

American Record Guide

October 2009

Elaine Fine

It Takes Two
Marquis 81401

All the arrangements on this spectacular recording are by the British-born Canadian composer Clifford Crawley. The two Canadian musicians are on the faculty of Memorial University of Newfoundland, which they use as a home - base for an international career as the “Duo Concertante”.

The popular music here is not your normal cross-over fare. Some pieces are familiar, like Khachaturian’s ‘Sabre Dance’, Grieg’s ‘Solveig’s Song’, Sibelius’ ‘Valse Triste’, something from Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet*, and Mozart’s Turkish Rondo; but there are other pieces one would not normally associate with the violin, like Bonfa’s theme from ‘Black Orpheus’, Tchaikovsky’s June Barcarolle from *The Seasons*, Dizzy Gillespie’s ‘Night in Tunisia’, and Abreu’s ‘Tico Tico’. This duo plays a wonderful medley of Richard Rodgers waltzes and a fascinating and quick-cutting medley that cleverly ties together several Gershwin songs. Another clever medley called ‘The Lark’ combines musical larks from all over: there are bits from Haydn’s quartet, the Vaughan-Williams piece, and a couple of Irish lark melodies. There are also great arrangements of a few operatic arias: the Humming Chorus from *Madame Butterfly*, and ‘Mon coeur s’ouvre a ta voix’ from *Samson and Delilah*. It’s about time that someone made an arrangement of—or an extended fantasy on—this aria that is worthy of the material. I certainly hope this arrangement, along with the other arrangements on this recording, will be made available for other musicians to play. They are simply too good not to share.