

character pieces and a clever incorporation of multiple melodic references in pieces like *A bouquet of roses*. Alongside this, Kitchen's own transcriptions of Arthur Sullivan opera movements complement well. The Usher Hall Organ is naturally well-suited to this repertoire, easily transporting the listener back to an era of Edwardian opulence and entertainment.

RUPERT GOUGH

UNE VOIX FRANÇAISE

Renée Anne Louprette, Mander organ (1993), St Ignatius Loyola, New York City

Acis APL 01609 [69:58]

★★★★★



Having previously served as associate director of music, Renée Anne Louprette is no stranger to St Ignatius Loyola in New York and its French-inspired instrument from British firm Mander. She returns with an exciting recording of French repertoire. The second suite of Vierne's *Pièces de fantaisie* sits alongside some less familiar pieces by Ibert, André Isoir and Nadia Boulanger. Isoir's only organ composition, *Variations sur un psaume huguenot*, is a particularly vibrant exploration of neo-baroque sounds. Louprette plays with grace and charm as well as seemingly effortless virtuosity. Twenty-five years since its installation, this organ still captivates with its uniquely French voice in New York.

RUPERT GOUGH

LEONARD SANDERMAN, ORGEL

Joachim Wagner organ (1737), Liebfrauenkirche, Jüterbog; Johann Tobias Turley organ (1824), Dorfkirche, Kaltenborn Orgelstadt Jüterbog, vol.1 [66:58]

★★★



The historic organs are the most important feature of this disc, on which the tonal colours are well exploited in a programme of Buxtehude, Hassler (two first recordings from the Turin Tablature Book), Böhm, Weckmann, Reinken, J.S. Bach (BWV 537 and four 'lesser' chorale preludes from *Clavierübung III*), Krebs and Johann Schneider (1702-88, first recording). Leonard Sanderman's articulation is well schooled, although phrases sometimes lack forward direction, as in Bach's C minor Fantasia which lacks gravitas and tension. More imagination is shown in Schneider's Praeludium, and some beautiful sounds come from the Wagner organ. No notes on the music, unfortunately.

DAVID PONSFORD

GRIEG AND TVEITT FOR ORGAN

Nils Henrik Asheim, Stavanger Concert Hall

Lawo LWC 1151 [71:37]

★★★★★



It is interesting to note recently how organists are turning to transcriptions to demonstrate new concert hall organs. This premiere recording of the new Ryde & Berg organ in Stavanger's concert hall is no exception, and Nils Henrik Asheim turns

primarily to Norway's national treasure: Edvard Grieg. Asheim successfully transforms the piano *Ballad in the form of variations on a Norwegian folksong* into a colourful musical tableau. The other composer featured, Grier Tveitt, was born the year after Grieg's death. Some of his orchestral *Hardanger Tunes* are arranged here, and these fun character pieces continue to paint a musical picture of this region of Norway and its folk traditions.

RUPERT GOUGH

HAMPSON SISLER – ALL AROUND THE YEAR: ORGAN MUSIC FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Michael Koenig, E.M. Skinner/Klais organ (1930/2013), Ev. Saalkirche, Ingelheim am Rhein, Germany

MSR Classics MS1666 [48:17]

★★★



Hampson Sisler (b.1932) was the youngest ever recipient of the FAGO diploma, and has enjoyed a distinguished career as a church musician and widely published and recorded composer. The suites presented here each consist of a sequence of scenes evoking celebrations of family members and of moments in the church year which have become gradually secularised (St Valentine's Day, St Patrick's Day etc). Each improvisatory tableau is infused with melodies associated with the feast day referred to in the title. The melodies themselves spring from a variety of sources: Lutheran, Baptist and Anglican hymn tunes, popular American songs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, music of Japan and of native America. These themes, generally appearing in off-colour harmonic contexts, are more 'referenced' than developed in any systematic way, some canonic writing notwithstanding, and the listener is left with a sense that this could be incidental music to a film or a play. The London-based Austrian organist Michael König (whose biography is unduly modest regarding his pioneering work to champion the organ in Africa) plays splendidly and with the sense of orchestral colour and control required by the unique, sizeable 1930 Skinner now residing in Ingelheim am Rhein.

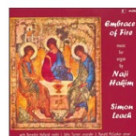
CHRIS BRAGG

HAKIM: EMBRACE OF FIRE

Simon Leach, William Hill organ, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Manchester; Benedict Holland (vn), John Turner (rec), Randal McCusker (t)

Métier MSV 28583 [70:43]

★★★★★



Simon Leach departs from Manchester's Holy Name of Jesus church for pastures new in Edinburgh with an entertaining, quietly virtuosic tribute to long-time collaborator Naji Hakim. Of interest is the title track – with its blend of plainsong, Hindu scales and irregular rhythms seamlessly integrated by Leach and an expressive 1871 III/48 William Hill – and a first recording of the *Toccata on the Introit for the Feast of the Epiphany* (2016), where a plainsong introduction gives way to a rich set of symphonic variations culminating in blazing splendour. Works pairing organ with recorder and violin are fully engaging and