

Chamber Reviews

Reissues Reviewed by Julian Haylock



Alfredo Campoli: The Bel Canto Violin, Vol. 1
Works by JS Bach, Tartini and Handel
Eloquence 482 5175 (1948-55) 109:22 mins (2 CDs)
Derided during his lifetime due to his 'palm court' associations, **Alfredo Campoli** was a master of the 'long line', as witness his beguiling espressivo purity in these stunning transfers. ★★★★★



Alfredo Campoli: The Bel Canto Violin, Vol. 3
Works by Kreisler, Dohnanyi, Paganini, Schubert et al
Eloquence 482 5159 (1953-6) 113:00 mins (2 CDs)
Treasurable performances, brimming with personality, tonally immaculate and powered by a sensitivity to emotional narrative to have the listener hanging onto **Alfredo Campoli's** every phrase. ★★★★★



Alfredo Campoli: The Bel Canto Violin, Vol. 6
Works by Sarasate, Albéniz, Brahms, et al
Eloquence 482 5135 (1972-80) 152:17 mins (2 CDs)
Recorded when **Alfredo Campoli** was in his sixties and seventies, his singing tone and affectionate shaping of these cherishable miniatures is as inimitable as ever, if not quite so intonationally blemishless. ★★★



Wandy Tworek: The Danish Violin Wizard
Works by Wieniawski, Tartini, Franck et al
Danacord DACOCD 787-788 (1946-53)
157:41 mins (2 CDs)
A useful selection of **Wandy Tworek's** best recordings, including a fine account of the Bartók Solo Sonata and rarities by Knudåge Riisager, Fini Henriques and Tworek himself. ★★★

was a surprise chart hit in 1982), Anderson's music often deploys electronics, draws vividly on her own voice, and is underpinned by a keen sense of storytelling. This vibrant, exploratory work, created in collaboration with the Kronos Quartet, is also a powerfully personal composition: *Landfall* offers a mosaic-like exploration of Hurricane Sandy, the storm that raged across New York in 2012, but the piece also recounts how Anderson's own archive of work was decimated in the ensuing floods.

Divided into 30 tracks, with colourful titles that range from reportage ('CNN Predicts a Monster Storm') to the more elliptical ('We Blame Each Other For Losing The Way'), *Landfall* moves from fierce evocations of whirling winds to serene meditations on loss, regret and dreams. The quartet is often electronically processed or blended with keyboards or samples, while many of the tracks feature Anderson's distinctive, honey-rich voice narrating. One of the work's

most striking moments is 'Nothing Left But Their Names', where Anderson considers a list of every extinct animal ('the short-faced bear, the Shrub-ox, fifteen chapters on sloths'), while the quartet wheels and shimmers about her. Anderson's spare, droll text and her almost impassive performance keeps the work free of sentimentality, allowing the devastating impact of the storm to land. *Kate Wakeling*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Auerbach Piano Trios Nos 1 & 2 Shostakovich Piano Trio No. 2

Delta Piano Trio
Odradek ODRCD350 63:30 mins
The Delta Piano Trio deliver a very powerful and convincing account of Shostakovich's Second Piano Trio, one which takes nothing in the music for granted.



Throughout, there is a keen attention to details often overlooked by other interpreters. Good examples are their exaggeratedly snarling surges of sound which bring a particularly subversive element to the already frenzied *Scherzo*, and the violin's grotesquely rasping open E string in the Jewish dance at the start of the Finale. Apart from these significant interpretative nuances, the Delta Piano Trio also has a fine grasp of longer-term structure, as reflected in the way they control the rise and fall in intensity of the *Passacaglia*, then trace the slow yet inexorable build-up of bitterness and anger through the Finale to overwhelming effect.

Lera Auerbach's soundworld inhabits similar realms of irony and darkness as Shostakovich, even though she employs a more advanced musical language that owes much to Alfred Schnittke.

Her First Piano Trio, completed when she was only 21 years of age, has some striking ideas, in particular a sequence of high glissandos on the cello near the end of the first movement that evokes the sound of seagulls.

The Second Trio, composed 20 years later, is more complex in design, but retains the earlier work's capacity to communicate vivid musical images. As in the Shostakovich, the Delta Piano Trio delivers strongly characterised performances and Odradek's recording is both warm and clear.

Erik Levi
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Borodin • Dvořák • Tchaikovsky Dvořák: String Quartet No. 12 in F (American); Tchaikovsky: String Quartet No. 1; Borodin: String Quartet No. 2 Escher String Quartet BIS BIS-2280 (Hybrid CD/SACD) 81:7 mins

This is something of a standard 'top hits' compilation of soulful Slavie quartets. Indeed, it exactly duplicates the programme of an Emerson Quartet CD (on DG) issued over 20 years ago, which combines that group's 1990 Tchaikovsky/Borodin album – itself a standard coupling of those two well-loved D major Russian quartets – with their Dvořák *American Quartet* recorded that same year.



The Eschers' new album, beautifully recorded in SACD, contains much fine playing by that young group. They are particularly well-attuned to the Tchaikovsky, not only delivering a gently melancholic account of its melodious second movement, but also presenting the symphonic-style first and last movements in a dramatic and appropriately vigorous manner.

Their accounts of the Dvořák and Borodin works appear to focus on their more obviously tuneful qualities. Dynamic contrasts are often blunted: in the Dvořák third movement *Scherzo*, for instance, the *forzando* accents intended to contrast with the following *pianissimo* passage are toned down respectively to borderline *forte* and *mezzo piano*. The Emersons' livelier account creates a greater sense of drama, with sharper accents and appropriate dynamic contrasts to jolt the listener out of any complacent sense of familiarity, making one all the more alert to that movement's unexpected switches of direction. Too often, the Eschers smooth over such details, making it easy to overlook the inventive colours and craft of these original works. *Daniel Jaffé*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

BACKGROUND TO... Lera Auerbach (b.1973)



Born in Russia, Auerbach defected to the US while on tour in New York as a pianist in

1991. She studied composition at the Juilliard School, then took a post-graduate degree in piano at the Hochschule für Musik in Hanover. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2002, performing her own Suite for Violin, Piano and Orchestra with Gidon Kremer and the Kremerata Baltica. Her many works for orchestra have been conducted several festivals by such musicians as Neeme Järvi, Vladimir Jurowski, Andris Nelsons and Osmo Vänskä. Auerbach has been equally creative as an artist (sculpture and painting) and as a poet.