

# The Clarinet

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INTERVIEW WITH

# Béla Kovács

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Rudolph Dunbar

The Albert-System Clarinet

Vietnamese Composer Nguyen Phuc Linh

Marco Mazzini and Clariperu



have just made a masterpiece, that's the *Bolero*; alas, it contains no music at all." Such self-effacing talk could be interpreted in many ways, but I think we are all the richer for this singular work, a model of economy and relentless forward drive. Beyer's arrangement is also vital, even with reduced forces compared to the augmented orchestra that Ravel used.

Ravel painted one color combination after another, stacked end to end creating a colossus. Beyer has shortened Ravel's original 430 bars to 268 and provides directions for an optional further cut of 53. He suggests performing with a percussionist; after all, the snare drum player is really the star of the show. If no snare drum is used the oboist is instructed to put the bolero ostinato into motion with key clicks through the first 20 bars. Beyer is ingenious in his own orchestration. Variety is on hand with every new phrase by changing the role of each instrument among melody, melodic harmony, ostinato and harmonic structural duties.

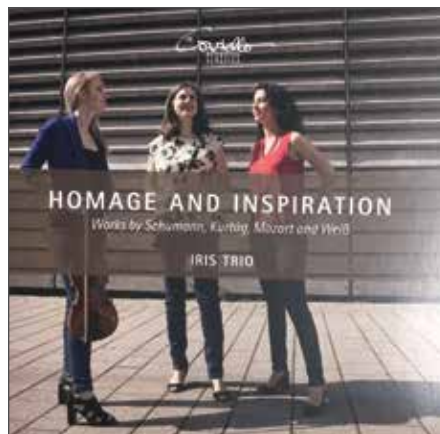
This virtuosic work brings intonation and rhythmic accuracy into the spotlight and would challenge any ensemble. It would be effective at school shows highlighting each instrument.

— Gregory Barrett

## RECORDINGS

**Homage and Inspiration: Works by Schumann, Kurtág, and Weiß.** Iris Trio: Christine Carter, clarinet; Molly Carr, viola; Anna Petrova, piano. R. Schumann: *Märchenerzählungen*, Op. 132; G. Kurtág: *Homage à Robert Schumann*, Op. 15d; W.A. Mozart: *Trio in E Major "Kegelstatt"* K. 498; C. Weiß: *Drittes Klaviertrio für Klarinette, Viola, und Klavier* "Gespräch unter Freunden." Coviello Classics, LC 12403. Total Time: 62:46.

Iris Trio skillfully pairs classics and contemporary music in their album *Homage and Inspiration*. Comprised of clarinetist Christine Carter, violist Molly Carr, and pianist Anna Petrov, Iris Trio debuted in 2013 in concert at the German



Consulate in New York City; a multi-country concert tour and collaboration with Christof Weiß furnished inspiration and impetus for this album. Liner notes in English and German provide descriptive program notes, detailed performer bios and insight into the creative process.

Talented soloists in their own right, the interplay and musical collaboration of Iris Trio shine brightly. Lines weave into unified constructs that highlight timbral nuances. Seamless melodies combine with impeccably balanced tutti passages. Intense musicality reigns throughout, with luminous depth of resonant tone in all registers. Dynamics empower without shocking the senses. Simply, this disc by Iris Trio is immaculate in its musical and technical presentation, bringing forth depths of sound palettes for the listener's delight.

In the opening work, the time-honored *Märchenerzählungen (Fairy Tales)*, Op. 132, by Robert Schumann, performers move seamlessly between foreground and background, as melodic lines are woven between instruments with unblemished intonation. Phrasing comes to light at every turn, highlighting the vocal quality of the work.

Harkening to the album's title, György Kurtág's *Hommage à Robert Schumann*, Op. 15d, pays tribute to the inspirational composer. It is crafted as six vignettes, and striking musicality is heard from the first note. Lines are meticulously phrased, with each performer adding expressive nuances. Musical stories unfold in every movement; the technique is flawless and intense musicality breathes life into the fragments.

The enduring "*Kegelstatt*" *Trio in E Major*, K. 498, by Mozart receives a fresh interpretation. Daring risks of phrasing and spotless ensemble artistry enliven the classical structure. The authoritative presentation is decisively infused with playful turns of musicality, aptly capturing the compositional spirit. Supreme technical command supports rubato that creates lyrical dynamism throughout the composition.

The *Third Piano Trio (Conversation among Friends)* by Christof Weiß demands exceptional virtuosity from performers both individually and collectively. Individual parts are complex, combining into a multi-tiered organized cacophony of sounds that evokes a conversation with each voice vying for attention. Intricate rhythms belie stark melodies, with rapid interplay of voices and contrasts of registration pushing the boundaries of performance. The exquisite collaboration of the Iris Trio comes to the forefront in the interpretation, as technique and musicality intertwine to present an enthralling performance. The interpretation and level of execution are exceptional.

Iris Trio's ability to blend superior technique with sensitive musicality comes to the forefront, as flawless intonation, resonant tone, and perfect balance brings these works to life. Iris Trio presents a compilation that beckons listeners to stay for a while and ask for more. This disc presents a strong recording, which hopefully preludes subsequent projects by the ensemble. This recording would be a welcome addition to any personal or public chamber music collection.

— Michelle Kiec

**Choro Tributes.** Diálogos Duo: Louis Arques, clarinet; Richard Boukas, guitar. R. Boukas: *Não Diga Agora; Anacletozinho; Solstício de Verão; O Bandolim Sabe Tudo; Meu Violão é o Chorão; Manhoso; Requiem; Choro do Sol; Dois Irmãos no Céu; Sambando na Praia; Choro Sussuro; Som Livre*. Self-published (available at <https://boukas.com/dialogos-duo>). Total Time: 51:58.

*Choro Tributes* consists of music written for clarinet and guitar exclusively by New-York-based guitarist and composer