

EPTA

EUROPEAN PIANO TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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**SOLSTICE SOCD 145**

*Samuel Barber—l'Oeuvre pour piano*  
*Lilia Boyadjieva*

This is the first ever recording of the *Complete Piano Works* by Samuel Barber, with premiere recordings of four of his works: for this reason alone it is a worthwhile and welcome addition to the catalogue. The interpretations by *Lilia Boyadjieva* are compelling, full of exciting colour showing an affinity with Barber's style. Barber's piano *oeuvre* is less familiar than it deserves; at its centre is the masterly *Sonata Op.26* of 1945 which Horowitz premiered and made popular. It is a beautiful work, rich in idiomatic colours, both modal and polytonal, with Bartok-like sinewy lines and impressionistic patterns. Ms. Boyadjieva superbly highlights the contrasts of delicate filigree in the Scherzo with the incredibly evocative sustained slow movement, allowing its plangent, wistful poetry to unfold with elusive power. In the outer movements there is a propulsive energy realised with vigour, the toccata-like finale flowing with great drama. The premiere recordings are of youthful works: the *Three Sketches* and two charming miniatures, *Fresh from West Chester*, which anticipate the fully-fledged Americanisms of *Four Excursions* Op. 20 (1942-4) with their echoes of Copland and jazz. Barber's melodic gift is also evident in the *Nocturne* Op 33, which is intriguing in its use of twelve-tone harmonies over a Chopinesque accompaniment, and *After the Concert*, a late tunefully tonal work. Barber's *Ballade*, his penultimate work, composed for the Van Cliburn Competition in 1977, has an eloquence and rhetorical potency which, allied to its virtuosic demands, affirms Barber's pre-eminence in American music of the twentieth century. The appreciation of his *oeuvre* is sure to be enhanced with this impressive new CD.

Malcolm Miller

Traduction française des  
elements principaux

"... Lilia Boyadjieva a aussi toute la force musculaire nécessaire pour les grands moments de ce morceau assuré, parfois truculent, mais elle apporte plus de délicatesse et de fluidité aux passages sentimentaux et expressifs qui sont, peut-être, plus caractéristiques de Barber. C'est une lecture lyrique et changeante, autant que puissante..."

"... sa cadence et sa souplesse rythmique dans la troisième et la quatrième "Excursion" sont un vrai délice et, aussi, elle est offre plus d'atmosphère dans la "Nocturne", qui devient une rêverie plus sombre sous ses doigts..."

PIANO JOURNAL