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## CD Feature/ Floraleda Sacchi: "Minimal Harp"

**Great for self-therapeutic purposes: A quality selection inspired by Zen rather than encyclopedic genre definitions.**




Sometimes I feel like throwing away all of my belongings. I picture me grabbing all my boring books, worn-out clothes, old magazines, long-forgotten CDs, redundant pieces of furniture and my TV, throwing them out the window and onto the middle of the street, where they'll smash into a huge pile of plastic and paper. In these daydreams, I of course do not need to need to worry about practical questions such as who will clean up this mess or what I am going to do should I want listen to my favourite albums again. I just stand there with my elbows reclined on the window sill, an entirely empty room in my back and gazing down onto everything I lost. And it feels fantastic.


This notion, rather than any kind of academically inspired

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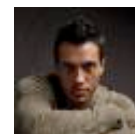
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program, is at the heart of „Minimal Harp“. Instead of setting out to compile or collect a compendium of transcribed works by the usual suspects – Reich, Riley, Young – Florelda Sacchi has made it her mission to illustrate the ongoing search for precision, purity and truth in a selection which is inspired by Zen rather than encyclopedic genre definitions: „When wonders are eliminated and we approach essence, we realise that it contains the intensity and depth of the long path that has led us to that result“, she observes in the liner notes, „and at the same time we find that in itself essence has a simpler, broader, more universal expressive value. In this connection, one of Robert Morris's adages is enlightening: Simplicity of form is not necessarily simplicity of experience.“

It certainly isn't with regards to an album as diverse and expressive as this one. Sacchi has chosen pieces from an eclectic roster of composers she has grouped into four distinct categories: Those researching „the beginning of everything“ (Cowell, Ligeti, Nyman), those dealing with „metamorphosis“ (Glass, Peter Machajdik), „time“ (Lou Harrison, Nicola Campogrande) and „the intrinsic vibration of things“ (Cage, Pärt). Aside from these astute and poignant distinctions, she has also juxtaposed world premiere recordings of popular classics (such as Cage's „A Room“ and „In a Landscape“) with world premiere recordings of pieces dedicated especially to her (Campogrande's „Tililadodin“), contrasted material by figureheads of the minimalist




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movement with pieces by rising talents and fused work based on brittle yet outspoken melodies with astoundingly lyrical rhythm-oriented compositions.

The outcome is an album which feeds from the quality of its music rather than from clever concepts. Regardless of whether she presents Philip Glass' „Metamorphosis“ as a suite of five completely unpretentious and straightforward instrumentals, rebuilds the sacral sonic cathedrals of Pärt as a condensed space of concentration on „Pari intervallo“ or transcends the Indian connotations of Lou Harrison's uplifting „Jahla“ and „Avalokiteshvara“ into a glistening texture of warm pulsation, her message is always the same: The truth we set out to find and understand is universal yet private, pure yet unrefined, clear yet ineffable. In their finest and most accomplished moments, these composers do not „interpret“ essence, but channel and catalyse it, eschewing making a statement in favour of stepping back behind the inbuilt statement implicitly oscillating within the music. The differences in expressing the same object is not so much the result of drastically different aesthetic principals (even though they naturally play a part as well) but of the inherent nature of essence itself. As an instrumentalist, therefore, Sacchi has chosen not so much to approach these pieces by focussing on the underlying scene-affiliations of the composers but by their fundamental aims. Performing all of these works on the Harp is, with all likelihood, not a statement of

emancipatory intent, but a consequential move designed to bring the underlying trains of thought to the fore without factors such as timbre or orchestration getting in the way.

Intriguingly, it has only made some of these performances sound more representative than ever – I'm pretty sure fans of Glass, Cage and Pärt fans will be stunned by these renditions. It's great for self-therapeutic purposes, too: My daydreams of ridding myself of my belongings haven't suddenly ended, but I am contemplating keeping at least „Minimal Harp“ and a CD Player should I ever put my plan into action.

By Tobias Fischer

Homepage: [Floraleda Sacchi](#)  
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By Tobias Fischer, published 2009-01-27

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