

“The First Beauty” Music by KLEIN, KYANDAL, YUN and AM – Oslo Kammerakademi/ David Friedemann Strunck – LAWO Classics

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“The First Beauty” Music by KLEIN, KYANDAL, YUN and AM – Oslo Kammerakademi/ David Friedemann Strunck – LAWO Classics multichannel SACD LWC 1093, 1:15:01 (3/4/16) 1:15:01 [Distr. by Naxos] ***1/2:

Seldom heard contemporary wind music nicely played and recorded.

This new SACD from LAWO Classics is a collection of contemporary wind music played by the Oslo Kammerakademi, a new ensemble with some of Scandinavia’s leading wind soloists. The Oslo Philharmonic’s solo oboist David Friedemann Strunck is the initiator and artistic director of the ensemble.

The ensemble is unique in Scandinavia because it plays chamber music for wind instruments with the classical harmony music instrumentation as a basis, where the ensemble uses historical brass instruments of the baroque, classical and romantic repertoire to give the sound both authenticity and transparency. The ensemble had its debut in Oslo in December 2009.

The disc contains four 20th-century works, including music by Gideon Klein (1919-1945), Johan Vandal (1919-1999), Isang Yun (1917-1995), and Magnar Åm (b 1952)

While all the compositions on the disc are interesting, and all are well played, I thought the highlight work was the most recently composed – *the first beauty for Wind Octet and Double Bass* by Magnar Åm. Written in 2012, it has a lyrical melody and a poignancy that make it a stand out, and something I would listen to more than once. The audio is quite good, with instruments well placed up front. The surround channels are used mainly for hall ambiance, not putting you in the center of the musicians.

This is a fine collection of contemporary wind music. It’s beautifully performed and nicely recorded, and these works are unlikely to appear in any other collection. Musical explorers will appreciate this disc.

—Mel Martin <http://www.audaud.com/the-first-beauty-music-by-klein-kyandal-yun-and-am-oslo-kammerakademi-david-friedemann-strunck-lawo-classics/>