

Scrapyard Exotica

Label: Sono Luminus

Release: September 25, 2015

PRESS CLIPS

"I'm guessing it's been a while since you've rocked out to a string quartet recording. See if your foot can stay still once you put on this funky disc of rhythmically infectious (if often warped) music" – [New York Times](#)

"...enjoyable strangeness...performed with commitment and precision" – [Strad Magazine](#)

ACCOLADES

GRAMMY Nomination: Producer of the Year, Classical (2015)

ALL REVIEWS

[BBC Magazine](#)

[NY Times](#)

[Gramophone](#)

[Strad Magazine](#)

[Audiophile Audition](#)

AXS

Contzender - CD of Month (Netherlands)

Midwest Record

Primephonic

SF Examiner

Description:

The Del Sol String Quartet releases *Scrapyard Exotica*, featuring three premiere recordings by a triumvirate of today's hottest composers. New works by Mason Bates, Ken Ueno, and Mohammed Fairouz, two of which were written specifically for this quartet, comprise Del Sol's third full-length recording for Sono Luminus, out September 25 as a two disc Blu-Ray Audio/CD combo.

Never content to simply re-interpret the existing canon of music for string quartet, the indefatigable Del Sol String Quartet has been commissioning new works and giving electric performances for over 20 years. The group continues to innovate with *Scrapyard Exotica*, its third full-length album from Sono Luminus, following 2014's highly praised *Sculthorpe: The Complete String Quartets with Didjeridu*. Premiere recordings of new works by Mason Bates, Ken Ueno, and Mohammed Fairouz push the group to their musical and physical limits – and set forth a dazzling and deeply personal vision of what a string quartet can do.

The three composers on this album are leading figures in today's classical avant-garde, but their voices couldn't be more different. The composers' influences run the gamut from club beats to throat singing to Middle Eastern dance beats, from the melodic beauty of Schubert to swinging jazzy grooves to the world of science fiction. Yet each piece is firmly rooted in the here and now, shedding light on a different facet of life in the 21st century.

The album begins with “Bagatelles for String Quartet and Electronica”^[1] by Mason Bates, whose work as a DJ is integral to his compositional approach. A highly collaborative project, Bates began composing the bagatelles by inviting the Del Sols into the recording studio to explore all the unusual sounds they could make with their instruments, then combined cutup samples of these recordings in rhythmically diverse ways to create an electronica part as a fifth voice. He wrote scored parts for the four instrumentalists, who play with the electronica, resulting in a dance-like piece that sounds completely of the moment. The second work of the album is Ken Ueno's “Peradam”, another piece composed specifically for the Del Sols. Named for a rare diamond-like stone invented by René Daumal in his allegorical novel *Mount Analogue*, the peradam reveals itself to whoever “seeks it with sincere desire.” Learning the piece “became an incredible physical journey for the quartet, in addition to a sound world odyssey,” according to violist Charlton Lee. Spanning over 20 minutes in length, “Peradam” is person-specific for the Del Sol String Quartet, taking advantage of every member's ability to sing and play, particularly Lee's unique ability to throat sing. The mutual respect between musicians and composer is evident in the final product; Ueno says of the piece, “I feel blessed whenever I meet and have the opportunity to collaborate with musicians like Charlton and the Del Sols, where together we journey towards the summits of our *Mount Analogues*. Musicians such as these help expand my imagination for what might be possible, and make it real in performance.”

Last is Mohammed Fairouz's evocative and dramatic piece in four movements, “The Named Angels,” referring to the four angels that are recognized by name in the Islamic, Christian, and Jewish traditions: Michael, Israfil, Gabriel, and Azrael. Angels embody justice, power, kindness, healing, death, and other universals; according to Fairouz, “It is natural to express these attributes musically, since music is present

in all human communities – it transcends the present and expresses the eternal, never-changing truths of the human condition.”Previously heard only by live audiences who have been captivated by the power of each of these works, the Del Sol String Quartet now makes these recordings accessible to those they have not yet reached in the concert hall. Sono Luminus releases Scrapyard Exotica on September 25, 2015.

Video Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lgl7QIKL00&width=1280&height=860>