

A portrait of pianist Klara Min, looking upwards and to the right. She has dark hair and is wearing a dark top. The background is dark with horizontal light streaks.

KLARA MIN

evocation

SCRIABIN • MOZART • MESSIAEN



STEINWAY & SONS



KLARA MIN

World-renowned concert pianist Klara Min is a Steinway Artist who makes her home in Berlin and New York. Respected also as a thought-leader in the music industry, Ms. Min is the founder and artistic director of New York Concert Artists and Associates (NYCA).

A native of South Korea, Ms. Min has performed extensively throughout North America and Europe as well as in her home country of South Korea, in some of the world's most important

concert venues including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Wigmore Hall, Munich's Gasteig, the Berlin Philharmonie, Berlin's Konzerthaus, Laeiszhalle, Vienna's Konzerthaus, Paris's Salle Cortot, South Korea's KBS Broadcast Hall, and Lotte Concert Hall. She has performed with prestigious orchestras such as Hamburger Kammerphilharmonie, Munich Kammerphilharmonie, Seoul Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, Manhattan Chamber Orchestra, Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra, American Chamber Orchestra, St. Petersburg State Symphony, and Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra among others.

Gramophone magazine describes Ms. Min's 2016 recording of Scriabin works on the Steinway & Sons record label as, "In short, Min's finest performances on this gorgeously engineered release will make Scriabin fans sit up and take notice." Klara Min's first album *Ripples on Water* features modern Korean piano music; it was released on Naxos and complimented for "mak(ing) every note count" (All Music). Her second release of a selection of Chopin's Mazurkas was released on Delos. American Record Guide selected the album as one of six critics' choices in 2013 raving, "her dynamic control is out of this world". Klara Min was the recipient of a Samsung scholarship.

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Since ancient times, Night has been revered as the secret place of God. Turning away from the relentless control of daylight, poets have sought spiritual and poetic inspiration in the sublime darkness of mystery-inducing night. Klara Min's album presents us with piano pieces intimating this 'dark but dazzling' night. Its title, "Evocation," suggests night's musical power to awaken and stir subliminal feelings hidden at the depth of our souls.

Within the album, we journey through kaleidoscopic visions of night from serene twilight to the ominous terror of darkness. We open with a peaceful nocturne, *L'alouette-lulu* from Messiaen's *Catalogue d'oiseaux*, Book 3 (1956-1958). Within, a woodlark, with "the mysterious voice from on high," converses with a nightingale with edged tremolos; intervening low-voiced sonorities and silences envelop their tranquil dialogue at midnight.

Next, the Scriabin *Sonata-Fantasie No. 2 in G sharp minor, Op. 19* (published 1898) portrays the impressions of ocean at night Scriabin took in on a visit to Latvia in 1892. In his own program notes, Scriabin notes: "The first part evokes the calm of a night by the seashore in the South; in the development we hear the somber agitation of the depths. The section in E major represents the tender moonlight which comes after the first dark of the night. The second movement, presto, shows the stormy agitation of the vast expanse of ocean."

Mozart's *Fantasia in D minor, K 397* (1782) locates the primacy of imagination and intuitive feeling over the elaborate work-out of reason and norm. Inspired by C.P.E. Bach's fantastic art of original genius, Mozart juxtaposes the contrasting effects of *pathétique* lamento, sentimental aria, and happy contradance.

The next two pieces lead us to the numinous realm of *mysterium tremendum*. Scriabin's infamous *Sonata No. 9, Op. 68* (1913), nicknamed 'Black Mass,' vouchsafes an increasing tendency in his late period to treat music as a

sheer spiritual phenomenon and a manifesto of his theosophical beliefs. His atonal inventions, which he had been developing separately from Schoenberg since 1900, are used to musically configure the fiendish awe and dread that a daemonic force begets in us. This work shocked and astonished even the composer. After premiering it, he commented "In the ninth sonata I came closer than ever before to the Satanic...." The opening legendaire theme, a sound of distant mysterious wailing, constantly transforms itself and eventually cascades into the diabolical vortex of a grotesque parade, after which it fades into the menacing silence of darkness.

In *Vers la flame*, Op. 72 (1914), a poem for piano solo, our musical imagination is once again drawn into the urgency and dark side of the spiritual world. The music of flickering fire gradually develops into an explosive and overwhelming force with overpowering energy, then bursts into a sonic silvery flash of bright light.

Min closes this ominous journey of night with Messiaen's *La chouette hulotte* from the same collection as *L'alouette-lulu*. In sharp contrast to the latter, this closing piece evokes the ominous feelings of terror of deep night with a religious undertone. In the preface, Messiaen describes its mood as "Darkness, fear, a racing pulse... the call of the tawny owl... gripped by terror, like the shriek of a murdered child... Silence. The owl's hooting fades in the distance, like a bell tolling from another world...."

– *Daesik Cha*

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Recorded February 7, October 3 & 24, 2017 and October 3, 2018
at Steinway Hall, New York City.

Producer: Jon Feidner

Engineer: Lauren Sturm

Assistant Engineer: Melody Nieun Hwang

Editing: Jon Feidner and Renée Oakford

Production Assistant: Renée Oakford

Mixing and Mastering: Daniel Shores

Equipment: Pyramix using Merging Technologies Horus Converters;
mixed and mastered through Merging Technologies Horus Converter

Microphones: DPA 4006A, Schoeps MC6/MK2

Piano Technician: Lauren Sturm

Piano: Steinway Model D # 597590 (New York)

Executive Producers: Eric Feidner and Jon Feidner

Art Direction: Jackie Fugere

Design: Cover to Cover Design, Anilda Carrasquillo

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OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)

1 Catalogue d'oiseaux: VI. L'Alouette Lulu 7:36

ALEXANDER SCRIBIN (1872-1915)

Sonata No. 2 in G sharp minor, Op. 19 "Sonata fantasy"

2 I. Andante 8:08

3 II. Presto 4:11

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

4 Fantasia in D minor, K 397 5:55

ALEXANDER SCRIBIN

5 Sonata No. 9, Op. 68 "Black Mass Sonata" 9:36

6 Vers la flamme, Op. 72 6:18

OLIVIER MESSIAEN

7 Catalogue d'oiseaux: V. La chouette hulotte 7:29

Playing time: 49:18

KLARA MIN

PIANO



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