



INFODAD.COM: Family-Focused Reviews

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The commitment is of a different kind in the new release of Kile Smith's *Vespers*, which was commissioned by Piffaro and first performed only last year. Like Penderecki, Smith mixes old elements with distinctively modern ones, but both the elements and the way they are joined are quite different. Smith incorporates Renaissance vocal techniques and fluent modern writing for wind band, with some strikingly effective choral sections (on the word "Alleluia," for example) and a series of instrumental movements that are more than interludes – they are themselves based on religious texts, which they seem to have absorbed and then reproduced in an alternative form. An especially interesting aspect of *Vespers* is that Piffaro specializes in music of the 15th through 17th centuries, and brings its handling of the works of those much earlier times to Smith's writing; while Smith, clearly sensitive to Piffaro's usual focus, has given the band material to work with that incorporates a clean, modern sound while paying tribute to compositional techniques of the past. Neatly interrelated and interwoven, Smith's *Vespers* is an emotionally and musically appealing update of some timeless religious sentiments, with the use of German text enhancing a never-quite-imitative connection to the era of Bach – for example, in "Herr Christ, der einig Gotts Sohn" ("God's only Son, for all time").