Even though there is only one singer, the plot involves many characters with whom the listener may be familiar, such as Semele, Jupiter (with whom Semèle once had an affair), and Jupiter's wife Juno (here called Saturnia). Briefly, Ino (daughter of Cadmus and Hermione—title figures in an important Lully opera) has raised Semele's son (the young Bacchus) when Semele was caused to die by the jealous Juno. Juno avenges herself by leading Semele's husband Athamas to kill his and Semele's son Learcho. Ino and the other son, Melicertes, flee into the ocean, where the sea god Neptune welcomes them and transforms them into sea deities.

All the works on this disc are from the last years of Telemann's life, when he was in his 80s. All are immensely engaging and, indeed, would have, at least in certain respects, seemed quite up-to-date at the time—or at least a fascinating blend of the old (two of the pieces are structured as dance suites, an archetypal Baroque genre) and the new.

The period-instrument orchestra plays attractively, shaping phrases with greater elegance than the orchestra on Harnoncourt's recording of *Ino*. The recorded sound is nicely balanced. All in all, a wonderful tribute to a composer who nowadays doesn't quite get the respect (and performances) that he deserves.

LOCKE

THOMAS, AR: *Terpischore's Box of Dreams; Dance Mobile; Carnival; Con Moto; Bebop Riddle II; Star Box; Laetitia's Caprice*
Nadina Mackie Jackson, bn; Phil Pierrick, sax; Alexander Hersh, vc; Tom Hicks, p; John Corkill, Ian Ding, Kyle Flens, Cynthia Yeh, Adam Rosenblatt, Gerrett Arney, Nonoka Mizukami, perc; Grossman Ensemble/ Tim Weiss, Stefan Asbury; SUNY Fredonia Wind Ensemble/ Paula Holcomb
Nimbus 6445—69 minutes

Augusta Read Thomas (b 1964) is one of America's outstanding active composers. She is a prominent Chicagoan, having been a resident composer of the Chicago Symphony under Boulez and Barenboim, a professor at the University of Chicago since 2010, and a founder of several local, thriving new music festivals. In 2016 she established the Chicago Center for Contemporary Composition and the resident Grossman Ensemble to foster the creation and performance of new music of the highest caliber. I reviewed this ensemble's excellent inaugural album (J/F 2021).

Thomas writes living music; that is to say, music that is heard in the midst of creation, a quality she refers to as captured improvisation. She has a remarkable gift for weaving together joyfully anarchic, individual voices in a dizzying array of color, rhythm, and timbre—all while quietly retaining unity and the utmost craftsmanship. Each note and its articulation feels freely spontaneous yet intentional and considered.

She has always excelled at chamber music, and this album of recent works is no exception; it is an especially effective showcase of her strong and imaginative writing for wind, brass, and percussion. There are two glittering, complimentary works for percussion quartet: `Con Moto' (2018) and `Star Box' (2020), the latter written in memory of her teacher, Jacob Druckman. There are two solo pieces: the jazzy `Bebop Riddle II' (2022) for pizzicato cello and piano and `Laetitia's Caprice' (2023) for soprano saxophone, a broad and expansive piece despite its very short length.

The remaining works are for chamber orchestra; this is where Thomas's glorious ear for kaleidoscopic color shines. *Carnival* (2022) is a concerto for bassoon and winds, performed by Nadina Mackie Jackson and the SUNY Fredonia Wind Ensemble. The bassoon takes on a mischievous, harlequin-like character amid a whirlwind of brash, quirky winds. *Dance Mobile* (2021), written in memory of Oliver Knussen, is a triptych of propulsive dances built on ostinato-like rhythms.

In a class of its own, though, is *Terpsichore's Box of Dreams* (2023), one of the most outstanding works for chamber orchestra I have heard in recent years. The endlessly flowing and erupting bouquets of color, conversation, and mischief are utterly exhilarating. This is a piece I could listen to again and again and never tire of it. Needless to say this is a must-have album from one of America's best and most interesting composers. Performances are universally excellent and sound is clear and full, ideal for these works.

FARO