Lubin swims smoothly through Schubert release

SCHUBERT
The Trout Quintet and Seven Lieder.
Steven Lubin, fortepian. John Mark Ainsley, tenor.

Joining Lubin to complete a delightful Schubertiade, such as might have taken place in a London chamber ensemble, too, with tenor John Mark Ainsley of the Music Chamber Ensemble is cleverly conceived on the same disk as the Lubin recording, pianist Gerald Moore.

All the songs in this collection are connected with water, and Ainsley continues his recital with a gentle and touching rendition of the song Am Strande ("Beside the River"). Lubin provides a sensitive, stylized accompaniment which highlights the prelude.

Der Jüngling am See ("On the Lake") is taken a little too slackly for my taste, but the singing "Erlkönig" calls for a relaxed pace and is beautifully colored by Ainsley, whose reflective singing goes to the heart of both music and text. An Eine Quelle, ("To a Spring") love song, is sung melancholically, while the longing in the lover’s voice comes through poignantly in the next song, Der Jüngling am See ("Beside the River"), not only in Ainsley’s singing, but in Lubin’s quite shapid accompaniment. The recital ends with Der Schiffer ("The Oarsman"), vibrantly sung and tightly accompanied on piano. It seems that Steve Lubin has recently become quite hooked on fish. He’s also writing an epic poem for children about a reckless young fish called Gish who runs away from his "Fishmaster".

For an hour or so he swims along. Sang himself a happy song.

Gish’s song was by Schubert, no doubt. Given all his recent delvings into metaphysics (the term is a Lobian’s), I’ll inquire if Lubin eats fish. The news is that he does. But you don’t need to think of that as you enjoy his terrific new CD, a recording guaranteed to make you feel decidedly happy. Go buy it!