

Across The Seas

Cultural Inspirations in Chamber Music

Craig Madden Morris



CRC 4155

High Holidays, Solos

(16:55)

Eric Silberger, violin; John Henry Crawford, cello

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------|-------------|
| 1 | Hineni (Here I Stand) | 5:41 | (Silberger) |
| 2 | Zocharti Loch (I Remember You) | 5:47 | (Silberger) |
| 3 | Ayl Molay (Compassionate God) | 5:27 | (Crawford) |

Americana, String Trio

(19:17)

Eric Silberger, violin; Tanner Mennes, viola; John Henry Crawford, cello

- | | | |
|---|----------|------|
| 4 | Moderato | 6:40 |
| 5 | Adagio | 7:20 |
| 6 | Rondo | 5:16 |

Aloha Quartet

(17:06)

Eric Silberger, violin; Bixby Kennedy, clarinet; John Henry Crawford, cello;

Philip Fisher, piano

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|------|
| 7 | Puka La (Rising Sun) | 6:58 |
| 8 | Nalu (Waves) | 4:17 |
| 9 | Ukelele | 5:50 |

Total Time: 53:21

Recorded July 6, 7, & September 1, 2024 at Samurai Hotel, Astoria, New York.

Producer and engineer, Shao Ting-Sun. Copyist, Jered Albertus.

Across The Seas



Cultural Inspirations
in Chamber Music

Craig Madden Morris



Across the Seas

Cultural Inspirations in Chamber Music

Music, for all of us, is intimately connected to our lives and the sounds we love and grew up with, and that we discovered on our journeys through our world. We all remember the music we heard as children, and certainly we remember the songs that bound us together with our friends as teens. As we grow older, we are exposed to music from all over the world that we experience through visits, shows, and media.

On this CD, I have explored these sounds from my own life. The first three tracks reflect my strong Jewish heritage and my memories of the great voices of the cantors in the synagogue, which made religious services places of reflection and warmth. The first piece, Hineni, is the cantor's personal plea to lead the congregation, despite his shortcomings as a person and as a cantor. The second piece, Zocharti Loch, is the hope the God will lovingly remember his people, despite their sins and the errors of their ways. The last piece, Ayl Molay, is the prayer for perfect peace for all who have passed away. The next three tracks explore the feelings of growing up in this amazing country, with all the variety of melodies and harmonies that converge to shape our American life experience. The final three tracks highlight the tropical aura and lush beauty

of Hawaii, with the sweet, relaxed atmosphere that makes visiting there a truly wonderful experience in its unique setting.

My hope is that this music opens up the diversity that enriches all of us as we explore and experience our lives, and as we grow and become enriched by our collective experiences through our world.

—Craig Morris

Craig Madden Morris

Craig Morris has been composing music since the age of 11. He studied composition with Shirley Bloom, Kevin Scott, and Joelle Wallach and also studied violin, piano, and voice. He played violin with the Bronx Symphony Orchestra for many years and presently plays with the Ridgewood Symphony. He has sung professionally as a cantor for over 40 years. His music has been performed by the Ridgewood Symphony, the Bronx Symphony Orchestra, the Brno Philharmonic, the Janacek Philharmonic Orchestra, the Fifth International Music Festival of Buenos Aires, and the Chamber Music Society of Formosa. His compositions include piano sonatas, orchestral suites, violin, cello and clarinet concerti, a concert duet for soprano and tenor, choral compositions, and a sacred service for the Sabbath. *Arise*

My Love and *The Rubaiyat* were chosen as finalists in the 2010 Meistersingers Choral Competition.

His orchestral overture *Lullaby* was selected as a winner in the international Ablaze Records Orchestral Masters Competition and was released in 2013. One critic described it as “fetchingly beautiful, redolent of Bernstein and Copland, and driven with a sure melodic and harmonic hand, this deeply American score paints a lovely and melodic world that is very effectively orchestrated and affectively captivating despite its brevity.” His *Benjamin Overture* was recorded by the West Point Band, and premiered by the SUNY Orange Symphonic Band in 2013. His *Violin Concerto* was premiered by the Hamilton-Fairfield Symphony Orchestra in 2014, with Francisc Restesan, soloist. It was released by Navona Records. The Kathodik Review stated “the very beautiful *Concerto for Violin* is dominated by a lyrical vein almost uncontainable. It excels in sustaining lyrical lines which seem never to end, crossing passages which are sometimes meditative, and other times exhilarating and exhibitionistic.” His string and percussion suite *A Child's Day* was reviewed by GappleGate “evoking in three movements vivid tapestries that show a child's tender ability to experience all as if anew every day. This is charming music, immediately communicative, but not in any simplistic man-

ner.” His *Songs of the Seasons* was reviewed by Gramophone Magazine as “an engaging suite.” Morris was commissioned by the Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra to compose a companion piece to Elgar's Enigma Variations, *The Enigma Fantasy*, which premiered in 2017. *Chamber Music for our Times*, was released in 2020 and was reviewed by the American Record Guide: “His *Romance for Violin and Piano* is tinted with sensitive, fragile seconds in the piano and soaring, truly romantic lines in the violin that never go quite where one expects. *Piano Quartet 1* was inspired by Brahms and Dvorak. Yet these immensely lush harmonies, rich and abundant, feel somehow at liberty in a way that similar creations by Brahms and Dvorak can't. It's an original take on tradition and is aural beauty at 100 proof.” Take Effect Reviews stated “*Colors* follows with gorgeous string manipulation that unfolds over four movements where a pair of violins, a cello and viola blur together with sublime beauty.” In addition, an orchestral piece, *Elegy* was premiered by the Ridgewood Philharmonic Orchestra on October 21, 2022.

Morris is a child psychiatrist. A native New Yorker, he lives in New City, NY with his wife, Nancy.