

Canadian-based composer Lothar Klein managed to develop his own style through the use of musical quotation and collage. While the practice is not unprecedented—one thinks of famous precursors such as Berg/Bach, Stravinsky/Pergolesi, and even Bach/Vivaldi—Klein's single-minded exploration of this technique goes far beyond pouring old wine into new bottles.

This new recording, produced by the composer with the assistance of the Canada Council and others, presents three of Klein's best collage works. Most striking is *Musica Antiqua* for consort and orchestra, which bathes the listener's ears in a refreshing pool of musical idioms from the Renaissance and from our own time. Described as an "allegory," the broad orchestral tapestry is punctuated repeatedly by the distinctive *ripieno* consort group—a kind of "handshake across the ages," in the composer's words. Its a shimmering, enchanting score.

The Masque of Orianna presents three orchestral movements excerpted from a larger work of the same name for soloists, chorus and orchestra. Intended as a tribute to Elizabethan music-making, the *Masque* dabbles in the keyboard music of John Bull, the Elizabethan air, and the keyboard suite. While maintaining a sense of respect, Klein manages to probe these works anew and bring out much of their inherent humor. In the *Canadiana Suite*, Klein is able to display his skill in lighter orchestral fare. The "Rumrunner's March," a *Schottische*, the *Valse aux demoiselles de Montréal* and the *Vol au vent* might not be familiarly Canadian to every listener; however, Klein's light-hearted setting is thoroughly delightful and provides welcome contrast to the music that precedes it.

The performances appear to spring from separate broadcast recordings from West Germany. The North German Radio Orchestra and Munich Philharmonic provide respectful, although undistinguished readings. The Toronto Consort, the sole Canadian talent, brings tremendous color, ener-

gy, and a few "funky" pitches to *Musica Antiqua*. The album is most certainly worth acquiring for its refreshingly unique sounds and conjunctions.

Michael Berton

CRITIC'S CHOICE

MOZART: *The Marriage of Figaro*. Petteri Salomaa, Barbara Bonney, Håkan Hagegård, Arleen Augér, Alicia Nafé, Della Jones, et al.; Drottningholm Court Theatre Orchestra and Chorus, Arnold Östman, conductor. L'Oiseau Lyre (DDD) CD, 421 333-2 (3).

The field has already become crowded with recordings of *Figaro*, arguably the most popular of Mozart's many magnificent operas. If there were nothing else to recommend it, this new release could be cited for two perhaps trivial reasons. One, it is surely the most complete *Figaro* ever, containing extra bits and pieces from alternative performing versions known to have existed in Prague and Vienna during Mozart's life (though these always appear at the end of each of the three CDs as appendices). There is little in these addenda to sway us from the conventional version, although one can always program in an alternative performing edition for the sake of novelty. Two, period instruments are used—29 of them to be precise. When they all blow, pluck and scrape together, you know we're in for a low-calorie timbre: the Vienna Philharmonic will provide more meat in climaxes.

If potential buyers are looking for a third reason, I might suggest that the cast is relatively impoverished in terms of name-brand performers (you might even say unsung) by comparison to other competing versions. Except for Swedish baritone Håkan Hagegård and Arleen Augér, there is a paucity of bankable world-famous stars here. But do they ever shine! The combination of Barbara Bonney and Petteri Salomaa evoke the most musically satisfying Susanna and Figaro I've ever heard. With soothingly note-perfect exaction and a seductively sweet characterization that is neither cloying nor

KLEIN: "Musics Ancient and Modern"—includes **Musica Antiqua* ("An allegory for consort and orchestra"); ***Masque of Orianna*; †*Canadiana Ballet Suite*. *The Toronto Consort, North German Radio Orchestra, Hannover, Miklós Erdély, conductor; **Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Heinrich Bender, conductor; †North German Radio Orchestra, Robert Hannell, conductor. Lomar LP (no catalogue number) (available through Canadian Music Centre).

Back in the '60s it was all too easy for young composers to be influenced and co-opted by the prevalent musical schools of serialism and minimalism. This is why it is always refreshing to discover those composers who were able to establish a unique path for themselves. The German-born, American-trained, and