

GÉNIA

G. PROKOFIEV PIANO BOOK NO. 1



Artist: GéNIA
Title: G. Prokofiev Piano Book No. 1

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When Gabriel Prokofiev first heard virtuoso pianist GéNIA, he was so inspired by her incredible control of the piano and expressive touch that he put aside previous reservations and decided to write a book of piano pieces for her. Initially he tried to veer away from the more traditional piano writing influences that had informed his early musical life (Chopin, Bach, S Prokofiev, Bartok et al). However, as the compositions started to take shape, it became evident that this connection to the past was unavoidable; with GéNIA encouraging Gabriel not to suppress his instincts. Yet this Piano Book is by no means a work of nostalgia; lurking under the surface of what occasionally sound like traditional harmonies and textures are subtle discords, pedal effects, rhythmic distortions, and even techniques that would normally be found in electronic and urban music settings.

Piano Book No. 1 contains all the usual, or should we say 'unusual' traits of Gabriel Prokofiev's compositional style. There is a strong descriptive character in many of the pieces with 'Cold Wooden Window' clearly alluding to the shared Russian ancestry of Gabriel and GéNIA. 'Tough Moves' combines a hip-hop feel with romantic tremolo effects and 'Fky House' employs low bass clusters to work in the manner of drum patterns in dance music. Then 'Glass swing' is a 21st century bastardisation of Bach-styled 2-part invention. Gabriel's method is perhaps comparable to the poly-stylistic writing of Schnikte, and his intuitive approach reveals that modern classical music can be sensitive and unafraid of bridging the gap between seemingly disparate musical worlds.

GéNIA's subtlety of expression combined with her faultless technique enable her to unite the contrasting elements of Gabriel's music seamlessly, creating effortless playing. Both performer and composer are well known for their pioneering attitudes in the contemporary classical world, with GéNIA having previously commissioned over 20 pieces for piano and electronics and developed a multidimensional playing technique called Piano-Yoga®. GéNIA's UK debut in 2001 was met with critical acclaim and Nonclassical are proud to release their 2nd album together.

Piano Book No. 1 connects more to the classical tradition than previous Nonclassical releases, showing that though they may present classical music in a *non-classical* way, Nonclassical are still interested in continuing the legacy of classical music and moving it forward. One of the aims of GéNIA and Gabriel's collaboration was to create an intimate sounding piano album that connected to the classic recordings of the past. This led to 88.2k digital recording of a hand-picked Steinway D-Series piano which was then mastered through analogue tape and vintage valve equipment, without compression.

Tracklisting:

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| 1. Sketch | 2:45 |
| 2. Rockaby | 3:55 |
| 3. Glass Swing | 3:56 |
| 4. Tough Moves | 2:38 |
| 5. Entrance | 3:44 |
| 6. Key Pulses (Wind up Scott) | 2:35 |
| 7. Side Dance | 2:54 |
| 8. Clock Watt | 5:16 |
| 9. Cold Wooden Window | 3:01 |
| 10. Black Sauce | 3:47 |
| 11. Fky House | 2:32 |

An interesting foot-note for classical enthusiasts; mid-way through writing the piano book, Gabriel discovered that two generations earlier his and GéNIA's families had worked together. Vladimir Horowitz (GéNIA's great-grand-uncle) notably made the world premier recording of Sergei Prokofiev's (Gabriel's grand-father) 7th piano sonata in 1945, among other key performances of his piano works.

Sergei Prokofiev described Horowitz as a "*miraculous pianist*"

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