

American Record Guide

July/August 2010

By Chaffee

CD Review

DAVIS: *preApnea*
ECKARDT: *16*
FUJIKURA: *Poison Mushrooms*
GUZMAN: *Prometeo & Epimeteo*
TOLEDO: *Aliento/Arrugas*
YUN: *Run in a Graveyard*

Claire Chase: Fl
New Focus 106- 58 minutes

Claire Chase has been active in the New York new music scene for nearly a decade. She is executive director and co-founder of the International Contemporary Ensemble. Groups like this peak and fade quickly; it is a testament to her skills and leadership that this group has been active for quite a while. She is also an extraordinary musician. She won the coveted Concert Artist Guild competition in 2008, a rare feat for a flutist. We will be seeing a lot of her in the coming years. In fact, just as I was about to write this, the NY Times review of her recent Carnegie debut caught my eye. She played an astonishing program-- Bach, Donatoni, Boulez, and Paganini, apparently with dazzling proficiency. Look out world, here comes a monster.

This is her debut recording. Everything about it is commendable, from the playing to the beautiful packaging. If you are going to make a splash with a debut, this is the way to do it. She obviously wanted to eschew the typical path of other big name competition winners, too-- rather than record flashy concertos and standard literature, she put together a program of challenging pieces composed in the last decade or so. The pieces defy description-- you must simply hear this for yourself.

Claire Chase is clearly interested in pushing the boundaries of what it means to be a "virtuoso" flutist. It is a noble and daring path, and she deserves the highest praise. Flutists and non-flutists alike should find this stunning.