



AMERICAN CLASSICS



Ian
KROUSE

Nocturnes

Invocation

Jessica Rivera, Soprano

Vladimir Chernov, Baritone

Movses Pogossian,

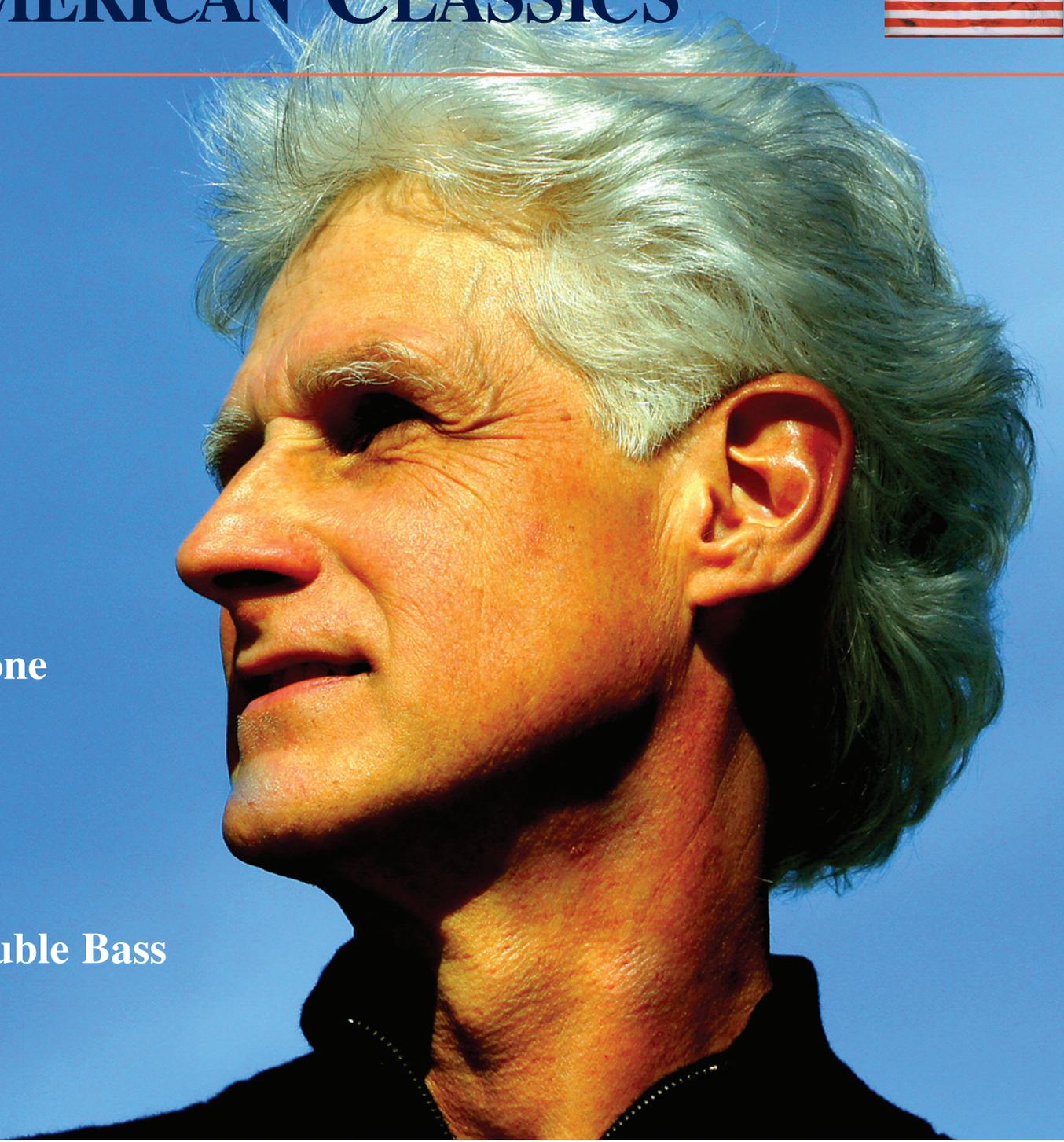
Guillaume Sutre, Violin

Richard O'Neill, Viola

Antonio Lysy, Cello

Christopher Hanulik, Double Bass

Maryanne Kim, Piano



Ian
KROUSE
(b. 1956)

Nocturnes, Op. 60 (2010) 28:35

- ① **No. 1. Twilight** 9:24
(Text: Misak Metzarents, 1886–1908)
- ② **No. 2. Love Song** 4:54
(Text: Misak Metzarents)
- ③ **No. 3. The Night** 8:02
(Text: Gurgen Mahari, 1903–1969)
- ④ **No. 4. Hymn** 6:10
(Text: Vahan Terian, 1885–1920)

Invocation, Op. 54 (2006) 26:16

- ⑤ **No. 1. Weary with toil** 4:47
(Text: William Shakespeare, 1564–1616)
- ⑥ **No. 2. Cuántas veces, amor** 5:57
(Text: Pablo Neruda, 1904–1973)
- ⑦ **No. 3. Mata Aru Yoru Ni** 6:15
(Text: Michizō Tachihara, 1914–1939)
- ⑧ **No. 4. Cho-hon** 9:14
(Text: Kim Sowol, 1902–1934)

Ian Krouse (b. 1956)

Nocturnes, Op. 60 • Invocation, Op. 54

Nocturnes, Op. 60 (2010)

Nocturnes, a song cycle for baritone and string quintet (two violins, viola, cello, and double bass) was composed for Vladimir Chernov and the Dilijan Ensemble in July 2010, primarily over a two-week period the composer spent in Japan. Composed of four poems by well-known Armenian poets who flourished in the early decades of the 20th century, the cycle takes the form of a proto-narrative psychological odyssey through the inner mind of a man at mid-life. Though set at *Twilight*, the first song reveals a troubled protagonist who seeks solace in light images: a saffron virgin, the gilded sun, the radiant daylight. The light-craver finds temporary relief in *Love Song* where a passionate outpouring fueled by sensual imagery of hashish and balm, and, even more revealing, kisses of light, succumbs, yet again, to sadness and despair. *The Night* – the most complex song of the set – begins from the depths of darkest night. Based loosely upon Schubert's song *Der Doppelgänger*; it assumes almost symphonic dimensions as it gradually picks up momentum – at its culmination it has evolved into a roiling swirl of dance music, based, again quite freely, on the opening motif of Beethoven's *'Moonlight' Sonata* (a careful listener will hear hints of the Beethoven in the very opening bars of the work as well!). Mahari's text, which in contrast to the Metzarents poems is in Eastern Armenian dialect, is a revelry of nostalgic images of the past, with colorful references to cymbals, bambirs (an ancient lute-like instrument) and other dancing imagery. Though the lines "All round me were dead days, and dead flower petals," reveal lingering melancholy, the man appears to have re-found hope and youthful vitality, again by turning towards the light: "How distant seems still my Autumn to me, and my days do appear still light, still aflame." *Hymn*, a setting of Terian's poem *I will come*, is again in Eastern Armenian dialect (it is deliciously coincidental that the dark opening songs are set in the Western dialect – from the direction of the setting sun – whereas the optimistic

third and fourth songs find the singer turning towards the East, and dawn, for redemption and solace). Our careful listener may notice that the last song is not only a transformation of the Schubert, now in the warm key of B major, but a recapitulation of the beginning as well; this is only a hint of the many symphonic aspirations of the work. It ends *pianissimo* with the profoundly hopeful lines: "I will hold your hand, I will grasp your grief, I will spark new lights in your soul!"

Invocation, Op. 54 (2006)

Invocation, a proto-narrative cycle of four songs for soprano and piano in four languages, was born of an inchoate desire to explore "intangible" love and the intangibility of love. The first song, a setting of Shakespeare's *Sonnet XXVII: Weary with toil*, is a nocturne, its indirect allusions to the style of Britten and Dowland quite conscious. Musing upon these two composers took me easily to the lute and the guitar, and so the cycle begins with the first of dozens of guitar-like gestures. The 'author' finds himself/herself (gender is ambiguous throughout the cycle) in a state of ennui and restlessness, apparently unable to find solace by day or by night. He/she longs for a love(r) that is absent, if such a person actually exists, or is even aware of the longings expressed by the writer. Though we may certainly assume that Shakespeare was writing of an actual person, I read this as a longing for an unknown love, and set the piece in a deliberately disquieting manner.

The second, a setting of Pablo Neruda's *Sonnetos de amor, XXII*, presents the flaming up and, perhaps, consummation of sensual love – imagined or otherwise. Though we can assume that the subject of this poem was Neruda's wife, and that it deals with a tangible relationship, I find the phrases that refer to or infer a mistiming or lack of recognition to be particularly revealing. The writer speaks of 'loving without seeing' (loving without being able to acknowledge?), of 'loving

without remembering you' (loving deprived of the history of a normal conjugal relationship?). I admire the references to the intangible expressed mainly in the second verse, and the realization that perhaps it was all as ephemeral as the strumming of a guitar in the shadows. Naturally, the 'guitar' motifs make a noticeable appearance at this point. Ultimately though, the last few lines, with images of 'wildfire' (passion burning out of control) and 'flame' encapsulate the essential purpose and place of this poem in the cycle.

The third song, a setting in Japanese of Michizō Tachihara's *Mata Aru Yoru Ni*, and the second nocturne, gets to the heart of things with its less than veiled allusions to an affair. Again, the meaning is ambiguous; it's like trying to hold smoke. After all, it may simply be a momentary fancy. The piano arpeggios envelop the (perhaps imaginary?) lovers like the mist described in the poem.

The last song, the first to be written, is *Cho-hon*, a celebrated poem by the renowned Korean poet Kim Sowol. It is the 'heart' of the cycle and explores a passion, at life's end, that has never been allowed a proper, healthy expression, and may only do so within the solitude of the writer's heart, at the end of earthly things. It is at once profoundly sad, and yet consolatory, and is set at a time when day gives way to night – death/oblivion. Here the 'guitar' motifs find an ultimate expression and are manifested in numerous ways, in almost every bar.

Each song begins with a permutation of the pitches 'E–F–G,' where 'E' alone is unchanged. In the first it is the Phrygian: 'E–F–G'; in the second: 'E–F–G sharp' (hinting at the Flamenco Phrygian); in the third it is: 'E–F double sharp–G sharp'; and in the final song, the simple minor expression: 'E–F sharp–G.' These 'E'-centric modes, of course, represent the guitar.

In all but the last, there is an expressive interplay between atonality and modal diatonicism, representing the dichotomy between the tangible – atonal, and the intangible – tonal, with a deepening commitment to tonality as the songs unfold. The first song is the most atonal. The second somewhat less so, the third still less, and the last song is all but completely tonal until the very last bars, where it too gives way to the 'grounding' of atonality and the sense that even such a sincere outpouring of emotion is ultimately ephemeral and elusive. I am aware of the irony that atonality (the quintessential language of the 20th century) represents grounding, reality, and the tangible, whereas, tonality is made to signify the unreachable, the intangible, and the fantastical, thus turning on its head the traditional use of such languages (when they are juxtaposed) for an opposite effect.

Ian Krouse

Jessica Rivera



Photo: Isabel Pinto

Soprano Jessica Rivera has collaborated with many noted contemporary composers, several having written works expressly for her, including John Adams, Osvaldo Golijov, Gabriela Lena Frank, Ian Krouse, Jonathan Leshnoff, Nico Muhly and Paola Prestini. She has appeared with conductors Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robert Spano, Markus Stenz, Bernard Haitink and Michael Tilson Thomas. Rivera made her Santa Fe Opera debut in 2005 as Nuria in Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar*, a role she reprised for the 2007 GRAMMY Award-winning Deutsche Grammophon recording. In 2007 she released *Jessica Rivera Sings Romantic Music* for Urtext Digital Classics, a critically acclaimed recording that included the premiere of Krouse's *Cantar de los Cantares*, written especially for her.

www.jessicarivera.com

Vladimir Chernov



Photo: Daniel Newman

Renowned Russian baritone Vladimir Chernov has sung over 40 leading roles at opera houses around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Teatro alla Scala and Teatro Colón under Claudio Abbado, Valery Gergiev, James Levine and Seiji Ozawa, among others. Chernov made his US debut at the Los Angeles Opera as Posa in Verdi's *Don Carlo* opposite Plácido Domingo. His discography includes *Il trovatore*, *Luisa Miller* and *Don Carlo* for Sony Classical, *Rigoletto* for Deutsche Grammophon, *Un ballo in maschera* for Teldec, and Ian Krouse's *Armenian Requiem* on Naxos (8.559846-47). He is a professor of vocal studies at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Movses Pogossian



Photo: Brian Runt

Violinist Movses Pogossian has performed with members of the Tokyo, Kronos, and Brentano String Quartets, with Kim Kashkashian, Jeremy Denk, Lynn Harrell, Ani and Ida Kavafian, and Rohan de Saram, and with the Brandenburger Symphoniker, Staatskapelle Halle, Sudety Philharmonic, the Tucson and El Paso Symphony Orchestras, Scandinavian Chamber Orchestra of New York, and Sinfonia Toronto. A committed advocate of new music, Pogossian has premiered over 50 works, and works closely with composers such as György Kurtág, Tigran Mansurian, Augusta Read Thomas, Ian Krouse and Leif Segerstam. Pogossian is the artistic director of the Los Angeles-based Dilijan Chamber Music series, and a professor of violin at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

Guillaume Sutre



Photo: Connor Vance

Violinist Guillaume Sutre was the first violinist of the Ysaÿe Quartet. He has recorded for Sony Classical, Decca, Harmonia Mundi, Naïve, Aeon, and Ysaÿe Records. Sutre has appeared with the Sinfonia Varsovia, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Göttingen Symphony Orchestra and the Budapest Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, with conductors such as Yehudi Menuhin, Stefan Sanderling, David Robertson and Sheldon Morgenstern. He has performed at Wigmore Hall, Teatro di San Carlo, Berlin Philharmonie, Musikverein Wien, Carnegie Hall, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and in more unusual venues such as the Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia), Manaus Opera House (Brazil), Grand Opera House, Hanoi (Vietnam), and Fondation Bolipata (Philippines). Sutre at the time of this recording was a professor of violin at UCLA.

Richard O'Neill



Photo: Marie Claire Korea

Violinist Richard O'Neill, an Emmy Award winner, two-time GRAMMY Award nominee, and Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient, has appeared with the London, Los Angeles, Seoul, and Euro-Asian Philharmonic Orchestras, the BBC, KBS, Hiroshima and Korean Symphony Orchestras; the Moscow, Vienna, and Württemberg Chamber Orchestras; Alte Musik Köln, Kremerata Baltica and Sejong with conductors such as Andrew Davis, Vladimir Jurowski, François-Xavier Roth and Leonard Slatkin. A Universal/Deutsche Grammophon recording artist, he has made ten solo albums and many other chamber music recordings. He has worked with composers Mason Bates, Elliott Carter, Paul Chihara, Unsuk Chin, Mario Davidovsky and John Harbison among many others.

Antonio Lysy



Photo: Paul Flanagan

Cellist Antonio Lysy, an artist of international stature and a dedicated pedagogue, has performed as a soloist in major concert halls worldwide. He has collaborated with distinguished conductors including Yuri Temirkanov, Charles Dutoit, Yehudi Menuhin, Sándor Végh and Kees Bakels, and continues to perform regularly both as a soloist and chamber music artist. Lysy has recorded extensively for CBC Radio, BBC Radio, Classic FM, and other European radio networks. His commitment to chamber music is demonstrated by his musical directorship and founding in 1989 of the annual Incontri in Terra di Siena Chamber Music Festival in Tuscany, Italy. He is currently professor of cello at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

www.antoniolysy.com

Christopher Hanulik



Photo: Myung Chun

Christopher Hanulik is the principal bassist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He previously served as principal bassist of The Cleveland Orchestra, with whom he made numerous recordings, including an album conducted by Pierre Boulez for Deutsche Grammophon. Hanulik regularly performs with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Chamber Music Society and at Green Umbrella concerts. He has performed with the Miami, Calder and Chicago String Quartets and the Jacques Thibaud String Trio, and with Gil Shaham, Cho-Liang Lin, Yefim Bronfman, Emanuel Ax, David Finckel, Wu Han and Thomas Adès, among others. He is currently on the faculties of the University of California, Los Angeles and the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Maryanne Kim



Pianist, organist, and harpsichordist Maryanne Kim has performed throughout the United States, Canada, China, and South Korea. In 2009, as the final performance of a US tour, she made her Carnegie Hall debut in a recital with Jessica Rivera, where she performed Ian Krouse's *Cantar de los Cantares* as well as the premiere of Nico Muhly's *The Adulteress*. In August 2006, she premiered Krouse's song-cycle *Invocation* in Los Angeles, a work written for her and Rivera. She also performs regularly with Los Angeles-based early music ensemble Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra. Her principal teachers included Alan Smith, Martin Katz and Ick Choo Moon.

Ian Krouse

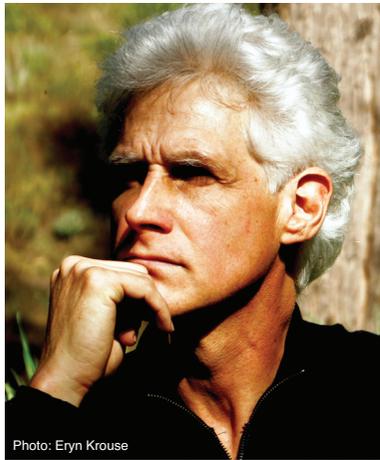


Photo: Eryn Krouse

Born in 1956 in Olney, Maryland, composer Ian Krouse is widely known for his pioneering development of the guitar quartet. He has composed eleven quartets to date, including the epic *Quartet No. 5 'Labyrinth (On a Theme of Led Zeppelin)'*, and most have received multiple recordings and are regularly featured in the touring repertoires of leading contemporary ensembles. Several of his solo guitar works, most notably *Air (In the Irish style)* and *Variations on a Moldavian Hora*, have received multiple recordings and are performed regularly by guitarists all over the world. Krouse's *Armenian Requiem*, which received its premiere on 22 April 2015 at Royce Hall, University of California, Los Angeles, was commissioned by the Lark Musical Society to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The work is the first ever large-scale concert setting of the traditional Armenian requiem liturgy, and its debut recording was released in March 2019 on Naxos (8.559846-47) to critical acclaim. Krouse's vocal works, of which there are dozens, include song cycles, three vocal symphonies, choral works, and an opera. In the lead up to the premiere of the *Armenian Requiem*, the Lark Musical Society commissioned two works on Armenian texts: *Nocturnes*, on poems by Metzarents, Mahari and Terian, for baritone and string quintet, conducted by the composer in performances in Los Angeles, Tuscany and Yerevan, with baritone Vladimir Chernov and the UCLA Camarades string ensemble, and *Fire of Sacrifice*, on the poetry of Charents, for soprano and chorus, premiered by Vatsche Barsoumian and the Lark Master Singers. Other vocal works for which he is known are his song cycles *Cantar de los Cantares* ('Song of Songs') and *Invocation*, both written for American soprano Jessica Rivera who released the former in 2009 for Urtext Digital Classics to critical acclaim, and the earlier *Cinco Canciones Insólitas*, which has been championed and recorded by American mezzo-soprano Suzanna Guzmán with the Debussy Trio. In 2010 Krouse's a cappella setting of Walt Whitman's *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* received its successful premiere performance by the May Festival Chorus of Cincinnati under the direction of the work's dedicatee, conductor Robert Porco. In addition to hundreds of performances annually by guitarists and guitar quartets all around the world, his works have been performed or recorded by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Seocho Philharmonia Orchestra of Korea, the Ukraine Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Cairo Symphony Orchestra, the Armenian National Philharmonic Orchestra, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the UCLA Philharmonia, the University of Southern California Symphony Orchestra, the Mexico City and Pasadena Chamber Orchestras, The Aureole Trio, Dinosaur Annex Music Ensemble, 20th Century Consort, Remix Ensemble, Pacific Serenades, The Dilijan Ensemble and the Los Angeles Chamber Singers, to name a few. His works have been recorded and released by Brain Records, Chandos, Delos, G.S.P. Records, GHA Records, Innova Recordings, Koch International Classics, Lisaddell, Naxos, RCM, Voces de Iberoamerica, and Urtext Digital Classics among others. He is a distinguished professor of music at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. www.iankrouse.com

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(b. 1956)

1–4 Nocturnes, Op. 60 (2010) **28:35**

5–8 Invocation, Op. 54 (2006) **26:16**

Jessica Rivera, Soprano 5–8

Vladimir Chernov, Baritone 1–4

**Movses Pogossian,
Guillaume Sutre, Violin 1–4**

Richard O’Neill, Viola 1–4

Antonio Lysy, Cello 1–4

Christopher Hanulik, Double Bass 1–4

Maryanne Kim, Piano 5–8

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.
The available sung texts and English translations can be
found at www.naxos.com/libretti/559877.htm

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5–8 at Schoenberg Hall, The UCLA Herb Alpert School
of Music, University of California, Los Angeles, USA

Producer: Ian Krouse • Engineer: Umberto Belfiore
Mastering engineer: Sergey Parfenov (The Evelyn &
Mo Ostin Music Center at the UCLA Herb Alpert School
of Music, Recording Studio Director: Luis F. Henao)

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Ian Krouse Music **5–8**

Cover photo: Eryn Krouse



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Ian Krouse has been acclaimed by *Gramophone* as “one of the most communicative and intriguing” of today’s composers, his style drawing on historical and traditional influences as well as being innovative and modern. With references to Beethoven and Schubert, metaphors of darkness and light are conveyed with powerful emotion in *Nocturnes*, which sets four texts by well-known Armenian poets to form an odyssey through the mind of a man at mid-life. With profound sadness at its heart, *Invocation* explores the intangibility of love, contrasting atonality and tonality to express emotional outpourings that ultimately remain ephemeral and elusive.

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

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Playing
Time:
54:59