

Trust's latest Gareth Farr recording displays in the main his work of the last two years, some new work, some recycling of older stage music such as the *End of the Golden Weather* music into self-sufficient compositions (in this case as a four-movement suite renamed *Te Parenga*, Bruce Mason's name for the Takapuna beach where the theatre-piece was set). Whilst this practice is a time honoured one composers need to be aware that, in preserving and dishing up on CD every note of one's occasional thoughts, one is led inevitably towards comparison with a certain famous European composer, every note of whose recent music was created and put into treasure chests by the composer himself as those of a (self-proclaimed) genius writing for an adoring posterity.

Two works jump off this CD at you. *Naga Baba* refers to an extreme Hindu sect who wander, naked but for a covering of ashes, and totally reliant upon alms, until seven years of initiation are up, and a ceremony of piercing the ear with a red-hot iron is performed. Those who survive without flinching are saved, others go mad or die, so were not meant for the godly. A most fascinating clackety instrumental texture is discovered for the beginning, involving inter alia a lot of strongly defined *col legno* from the NZSO Chamber Orchestra. Eight minutes into the piece a solo minor-mode violin (the priests on their mantras?) appears and is gradually subsumed into the rest of the orchestral texture 'as a sort of analogy of the transformation of the individual to a larger group mentality'. The inevitable raising of temperature ends in a sudden cut of the sound, leaving hanging a few moments of the wailing of solo violin. A curiously affecting and interesting piece.

The title work, *Warriors from Pluto*, a piece written for Strike together with the NZSOCO, was thought of initially as filling the perceived gap in Holst's suite on the planets which was of course written well before Pluto was discovered. But eventually its scenario rotated so it ended describing the

discovery and exploration of the beautiful but mysterious Earth by the best and bravest of the warriors of 'the Queendom of Pluto'. For lovers of Strike and enthusiasts for Farr this is a suitably noisy work, but also one with its own subtleties, such as the beautiful textures which intersperse the drummed and brake-drummed areas.

