

CLASSICAL MUSIC SENTINEL

FEATURE REVIEW by Jean-Yves Duperron



Release Date: 10/11/2011

Label: Albany Records Catalog #: 1298

Composer: John Adams, Joan Tower, Daniel Crozier, Chen Yi, ...

Performer: Heidi Louise Williams

Number of Discs: 1

Recorded in: Stereo

John Adams - American Berserk

Joan Tower - No Longer Very Clear

- Holding a Daisy

- Or like a...an Engine

- Vast Antique Cubes

- Throbbing Still

Daniel Crozier - Winter Aubade

Chen Yi - Ba Ban

Augusta Read Thomas - Traces

- Reverie: Like Robert Schumann crossed with George Crumb

- Caprice: Like Scarlatti's Baroque Ornamentation crossed with Art Tatum

- Tango: Like Astor Piazzolla crossed with John Coltrane

- Impromptu: Like Stravinsky crossed with Chopin and Thelonious Monk

- Toccata: Like J.S. Bach crossed with BeBop

William Bolcom - 12 New Etudes, Book IV

- Vers le silence

- Hi-jinks

- Hymne à l'amour

An interesting and varied panoply of recent piano works by American composers, written between 1987 and 2009. Ranging from the oft recorded Bolcom and Adams, to the more obscure Crozier and Yi, it presents to us an overview of what American composers have had to say on the piano over the last 25 years. From the percussive and angular American Berserk by John Adams, to the dreamy and Debussy-tinged Winter Aubade by Daniel Crozier, all styles and moods are well on display here. Bolcom's pieces demand the pianist's full emotional attention, while the "off the cuff" improv pieces by Thomas require a strong and sharp technique.

Pianist Heidi Louise Williams has already, after a mere seven years since her 2004 New York debut recital in Lincoln Center, well established her presence and reputation for promoting new music. Previous recordings include collaborative efforts in chamber music and concertante works, so this could be considered her first solo flight, and an impressive display of daredevil technical stunts controlled by a strong emotional pulse it is. In particular her take on the Crozier and Bolcom pieces shows an affinity for detail and a flair for getting inside a musical creation. Williams doesn't just play the music, she lives it.

- Jean-Yves Duperron - October 2011

From: <http://www.classicalmusicsentinel.com/collections/collection-drive-american.html>