aspect and the harmonies used. Much of it is fragmented, antithetical to Debussy’s lines. She writes a unison section followed by flowing, sustained clarinet lines. These are punctuated with sharp dissonant chords. Very effective!

Through Waters, by Mountains by Chen Yao (China) was influenced and inspired by Debussy for two of his previous compositions. He notes, “I selected several thematic motifs from the *Rhapsodie* and developed them as a free fantasy.” The high register in the clarinet is long and taxing, but Yehuda manages it exceedingly well. Reflections with repetitive, murmuring piano lines seem to indicate waters. This is a very effective but difficult piece.

Michel Pitrossian (France) states that his *Timkat Song* is related to Debussy in two ways: formally and conceptually. Pitrossian borrowed a melody from the ceremony of Timkat, the main Ethiopian religious feast, which in retrograde is reminiscent of the opening of Debussy.

Luminous Rhapsody by Piotr Szewczyk (USA) draws its inspiration from Debussy’s rich harmonic language and colorful

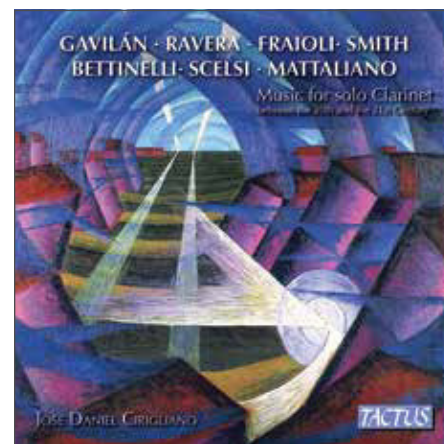
changing moods. Although the composer alludes to one brief Debussy quote, I find that there are many other subtle references to Debussy’s *Rhapsodie*. Some are harmonic, melodic or rhythmic motives.

The performances of both artists are very polished. The technique is impeccable and the ensemble is very concise. Yehuda performs with a beautiful, fluid sound. Recommended!

– Robert Chesebro

Music for Solo Clarinet Between the 20th and 21st Century.

Josè Daniel Cirigliano, clarinet. G. Gavilán: *Clariloquio*, A. Ravera: *La scatola del tempo*, A. Fraioli: *Quattro Pezzi* and *I miei occhi*, W.O. Smith: *Meditations* and *Five Pieces*, B. Bettinelli: *Studio da concerto*, G. Scelsi: *Ixor II*, G. Mattaliano: *Zeta World*. Tactus TC 93002. Total time 52:35.



Josè Daniel Cirigliano is an Italian clarinetist with a strong reputation as a performer of modern avant-garde clarinet music. In this recording, Cirigliano has recorded unaccompanied works for different clarinets that utilize extensive modern extended techniques. The performances on this CD are not timid or highly polished, but are instead bold, energetic and highly virtuosic performances of this demanding repertoire from the second half of the 20th century and early 21st century.

The first track on this CD is *Clariloquio* by Guido López Gavilán. Cirigliano performs this piece with impressive technical facility and dynamic

control. The playing is very aggressive, resulting in a powerful and intense performance. Tone quality and fast tempi do test the limits at times, but Cirigliano's performance is convincing. The other works for soprano clarinet, Antonio Fraioli's *Quattro Pezzi*, Bruno Bettinelli's *Studio da concerto* and William O. Smith's *Five Pieces* are performed in very much the same manner. Although each of these works has qualities which differentiate them, there is a certain "sameness" in the impressions to the listener in the harmonic and avant-garde melodic language that is used. In all of these pieces, Cirigliano provides thoughtful, energetic and dramatic performances.

The two works for bass clarinet, Giacinto Scelsi's *Ixor II* and Alessandra Rivera's *La scatola del tempo* are equally

engaging and show Cirigliano's ability to play the bass clarinet with the same energy, facility and intensity as he shows on the soprano clarinet. *La scatola* utilizes many extended techniques that result in interesting and innovative effects. Of these, singing while using vibrato and playing phrases is a chilling and an extraordinary effect that is highly memorable.

The performance of William O. Smith's *Meditations* for demi-clarinet was particularly compelling. As one listens, one wonders how Cirigliano produces the effects and sounds. These effects are done very well and sound effortless. They show Cirigliano's expertise and talent for playing this type of music. The other work which captured my attention was *I miel occhi* by Antonio Fraioli. The piece requires the performer turn to the left on some

segments, turn to the right and return to the middle. In the recording process, one hears this in the left and right stereo channels. It gives the effect of Cirigliano playing from different parts of the recording studio which was very interesting.

The CD closes with Giovanni Mattaliano's *Zeta World*. It is upbeat with jazz and ethnic music influences. The piece requires great technical control with its large leaps and fast passages. Cirigliano makes it sound easy.

Overall, this CD was well done. The recording quality was fine and the repertoire selection was well suited for making an album of modern and more experimental music. This recording would make an excellent reference for people wanting to study pieces in this genre.

– David Shea

AUDIO NOTES

by Kip Franklin

Transitioning to the role of audio reviews editor would have been a monumental task had I not had the support and guidance from Chris Nichols, Rachel Yoder, Jeffrey O'Flynn, and the whole review team. It is in that spirit of collaboration that I would like to devote my first column to two new albums centered on partnership and cooperation. The clarinet has historically been a favorite choice of many composers in their chamber works, and as instrumentation has become more varied through the centuries it continues to be included as a prominent instrument. These albums contain works composed during the 20th and 21st centuries for clarinet in tandem with other instruments, many of which are world-premiere recordings.

Rough Wind/Smooth Wind. The Scott/Garrison Duo: Shannon Scott, clarinet; Leonard Garrison, flute; with Rajung Yang, piano, and Stuart Gerber, marimba. P. Jalber: *Triple Set*, E. Mandat: *Togetherness*, M. Kupferman: *Four Constellations*, A. Wilder: *Suite for Flute, Clarinet, and Piano*, E. Carter: *Esprit Rude/Esprit Doux I* and *Esprit*

Rude/Esprit Doux II, R. Brownlow: *Bric-a-brac*. Albany Records TROY 1742. Total Time 75:46. Amazon and iTunes

The latest release from the Scott/Garrison Duo (Leonard Garrison, flute, and Shannon Scott, clarinet) titled **Rough Wind/Smooth Wind** is a true tour-de-force. Pierre Jalbert's *Triple Set* is one of several new works commissioned by the Flute/Clarinet Duos Consortium in 2016. This work is the highlight of the album. Together with pianist Rajung Yang, the Scott/Garrison Duo perfectly balances rhythmic, aggressive, acrobatic playing

with delicate soft passages and unison pitch exchanges. Intonation and execution are exquisite throughout the work. *Triple Set* itself is engaging and fun, making it a terrific addition to the repertoire. I would recommend this specific recording to anyone interested in programming the work.

Eric Mandat is certainly no stranger to clarinetists, but *Togetherness* was unknown to me before listening to this album. The piece possesses all the elements we expect from Mandat: multiphonics, quarter tones, etc. However, upon listening one is hardly aware of these extended techniques because of the superb blend and line woven by the performers. The second movement offers a unique timbral change, using piccolo and E-flat clarinet rather than the standard instruments. The third movement largely alternates between passages in rhythmic unison and quasi-improvisatory solos with an ostinato accompaniment, which would seem to pose many ensemble challenges but is handled with effortlessness and poise.

Meyer Kupferman's *Four Constellations* is the most progressive work on the album in terms of melody, harmony and timbre. The four short movements are

