

***Ophelias PR für Kultur***

***New CDs***

***American Spirit***

The following ancient legend has Marsyas challenging Apollo to a musical contest. His double flute, the aulos – as it is called – sounded better than the god's string playing. The Muses decided in favor of Apollo's playing and Marsyas, the satyr, was flayed alive. Not exactly a nice story and yet the Munich-based classical label – a division of Enja Records – chose this character as its name-giver. Newest product: The Pacific Trio plays works by American composers. Nothing new – so it would seem at first. Yet the selected pieces give musical expression to what Leonard Bernstein, in his senior thesis at Harvard, tried to make a case for: "I will try to show that there is something American in the newer music that does not rely on folk material." Only a few composers meet the criteria for this specific national style: for instance George Gershwin or Aaron Copland. On the CD, besides an early piano trio by the young Bernstein, there is also to be heard a trio by the Chicago-born (1929) Robert Muczynski. Aaron Copland's "Vitebsk" is inspired by a Jewish folk song and so has in it nothing whatsoever of his later-emerging, greatly wide-ranging musical national epics. Especially successful and magnificently interpreted by the piano trio is the 20-minute Suite from "Porgy and Bess".

- *Anja Renczikowski*