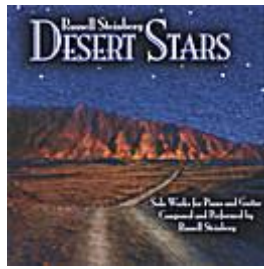


Mp3 Russell Steinberg - Desert Stars



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Collection of classical music for piano and classical guitar in a romantic extended tonal style with influences of Ravel, Bartok, Debussy, and Copland 22 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, CLASSICAL: New Age Details: DESERT STARS: Solo Works for Piano and Guitar Composed and Performed by RUSSELL STEINBERG About the music... This CD is a collection of my solo pieces for piano and classical guitar. . The music is often quiet and reflective, but sings in warm tonal colors surrounded by a kind of hazy harmonic resonance. As a kid, I liked to hold down the pedal on the piano and blur the harmonies-that may be the origin of this hazy resonance that threads through this music, which otherwise has no pretensions of being modern or innovative. Some brief notes follow: Joy in Sea is an exuberant and playful romp of a piano prelude. The title is a pun on its tonal center (C) and inspirational origin: I had just moved near the ocean in Pacific Palisades, CA. The Five Preludes for Guitar are simple romantic pieces for classical guitar. The second prelude, "Daffodils," is dedicated to Karen Whalen, a next door neighbor who confided that one night my music had turned her from suicidal thoughts -rather the opposite of what I was hearing from other neighbors! All three Floating Preludes for Piano glow with an upper register resonance. The wispy phrases of "Clouds" unfold and float along in the extremes of high and low registers. Within the miniature world of "Clocks" is a kind of mad ticking that courses through an angry cosmos. "Elysium" is a nod to the special sonic worlds of French composer Maurice Ravel, but with my personal quiet treble resonances. The arches and ornaments of Arabesque are inspired by two famous classical works of the same name, one by Robert Schumann and the other by Claude Debussy. Amazing Grace' Variations was actually a composition assignment to produce stylistic variations on this famous hymn tune. The first variation features the tune upside down in the style of Erik Satie's Gymnopedies, the second variation sets the tune in an impressionist blues style, the third uses

tone clusters alla Bartok, the fourth is atonal and spacy, and the fifth turns the tune into an Americana style chorale. 5 Finger Pieces for Piano are dedicated to a dear group of adult composition students. I tried to compose the simplest music I could imagine for them. Each piece begins with both hands in a particular "five finger" position from which they never leave! The last piece, "Jim," is my shortest composition. Jim Bishop helped me produce a recording of my first symphony and contributed creatively with his graphic talent to my AudioMaps of the Beethoven Symphonies. How horrible and ironic that just a year later Jim's life was cut tragically short in an automobile accident. This CD is dedicated in his memory. We all miss Jim exceedingly; the world is different without him. Desert Stars is a set of three improvisatory fantasies that I conceived during nights stargazing in Death Valley. In the first movement, harmonies pulse and bleed together through the held piano pedal. A quasi lullaby is ripped apart in the second movement, unable to hold together in the vastness of space. The last movement is a gentle and nostalgic reinterpretation of the pulsing chords from the first prelude. BIOGRAPHY Russell Steinberg is a composer, performer, and conductor with a Ph.D. in Music from Harvard University, an M.M. from the New England Conservatory, and a B.A. from UCLA. Recent commissions include the Daniel Pearl Foundation, the Jewish Center for Culture and Creativity, and the Westchester Conservatory Mentor Orchestra. Steinberg's music has been performed in the United States and abroad, including concerts in Los Angeles, Boston, New York, Baltimore, Aspen, Connecticut, San Francisco, New Jersey, Vermont, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and recently Israel. His first symphony, CityStrains, was commissioned jointly by the Westchester Symphony in New York and the Hopkins Symphony in Baltimore. His awards include an ASCAP Young Composers Grant, Composers Inc. and NACUSA prizes, MacDowell and Aspen Fellowships, and First Prize in the New World String Quartet competition. He is the founder and current Director of Music at the Stephen Wise Music Academy of Los Angeles and Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Youth Orchestra. He also regularly teaches courses at UCLA in music composition and music listening. His writings include a novel approach to orchestral listening titled AudioMaps to the Beethoven Symphonies and several award-winning CD-ROMs including the Voyager Company's Richard Strauss: Three Tone Poems. His early music teacher, Dorothy Compinsky, encouraged him to compose while introducing him to piano, classical guitar, and violin. He continued composition studies most notably with Leon Kirchner, Arthur Berger, Elaine Barkin, and Kenneth Klauss; piano with Earle C. Voorhies and Salome Arkatov; and guitar with Ronald Purcell.

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