

**WALLEN:** *Piano Concerto*; see MACONCHY

**WEBER:** *Clarinet Concertos*;  
*Silvana Variations*  
Roeland Hendrikx; Rhine Philharmonic/  
Michel Tilkin  
Evil Penguin 53—66 minutes

In 1945 the Rheinische Philharmonie emerged from the ashes of war in Koblenz in west-central Germany, and in 1973 it earned state tax support. Here the Belgian clarinet soloist Roeland Hendrikx and Belgian maestro Michel Tilkin visit the orchestra to record the Weber clarinet concertos and the Variations on a Theme from *Silvana*, an early opera completed at the same time the young composer met clarinet virtuoso Heinrich Baermann and began writing for his instrument. Between the concertos, a selection appears from Weber's magnum opus, *Der Freischutz* (1821): the aria 'Leise, Leise, Fromme Weise' (Softly, Softly, Pure Song) in an arrangement by German composer Andreas Tarkmann (b. 1956).

The collaboration between Baermann and Weber has long sparked debate as to how much of the music is the product of the composer and how much is the contribution of the soloist, especially in the first concerto. Here, some interesting decisions are made. At the end of the exposition in I, Hendrikx keeps Baermann's added 16th-note passage; and in the middle of III, just before an orchestral interlude, Tarkmann inserts a cadenza in the spirit of Baermann.

As expected, this is expertly played. Hendrikx offers a silky tone, hushed pianissimos, gorgeous phrasing, and fluid technique; and when the music turns into an aria, he sings through his clarinet with heartfelt conviction. The orchestra is also splendid, rendering each score with heft, polish, and sparkling clarity, especially in Weber's terrific woodwind writing that buoys the clarinet line.

At the same time, Hendrikx is cautious with his loud dynamics, never venturing beyond a forte, even in the heated passages; and the orchestra naturally defers to him, lessening support in the solo lines and reserving all power for the tutti sections. The upshot is an album with several breathtaking moments that will make the audience weep but only a few that bring the fire that the composer requires.

HANUDEL

**WEBER:** *Piano Concerto*; see SCHUMANN

**WEBERN:** *Variations*; see BEETHOVEN

**WEELKES:** Anthems, Canticles,  
& Consort Music  
*What Joy So True; Lord, to Thee I Make My Moan; All People, Clap Your Hands; Hosanna to the Son of David; O How Amiable, When David Heard; Deliver Us, O Lord; O Mortal Man; O Happy He; O Jonathan; O Lord, Grant the King a Long Life; Rejoice in the Lord; Most Mighty and All-Knowing Lord; Christ Rising Again; Te Deum & Jubilate (Short Service); Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis (Sixth Service); Voluntaries 1+2; Pavans 2+3; In Nomines 1+2*  
Timothy Ravalde & Thomas Howell, org;  
Chichester Cathedral Choir; Rose Consort of Viols/ Charles Harrison  
Regent 571—77 minutes

2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd (c1540-1623), but it also marks the same anniversary of another important English composer, Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623), who was more than 30 years younger than Byrd and very different in personality. Weelkes's early career showed great promise. At the age of 21 he published his first book of madrigals in 1597. Additional collections followed in 1598, 1600, and 1608. On the title page of the 1608 collection the composer is described as a "Gentleman of His Majesty's Chapel". Apart from that, there is no evidence that Weelkes was ever a member of the Chapel Royal. Was the 1608 claim mere wishful thinking, or was Weelkes under serious consideration? In his notes to this recording, John Lees points out that Weelkes's more elaborate church music would have been more suitable for the Chapel Royal than for the far more limited resources of Chichester Cathedral, where he was then serving.

In 1599 Weelkes was organist at Winchester College. In 1602 he became organist, master of choristers, and a singing man at Chichester Cathedral. As early as the 1570s there were serious disciplinary problems with the members of the cathedral's musical staff including brawling, drunkenness, and absenteeism. This was not a healthy atmosphere for Weelkes, who was probably a chronic alcoholic with a volatile temper and lack of social discipline. In 1617 he was dismissed as organist and choirmaster (but retained as a singer) for "drunken-