



k[NO]Wn Piano

aud 23.446

EAN: 4022143234469



International Piano (2021.12.01)

innocence

Great feature on Jimin Oh-Havenith's current CD project see PDF!



RECORDING FOCUS

Oh-Havenith with her late husband Raymond. She believes strongly in making music part of daily life because of her own struggles as a professional pianist.

self? So I took all the small pieces on *K[NO]Wn Piano* and gave them their own place. The experience felt new and very present. I realised I could also reflect the story of piano music itself, so arranged the pieces chronologically.

Oh-Havenith has received positive feedback from people who love listening to her album with their grandchildren. She believes strongly in making music part of daily life because of her own struggles as a professional pianist.

'I have always tried to find a balance,' she explains. 'I can now say that daily life is the foundation for my music. As Farbridge wrote, "All true creative activity operates only in the state of innocence."

Oh-Havenith's inclusion of Gottschalk is a cause for celebration, as anyone who knows his music will surely agree. It also has a strong personal significance: her late husband Raymond Havenith recorded an album of Gottschalk's music for the German label Musicaophon in 1987. Gottschalk was a great human being. Very modern. He was travelling in America, in his own train with two grand pianos, and played for everyone – including people who had never seen a piano before. He had a really big heart yet never writes an unnecessary note. I love his music.

K[NO]Wn Piano was recorded on a Bösendorfer. 'I can make my own sound on this piano. I have used it for my last four albums, as well as a new Russian programme recorded during the pandemic. Russian music exudes very strong energy, and I think people now are greatly in need of strength. Mussorgsky's Pictures is so powerful. Yet it is never about music power, which is why Mussorgsky and Scriabin are so colourful. Scriabin gives us poetry, while Rachmaninov is grand, generous and deep.'

Oh-Havenith uses Rachmaninov to exemplify her working process: 'It is like mountain climbing: first you see the mountain, beautiful and majestic. As we experience more on the way, this is like a jungle of notes and sound. For me, clearing up the details is the only reality of making music. It's essential to understand the connection between each step or note, and the mountain or piece as a whole.'

This is not a journey that can easily be made alone: 'When you record, you are dependent on so many people. I am lucky to work with a fantastic team: producer Ludger Böckenhoff, engineer/editor Justus Beyer and piano technician Gerd Finkenstein. They give me inspiration and they support me so much. I always think of an album as a Gesamtkunstwerk.'

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