



Marimba Concerto

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Percussive Notes (John Beck - 2002.06.01)

"Unique" is what I think of to describe this CD. Four concertos for marimba and orchestra on one CD is a first, to my knowledge. The concertos are: "Concerto No. 1 for Marimba and Orchestra" by Anders Koppel, "Concerto for Marimba and Strings" by Eckhard Kopetzki, "Samba Classique" by Karl-Heinz Köper, and "Prism Rhapsody II" by Keiko Abe. The orchestra is Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Saarbrücken - Dominique Fanal, conductor. Assisting Mycka on "Samba Classique" and "Prism Rhapsody II" is marimbist Franz Bach.

The Koppel concerto is a three movement work first performed at the 1995 International Percussion Competition Luxembourg as the set piece. The first movement is dark and dramatic in character. The second movement is reflective and the third movement is playful. The Kopetzki concerto is in four movements interspersed with cadenzas. The Köper concerto was originally written for mandolin and guitar. The Abe piece was originally written for solo marimba.

Mycka has established herself as a world-class artist on the marimba. Her first two solo CDs are regarded as collectors items and this concerto CD is certainly going to achieve the same status. Mycka's performance is musical, technically superb, and has a quality of sound that makes the marimba almost sound like a piano. Franz Bach is also to be congratulated for his artistry, as is the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Saarbrücken under the direction of Dominique Fanal. That being said, the real credit goes to Katarzyna Mycka for her technical mastery of the marimba and her artistry.