

'Insomnio'

JUKKA TIENSUU: nemo; JAMES WOOD : De telarum mechanicae ; RODERIK DE MAN: Chromophores; LUCA FRANCESCONI: Islands  
Insomnio (ensemble)/Ulrich Pohl  
Encora Records multichannel  
SACD enc-011 (5.1), 67:37 \*\*\*\*

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The brittle metallic timbres that open "Chromophores" by Roderik de Man give way to some strangely compelling solo winds and ethereal piano and string sounds. De Man, from Holland, explains that chromophores are cell structures (such as those in the dermis of chameleons and other light sensitive creatures) that can change their color in their surroundings. In this case, the colors of the orchestra shift subtly by their exposure to electronically added effects and the interaction of some very unique timbres (like mandolin) in the context of more traditional sources. There are some nice timbral changes that can be "timed" with tempos and harmonic shifts as well. The highlights within this work, for me, were some very exotic and attractive wind solos (like bass clarinet) that drift in and out of a somewhat abstract context.

-- Daniel Coombs