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MARCH 2026 VOL.137 NO.1631

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NEMANJA  
RADULOVIĆ

THE STAR SERBIAN VIOLINIST ON  
HIS NEW PROKOFIEV ALBUM AND  
CREATING MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS



● **ADES** Violin Concerto  
Concentric Paths: The  
Exterminating Angel Symphony  
**Leila Josefowicz (violin) Minnesota  
Orchestra/Thomas Søndergård**  
PENTATONE PTC5187487  
**A mesmerising new account  
of a recent violin concerto**

For a piece premiered as recently as 2005, Thomas Adès's Violin Concerto *Concentric Paths* has already accumulated quite a number of high-profile recordings, with accounts from Augustin Hadelich, Pekka Kuusisto, Peter Herresthal and Anthony Marwood (for whom Adès wrote the piece) among them. If US violinist Leila Josefowicz is stepping into quite a crowded field, she nonetheless stamps a very distinctive mark on Adès's mesmerising mix of cool-headed structuralism and emotional exuberance.



Leila Josefowicz: compelling  
artistry in Minnesota

She has played the piece live for many years, as she explains in her brief booklet note, and that's immediately apparent in her deep understanding of the concerto's restlessly shifting moods and textures, and in the eloquent way she adapts her playing in response. She's crisp and crystal clear in the cascading arpeggios that open the first movement, shifting into breathless athleticism later in the movement, but always with a clear intent. She conjures a strange beauty amid the second movement's slithering figurations, too, and zips along with almost manic energy in the finale. It's a thoroughly compelling account that digs deep to uncover the meanings – emotional and intellectual – that seem to lie behind Adès's sometimes complex writing.

Josefowicz receives enormously characterful support from the Minnesota Orchestra under Thomas



Søndergård, who generates some exceptionally beautiful passages but is unafraid to make his band roar and grumble too. *The Exterminating Angel* Symphony – extracted from Adès's third opera and getting its first ever recording – likewise shows off both the orchestra's and the recording's technical detail, and Søndergård has an exceptional sense of the piece's unfolding drama. It's a thoroughly rewarding disc – even if, at a mere 39 minutes, it's more than a little short.  
DAVID KETTLE

**AMERICAN TAPESTRY**  
**BARBER** String Quartet **KORNGOLD**  
String Quartet no.3 **MARSALIS** At  
the Octorion Balls: nos. 3, 4 and 5  
**WILLIAMS** With malice toward none  
**Calidore** Quartet  
SIGNUM SIGCD070  
**A New York-based quartet explores  
its heritage to fine effect**

This is an attractive set, of which only Barber's sole String Quartet is at all well known. In the first movement *Molto allegro* the opening unison declarations are fiercely played, and effectively balanced by silky, sensual passages in between, with the later contrapuntal sections having both energy and clarity. The Calidore demonstrates a moving fragility and vulnerability in the *Molto adagio*, arguably more telling in this form than is generally found in its famous later incarnation, the *Adagio* for Strings. Here, too, the short finale has its own emotional complexity.

The three movements from Wynton Marsalis's *At the Octorion Balls* all have the exuberance of their roots in New Orleans dances. No.4, 'Many gone', is a lament for slavery, and features an extended cadenza for



cello, splendidly played by Estelle Choi. The last of them, 'Hellbound Higby', is a terrific depiction of a train ride.  
After John Williams's short 'With malice toward none', arranged for string quartet from his film score for *Lincoln*, comes Korngold's Third Quartet, in which the Calidore shows sinew and tenderness in the first movement and dry, spiky energy in the staccato scherzo. The Sostenuo receives an affecting, delicate performance, which gives way to agitated anguish. The *Allegro* finale is mainly happy and dancing, and unequivocally in D major. The recording is close and rich.  
TIM MCHEMRY

● **BRAHMS** Violin Concerto  
**GOLDMARK** Violin Concerto no.1  
**Ning Feng (violin) Berlin  
Konzerthausorchester/Antony Hermus**  
CHANNEL CLASSICS CC546225  
**An outstanding addition  
to a crowded arena**

Great recordings of the Brahms Violin Concerto come along so rarely that you blink and wonder: can it really be so? But several hearings of Ning Feng's masterly, inspired interpretation have simply confirmed its eminence.

Of course, a concerto is a collaboration. The understanding between soloist and Dutch conductor Antony Hermus is palpable and the *Adagio* begins with an outstanding *cbo solo* (uncredited, but an email to the orchestra confirmed my hunch that it was principal oboist Michaela Kuntz).

In the first movement an excellent tutti at a good tempo builds nicely to Ning Feng's entry and he is



Total mastery from Ning Feng

authoritative in all the demands Brahms makes on the violinist: his lyrical playing is beautiful and when he has to dig in, his command is total, with sublime double-stopping. The Joachim cadenza itself is full of incident too.

After Kuntz's wonderful solo, the violinist finds a narrative in the *Adagio* which he expounds gorgeously, knitting it into an organic whole. The *Allegro giocoso*, rhythmically secure, sounds just right. Throughout, the woodwind playing is exceptional.

I associate Goldmark's agreeable but ramshackle concerto with Milstein, who knew how to hold it together. Ning Feng is up there with him, entering sweetly and taking the more peremptory passages in his stride. As in the Brahms, tempos are just right and the solo playing is out of this world, especially in the rapt second theme of the opening movement. He is suitably meditative in the *Andante* and the finale is rhythmically spot on, with the soloist



holding our interest throughout the long cadenza – and impetus maintained to the end. The recording team have done their work well.  
TULLY POTTER

**AN ENGLISH VIOLIN  
CREITH** Violin Concerto in G minor  
**CLARKE** Midsummer Moon; Lullaby;  
Chinese Puzzle **ELGAR** Chanson de  
matin; Chanson de nuit; La capricieuse;  
Sospiri **WALTON** Canonetta; Scherzetto  
**Geneviève Laurenceau (violin) Jean-  
Frédéric Neuberger (piano) Orchestre  
de Picardie/Dirigé Niemann**  
NIMAG MUSIC NIMM130  
**A French violinist champions a  
forgotten British female voice**

This early 20th-century English programme from French violinist Geneviève Laurenceau is championing a real rarity: the Violin Concerto by Guirre Creith (1907–96), which was premiered in 1936 by its dedicatee Albert Sammons, but then lay forgotten until its manuscript was rediscovered after the composer's death. Along with some songs, it represents the entirety of Creith's surviving output, and it's musically interesting: long-spun, lyrically sailing violin lines and a lushly scored chromaticism with shades of Wagner and Elgar, are combined with more modern, English-folk-influenced spice. It has only been recorded once before, in 2008, by Lorraine McAdan with Martin Yates and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Here it has been well served, with crisper, cleaner capturing of both soloist and orchestra than the McAdan. Laurenceau herself brings rich-toned muscular energy to the opening *Maestoso*, a mix of sweetness and fiery passion to the

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