

# Marchelie: Don Quixote & Dulcinea; Eclipse; 3 Estampes; Dance.

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MARCHIELIE: Don Quixote & Dulcinea; Eclipse; 3 Estampes; Dance; REBAY: Waltz; Tango; HAUSWIRTH: Konzertino; GNATTALI: Sonata; HEMENGER: Songs from America; JENTSCH: Sonata

Michael Kevin Jones, vc; Agustin Maruri, g

Emec 63--75 minutes

With the exception of Gnattali, I did not know any of these composers before putting the disc in my player. Nor did I expect the unusual pairing of cello and guitar to be particularly revelatory or even reasonable. I was wrong. This release gripped me immediately, largely because of the superb playing of Jones and Maruri. Cellist Jones is the main attraction, his magnificent tone and expansive phrasing an irresistible figure against the ground of Maruri's accompaniment. The music is largely conservative, neoromantic fare; without Jones's beguiling cello I suspect much of it would be forgettable.

The six works by French composer Erik Marchelie that open the program are the most satisfying of the safely lyrical pieces here; Marchelie's rich harmonies and soaring melodies are ideally suited to Jones and Maruri's approach. Works by Ferdinand Rebay and Hans Hauswirth inhabit the same tonal landscape, but by this point in the program I was itching for something less saccharine. To my surprise, Gnattali's sonata largely failed to deliver on this front; it is blander, formally stiffer than much of his music, and it is not until III that it really leaps out with some spirited textures and exchanges between the two instruments.

Seven American folk song and spiritual arrangements by the young American composer Drew Hemenger follow. The almost vocal directness of Jones's playing carries these simple arrangements. It is not until the final work that a real affective contrast finally arrives: Walter Jentsch's sonata, one of several world premiere recordings here, is coarse, angular, and austere. After so much triadic sweetness its effect is paradoxical: a bitter palette cleanser.

The packaging is very attractive, the sound is excellent—with a realistic balance between guitar and cello—and the notes are extensive.