

— Sarah Cahill
Berkeley, CA April 2013

As Frederic Rzewski once said, "Music probably cannot change the world. But it is a good idea to act as though it could." This CD has already changed the world for many of us, and now, with its rerelease, it can continue to change the world for more listeners. It's a great pleasure to hear it again.

The musicians on this CD are all long-time Kitzke collaborators. Since this recording was made, his compositions have ventured further out into the world, with performances often taking place without his knowledge. His scores are precise and clear enough that even without contacting him, musicians can communicate his intentions. But there is really no substitute for having Jerome by your side as you learn his music, gently encouraging you to "YIP" loud and high, showing you how to drum on the piano lid, demonstrating a bird song or a breathy sigh. Jerome himself is such a kind-hearted gentle spirit that the sheer force of his work can come as a surprise. But for him, there is no reason why the political convictions and social conscience at the heart of all his work cannot coexist with lyricism and beauty.

It would be hard to think of a living American composer whose music is as exuberant, vital, and transformative as Jerome Kitzke's. The compositions on this album, which was first released in February 1999, provoke strong reactions because they themselves are so strong. Like Walt Whitman's poetry, his music contains multitudes. In Mad Coyote Madly Sings, we hear outcries for social justice mingled with tremulous joy and tenderness. A simple ritual drumbeat shares space, in We Need to Dream All This Again, with rhythmic and melodic complexity. Breath and Bone, an elegy for a friend who died, conveys the same ecstatic life-affirmation as The Animist Child, which honors a child's birth.

Jerome Kitzke

JEROME KITZKE THE CHARACTER OF AMERICAN SUNLIGHT

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Rightly told, all tales are one. Cormac McCarthy
The story itself is the name. James Hazard
Mitakuye Oyasin. (All My Relations)

- 1 Mad Coyote Madly Sings (1991) 8:35
- 2 A Keening Wish (1988) 12:27
- 3 The Animist Child (1994) 6:44
- 4 The Big Gesture (1987) 14:00
- 5 Breath and Bone (1996) 5:17
- 6 We Need to Dream All This Again (1993) 11:14
- 7 The Character of American Sunlight (1996) 14:01

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Lisa Karrer
Guy Klucevsek
Jerome Kitzke
Bradley Lubman
Essential Music
The Mad Coyote

The Character of American Sunlight

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