

CD Review: Jack Sutte — *Fanfare Alone*

by Daniel Hathaway



Cleveland Orchestra second trumpet Jack Sutte has been busy recently compiling a second CD, *Fanfare Alone*. This time Sutte appears all by himself — but in the company of a sizeable cast of Schilke brass instruments. Recorded last May in Gamble Auditorium at Baldwin Wallace University by Five-Four Production's Robert Friedrich, the eighty-three minute, two-disc set features twenty-eight tracks of music for solo trumpet, cornet and flugelhorn comprising pieces by twenty individuals.

Besides Sutte, the roster of composers specially commissioned for this disc includes his Cleveland Orchestra colleague, oboist Jeffrey Rathbun, Cleveland composer Margi Griebing-Haigh, BW composer in residence Clint Needham and recent BW graduate and trumpeter Kevin Johnson, as well as Berkelee College professor Jonathan Bailey Holland. Jazz trombonist Morgan Powell, Stefan Wolpe, Ornette Coleman, Otto Ketting, David Loeb and Chilean composer Alejandro Guarello are among the other names on the track list.

Fanfares Alone is a collection of miniatures. Most of the pieces are under five minutes in length — Robert Pounds's two-movement *Music for Trumpet* is the longest, clocking in at just over eleven minutes. But short as they are, the selections provide time enough for Sutte to reveal his impressive mastery of trumpet technique and his wide range of tone from the lyrical to the edgy.

Morgan Powell's *Alone* (1972) is an extended conversation with one's self featuring an abundance of rhetorical devices, wah-wah effects and multiphonics. Stefan Wolpe's

Graceful, Talking and *Not Too Big, Intimate* represent another kind of inner dialogue, this time alternating between the chatty and the lyrical.

Ornette Coleman's *Chanting* is perhaps more like crooning. Its smooth lyricism provides a nice change of style halfway through the first disc. Clint Needham's *Three Ditties* — *Egg(S)*, *Bead(S)* and *(Eff)Anfare* — bring in the techniques of beatboxing, minimalism, and vocalizations (the third movement was reminiscent of the pecking chicken in Rameau's *La Poule*).

Jonathan Bailey Holland's *The Flamboyant Frenchman*, a Sutte commission in homage to the nineteenth-century cornetist Jean-Baptiste Arban, challenges the soloist to a whole routine of trumpet calisthenics in just over two minutes, and sounds at times as though a Etude by Arban's hero, Paganini, is about to break out. Sutte was on top of everything Holland threw at him.

Kevin Johnson's *The Seventh Trumpet*, a reference to the fanfare in the *Book of Revelation* that announces the reign of Christ, features slides, vocalizations inside the trumpet and a frantic low section toward the end culminating in a triumphant high note and a sinister low growl (The Beast?)

Sutte's own *Modern Lore* contrasts the lyricism of its outer movements with a "March Fanfare" that features rhythmical foot stamping and buzz tonguing.

The most immediately engaging work is Margi Griebing-Haigh's *Clare Fanfare* (perhaps a reference to Clare College, Cambridge where her daughter was an undergraduate). A pattern of long notes is echoed then repeated at the end, with gestures like English change ringing and a merry passage full of grace notes in the middle.

One of the most interesting and varied selections is Alejandro Guarello's *Solitario V* from 1991. A dramatic conversation with echoes between registers — and one of the only muted passages on the disc — it ends with arresting chromatic scales and staccatos.

Jeffrey Rathbun's witty *Re: Sousa* concludes the disc with a montage of vaguely familiar march-like motives that suggest but never deliver their originals intact.

Fanfare Alone will likely find its way most often onto the shelves of trumpet players and trumpet afficianados, but it makes remarkably compelling listening on its own musical merits. It offers the same kind of lonely charm that Copland's *Quiet City* invokes, heard late at night — when you're all by yourself.

Alas, there are no liner notes or documentation that you can read without peering through the jewel box with a magnifying glass in hand. A few notes about the composers would have been nice additions to this attractive recording.

Published on ClevelandClassical.com December 2, 2014.

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