



FANFARE

MARCH / APRIL 2014

KOETSIER Sonatina.1 Romanza.1 Variations.1 Scherzo Brillante.1 13 Études Caractéristiques: VII. Rythme comme "Le Sacre du printemps." Chorale Fantasy.2 Sonata for Horn and Harp3 • James Boldin (hn); 1Richard Seiler (pn); 2Matthew McMahan (org); 3Jaymee Haefner (hp) • MSR 1393 (52:42)

This is wonderfully light but well-written music for horn by Jan Koetsier (1911–2006), all from late in his life (from 1972 to 1989). Mostly known within Germany, the Dutch-born Koetsier loved writing pieces that were accessible and sometimes humorous, and this generous collection gives us a little of both. None of this music is difficult to describe—it is essentially theme-and-variations style with some modern harmonies tossed in now and then for spice—yet it is all so engaging and delightful that to break it down further would spoil one's listening enjoyment. The opening Sonatina and the Variations are presented here in world premiere recordings.

Yet, inevitably, what makes this CD work is the wonderfully warm and ebullient playing of young hornist James Boldin, a member of both the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra and Black Bayou Brass. He contributes articles to the Instrumentalist Magazine and The Horn Call, and has also played with other regional orchestras. Thus we have here a paradox: superb playing by a regional American artist on an extraordinarily high level of both technique and communicative abilities. Boldin negotiates his way blithely through Koetsier's music, spanning styles from the lighthearted Romanza and Scherzo Brillante, to the Chorale Fantasy with its superb dramatic build-up, and the Étude Caractéristique based on the "Sacrificial Dance" from Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*. Equally fine are the contributions of pianist Seiler, organist McMahan, and harpist Haefner. This is, quite simply, a fun disc.

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This article originally appeared in Issue 37:4 (Mar/Apr 2014) of Fanfare Magazine.

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