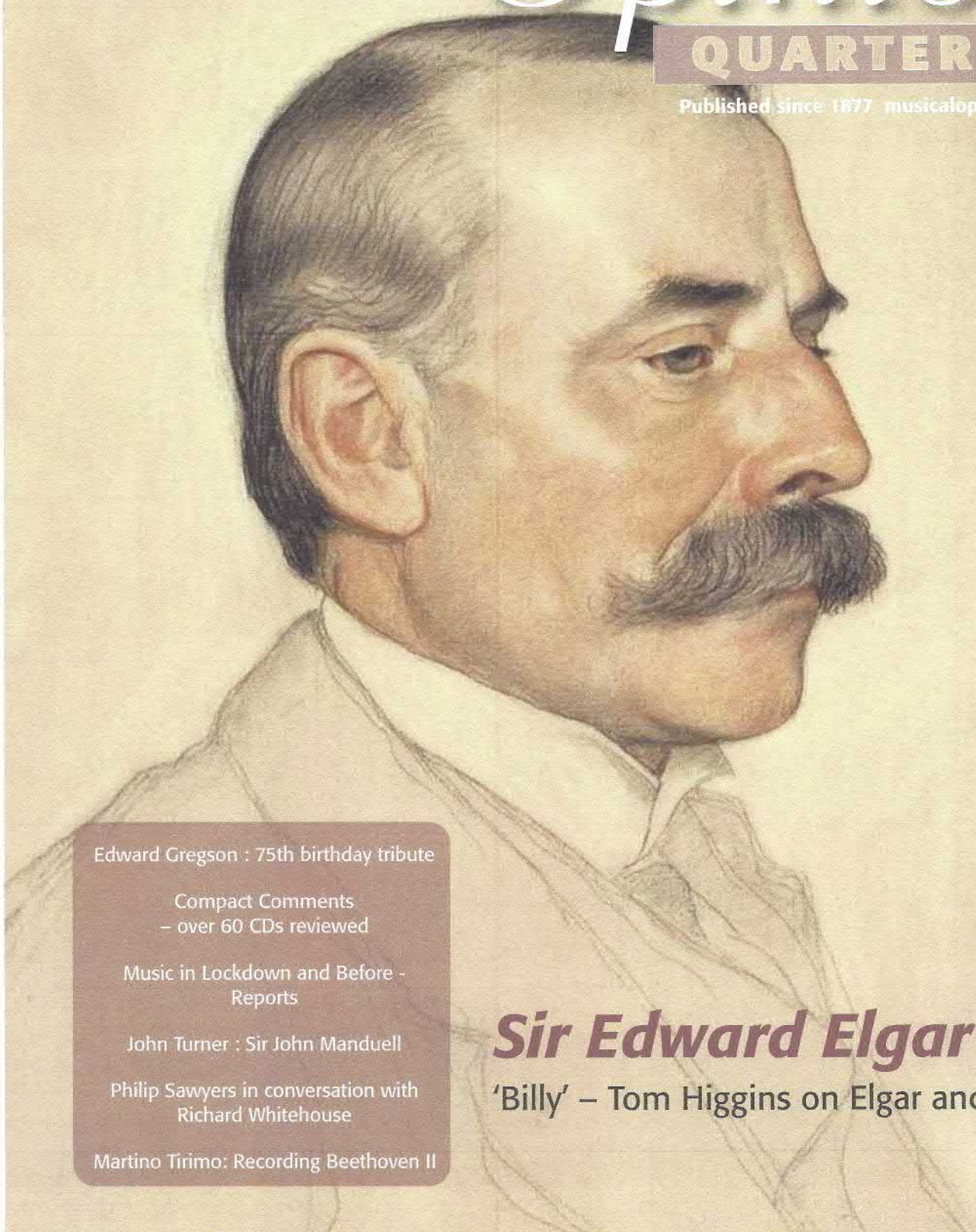


MUSICAL *Opinion* QUARTERLY

Price £6.00 October – December 2020
Issue number 1525

Published since 1877 musicalopinion.com



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overshadowed by the *Sabre Dance* and the Adagio from *Spartacus* (both ballet movements, ideal in context), has remained virtually unknown – in particular the *Dance Suite* for orchestra of 1932 and the First Symphony – and his piano music (apart from the popular Toccata) has likewise been unfairly neglected. In some ways, Khachaturian himself must take some of the blame for the Sonata (originally 1961, but revised substantially and shortened in 1976?) has often confused pianists (much as Rachmaninoff's Second Sonata in its two versions has).

So plaudits are undoubtedly due to the young Jordanian-Palestinian pianist Iyad Sughayer for revealing much of the quality of Khachaturian's better works, as in this very fine account of the first version of the 27-minute Sonata. It is very well played indeed, and the recording quality is first-rate. The remaining works on this disc are naturally lighter in mood but are equally well worth the attention of music-lovers. One hopes that this excellent artist will go on to investigate and record Khachaturian Seven Fantasias and Fugues for solo piano – another relatively late work that deserves recording to this standard.

Robert Matthew-Walker



'The Whole Earth Dances': Cheryl Frances-Hoad: The Whole Earth Dances; Cloud Movements; Songs

and Dances; The Prophecy; Game On; Pay Close Attention; Mazurka; Medea; My Day in Hell Francesca Barritt, violin / David Cohen, cello / Gildas Quartet / Rebecca Gilliver, cello / Daniel Grimwood, piano / Fenella Humphreys, violin / Sholto Kynoch, piano / Sara Minelli, flute / Yshani Perinpanayagam, piano, *Commodore 64* and sound design / Sophia Rahman, piano / The Schubert Ensemble / Rozenn Le Trionnaire, clarinet ★★★★★ Champs Hill Records CHRCD152 [81:40]

Covering nearly two decades of composition, the fifth and final Champs Hill release devoted to the music of Cheryl Frances-Hoad focuses on her works for chamber forces. A wide variety of influences lie behind the featured pieces,

suggesting an open-mindedness and curiosity that keeps the material enterprising and fresh.

The Whole Earth Dances, for piano quintet (2016) was inspired by two Ted Hughes poems 'Thistles' and 'Ferns', and its delicate equilibrium between rarefied stasis and expressive fragmentation is perfectly maintained in the Schubert Ensemble's searching realisation of the score. *Cloud Movements* (2014) balances atmospheric chordal progressions with sharp counterpoint; clarinetist Rozenn Le Trionnaire, violinist Francesca Barritt and pianist Sholto Kynoch have the measure of one of the composer's toughest and most elusive pieces. By contrast, *Songs and Dances* (2011) has a breadth and lyricism that instantly engages the listener, especially in this noble reading by cellist David Cohen and pianist Daniel Grimwood. *The Prophecy* (1998) is a substantial, single-movement piece that makes imaginative use of the 'Dies Irae' plainchant; cellist Rebecca Gilliver and pianist Sophia Rahman allow the score room to breathe as it unfolds in unpredictable yet entirely convincing ways. *Game On*, for piano and *Commodore 64 home computer* (2015) is wonderfully inventive and, in the expert hands of Yshani Perinpanayagam, strangely poignant. *Pay Close Attention*, for piano and string trio (2011) is a compact, rhythmically unsettled piece. Although it lasts just over two minutes, it never feels rushed or underdeveloped and Yshani Perinpanayagam and members of the Gildas Quartet clearly relish its metrical intricacies. *Mazurka* (2014) is a charmingly offbeat take on the lively folk dance which sings in this sparkling account by violinist Fenella Humphreys and pianist Sholto Kynoch. Sara Minelli impresses in *Medea* (2007/2017), a dramatic soliloquy for solo flute and the disc is rounded off satisfyingly with a committed performance by the Gildas Quartet of the Dante-inspired *My Day in Hell* (2008), a quirky but compelling stance on the string quartet which makes a perfect counterweight to the composer's equally individual view of the piano quintet heard at the start of the programme.

Informative booklet notes, a generous playing time and warmly recorded sound all increase the appeal of this desirable disc. Heartily recommended.

Paul Conway



Recollections': Malcolm Lipkin: Prelude and Dance; Naboth's Vineyard; Interplay; The Journey; Clifford's

Tower; Pastorale; String Trio John Turner, recorder / Nicholas Trygstad, cello / Janet Simpson, piano and harpsichord / David Corkhill, percussion / The Nash Ensemble [Five Stars]

★★★★★ Divine Art dda25202 [83:46]

Malcolm Lipkin (1932-2017) was a fine composer and this generously filled disc presents a rich selection from his chamber and instrumental output. The first four items are recent recordings for the Divine Art label. Cellist Nicholas Trygstad and pianist Janet Simpson capture the delicate blend of wistfulness and hope in *Prelude and Dance* (1987). The players are joined by John Turner for a gripping account of *Naboth's Vineyard*, for recorder, cello and harpsichord (1982). This work carries the listener along by the sheer strength of its narrative and the humanity and palpable sense of moral outrage underpinning a passionately argued story of injustice and murder. *Interplay*, for recorder, cello, harpsichord and percussion (1976) has a satisfying sense of formal balance: its two movements, the first fluent and hypnotic and the second serene and spacious, providing a natural foil for each other. In the capable hands of John Turner, *The Journey*, for solo recorder (2016) is a tribute to the composer John McCabe, which conveys much in its short playing time and acts as a distillation of Lipkin's art. The final three items have been remastered from a 1985 Hyperion LP featuring members of the Nash Ensemble. *Clifford's Tower*, for wind quintet and string trio (1977) is a powerful and heartfelt piece marking the massacre of the Jewish population of York in the 12th century. *Pastorale*, for horn and string quintet (1963, arr. 1979) finds the composer at his most relaxed and lyrical. The String Trio of 1964 is a tautly argued and idiomatically written score in which every note counts and it is well served in this authentic and persuasive performance. This satisfying, carefully planned composer portrait is warmly recommended.

Paul Conway