

WOMEN COMPOSERS

A Consumer Guide

RECENTLY IN THE VILLAGE VOICE, NEW MUSIC COLUMNIST KYLE GANN WROTE "IF CONCERTS DIE IN A FLASH, CDS ARE (ALLEGEDLY) FOREVER. IRONICALLY, WHILE DISCS BOOM, WOMEN COMPOSERS HAVE VANISHED." I STRONGLY DISAGREE, OFFERING A LIST OF RECENT RELEASES BY SOME OF THE FINEST WOMEN COMPOSERS AROUND.

Mary Jane Leach: ***Celestial Fires (XI)***

Being particularly interested in "sound phenomena: difference, combination, and interference tones, especially with like or similar instruments" has always been an obsession for Vermont composer Mary Jane Leach. Five pieces for eight sopranos, one for seven bassoons and one for alto flute and voice (in which the voice part is written to sound like the flute) compose this *Celestial Fires*, her first release on CD.

Based in New York since the mid-1970s, Leach has created a sonic world of tonal beauty, a visionary quest for inner peace. In *Bruckstück*, the opening composition which is sung by The New York Treble Singers and based on the Adagio of Bruckner's *Eighth Symphony*, soft sparse tones gently nudge and lightly tap you: you feel as if time has been suspended. In *Trio For Duo*, the piece for alto flute and voice, the charming physicality of the composition gently strikes you and tosses you onto the Moon-like desert of its irresistible spell.

Fabrizio Gilardino

Vice Versa.