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Pure Colors: Music by Judith Lang Zaimont

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Performance ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★

Release Date 2005
Time 55:35

Label
Albany[785]

Album Information
Libretto/Lyrics included with the album

AMG Album ID
W 132448

[Corrections to this Entry?](#)

Review

by Blair Sanderson

A collection of short pieces composed for members of the music faculty at the University of Minnesota, *Pure Colors*, Judith Lang Zaimont's 2005 album on Albany, has the relaxed, comfortable feeling that comes through a composer's familiarity with a close circle of performers. Although these pieces were created largely in an academic milieu, they should have a much wider appeal, partly because Zaimont's mildly modernist gestures, lush harmonies, and gentle melodic inflections make her music accessible, but also because her colleagues' communicative performances make this album more pleasurable than a collection of ad hoc, one-time read-throughs. The wide range of dates suggests that this album might be intended as a retrospective, but the early *Valse Romantique* for flute (1974) falls well outside the main body of work and may be considered separately. Even though Immanuel Davis' graceful performance fits temperamentally with those of the other musicians here, this flute solo feels less substantial than the later pieces and less connected to Zaimont's mature language. More compelling and consistent with the other pieces are 'Tanya' Poems (1999), in cellist Tanya Remenikova's vivid, *recitativo* interpretation, and *Astral...a mirror life on the astral plane* (2004), a fluid clarinet solo that John Anderson delivers with a smooth tone and lively articulation. Zaimont's quasi-operatic setting of two texts by Eudora Welty, *Virgie Rainey* -- Two Narratives for soprano, mezzo-soprano and piano (2002) is performed with high theatricality by Wendy Zaro-Mullins, Jean del Santo, and Timothy Lovelace, respectively. For those who appreciate lighter fare, there is the humorous 'Bubble-Up' Rag -- Concertpiece for flute and piano (2001), which flutist Davis and pianist Nanette Kaplan Solomon toss off with abundant charm and pizzazz. But the most convincing piece of the CD is the mysterious *Wizards* -- Three Magic Masters (2003), in which Zaimont's ideas are most cogently and completely expressed in rich harmonies and crystalline rhythms; pianist Young-Ah Tak renders this ornate piano study with drama and flair. Albany's recording is exceptionally clear and focused, so everything sounds wonderfully realistic and resonant.

Performances

Composer	Title	Year	Time
Judith Lang Zaimont	Wizards - Three Magic Masters, for piano	2005	8:31
Judith Lang Zaimont	Astral... a mirror life on the astral plane, for clarinet	2005	8:54
Judith Lang Zaimont	Virgie Rainey, two narratives for soprano, mezzo & piano	2005	11:42
Judith Lang Zaimont	A Woman of Valor (eshet hayil), for voice & string quartet	2005	4:29
Judith Lang Zaimont	Tanya Poems, for cello	2005	12:25
Judith Lang Zaimont	Bubble Up Rag, concertpiece for flute & piano	2005	9:34