

CD REVIEW 123

Flowing Waters, the music of Luke Whitlock.

Suite Antique for piano; Flowing waters for piano; Three Pieces for wind trio; Evening Prayer; Flute sonata; The Faust and Mephisto waltz

Duncan Honeybourne (piano), Anna Stokes (flute), James Meldrum (clarinet), Vicky Crowell (bassoon), Wal-Yun Lee (piano)

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Luke Whitlock was born in Exeter in 1978 and is a composer and also a producer for both Radio 3 and Radio 4. He has had a passion for all types of music, which creates problems as to how to define him. The whole concept of crossover in music can be worrying. But he has been encouraged in real music by Peter Reynolds and my friend, Andrew Downes.

In 2005, Whitlock graduated from the University of Plymouth with a certificate in education. He now lives in Cardiff as a radio producer and a freelance teacher at the Royal Welsh College of Music.

Suite Antique is a collection of six early dances. They are tonal and attractive music but they are seldom original. The opening allemande is very beautiful. The courante introduces a more personal style. The fifth piece is a Minuet but is really a waltz with far too music at the top of the piano. The final piece is a Gigue, which is not antique at all, and hints at seedy jazz.

Flowing Waters does not start in a flowing way and after a short start we are plunged into Liszt's Liebestrum no 3, or so it seems. I failed to follow the logic but Duncan Honeybourne is very fine in this as he is in the Suite.

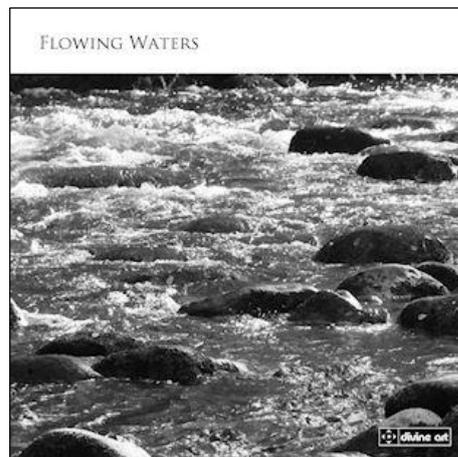
The Wind trio, like so much modern music, is predominantly slow or at a moderate tempo. The first movement As Shadows Fall is evocative and beautifully balanced with an excellent blend between the instruments. The second piece, Morning Escapades is inherent in the music but somehow the music does not flow although it is a happy Humoreske. The final piece Midnight Journey does not seem to convey itself in the music. It may suggest a nervous passenger but the ideas of others will be just as valid. Perhaps it is a tedious journey or the traveller is tired.

Evening Prayer is a rich sounding piano piece often with beautiful nuances, music perhaps standing between Debussy and Satie. It has a religious feel and, apparently, the composer first embraced Christianity and has an interest in Buddhism

The Sonata for flute and piano is the most rewarding work on this disc. It is easy on the flute but never commonplace. The instruments are on an equal footing and the passion of the first movement is felt. The middle movement is also melodious but there are a few strange sounds. The final is a waltz and sadly predictable. But it is fun!

Duncan Honeybourne returns for the final item, which is a fun piece and another waltz!

The sound and performances are of quality and there is an obvious sincerity in this composer's music.



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