

REFRACTIONS (VALEN, BERG, MESSIAEN, WEBERN)

Norwegian Soloists' Choir, Norwegian Radio Orchestra / Grete Pedersen (dir)

BIS-1970 SACD [54:44]



This collection of spectacular performances introduces a retrospective of four works by Fartein Valen, from the lyrical opulence of *Psalm 121* of 1911 to the unremitting *Kom regn fra det høie* ('Come rain from on high') for women's choir with clarinet obbligato of 1937. Messiaen's *Cinq rechants* are magnificent, and the ease with which Webern's early *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen* and the op.19 songs – clearly more challenging for listeners than singers – is admirable. But it is an arrangement of Berg's *Die Nachtigall* for 16 voices by Clytus Gottwald that is truly glorious, with its effortless high D at the end.

PATRIC STANDFORD