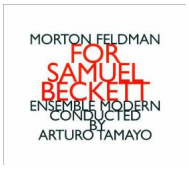
Morton Feldman - For Samuel Beckett (1992)



1. For Samuel Beckett 43:37 Ensemble Modern: Bassoon – Andreas Groll , Norika Shimada Cello – Daniel Raabe Clarinet – John Corbett, Wolfgang Stryi Double Bass – Thomas Fichter Flute – Angela Winau, Dietmar Wiesner French Horn – Hans-Jürgen Krumstroh, Thomas Baumgärtel Harp – Karin Schmeer Oboe – Catherine Milliken, Mechiel van den Brink Piano – Hermann Kretzschmar Trombone – Thomas Bender, Uwe Dierksen Trumpet – Michael Gross, Sebastian Schärr Tuba – Guido Gorny Vibraphone – Rumi Ogawa-Helferich Viola – Ingrid Albert Violin – Hilary Sturt, Peter Rundel Arturo Tamayo – conductor

Listening to Feldman's For Samuel Beckett is like walking through a door into an entirely different, self-contained world that had been there long before you knew about it and would continue after you left. It's as though the composition has no set beginning or end; it seems to begin when the listener peeks in and "ends" when the listener leaves, but one has the sense that it had been going on for ages and you just happened to catch a glimpse of a small sub-section of it. One of the very few Feldman pieces for a large ensemble, it has an extraordinary breathing quality, the reeds and strings sighing back and forth at each other. There is also, appropriate to the dedicatee, a resigned bleakness in the near repetitions and overall effect of stasis. As Art Lange describes it in his fine liner notes, "Everything simply is, and continues to be." When the composition ends, it's as if someone just closed the door and the listener is sure that the music is continuing somewhere. For Samuel Beckett is an astonishing work, beautifully performed by the Ensemble Modern, with all the probity, rigor, and gentleness of classic late Feldman. Very highly recommended. --- Brian Olewnick, Rovi

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