



Together and apart: Carol Rodland and Scott Kluksdahl play music by Bartók and three American composers

moving poems by Lloyd Schwartz (coincidentally one of America's senior classical music critics) accompanied exquisitely by cellist Adrian Daurov.

The most addictive music is the *Three Fragments* by the 11th-century poet Ibn Khafajah, sung – in Arabic, since 'the beauty of the original cannot be translated' – hypnotically by Kiera Duffy backed by violin, cello, flute and guitar, traditional instruments in Arabic music, the guitar allowing Fairouz 'to evoke the plucked tenderness of Andalusian lovedreams'.

The CD concludes with a setting of 'Annabel Lee' which is attractively Britten-ish, in spirit more than style, and a heartbreaking 'The Stolen Child' to Yeats, which feels as though a relative of Schubert's Erl King has been transported across time and space. **Laurence Vittes**

'American Visions'

Becker *Elegy*. **The Four Curiosities** - *Passacaglia*
Copland *Four Piano Blues* - No 3. *Our Town*.
Rodeo **Gershwin** *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* (arr Wild)
- No 4, *Embraceable you*; No 7, *Fascinatin' rhythm*
Rodgers *Carousel Waltz*. *My favorite things* (both
arr Hough) **Sousa** *The Stars and Stripes Forever*^a
Ian Gindes *pf* with ^a**Tatiana Shustova**,

^a**Jiafang Yan**, ^a**Jing Hao** *pfs*
Centaur © CRC3475 (63' • DDD)

^aRecorded live at the Krannert Center for the
Performing Arts, Urbana, IL



It would be no exaggeration to say that Ian Gindes's new recording is a Yankee

Doodle Dandy. The pianist plays music by American composers in both popular and 'classical' realms with affection, energy and keyboard brilliance. Much of the fare, offered in transcriptions, is familiar, but Gindes brings to each piece a freshness that prompts us to love this music anew.

He opens with selections by Aaron Copland – two in piano versions so persuasive in mood and nuance that the well-known orchestral versions aren't missed. Four of the five movements from the ballet *Rodeo* and three excerpts from the movie score to *Our Town* find Gindes basking in Copland's distinctive juxtaposition of nostalgia and revelry. He also brings elastic finesse to a piece originally for the instrument, *Four Piano Blues* No 3 (dedicated to William Kapell).

Two appealing short works by Kris Becker – *Passacaglia* (from *The Four Curiosities*) and *Elegy* – rub shoulders with arrangements of Broadway fare that gives Gindes many opportunities to exude pianistic panache. Earl Wild paid tribute to Gershwin in *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*, including the lavish

treatments of 'Fascinatin' rhythm' and 'Embraceable you' that Gindes performs here. Another virtuoso pianist, Stephen Hough, pays homage to Richard Rodgers in grand and grandiose incarnations of 'My favorite things' and the *Carousel Waltz*.

The final selection is the biggest arrangement of all, Mack Wilberg's two-piano/eight-hand version of Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. Gindes shares the stage with Tatiana Shustova, Jiafang Yan and Jing Hao to rousing effect. **Donald Rosenberg**

'Dialogue'

Bartók *23 Duos* (arr P Bartók)^a

Del Tredici *Cello Acroscopic*^b **Piston** *Duo*^a

Read Thomas *Dream Catcher*^c

^a**Carol Rodland** *va* ^{ab}**Scott Kluksdahl** *vc*

Crystal Records © CD880 (56' • DDD)



Perhaps 'Dialogues and Monologues' would have been a more accurate title.

Carol Rodland and Scott Kluksdahl perform duos by Béla Bartók and Walter Piston and go it alone in works by Augusta Read Thomas and David Del Tredici that were written for them.

Bartók composed 44 duos for violins. His son, Peter, arranged 23 of them for viola



Piet Koornhof: incendiary playing in a series of virtuoso bonbons

and cello, which must make proponents of those instruments inordinately happy. These little masterpieces, originally conceived for students, appear simple on the surface but their folksy content requires nuanced treatment, which they receive in abundance in Rodland and Kluksdahl's thoughtful and buoyant performances.

The musicians had a chance to confer with Peter Bartók about the duos, and their connections with two of the three other composers on this disc generated the solos they play. Read Thomas's *Dream Catcher* for solo viola (originally for solo violin) is a burst of expressive ideas, which the composer describes as 'captured improvisation'. Rodland shapes the piece with vibrant fluidity, tracing its surprising flights as if they were cogent ideas popping into her head. Kluksdahl's solo outing is Del Tredici's *Cello Acrostic*, based on an aria from his *Final Alice* and verses from *Through the Looking Glass*. The cellist conveys the aura of fantasy in a reading of disarming songfulness. The musicians collaborate once again in Piston's Duo, to whose neo-classical writing they apply vividly poised and lyrical touches. **Donald Rosenberg**

'On Fire'

'The Virtuoso Violin'

Glazunov Meditation, Op 32 Dvarionas Pezzo elegiaco Kabalevsky Rondo, Op 69 Karayev Waltz Kreisler Tambourin chinois, Op 3 Kroll Banjo and

Fiddle Rota Improviso Skoryk Melody. Spanish Dance Taneyev Romance, Op 26 No 6 Toldrà Six Sonnets Wieniawski Polonaises - No 1, Op 4; No 2, Op 21. Scherzo-tarantelle, Op 16 Ysaÿe Violin Sonata No 3, 'Ballade'

Piet Koornhof *vn* Bernarda Vorster *pf*
Delos © 2 DE3479 (101' • DDD)



The title doesn't begin to tell the story of Piet Koornhof's musical sensibility. While

many of the works on his two-disc set call for a soloist of the highest technical accomplishment, the South African violinist avoids taking a scorched-earth approach to the repertoire. He is a keenly sensitive musician who places the dazzling aspects in discerning context.

You won't hear Koornhof show off, in other words, just to show off. In the most acrobatic pieces, such as Wieniawski's Polonaises and Ysaÿe's Third Sonata for solo violin, he treats the tricky flights – large leaps, multiple stops, racing scales – not as isolated bursts but as part of the overall narrative. Tempi are judicious, sometimes spacious, and never driven. Koornhof makes sure notes are dead-centre in intonation, however fleetly they pass by, and that every gesture has a meaningful direction.

With his excellent pianist, Bernarda Vorster, Koornhof plays a host of bonbons by composers including Glazunov, Kabalevsky, Kreisler and Nino Rota. But he also devotes a fair share of the discs to less heralded figures: William Kroll, Baly Dvarionas, Myroslav Skoryk, Sergey Taneyev and Eduard Toldrà. Koornhof advocates warmly for Toldrà, a Spanish Catalan violinist and composer, whose *Six Sonnets* are evocative essays based on poetry by Catalan poets. Virtuosity, as Koornhof demonstrates in these pieces, often means bringing something special to music of subtle lyricism and charm. **Donald Rosenberg**

'The Spirio Sessions'

Caine Improvisation on Mozart's Piano Sonata, K545. Nine Miniatures – for solo piano; for two pianos Gesualdo Beltà, poi che t'assenti. Itene, o miei sospiri. Non mai non cangerò. O dolce mio tesoro Mozart Piano Sonata No 16, K545 – Allegro D Scarlatti Keyboard Sonatas – Kk27; Kk455; Kk492

Uri Caine, Jenny Lin *pfs*

Steinway & Sons © STNS30044 (58' • DDD)



Spirio is a high-resolution player system developed by Steinway that captures