

extended head before they begin trading increasingly complicated rhythms. Morelli's velvety, diffused timbres suit the laid-back quality of the writing – his high register sounds like a smoky whisper.

The remaining works all involve other instruments but no piano, the most challenging of which may be Andrea Clearfield's *Three Songs for Oboe and Double Bass (after Poems by Pablo Neruda)*. The first movement allows Fiala to stretch her expressive range. Bassist Karl Olson does the same, his intervallic leaps carefully matching the oboe's. The second movement, "The Light Wraps You," gives the CD its title, and, at a minute and a half, is a full minute longer than the first. It takes longer to read Neruda's dense, sensual, mystical poems than to listen to Clearfield's aphoristic responses. But these pieces have a variety, creativity, and inner logic that is less evident in some of the other repertoire, and they are a good choice to balance the collection. "Every Day You Play" provides a faster, impish conclusion to the set.

Two composers' works seem somewhat related to process music, James MacMillan's *Intercessions for Three Oboes* and Fulvio Caldini's *Étude du réveil* for oboe and clarinet. Listening for the first time without reading, I assumed Fiala was playing all MacMillan's parts through a delay system and/or recording herself, but the piece makes its ostinato-cum-flourishes patterns via three live oboists. It must be a real kick to hear and see live. Somebody in the trio, which includes Joseph Salvalaggio and Martin Schuring, has some (male range) throat noise, but that only detracts slightly from the stunning virtuoso effects of this unusual but approachable seven-minute piece. Caldini's *Étude* contrasts the oboe and clarinet in successive repetitions of a gradually accrued melody. As the lengthening repetitions unfold, each instrumentalist must begin to play before the other has finished, and the counterpoint grows in activity and ingenuity. Caldini pays homage to Steve Reich in his notes, but he belongs to a more whimsical generation. Clarinetist John Cipolla pairs Fiala impeccably as the two perfectly match their articulations and rhythmic inflections.

The CD fittingly concludes with a work commissioned by Fiala and her flutist colleague Heidi Pintner with support from various WKU agencies. Utah maverick composer Philip Bimstein has a place in oboists' hearts because of his signature oboe-plus-recorded-sounds piece called *Half Moon at Checkerboard Mesa*. *Cats in the Kitchen* has a similar premise – two live players are accompanied by domestic breakfast sounds and various cat noises in three movements:

"Eggs and Toast," "O Sole Meow," and "Where's Your Mouse, McGee?" Bimstein's adroit positioning of concrete sounds with perky tunes also carries an original sense of cadences and transitions. Those familiar with *Half Moon at Checkerboard Mesa* will recognize the grooves. Special kudos to Fiala's husband, recording engineer Tom Wilhelm, for making this intricate combination of live and recorded sound completely natural on the CD. The second movement is my favorite for its compelling texture of manipulated cat cries interlaced with wailing flute and oboe. But the extended final movement just breaks my heart ever since I read the note that cat "McGee" passed away subsequent to the completion of the work. Bimstein's partner Charlotte's voice carries a prescient sadness. Nonetheless, the purring and flutter-tonguing, and many other amusing effects will make audiences smile, or even laugh out loud.

Certainly Michele Fiala, as well as her colleagues and mentors, must be very proud and satisfied with this entire intelligent effort. Western Kentucky University got their money's worth supporting this project.



Bassoon MUSIC REVIEWS

REVIEWS BY DANIEL LIPORI
Ellensburg, Washington

MUSIC FROM TREVCO MUSIC
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DOUGLAS, BILL.

Trio, for Oboe, Clarinet, and Bassoon.
TCO 1084 (\$20)

Here is a great new piece to add to the reed trio repertoire. The first movement, 'Bebop Cantando,' is in an ABA form, and begins in a moderate cut time tempo with the oboe and clarinet playing a melody together with a walking bass line in the bassoon underneath. The melody is primarily a stepwise eighth note pattern, with some syncopated quarters notes included as well. When I started to read this movement, I immediately