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OLIVERO *Neharót Neharót* **MANSURIAN**
Tagh for the Funeral of the Lord, Three Arias
(Sung out the window facing Mount Ararat)
KOMITAS Oror **STEINBERG** *Rava Deravin*
Kim Kashkashian (viola) Robyn
Schulkovsky (percussion) Tigran
Mansurian (piano) Kuss Quartet, Munich
Chamber Orchestra/Alexander Liebreich,
Boston Modern Orchestra Project/Gil Rose
ECM 476 3281



This new disc from the American-born violist Kim Kashkashian combines music reflecting her Armenian cultural heritage

with two major new works by Israeli composers. Throughout, she achieves a remarkable balance between technically immaculate precision and earthy passion, delivering performances of studied commitment and palpable emotion.

The tone is generally dark. The *Three Arias* by respected Armenian composer Tigran Mansurian convey a heartfelt longing for some of his country's historic sites that

are now in Turkish territory. Kashkashian brings a real vocal quality to the solo line, highlighting the work's origins in song, and her use of an intense, often penetrating vibrato and subtle portamento imbues the work with a bittersweet sadness. *Tagh for the Funeral of the Lord* continues the vocal focus, and here Kashkashian makes the most of the microtonal inflections that colour her sombre, serious solo line.

In *Rava Deravin* by the Israeli composer Eitan Steinberg, the Kuss Quartet provides strongly characterised backdrops for Kashkashian's poised delivery of a wide-ranging solo line. But it's the opener, *Neharót Neharót* by Betty Olivero, that proves the disc's real find, combining soaring Middle Eastern melodies with Monteverdi quotations to startling effect. Kashkashian brings a breathy, velvety sound to some of her poignant melodic twists and turns, and intertwines gracefully with an accordion in some moving duet passages. The work's dark passion matches Kashkashian's playing to a tee. Sound is exemplary throughout.

DAVID KETTLE