

Mp3 Jace Vek - Vision



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Relaxing and uplifting solo piano virtuosity. 14 MP3 Songs NEW AGE: New Age, CLASSICAL: Contemporary Details: Review by Kathy Parsons, Solo Piano Publications "Vision" is a stunning collection of magnificently composed and performed piano solos by Jace Vek. As I listened the first couple of times, the piano teacher in me smugly thought, "Now here is a pianist with years and years of training!" I went to Vek's website, and was completely amazed to read that he was self-taught up to his successful audition for a music scholarship to the Creative Arts program at West Virginia University in 1990. A few years later, he was chosen by Marvin Hamlisch to perform an original composition at Pittsburgh's Heinz Hall, receiving a standing ovation from a sold-out crowd. At the age of 28, Vek's musical career looks extraordinarily promising. His compositions are definitely classical in scope, and his playing style is often "big" in the tradition of Rachmaninoff and Horowitz. He is equally capable of a charming and gentle touch on "Songatina" and "Mari's Eyes", indicating that Vek can "do it all!" I read that the first seven tracks indicate Vek's ability to compose and perform "contemporary/new age pieces", and the other seven pieces are more classical and show his "impressive technical ability". Since the definitions of "new age piano" and "contemporary classical" blur more all the time, I don't hear a big difference in the styles, which is good. "Gate C-61" opens the CD with a quiet, plaintive little melody that gradually builds and gathers energy, explodes in crashing chords, and then quiets back to a gorgeous melody that again builds energy very gradually, seamlessly melting into "Romance". These pieces are an excellent preview of what is to come on the album, as they show Vek's tender side as well as his power. "Jennifer's Largo" is a favorite, with its gentle melancholy. "Mari's Eyes" has a dark Russian feel to it, but swirls a bit like a waltz - very beautiful! "Tocatta in G# Minor" is full of flash and bravura, sounding like it is from another time. "Kaleidoscopic Etude" is also big, flashy, and fun, borrowing phrases from classical music here and

there. "Pastoral Moment" quiets the mood but is full of energy and optimism. The three Tadet Variations and Intro are somewhat more abstract and free-form, but hold together beautifully, again demonstrating the range of Vek's emotional and technical playing. These are perhaps the strongest works on the album. "Overture to Nemacolin" (the resort and spa where Vek has been resident pianist for the past eleven years) closes the CD with a pensive, hauntingly beautiful melody. This is a very exciting album from a very promising young artist! Sure to be on my "10 Best Albums" of the year list, I give "Vision" my highest recommendation.

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