

CLASSICAL CUTS



OUT CLASSICS II: STEPPING OUT

Various artists • RCA Victor Red Seal

Stepping Out extends the marketing tie-in with a previous release that boasted "over 70 minutes of seductive classics." The cover models are clothed this time, but no less sensual for it. "Step out onto the dance floor of queer music history! A

Music

collection of the world's greatest classical dance music by gay composers of three centuries," reads the small print. This CD trots out exemplary excerpts of Tchaikovsky's ballets and other equivalents of the Top 40 you hear on any classical radio station, along with a few less common pieces such as Barber's "Hesitation Tango." It's a good way to sample composers you may be unfamiliar with.

THE MUSIC OF PAUL BOWLES

The Eos Ensemble • Catalyst

This gem captures music that has been unplayed for more than 40 years. Those who know Bowles do so mainly through his fiction. His 1949



novel *The Sheltering Sky* greatly influenced the beat generation. The Moroccan home of he and his wife, Jane, both ambisexual, became a common reference point for numerous postwar authors and composers.

But prior to his literary success, Bowles primarily wrote music. He was part of the New York circle in the 1930s and 1940s that revolved around Aaron Copland and later Leonard Bernstein. Bowles' music often reflects both the spirit of Americana that is perhaps most beloved in Copland, and the Broadway musical theater, then at its peak. The longest piece is "The Wind Remains," a combination of beautiful melodies and surreal, disjointed excerpts from the poetry of Federico García Lorca. Any fan of U.S. music will delight in this disc of rediscovery.

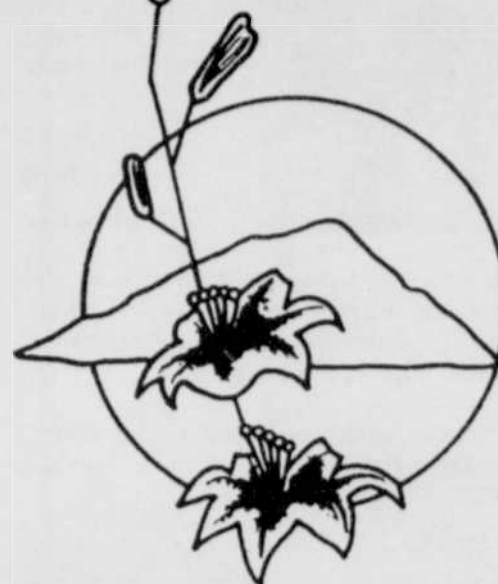
THE ULTIMATE OPERA QUEEN

Various artists • RCA Victor Red Seal

Regarding the title of the CD, one must surely take this marketing spin with a grain of salt. True, it is packed with 75 minutes of gorgeous arias by the likes of Leontyne Price, Anna Moffo and Montserrat Caballe. But the true opera queen will already have sworn her fealty to a particular diva and have amassed a much deeper collection than this. Like all compilations, it is a worthy start for a lady-in-waiting or young princess—some-one just beginning to explore the field.

Reviewed by Bob Roehr

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