



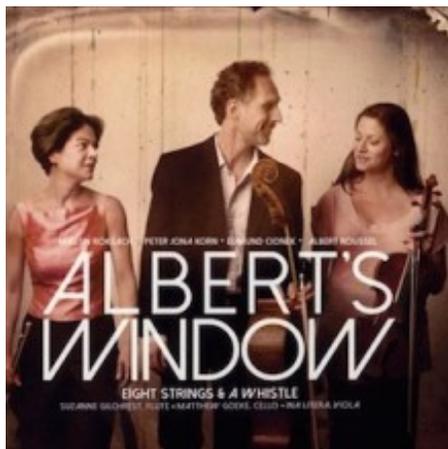
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Eight Strings & a Whistle, Albert's Window: CD Review

Jan 2, 2016 by [The Flute View](#)



I love the name of this chamber music group: [Eight Strings & a Whistle](#)! The “whistle” is flutist [Suzanne Gilcrest](#) and the eight strings are divided between cellist [Matthew Goeke](#) and violist [Ina Litera](#). They have just released their debut recording *Albert's Window*. The group has been active since 1998 presenting and expanding the literature for their unique instrumental combination. In this collection they present works by:

[Martin Rokeach](#)-- *Going Up?* (2008)

[Peter Jona Korn](#)-- *Aloysia Serenade* (1953)

[Edmund Cionek](#)-- *Bad Robots* (2010)

Albert Roussel-- *Trio, Op. 40* (1929)

I enjoyed all the performances on the album very much as the group plays with extraordinary ensemble, subtlety and humor. The players complement each other very well matching sound, articulation, emotion, and dynamics in a way that draws the listener in and illuminates the musical ideas of the composers. I enjoyed learning more about these composers and their stories, and I enjoyed hearing their music-- they are all worth a deeper exploration.



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Eight Strings & a Whistle: ALBERT'S WINDOW

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Since I mentioned humor in the playing, it's worth noting that the Rokeach, Korn, and Cionek each have a humorous point of view in their music!

Rokeach comments on the title of his piece *Going Up?* referring to the thematic upward momentum: “ Might there be some kind of emotional or spiritual meaning behind the notes? I don’t know.”

Peter Jona Korn, born in Berlin in 1922, a student (after leaving Germany for Jerusalem in 1936 and then the US in 1940) of Stefan Wolpe, Ernst Toch, Hanns Eisler, and Arnold Schoenberg, worked in Hollywood and eventually moved back to Germany in 1967 to be Director of the Richard Strauss Conservatory. He wrote the *Aloysia Serenade* for Doriot Anthony Dwyer. The composer and his friend Ernest Gold nicknamed themselves and friends “Aloysius,” and Dwyer was an honorary “Aloysia”!!

Edmond Cionek writes about his piece, *Bad Robots*: “My thematic material came about one afternoon as I was riffing along with a particularly musical Xerox machine at Staples. I like technology as much as the next person, however some developments are not a step forward.” Each movement plays with this tension between human and machine.



Eight Strings & a Whistle

Congratulations to Eight Strings & a Whistle for a thoughtful and interesting album full of great playing and engaging music. The CD is produced by [Ravello Records LLC](#).

-Barbara Siesel

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