

## Nicolas Bacri - Piano Music (2011)



01. *Prélude et fugue op. 91* [0:05:20.33] 02. *Sonate no. 2 op. 105 : I Adagio doloroso* [0:02:51.32] 03. *Sonate no. 2 op. 105 : II Scherzo (Vivace non troppo)* [0:05:47.05] 04. *Sonate no. 2 op. 105 : III Allegro moderato alla fuga* [0:02:47.01] 05. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 1 Suite baroque : I Prélude* [0:01:37.37] 06. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 1 Suite baroque : II Air* [0:03:28.36] 07. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 1 Suite baroque : III Musette* [0:00:59.61] 08. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 1 Suite baroque : IV Menuet lent* [0:02:35.70] 09. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 1 Suite baroque : V Gigue* [0:01:21.72] 10. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 2 Sonatina classica : I Capriccio* [0:01:56.73] 11. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 2 Sonatina classica : II Gavotte* [0:01:41.25] 12. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 2 Sonatina classica : III Fuga diatonica* [0:02:10.13] 13. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 3 Arioso barocco e fuga : I Arioso Barocca* [0:04:19.16] 14. *Diletto classico op. 100 no. 3 Arioso barocco e fuga : II Fuga monodica* [0:01:41.29] 15. *Deux esquisses lyriques op. 103 : I Conte russe* [0:02:44.05] 16. *Deux esquisses lyriques op. 103 : II Paysage scandinave* [0:03:52.69] 17. *Petit prélude* [0:00:59.30] 18. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : I Nocturne no. 1* [0:01:35.46] 19. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : II Valse* [0:02:13.38] 20. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : III Nocturne no. 2* [0:02:12.15] 21. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : IV Nocturne no. 3* [0:01:41.55] 22. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : V Improvisation no. 1* [0:01:52.28] 23. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : VI Improvisation no. 2* [0:01:10.44] 24. *L'enfance de l'art op. 69 no. 1 : VII Nocturne no. 4* [0:02:19.15] 25. *Petites variations sur un thème dodécaphonique op. 69 no. 3* [0:04:19.03] Eliane Reyes – piano

This is a fine introduction to the piano music of the scandalously underrated French composer Nicolas Bacri by Franco-Mexican pianist Eliane Reyes. Her first solo recital for Naxos was released just over a year ago, spotlighting the music of the Polish French composer Alexandre Tansman. That disc was marred a little by recording hitches - ironically it was produced by Bacri! - but Reyes' contribution was immaculate. This time round, Elias' artistry and Bacri's listener-friendly originality combine to produce a recital of considerable interest and broad appeal - and these are all first recordings to boot.

Reyes' recital opens with the Prelude and Fugue op.91, dedicated to René Maillard (review of a recent release of his music on Naxos), and a forceful homage to Bach. The three-movement, twice-revised Second Piano Sonata follows, its dark, sombre opening segueing into an initially ferocious scherzo, with no let-up for the pianist's fingers in the pell-mell finale. Atonality is never far away in Bacri's music, but nor is tonality, and the overall soundscape of the Sonata is one that Prokofiev and Shostakovich would recognise - and likely admire.

The most openly modernistic works are the Short Variations on a Dodecaphonic Theme and The Childhood of Art, both early flirtations with Schoenbergian principles, but even here the gentleness and lyricism of Bacri's music - the latter work, for example, contains four dreamy Nocturnes - is unlikely to offend any but the most delicate of ears.

Fast forward twenty years and Bacri was writing the Two Lyric Sketches, nostalgic, intimate pieces à la Grieg that are as lovely as they are 'anachronistic', and the unusual but genial Classical Delight, three self-standing works within a work 'in Homage to the Baroque and Classical Masters'. These are not anachronisms, but more akin to new translations of old works. Thus there is some atonal Baroque and jazzy Classicism along the way as Bacri pays tribute not only to his favourite composers from earlier centuries, but also to Prokofiev and Satie.

Reyes gives an elegant, sensitive and technically assured account of Bacri's works, most of which she premiered. Perhaps the fact that she did not premiere op.69 no.2 explains its otherwise odd absence from the programme - at six minutes in length it would have easily fitted on the disc.

As previously mentioned, sound quality is good, though there are a few minor technical anomalies, mainly, but not entirely, confined to L'Enfance de l'Art - odd squeaks in the final movement, the suspicion of one or two editing joins in other sections. The CD booklet offers nothing fancy and the notes are typically densely printed, but they are informative and well written, and there is also a nice photo of Reyes and Bacri together.

In sum, this is an ideal disc for anyone looking for a benign introduction to contemporary/atonal music, and a raspberry to those who claim that new music is all tuneless, shapeless dreck. ---  
Byzantion, [musicweb-international.com](http://musicweb-international.com)

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