

Pierce on Disk

The Newsletter of Pianist Joshua Pierce

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Simply put, Joshua Pierce is one of the world's most prolific, versatile and finest recording and concert artists. With an exceptionally large and widely varied solo and duo (the latter with the wonderful Dorothy Jonas) piano discography and orchestral and chamber repertoire, Joshua stands in the forefront of today's performing musicians.

The above image is the cover of **The Schubert Recordings, Volume I** (MSR Classics 1204) featuring the master's **Sonata in B-flat major, Op. posth, D.960, Allegretto in C minor, D.915** and **Six Moments Musicaux, Op.94, D.780**.

MusicWeb International wrote of this disk, "his is impressive Schubert playing, with judicious pedalling, vivid contrast in tone colour, finely tuned dynamic control and a natural rubato...this is a disc worth hearing, and taster of what may prove to be a valuable Schubert series." American Record Guide said, "[Joshua Pierce] applied his mind and heart to every phrase. Nothing is straightforward; everything is interpreted, and there's a reason behind every gesture. It is nice to hear such thoughtful playing."

Indeed, two more volumes of this series have been issued - **Volume II** (MS 1205), of which Turok's Choice wrote, "Joshua Pierce succeeds brilliantly; every time something repeats, it is varied in the most subtle manner, so that it retains its place in the

structure without becoming redundant. Beautiful music, performed distinctively, with great feeling," and the upcoming **Volume III** (MS 1206).

Since it would take many issues of **Pierce on Disk** to list all of his recordings, we'll just mention a few of the more recent releases. Others will be featured in future issues.



Recently issued, **This Is Gershwin: Complete Works For Piano And Orchestra** on (MSR Classics 1265) is a spectacular collection of Pierce's performances of **Rhapsody In Blue, Second Rhapsody**, the **Piano Concerto In F** and the **Variations On I Got Rhythm** with the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Kirk Trevor. AllMusicGuide wrote, "The placement of the little-played Second Rhapsody at the beginning of the program signals the kind of Gershwin recording this is going to be... Pierce finds "restlessness" in the shifting tempos and melodies of this [**Rhapsody In Blue**], which is a fresh way to look at it, and the complexities of the I Got Rhythm Variations also fare well in his careful reading...This is quite a novel Gershwin disc...Recommended."

We mentioned the wonderful Dorothy Jonas before. 2008 marked the 30th year that the duo-piano team of Pierce and Jonas has been performing. You can find a complete listing of their many recordings at <http://www.jamesarts.com/pierce/>, but for

now, let's highlight **Rachmaninov Symphonic Dances/Romantic Music for Two Pianos** (MSR Classics 1260), with music of Rachmaninov, Saint Saens, Britten, Debussy, Lutoslawski, Arthur Benjamin and Arnold Bax.



Audiophile Audition said this of their career and this disk, “[the Pierce & Jonas two-piano team] have been performing and recording the usually neglected repertory of two-piano music from the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as new works written especially for them, and are one of the top duo-piano teams in the world today. These recordings... constitute a wonderful two-piano concert without a dud in the group...The entire program is a gas, but my favorite [in addition to the Rachmaninov] was the mysterious **Poisoned Fountain** of Bax.”

This, the Schubert series and the Gershwin disk are all available from MSR Classics - <http://www.msacd.com/>.

And now, for something completely different...

Besides his mastery of the old masters, Joshua Pierce is world renowned for his performances of the music of John Cage, Charles Ives, Ivan Wyschnegradsky, Harry Partch, Teo Macero, Karl Stockhausen, La Monte Young, Toru Takemitsu, Swen Sandstrom, Maurice Ohana, Ben Weber, Sofia Gubaidulina and many others.

He's had a long association with the American Festival of Microtonal Music, Inc. (AFMM), having been the organization's

official pianist and Artistic Advisor. In fact, in 1996, AFMM Director Johnny Reinhard brought his realization of Charles Ives' **Universe Symphony** to Alice Tully Hall with Mr. Pierce as pianist. They have performed together throughout Russia, Europe and the United States since 1983.

Pianist Joshua Pierce on the Pitch label (P-200207) is a testament to his amazing range and skill.



With music of Alan Hovhaness, Robert Bonotto, Wyschnegradsky, Roland Moser, Cage, Stephen Konicek, Maurice Ohana and Ives, in live performances with his longtime duo-piano partner Dorothy Jonas and stalwarts of the New York microtonal scene such as AFMM director and bassoonist Johnny Reinhard, Jodie Beder, Dave Eggar, and others, this is a wonderful introduction to a unique musical genre. You can purchase the disk at <http://www.afmm.org/>.

Joshua Pierce on the Web

For more information about Joshua Pierce, including bio, performances, a complete list of CDs, reviews and much more, visit <http://www.jamesarts.com/pierce/> or contact Jeffrey James Arts Consulting at 516-586-3433 or jamesarts@worldnet.att.net.

