

through clear phrasing and sensitive dynamics. She clearly is singing through her guitar—every phrase here is a coherent thought played with intention.

Russian Sofia Gubaidulina's expressive 'Serenade for Guitar Solo' opens in a minor key and evolves into much more contemporary language, setting the stage for the rest of the recording.

Thea Musgrave's *Postcards from Spain* concludes with an energetic movement, 'Windmills of La Mancha', with more obvious Spanish references than the other movements, and is a fitting conclusion to this program.

Thanks to recording engineer Leif Hesselberg, who should be roundly applauded, the excellent recording quality reveals in detail Camitz's wide palette of tone color and articulation. The sound quality is consistently realistic even when the music exhibits wide dynamic contrasts and sharp accents, as in Pernille Sejlund's *En Citron i Vindueskarmen* (A Lemon on the Windowsill). The string scratches in Birgitte Alsted's 'Chitarra Ariosa' are pristinely recorded, but are irritating; I'm not sure what musical value they add to the work.

Some typos in the liner notes could have been avoided, but Camitz's English is much better than my Danish.

Treat yourself to a lovely sonic experience of contemporary music for the guitar from an artist who feels it deeply.

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Bitter the Laughter, Sweet the Tears

Richter-Uzur Duo—Centaur 3970—41 minutes

This virtuosic duo performed from 2005 to 2019, all the while creating new music and arrangements. Then guitarist Brad Richter, who holds a master's degree from the Royal College of Music in London, was diagnosed with a debilitating case of Lyme disease that ended his performing career. This disc is a compilation of excellent concert and studio-recorded items from this fruitful period.

Richter's composition, the title track, opens the program with an inventive duet that is contemporary but aurally unified and understandable. The writing for both instruments, expressively encompassing a wide range of emotions and textures, is first-rate and well-performed.

Viktor Uzur, cello professor at Weber State University in Utah, who holds a soloist diploma from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory and a doctorate from Michigan State University, composed the second piece, 'Kolo Fugato', to

perfectly project his strengths as a soloist including blistering scale passages and riveting, ethnically inspired moments.

Two jointly-composed pieces are notable. 'Almost October' has several sections that one can hear as having been derived from some serious improvising together. These pieces show the depth of the relationship between these two formidable musicians. Their concluding arrangements of variations on 'The House of the Rising Sun' coupled with 'Greensleeves' and 'Scarborough Fair' are interesting and substantial.

Recording quality is excellent, with remarkable consistency of tone and space despite having been recorded over the span of 4 years in different places. Kudos to engineers Aaron Hubbard and Mike Levy!

The Richter-Uzur Duo should be ranked among the best in the world. This recording deserves to be heard; it embodies impressive creativity and execution.

MCCUTCHEON

Mahan Esfahani, hpsi

KRASA: *Kammermusik*; **KALABIS:** *Concerto*;
MARTINU: *Concerto*

Prague Radio Symphony/ Alexander Liebreich
Hyperion 68397—61 minutes

Esfahani's recording of these Czech concertos is in part a tribute to Zuzana Ruzickova, who also performed and recorded these pieces. He was her last student.

The performances are ideal: Esfahani as bravura harpsichordist catching a wide range of emotions, sympathetic conductor Liebreich, who balances everything well, and expert orchestral players who know what life in Prague has been like over the past 60 years of turbulence.

The harpsichord is a good match for the music, too. It was built in 1971 and carefully restored for this project. Its 16-foot register helps to bring out the humor and profundity of the music.

Bohuslav Martinu's harpsichord concerto is (typically for him) based not so much on melody, but on catchy rhythmic fragments that gradually bring in different pitches as they repeat. The concerto's orchestration includes a piano part that functions almost like a second soloist. Esfahani and pianist Ivo Kahaneč play these percussive keyboard parts incisively. Beyond them there are only 6 string players and 2 winds. The performance comes across as intense chamber music. A passage near the