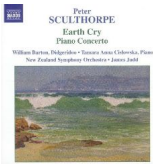


Peter Sculthorpe: Earth Cry - Piano Concerto (2004)

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Peter Sculthorpe: Earth Cry - Piano Concerto (2004)



1 *Earth Cry* (1986) 13:55 2 *Memento Mori* (1993) 14:29 3 *Piano Concerto* (1983) 21:26
4 *From Oceania* (1970/2003) 5:32 5 *Kakadu* (1988) 15:44 Piano – Tamara Anna Cislowska
Didgeridoo – William Barton (track 1) The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
Conductor – James Judd

A sense of adventure pervades the music of Peter Sculthorpe, an eclectic composer who has mingled sounds of the Pacific islands and Australia with the timbres of the western symphony orchestra to dramatic effect. However, this mingling of cultures sometimes sounds forced and too obvious, and Sculthorpe's music occasionally takes on the artificiality of a Hollywood soundtrack. This 2004 release from Naxos requires a suspension of disbelief, and listeners should hear the whole disc before passing judgment. Best of the selections is the Piano Concerto (1983), where Sculthorpe's blending of Japanese music and Balinese gamelan with the European form is quite subtle. Tamara-Anna Cislowski's delicate solo part is well-integrated with the exotic orchestral colors, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, directed by James Judd, delivers its most sensitive performance here. Also appealing is the heavily percussive *From Oceania* (1970-2003) where, again, Sculthorpe mixes his eastern and western sonorities judiciously. But *Earth Cry* (1986) and *Kakadu* (1988) are more overtly symphonic, and Sculthorpe's slick orchestration and bombastic action music undercut the effectiveness of the didgeridoo in the former and the imitations of birdsongs in the latter. Naxos offers clear and resonant sound in all but the subdued *Memento Mori*, the least compelling piece of the program. --- Blair Sanderson, allmusic.com

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