

Ketelbey British Light Music. Slovak Philharmonic Male Chorus; Bratislava Radio Symphony Orchestra/ Adrian Leaper.
Marco Polo ® ® 8 223442 (74 minutes: DDD). In a Monastery Gardena. The Adventurers. Chal Romano. Suite romantique. Caprice pianistique. The Clock and the Dresden Figures. Cockney Suite—No. 3, At the Palais de Danse; No. 5, Bank Holiday. In the Moonlight. Wedgwood Blue. Bells across the meadows. Phantom melody. In a Persian Marketa. Selected comparison.
Philh, Lanchbery (3/94) (CFP) CD-CFP4637

What a splendid CD! If there has been a disappointment with this enterprising series, it is that the quality of music and interpretation in some of the issues has not always maintained the high standard of the Haydn Wood CD in the first release (8/92). But no such problem here. The obvious favourites (In a Monastery Garden, In a Persian Market, Bells across the meadows) are played with a grace and sensitivity that never invites unfavourable comparison with earlier recordings of the same pieces. If others in the same somewhat maudlin vein (In the Mystic Land of Egypt, In a Chinese Temple Garden, Sanctuary of the Heart) are missing, it is to give us the opportunity to hear some of Ketelbey's unjustly overshadowed compositions. And what delights there are!

Over-exposure to Ketelbey's more stereotyped, highly perfumed compositions has disguised what varied and inventive music he composed. We know the charms of The Clock and the Dresden Figures and In the Moonlight, the invigorating open-air spirit of C/ta! Romano from the Lanchbery collection recently reissued on Classics for Pleasure. However, I would not now want to be without the equally invigorating overture The Adventurers, the elegant Suite romantique, the sparkling Caprice pianistique and the jaunty Wedgwood Blue—and what a pity we are restricted to just two movements of the Cockney Suite. It is a pity, too, that the generally excellent notes should perpetuate the myth that 'Ketelbey' was a pseudonym. But, no matter. With playing, conducting and recording of a high standard, this is a collection that absolutely demands to be heard. AML