

# **Mp3 Leslie Stevens - My Years In The Outback, Vol. 1: Naked Meditations**



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Intimate, quirky, spontaneous solo piano music effused out of a skinny white chic who sounds like she's channeling someone twice her weight and age with an edgy, lyrical, angular, gnarly collision of impressionist, modern jazz, avant garde and BBQ skewers 12 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Free Jazz, JAZZ: Weird Jazz Details: "This new disk of solo piano improvisations will set your ears on an avant edge with raw musical meditations, visceral first takes that incorporate free improv, modern jazz, avant garde, aleatoric and impressionist elements." Farrell Lowe, All About Jazz "Hard to believe she made this up right on the spot--all but the two covers are first takes. This clarity of musical articulation is rarely heard in solo jazz free improv land." RC "This CD has put a real twist on my ear drums and it's refreshing, out there but still very accessible. I like the edge that it rides, especially on the cut "Inside"--sounds like Waits and Cage found a door from China that opened up inside the piano. Her cover of "Never is Now" is my favorite, it's a lingering thought, a day dream that tempts me into to some dark places." DKS About the CD This CD is an intimate, quirky, visceral and often raw set of musical mediations for solo piano. All tracks but the two covers ("Never is Now" "Yellow Hammer", a graphic score) are unedited 1st takes of free improvisations, created without sketches or any preconceptions, just Zen-inspired surrender to the muse at the moment of recording. About the Artist Leslie has worked professionally since 1973 in jazz, musical theater, cabaret, concert and avant garde venues as an improvising pianist, composer/arranger, vocal performance artist and classical soprano--from duos to more than a dozen improvising performers. She performs all genres of music, breathing new life into concert and club formats with eclectic juxtapositions, an approachable performance style and wit. Leslie's stylistic range includes jazz, classical song, avant-garde improvisation, opera, modern classical, cabaret, oratorio, performance art and electronic

music repertoire. As a pianist and composer, Leslie combines post-bop, avant garde and free jazz elements with Impressionist, Serialist, Minimalist and Aliatoric classical music vocabulary. She counts such diverse musicians amongst her formative influences as Messaien, Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Berio, Satie, Bill Evans, Jaki Byard, Cecil Taylor, Paul Bley, Martial Solal, Andrew Hill and Keith Jarrett. Leslie's voice combines a warm, round, full lyric soprano and a mezzo-like lower register. She sings in 8 languages and has no fear of spoken word, sprech-stimme, overtone chanting, vocal noises, electronic processors or even a child-like plaint! Leslie has been privileged to work with and perform for many contemporary composers on performances of their works, including Steve Reich, Iannis Xenakis, Morgan Powell, Sal Martirano, Ralph Shapey, Zack Browning, Robert Fleischman, Jackson MacLow and Anne Tardos. In 1994, Leslie performed Anne Tardos' photo-poetry collage in 5 languages, Cat Licked the Garlic, for speaker/singer with multimedia projections, for the Beat Poetry Conference sponsored by Naropa Institute. Leslie received a grant in 1997 for the performance of original compositions for voice and string ensembles at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA). Leslie is also a poet. By her teens, Leslie showed an aptitude for performing modern music and jazz. Originally from the Chicago area, Leslie began her professional career as a symphonic french hornist and jazz singer while in high school and college. Leslie attended the University of Illinois as a double-major in performance in classical voice and french horn, as well as a minor in jazz studies/composition, including private study with jazz pianist Tony Caramia, serial composer/electronic pioneer/jazz pianist Sal Martirano and composer/jazz trombonist Morgan Powell. Leslie later pursued professional studies in jazz piano with jazz pianist/composer Garry Dial (Manhattan School of Music New School), and as an operatic singer with Elizabeth Mannion (Aspen Festival), Katherine Rosos-Edison, (formerly Banff Art Institute of Chicago) and Richard Boldrey (Lyric Opera of Chicago Northwestern University). From 1980-1992 while living in Aspen CO and Sun Valley ID, Leslie primarily pursued other interests in spirituality and holistic healing. In Aspen, she performed as a singer for several seasons with the Crystal Palace Cabaret. She returned to performing regularly professionally on moving to the Denver area in 1993.

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