



## Tre Voci Marina Piccinini

©2014 ECM Records

*Tre Voci: Tone Poems* by Toru Takemitsu, Claude Debussy, & Sofia Gubaidulina is a stunningly beautiful recording for many reasons. There is the incredible

ensemble. It is hard to go wrong with a flute, viola, and harp combination. But the performance of these three tone poems is wrought with passion, purpose, and exquisite attention to detail, especially when it comes to creating an atmosphere of tone color through sound. (Kim Kashkashian plays viola and Sivan Magen plays harp.) The works themselves are masterpieces for this trio of instruments, and repeated hearings are warranted and desirous.

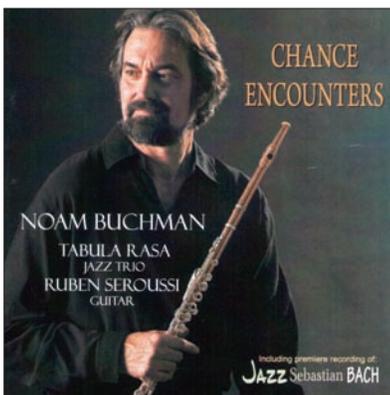
Toru Takemitsu's *And then I knew 'twas Wind* is inspired by American poet Emily Dickinson. Although Takemitsu began studying Western music, he eventually looked to the music of his Japanese roots. Rather than focusing on melody, rhythm, and harmony, Takemitsu embraces Eastern music qualities such as timbre iterations and a sense of timelessness. There is a sense that this piece is breathing; musical moments begin, swell, relax, and then pause briefly only to begin the process over again. The liner notes suggest that the work is a living, breathing organism. In addition, although Takemitsu wrote primarily for Western

instruments, the use of these instruments emulates elements of traditional Japanese instruments.

Takemitsu expressed that he wanted his work to be performed with Debussy's *Sonate* for flute, viola, and harp—and for good reason! Takemitsu was heavily influenced by that work when writing *And then I knew 'twas Wind*. The musical elements expressed in Debussy's *Sonate*, the CD's second piece, reflect Takemitsu's preferred compositional aesthetic: timelessness, emphasis on timbre, and a departure from the Western model of musical development. This three-movement work was written at the very end of Debussy's life during World War I and is still one of his most popular works.

The final tone poem is Sofia Gubaidulina's *Garden of Joys and Sorrows*. Timbre is a key element in this single-movement work, as all three instruments employ non-traditional techniques (harmonics, glissandos, pitch bends) to shape and nuance sound. And time is once again non-linear, organized by episodes or moments. At the very end of the piece, a poem by Viennese poet Francisco Tanzer is read, although the title was taken from a poem by Moscow poet Iv Oganov. Lucky for us, all of the poems of inspiration for the composers are included in the liner notes, allowing listeners to bask in the deeper meaning expressed in this music.

I highly recommend this CD for lovers of chamber music and those who appreciate the collaborative efforts of all artists. Come follow the trail of thought and meaning expressed by these composers as interpreted by some of the finest musicians of our age. —Tess Miller



## Chance Encounters Noam Buchman

©2014 The Eighth Note

The flute repertoire may seem meagre, but too many flute players lack the imagination to do anything about it. Players latch onto any decent piece and per-

form to extinction. My life would not be incomplete were I never again to hear the Chaminade Concertino, or Debussy's *Syrinx*, or the Poulenc Sonata, or Dutilleux's *Sonatine*, or Berio's *Sequenza*, or any of a dozen other works every flute player wants to play. This is not to say these are not good pieces of music (well, all right, the Chaminade is a truly wretched piece of dross), but really, enough is enough. Why, I keep wondering, can't people look for something new to play?

Now this excellent recording appears with two more pieces that I have heard too often, along with something new, and very good it is, too. Noam Buchman is the terrific flute player responsible.

Claude Bolling's *Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano Trio* is another of those standard works that is played so often we can easily

forget how enjoyable it was on first hearing. Buchman has had the clever idea of commissioning another work for the same combination of instruments from Uri Brenner: *Jazz Sebastian Bach*. This is a delicious work that I hope someone will publish soon; players will love it, and so will their audiences. Arguments will doubtless be made that jazz is an improvisatory form, so this fully notated work can therefore not be jazz. Whatever it is, this piece is wonderful to listen to. Brenner has taken movements from Bach flute sonatas and jazzed them up in the styles of Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, Chick Corea, and others. Bits of the Bach B Minor Sonata are pretty jazzy to begin with, and I can understand why this was one of Brenner's choices. Noam Buchman, for all his strict classical training (he is first flute in the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra), is not afraid to let rip with some dazzling playing.

This CD includes movements of the *Bolling Suite* performed with vigor and originality by Buchman and Brenner's jazz trio, *Tabula Rasa* (with Brenner playing piano, Edmond Gilmore playing bass, and Shlomo Deshet playing drums). Another of those good but too-often-played works, Astor Piazzolla's *Histoire du Tango* for flute and guitar, is given a spirited and enjoyable performance, with the excellent guitarist, Ruben Seroussi, providing energetic support. These performances sparkle.

—Robert Bigio