SEPTEMBER 20, 2026



Emanuele Stracchi (b.1990)
Shakespeare's Mirror
I Musici Gemelli:
Francesco Pio Bertozzi and Giuseppe Pio Bertozzi (violins)
Hanna Kelemen (actress)
rec. 2026, ProVibe Park Studios, Budapest, Hungary
Reviewed as WAV download
Hunnia Records HRES2615 [41]

This album came to my attention thanks to violinist Francesco Pio Bertozzi's pro-active use of the messaging function on Instagram, and I am glad it did. I have reviewed this as a high quality WAV download and am

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impressed by the recording quality and documentation, which includes all spoken texts and plenty of information about the piece, about the chosen texts and the artists involved.

We are told that this album "began as an artistic project combining music and theater, bringing some of William Shakespeare's most important works to life in sound…. The music constantly dialogues with the theatrical word: the tracks are interwoven with recited passages, in which the actress interprets famous monologues and textual fragments taken from Shakespeare's works… The result is a sonic and theatrical journey that brings the author's great universal themes: love, power, madness, and destiny." This provides a certain amount of context, but pondering on PR texts only gets us so far.

I wouldn't really call this a journey, more a set of intriguing vignettes, but none the worse for that. There is certainly some musical integration that binds the sequence into a cycle, and two violins with voice creates a kind of sonic unity that has advantages and perhaps a few disadvantages. The overall impression is one of lyrical poetic fragility that creates its own attractive atmosphere, but only expresses a part of Shakespeare's range, arguably casting it retrospectively into its line of tradition back to ancient Greek theatre. The violins create their own dialogue, and there are nice contrasts for instance between the song-like melody with pizzicato accompaniment in *Romeo and Juliet*, followed by quiet tension in the 'Is this a dagger which I see before me…' monologue from *Macbeth*. Violins and spoken word in this context reminds me of passages from Luciano Berio's 'theatre of the imagination' but without the extremes –

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this being the safer ‘Venetian gondola’ rather than the ‘storm at sea’ approach. Shakespeare’s texts are recited as written but without any expansions into a wider soundworld and the musical settings, while having a certain amount of individual character, share a relatively introverted level of energy.

Hanna Kelemen is a native of Hungary but does very well in giving Shakespeare’s linguistic flow and rhythm its natural clarity. There are a few corners where an occasional ‘r’ or ‘th’ inflection and a hint of an American accent emerge, but these things endear rather than distract. I admire her emphasis and passion without hysteria, maintaining a balance with the character of the music rather than upstaging.

Emanuele Stracchi is a versatile musician of whom I am sure we will hear more in the future, and the ambitious and award-winning duo I Musici Gemelli is clearly an active unit and doing very well in a variety of genres. This superbly produced album is the kind of thing that, once experienced, nestles at the back of your mind and leaks inspiring creative thoughts when you least expect it. This is a stimulating project that will do its contributors no harm at all, and I hope it provides a foundation for further musico/dramatic explorations.

Dominy Clements

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Availability

This recording is available to stream, in some cases, download, from the major platforms.

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