

C Scott • Vaughan Williams

'Songs of Quest and Inspiration'

C Scott Ballad of Fair Helen of Kirkconnel, Op 8.

Blackbird's Song, Op 52 No 3. An Eastern Lament,

Op 62 No 3. Have ye seen him pass by?. The

Huckster. Picnic, Op 46 No 3. Prelude, Op 57 No 1.

Song of London, Op 52 No 1. A Song of Wine, Op 46

No 3. Sundown. Time O'Day. To-Morrow.

Water-Lilies Vaughan Williams Five Mystical Songs

- Love bade me welcome; Easter. Songs of Travel

Robbert Muuse *bar* **Micha van Weers** *pf*

Challenge Classics © CC72527 (65' • DDD)



Dutch examination of the mostly pre-war Cyril Scott

The music of Cyril Scott has enjoyed something of a renaissance in recent times. Between them Chandos, Dutton and Marco Polo have recorded a range of his orchestral, chamber and piano works. This has subsequently allowed us properly to judge the nature and quality of his music, rather than by only a few miniatures such as the *Water Wagtail* and *Danse nègre* which shored up his declining reputation after the Second World War.

This pioneering recording, by the enterprising Dutch pair Robbert Muuse and Micha van Weers, of a selection of Scott's songs, many of them world premieres, provides an enlightening glimpse of the composer's appreciable powers, not least during the period before the First World War when he was considered, like Bantock, to be one of Britain's *enfants terribles* in the musical world. Debussy admired Scott's work and the influence of the Frenchman is evident in much of the harmonic colour and piano texture, especially in imaginative pieces such as 'Picnic', the brusque 'Song of London' (both 1906) and 'An Eastern Lament' (1909). Muuse consciously attempts to emphasise the heady, languorous atmosphere of 'A Song of Wine' (1907), whose French credentials are even more exaggerated in the post-war 'Have ye seen him pass by?' and 'The Huckster' (both 1921), and the fine setting of Christina Rossetti's 'To-Morrow' (1927). Muuse and van Weers also give impressive performances of Vaughan Williams's *Songs of Travel* and two of the *Five Mystical Songs* (though I miss the presence of the accompanying chorus).

Jeremy Dibble