

FANFARE

The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors

November/December 1993

Volume 17, Number 2

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Of the four CDs submitted for this article, I found the one titled *Golden Petals* the most intriguing. It is a collection of five pieces showing five distinct and distinctive permutations of jazz — the idiom as practiced by Artie Shaw in his Concerto for Clarinet (as arranged by Newton Wayland and transcribed by Paul English for live clarinet and synthesizer); as filtered through Igor Stravinsky's musical sensibility in his *Ebony Concerto* (also transcribed for the forces mentioned above); and as practiced by Janice Misurell-Mitchell in her paradoxical and often haunting *Alone Together* for bass clarinet and double bass (used in the jazz mode), and Paul English's bluesy and more accessible *The Saxophone, For Solo Saxophone and Female Narrator* — both of which are quirky; explore the outermost possibilities of instrumental timbre and technique; and push the concept of thematic variation to impressive heights. I found the disc not only musically refreshing, but often revelatory. Hearing Stravinsky's music being played by a machine that was able to imbue it with an unearthly metrical evenness, I got a new sense of the reason for his dictum that music should be "realized" not "interpreted." The rhythmic and metrical precision limned out his complex and subtle rhythms to splendid effect. The largest work, McKinley's *Golden Petals* for bass clarinet (interchanged at key moments with soprano saxophone), double bass, and instrumental ensemble, is full of McKinley's earmarks — sustained ostinatos, telling harmonies, and instrumental flair — it provided woodwind player Richard Nunemaker and bassist Peter Herbert with a fine virtuoso vehicle.

"I've been writing music for Nunemaker for over ten years. When I composed *Golden Petals*, he liked it so much that he wanted it recorded. We recorded it at Rice University with David Colson and the Pierrot Plus Ensemble about five years ago. He, however, couldn't get it onto a label — it was, once again, the old problem of economics. When MMC was formed I told him that MMC would post-produce *Golden Petals*. I'm writing a bass clarinet concerto for him in 1995. It will, of course, be recorded by MMC."