

FILM SCORE

Score

Das Wunder von Bern ★★★★★

MARCEL BARSOTTI

ZYX Music - ZYX55341-2

35 tracks - 71:18

Swiss-born composer Marcel Barsotti is currently making a name for himself overseas, writing music for the German cinema. His newest soundtrack release, *Das Wunder von Bern*, is a wonderfully melodic score, that shows his respect for traditional film scoring, while still highlighting his own abilities.

With 35 tracks on a single CD, you can expect a lot of short cues. But Barsotti's writing is inventive and most tracks are still effective. While a few tracks end unexpectedly, most flow together well, which is unusual for soundtracks of this nature.

With such a large number of short cues, one might also expect a lot of repetition, but his is certainly not the case. Barsotti and co-orchestrator Enrique Ugarte keep the music constantly evolving

through their wonderful use of the orchestra's palette of colors. The recording of the NDR Philharmonic Orchestra is simply beautiful, with a full and natural tonal balance that really shows off the sumptuous orchestrations. In particular, the woodwinds are impressive in the touching way they handle the bulk of thematic material for the score.

"Training" is a bouncy cue with pizzicato strings behind playful woodwinds, that will surely bring Thomas Newman's *Six Feet Under* theme to mind. "Ackermann Rumba", with its slurring clarinet and trumpet melodies, has a playful Gershwin sound to it. "Kleine Bar am Thuner See", played by Achim Kück, is an original piece for solo jazz piano that's so well developed you'd swear you've heard it before. Clanking wind chimes lead into a harp arpeggio for the beginning of "Unter Tage". A deep bass drum signals the start of an ominous crescendo of stirring strings and low brass. Unexpectedly, the cue shifts back to a variation of the

"Training" melody and the tension is released. Kousing syncopated percussion propels "Anpfiff" along an exiting trajectory reminiscent of Jerry Goldsmith's *Capricorn One*. Again, it's not so much that Barsotti is copying other composers' musical styles, but that he's comfortable and sure-footed writing for the medium. It might take a little searching to get a copy of this album in the States, but, hopefully, both the film and its wonderful score make it across the Atlantic Mainstream American composers who are sitting back collecting paychecks for bland, halfbaked scores will have cause to worry should Marcel Barsotti decide to move Hollywood. *Das Wunder von Bern* is a release that surely deserves attention and signals the arrival of an enthusiastic new talent.

-I.D.T.