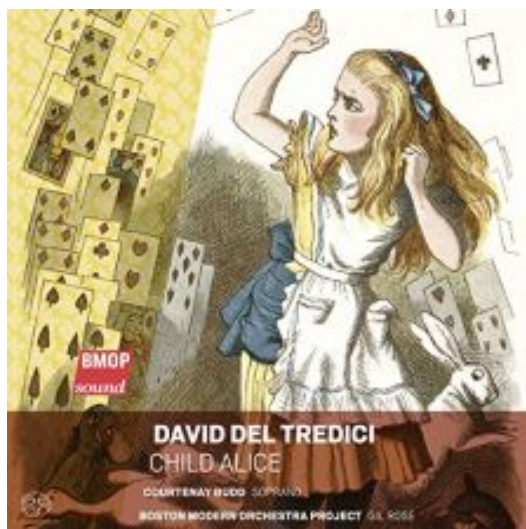


GRAMOPHONE

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TREDICI *Child Alice*

Author: Donald Rosenberg



Alice isn't the only one who finds herself immersed in enchanting and wild escapades in David Del Tredici's *Child Alice*. So do a soprano and especially an orchestra, who engage in glittering, bizarre and clamorous episodes that might prompt Mahler and Strauss to sit up and take notice. The Boston Modern Orchestra Project's superlative recording of this massive work – six movements and more than two hours of music – certifies the piece's status as sonic wonderland.

The score is the most expansive entry in Del Tredici's 25-year reflection on Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The American composer won the 1980 Pulitzer Prize in Music for 'In Memory of a Summer Day,' which became the first part of *Child Alice*, here receiving its first complete commercial recording. The work finds Del Tredici in what can only be described as giddy form, as if he were a kid in an orchestral candy store.

There are events throughout in which the composer seems intent on outdoing illustrious forerunners in terms of colour and climax, and all the listener can do is give in to the riotous activity. But *Child Alice* isn't just about making a rumpus. As the soprano sings various settings of Lewis's preface poems, the music – unified by Del Tredici's beguiling Alice theme – casts a spell.

With the Boston Modern Orchestra Project on top form and soprano Courtenay Budd epitomising radiance and agility, Gil Rose conducts a performance of arresting character, finesse and instrumental prowess.