

Lovers (1948, saraband and carnival; Schurmann) – are no less remarkable. Some are necessarily short-breathed, but almost every excerpt on this disc could stand on its own in the concert hall. I've never really understood the presentation of 'film-music evenings', other than as crowd-pullers: if it's good enough to perform, it's good enough to perform without apology. Rawsthorne's film music certainly is.

There have been two recent chamber-music discs of Rawsthorne. The Fibonacci Sequence (on ASV DCA 1061) manage three first recordings out of five works: the *Concerto for Ten Instruments* (five strings, five wind; 1961), urbane and clear-textured, with reserves of energy when required; the Suite for flute, viola and harp (1968); and the late (1970) Quintet for clarinet, horn and piano trio (same scoring as Fibich's op.42, though I doubt Rawsthorne knew it), which has the bleak austerity as late Holst. McCabe (p.281) is quite hard on the Quintet ('one of his least interesting chamber works'), but I find its edgy stumbling between ebullience and introspection strangely moving, like a man grinning nervously as he looks death in the eye. The other two works here are the Sonatina for flute, viola and piano (1936) and Quintet for piano and winds (1962–63), where Rawsthorne married his mastery of classical technique with serial method – and perhaps just a touch of the blues in the bubbling scherzo – to produce a faultlessly argued and entirely accessible masterpiece.

The second chamber CD, from Naxos (8.554352), contains the other Piano Quintet – with strings (1968). Another first-rate score, and

rather tougher than the Quintet with winds, it proceeds in a much more brusque, assertive manner. The pianist here is John McCabe himself (why am I not surprised that his book mentions his participation in the première only in the Chronology?), with two members of the Rogeri Trio and the violinist Mark Messenger and violist Helen Roberts – a knock-out performance. In the urgent *Concertante* for violin and piano (1934 – evidence of early mastery), the Shostakovichian Piano Trio (1962) and two fine sonatas with piano – for viola (1937, rev. 1954) and for cello (1948) – the Rogeri members are joined by various other pals to round out a disc that excellently illustrates Rawsthorne thinking big on a smaller scale.

McCabe has also been before the mikes with Rawsthorne on his own: the *Theme and Four Studies* (early 1940s) can be found on a CD from ASC (CS CD3: Contemporary British Piano Music, Vol.2) – a barnstorming performance which proves that he should be locked back in the studio until he has laid down all the Rawsthorne works for solo piano; here the other works are Thomas Pitfield's *Prelude, Minuet and Reel*, David Forshaw's *Four Piano Pieces after Charles Messier*, *Three Palindromic Preludes* by John R. Williamson, Christopher Beardsley's *Diptych* no. 1 and the First Sonatas by David Ellis and David Golightly.

I don't know why composers' reputations go into decline after their deaths, but Rawsthorne's did as surely as anyone else's. Times have now changed, and for the better.

Martin Anderson

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A sprinkling of 'lay' enthusiasts took advantage of the symposium's friendly open-door policy. Similar events, and a series of publications accruing from them, have been mooted for the

future. Carl Nielsen's music, said Robert Simpson, speaks of human sanity in the face of odds. This sanity has never perhaps been needed more urgently.

Peter Palmer

Tempo 218 Erratum

We regret that in David Matthews's Letter to the Editor (*Tempo 218*, p.71) the order of his two music examples was inadvertently reversed.