

GRAMOPHONE

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SOUNDS OF AMERICA




Violin tones and singing voices are evoked in the Theremin Concerto by Dalit Hadass Warshaw (right), performed by Carolina Eyck and BMOP conducted by Gil Rose

Warsaw

Camille's Dance. Responses. Sirens: A Concerto for Theremin and Orchestra^a

^aCarolina Eyck *theremin*

Boston Modern Orchestra Project / Gil Rose

BMOP/sound (1104  • 51')



The three works by Dalit Hadass Warsaw (*b*1974) on the Boston Modern

Orchestra Project's newest recording show a composer smitten with the possibilities of massed instruments in conversation. Each of the pieces abounds in narrative suspense and elation, with orchestral writing that embraces everything from the subtle and glistening to a voluptuousness that likely would tickle Richard Strauss and Maurice Ravel (one of Warsaw's heroes).

Along with her compositional skills, Warsaw is an admired player of the piano and theremin, the latter of which is employed to rapturous effect in the album's titular score, *Sirens: A Concerto for Theremin and Orchestra* (2017). The preternatural electronic instrument Leon Theremin bestowed upon the world in the 1920s is most widely known for its ability to evoke fright in horror movies, but Warsaw never succumbs to stereotypical application. The three movements of her concerto place the theremin in close encounters with the orchestra that range from soaring dialogues to tender reflections and ominous confrontations.

Warsaw pays tribute to the noted thereminist Clara Rockmore in the first movement, 'Clara's Violin', in which the electronic instrument sounds remarkably like the stringed one, especially in the suspended hands of the recording's eloquent and dauntless soloist, Carolina Eyck. The theremin is transformed into an agile soprano in 'Ulysses', whose mythological sirens, hearkening back to Homer via Kafka, sing with haunting beauty. The glissandos that are so crucial to the theremin's expressive profile make striking appearances in the finale, 'Fugal Horn', in which Warsaw weaves dark elements together in a virtuosic display of creativity.

The composer's imagination, as well as her close connections to beloved music and musicians, goes to equally compelling lengths in two other scores: *Responses* (2016), colourful and sometimes menacing meditations on three Brahms intermezzos, and *Camille's Dance* (2000), a sweeping portrayal of a work by the sculptor Camille Claudel, a model and muse of Auguste Rodin, that also explores the cataclysms inhabiting her psyche.

To all of these prismatic pieces, conductor Gil Rose and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project apply their distinctive brand of character and polish.

Donald Rosenberg