



COMPACT DISC REVIEW

By

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LIVE at The Sheldon Concert Hall

Stephanie Trick, piano

<http://www.ragtimers.org/reviews/>
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Viper's Drag / In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning / Liza / Mule Walk / Anitra's Dance / Blues for Alfie / Handful of Keys / Roberto Clemente / Shout for Joy / Everything Happens To Me / Bach Up To Me / St. Louis Blues / Champs-Elysées / I Ain't Got Nobody / Nothin' / Echoes (sic) of Spring / Truckin' / Hallelujah / Harlem Strut.

It is no small feat to play a concert at Sheldon Concert Hall, often referred to as “the Carnegie Hall of St. Louis,” but Stephanie Trick has done it and, judging by this album, it was a smashing success. It is also no small feat to record such a concert in pristine sound, but that has been done, too.

In the short span of 4-5 years, this young lady has come to practically dominate the stride piano field. She is not, however, one-dimensional, as this CD attests. Yes, stride makes up the larger part of this recording, but there are also tracks that might fall into the “cocktail piano” category (*In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning, Everything Happens To Me, I Ain't Got Nobody*), a couple of blues (*Blues for Alfie, St. Louis Blues*), a rompin' boogie (*Shout for Joy*) and the most fervent rendition of the contemporary rag, *Roberto Clemente*, I think I have ever heard.

Her playing is precise but not dispassionate and her use of dynamics is quite good. Some of the selections were written by stride ticklers for other stride ticklers and thus are played four-alarm style throughout (*Mule Walk, Handful of Keys, Nothin', Harlem Strut*), while others follow the lead of the great Donald Lambert by starting ballad-like before breaking into the some hot stride (*Liza, Anitra's Dance, Hallelujah*), but no matter how she cranks up the pace, she makes it sound as if she isn't even breaking a sweat. (I am told that men “sweat,” but women “glow;” however, “breaking a glow” somehow doesn't fit the idiom...)

The liner notes give us a personal glimpse into why each piece was chosen and who her influences have been, information that, sadly, is so often omitted from recordings. Stephanie Trick is at the top of her form on this album and it's hard to imagine anyone who wouldn't enjoy it and want to own it.

Available for \$17.00 plus shipping from <www.cdbaby.com>.