

WHAT THE PRESS IS SAYING ABOUT MELIA WATRAS:

Gramophone:

“An artist of commanding and poetic personality.”

The Strad:

“Staggeringly virtuosic.”

“A beautiful celebration of 21st century viola music.”

Strings:

“She is first and foremost, an artist.”

“Throughout, Watras shows that the viola has no limits in terms of emotional range and expression. These are, quite simply, great stories told with power and passion.”

“Melia Watras presents a provocative, relentlessly absorbing recital of profoundly expressive, experience-laden music that could only be written for the dark-voiced instrument that she plays.”

Journal of the American Viola Society:

“*String Masks* showcases not only the virtuoso’s sensitive playing, but also her innovative and daring spirit.”

Q2 Music (WQXR-NYC):

“If ass-kicking in classical music could be likened to that of late-80’ s-to-early-90’ s action heroes, Melia Watras is a Jean-Claude Van Damme of the viola.”

Seattle Times:

“Velocity that seems beyond the reach of human fingers.”

The WholeNote (Canada):

“This is an album of singular gems as well as a complete collection. A work belying its complexity, *Firefly Songs* also stands strongly, piece by piece as beautifully expressed miniatures, each feeling free and spontaneous.”

“American composer and virtuoso violist Melia Watras’ latest album *String Masks* features her sensitive playing and several string-centered compositions.”

Textura:

“Melia Watras distills rich life experiences into strikingly original musical form.”

“Melia Watras's *Schumann Resonances* impresses on so many levels, it could function as a prototype for all artists aspiring to make an ambitious solo statement.”

Chicago Reader (Best of 2015 list):

“Seattle-based violist Melia Watras knocked the wind out of me with the dramatically dark beauty of this recording.”

Les Dernieres Nouvelles D’Alsace (France):

“Rare refinement.”

American Record Guide:

“Watras is a terrific violist.”

“An amazing feat of bow control and virtuosity.”

Which Sinfonia:

“The album is a beautiful collage of transformational figures in Watras’s musical practice.”

An Earful:

“She's not waiting for new viola music - she's commissioning it, or writing it herself. Artists in any medium could learn from her energetic example. Long may she reign!”

“Watras and [pianist Winston] Choi are such consummate musicians. It's a shame [composer George] Rochberg didn't live to hear their performance - I doubt it can be bettered.”

Second Inversion:

“This is an album that does more than just show off virtuosity: it showcases Melia Watras' bravery as a performer and composer.”