

# Mp3 Walden Chamber Players - Sun Threads, Music By Augusta Read Thomas



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A collection of chamber music works by renowned composer Augusta Read Thomas, performed by the Walden Chamber Players. Thomas's music exudes vibrancy and a rich palette of colors and is marked by a sophisticated musical language that is all her own. 9 MP3 Songs in this album (63:08) ! Related styles: CLASSICAL: Chamber Music, CLASSICAL: Contemporary People who are interested in Kronos Quartet Pierre Boulez should consider this download. Details: Heart and soul in the breathtaking music of a thoughtful contemporary composer...reveals a lively, probing mind allied to a beating heart.

--Gramophone Magazine, Donald Rosenberg In listening to this chamber music by Thomas, you enter an intimate world of transcendent rhythmic narrative and spirited, fluidly connected structural units.

Instruments are the human dramatis personae in Thomas theater of idiomatic exploration and modern balance between motivic design and formal unity. The instruments of Thomas chamber music are candidly vocal both conversant and soloistic - and technically and emotionally specific, precise, and virtuosic. Thomas characteristic aesthetic of imaginative, ethereal craftsmanship, and her rich and striving tonal palate shine. Especially poignant are the openings of Thomas pieces, which embody a spiritual originality and sense of unique, emergent rhythmic innovation within very real emotional colors. The gravity of pitch choices and musical directions to the musicians, such as majestic, are tempered by the ethereal weightlessness of the instruments rhythmic recitation. Each work portrays a sacred genesis of sotto voce intervallic exploration into fluent, intricate timbral, rhythmic, and emotional dialogue between instruments. Remarkable is how each instrument exists in its own idiomatic sphere and yet is able to emerge from, recede, and transform into the current sonic topography and solo instrumental declamations. Mathematical subdivisions and recitative rhythmic elaboration are never merely gestural

filler between exclamatory landmarks; the highly deliberate and diverse rhythmic profiles within Thomas chamber works create the music's deep and characteristic motivic and emotional fiber. The organic, moving association of tonal language and rhythm creates a palpable, highly specific trajectory for each piece. The seamlessness of structural joints in Thomas's work augments her pieces' emotional reach and immediacy and the human and highly accessible local emotional charge of the music as communicated to the musician through Thomas's performance directions noted in the scores.

Walden Chamber Players

Walden Chamber Players is comprised of twelve dynamic artists in various combinations of string, piano, and wind ensembles. The wide variety of instrumental groupings possible with this ensemble allows for great versatility and eclectic programming, a hallmark of the Walden Chamber Players. Founded in 1997, the Walden Chamber Players present educational curricula and concerts in a format that highlights the belief that music is the human experience translated into sound. Programs are designed to present rarely heard works by composers of the past as well as music by contemporary composers in a conscious effort to broaden the musical horizon of the audience. Walden presents a new concept of a classical concert both in content and presentation. We draw from a rich palette of sources and styles, mixing and matching the works of both classical and contemporary composers with an eye to new understandings and discoveries. Concerts often feature the use of multi-media, giving the audience a broader appreciation of a certain time period and enabling the listener to make a connection between the artist, the creative process and society at-large, often mutually influencing forces, thereby creating a richer context.

Members of the Walden Chamber Players are current and former members of such prestigious musical organizations as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Pops, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Artistic Director Christof Huebner is a member and Artistic Director of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Members of the ensemble perform at leading festivals throughout the United States and abroad. Ensemble members are also on the faculty of many of New England's premier musical teaching institutions, such as the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston University, and the Boston Conservatory of Music.

Performers on this CD: Laura Ahlbeck, oboe Yehonatan Berick, violin Joel Pitchon, violin Christof Huebner, viola Ashima Scripp, cello Jonathan Bass, piano Augusta Read Thomas

Described in the prestigious Grove Music reference series as one of the most sought-after American composers, Augusta Read Thomas was born in Glen Cove, New York in 1964. Trained at

Northwestern, where she was taught by Alan Stout, at Yale, where she studied composition with Jacob Druckman, and at the Royal Academy of Music, she has served as the first female composition professor at the Eastman School of Music. Achieving tenure at 33, she left Eastman to become Wyatt Professor of Composition at Northwestern University; both professorships she held concurrently with her position as Mead Composer-in-Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Thomas already profound understanding of individual instrumental, orchestral, and vocal possibilities found further expression and fulfillment with her Mead residency at the CSO, a post which began in May 1997 and extended through June 2006. In 2006 she bravely left her tenured and chaired Northwestern professorship to devote herself entirely to composition. Her work has been championed by Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez and other distinguished conductors including Lorin Maazel, Sir Andrew Davis, Christoph Eschenbach, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Oliver Knussen, Seiji Ozawa, Mstislav Rostropovich, David Robertson, Gerard Schwarz, Ludovic Morlot, Marin Alsop, and Cliff Colnot. She has received commissions from many outstanding musical institutions including the Berlin Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, NDR German Radio Orchestra, the National Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, Radio France, the BBC Proms, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra de Paris, the London Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and by Chanticleer, all of whom have performed her work. Inspired by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and its musicians, whose particular instrumental strengths she captured in her music, Thomas composed nine luminous and important works during the Mead residency. Her ninth work, *Astral Canticle*, a double concerto for flute, violin, and orchestra (2005), premiered by the CSO with Daniel Barenboim conducting, and soloists Mathieu Dufour, flute, and Robert Chen, violin, was one of two finalists for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Music. Thomas used her CSO Mead Residency as a potent forum for new music beyond her own composition. She created an innovative institution within the institution of the CSO *MusicNOW* and through its existence she was and remains a powerful advocate for the performance of new music in Chicago. With her highly refined and intellectual judgment about music, she placed the spotlight on the new music of others, delivering many public and preconcert lectures, and speaking about her own and others music in public, becoming the center of a new music community in Chicago as an essential part of her CSO residency and beyond it. Thomas understanding of new music and her warmth in conveying the music's message have been highlighted by one as discerning and analytical as Anthony Tommasini. He noted how in a pre-concert discussion Thomas was gracious and

inviting, Tommasini sharing with his wide New York Times readership how helpful it was to get to know the composer through her verbal presentation. In this same welcoming spirit, Thomas made it her mission to be a force in gathering composers of Chicago around her, fostering a warm sense of community, just as she does in advocating new American music through her chairmanship of the board of the American Music Center (a founding board member of the AMC was Aaron Copland). Wynne Delacoma, then music critic of the Chicago Sun Times, wrote that Thomas filled a gaping hole in the musical life of the city of Chicago, where it was difficult to find contemporary music being played until August Read Thomas came along. Delacoma described how she fought to create the CSOs contemporary music series, MusicNOW, showcasing a wide range of composers and selecting the very best of the great number of scores sent to Maestro Daniel Barenboim and Pierre Boulez. Anthony Tommasini of the New York Times pinpointed in his writing Thomas great strength as a composer: her vivid ear for instrumental color. Hers is a very individual musical language that seeks to grip the heart and to take risks, expressed in the most modern and abstract musical voice. In the six chamber works on this CD, one experiences Thomas individualistic sound, governed by her own sense of color, form, harmony, and the inspiration of nature, poetry, spirituality, and her own interpretation of jazz. Notes by Victoria S.D.Aschheim

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