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CLASSICAL

Ever After
Nadina Mackie Jackson
Odd Bird Studios

If you're a concert bassoonist, chances are you spend a fair amount of your time raiding other instruments' repertoire, performing pieces "after" Scarlatti, Bach and so on: hence the title of this fine, self- produced CD by Toronto-based bassoonist Nadina Mackie Jackson. In fact the CD features one original work: *Cinq Caprices* for solo bassoon, written (mostly) for Jackson by Canadian composer Mathieu Lussier (b. 1973) — himself an accomplished bassoonist. By turns lyrical and rhetorical, they often look back to the baroque; surprisingly intimate (is it demeaning to bassoons to say "surprisingly?"), they make the most of the instrument's expressive capabilities. Prokofiev's Sonata in D, Op. 94, originally for flute and piano, is often performed (to its improvement) on violin; bassoon is a more radical departure. Jackson's intense musicality prevents the adventure from turning into parody, though the character of the instrument brings out the composer's irony. David Swann is her lyrical pianist. Arrangements by Michael Sweeney of zippy keyboard pieces by Scarlatti and Bach take some getting used to, but a pensive D-Minor Scarlatti sonata receives a memorably expressive performance. The album is available on www.cdbaby.com or www.nadinamackiejackson.com *Tamara Bernstein*