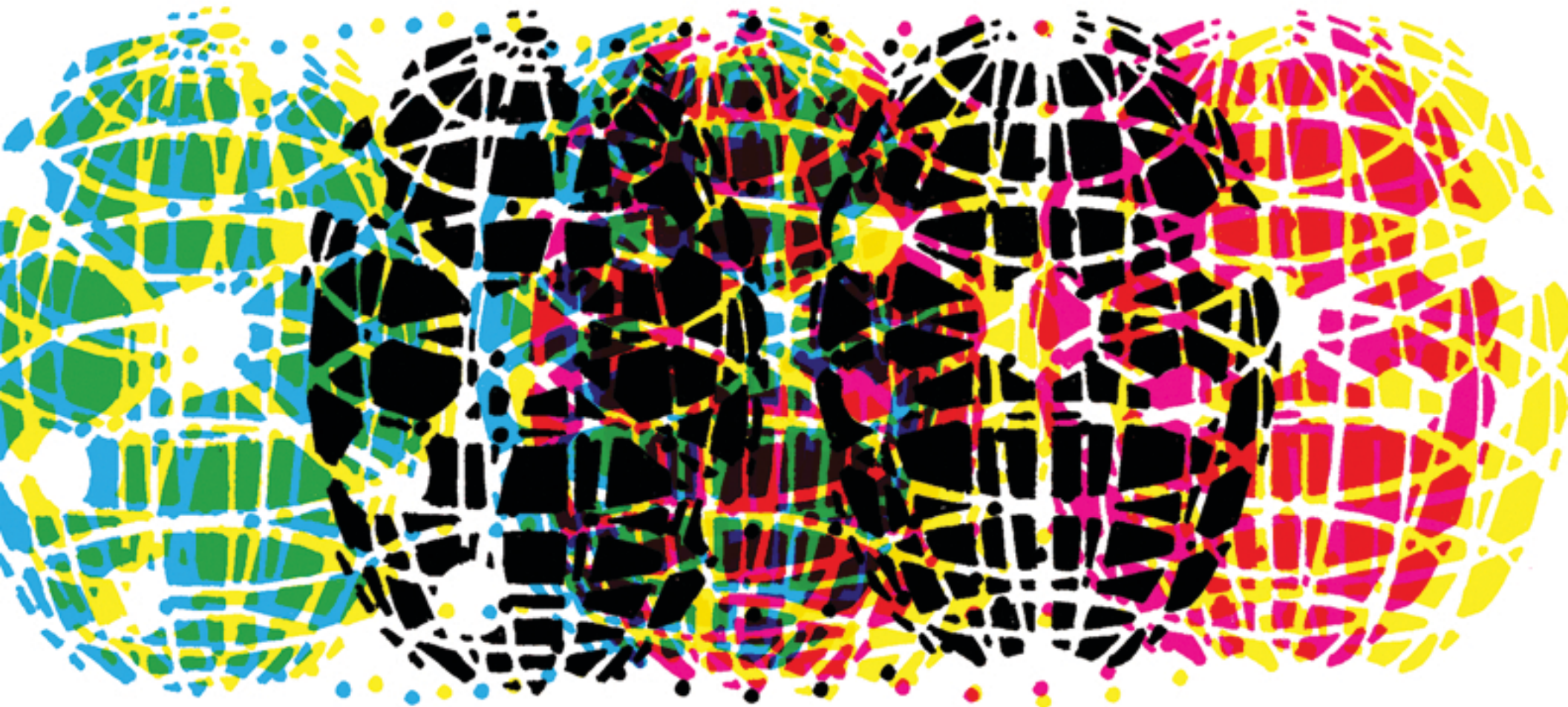


# SIMPLE MUSIC

GIYA KANCHELI



JENNY LIN, PIANO | GUY KLUCEVSEK, ACCORDION



STEINWAY & SONS

# SIMPLE MUSIC

GIYA KANCHELI (1935-2019)

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17	RICHARD III	1:57			

Playing Time: 63:15

Tracks 1, 6-7, 9-10, 17-18, 21, 24, 27: Jenny Lin, piano & Guy Klucevsek, accordion

Tracks 2-4, 8, 11-15, 19, 22-23, 25, 29-31, 33: Jenny Lin, piano

Tracks 5, 16, 20, 26, 28, 32: Guy Klucevsek, accordion

JENNY LIN, PIANO | GUY KLUCEVSEK, ACCORDION



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Jenny Lin commands a vast repertoire, from the most obscure modern music to the most tried and true of romantic warhorses. An inveterate collector of sheet music, the score to *Simple Music for Piano* by Giya Kancheli sat on her shelf for a decade... until she had the brainstorm to invite accordion avatar Guy Klucevsek to join her in an amplification of the complete set. Originally the two talked about performing the pieces live, but the right moment didn't materialize.

The 2020 pandemic saw performing artists of all disciplines finding ways to make new work in the new normal. Many of these Kancheli miniatures were originally written for film. Since film is by necessity an artificial art, inconceivable without hours of editing and post-production, a "socially-distanced" rendition of this music made perfect sense.

In July, Lin recorded in person in Virginia at Sono Luminus studios, with one engineer in the booth and one remote in North Carolina. In August, Klucevsek recorded at his home in Staten Island with one engineer in the basement of the house and one remote in North Carolina.

The greatest works of Kancheli are epic symphonies and choral requiems in the grand Soviet tradition of Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich and Schnittke. For most of his life, Kancheli was not known in the West; after Glasnost, his music was championed by an international group of stars including Dennis Russell Davies, Kurt Masur, Jansug Kakhidze, Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet, Kim Kashkashian, Mstislav Rostropovich, and the Kronos Quartet.

*Simple Music* is a collection of inspired fragments, a unique set explained best by the composer himself on the title page of the score:

*While dedicating myself to symphonic and chamber music, I simultaneously wrote music for the stage and screen. No wonder, then, that certain themes originally intended for plays and films made their way into my larger works or that the large forms themselves sometimes contained episodes reminiscent of incidental music. I myself can't always remember where a particular theme first appeared, not least because the vast majority of more than a hundred of the films and plays for which I wrote music have now passed into history.*

*So I have decided to revive some lost fragments in the collection of 33 miniatures. Time will tell if they can survive outside of their original context. Meanwhile, I'll allow myself to give a little advice to anyone interested in these humble sketches:*

*The simplicity of presentation does not preclude but rather encourages freedom of interpretation, particularly for those with a gift for improvising. Strict adherence to tempo markings, dynamic indications and performance instructions is by no means obligatory.*

*You can play as many of these pieces as you like, in the sequence of your choice. Or not play them at all, but simply enjoy Rezo Gabriadze's drawings.*

Most composers from Kancheli's background rarely share an invitation to co-create. Klucevsek elaborates: "Kancheli's comments about how performers could approach these pieces made me feel he was encouraging us to improvise, arrange and even reimagine, not unlike the way we might approach pieces from The American Songbook, for example. In the duos, I thought of my added lines as an arrangement technique. For my solo versions, I thought of them as reimagining how these might have been different had they been created for accordion instead of piano or orchestra. The Kancheli pieces are drop-dead gorgeous; I also love his sense of humor."

The recital offers an engaging mixture of solos, duos, freedom and fidelity.

1. King Lear (1987) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. Searching E-flat prelude. Twice through the page; the first time Lin alone, the second time Klucevsek offers an improvised counterpoint.
2. The Eccentrics (1973) Film by Eldar Shengelaya and Rezo Gabriadze. A halting D major waltz. The next three are solo piano, all played to the hilt by Lin. Underneath the hood, many small details of the Kancheli writing are idiosyncratic: an octave displaced here, a buildup of dissonant harmony there.
3. When Almonds Blossomed (1972) Film by Lana Gogoberidze. Wandering jazzy harmonic sequences not far from Michel Legrand. Ends in C.
4. Extraordinary Exhibition (1969) Film by Eldar Shengelaya and Rezo Gabriadze. Ironic march in C, almost a boogie-woogie, naive and sparkling.
5. As You Like It (1978) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. Klucevsek returns with a solo, a D major melody. Klucevsek needs to re-score the part slightly for accordion, adding a bit of "oom-pah" accompaniment.

6. Don Quixote (1988) Film by Revaz Chkheidze. F minor. The two musicians call and respond, taking turns between an accordion dirge and a piano march. Lin reinforces some low octaves here and there.
7. Kin-Dza-Dza (1986) Film by Giorgi Danelia and Rezo Gabriadze. The score is not marked "Tango," but that's certainly what this miniature transforms into, especially given Klucevsek's added fills and ornamentation. Some of the miniatures are obviously within a key; some wander all around. In this case we start in D-sharp minor and end in F minor.
8. Mimino (1977) Film by Giorgi Danelia and Rezo Gabriadze. Begins just like the start of the series, the King Lear motif but now in F, before going into another endless melody with jazz overtones. Lin adds in her ornamentation for this solo track.
9. Mother Courage and Her Children (1988) Play by Bertolt Brecht, directed by Robert Sturua. A G minor ironic march, one can almost see the Soviet uniforms on parade. Lin plays the page once; Klucevsek joins for another round, all guns blazing.
10. Twelfth Night (2002) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. One of the more esoteric miniatures, with piano and accordion acting in uncanny ways. The dissonant accordion notes against the piano are Klucevsek's own.
11. The Blue Mountains (1984) Film by Eldar Shengelaya and Revaz Cheishvili. The next five are piano only, beginning with a cheerful waltz in C.
12. Waiting for Godot (2002) Play by Samuel Beckett, directed by Robert Sturua. Another waltz, in a slightly sentimental G major.
13. Richard III (1979) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. Marked "quasi-ragtime" in the score: Café 12/8 in C major with ironic outsized dynamics.
14. Khanuma (1968) Play by Avksenti Tsagareli, directed by Robert Sturua. A rich ballad begging for a chanteuse.
15. The Caucasian Chalk Circle (1975) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. Almost Satie-esque in purity, with an unexpected coda in C.

16. *The Role for a Beginner* (1979) Play by Tamaz Chiladze, directed by Robert Sturua. Klucevsek takes his time and creates quite an elaborate fantasy on the simple materials provided by Kancheli. Starts in C but ends in A.
17. *Richard III* (1979) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. The voices combine for another sad waltz redolent of the café. In A minor.
18. *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1975) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua / *Extraordinary Exhibition* (1969) Film by Eldar Shengelaya and Rezo Gabriadze / *Khanuma* (1968) Play by Avksenti Tsagareli, directed by Robert Sturua. Kancheli bundles a few disparate themes into a small suite: Twisting C minor, plaintive C major, rambunctious F major.
19. *The Crucibles* (1968) Play by Arthur Miller, directed by Robert Sturua. This piano solo is one of most elaborate of the series, a rich prelude, beginning in A minor but spectacularly unresolved in E minor. A good showcase for Lin's command of pianistic color.
20. *Hamlet* (1992) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. It's just 9 bars of chorale in the original, but the second time through, Klucevsek adds fancy obbligato.
21. *Twelfth Night* (2001) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. Another ironic Soviet march is marked "Scherzando" in the score. Wildly dissonant clusters punctuating the ends of phrases are original to Klucevsek and Lin, but such imaginative additions are totally within the style. Begins in E minor and ends in F minor.
22. *Don't Grieve* (1969) Film by Georgi Danelia and Rezo Gabriadze. Childlike wonder in C major for piano alone.
23. *Bear's Kiss* (2002) Film by Sergei Bodrov. This piano prelude begins in A minor and is for adults only. The phrases stop interacting with each other, and we are left with an unanswered question in F minor.
24. *Kin-Dza-Dza* (1986) Film by Georgi Danelia and Rezo Gabriadze. A hint of aggressive tango informs this F minor cue.
25. *Hamlet* (1992) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. One of the more

gnomic and unresolved miniatures, with a few different styles placed next to each other. The solo piano begins in confused C minor, gets lost further in D minor, and eventually wanders off into near atonality.

26. *Earth, This Is Your Son* (1980) Film by Revaz Chkheidze. Klucevsek reads the page down mostly as is, although he changes register for the B minor melody and adds in a bit of expressive ornamentation.

27. *Tears Were Falling* (1982) Film by Giorgi Danelia. For the gentle stride in C major, the pianist is instructed to use the left palm for white-note clusters. The arrangement with added accordion makes perfect sense.

28. *Cinema* (1977) Film by Liana Eliava. Another substantial rearrangement for solo accordion. Klucevsek plays the haunting melody in held seconds and clusters before repeating with the low harmony. Both times we quickly traverse from A minor to D minor.

29. *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1975) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. This solo piano piece circles itself in C major, alternating between naive gestures marked "Giacoso" and "Con Fuoco."

30. *The Role for a Beginner* (1979) Play by Tamaz Chiladze, directed by Robert Sturua. Another sad but pretty piano waltz, this time starting in D minor before resolving to D major.

31. *Sunny Night* (1966) Play by Nodar Dumbadze, directed by Robert Sturua. Begins with a repeated note theme in C minor, marked "Con dolce maniera," before moving to an unexpected "Quasi jazz waltz."

32. *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1988) Play by Bertolt Brecht, directed by Robert Sturua. A return to the accordion D major material heard much earlier in track 5, *As You Like It*.

33. *Romeo and Juliet* (2004) Play by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Sturua. Lin delivers the most virtuosic piano writing of the set, beginning with a rich overture before settling into a strong call and response. It's all C minor – but then the notes fall away, tonality disperses, and a few high dissonant notes end with no key whatsoever. It's a suitably gnomic ending for a set of marvelous fragments.

– *Ethan Iverson*



NATIONAL KAHSIUNG CENTER FOR THE ARTS  
(WEIWUING)

Pianist **JENNY LIN** is an artist of keen musicianship, brilliant technique, and a compelling perspective shaped by a deep fluency in global culture. Born in Taiwan, raised in Austria, educated in Europe and America, Lin has built a vibrant international career, notable for innovative collaborations with a range of artists and creators.

In this most unusual season, Lin has performances – both digital and in person – at the Mostly Mozart Festival, Washington Performing Arts, Winnipeg New Music, the Morris Museum, St. Olaf College, and elsewhere.

Jenny Lin also continues her collaboration with Philip Glass, performing his Etudes in concerts around the globe. This experience inspired Lin to create The Etudes Project, in which

she works with a range of living composers to create new technical piano etudes, pairing each new piece with an etude from the classical canon. The results are featured on Sono Luminus albums; Volume 1 showcases Lin's work with ICEBERG New Music, and Volume 2 will be released in 2021.

Jenny Lin is the featured pianist in Elliot Goldenthal's original motion picture score for Julie Taymor's 2020 film, *The Glorias*. Notable recordings in Lin's catalogue (which includes more than 30 albums on Steinway & Sons, Hänssler Classic, eOne, BIS, New World, Albany, etc.) include Philip Glass's Etudes, Arthur Schnabel's complete solo piano music, the complete Chopin Nocturnes, an album of Broadway song arrangements titled *Get Happy*, her ingenious release of transcriptions of the songs of Chinese pop singer Teresa Teng, and *Melody's Mostly Musical Day*, an album, picture book, and multimedia children's concert, all released on the Steinway & Sons label.

Lin has performed with orchestras throughout the world, including the American Symphony Orchestra, NDR and SWR German Radio Orchestras, the RAI National Symphony Orchestra,



and others. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, at BAM Next Wave, Spoleto USA, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, and elsewhere.

Fluent in English, German, Mandarin, and French, Jenny Lin holds a bachelor's degree in German Literature from The Johns Hopkins University and studied music at the Hochschule für Musik, and at the Peabody Conservatory. Jenny Lin currently resides with her family in New York City.



CHRISTOPHE GOUSSARD

Aaron Jay Kernis, John King, Guy Klucevsek, David Mahler, Bobby Previte, Elliott Sharp, and Lois V Vierk—premiered at New Music America 1987 in Philadelphia, was featured at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival in 1988, and toured the USA, Japan and Europe for several years thereafter. The 1992 recording of the entire collection, which John Schaefer cited as "one of the 10 best recordings of the year" on his *New Sounds* radio program, was recently re-released on the Starkland label.

**GUY KLUCEVSEK** is one of the world's most versatile and highly-respected accordionists. A composer as well as accordion virtuoso, he has performed and/or recorded with Laurie Anderson, the Boston Pops Orchestra, Dave Douglas, Bill Frisell, the Kronos Quartet, Natalie Merchant, John Williams and John Zorn; appeared as a guest on Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood; and accompanied soprano Renée Fleming at the memorial service for Senator John McCain.

His "Polka from the Fringe" project—with contributions from composers including Mary Ellen Childs, Anthony Coleman, Carl Finch, Fred Frith, David Garland, Peter Garland, Daniel Goode, Robin Holcomb, Phillip Johnston, Joseph Kasinskas,

His group Accordion Tribe—a quintet of international composers/accordionists Bratko Bibic (Slovenia), Lars Hollmer (Sweden), Maria Kalaniemi (Finland), Guy Klucevsek (USA), and Otto Lechner (Austria)—released three albums of original music, and is the subject of Stefan Schwieter's award-winning documentary film, *Accordion Tribe: Music Travels*.

Klucevsek has written over 100 pieces for accordion, for the ballroom, the beer garden, the concert hall, and for collaborations with choreographers, theatre artists, and filmmakers. His discography includes 24 recordings as soloist, leader, and co-leader on Starkland, Tzadik, Winter & Winter, Innova, and XI. In 2020 he released his first collection of scores, "Vignettes: Short Pieces for Accordion," accompanied by recordings of all the pieces.

He is the recipient of a 2010 United States Artists Collins Fellowship, "recognizing the most compelling artists working and living in the United States."

# SIMPLE MUSIC

Jenny Lin recorded July 13-16 2020 at Sono Luminus Studios, Boyce, Virginia.  
Guy Klucevsek recorded August 20, 2020 at his home in Staten Island, New York.

Executive Producers: Jon Feidner, Anthony B. Creamer III

Producer: Dan Merceruo

Recording, Mixing and Mastering Engineer: Daniel Shores

Editing Engineer: Dan Merceruo

Remote Recording Engineer Guy Klucevsek: Andreas K. Meyer & Jennifer Nulsen

Piano Technician: John Veitch

Piano: Steinway Model D #590904 (New York)

Art Direction: Jackie Fugere

Design: Cover to Cover Design, Anilda Carrasquillo

Cover Art: Terry Winters

Production Assistant: Renée Oakford

Accordions:

"I used four accordions for this recording: a Titano Virtuoso Convertor (with both standard and chromatic bass), a vintage Sonola SS20; and two others lent to me by dear friends—an American-made Bell with musette tuning, courtesy of Charlie Sauss, and a Siwa and Figli Super Quattro Artist model, courtesy of Guenadiy Lazarov/Accordion Gallery."

- Guy Klucevsek

*We are deeply grateful to Anthony B. Creamer III, whose support made this recording possible.*

- Jenny Lin & Guy Klucevsek

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