

Broken Songs not for everyone

BROKEN SONGS: Poetry and lyrics by Margaret Sweatman; Music by Glenn Buhr (Staccato Chapbooks 001; 55:27).

Those looking for an invitation to decipher some pretty heavy allegory will find Winnipeg writer Margaret Sweatman's poems challenging, for they frequently suggest they can only be perceived if you have a super-sensitive eclectic.

But as you get into these 18 pieces, textual relevance takes more of a back seat to the words-included musical picture. Sweatman has an unflinching ear for the musicality of the words.

When the words are combined with Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra composer-in-residence Glenn Buhr's assured, highly varied, mostly jazz-rock underpinning, it makes for some rather interesting listening.

CLASSICAL RECORDS

Sweatman brings the same intelligent regulation to the vocals, not going overboard with the theatrics and letting her role become part of the whole.

Buhr, on the piano and synthesizer, is assisted by a terrific band: Greg Lowe on electric guitar, Gilles Fournier, electric bass, Sasha Boychouk, sax and a very nimble drummer, Adrian Peek.

Not for everyone, but ambitious and imaginative to be sure. You can catch these artists in a live performance of the record Feb. 22 at the West End Cultural Centre. ★★★½

James Manishen

TCHAIKOVSKY: ROMANCES;
Olga Borodina, mezzo soprano;

Larissa Gergieva, piano (Philips 442 013-2; 59:42).

Tchaikovsky wrote more than 100 songs of mostly light, delicate expression, influenced by the French romance more than the Lied.

Borodina's voice has a magnificent quality, distinctively Slavonic in weight and firmness of tone. Although she gives full expressive rein to those songs of longing and despair, she never tempts rhetoric, keeping the gestures direct and genuine.

Both she and Gergieva strike right to the heart of each of the 19 songs, capturing the many moods in ideal fashion.

Although not top-drawer Tchaikovsky, such performances make this recital very satisfying. A bonus disc of Borodina in Russian opera is included.★★★★ *James Manishen*

B6 Winnipeg Free Press, Saturday, February 11, 1995
