

# Recording Reviews

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*Dialogue* – Béla Bartók: 23 Duos for viola and cello; Augusta Read Thomas: Dream Catcher; David Del Tredici: *Cello Acroscopic*; Walter Piston: Duo. Carol Rodland, viola; Scott Kluksdahl, cello. Crystal Records CD 880.

The present selection from Béla Bartók’s violin duos was arranged for viola and cello by the composer’s always enterprising younger son, Peter. These are not one-to-one transcriptions; Bartók Jr. has redistributed the music between the two instruments, sometimes changing the octaves at which they play and achieving generally effective solutions. The present players’ partnership goes back to their student days, and they obviously enjoy making music with each other. Balance and phrasing are disarmingly natural with tempos that are mostly within a second or two of Bartók Sr.’s painstaking markings.

Two unaccompanied pieces are placed midway through the program. The suggestiveness of the title of Augusta Read Thomas’s composition together with Rodland’s detailed and vivid playing conspire to make a most compelling statement of this—at first sight—loosely

constructed piece, which the composer describes as a “captured improvisation.” Del Tredici’s composition is an arrangement of the concluding aria from his Lewis Carroll-inspired opera, *Final Alice* (the text of which is an acrostic, hence the title). Kluksdahl negotiates the self-accompanied, lullaby-like piece with warm sound in both the *arco* and *pizzicato* statements of the main subject.

The only original piece on this recital (Thomas’s was originally written for violin) is Walter Piston’s Duo, a beautifully crafted composition in the neo-classical style of the pre-war years (it was actually written in 1949). Two sparkingly vivacious movements frame a heartfelt *Andante sereno* that recalls the “populist” style of Aaron Copland. With expressive, stylish playing from Rodland and Kluksdahl, the Duo makes for an exciting conclusion to this lovely recital that has been faithfully caught by the life-like recording.



Max Reger: Three Suites, op. 131c; Adolf Busch: Suite, op. 16a; Justus Weinreich: Three Suites. Roland Glassl, viola. Audite 97.721.