

Modern classical and avant garde concert music of the 20th and 21st centuries forms the primary focus of this blog. It is hoped that through the discussions a picture will emerge of modern music, its heritage, and what it means for us.

Thursday, January 24, 2013

Nils Anders Mortensen, Im Freien, Debussy, Grieg and Bartok for Solo Piano



Norwegian pianist Nils Anders Mortensen's *Im Freien* (LAW Classics 1032) is all about music "out of doors," in nature, among the people, as thematically expressed in the solo piano music of Debussy, Grieg and Bartok.

This is music in a poetic vein, filled with moonlight, stars, the village, the night. Nils plays the representational, mood-capturing works with a very good feel for the overarching arc of each. This is music that works its charm through a propulsive, all-important long form. And that comes across quite readily and expressively in Mortensen's interpretations.

The selection sets the mood with a long string of impressionistic, lyrically masterful tone poems from Grieg and Debussy, then adds a bit of modern spice in Bartok's five movement suite "Im Freien," for which of course the album is named.

This is an important pianist who shines brilliantly with this repertoire. There is sheer pleasure to be had with his out-of-door program. When spring comes, you'll be ready for it with "Im Freien"!

[Grego Applegate Edwards at 5:59 AM](#)