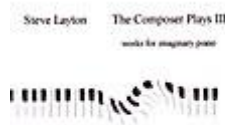


Mp3 Steve Layton - The Composer Plays Iii: Works For Imaginary Piano



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Subtle, strong and absolutely musical realizations of both "possible" and "impossible" contemporary piano music. 11 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, ELECTRONIC: Experimental Details: Continuing his exploration of composition and performance with "virtual" piano, Seattle-based composer Steve Layton (b. 1956) offers the third in his series of "The Composer Plays" CDs. For the first time in the series, in addition to his own works Layton here performs compositions by two other excellent composers: New Yorker Jeff Harrington (b. 1955), and the late master Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001). Harrington's "BlueStrider" is a pounding monster of a piece, with the drama and contrapuntal skill of Beethoven and Stravinsky married with Harrington's own New Orleans barrel-house-blues roots. Obsessive riffs weave their way through both iron-clad logic and exuberance. Xenakis' "Evryali" is one of the pianistic monuments of the late 20th century, full of fearsome blocks of sound and densely intertwining branches of pulsing lines; so dense at times that virtually no single pianist can manage all of the notes in places. Layton's own "virtual" realization allows all of what Xenakis wrote to be heard just as he wrote it. Layton's own music is sometimes extremely complex, other times deceptively simple, with the full gamut of moods, colors, tonality and chromaticism; a kind of delirious and unpredictable "hyper-romanticism", yet with a kind of deep formal structure. He often attempts to integrate "impossible" kinds of pianism with the traditionally possible, in a seamless fashion that makes those kinds of distinctions melt away into the simple intensity of the musical experience. No musical keyboard was touched for any of these performances; yet each is an absolutely convincing and real musical experience, with each note crafted by the mind and "touch" of the composer himself. A nearly life-long resident of the Pacific Northwest, Steve Layton has built an imposing body of work over the last twenty-five years, both for traditional as

well as electronic instrumentation. Besides "classical", he knows that Art can be made with any style, so is equally open to creating work that borrows (or subverts) pop, ethnic, and historical traditions. He has performed and been performed across the West, and has been very involved recently with the new ways the Web allows for composers and audience to "meet" worldwide.

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