
THE WHOLENOTE

February 13, 2023

Review: LOOP – Ligeti’s Inspiration and Legacy – Rose Wollman

By Ivana Popovic

Some new classical releases are concept albums, finding meaning in underlining connections between pieces from different composers and periods. The pieces may relate to each other through style, gestures, compositional techniques, tonality or themes. *Loop: Ligeti’s Inspiration & Legacy* is brimming with such relations. The album is centred around György Ligeti’s Sonata for Viola Solo, written in the late 20th century and expressing distinct elements of the Baroque sonata, with six movements based on different tempi, rhythms and themes.

Contemporary composers – Garth Knox, Alexander Mansour, Rose Wollman, Atar Arad, Melia Watras and Natalie Williams – match and mix the colours, gestures, language and structure in the most imaginative ways.

Violist Rose Wollman’s ingenious concept is based on imaginative yet logical pairing of each of the six movements with a piece from the Baroque era and commissioning six contemporary composers to write a

companion piece to the Ligeti/Baroque set. The result is remarkably insightful: pieces within each triptych segue beautifully, as if they had all been written at the same time. The companion pieces support and illuminate aspects of Ligeti’s movements, sometimes in unexpected ways.

Featured Baroque composers include Bach, Tartini, Gabrielli, Corelli, Telemann and Biber, with their recognizable rhythmical and thematic elegance. Ligeti’s movements have Eastern European folk elements as well as jazz and Latin influences, but they are very much written in Ligeti’s unique language and display clever compositional techniques. Contemporary composers – Garth Knox, Alexander Mansour, Rose Wollman, Atar Arad, Melia Watras and Natalie Williams – match and mix the colours, gestures, language and structure in the most imaginative ways.

Wollman’s extensive liner notes give a detailed explanation of her creative and analytical process in finding common threads. Her playing is agile, intelligent, movingly expressive; her articulation superb. The intimate atmosphere makes this album even more appealing.