

poet instead. The poems are intensely moving.

North and South has poems by Elizabeth Bishop for a "colored singer"—consequential commentaries on troubled relationships. *Crossroads* is poems by Louise Block on times of day and their metaphors. All are expressive and memorable. People wary of Harbison's other work will find these songs revelatory and enjoyable.

Performances are sympathetic; the pieces are flawlessly rendered. All performers are associated with the Oberlin Conservatory. Texts included; notes by the composer.

GIMBEL

HAYDN: *Symphony 49*;

NONO: *Djamila Boupacha*;

GRISEY: *4 Songs*

Ludwig Orchestra/ Barbara Hannigan, s
Alpha 586—73 minutes

The Haydn takes 27 or 28 minutes. The opening Adagio takes 14 minutes, and everyone else takes 7 or 8 minutes. It is very beautiful and very slow, but it repeats that stretch it so far. The sound is rich and strong, though the orchestra is only around 30 musicians. There is certainly no more moving performance of that movement of *La Passione*. It is also excellent—and 6 minutes versus the usual 4 (repeats again). But the Minuet and finale are way too fast. Despite the luscious sound here, Janigro is generally kinder to the music and more balanced.

But the program opens with the miserable Nono piece. At least it's short (5 minutes). But who wants to hear even a nice voice like this simply shrieking?

And the closing piece—40 minutes—is a group of songs by Gerard Grisey (1946–98) with 10 or 11 instruments (as in the Nono). It's truly horrible—and even worse after the Haydn. The songs are called 'Death of the Angel' (and it sounds like it), 'Death of Civilization' (ditto), 'Death of the Voice' (O yes! Whoever sings this can hardly be expected to sing again), and 'Death of Humanity' (a miserable "instrumental interlude"—mostly percussion banging). Those are followed by a 'Berceuse' (Lullaby). The singer tells us she had been performing this for 10 years. She claims to be attracted to its "cries into the abyss". But we have to listen to them—and why would anyone willingly subject himself to this music?

There are people who are amazed at what

Barbara Hannigan can do with her voice. To me it sounds like she is going to destroy it. Nor is anything she sings on this program rewarding or satisfying in any way. She should work on her conducting.

VROON

HAYDN: *Choral Pieces*; see Collections

HELBIG: *Piano Pieces (12)*

Clemens Christian Poetzsch
Neue Meister 301387—46 minutes

Neue Meister is the contemporary label of Edel, whose main label is Berlin. But this is not the noise you expect from contemporary music. Sven Helbig writes music that is romantic and meditative, soothing rather than shocking. It is certainly pleasant to listen to but never very profound. It might be good atmosphere for serious meditation or yoga. It would be good background music for almost any gentle activity.

This is not a new genre; a number of pianist-composers have written and recorded similar music. But I guess I was moved that a classically-trained "contemporary" composer would write such sweet and soothing music. Sometimes I'm reminded of Satie, sometimes even of Chopin.

VROON

HOVHANESS: *Cello Pieces*

Yakamochi Suite; Cello Suite; Fantasy; Cello Sonata; Nagooran

Christina Gullans; Jeremy Fisell, p; Adam Rosenblatt, timpani; Daniel Heagney, tam-tam; Jeff Stern, vib; Tatevik Khoja-Eynatyan, chimes; Nonoka Mizukami, glockenspiel/ Robert Dodelin

Albany 1805—59 minutes

"Across the Ages" is the title of this program. Rather to my surprise, I find that neither my collection of recordings nor ARG's index includes any cello pieces by Hovhaness but the 14-minute Yakamochi Suite that begins this program and his Cello Concerto (not recorded here).

Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000) is a well-known and oft-recorded composer of many types of music. His harmonies and style tend to be modal and relatively moody and religious-sounding. If you can take that, this is a fine collection of his cello music, ending with a rather unusual 15-minute suite for cello and percussion—a transcription of a work he originally scored for South-Indian instru-

ments. Nagooran was a saint who united the Hindu and Moslem religions. The suite is well worth hearing and makes a colorful ending to a lovely program.

Gullans studied cello with Janos Starker, Helga Winold, Csaba Onczay, Elizabeth Simkin, and John Sant'Ambrogio. She plays this music with fine attention to its phrasing and thoughtful nature. Her pianist has made many recordings, and they work together beautifully. The recorded sound is fine.

D MOORE

HUMMEL: *Mandolin Sonata*;

see BEETHOVEN

INGEGNERI: *Mass, Laudate Pueri Dominum; Motets*; **CROCE:** *In Spiritu Humilitatis*
Girton College Choir; Guildhall School & Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama Historic Brass/
Gareth Wilson

Toccata 556—70 minutes

Marc'Antonio Ingegneri (c1535–92) has been remembered chiefly as an early teacher of Claudio Monteverdi. He was an important composer in his own right, working in the wake of the Council of Trent (1545–63)—whose influence was by no means unfavorable to the development of liturgical music—but his achievements have been neglected in modern times in comparison with the work of contemporaries like the Gabriellis and Palestrina. All of his works here are claimed as first recordings.

Ingegneri was a native of Verona and began his education as a choirboy at the cathedral there. He appears to have been part of the cathedral's musical establishment until the late 1550s. He pursued his career in Venice, Padua, and Parma in the 1560s, but in 1573 he attained the principal appointment of his career as *maestro di cappella* at Cremona Cathedral. According to theologian and musician Giampiero Innocente, who contributes a substantial and informative essay to the booklet, the only music employed at the cathedral before the 1570s, apart from some exceptional occasions, was plainsong. Ingegneri was thus involved in the work of building up the cathedral's musical establishment to a level comparable with the leading churches of Venice, Bergamo, Bologna, and Padua. In this he was encouraged by Nicolo Sfondrati, Bishop of Cremona from 1560 to 1590. In that year he was elected pope and reigned for less than a year as Gregory XIV (1590–91). The

Council held that ambitious church music should evoke the *ecclesia triumphans*, and Ingegneri obliged with imposing polychoral compositions and accompanying instruments.

The principal work here is the Mass *Laudate Pueri Dominum*, a parody mass based on Palestrina's motet of the same name. The mass is for double choir in eight parts. Generally speaking, the more voice parts there are, the less contrapuntal intricacy in the writing. Innocente points out that in the case of this work, Ingegneri displays a great deal of the contrapuntal prowess he was noted for. Two brief five-part motets on texts from the Song of Songs—'Quae Est Ista' and 'Surge Properea'—reveal more of his skillful part writing. There are other motets here from 12 to 16 parts, and polychoral dialog holds a more prominent place in them. On this recording, two of the motets are played by the brass, and two Italian madrigals are played in organ reductions. The movements of the mass are not performed consecutively, but have the other pieces inserted between them. For the most part, this music reminds me more of the Gabriellis than Palestrina. Most of it is accompanied by the brass, which never upstages the singers.

The mixed Choir of Girton College, Cambridge, produces what I would call a smooth rather than incisive choral sound. The singers are undergraduate and postgraduate members of the college and have a youthful tone. Their performances are very good, but not of the standard of Trinity or Clare Colleges. In 2019 they presented some of this music in a tour of Italian churches, including Cremona Cathedral, where it would originally have been heard under the composer's direction.

GATENS

JACQUET DE LA GUERRE: *Violin Sonatas*

Les Dominos/ Florence Malgoire, v

Ricercar 142—78 minutes

This is a re-release of a recording first issued in 2011 containing the complete violin sonatas by Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre, published in 1707. Born into a musical family, her talents as a harpsichordist brought her to the attention of Louis XIV and she often performed at court. While not a violinist, her sonatas demonstrate her familiarity with contemporary works by Johann Paul von Westhoff and Arcangelo Corelli. These are not strictly sonatas for solo violin and continuo since many movements have an independent