

Permutations

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There is a fascinating dichotomy at the heart of this album, one that – for once – produces positive results rather than expressive discord (which is not to say there are no discordant passages). Ravello's advance publicity suggested that Anne Goldberg-Baldwin's programme was one of 'meditative piano music', with all the dreamy, New Age-style meanderings that implies, yet her programme is entitled 'Permutations' – a name one might rather expect as the lead track of something from the High Age of Serialism in the 1960s. Happily, the music goes to neither extreme but explores much of the field between.

None of this is obvious from the album notes, which are bereft of any information on any of the pieces, beyond the fact that those by Háldor Smárason (the full title of which should be *Cold Hands Seeking Tranquillity*), Kevin Baldwin and Alex Burtzos were commissioned by Goldberg-Baldwin, Richard Carrick's *Miniatures* were written in 2019 for her otherwise; and *time leaves traces not etched in stone* is her own composition (from last year).

Smárason's *Cold Hands* (2019) is very much at the meditative end of the spectrum, a delicate and at times dreamy tone picture.

Goldberg-Baldwin's performance sounds definitive, although I cannot help noting her performance duration in excess of 15 minutes where the composer's website states just nine! Despite its rather 1960s-style title, Burtzos's rather free-tonal *Perforations* (2018) is the most lyrical work here, making a nice contrast to Carrick's spikier *Miniatures*.

Two pieces seem to require preparation of the piano, Goldberg-Baldwin's own finely imagined tone picture and the quietly compelling *Five Meditations on Music from Luigi Rossi's Collection* (2017) by one of her former teachers at the Manhattan School of Music, Reiko Fütting. By contrast, Kevin Baldwin's brief *Broken Language* (2022) is more volatile – though not 'prepared' in any way – but none has the textural variety of Chris Cresswell's *this is where I am right now* (2021), accompanied by electronics supplied by the uncredited composer. Goldberg-Baldwin is a most persuasive interpreter, and Ravello's sound is adequate if a little two-dimensional.

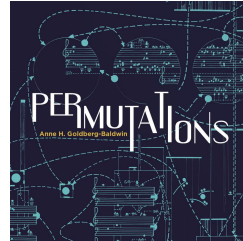
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Cold Hands

Broken Language

Time Leaves Traces

Not Etched in Stone

Perforations

This Is Where I Am

Right Now

Miniatures

5 Meditations on

Music from Luigi

Rossi's Collection

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