



Valerie Barber PR

Carlo Rizzi

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ORCHESTRAL REVIEWS



Marcus Bosch is at his best in the lyrical second subject of the Fourth Symphony's finale, which has something of a Brucknerian aura about it. The *Scherzo*, however, although spirited, is a little bland, the *pizzicato* underpinning of the principal theme less distinct than it might have been. Commentators tend to align the Third rather than the Fourth Symphony with Wagner but in this performance the opening of the Fourth's *Andante* second movement wears its Wagnerian pedigree very close to its sleeve.

It's a good performance, generally well played, the Eighth likewise, though needless to say here the competition hots up a great deal. When reviewing José Serebrier's generally superior version I cited Manfred Honeck as the current CD gold standard and I've yet to hear a modern version that dissuades me from that standpoint. Beyond the slow opening, Bosch cues a vigorous *Allegro con brio* with a refreshing lack of disruptive *rallentandos* (always a temptation in this movement), though in the fast coda the orchestra sounds as if it's straining to keep up (the brass especially, at around 8'33"). The *Adagio* is almost there, sensitive in part but a little tentative (more in mood than in execution), the *Allegretto grazioso* third movement relatively swift and with no easing of tempo for the Trio. Here, as in parts of the first movement, the flutes (ie at 7'31") shine through nicely, though downward string figurations are barely audible. As to the finale, again pretty good, though the martial, drum-and-fife-style strings accompaniment at around 3'02" is indistinct.

Were the market less crowded than it is I could grant this CD a cordial welcome; but as things stand, with countless fine Eighths and Neumann (three times over), Bělohlávek and Válek in the Fourth, aside from the odd winning detail Bosch and his worthy Nuremberg State Philharmonic aren't really competitive. If you want to sample their work at its best, try their coupling of Symphonies Nos 3 and 7 (7/13), well worth investigating. **Rob Cowan**

Sym No 8 – selected comparisons:

Pittsburgh SO, Honeck (A14) (REFE) FR710SACD

Bournemouth SO, Serebrier

(12/14) (WARN) 2564 62878-7

Falla

Noches en los jardines de España^a. El sombrero de tres picos. Fantasia Bética. El Amor brujo

Luis Fernando Pérez of
Basque National Orchestra / Carlo Rizzi
Mirare © MIR219 (56' • DDD)



Having recorded the piano music of his fellow countrymen Soler and Granados

(4/12), Luis Fernando Pérez now turns his attention to Spain's most original composer of the last century, Manuel de Falla. Alongside the much-recorded *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, Pérez gives us the less frequently played *Fantasia Bética* and suites from two of Falla's popular theatre pieces. In the *Fantasia*, Pérez gets to the heart and soul of Falla's Andalusia – or, more pertinently, its Roman past, 'Baetica' being the Roman name for Andalusia. A pianist tackling this work requires fingers of steel to penetrate the waves of notes, as well as the poetic inclination to let the middle section, an *Intermezzo*, run its introspective course. Pérez articulates the percussive sounds of the *Fantasia*'s flamenco rhythms with a pride and passion, while his *Intermezzo* sings as sweetly as the *dolcemente* marking suggests.

Falla produced his own piano versions of the three very familiar excerpts from *The Three-Cornered Hat*. The Seguidilla flows effortlessly from Pérez, which is some feat given that the violin's lovely tune, now in octaves, is set against *tremolo*, *pizzicato* and wind filigree, all seamlessly incorporated by two hands. In the dances for the miller and his wife, Pérez catches the earthy character of this couple's fiery spirit, rooted in the soil on which they dance. He brings out the strong modal harmony in *El Amor brujo*, Falla's ballet-pantomime that epitomises the gypsy character, culminating in the chimes of midnight that introduce the Ritual Fire Dance.

It was an inspired idea to team Pérez up with the Basque National Orchestra, founded in 1982, under the experienced Carlo Rizzi for *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*. The viola line at the beginning of this interpretation is truly *misterioso* and the impressionistic atmosphere and continuity between soloist and orchestra never tire throughout, offering a strong visual sense of time and place. The secret grottos of the palace garden, known as the Generalife, the sounds of a lively fiesta carried on a balmy breeze in the Distant Dance, then the gypsy musicians partying in the Sierra mountains of Cordoba are presented not just as a vehicle for virtuosity but with an awareness of the music's unusual nature. The coda, one of the loveliest passages in

Falla's output, is finely drawn. A most successful disc. **Adrian Edwards**

Gershwin · Lasser · Ravel

'Broadway-Lafayette'

Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue

Lasser Piano Concerto, 'The Circle and the Child'

Ravel Piano Concerto in G

Simone Dinnerstein of MDR Leipzig Radio

Symphony Orchestra / Kristjan Järvi

Sony Classical © 88875 03245-2 (69' • DDD)



Broadway-Lafayette is a New York City subway station in Manhattan, so

someone will have to explain to me its relevance to these three works for piano and orchestra. The Ravel and Gershwin open and close the disc, with the world premiere recording of Philip Lasser's Piano Concerto in the middle.

Were I hearing the Ravel G major and *Rhapsody in Blue* for the first time through these performances, I should count myself lucky. The sound engineering is vibrant, the acoustic focused, allowing the percussion and brass to pack a real punch, with the soloist ideally placed in the balance. Simone Dinnerstein, who has made her reputation playing Bach, proves a formidable exponent of both works, exhilarating in the outer movements of the Ravel. The slow movement has a superbly played duet with the cor anglais and is a highlight of the disc. She pays Gershwin/Grofé the compliment of playing exactly what they wrote (for once) – except for taking the 'blues' section at bar 260 way under tempo.

Philip Lasser's Concerto, *The Circle and the Child* (a poetic rather than programmatic subtitle), was written specially for Dinnerstein and premiered in 2012. The composer describes it as a tribute to his 'three favourite composers and also teachers', Debussy, Bach and Schumann, and jokingly refers to the first movement as 'the piano concerto Debussy never wrote'. The second movement, 'Chorale and Child', is built on *Ihr Gestirn, ihr hohen Lüfte*, BWV366. The finale, 'Circles', has less distinct origins but, while it is the only one of the three to use overtly dissonant harmonies, it is no less mellow and reflective than the others: this must be one of the least virtuoso and showy piano concertos of recent years. **Jeremy Nicholas**

Haydn · Mozart

Haydn Sinfonia concertante, HobI/105^a

Mozart Oboe Concerto, K314^b

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