

## 'Exposure'

**Ballie Harmonizing** (Artificial Environment No 7)

**Cassidy A Painter of Figures in Rooms**

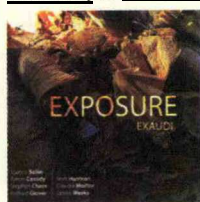
**Chase Jandl Songs** **Glover** Corradiation

**B Harrison** eight voices **Molitor** lorem ipsum

**Weeks** Nakedness

**Exaudi**

University of Huddersfield © HCRO6CD (77' • DDD)



The University of Huddersfield boasts a Centre for Research in New Music, and

several of the composers represented on this CD have Huddersfield connections. The spirit may be experimental but the execution is polished, confident, persuading you that the performers really believe in their often provocative material.

Bryn Harrison (b1969) is the senior figure, and in *eight voices* he offers an exemplary challenge to listeners: how to distinguish repetition from variation. There is an expressiveness here that never settles into conventional lyricism, and if

you feel that the piece does too much with too little, then the rest of the disc is probably not for you. For something closer to conventional lyricism, Stephen Chase's five *Jandl Songs* are less disconcerting but that doesn't prevent the composer from offering a great variety of texture and tone within a miniature frame.

The freshness found in Chase's music and admirably realised by Exaudi is evident elsewhere – in the offbeat superimpositions of Joanna Bailie's *Harmonizing (Artificial Environment No 7)* and also in the sustained hyper-minimalism of Richard Glover's intriguing *Corradiation*. Minimalism in a different sense motivates James Weeks's *Nakedness*, a close-up study in vocal control and stamina performed with hypnotic conviction by solo soprano Juliet Fraser. Finally, if Claudia Molitor's accomplished *lorem ipsum* comes across as too anxious to please, Aaron Cassidy's *A Painter of Figures in Rooms* – the painter in question is Francis Bacon – is rather less ingratiating, relying on vocal equivalents of the contortions and distortions associated with Bacon's portraits. Exaudi make it sound almost effortless, and the recording, made in Tonbridge School Chapel, ensures that every gasp and grunt has maximum impact.

**Arnold Whittall**

