



BRITTEN

Piano Concerto; Violin Concerto

Tasmin Little (violin), Howard Shelley (piano); BBC Philharmonic/
Edward Gardner

Chandos CHAN 10764 76:30 mins

BBC Music Direct

£12.99

part review...

We also have a very special reading of the Violin Concerto, my 'big heavy-weight concerto', in the composer's words. Its sheer extravagance and dreamy sensuality mark it out from the economy and control of more familiar Britten. This may not be a flawless reading (some of Tasmin Little's double stopping being just short of immaculate), but Little and Gardner plumb its emotional heart in a performance of great passion and spontaneity. There's a sense not just of supple flow from Little, but an incandescent commitment to the work. She finds something more febrile than James Ehnes (reviewed below) in the central *Vivace*, and Gardner draws it to a menacing climax. The range of dynamics is also wider, with barely audible *pianissimos* in the cadenza, while the 'Passacaglia' is allowed to dream its way into a profoundly moving meditation. *Helen Wallace*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★★