

Rupert Marshall-Luck is a most eloquent advocate and his way with these new pieces and indeed with the many rarities he has brought back to thriving life is both moving and admirable.

ROB BARNETT | MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

The performances are as satisfying and as confidently magisterial as the recording quality, which never misses a beat in its clarity and strength. We should never take the redoubtable Rupert Marshall-Luck for granted. Here is a man who continues to introduce us to works that the years have discarded and trodden down. He brings them to us not as something fusty and dusty but as precious and joyous. His work at the EMF in this and previous years and his many previous discs leave us in no doubt of his great artistry and advocacy. It's an extraordinary heritage that he is laying down.

ROB BARNETT | MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

Rupert Marshall-Luck is an ideal interpreter [of Stanford's second Violin Concerto]: generously but not effusively lyrical; agile and athletic... The warm, folksong-like slow movement is at times almost painfully beautiful...

If this work is a worthy discovery, another première recording – of the Violin Concerto by Robin Milford – is even more of a surprise: attractive, unmistakably English, but with touches of darkness and chromatic harmony in the slow movement and some bold gestures in the finale, not least its sombre ending. Marshall-Luck is, again, indefatigable and keenly picks up on the work's melancholy strain.

EDWARD BHESANIA | THE STRAD

Milford's idiom has a lean purity, plus a flair for long-spun, yet beautifully focused melodic line. All this is conveyed with much loveliness by Rupert Marshall-Luck, whose handsome tone and laser-like tuning are remarkable in themselves.

MALCOLM HAYES | BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

[Stanford's second Violin Concerto] is a wonderfully fluent, warm-hearted creation... Dashing committed treatment it enjoys, too, from Rupert Marshall-Luck, who receives uncommonly fine support from Owain Arwel Hughes at the helm of the BBC Concert Orchestra... To my mind, this powerfully affecting 38-minute canvas [the Milford Concerto] undoubtedly constitutes a major find... The present artists do Milford absolutely proud.

ANDREW ACHENBACH | GRAMOPHONE

[The Milford Concerto] is so beautifully written throughout, so imaginatively balanced and at times so endearingly attractive that one can but thank EM Records and these musicians for their enterprise in bringing it to life. Rupert Marshall-Luck gives very convincing performances throughout (the cadenza of the first movement in particular is outstandingly well played) and Owain Arwel Hughes and the excellent BBC Concert Orchestra provide a splendid partnership. Don't miss this one.

ROBERT MATTHEW-WALKER | INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

The recorded sound is splendidly generous, while Marshall-Luck and Rickard evince a real sympathy for this music in heartfelt interpretations that give voice to Howells' personal and much under-rated genius for chamber music.

JEREMY DIBBLE | GRAMOPHONE

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With great pleasure I have been listening to this two-CD set from EM Records... We have music of distinction and performances to match. A decisive view of how the structures must knit together... and considerable mental stamina from both players... are firmly implanted into the performances, and the passionate, lyrical dimension of this work [the B minor Sonata] comes over with natural candour... There is just the right amount of flexibility in the approach... and a velvety warmth to Marshall-Luck's sound in the lower register. [These recordings] show this duo on magnificent form.

MARK TANNER | INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

Rupert Marshall-Luck's account glows with fervour.

DAVID DENTON | THE STRAD

A high point on this recording is the sweetly intense tone, rapt and concentrated, that Marshall-Luck produces in the second, slow movement [of the First Sonata]. [Marshall-Luck] has unfailingly located the apex of the sonata's expressive heart, and sustains the mood in the finale's opening... There is a 21-page booklet written by Paul Spicer and Marshall-Luck full of pertinent commentary and... the recording is fully sympathetic to the performances.

JONATHAN WOOLFE | MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

Thoroughly rewarding as musical discoveries and as performances. Marshall-Luck captures well the beguilingly dark tinge to Scott's highly chromatic, post-Romantic, texturally dense Viola Sonata. And Sacheverell Coke's wartime Violin Sonata nr 1, equally absorbing... receives an equally committed performance.

EDWARD BHESANIA | THE STRAD

It's hard to imagine that either concerto could have received stronger or more effective advocacy than from Rupert Marshall-Luck. Whenever the music demands it, his playing is deft and agile; but the most enduring memory is the poetry and feeling that he brings to the lyrical passages in which both works abound. His performance of the Stanford slow movement alone is worth the price of the disc.

JOHN QUINN | MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

The Moeran is one of the few slow-fast-slow schemed 20th-century violin concertos... Soloist Rupert Marshall-Luck demonstrated his usual richly-endowed tone – nothing slender about it: it's more Campoli than Neaman; more Haendel than Chung. He was partnered by an orchestra that was well on top of the score, even in the great spaces of the Abbey. Those very spaces brought out the modest orchestral role and especially the voluptuous clarinet sound and the rapturous slowly hallooing French horns; the latter such a Moeran trade-mark. Martin Yates did great work in a reading that dwelt tenderly on the poetry of this poetic work and would not be rushed... Marshall-Luck made the short cadenzas interesting and integral rather than showy and grafted on... The afternoon's rehearsal had lavished time on the tricky fireworks of the middle movement which came across as both spectacular and substantial on the night.

ROB BARNETT | SEEN AND HEARD INTERNATIONAL

Rupert Marshall-Luck is clearly in his element with music of this kind. His performance in both concerti is sensitive and committed, and he's a convincing advocate for both works... Highly recommended.

DAVID SMITH | PRESTO CLASSICAL

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The quality of the performances here is such that Marshall-Luck and Rickard need not fear competition. These are surely reference performances... Producer/engineer Richard Bland has once again achieved excellent sound which is truthful and well balanced.

JOHN QUINN | MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

Rupert Marshall-Luck and Matthew Rickard give warmly committed performances, well recorded. An excellent issue.

EDWARD GREENFIELD | GRAMOPHONE

This CD is a winner all around: The performances are first-rate, and violinist Rupert Marshall-Luck does double duty equally convincingly on the viola in the Chaconne. Recorded sound is clear and musical, and presents both the music and the performances in the best possible light. I view John Pickard as an important composer of our time. His is an individual voice, and his music is both approachable and rewarding, demanding repeated listening. This is simply a compact disc not to be missed.

DAVID DEBOOR CANFIELD | FANFARE

These two fine musicians have done an invaluable service in bringing to light several works by their British countrymen that have heretofore been shamefully neglected. Marshall-Luck and Rickard's performances of this music are, in turn, thrilling and touching. They capture the moods of these pieces unerringly and to perfection. Marshall-Luck's... technique and intonation are flawless, [and] each work is projected with knowing sensitivity and communicative expression... Recommended all round for some extraordinarily beautiful music and extraordinarily beautiful playing.

JERRY DUBINS | FANFARE

Lionel Sainsbury's Soliloquy, op.21, for unaccompanied violin... is a terrific discovery, a real virtuoso showpiece that also has a great deal to say. Lasting only just over seven minutes, its marriage of passionate statement involving much sweeping figuration across the full range of the instrument, and vigorously impulsive upbeats leading to frequently double-stopped melodic utterances, suggests a comprehensive understanding of the instrument. Intensely violinistic, the piece is given a searing performance by Marshall-Luck, who convinces one that its comparatively short span contains an utterance of compressed energy, ideally realised.

PIERS BURTON-PAGE | INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

There was a time when English post-Romantic chamber music that lay off the beaten track was accorded performances and recordings that were thoroughly worthy, yet did not always entirely avoid the sensation of interpretative dutifulness. Listening to these deeply committed and discriminating performances, any perceived 'difficulties' with this music appear to melt away. ... By floating [Vaughan William's] long melodic lines as though they were exquisite examples of Renaissance polyphony, [Marshall-Luck and Rickard] arrive at the music's nexus point... Fascinatingly, Holst's Five Pieces, all dating from the turn of the last century, offer gentle reflections of Schumann and Mendelssohn through an Elgarian prism. Marshall-Luck's ability to spin cantabile lines with the subtlest of phrasal inflections pays real dividends here, so that one is taken effortlessly back to the enchanting world of the Edwardian salon. The Walford Davies Sonata is more overtly Brahmsian in its trajectory, yet successfully avoids any profound sense of *déjà vu*. Once again, Marshall-Luck proves highly responsive to the music's ebb and flow.

JULIAN HAYLOCK | THE STRAD

All these performances meet the often considerable challenges of their respective pieces head on. Rupert Marshall-Luck, in particular, proves as adept in an overtly contemporary idiom as in those of the early twentieth century with which he is most associated... [Pickard's] music has a substance and durability which make it, and the present disc, required listening.

RICHARD WHITEHOUSE | INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

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