

Battleground

Nordhagen, Olsen, Holm, Laukvik, Eben
Marius Hesby, trb; Anders Eidsten Dahl, org
LAWO 1128—66 minutes

Trombonist Marius Hesby is a member of the Norwegian Navy Band, and organist Anders Eidsten Dahl is cantor at Bragernes Church in Drammen, Norway. Together they are the Olmstridt Duo, and all but one of the works presented here were composed for them. Stig Nordhagen's little 'Macchia nera di polvere' (2002)—which means either black powder or black speck of dust, according to the very amusing notes—begins noisy and discordant and becomes more so. Arne Rodvelt Olsen contributed two smaller works—a sixminute Fantasia (1999) and a three-minute Intrada (2005)—and a big, impressive one: the 21-minute Missa (2003). The biggest singlemovement work is Lars-Thomas Holm's 16-minute Fanfares over Battled Ground (2005-2014). Jon Laukvik's 'Arabeske' (2010) and Petr Eben's Two Invocations (1988) complete the program. Both instruments make big, impressive sounds, and the works take full advantage. All are serious and dramatic, and they have extremely imposing moments. Acoustics are always a challenge in brass-organ recordings when the space is a large church. The brass instrument is heard as a single point of sound, but the organ sound fills the space. Here, each instrument sounds very natural when heard alone. Heard together, the trombone sometimes seems a little distant and is swallowed by the organ. But Hesby has lots of power, so at fortissimo there is no problem hearing him. The organ is magnificent.

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