**Music for Great Films of the Silent Era \*\*\*\***

*WILLIAM PERRY*

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15 tracks – 78:47

William Perry served for many years as the Music Director for the Museum of Modern Art Film Department in New York City.  Over a host of years, he played piano backgrounds for hundreds of silent films using period and original music.  Though perhaps less known to contemporary film fans, Perry received recognition through *The Silent Years* (1971), an Emmy-awarded television program and has continued television work with American Public Television.  His Broadway show adaptation of the *Wind in the Willows* garnered three Tony nominations in 1986.  The present release comprises three works that include themes Perry created for the silent film scores he accompanied.  As with the work of Carl Davis, Perry, along with orchestrator Robert Nowak, has found a way to recreate a period sound for his accompanying scores without ever feeling too overtly cliché in their design in these larger-scale works.

The first work featured is the *Gemini Concerto*.  **The six movement piece was written for the Albek Duo who perform it here beautifully.**  In essence a musical tour, the piece moves delightfully through accessible lighter musical material.  Perry chose six thematic ideas (outlined in the accompanying booklet) drawn from music he provided for seven 1920s scores.  The opening movement, “Introduction and Travel Music,” is an almost Gershwin-esque piece.  The stops at Dublin and Berlin allow for a little Celtic and cabaret music respectively.  “Moscow” allows for a bit more romanticism while “Vienna” finds us in a more 1920s/1930s texture first for an Ibert-like “Polytonal Polka” and then a more traditional Hollywood-like “Waltz” recalling Newman’s film music but much lighter in orchestration.  “New York” makes for a fine conclusion with a Grapelli-like jazzy violin solo at its front end playing a tune that could easily have come from Irving Berlin.  The themes are revisited in the movement before coming to a wonderfully jubilant conclusion.  Overall, the piece is a really enjoyable half hour of engaging themes, light orchestration, and occasionally whimsical sound effects.  **It is definitely a piece that could be a real crowd pleaser in concert.**