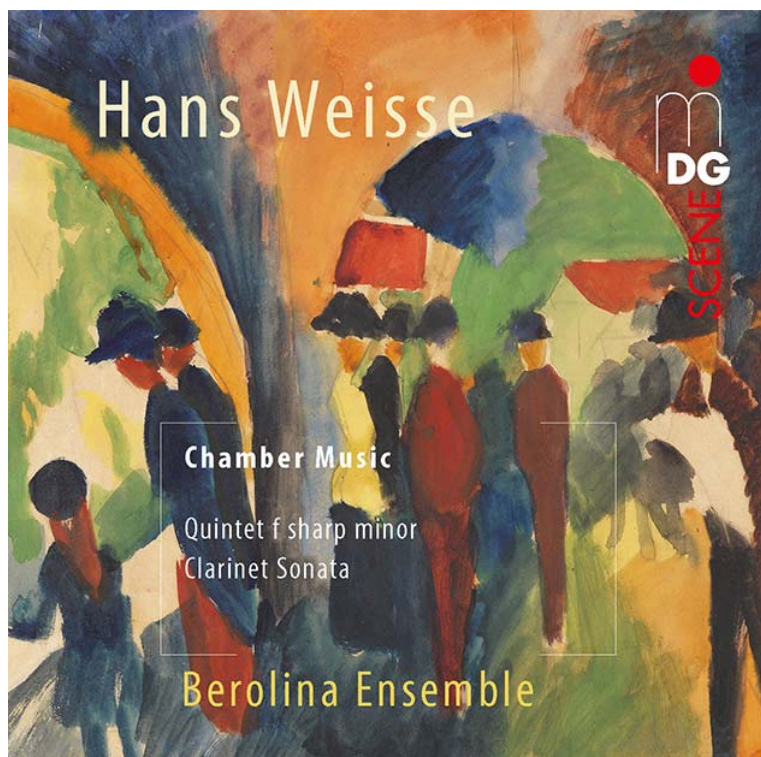


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SCENE



09/18-(5)

Hans Weisse (1892-1940)
Clarinet Quintet F sharp minor
Clarinet Sonata op. 10

Friederike Roth, clarinet
Berolina Ensemble

1 Hybrid-SACD

MDG 948 2078-6

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Sensational Premieres

Once again the Berolina Ensemble has a sensational surprise in store. The Clarinet Quintet and Sonata for Piano and Clarinet penned by Hans Weisse are heard on this SACD in what may be first-ever performances. In any case, this is what the manuscripts suggest: they were first rendered playable by the musical discovery team led by the clarinetist Friederike Roth, and their work paid off! Delightful late Romanticism meets ambitious tonality in this music displaying its own unique appeal.

Career Obscurity

Hardly anything is known about the composer. Born in Vienna to an actor, Hans Weisse was a pupil of Heinrich Schenker, whose radical approach to music theory won him many adherents particularly in the United States. In 1930 Weisse himself accepted an appointment in New York, where he died mysteriously in 1940 at the early age of forty-eight. Weisse did most of his composing during his years in Vienna, before Wilhelm Furtwängler called him to Berlin for instruction in Schenker's compositional methods.

Obstacle Course

Furtwängler heard Weisse's Octet – and was enthusiastic about it. Although Weisse enjoyed prominent endorsements of this kind, hardly any of his works were performed. It is not known why this was so, but the composer himself may have been his own obstacle. The score material of the Clarinet Sonata is not easy to follow; he evidently changed the order of the three movements several times. And, who knows, maybe he planned a fourth movement!

Sumptuous Performances

In any event, the contrast between Weisse's perspicacity in music theory and the obscurity of his writing practice is striking. Even his meticulous mentor Schenker felt that many a piece of his was too intellectual. However, the performances by the Berolina Ensemble create just the opposite impression: the music shines and vibrates with intensity, the harmonies continuing within the bounds of tonality are taken to the bursting point, and on this three-dimensional, high-resolution SACD this rewarding new discovery also offers sumptuous listening pleasure.

Romantic Rarities

W. von Bauszern: Quintet; 8 Kammergesänge for Soprano, String Quartet, Flute & Clarinet; String Trio
MDG 948 2071-6 (Hybrid-SACD)

W. von Bauszern: Octet, Elegy, Serenade
MDG 948 1826-6 (Hybrid-SACD)

Ernst Rudorff: Chamber Music
MDG 948 1889-6 (Hybrid-SACD)

Heinrich Hofmann
Octet op. 80, Serenade op. 65,
Sextet op. 25
MDG 948 1808-6 (Hybrid-SACD)

