

SEA TO SHINING SEA: A TAPESTRY OF AMERICAN MUSIC

Press & Media Quotes

"On this latest outing, there are (as you might glean from the CD title) American "roots" songs... tunes like "Sweet Betsy From Pike" will remind you of times when our country was in "exploratory" mode; young and fresh, so to speak. She will enchant and delight you with "Oh Susannah". and the rich tones of "America The Beautiful" speak of a glorious time ... 20 marvelous sonic memories that are timeless in/of their own, and pure magic in Ms. Spielberg's talented hands, "Sea To Shining Sea" is an album that will spin over and over again on players between those shores - no doubt in my mind. I give it a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED" - Improvijazzation Nation

"Sea to Shining Sea: A Tapestry of American Music is in a nutshell, A Musical Treasure. The music is filled with nostalgia and warmth. The quality of the arrangements is superb. This latest work of Robin Spielberg is one of the best releases the year." Score: 5/5 Stars
-Reviewsnewage.com

"Home on the Range, Aura Lee, Danny Boy, In the Good Old Summer Time: these are melodies and songs that across generations and cultures and suggest a hand of comfort and connection from past to present. Spielberg brings her gift for melody to the well known songs on Sea to Shining Sea: A Tapestry of American Music, creating and recreating memories and melodies, presenting them without words and giving space for listeners to add their own stories. There are twenty tracks on the disc, including three Spielberg originals, which stand up in good company with the well known pieces. She's well supported by Catherine Bent on cello, Kate MacLeod on guitar, fiddle, and vocals, Nancy Rumbel on oboe, Paul Henle on percussion, and her daughter, Valerie, on marimba and bells. It`s a fine recording to just play through as it stands, but especially worth note are a lovely reinterpretation of The Water is Wide, the lively I've Been Working on the Railroad paired with the quiet Oh Shenandoah, and the original Circle of Life."
-Music Road

"Music continues to be made new, branching off from the known to create new perspectives, songs and styles. But with this growing variety comes the difficulty of consensus, finding music with which all generations in the room can connect. Yet pianist Robin Spielberg's newest album, Sea to Shining Sea: A Tapestry of American Music, has done just that by appealing to our united American heritage.

Spielberg's album includes her own arrangements of famous American tunes from the Civil War to the Gold Rush through the 1920's as well as three originals...many of the songs, it seems, have just always been in our blood, like You Are My Sunshine, America The Beautiful or Home on the Range.

Minus two of the tracks on the album, Spielberg recreates these musical traditions as ensembles, with a cello, percussion, fiddle, guitar and oboe. The instruments are conversational, trading off the melody lines as if reminiscing over the memories of these classics.

The tunes on the album are sweetly simplistic, garnished with minimal ornaments to preserve their integrity. This less-is-more-approach spawns crisp, unhurried music that encourages one to sit back and muse over the evocations of these American songs..." -Kjersten Olsgaard for The Billings Outpost

"Take a walk down the sidewalks of small town America of the mid to late 1800s and early 1900s - a time when people gathered by the local park band shell to hear their favorite songs, drank lemonade, and greeted neighbors with a "Howdy. Nice to see you!" and meant it with sincerity. This is the evocation of Robin Spielberg's tribute album, Sea to Shining Sea: A Tapestry of American Music....the songs are instantly recognizable. Highlights for me include the following: "Home on the Range" which here is treated as a soft, slightly sad ballad, with Spielberg's piano embellished by Rumbel's woodwind magic and MacLeod's guitar, Spielberg's plaintive solo turn on Oh Shenandoah (which gets arguably the most drastic reimagining), And the Band Played On, performed by a sizable ensemble and retains the charm and romance of the original but also flows with a gentle yet deep emotional resonance, the sweet nostalgia of You Are My Sunshine, and the sheer exuberance present in the uptempo I`ve Been Working on the Railroad. Two of Spielberg's originals close the album, the simply beautiful Circle of Life (one of the best songs she's written) where she is joined by cellist Catherine Bent, and Look to Tomorrow, a delicate vocal ballad sung by MacLeod backed by Spielberg and Bent.

Hopefully, when we old-timers listen to Sea to Shining Sea, it will help keep these songs, as well as many other memories of simpler times, alive and vibrant. Sea to Shining Sea is a well-crafted album, but more than that, it's a sepia-toned snapshot that reminds us where we came from as a nation and, just perhaps, some of where we should be headed as well." -Bill Binkleman for ZoneMusicReporter.com

"Sea to Shining Sea: A Tapestry of American Music is the latest release from one of my very favorite artists, Robin Spielberg. The collection consists of twenty tracks - seventeen traditional American songs plus three Spielberg originals. With the exception of two solo tracks, Spielberg returned to working with an ensemble of musicians (including her daughter Valerie) who contributed their talents on a wide variety of

instruments. In the spirit of the music, most of the arrangements are sweetly old-fashioned, conveying feelings of optimism, nostalgia, and hope. Spielberg often gives her guest artists the spotlight, allowing them to carry the melodies while she accompanies on piano. In the liner notes, Spielberg says, `There are songs on this recording I grew up singing, and there are songs on this recording your parents grew up singing.... From the Civil War to the Gold Rush to the great wave of immigration in the 1900`s, these songs chronicled journeys, hardships and love in music, as they discovered the beauty and the majesty of America.` Spielberg is obviously making a concerted and heartfelt effort to keep this music alive and fresh for the young people growing up now so that the songs will continue to be passed to future generations. This music is a very vital part of our American culture and history.

Sweet Betsy From Pike begins the album with a lovely piece that features Spielberg on piano, Nancy Rumbel on oboe and Catherine Bent on cello. Home On the Range is arranged for piano, guitar (Kate MacLeod), and oboe (Rumbel) and evokes feelings of peace and contentment. Let Me Call You Sweetheart` is an old-fashioned waltz arranged for the ensemble and conjures up images of sunny picnics with live music coming from the bandstand. My Grandfather's Clock introduces Spielberg's daughter, Valerie, playing the `tick tock` of the clock on marimba. Piano and strings carry the rest of the tune. Valerie also appears on an utterly charming version of Bicycle Built for Two that features strings and piano. I love the piano/oboe/cello trio of Danny Boy, a song that always makes me feel nostalgic and a little sad. This arrangement is perfect! America The Beautiful is the first of the two piano solos, and what an elegant and passionate arrangement it is! Spielberg performed The Water Is Wide on her 2000 release Beautiful Dreamer as a piano solo, but this time the poignant melody is presented as an achingly beautiful duet for piano and cello - another favorite! Oh Shenandoah is the second piano solo, and also stands out as an emotionally powerful favorite. Circle of Life ...is arranged here for piano and cello - gorgeous! The closing track is another original, the lovely Look to Tomorrow, sung by Kate McLeod and accompanied by piano and cello with back-up vocals by Valerie and Brinkley Brown. What a warm and satisfying journey this album has been! Very highly recommended! -Kathy Parsons for MainlyPiano.com