

## Mp3 Dennis Ruff - At Play



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This CD contains classical music for the early 21st Century. The title, *At Play*, gives a solid clue to the nature of the music: 15 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, CLASSICAL: Orchestral Details: The music on this CD continues my exploration of chamber combinations begun with the L.A. Frames of Mind CD of 2004 and extended in the "Concerto for Piano Strings" and the "Serenade for Chamber Ensemble Percussion" that accompany the eponymous preludes on my Twenty-Four Preludes for Piano CD from early 2005. *At Play* is a continuation of process for me in another respect, as well: It contains music that seeks to please the ear and not to disquiet the spirit, unlike much of the art music of the century just past. (And here I must insist that I do not mean to denigrate said music -- being, in fact, a long-term fan of the "give 'em hell" school of composition). Whether this shift from my earlier music is being driven by a change in attitude as to what should be the social function of the art, or has been occasioned by a desire to mitigate, in whatever respect I might, the often dismal prospect we citizens of the world seem to be facing in the early years of the 21st Century, I cannot say. I suspect both are "at play" to one degree or another. All of the above was written previous to the terrorist bombings in London of 7/7/2005. A few days before these events, I had completed composition of the first movement of the *Sinfonia*. I had intended that the *Sinfonia* would celebrate and extend the over-the-top spirit of the tango first movement. I now knew that I could not in good conscience continue in that vein. Over the following days, waking dreams brought me images -- grainy, black and white images of some human drama emotionally related to the London disasters, but tangential to it. As I continued to work on the *Sinfonia*, I began to feel that the music was developing as an accompaniment to these images: It was becoming a score for a Silent Movie in my head. Once I had that title, the drama divided into four segments: Festival...The Parting...War March...The Letter. A sadly common, ageless human story. One could argue that the tragic character of

the completed Sinfonia places it uncomfortably on a CD titled At Play. Indeed, and the same might be said, in hindsight, of my choice, early in 2005, of the photo from my family history that I incorporated in the cover design for the new CD. We have in this photo a group of children snapped on a Spring day in Waterloo, Iowa in 1941 -- all unaware that mere months later, the attack by Imperial Japan upon the American navel fleet in Pearl Harbor would drastically change their lives forever. At Play? I can say that I retain this title for the CD in full knowledge of the range of meaning inherent in the phrase.

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