

# SS Smith

'A River Rose: Music for Violin'

Hearts. Three for Two<sup>a</sup>. A Gift for Bessie<sup>b</sup>.

Minor. A River Rose<sup>c</sup>. I've Been Here Before<sup>d</sup>

Airi Yoshioka *vn* with <sup>b</sup>Sue Heineman *bn*

<sup>a</sup>Maria Lambros *va* <sup>bd</sup>John Novacek *pf*

<sup>c</sup>José 'Zeca' Lacerda *vib* <sup>b</sup>Lee Hinkle *perc*

New World © NW80754-2 (62' • DDD)



The American composer Stuart Saunders Smith is unafraid to reflect

aspects of his life in his music. Each of the works on 'A River Rose: Music for Violin' depicts a person, location or atmosphere he has transformed into sound. Smith's music manages to strike a winning balance between the highly experimental and the deeply expressive. In the six works on this disc, each score or movement has a title that points the listener in some precise direction, though the results are suffused with piquant and vivid surprises. The solo violinist not only plays in four of the pieces but also sings and occasionally hums.

The seven movements in *Hearts* – with such lower-case titles as 'the disembodied heart' and 'a couple having a picnic and watching the clouds go by' – are striking evocations of Smith's fertile, impressionistic mind. *Three for Two*, scored for violin and viola, describes locations in Maine.

Improvisation drives the narrative in *A Gift for Bessie* for violin, piano, bassoon and percussion. *Minor*, whose title suggests both