

## **Classical-Modern Music Review**

By Grego Applegate Edwards

Mark Abel's *The Dream Gallery* ... is a musical story of the recession, and one of the only concert pieces I can think of that takes on this period of our history. That it does so from the standpoint of seven sometimes rather confused average-Joe types is, I suppose, what makes it so engagingly immediate.

The music has a kind of "high-toned" symphonic quality, in some ways a transformation of the Broadway musical to concert music. It's contemporary in a mostly diatonic, post-minimalist way, with some rather excellent tone-painting settings of texts -- something that Benjamin Britten did so well -- along with a hint of Steve Reich's minimalism, a Zappa-like flourish now and again, not to mention Michael Nyman's and John Adams' operatic treatments as predecessors.

The music ... involves some very accessible, serious symphonic song crafting, a contemporary opera without costumes and props. ... The stories can be quite moving at times, with their well-conceived musical settings.

Abel has crafted an ... excellently written work that is a joy to hear. The soloists and orchestra do a terrific job with the score, and no doubt it could be considered a triumph.