

## **CD REVIEW**

### **Leon Bosch – The British Double Bass**

For lovers of 'classical double bass' and of 20<sup>th</sup> century music, this album offers a double treat. Western Cape-born bassist Leon Bosch presents a set of recordings here that feature compositions for double bass by 20<sup>th</sup> century British composers whose names aren't exactly ordinary household knowledge. And what an aural feast this compilation yields! Bosch is living what must be every 'classically'-trained bassist's dream: getting not only to play but also to record some of the key works for an instrument that has been viewed as the 'black sheep' of the orchestra. (I recommend that bibliophiles consult Patrick Süskind's one-man play/ novel 'The Double Bass' / 'Der Kontrabass', for further edification.) Bosch is more than ably assisted by Korean pianist Sung-Suk Kang – her second collaboration with Bosch (check out "Virtuoso Double Bass", also released by Meridian records) – and by string and percussion ensemble I Musicanti, under the direction of violinist Susanna Candlin. Bosch's arco execution is near-flawless, his pizzicato work is compelling (listen to Elizabeth Maconchy's 'Music for Double Bass and Piano' and Thomas Pitfield's "Sonatina ..."), and he more than holds his own in a solo capacity (David Ellis's 'Sonata op. 42 for Unaccompanied Double Bass' and John McCabe's 'Pueblo for Solo Double Bass', the latter written specifically for the artist). While some pieces here are lighter than what one would normally associate with 20<sup>th</sup> century music, there is not a single recording here that is anything less than both pleasing and intriguing, and Bosch shines throughout: a truly beautiful and well-annotated album!

**Kai Horsthemke**

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