AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014

Canadian Concerto Project I
LUSSIER: *Alameda Impressions; Dernier Chant d'Ophelie; Odd Bird Concerto;* **OCCHIPINTI:** *13 Seconds; Sicilian Proverbs;* **BUHR:** *Man Will Only Grieve if He Believes the Sun Stands Still*
Nadina Mackie Jackson, bn; Guy Few, tpt; Group of 27
MSR 1480—66 minutes

How can we not enjoy the captivating characters Nadina Mackie Jackson and Guy Few? Nadina the bewitching bassoonist with the blue spiky hair, Guy the swashbuckling trumpeter (and pianist) with the earrings and fascinating facial hair. They stand out in the classical music world, to be sure, and they are terrific musicians with engaging personalities, too. This is their third album together (March/April 2008: 234).

Matthew Lussier is a bassoonist, composer, and close friend of these soloists. He writes music that doesn't fascinate me, but it has sensuous flavors that fit these colorful artists. In the three-movement, 13-minute *Impressions de l'Alameda* (2006), where Lussier was inspired by the Almeda gardens of Mexico City, Few has long, lyrical lines in I ('Libre et fantasque') and II ('Sarabande'), then a lively dance in III ('Vif et energique'). In *Le Dernier Chant d'Ophelie* (1997), Jackson plays passionately in depicting the final moments of Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In the 18-minute *Odd Bird Concerto* (2012), I introduces 'The Bird and the Agitation of Life', II ('Ending Worlds') is poignant, and III ('The Tragic Bird Finds its Way to Peace') gives Jackson both singing and energetic lines.

My favorite pieces are two by Michael Occhimpinti and one by Glenn Buhr, all of which have Jackson and Few working as a duo. Occhipinti's '13 Seconds' (2005) has jazz flavors, lots of counterpoint, and much interplay between soloists and strings. *Sicilian Proverbs* is by turns quirky and seductive. Buhr's wistful little 'man will only grieve if he believes the sun stands still' is an aria from his opera *Anna's Dream Play*. The very mellow sound is due in large part to the warm sound of Few's flugelhorn-like corno.

KILPATRICK

MSR MUSIC LLC
8 DOVER CIRCLE, NEWTOWN CT 06470
(203) 304-2486 WWW.MSRCD.COM (203) 304-2491 FAX
EMAIL: INFO@MSRCD.COM