

# The Classical Music Sentinel

## Recording Review

### El Dorado

Caroline Léonardelli, harp

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There is no doubt that of all the musical instruments, the harp produces the most beautiful and pleasant sound. After all, nothing sounds more angelic than a series of arpeggios played on a harp. And great composers know that to create some great atmospheric effects, include one or two harps in the orchestration of a score. But, I have always found the harp to be rather unidimensional and lacking in emotional character.

Well, on this her latest recording, Caroline Léonardelli is apt to change my misplaced opinions. The different moods she projects from the instrument in 'Song of Nymphs' by Marjan Mozetich, should be enough to persuade me of her technical abilities and the harp's capabilities, but throughout every piece on this CD, she displays not only her remarkable musicianship, but also the harp's various personalities. The introduction of 'Sicilienne Variée' by Jean-Michel Damase is a great example, the tenderness of 'La Fille Aux Cheveux de Lin' by Claude Debussy and the childish atmosphere of 'Little Shepherd' also by Debussy, also demonstrate the harp's many facets. And there is an abrupt mood shift when the program closes with the CD's title work 'El Dorado' by Marjan Mozetich. A piece of music that takes you on a strange voyage to a distant and mysterious land. Here the Penderecki String Quartet and Joel Quarrington provide the support which sounds like the minimalist rhythm of a steam train taking the harp on a long journey of exploration and strange soundscapes. A work of dark beauty by Mozetich using his minimalist techniques.

The recording here is superb and the sound of the harp is rich and palpable, and detailed from top to bottom. A definite choice as a harp recording with the added bonus that all the works on this fine disc have something to say.

This recording has just been nominated and is in the running for a Juno Award coming up in the spring of 2010.

Jean-Yves Duperron