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## THE WHOLENOTE

March 2017

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### **Strings Attached**

By Terry Robbins

Melia Watras: 26 (Sono Luminus SLE-70007) is a fascinating CD inspired by the concept of violists performing and sharing their own compositions. Violists Watras, Atar Arad and Garth Knox (here playing viola d'amore) are joined by violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim in five works by Watras, two by Arad, one by Knox and a duo by American composer Richard Karpen.

All the players have extensive chamber music experience, Arad with the Cleveland Quartet, Knox with the Arditti Quartet and Watras and Lim as co-founders of the Corigliano Quartet. The playing is of the highest standard throughout.

All of the nine works – there are three duos for two violas and two for violin and viola, three solo viola works and a solo violin piece – are world premiere recordings, and each one is a real gem. It's a terrific CD, and one which should appeal to a much wider audience than just lovers of the viola.

The CD title, incidentally, represents the combined number of strings on the four instruments used.