

# Compact Comments



**Barry Mills - Interbeing [Vol 6]**  
**All the mornings in the world, for flute, clarinet, string quartet, piano, percussion/Hard Times - Different Times, for female folk singer, soprano, alto, tenor, bass/ Mirrored Moments - clarinet, violin, cello, piano/ Cherry Blossom - guitar duo/Falling Leaves - guitar duo /Septet - flute, clarinet, harp Julian Broughton - conductor/ Katrin Heyman - flute/Steve Dummer - clarinet/Adam Bushell - percussion/ Nancy Cooley - piano/Andrew Thurgood - violin 1/Anna Cooper - violin 2/Matthew Quenby - viola/Sarah Carvalho-Dubost - cello/Charlotte Spong - Folk singer/Antonia Hyatt - Soprano/Sarah Newington - contralto/ Nick Boston - Tenor/Clive Whitburn - Bass/Ellie Blackshaw - Viola/Seána Davey - Harp/Jon Rattenbury & Brian Ashworth - guitar duo**  
**★★★★★ Claudio [Blu-Ray] CC6044-6 [82'15"]**

This, the latest in the increasingly impressive series of recordings of the music of Barry Mills from the Claudio label is arguably the most wide-ranging in that it combines original compositions with arrangements of ethnic folk music, revealing – at least in part – those more identifiable aspects of the roots of Mills’s compositional language. One should not infer from this that Mills’s work is essentially a throw-back to the folk-based compositions of a century and more ago, for he reveals, both in his arrangements and in his original works, an individual voice that demonstrates the continuing revivification of such deeply-rooted musical expression. Not for Mills the fruitless chasing after of current fashion, in whatever shape it arises, but a genuinely consistent mining of true musical seams, rich in promise and fulfilling in achievement.

The opening tracks – All the Mornings in the World, and Hard Times – show these twin strands admirably: original composition set against more ethnically-inspired music – and throughout this exceptionally well-filled release one is left in no doubt as to Mills’s genuine musicality and the appositeness of his instrumentation and natural inspiration. His technical command of the inherently

natural qualities of composition – those of speaking directly to an interested audience in language that is not inherently off-putting – are much to be commended in a world where so many composers erect aural barriers to prevent the ready absorption of their creativity other than to a few followers of an inner circle.

Throughout, there is much to intrigue, move and admire in these five very contrasting (in instrumentation and expressive purpose) compositions, and in the very fine performances. One would not be surprised to learn the recordings were all made effectively under the composer’s supervision, for there is a truly committed feeling as a genuine listening experience throughout. The composer must have been thrilled at the result of these artists’ consistent musicianship, and this outstandingly well-recorded disc is strongly commended to the enquiring music-lover.  
**Robert Matthew-Walker**



**Domenico Scarlatti, Muzio Clementi, Keyboard Sonatas**  
**John McCabe, piano**  
**★★★★★ Divine Art dada 21231 [79'00]**

In 1981 Ted Perry at Hyperion asked John McCabe to record some Scarlatti whereas McCabe wanted to record Clementi. They compromised by having an LP of each and these have now been skilfully remastered onto two CDs with notes from the composer’s widow, Monica McCabe, derived from various sources.

McCabe’s complete Haydn sonatas were a revelation when they came out in the mid-1970s and still stand up well on CD. Hallmarks of his pianism are an impeccable finger technique; a melodic sophistication without exaggeration; and he draws on a range of articulation from legato to staccato. Repeats in both Scarlatti and Clementi are an issue – Clementi’s Sonata in G minor, Op.

50, lasts twenty minutes even without the repeats, as here. McCabe cuts some repeats in Scarlatti, with advantage especially when similar material is presented more than once anyway. What would one give to know exactly what Scarlatti himself did in these repeats? Kirkpatrick’s influential 1953 edition of sixty sonatas – only a tenth of the composer’s astonishing output – with a preface indulging in some rather absurd questions and answers, says nothing about repeats or the use of more than one manual in repeated passages.

Scarlatti’s dazzling originality shows through in his keyboard sonatas. New Grove claims that these works are about texture and harmony but in fact Scarlatti’s melodies, indebted to popular music surrounding him in Lisbon where he spent the last years of his life, are acutely memorable. K208, not recorded here, is sublime. McCabe’s selection is attractive and well contrasted. Unusually, I find his K133 a bit slow with an odd hesitation early on. But he’s no slouch as his galloping presto in K519 shows. Compared with all this brilliance, Clementi comes over as rather dull, although there’s no mistaking the drama of the abandoned Dido in the Op.50 sonata – diminished sevenths to the fore in the last movement, *con disperazione*. Usually Clementi puts rather undistinguished material through its paces, although the popular *Monferrine*, Op. 49, come off well, especially No. 12 with its impudent figuration enclosing a serious central section in the minor key.

These days reissues may not get the attention they deserve. That would be a mistake in the case of these scintillating performances now so fortunately rescued.  
**Peter Dickinson**

<p><b>Simplicius</b>          Music for clarinet          John Hawkins</p> <p>Steve Dummer • Clarinet          Stone Street Sinfonietta          Holly Mathieson • Conductor          Yoko Ono • Piano          Ivana Peranic • Cello          Aidan Smith • Baritone</p> <p><b>CLAUDIO</b></p>	<p><b>CLAUDIO</b>  <b>Simplicius</b>          Music for clarinet          John Hawkins</p> <p>Simplicius          Simplicissimus</p> <p>The Dong with a          Luminous Nose</p> <p>In Touch          Trio for clarinet, cello &amp;          piano</p> <p>Clarinet Sonata          Concerto for Clarinet          &amp; String Orchestra</p> <p>          Worldwide Distribution - Naxos -          Available as CD/9045-2 CD or          CC6045-6 Blu-ray          www.ClaudioRecords.com</p>
	<p>Worldwide Distribution - Naxos -          Available as CD/9045-2 CD or          CC6045-6 Blu-ray          www.ClaudioRecords.com</p>