

Ernest Bloch, Ben Haim – Violin Music (2007)

Written by bluesever

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Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)

1. *Baal Shem: 3 pictures of Hassidic life: Vidui*
2. *Baal Shem: 3 pictures of Hassidic life: Nigun*
3. *Baal Shem: 3 pictures of Hassidic life: Simchas Torah*
4. *Suite hébraïque: Rapsodie*
5. *Suite hébraïque: Processional*
6. *Suite hébraïque: Affirmation*
7. *Suite No. 1 for solo violin: Prelude*
8. *Suite No. 1 for solo violin: Andante tranquillo*
9. *Suite No. 1 for solo violin: Allegro - Andante*
10. *Suite No. 1 for solo violin: Allegro energico*
11. *Suite No. 2 for solo violin: Energico, deciso*
12. *Suite No. 2 for solo violin: Moderato*
13. *Suite No. 2 for solo violin: Andante*
14. *Suite No. 2 for solo violin: Allegro molto*

Paul Ben-Haïm (1897-1984)

15. *Sonata for solo violin in G minor, Op. 44: Allegro energico*
16. *Sonata for solo violin in G minor, Op. 44: Lento e sotto voce*
17. *Sonata for solo violin in G minor, Op. 44: Molto allegro*
18. *Berceuse Sfaradite*
19. *Improvisation and Dance, Op. 30*

Hagai Shaham: violin

Arnon Erez: piano

Shaham's and Erez's first disc of Bloch's music for violin and piano drew raving reviews from critics and listeners alike. This second should be a barnstormer like the initial foray, only this time Bloch has to share the programme with Paul Ben-Haïm, one of Israel's most famous

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composers, who together with some 40 other musicians had to flee the Nazi persecution and rebuild his career in strange and often trying conditions in Palestine.

Although Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) was born in Switzerland and Ben-Haïm (1897-1984) was a native of Munich, the musical language of both men ran parallel to the fact that the two experienced an awakening of the Jewish soul in music. All the pieces on this CD are a testimony to the inner suffering and anguish that many Jews were subjected to with the rise of Nazism, but if one listens carefully, the spirit of defiance and the will to survive it are at the very core of these emotional utterings.

Performances are simply electrifying, and the relentless tension that they create is almost unbearable. A vividly recorded and superbly documented disc all round. ---Gerald Fenech, classical.net

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