

ELSA GREETHER

VIOLIN

It would be hard to imagine more moving performances of all this music than those of Grether.
Gramophone

Grether's playing is technically outstanding, dynamic and vivid, with a silky timbre.
Pizzicato Magazine

To say Grether has met her brief is an understatement. This is easily my favourite solo recital in quite some while.
Gramophone





Photo © Klara Beck

French violinist Elsa Grether is regularly invited to prestigious festivals and venues in France and abroad. As a soloist with orchestra, she has played concertos from Bach to Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Sibelius, Prokofiev, Tomasi among others, with the Orchestre Symphonique de Mulhouse, Orchestre National de Cannes, Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra, Briansk Symphony Orchestra, Indiana Philharmonic, Deutsch-Tschechicher Chamber Orchestra...

She has given recitals at Carnegie Weill Hall in New-York, Folle Journée de Nantes, Printemps des Arts de Monte-Carlo, Flâneries Musicales de Reims, Menton Festival, Festival de Sully et du Loiret, Festival de Rocamadour, Festival des Forêts, Festival des Abbayes en Lorraine, Festival de Musique sacrée de Perpignan, Festival Berlioz, Grandes Heures de Cluny, Pâques à l'Abbaye de Fontevraud, Musicales de Normandie, Festival d'Arténéra, Festival Lille Clef de Soleil, Salle Cortot, Invalides and Petit Palais in Paris, Bozar and Flagey in Brussels, Radio Suisse Romande and Festival Musiques en Eté in Geneva, Altmark Festspiele, Ido Festival Düsseldorf, Palazzetto Bru-Zane in Venice...

Her recent and coming engagements in 2022/23 include a debut recital at the Berlin Philharmonie, Sibelius Violin Concerto with François-Xavier Roth and La Jeune Symphonie de l'Aisne, return invitations to the Folle Journée Nantes and with Orchestre Symphonique de Mulhouse under Jacques Lacombe in Tomasi Violin Concerto, recitals in Paris Invalides, Paris Petit Palais, Salle Cortot, Arsenal de Metz, Montauban, Avignon, Mulhouse, Orléans, Reims, Liège (Belgium), KonzertGut Concert Series (Germany), Festival des Abbayes de Lorraine, Festival de la Lucerne, Escapades Musicales d'Arcachon, Festival Stras'Orgues.

Her 3 CDs "Poème mystique" (Bloch and Pärt) with pianist Ferenc Vizi, "French Resonance" (Pierné, Vierne and Fauré) with François Dumont and "Kaleidoscope" for solo violin (Bach, Ysaye, Honegger, Tõn-Thât Tiet, Khatchaturian, Albeniz) were released in 2013, 2015 and 2017 by Fuga Libera/Outthere.

All three CDs received unanimous acclaim and were awarded the highest distinctions: "5 Diapasons", "4 stars" in Classica Magazine as well as excellent reviews from Gramophone, Pizzicato Magazine, La Libre Belgique...

Her 4th CD, dedicated to the work of S. Prokofiev together with pianist David Lively, was released in 2019 (Fuga Libera/Outthere) and received great reviews ("CD of the week" and FFFF in Télérama, 5 Diapasons, 5 stars in Classica Magazine, 5 from Pizzicato Magazine, Musikzen, Concertclassic, Classiquenews, Crescendo Magazine...).

Her new CD, dedicated to Maurice Ravel's complete works for violin and piano as well as rare transcriptions and arrangements (World premiere recordings), with pianist David Lively, was released in September 2022 on label Aparté. It won unanimous acclaim by the press and the public (The Strad Magazine, Gramophone, BBC Radio 3, FFFF Télérama, 5 Stars Classica, 5 from Pizzicato Magazine, CD of the week in Rondo Magazine...).

Elsa won the Pro Musicis Award in Paris by unanimous decision of the jury. She has held scholarships from a number of foundations such as Fondation Safran pour la Musique, Fondation Natixis Banque Populaire, Fondation de France (Prix Oulmont), Fondation Cziffra, Fondation Bleustein-Blanchet pour la Vocation. She was awarded the Josef Gingold full scholarship at Indiana University. In 1993 she was prizewinner at the Young Soloists' Competition organized by the RTBF in Brussels.

She is regularly heard on radios such as France Musique (who just dedicated an hour-long program to her work in "Stars du classique" presented by Aurélie Moreau), Europe 1, Musiq3 and RTS Suisse and was the subject of a program in Alain Duault's television program « Toute la musique qu'ils aiment » (France 3).

Elsa was born in Mulhouse, France. After being awarded a Premier Prix in violin by unanimous decision of the jury at the Conservatoire de Paris-CRR on her fifteenth birthday, her lively curiosity prompted her to continue her training abroad, with Ruggiero Ricci at the Salzburg Mozarteum and then in the United States with Mauricio Fuks at Indiana University Bloomington and Donald Weilerstein at the New England Conservatory in Boston. She subsequently received guidance from Régis Pasquier in Paris.

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Photo J. Ehrenheim

Elsa Grether and Mathias Weber, Recital at the Berlin Philharmonie, nov. 2022.

Elsa Grether: Ravel

By Edward Bhesania 12 October 2022

A complete cycle is spiced by some world-premiere arrangements



The Strad Issue: November 2022

Description: A complete cycle is spiced by some world-premiere arrangements

Musicians: Elsa Grether (violin) David Lively (piano)

Works: Ravel: Complete works for violin and piano

Catalogue number: APARTÉ AP295

Apart from demonstrating Ravel's wide-ranging stylistic influences – the Gypsy exoticism of Tzigane, the Blues movement of the Violin Sonata in G major, the popular foxtrot from L'enfant et les sortilèges and traditional Hebrew songs in the Deux mélodies hébraïques – this disc disproves Ravel's claim that violin and piano are 'essentially incompatible'. Furthermore, Grether and Lively are always stylistically, emotionally and tonally in sync.

The contrapuntal strands of the G major Violin Sonata's first movement are distinctive yet also delicate and luminous; whereas the climax is suitably bold and alarming (the tremolo violin arpeggios here recalling those in the Piano Concerto's Adagio, making that movement's inclusion here, suitably arranged, more revealing). The 'Blues' movement has, in the hands of these two musicians, the perfect cocktail of American groove and French nonchalance.

The Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré reflects the prayerful simplicity of the preceding (first) Violin Sonata's opening, and contrasts starkly with the scintillating vaudeville of the 'Five o'clock Foxtrot' from L'enfant.

The disc closes with Tzigane. Grether conjures a sense of mystery during the slow introduction but also negotiates with ease the high harmonics and the shower of alternating right- and left-hand pizzicato elsewhere. Combining speed and precision, there's a dizzying dash to the end. The recording quality matches the detail of the playing, making this album a persuasive enquiry into Ravel's kaleidoscopic art.

EDWARD BHESANIA

Elsa Grether: Kaleidoscope

► View record and artist details

The French violinist Elsa Grether isn't such a well-known name in the UK, but her recording of Bloch's two violin sonatas was enthusiastically received in these pages by Edward Greenfield (9/13). I'm about to continue in that enthusiastic vein here.

Grether's expressed aim with 'Kaleidoscope' is to help the listener 'discover all the possibilities of the violin and its expressive palette over space, time and aesthetics' – a mission statement that immediately raises the bar to a level only the bravest artists would set themselves, but one that Grether clears comfortably throughout this technically superb, intonationally perfect recital.

Cleverly anchored around the tonal centre of D minor, her programme begins where, in a sense, it all began, with the Chaconne from Bach's D minor Partita. By turns keening and worshipping, Grether's is a softly pulsing, mellifluously flowing and immensely natural-sounding reading; sublimely voiced and projected as a seamless crescendo of thought and feeling. It spans a full range of articulation, too, whether she's spitting out *sforzando* chords underneath a legato melody or has dropped down into some frictionlessly rippling *pianissimo* pool.

As for where to go next, Grether chooses 1933 Vietnam, switching Bach's Lutheran cathedral of sound for the post-Webern, Eastern-flecked elemental spiritualism of Tôn-Thất Tiết's *Métal Terre Eau*, a feast of eerie harmonics, glissandos, pizzicato and other effects, all of which she delivers with effortless conviction across the various alternations between crude energy and mystical weightlessness.

The programme's subsequent technical, stylistic, emotional, geographical and historical twists and turns are no less convincing and multifarious as we move through Ysaÿe, Khachaturian and Honneger and then end on Xavier Turull's virtuoso violin arrangement of Albéniz's 'Asturias, leyenda', where urgent spiccato bariolage mimics flamenco guitar technique.

To say Grether has met her brief is an understatement. This is easily my favourite solo recital in quite some while.

Author: Charlotte Gardner



Elsa Grether: Kaleidoscope

(3) Sonatas and 3 Partitas,
Movement: Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV1004

Metal Terre Eau

(6) Sonatas for Solo Violin,
Movement: No. 3 in D minor (Ballade)

Sonata-Monologue

Sonata for Solo Violin

Cantos de España, Movement:
Preludio (Asturias)

BLOCH Violin Sonatas Nos 1 & 2

Paris Conservatoire 'premier prix' laureate's first recording

► [View record and artist details](#)

Author: Edward Greenfield

The young French violinist Elsa Grether here gives the most passionate performances of three of Ernest Bloch's works most deeply inspired by the music of the synagogue, with their exotic augmented intervals. The two violin sonatas as well as 'Nigun', the middle piece in the triptych *Baal Shem*, all date from the early 1920s and my only regret is that Grether does not include all three of the *Baal Shem* pieces, 'Pictures of Hassidic Life'.

Nevertheless, it would be hard to imagine more moving performances of all this music than those of Grether, whose belief in their message is expressed in her own note in the booklet. There was a comparable collection

of Bloch works on the now-defunct ASV label (8/90), beautifully played by the unjustly neglected violinist Leonard Friedman, but Grether's accounts are even more persuasive.

Much the longer and more powerful of the two sonatas is No 1, its three movements spanning a full half-hour, superbly sustained. This is music to put alongside my favourite Bloch work, his Violin Concerto of the late 1930s. The Second Sonata, *Poème mystique*, is in a single movement of some 20 minutes, very rhapsodic in Bloch's endlessly inventive way. Grether has opted to offer as supplement Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* ('Brothers'); but, charming as it is, I would have preferred to have the extra *Baal Shem* pieces instead. Powerful recording to match the performances. I look forward to hearing more of Elsa Grether.



BLOCH Violin Sonatas Nos 1 & 2

Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1

Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2, 'Poème mystique'

Baal Shem, Movement: Nigun

Fratres



Ravel, World Premiere, Concerto in G, Adagio, transcription. Elsa Grether, violin, David Lively, piano.

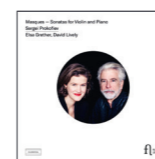
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RKLOJzENV8>

Ravel, Sonata in G, *Perpetuum mobile*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkoVZmYTgoA>

Ravel, Fox-Trot from *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OichIV5haks>



Teaser CD Prokofiev « Masques ».

Elsa Grether, violin, David Lively, piano.

<https://youtu.be/DA00ZIsfUms>



Recording of the solo CD *Kaléidoscope* at the Abbaye de Fontevraud. Elsa Grether violin.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0B-QSPm4A80>

Bach, Ciaccona, Partita for violin No. 2 in D Minor, BWV 1004.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jDPaDNaFF8>

Albeniz, Cantos de España, op. 232, Asturias, Leyenda in G major.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZWmenubeTO>

Ysaÿe, Sonata for Solo Violin in D Minor, Op. 27 No. 3, « Ballade ».

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCM_EhEH78o



Fauré, Romance for Violin and Piano in B-Flat Major, Op. 28.

Elsa Grether, violin, François Dumont, piano.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BI76sCgvlfM>



Complete CD *Poème mystique* : Ernest Bloch : *Poème mystique*, Violin Sonatas / Arvo Pärt : *Fratres*. Elsa Grether, violin.

<https://youtu.be/ptMgr4kju0>

More audios and videos on <https://elsagrether.com/extraits/>



ELSA GRETHER ON SPOTIFY

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/7MzUlezlO5ABpMGDiMxmHj>

Elsa Grether interviewed on France Musique.

« Stars du Classique » by Aurélie Moreau.

<https://www.radiofrance.fr/francemusique/podcasts/stars-du-classique/elsa-grether-subtile-et-passionnee-9978064>

« Portraits de Famille » by Philippe Cassard: Miscellannées d'automne.

(Passage à 1h du début de l'émission)

<https://www.radiofrance.fr/francemusique/podcasts/portraits-de-famille/miscellannees-d-automne-mes-derniers-coups-de-coeur-discographiques-1608468>

Elsa Grether et David Lively in « Musique matin » about the CD Prokofiev - Masques.

<https://www.radiofrance.fr/francemusique/podcasts/l-invite-du-jour/elsa-grether-et-david-lively-sont-les-invites-de-musique-matin-4112090>

« Classic Club » by Lionel Esparza : about the CD violin solo *Kaléidoscope*.

<https://www.radiofrance.fr/francemusique/podcasts/classic-club/quoi-de-neuf-dans-les-bacs-avec-elsa-grether-pierre-moragues-et-alexis-kossenko-5717940>

On Fréquence Protestante.

interviewed by Marc Portehaut

<https://frequenceprotestante.com/events/le-violon-de-ravel-elsa-grether-violoniste/>

interviewed by Frédéric Casadesus

<https://frequenceprotestante.com/events/divertimento-8/>

Presentation of the Ravel CD in BBC Radio 3' s « Record Review », by Tasmin Little and Andrew Mc Gregor.

BBC Radio 3 - Record Review, Schubert's Piano Trio No 1 in B flat in Building a Library with Allyson Devenish and Andrew McGregor.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001bz9w>



CD RAVEL
ELSA GREThER, DAVID LIVELY
APARTE, 2022

Pizzicato Magazine about the Ravel CD

Elsa Grether's violin has a pure and bright sound that shines beautifully in these Ravel pages, and David Lively shows that he knows this composer's language intimately. The chemistry between the two performers is right on, promising an interpretation that remains true to the French stylistic tradition in its sensitivity and richness of color.

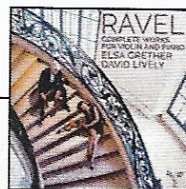
The sonata is subtly dosed in colors and contrasts. Virtuosity here is not associated with brilliance, but rather with a subtlety that sometimes makes the sound very mysterious. There is something unreal about this sonata that Grether and Lively emphasize. Played this way, this music is truly out of this world. After the drunkenly sensual blues played, there is a finale in which a frantic ride makes one forget about open necklines.

The very thoughtfully played Habanera is much more than an intermezzo on the way to the early and posthumously published Sonata for Piano and Violin, which sounds less like Franck and Fauré here and already shows more of Ravel than in some other interpretations.

After some smaller pieces, played very exquisitely and always meaningfully, both performers show a vibrant energy in the Tzigane, in which virtuosity is a major element. Elsa Grether plays passionately and without false shame, with generous violinistic brilliance. Lively is a perfect accomplice to this luminous and refined playing, which, for all its brilliance, lacks neither taste nor human warmth or even sensitivity. The pianist plays kinetically, with maximum dynamics, sharp and sometimes directly mischievous. To calm down After this furious finale, I listened again to the transcription of the slow movement from the G major Piano Concerto, with which the CD begins. Then one gets into a completely different kind of bliss....

To read the full article: <https://www.pizzicato.lu/elsa-grether-und-david-lively-mit-inspirierten-ravel-interpretationen/>

Classica novembre 2022 : « Pas une note ne sonne creux ou sans âme... Un disque qui fera date. »



MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937) ★★★★★

Elsa Grether et David Lively réussissent le tour de force de nous faire redécouvrir Ravel. Dans leur interprétation pudique brûle un feu intérieur et pas une note ne sonne creux ou sans âme. À la fin du premier mouvement de la *Sonate n° 2*, ce *sol* aigu tenu au violon pendant vingt-cinq secondes, sans vibrato, est envoûtant. La prise de son exceptionnelle permet même d'entendre les crins qui glissent sur la corde. Le célèbre « Blues » est joué par Elsa Grether et David Lively avec une élégance folle, sans démanchés brusques ni dureté au piano. Ravel voulait que les glissandos soient joués *nostalgico*. On y est totalement.

Dans la *Pièce en forme de Habanera*, l'extrême précision règne encore : l'esprit dansant est retranscrit par la vitesse de l'archet, la façon de mettre plus ou moins de pression sur la corde. Chaque mesure semble avoir été savamment analysée. Et dans *Tzigane*, l'ouverture au violon seul est jouée avec plus de douceur qu'à l'accoutumée, ce qui n'est pas pour déplaire. L'entrée du piano, raffinée et puissante, donne des frissons. Au-delà de la virtuosité, *Tzigane* raconte une histoire qui nous emmène dans des contrées lointaines. Voici un disque qui, sans aucun doute, fera date.

LAURE DAUTRICHE

Intégrale des œuvres pour violon et piano — Elsa Grether (violon), David Lively (piano) — APARTÉ AP295. 2021. 1H 08 MIN



**CD PROKOFIEV - MASQUES
ELSA GREThER, DAVID LIVELY
FUGA LIBERA/OUTHERE, 2019**

Pizzicato Magazine about the Prokofiev CD

In this all-Prokofiev program French violinist Elsa Grether convinces with a very spirited, contrasting playing. Her tone is as impressive as her technique. Since she also becomes poetic in the slower passages, she shows herself to be a thoroughbred musician who gives the music a maximum of rhetoric force. Lively is a really good partner for her. The piano sometimes sounds very powerful, sometimes very sensitive. The common textures remain ideally transparent.

<https://www.pizzicato.lu/grether-lively-als-hoch-intensive-prokofiev-interpreten/>

« La beauté de ce disque réside sans aucun doute dans la sonorité crépitante d'Elsa Grether. La violoniste française possède une identité sonore, un jeu racé avec de la rondeur. Quelle éloquence dans le phrasé ! Son jeu, dense, n'est jamais en force (...) et quelle incandescence encore dans la sonate pour violon seul ! (...)

Ce disque fait incontestablement partie des meilleures versions récentes des Sonates de Prokofiev. »

Laure Dautriche, Classica.

« Ce disque émerveille de bout en bout et se range sans hésitation parmi les grandes versions modernes. »

Alain Cochard, Concertclassic

<https://www.concertclassic.com/article/elsa-grether-au-disque-et-en-concert-sous-le-signes-de-prokofiev>

CD de la semaine et FFFF Télérama.

« *En symbiose avec le piano de David Lively, le violon sensible d'Elsa Grether exalte les partitions entre ombre et lumière de Prokofiev. (...) De la violoniste française Elsa Grether, on avait beaucoup apprécié, en 2017, le disque-récital pour violon solo Kaléidoscope (Fuga Libera). La voici qui revient, en l'excellente compagnie du pianiste franco-américain David Lively, pour un album consacré à Serge Prokofiev (...) Superbe programme, parcouru par une prodigieuse énergie, et un plaisir manifeste de jouer ensemble ces œuvres oscillant entre nostalgie du romantisme et modernité bien assumée.* »
Sophie Bourdais, Télérama

« *Elsa Grether et David Lively, deux solistes dont la réputation n'est plus à faire, abordent ce répertoire sans chercher à se voler la vedette et avec un art consommé de la surprise. Sens du dialogue, choix des tempi, clarté des lignes musicales, jeu finement adapté à chaque œuvre : on sent, dès les premières mesures, que leur collaboration les élève au rang des meilleurs interprètes de la musique de chambre de Prokofiev.* »
Albéric Lagier, Musikzen.

« *L'amour de l'instrument, le raffinement comme la puissance, les couleurs, avec toujours le soin de l'artisan qui polit sa pièce, Elsa Grether rivalise avec les plus grands (...)* »
Classiquenews.

« (...) cette véhémence, ce jeu sombre où l'archet abrase la corde, la tension dramatique que David Lively produit en creusant le son de son piano trouvent le ton futuriste et angoissé de cette partition radicale jusque dans sa coda si singulière. **Quel autre violoniste jouait ici avec tant d'intensité ?** **Gidon Kremer aurait-il servi de modèle à Elsa Grether ?** **Elle ajoute la Sonate pour violon seul que Prokofiev écrivit pour David Oïstrakh, ardent les phrasés, jouant à plein archet, emportant son écriture si éloquente.** (...) »
J.-C. Hoffelé, Artamag.

« *Elle surprend car on a beau connaître sa capacité technique, aimer sa maîtrise et sa sonorité, apprécier son phrasé, à chaque nouvelle production ces qualités semblent renouvelées : elle réussit à imposer sa vision d'un univers musical.* »
J.-C. Ober, L'Alsace.

« *Un CD passionnant !* »
Frédéric Lodéon, Carrefour de Lodéon, France Musique.

« *Une fougue, une énergie, c'est un vrai duo, parfaitement équilibré, c'est un disque magnifique qui vient de sortir!* »
Philippe Cassard, pianiste et producteur de « Portraits de famille » sur France Musique.



CD KALÉIDOSCOPE
ELSA GRETHER VIOLON SOLO
FUGA LIBERA / OUTHERE, 2017

Pizzicato Magazine about the solo CD Kaleidoscope

French violinist Elsa Grether combines typical works as well as slightly unusual pieces from Albeniz, Honegger and Khachaturian and the really extraordinary Métal Terre Eau by Ton-That Tiet. **Grether's playing is technically outstanding, dynamic and vivid, with a silky timbre.**

<https://www.pizzicato.lu/elsa-grethers-weitgespreiztes-soloalbum>

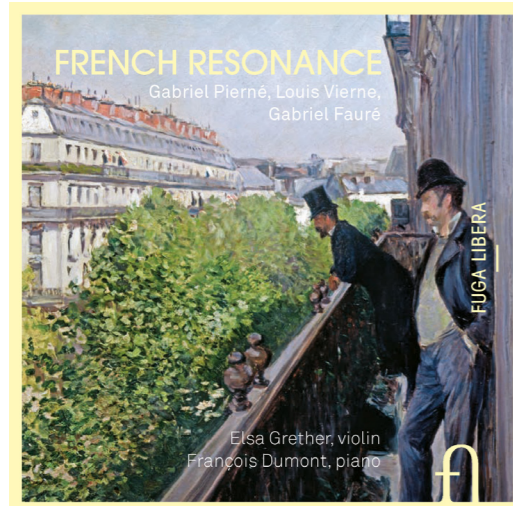
« *Elsa Grether fait partie de nos grandes violonistes et il serait temps que tous les organisateurs de concerts en prennent pleinement conscience. Humaine autorité dans Bach et Honegger, mystère dans Tôn-That Tiet, puissant souffle narratif dans Ysaïe et Khachaturian : ce Kaléidoscope captive de bout en bout, avec pour récompense au terme d'un exigeant mais prenant parcours le soleil d'Albéniz.* »
A. Cochard, Concertclassic.

« *L'archet souple, la noblesse de jeu et la richesse de coloris du violon d'Elsa Grether donnent à cet enregistrement toute sa valeur. La soliste se montre à la hauteur de l'enjeu dès la redoutable Chaconne extraite de la Partita en ré mineur de Bach. Elle s'impose par son autorité sans jamais forcer le ton avec naturel et intelligence en particulier dans le traitement subtil de la polyphonie la plus arachnéenne.* »
Michel Le Naour, Classica.

« *Elle confirme la personnalité de son style. Sa flamme intérieure anime des phrasés vivants, et la maîtrise des lignes polyphoniques ne tombe jamais dans l'emphase. Rien de péremptoire ici ni d'artificiel, rien de maniéré ni de racoleur, et une naturelle qualité d'intonation. Elle aborde avec le même talent la plus célèbre des six sonates d'Ysaïe (...)* »
J.-M. Molkhou, Diapason.

« Ce disque original et riche, où au plus familier succède le plus rare, est un bijou précieux, dont on ne se lasse pas. **Le jeu libre, épanoui, d'une exceptionnelle maîtrise, toujours sensible, relève du grand art.** De programme en programme, d'enregistrement en enregistrement, **Elsa Grether s'affirme comme une des plus douées et des plus inspirées de nos jeunes violonistes.** »

A. Dacheux, Classiquenews.



CD FRENCH RESONANCE
ELSA GREThER, FRANÇOIS DUMONT
FUGA LIBERA /OUTHERE, 2015

Even though original, the pairing of the sonatas by Gabriel Pierné and Louis Vierne stands to reason [...] Elsa Grether had already drawn attention with a CD devoted to Ernest Bloch for Fuga Libera. **Once again, she stands out as a top-flight violinist, succeeding in reconciling two imperatives: lightness of sound and a real orchestral power, indispensable for standing up to a piano part that is often intricate. Elsa Grether succeeds in this without being brutal, displaying a sonority that is always elegant and a well-drawn line without a thickening of the sound, in the lineage of a modernised Franco-Belgian school.** The partnership with François Dumont works very well, and this is conveyed in the fast movements, especially the finale of the Pierné and the outer movements of the Vierne, with an élan both exalted and controlled. **The sonority is personal and interesting, never complacent or superficially hedonistic.** The two short Fauré pieces, including a transcription of the song 'Les Berceaux', conclude the programme with a charming smile. **Jacques Bonnaure, Classica Magazine (march 2016)**

Elsa Grether confirms the qualities of playing and inspiration that had charmed us so in her first disc, devoted to Bloch. Lines that breathe, silky timbres, in perfect connivance with the imaginative, masterful keyboard-playing of François Dumont [...] animate a particularly poetic reading of the two sonatas. This violin, with its elegant legato and measured vibrato, that of a chamber player through and through, also nuances two thoroughly delightful short pieces by Fauré. An original programme, extremely well defended.
Jean-Michel Molkhou, Diapason Magazine (march 2016)



CD POÈME MYSTIQUE : BLOCH, PÄRT
ELSA GREThER, FERENC VIZI
FUGA LIBERA /OUTHERE, 2013

The young French violinist Elsa Grether here gives the most passionate performances of three of Ernest Bloch's works most deeply inspired by the music of the synagogue, with their exotic augmented intervals [...] It would be hard to imagine more moving performances than those of Grether, whose belief in their message is expressed in her own note in the booklet. There was a comparable collection of Bloch works [...] but Grether's accounts are even more persuasive. [...] I look forward to hearing more of Elsa Grether.
Edward Greenfield, Gramophone, September 2013

The young violinist Elsa Grether was right in not letting herself be intimidated by Jascha Heifetz's historic recording, nor the later one by Isaac Stern, to impose her own interpretation. Her astounding mastery deserves only praise: incandescent virtuosity in the closing moderato of the Sonata No.1, backed flawlessly by Ferenc Vizi's hot-tempered piano; supreme poetry as of the opening chords of the Sonata No.2, in which, with her accompanist-accomplice, she finds the ideal aptness for tackling the contrasting atmospheres of rhapsodic music that twirls and palpitates at every instant. The powerful feeling of freedom wished by the composer [...] finds renewed vitality in the performers' playing.
The same is true of the incisive headiness with which Elsa Grether carries Nigun [...], opportunely rid of its overly conventional sentimental effect... Fratres [...] is an ideal complement under the violinist's fingers, as she captures both the swank (and repetitive) energy and the profound spiritual loftiness, culminating in pianissimos of a final high note capable of making the listener swoon. A magnificent disc.
Franck Mallet, Classica (4 stars), July 2013

Still ill known despite the historic recordings of Stern and Szigeti or Heifetz, this diptych, coming from one of the most authentic creators of the 20th century, finds two profoundly involved performers in Elsa Grether and Ferenc Vizi. The sincerity of their inspiration and their complicity leave no doubt, and their version is particularly appealing. **For her first disc, the young French violinist [...] reveals imaginative, sensual playing, penetrating this sometimes austere repertoire with conviction. Finding just the right tone in both**

the laments and the moments of ecstasy, the two performers demonstrate inspiration and density, especially in the famous Nigun. The daring coupling with Arvo Pärt's piece turns out to be judicious, so much is *Fratres* steeped in mysticism.

A fine revelation.

Jean-Michel Molkhou, Diapason (5 Diapasons), May 2013

Organized round the Sonata No.2 of Ernest Bloch (1880-1959), subtitled 'Mystical Poem', the CD strikes a double blow: it opens a window onto the composer's rich chamber music output (we hear the two sonatas and the universally known Nigun here) and reveals the young French violinist Elsa Grether. Prompted here by a 'veritable love at first sight' for the Bloch sonatas, of which she hopes to express the 'fervour and flame as faithfully as possible', the artist puts her mastery at the service of an impassioned, committed, often intense version, but one that is always 'classic'. The sonorities are fine and brilliant, the dynamics extended, the accuracy unflinching, and even in the most poignant effusions, the pitfall of sentimentality is avoided. Excellent Vizi at the piano.

Martine Dumont-Mergeay, La Libre Belgique, 3 July 2013

Love at first hearing for Bloch!

Elsa Grether imbues his *Mystical Poem* with extreme delicacy, and this ecstatic meditation combines Hebraic and Gregorian prayer. The alchemy with Ferenc Vizi's piano is total. Bloch's First Sonata is violent and intensely lived [...] Elsa Grether burns with all her passion. 'Classical CD of the Week', Michèle Fizaine, *Midi-Libre*, March 2013

At the present time, Elsa Grether is a soloist on the rise. The present recording perfectly shows off her absolutely remarkable qualities, intensity and warmth of sound, without excessive virtuosity [...]. Certain recordings, from the moment they are released, impose themselves as references in the discography. I sincerely believe that the interpretation given by Grether and Vizi joins the ranks of the finest.

Victor Eskenasy, Suplimentul de Cultura (Romania), March 2013

A fascinating disc bringing together the works for violin and piano by the Genevan composer Ernest Bloch. Bloch's independent and passionate temperament explodes in these works [...]. Elsa Grether immerses herself totally in this particular universe, breathing into the music the quasi-religious inspiration that it calls for.

François Hudry, Qobuz, March 2013



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ELSA GREThER ON SPOTIFY

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