

# AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE

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**BLOCH:** *Suite; Solo Viola Suite; Suite Hebraique; Meditation & Processional*

Paul Neubauer, va; Margo Garrett, p

Delos 3498–56 minutes

This is special because it almost never came to be. These recordings were made in 2001, but the tapes were lost. They recently resurfaced. Viola lovers are fortunate to have one of the world's leading violists playing this material.

The Suite was composed in the annus mirabilis 1919, the same year that Rebecca Clark composed her Viola Sonata and Hindemith composed his Viola Sonata Op. 11:4.

An interesting item here is the unfinished Solo Viola Suite, which Bloch was working on when he died. It ends abruptly where Bloch left off.

This is the first time that I have heard all of Bloch's music for viola and piano in a single collection, and what is remarkable about it is the consistency of Bloch's style across the years. Bloch thought of himself as a composer of Jewish music, and orientalism is evident in every score here. His compositions have a rhapsodic character too.

These performances are excellent. Neubauer is in top form, and he really feels the music. He draws a beautiful tone from his instrument and plays with unfailingly pure intonation. Good sound.

By Joseph Magil