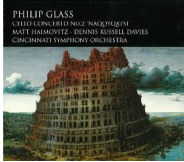


Philip Glass - Cello Concerto No.2 'Naqoyqatsi' (2013)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 11 August 2018 13:56 -

Philip Glass - Cello Concerto No.2 'Naqoyqatsi' (2013)



1 Naqoyqatsi 4:56 2 Massman 6:56 3 New World 3:48 4 Intensive Time 5:36 5 Old World 3:38 6 Point Blank 7:14 7 The Vivid Unknown 7:33 Matt Haimovitz - cello
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Dennis Russell Davies - conductor

As the subtitle indicates, the music in the Cello Concerto No. 2 ("Naqoyqatsi") of Philip Glass is not new but is drawn from the score to the film of that title composed by Glass in 2002. Though the term is drawn from Hopi cosmology, the film used a good deal of computer-assisted imagery to address the theme of the relationship between technology and the natural world. Glass' music, as usual, is entirely performed on conventional orchestral instruments. The original score had a prominent cello part, performed on the soundtrack recording by Yo-Yo Ma, and Glass has here boiled the original score, with perhaps a dozen cuts, down to seven movements that seem to make a vaguely linear sequence. The music is a good example of Glass' mature film scores, which may endure as his most lasting works; it combines the composer's characteristic minimal textures with more elaborate cello lines, some involving lightly extended techniques, that seem to evoke the metaphysical concept under examination ("Massman," "Intensive Time," "Point Blank," etc.). Although there's nothing new here, the version makes an attractively sized package of Glass, and listeners without access to the film may well prefer it as more coherent in this form. The realization is very strong. Cellist Matt Haimovitz, who has specialized in experimental mixtures of concert and vernacular traditions, acquits himself in such a way that no one will be thinking about Yo-Yo Ma; Glass' solo parts, although not virtuosic in a fancy way, aren't easy, for they require the composer's ensemble concepts to be sustained over long periods. Haimovitz soars. Another attraction is the superlative live recording in Cincinnati's venerable Music Hall; it would be hard to think of a venue that would be better in providing the resonant yet clean acoustic Glass' music demands. The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra under Dennis Russell Davies, who has conducted a lot of Glass in his time, catches the grander moments of the score without giving them the pounding quality they take in inferior Glass performances. ---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

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