

## L Berkeley

Andantino, Op 21 No 2<sup>de</sup>. Concertino, Op 49<sup>acde</sup>. Duo, Op 81<sup>de</sup>. Mazurka, Op 101 No 2<sup>e</sup>. Six Preludes, Op 23<sup>e</sup>. Five Short Pieces, Op 4<sup>e</sup>. Sonatina, Op 17<sup>ce</sup>. Three Pieces, Op 49<sup>b</sup>

**Schirmer Ensemble** (a)Masahide Kurita *fl*  
(b)Deborah de Graaff *cl* (c)Elizabeth Sellars *vn*  
(d)David Berlin *vc* (e)Len Vorster *pf*

**Naxos** 8 557324 (62' • DDD)

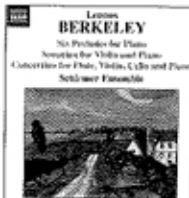
*Six Preludes – selected comparison:*

*Fingerhut (12/04) (CHAN) CHAN10247*

*Concertino, Duo – selected comparison:*

*Endymion Exs (DUTT) CDLX7100*

## A convincing survey of Berkeley senior's chamber and solo piano music



Lennox Berkeley's chamber music and piano works are increasingly being performed so there is very little here that is not already on CD. All the same, this is a valuable Australian initiative.

The Three Pieces for clarinet solo, from the 1930s, are a first recording – a resourceful set worthy to stand alongside Stravinsky's. The Sonatina for violin and piano has been unavailable recently and this is a sympathetic performance of a serious work that also has charm in the finale's witty waltz variation.

The largest ensemble piece is the Concertino, originally written for Carl Dolmetsch using recorder and harpsichord. This version with flute and piano can be compared with the Endymion Ensemble on Dutton. Both performances are convincing and atmospheric in the slow movements but the Endymion are more lively.

When it comes to the solo piano music the competition is from Margaret Fingerhut whose CD of the piano solo music has set the standards for some time ahead. Vorster's playing is sensuously melodic and he clearly relishes the music even if there are times when there's more *rubato* than usual in the popular Six Preludes. But these are convincing interpretations and all his chamber music roles are, as usual, exemplary.

Berlin's cello playing is fulsome in the luscious *Andantino* as well as in the more challenging Duo in Berkeley's later style. Altogether this is an attractive collection to supplement the orchestral music and operas on Chandos, and ought to bring Berkeley's small-scale works to a wider audience. Now we need the string quartets. **Peter Dickinson**