

just as marvelous (Dutch-born) Van Wanroij and (Greek-born) Christoyannis see my review of Gounod's *Tribut de Zamora* (Jan/Feb 2019). Enguerrand de Hys is new to me: a character tenor perfect for the quick, sly connivings of Calpigi. Jean-Sebastien Bou, as King Atar, hectors when agitated, and his low notes are weak. (I mentioned his low-end problem in a review of the Lalo opera *La Jacquerie*, March/April 2017.) But, like all the others, he enunciates the text beautifully and with seemingly infinite nuances of intent. In short, this performance outdoes at many points the generally fine DVD and, even more, the *Axur* CD. Unless you can understand French sung at a conversational pace, I urge you to follow the libretto and translation.

The elegant hardcover book that comes with the recording contains a superb essay (by Salieri authority John A Rice) and Beaumarchais's brilliant, corrosive libretto. Everything is in French, English, and German. One annoyance: there are no track numbers in the libretto. One must therefore keep flipping back to the tracklist printed earlier in the book. The tracklist also does not indicate the page where a track begins.

For further information about this opera, including many specific indications for the singers (e.g., the tyrant must sing one phrase "disdainfully"), I urge readers to look at Rice's 1998 book *Antonio Salieri and Viennese Opera* or my 2015 book *Musíc and the Exotic from the Renaissance to Mozart* (pp. 301-7).

*Tarare* is simply one of the most important operas of the Classical era, precisely because it challenges so many aspects of that era's "normality." You won't believe your ears. Rousset's recording leaps onto my list of "best of 2019."

LOCKE

**SANDER:** *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*  
PaTRAM Institute Singers/ Peter Jermihov  
Reference 731 [2CD] 90 minutes

In 1992 composer Kurt Sander (b 1969) was working as a paid choir singer in an Episcopal church noted for its fine music when his future wife, Larissa Kaminsky, invited him to sing in the choir for a forthcoming wedding at St Sergius Russian Orthodox Cathedral near Cleveland. It was a life-changing experience for him, as he had never felt in the western tradition so profound an integration of music and prayer. He began singing regularly in the St Sergius choir and in 1993 converted to the Orthodox faith. He completed his doctorate in

composition at Northwestern University in 1998, and later was appointed conductor at St George Orthodox Church in Cincinnati. He is now on the music faculty of Northern Kentucky University.

Peter Jermihov is an authority on Russian Orthodox music and champion of living composers in that tradition. Sander's association with him began in 2006 with a request for a new piece to complete a concert program as part of a music conference. Their professional association has been close since then. In 2016 Jermihov and the PaTRAM Institute commissioned a setting in English of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, the Russian Orthodox Mass. Sander had been considering such a project for some time. In writing the work recorded here, he took pains to produce a thematically and structurally unified setting to underscore the devotional coherence of the many texts of the liturgy. According to Jermihov, this is the first setting to do so, noting that earlier settings, while tonally coherent, were essentially conglomerations of individual movements. Sander's setting moves through the drama of the liturgy in one grand gesture while honoring its liturgical structure.

The first thing I have to say about the music is that it does not sound Russian. Sander is clearly approaching his task from a rich tradition, and while the musical gestures are unmistakably Orthodox, the musical language is the composer's own, though there are places that remind me of Morten Lauridsen. It is not a radically novel language. I am reminded of an essay I recently read online about the difference between imitation and emulation. Imitation can be slavish and without understanding, but emulation requires an intimate knowledge of what is emulated so as to extend the tradition. This is what Sander achieves here in music that is thoroughly accessible but never hackneyed.

Most of the music falls into one of two categories: brief choral responses to chanted declamation by the priest or deacon, and more extended choral pieces like the Cherubic Hymn and the Lord's Prayer. In his notes, Sander observes that most composers would begin by writing the more extended pieces, but he did the opposite—began with the brief responses. He describes them as "the fibers that hold the work together." For the listener they furnish the context for the more extended pieces like a setting for jewels.

The performance is superb, and that includes the chanting by baritone Keven Keys

as priest and bass Vadim Gan as deacon. His lowest notes almost defy belief. There are 25 vocalists in the PaTRAM Institute Singers. They form a tightly knit mixed choral ensemble. Some of Sander's writing is very slow and sustained—the devil to keep in tune—but the choir seems undaunted by the most demanding requirements. Conductor Peter Jermihov leads performances that are authoritatively and sensitively shaped. The recording was made in the church of the New Gracanica Serbian Orthodox Monastery near Chicago. The reverberation is sumptuous but not obscuring.

Complete texts are reproduced together with informative notes by the composer, conductor, and by Alexis and Katherine Lukianov, the chairman and co-founder of the PaTRAM Institute (Patriarch Tikhon Russian-American Music) and executive producers for this recording. The institute is devoted to the presentation of Orthodox sacred music in its highest form.

GATENS

**S**ANGUINAZZO, N: *Cello Exercises*  
Dietmar Berger  
Urania 14047—68 minutes

In the Austrian National Library in Vienna may be found the Este Music Collection; it appears to have come from Venice, where it was put together by an unknown collector in about 1700 and eventually was given to cellist Nicolo Sanguinazzo. He proceeded to add some other pieces, perhaps composed by him, including some for two instruments. It appears that he was a cellist of sorts and a composer of sonatas for cello and basso continuo. All of the above and more (or less) we gather from the unidentified author of the liner notes. The collection was published recently under the title *Essercizii per basso*, eba2139, edition baroque.

The liner notes give us some information about the composer, who liked to spell his name backwards, Olocin Ozzaniugnias. Among other things, he considered himself a Diletante di Violoncello—the title of this program. The program consists of 36 *recercari* for solo cello. It is unclear whether the arrangements for solo cello were made by the sanguine cellist or by the performer. At any rate, they are pleasant baroque etudes that I wouldn't mind throwing at my more advanced students. They never go in for double-stops, though one is played here in *pizzicato* and several spend a good deal of time in high registers. (Perhaps

those are the ones that originally included a violin.)

Berger is an experienced European cellist who has made several recordings on the viola da gamba. This is the first time I have heard him on the cello. Perhaps these little etudes are preparing him for greater achievements as a cellist. He plays them well, but they aren't particularly engrossing—that's not their job.

D MOORE

**S**AY: *Troy Sonata; The Moving Mansion;*  
*Art of Piano, sel*  
Fazil Say, p  
Warner 550465—62 minutes

Fazil Say has aroused some critical disfavor in his two most recent releases we've reviewed, both on Naive. Of his program of Beethoven Piano Concerto 3 and Sonatas 14 and 32, Mr Koldys (Sept/Oct 2014) criticizes the lack of sentimentality in the concerto and the very sluggish reading of the *Moonlight* Sonata I ("distended to 7-1/2 minutes"). In his review of Say's own Symphonies 2 and 3 Mr Gimbel "[wishes] he could get away from the lowbrow and elevate his game somewhat" (May/June 2014).

I've come to a somewhat different conclusion. Never unsympathetic to music that crosses stylistic boundaries, I often enjoy such works when I sense love and honesty in the music. Say's *Troy Sonata* has these qualities. It's a ten-movement "sonate caracteristique" lasting about 40 minutes, and it includes stunning musical depictions of images and characters from the Trojan War and is unified to some extent by a series of recurring leitmotifs. The seventh movement, 'Achilles,' is a breathless toccata and perfectly reflects the indomitable warrior. At the other end of the spectrum, 'Helen' (V) verges on a kind of Broadway-style ballad, tuneful and moving. And 'War' (VIII) is unbelievably exciting and brutal. In addition to this, the timbral variety of the piece is stunning; verging sometimes on electronic-sounding sonorities, it is as important to the work as the vivid, programmatic depictions.

Say's pianism is outstanding; I often hear him singing and grunting as he plays and appreciate this kind of intimate connection with the gestures of the music (as I always did with Glenn Gould's famous singing and self-conducting).

*The Moving Mansion* introduces still other stylistic guises of Say's imagination. 'Enlight-