

## 'Through the Lens of Time'

**Brotons** Variacions sobre un tema barroc

**M Richter** The Four Seasons Recomposed<sup>a</sup>

**Schnittke** Suite in the Old Style<sup>b</sup>

**Yun** Königliches Thema

**Francisco Fullana** *vn* <sup>b</sup>**David Fung** *pf*

<sup>b</sup>**City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra /**

**Carlos Izcaray**

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As its title suggests, Francisco Fullana's debut recording 'Through the Lens

of Time' sees the talented Spanish violinist bring together four diverse works which, in different ways, engage with the music of the past.

The most obvious and direct engagement appears in the form of Max Richter's *The Four Seasons Recomposed* (2012), wherein the composer tries to recapture the first flush and frisson of excitement he experienced as a child from first hearing Vivaldi's well-known work. Fullana captures this innocence in a way that Daniel Hope's far more assertive and outwardly expressive performance does not (DG, 2/13), and is more in keeping with the Baroque spirit of the original.

'Spring' opens with an ever-increasing panoply of looping birdsong-like fragments drawn from Vivaldi above a Coldplay-inspired chord sequence, and Richter's synthesis of pop and minimalism has brought him some success as a composer for film and TV. This is something we may not readily associate with Alfred Schnittke, yet the Russian's salvaging from the cutting-room floor of musical material originally designed for the cinema screen brought about his *Suite in the Old Style*.

Rarely straying beyond pastiche, the suite nevertheless reflects Schnittke's innate understanding and appreciation of 18th-century dance forms. Fullana imparts a spirited dancelike quality throughout, including the fugue movement, and is adequately supported by David Fung's unfussy accompaniment. Catalan composer Salvador Brotons's unremarkable *Variacions sobre un tema barroc* also keeps close to the 18th-century song upon which it draws.

The highlight, however, is Fullana's account of the Korean mid-20th-century composer Isang Yun's *Königliches Thema* for solo violin. By turns terse and explosive, Fullana's compelling performance counters any criticisms that his playing sometimes lacks weight and muscularity. **Pwyll ap Siôn**