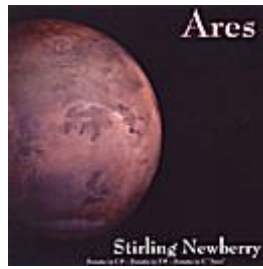


Mp3 Stirling Newberry - Ares



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Three Piano Sonatas, including "Ares, A Sonata as Prelude to Disaster in Iraq" 10 MP3 Songs

CLASSICAL: Contemporary, CLASSICAL: Traditional Details: In October of 2002, it was clear to me that America was inexorably committed to going to war with Iraq, and that because of the dismal quality of American executive leadership, the result was destined to be a costly and bloody failure. This sonata is both the sound of my banging my head against the wall as excuses and shoddy rationalizations were presented to deny what was being voted on on the floor of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and a vision of what would have to come afterwards. Every era has its peculiar means of evoking humor, and it is almost always related to the culturally indispensable. In the Age of the Enlightenment, where rapier exchanges of words could raise or crush expectations, the coin of the realm was wit. In the Romantic, which used exaggeration for emotional effect, and worshiped nature, the grotesque moved to the front. In the modern, it was irony - "You would shoot me for saying this, if you knew I was saying it." In the socially collective world of the post-modern, embarrassment was the loss of face that launched a thousand sitcom episodes. In our new era people live and die by systems they adopt, and belief in the group and its ethos is the key to success. We are all gung ho. In such a world, "snark" has become the new kind of humor. It is reductio ad absurdum set to laughter - taking internal inconsistency, and by faux sincerity exploding it for all to see. Its pinnacle practitioners are often pseudonymous - Digby, Billmon and Jesus General to name three. The first movement of the Sonata in C, entitled "There Will Be War" after an essay I wrote for Bob Fertik's democrats is snark, set to music. It takes the tropes of heroic war film vocabulary - the sonar blips of the sub hunt, the soaring upward harmonic marching, and undercuts them with vicious bass attack. It is ferocious music, a report on the age of Fox News America, and some might prefer to start with the second movement. The second movement is a statement on the reverse side of

the coin - peace. But not peace as a product that we hope our leaders will provide, but peace as a principle. If the continual edging around opposition of a failed from its inception war has any lesson, it is that leaders cannot be any more moral than the core of the people who elect them. It must be from the public, and not the public servant, that the moral will and ethical force to eschew violent fiat as a means of economic advantage must come. The second movement is a painting in sound of the heroism of opposition to this terrible war. As with all dramatic mistakes, there will be those who do not live to see the other side - one of the people who valiantly worked her self to her grave was Maria Leavey. Unheralded in her life, she died for want of health insurance, only days before the elevation of Nancy Pelosi to Speaker of the House of Representatives - something which Maria had worked so very hard for. For her, and for all of the civilians and combatants who have sacrificed in these terrible days - this sonata is my small stone set beside a long road.

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