

# Mp3 Emile Pandolfi - In The Holiday Spirit



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Elegant, fun, sometimes touching, piano solo arrangements of well-loved Christmas tunes, all imbued with Emile's special magic that will make you want to dance, sing, or just smile. 13 MP3 Songs EASY LISTENING: Mood Music, EASY LISTENING: Background Music Show all album songs: In The Holiday Spirit Songs Details: In the Holiday Spirit Review by John Pendley The Heart of the Matter, December 23, 2005 Music, like any other art form, is a way of knowing. Through music, I can experience both the creating and the performing artists' visions of life, love, death, truth, joy, whimsy, sorrow, the supernatural, or whatever they wish me to know through the music they make. Emile Pandolfi knows all this; I've heard him say that if a song doesn't speak to him, if he doesn't know its heart, and if he doesn't know how to reveal that heart to his audience, he doesn't play it. In The Holiday Spirit is an album which displays Emile's prodigious talent for getting to the heart of the matter, for experiencing the music anew, and then for allowing his audience to experience it with him. He invites us-no, he charms and seduces us into a diverse array of emotional worlds. It's an album of music for the joy of the season, in the traditional holiday spirit. But it is not merely that. It is also a collection for repeated listening and genuine involvement. Emile's playing touches the heart of The Coventry Carol. Though this is a carol to the holy child, it is in a minor key and darker than one might expect, for it begins knowing His end: Woe is me, poor Child, for Thee, And ever mourn and say; For Thy parting nor say nor sing, By, by, lully, lullay. Emile's arrangement opens in wistful simplicity, and mounts with an ever-growing feeling of melancholy. Could that persistent arpeggiated figuration deep in the bass be inexorable time itself, rolling onward toward the child's tragic destiny? We end as we began, in simple mourning, the opening theme in its original, modest guise. But it's not in Emile's nature to be in a dark mood for long, and he brightens our spirits immediately with The Christmas Waltz. This is pure Pandolfi magic, with a spirit so charming and

gay that even I can dream of waltzing. The pearly strings of flawlessly articulated treble notes that Emile laces together, in melody and adornment, summon images of fine jewelry on elegant throats. And the sensational counterpoint in the left hand, near the end of the piece, swirls like the dancers themselves. A small, rare, unexpected, spectacularly rendered masterpiece! There's usually a healthy dose of humor somewhere in a collection of Emile's arrangements, usually not far from the surface. After a tasteful introduction, his first statement of the melody in Home for the Holidays is a wistful sigh of pure nostalgia, much as yours or mine might be: "Oh, there's no place like home for the holidays." (Sigh!) There are some rolled chords and a few clichs, just the right whiff of sentimentality. Sort of like you or I might play it-assuming I could play. Then ... what's THIS? The second verse breaks into a groove of stride-jazz piano in an album Christmas carols! After a verse and chorus that fall into a warm and cozy pace, our wayward boy really starts cooking; this thing really struts and swaggers! OK, jazz and Christmas has been done before, but by jazz pianists, not-to my knowledge-in this kind of album. This is one of the surprises that marks Emile's imagination, one of the proofs that he really listens. And it's genuinely funny. A professor of mine once described genius to me as Picasso seeing a bull's head when he looked at the handlebars and seat of a bicycle. When Picasso welded the two together, the rest of us saw it, too. Juxtaposition is the key element, and originality of vision. I'm not claiming that there's genius at play here, though I have some opinions on the subject, but I'd certainly never have thought of putting the first, melancholy verse of Home for the Holidays together with several foot-stomping jazz verses to complete the wonderful version that Emile has created. If his rendering of I Saw Three Ships is the most impressive demonstration of his virtuosity on this album, A Cradle in Bethlehem proves that Emile Pandolfi appreciates the power of plain, unadorned beauty. This is a cradle song which I had not previously heard; now, I'll probably listen to it more often than anything in this collection. It begins, "A Mother tonight is rocking/A cradle in Bethlehem." A halting left hand pattern limps tenderly beneath a one note melody of singular beauty. How can such unpretentious plainness touch so deeply? Because we hear, in the hesitations of that left hand, the beating of the uncertain mother's faltering heart as she sings her lullaby. (As W. B. Yeats wonders in his poem The Mother of God, how must Mary have felt knowing whom she had born?) Slowly, intensity and complexity build as wise men come to worship; ancient Prophets and present angels are evoked as the music swells. This magnificent drama, however, is understated. Emile never tries to overwhelm the listener with huge fortissimos; there is always the feeling that, no matter how

loudly he is playing, there could always be more, and I'm grateful to him for his impeccable taste, for sparing me the bombast. Throughout this beautiful song, we have never wandered far from the manger, and at the end, we return to mother and child. I may be wrong, but the once faltering left hand seems a little steadier, now. Most warmly recommended. John Pendley About the Artist Critics call Emile Pandolfi's music "luxurious arrangements with an ethereal quality;" that he plays in a "free-flowing, emotional manner that seems to go to the music's very soul." (Stereophile Magazine) While keeping the melody uppermost, this solo pianist applies his classical technique to Broadway and Popular Music alike, all in addition to his classical performance. This unique mixture of passion and elegance has resulted in making him one of the top selling artists in the alternative market. Classically trained since the age of five, Pandolfi took a road-less-traveled by most serious artists and created his own inspiring arrangements of Popular Music. He began recording them in 1991, and has accumulated a catalog of 25 different albums and compilations. Without a doubt, when you hear the music of Emile Pandolfi, you will experience the heart and soul of one of today's finest pianists. Emile Pandolfi is one of today's most accomplished popular pianists. Classically trained from age 5, Emile applies his outstanding technique to familiar songs from pop and Broadway. A Steinway Artist, it has been said that "he plays in a manner that seems to go to the music's very soul" (Stereophile Magazine) He performs what he loves - arranging meaningful melodies with all the emotion and technique at his disposal. The result is so fully satisfying that fans have asked "how many hands does he HAVE?" (Only two, really!) Both in the recording studio and in live performance, this is piano at its best.

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