

The Putz *'Trumpet Concerto'*, although modernist in approach, is still engaging and accessible to the listener. Written in three parts it asks much of the performer, highlighting the need for the highest values of technical security in the outer sections, allied to a dark, rich sense of lyricism in the Bach inspired middle movement. The finale in particular demands much of the performer in terms of stamina, especially the coda where breath control that would make a pearl fisher gasp for air is needed in the thrilling climax to the work.

The Trevor Ford *'Concerto for Trumpet and Band'* is cut from a less complex strata of musical rock. More readily accessible and transparent it is a three movement work that is a mix of European Australianism in structure and approach.

Not surprising given the composers background the opening *'Soliloquy'* in particular owes much to the western shores of the Australian continent; an open, lyrical approach based on a simple, yet arresting melodic line. The *'Intrada'* reveals a more European flavour in style before a lively *'Rondo'*, playful and witty, closes the work somewhere between middle England and the Norwegian fjords.

Throughout the release, the soloist is accompanied with admirable skill and deference by the Military Band Grand Duchy Luxembourg. In Wiltgen's *'Schmelz Trilogy'* they reveal an admirable capacity to invoke colour and drama, as well as a detailed appreciation of balance and disciplined precision. The ensemble work takes its inspiration from steel making (the word schmelz means steel factory) and evokes the harsh industrial processes at work as well as the almost forlorn destruction of the once beautiful countryside that made way for its coming.

The final work *'Trumpets on Trip'* is a gem. Written with a dry wit by Jean-Paul Frish the five movement work is a playful, yet remarkably meaningful pastiche of styles and genres. The 'trip' is musical rather than chemically enhanced, from the basic simplicity of Luxembourg folk songs to snippets, nods and winks of classical repertoire and trumpet concerti to jazz and ceremonial fanfares.

Throughout the recording Philippe Scharz is a deeply impressive performer, both as a solo voice and a sympathetic and generous ensemble player. The accompaniment is also of a very high quality, as is the post production process, sleeve notes and sound engineering.

A very professional, professional in fact.

Iwan Fox