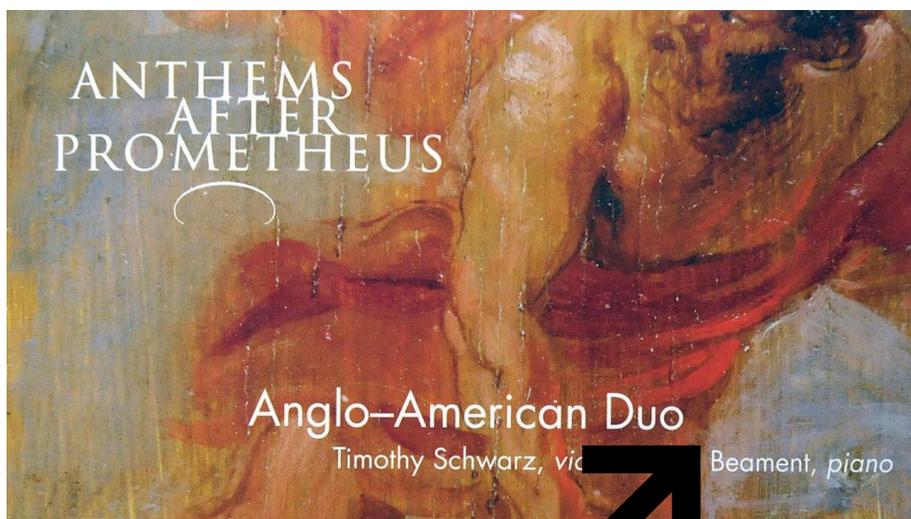


New CD by violinist Timothy Schwarz

Violinist Timothy Schwarz has had a commanding presence in the Lehigh Valley music scene for many years. He was formerly head of the string department at Lehigh University, then assistant professor of music at Kutztown University. Schwarz is director of the Techné Music Festival at Moravian College, which he founded six years ago, and head of the string department at Rowan University,



Tim Schwarz' new CD,
'Anthems after
Prometheus.
(CONTRIBUTED
PHOTO)

Schwarz made his solo debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra at age 9, has performed throughout the U.S., Europe and the UK, and has recorded solo and chamber works for the Naxos, Centaur, **EMI** and Marquis Classics labels.

Since 2009, he's been performing with British pianist Jane Beament as the Anglo-American Duo, which has released its debut disc "Anthems after Prometheus" on the Albany label.



Since 2009, Tim Schwarz, head of the string department at Rowan University, has been performing with British pianist Jane Beament as the Anglo-American Duo, which has just released its debut disc, 'Anthems after Prometheus,' on the Albany label. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The Anglo-American Duo, as its name implies, focuses on contemporary music of the U.S. and Britain, and features works by such composers as John Corigliano, Phillip Cashian, Lehigh University's Steven Sametz and David Osbon. The duo's new CD is focused entirely on the works of Osbon, whom Schwarz met in Philadelphia in the 1990s, when Osbon was studying composition under George Crumb at the [University of Pennsylvania](#).

The fact that Beament is the wife of Osbon adds another pair of names to a prestigious list of composing partners, whose ranks include Clara Schuman/Johann Brahms, Benjamin Britten/Peter Pears, Leonard Bernstein/David Diamond and many others.

All four works on the disc share a sense of seething, furious energy. The first, "Prometheus Sonata," is a work in five sections, composed in 2017. While the composer calls it the least abstract in the group, I found it a demanding, but fascinating, piece. Its opening discord resolves itself into a sort of furious surge of creative energy, tempered by softer, reflective sections with glistening glissandos on the violin and sweeping arpeggios on both instruments.

Schwarz commands a lovely, open upper register in his playing, made almost visceral by the recording's close miking — one can almost feel the silky texture of the strings. That's especially true in the second piece, "Five Homages," a minimalistic celebration of four composers and the renowned violinist Nigel Kennedy, from 1999.

Both the Elgar and Messiaen homages pay tribute to those composer's works for violin and piano. The Elgar section is powerful and dramatic; the Messiaen is a satisfyingly mystical and dreamlike evocation of his "Quartet for the End of Time."

The Crumb section is simply marvelous, a tour de force of minimalism and percussiveness, and especially noteworthy for one of the longest, most purely sustained high notes on a violin one is apt to hear. Equally impressive is Schwarz's ability to conjure that virtuoso trickster Kennedy with some jazzy flourishes and glissandos.

"Into the Sun" is a 2016 composition based on solo passages from Osbon's violin concerto, premiered by Schwarz in 2015. Schwarz performs beautifully, again with a clean, open upper register and silken tone. The performance is intense and passionate, with a fervor that grabs one's attention for the duration of the nine minute-long piece. Again, the miking is close, adding another layer of urgency to the sound.

The final work on the disc, "Still Waiting for the Revolution," is a piano trio composed in 2000. Joining Schwarz and Beament is cellist Lorraine Deacon in this blending of bluegrass, boogie-woogie and minimalism. It's an entertaining piece, especially in its frantic, aggressive opening with plentiful stabs and slashes, followed by a comforting slow movement based on the American folk song "Shenandoah."

More fun follows, with some hillbilly roughhousing and a boogie-woogie piano figure accompanied by shouts from the musicians. In the closing presto, the piano rumbles like a cauldron about to boil over, with yet more percussive stabs and thrusts.

"Anthems after Prometheus," Troy 1712, available from Albany Records at albanyrecords.com or at amazon.com.

Steve Siegel is a freelance writer.

jodi.duckett@mcall.com

Twitter @goguidelv

610-820-6704