

February 2012

GRAMOPHONE *Choice*

Informed by our unrivalled panel of critics, we choose the month's must-hear recordings

**JS BACH. GUY**

Solo Violin Sonata No 3, BWV1005, etc

Maya Homburger *vn*

Maya MCD1101

'The tone she produces is sublime. The Preludio is joyous, the Gavotte lilting, the Menuets truly danceable, the Bourée spirited and the Gigue exceptionally sensitively phrased.'

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JS Bach · Guy**JS Bach** Solo Violin Sonata No 3, BWV1005.Solo Violin Partita No 3, BWV1006 **Guy** Lysandra**Maya Homburger** *vn*

Maya © MCD1101 (55' • DDD)

**Ancient and modern music for solo violin**

This CD completes a trilogy born of the deeply collaborative partnership between Swiss-born Baroque violinist Maya Homburger and British composer Barry Guy. In each of the three recordings, Homburger performs a solo Sonata and Partita by Bach, separated by one of a set of three new works by Guy for solo violin, inspired by butterflies.

Homburger's performances of Bach's third Sonata and Partita, recorded in an Austrian church at St Gerold, are intensely beautiful and radiate warmth and inner calm. She takes a distinctly lyrical approach to the music, which in the Sonata enriches both the *Adagio and Fuga*, imbues the *Largo* with ethereal spaciousness that never loses momentum and still allows the *Allegro assai* to sparkle. Here and in the Partita, the tone she produces from her instrument is sublime. The Preludio is joyous, the Gavotte lilting, the Menuets truly danceable, the Bourée spirited and the Gigue exceptionally sensitively phrased. Those who have in the past admired the interpretations of Monica Huggett, Rachel Podger and John Holloway in this repertoire will want to include Homburger in this pantheon of players.

Barry Guy's *Lysandra* (2005) was inspired by the adonis blue (Homburger herself is a lifelong butterfly enthusiast); the companion movements, *Inachis* and *Aglais*, commemorate the peacock and tortoiseshell butterflies. *Lysandra* compels attention from the first note, is unapologetically dissonant and

cleverly mimics the skittering flight of butterflies through quick snatches of notes, and the fluttering of their wings via complex combinations of *tremolo* and *ponticello* bowing, harmonics, trills and double-stops. Menacing undertones emerge as the piece progresses, perhaps hinting at a side of the butterfly world of which we are hardly aware. Guy has created an evocative, up-to-date 'Biberische' vehicle for Homburger and her Baroque violin. **Julle Anne Sadle**