

'Imago' – the Latin word for *image* or *portrait* – only begins to suggest the imaginative and diverse musical worlds presented here by Italian pianist and composer Moira Lo Bianco. The music floats effortlessly between the furthest reaches of harmonic possibility, melodic development, and rhythmic impulse in characterful performances that span the perceived gap between written and unwritten music.

Lo Bianco considers classical music a tremendous source of inspiration — one that is exciting and enriching outside the traditional context. It is in this spirit that the album opens with pieces by Louis Couperin — Prelude in D major — and Erik Satie — Véritables préludes flasques (pour un chien) — the latter of which imagines moments in the life of a dog. These "unmeasured" compositions, though written centuries apart, forego traditional rhythmic notation and expression markings, respectively, allowing the performer to craft his or her own interpretation of the written pitches.

Lo Bianco later takes the Véritables préludes flasques and offers free form improvisations based upon them, paraphrasing the originals and creating original melodies that shed new light on what has been heard. She also interprets another famous Satie piece in Re-imagination of Gnossienne No. 4. Lo Bianco applies her inventive faculties to far more recent works in Toxic/Come As You Are and Lady Gaga Dada (A Bad Romance). The first, a rhythmic fantasia, combines the pop song popularized by Britney Spears with Nirvana's rock anthem, while the latter, a musical caricature of the hit 'Bad Romance,' reflects Lady Gaga's transformational and ironic persona.

Lo Bianco's sources and influences are even more widely varied however. Her original suite *The Dancing Cat* uses "odd meters" to electrifying effect, and draws upon the Middle-Eastern magamat to inform its modal harmonic twists. Her *Gregorian Effects* introduces two plainchant melodies as lullaby and sensuous dance, and *Bloom, Orange Tie* was inspired by film scoring.

Situated at the heart of the album, Sketchbook is a series of piano miniatures that explore different compositional techniques much like visual sketches represent an image with a few lines. 'Friduccia' and 'Charlie's adventures' are dedicated to Frida Khalo and Charlie Chaplin, respectively, while 'Piney's heart' honors a friend of the composer. 'Dear witch' is a musical portrait of Lo Bianco's mentor, heroine, and piano teacher Stephanie Tiernan. 'The guesthouse' is inspired by the poetry of Rumi, and 'A bystander' imagines the thought and feelings of a witness to something unknown.

The album ends with Arvo Part's tranquil yet foreboding Für Alina. The theme drifts along the keyboard with a mind of its own, exposing the various harmonic spectra that live in different areas of the piano and directing the listener into their own imagination.



Moira Lo Bianco's approach to music combines classical piano with improvisation. Her study of classical piano inspired a passion for J.S. Bach and Béla Bartók, who have both greatly influenced her, and she completed her Bachelor of Arts with an ethnomusicology thesis on Calabrian folk music and its traditions. She has also studied film scoring under Oscar award-winning composer Luis Bacalov, and further pursued piano at Berklee College of Music where she now sits on the piano faculty.

She has performed in prominent venues and festivals across the United States and Italy, and collaborated with many noteworthy musicians. In 2013, she released her debut album – Lunaria – featuring bass player Bruno Raberg and drummer Marcello Pellitteri. She also started a workshop series 'Classical Chords – Improvisation for Classical Pianists,' which is indicative of her commitment to bring classical music to unconventional venues and help new generations of listeners understand and appreciate its influence on contemporary styles. Nominated for Jazz Artist of the Year at the 2013 Boston Music Awards, Moira is a Young Steinway Artist and a Steinway Educational Partner.

LOUIS COUPERIN (1626-1661)

1 Prélude in D major 4:47

ERIK SATIE (1866-1925)

Véritables préludes flasques (pour un chien)

2 l. Sévère reprimande 0.44 | 3 ll. Seul à la maison 1.23 | 4 lll. On joue 0.48

CATHY DENNIS (1969-)/KURT COBAIN (1967-1994) (ARR, LO BIANCO)

5 Toxic/Come As You Are 3:59

MOIRA LO BIANCO (1984-)

The Dancing Cat

6 Parts 1 & 2 3:46 | 7 Part 3 1:50 | 8 Part 4 2:57

9 Re-imagination of Gnossienne No. 4 (After Satie) 3:10

Sketchbook

10 Friduccia 0.45 | 11 Dear Witch 0.48 | 12 A Bystander 1.20

13 Piney's Heart 0.53 | 14 Charlie's Adventures 0.42 | 15 The Guesthouse 2.05

16 Bloom, Orange Tie 3:46

Improvisations on Véritables préludes flasques (After Satie)

17 Sévère reprimande 1:18 | 18 Seul à la maison 2:21 | 19 On joue 1:39

20 Gregorian Effects 4:19

Stefani Germanotta (1986-)/Nadir Khayat (1972-) (Arr. lo bianco)

21 Lady Gaga Dada (A Bad Romance) 2:41

ARVO PÄRT (1935-)

22 Für Alina 7:23

PLAYING TIME: 53:24

Performances captured using Steinway's exclusive Spirio® technology; audio recording made using a Spirio® piano in playback mode.



IMAGO | MOIRA LO BIANCO

was recorded for Spirio on March 6, 2015, April 30, 2015,

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Producer: Jon Feidner

Audio Recording Engineer: David Angell

Mixing and Mastering Engineer: Daniel Shores

Spirio Editing: Jon Feidner

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> Executive Producers: Eric Feidner, Jon Feidner

Production Assistant: Robert Hillinck

Administrative Assistant: Joanne Hong

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Piano Technicians: Glen Bingham, John Veitch, and Lauren Sturm

My deepest gratitude to Mr. Jon Feidner and Steinway & Sons for believing in me and my music.

1MAGO

The young Italian pianist/composer Moira Lo Bianco bridges centuries and dissolves musical boundaries.

This haunting and beautiful album makes the ancient modern and the modern timeless.

L. COUPERIN

1 Prelude in D major 4:47

SATIE

2-4 Véritables préludes flasques (pour un chien) 2:55

DAVIS/COBAIN (ARR. LO BIANCO)

5 Toxic/Come As You Are 3:59

LO BIANCO

6-8 The Dancing Cat 8:33 | 9 Re-imagination of Gnossienne No. 4 (after Satie) 3:10 10-15 Sketchbook 6:33 | 16 Bloom, Orange Tie 3:46

17-19 Improvisations on Véritables préludes flasques (after Satie) 5:18 | 20 Gregorian Effects 4:19

GERMANOTTA / KHAYAT (ARR. LO BIANCO)

21 Lady Gaga Dada (A Bad Romance) 2:41

PÄRT

22 Für Alina 7:23

PLAYING TIME: 53:24



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