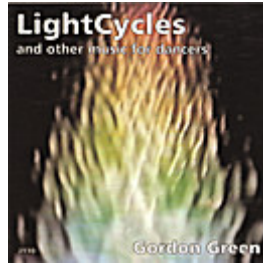


Mp3 Gordon Green - Lightcycles



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A collection of contrasting evocative instrumental compositions, scored for anything from multiple player pianos to tuned drums to string orchestra to digeridoo and landing jets. 21 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Experimental, WORLD: World Fusion Details: Gordon Green is a talented, emerging New York-based composer. His most recent CD bills itself as being "electronic music," and while this is true enough in the sense that synthesizer sounds (as well as samples) are utilized, this is not, to paraphrase the old car commercial, your father's electronic music. For one thing, Green's work presents an appealingly eclectic mix of styles incorporating anything and everything from organ- scored plainchant to high Romanticism to jazz inflections to Conlon Nancarrow "superpiano" idioms to "downtown scene" New York touches. For another, the composer's sonic world contains clear references to acoustic instrument timbres and sounds from nature. Anyone who thinks this music is a lazy, MIDI-based "substitute for the real thing," though, isn't listening very closely. Green embellishes his acoustic- instrument-oriented sounds with obviously electronic-derived filigree, thereby obtaining a strange, but telling timbre sheen impossible to achieve through the use of live players. The effect somehow suggests music derived from a shimmering, mildly automatized, slightly surreal parallel universe. All the works on this disk were inspired by non-musical works of art (choreography, driftwood sculpture, video art) and are meant to be danced to. The music is simultaneously wonderfully evocative and energetically rhythmic, a mix which would seem to assure its success for such a purpose. LightCycles is the CD's magnum opus. In a certain way, this twelve-movement composition can be seen as updating the concept of the 19th century descriptive or travelogue suite. Each movement is an elicitory, self-contained character piece that usually articulates one mood or approach, though more than one influence may be combined. Space permits listing only a few examples: "Spirals" suggests an electronic analogue to African drumming, "Tracery" combines jazzy

combo sounds and Indian tabla timbres, "Flickering" sounds like dozens of music boxes fighting each other for prominence, "Sails" (an electronic piano based piece) manages to mix influences from Chopin, process music, and Joni Mitchell and sound perfectly natural. Most importantly, none of these wildly contrasted musics sound out of place next to each other; the collection hangs together surprisingly well, helped in part by the "recapitulatory" nature of the last two movements. The music unfolds slowly, in an improvisational yet logical way, combining the best aspects of these seemingly contradictory approaches. It's a splendid listen. By contrast, Variations can ultimately trace its roots back to the aphoristic piano miniatures of Schumann and Debussy. These five little movements are jewel-box charmers, evoking fractured jazz, funhouse waltzes, ersatz Impressionist harp music, and much more. The last work, Novella, consists of four seemingly capriciously constructed movements that follow one another without pause. This reviewer was initially perplexed, but a second hearing revealed the piece's special accomplishment. The opening plainchant melody is subtly varied and transformed throughout the composition, thereby achieving maximum contrast from limited material. This fine, challenging work does not divulge its secrets readily, but just as one needs to pry open an oyster to extract a pearl, this piece rewards those listeners who give it a fair shake. In summation, this is terrifically good CD, a highly recommended purchase. Or to quote another old advertising slogan, "No home should be without one." - David Cleary, New Music Connoisseur, 21st Century Music

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