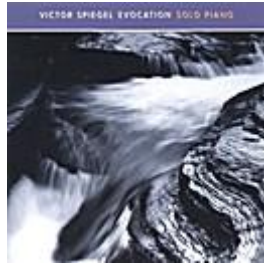


Mp3 Victor Spiegel - Evocation



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Victor uses ragas, flamenco, gamelan and jazz to create elegant, fiery, introspective piano pieces. 9 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: New Age, LATIN: Flamenco Details: Victor Spiegel, Evocation (Mangoid, 2002)

Apart from being the driving force behind the ensemble Darvish, Victor Spiegel performs individually. The CD Evocation is a recording of his solo piano compositions and, like the self-titled Darvish album, this is vintage Spiegel. Not only is he a pianist with astounding technical abilities, his interpretations are also highly original and sophisticated. Spiegel's versatility as a composer and arranger is further underscored by his apparent genius for incorporating a wide variety of musical styles from around the world. For Evocation he has borrowed from jazz, American folk, Turkish, Spanish, Jewish as well as mainstream western classical music traditions. The most amazing piece on this album is an adaptation of Indonesian gamelan music. Originally performed by a metallaphone orchestra consisting of a plethora of percussionists, Spiegel pulls it off to play a piano solo combining blues with gamelan scales. The result is a truly amazing blend that has retained an authentic Indonesian sound. In particular the central part of "American Gamelan," where the tropical tones, splashing off Spiegel's piano like raindrops, will transpose the listener's imagination to a temple courtyard on the Indonesian island of Bali at the high of the monsoon season. The CD's opening number is a statement of Spiegel's spiritual approach to music. Aside from his work as a professional musician and composer, he is also a practicing mystic. With "How Many Eyes" he reflects on the unique perspective that every human being has of both his inner self and the surrounding world. Consequently, experiences evoke different responses in every one of us. In that sense the composition is a celebration of the essence of individualism. This theme is further elaborated in the next track, "Sunrise on the Blue Nowhere," which is also covered on the Darvish album and recalls a transpacific sailing voyage. Is there a connection between Spiegel's adherence to a mystical order of

medieval Ottoman origin and his choice of a Turkish tone pattern for the composition "Taxim"? Although he himself has reservations regarding the "barbaric" piano's suitability for illustrating the delicateness of Turkish and Persian lute music, I think Spiegel's contemplative rendition gives the listeners more than a fleeting impression of the depth and subtlety of Middle Eastern spiritual music. Further examples of synthesizing East and West in music are given in the two Indian raga compositions on this album. With his relentless dedication to practice, Spiegel learned to play sitar in order to get a real feeling for raga composition. I especially want to mention "Raga in C." The penultimate track of Evocation fits seamlessly with the preceding number, a Mahler-inspired composition for which the Sufi master has given way to the maestro. To describe "Soon Enough," words like "lyrical," "haunting" and "subdued" come to mind. These two numbers are sufficient proof that Kipling's saying "East is East, and West is West and never the twain shall meet" does at least not apply to music. At the other end of the spectrum stands "Spain," a temperamental and rhythmic number in which the keys almost explode under the pianist's dexterity. Another contrast is provided by the album's closing track, "Shekinah." Although referring to a Jewish blessing this composition has a tempo more reminiscent of Africa. With this Spiegel shows again his ability to fuse seemingly juxtapositioned styles. The term "evocation" has a range of connotations, and like the word, this album arouses our imagination, stirs up emotions and raises the spirit, calling on the listener to open up his mind to a multiplicity of impressions. - Rambles written by Carool Kersten published 15 February 2003

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