



**Nikolai Kapustin Sunrise op.26 - Études de concert op.40 - Préludes op.53 n°9, n°11, n°12, n°13, n°23 –**

**L. Liebermann : Gargoyles op.29 –**

**Li Yinghai : Music at Sunset**

Par Stéphane Friédérich | CLASSICA | LE RÉPERTOIRE DES CD DE A À Z | 2 mars 2010

La note de Classica :



Marc-Andre Hamelin was one of the first to record the piano works of Nikolai Kapustin (Hyperion), an exciting composer whose style is impossible to classify. His music combines written-out jazz, mixing Art Tatum, Bill Evans, and Keith Jarrett with influences of post-romanticism including Rachmaninov. His repertoire demands an extraordinary technique. The speed is the main obstacle of this music, with its extraordinary energy and spirit.

The Chinese pianist Shan-Shan Sun who also occurs in duo with her husband, the Swedish pianist Per Tengstrand, plays Kapustin with a superb touch, combining a singing tone with fluidity. The *Eight Concert Etudes Op. 40* which is currently the best known cycle suits her perfectly. She plays them, as well as the *Preludes Op. 53*, with a freedom of tone and with a kind of detachment that suits the music without the risk of creating musical fixtures when romantic phrasing is overly applied (Op. 53, No. 9). Marc-Andre Hamelin seems to share his "devour" of the keyboard, hungry velocity and saturation of colors. Shan-Shan Sun's playing is rather more sensual, but no less precise in tone and rhythm, both of great complexity.

"*Gargoyles*" by American composer Lowell Liebermann (b. 1961) is ultimately more traditional, and almost as Slavic as Kapustin! These very rhythmic pieces are reminding of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, also in certain tonal aesthetics (*Presto ferocious*). The harmony of delicate Chinese folklore by Li Yinghai (1927-2007) is charming but anecdotal. Here again, Shan-Shan Sun delivers with finesse and sensitivity.