

Upon Listening

Sherry Kloss, *Epsilon Upsilon, Muncie Alumni*
3510 West University Avenue, Muncie, IN 47303
phone: 765-287-8469 email: sherkl@excite.com

New Lullaby: Fourteen Enchanting Ways to Fall Asleep is an outgrowth of the New Lullaby Project, brainchild of guitarist and educator **Aaron Larget-Caplan** (*Beta, Boston Alumni*). All of the CD's short solo pieces are newly commissioned by the artist and performed by Larget-Caplan with musical insight and fluent technical aplomb. The appealing theme and some delightful surprises will attract a listening public that's often unwilling to give new music a hearing. Short character pieces, a popular inclusion in concert programs a hundred years ago, challenge both composer and artist to convey their essence in a few brief moments. This is not mere background music; rather, the soothing and provocative sounds are mood-enhancing and beckon personal involvement.

Composer Lynn Job creates a wide variety of stylistic techniques in "The Sixth Night." Chordal strumming, influence of classic flamenco style, jazz flourishes, and harmonic patterns from major to minor tonalities complement this very satisfying work. Jonathan Feist's "Leaky Roof" contains wide rhythmic movement and harmonic interest in rock-ballad style. The ostinato bass contrasts energetically with the melody, and his use of harmonics for the concluding theme leaves us with a sense of peace. In "No Time," Feist weaves a poignantly memorable ballad, reminiscent of the Beatles' style of melding seemingly uncomplicated harmonies.

Similarly, the introduction of Francine Trester's "My Darling's Slumber" expands into a Beatlesque melody, develops with a bluesy line, and leads into interesting harmonies and phrasings. In "Nachtlied," Scott Wheeler spins an enchanting melody with cross-rhythms, punctuations of harmony, and use of rhythmic space

to create silences, transporting the listener to restful peacefulness.

"Cradle Song" by Kevin Siegfried is a true lullaby. A pleasing melody creates a lulling, restful effect, and surprise modulations evoke emotional memories of different worlds. In the melodically and harmonically rich "Descent to a Dream," Mark Small employs broken chords, arpeggiated style, and chromatic interest to create a descriptive work. Nolan Stolz's "Lullaby for Sam" begins with a single motive and then embellishes it for interest, using portamenti to color the line. Improvisational style and ostinato bass are the first sounds we hear in Carson Cooman's "Morning Lullaby." Attractive use of characteristic guitar touches (strumming repeated notes, broken chords, silences, and dynamics) contribute to the effectiveness of the composition.

The *sotto voce* harmonics of John McDonald's "You Are Alone to Sleep" set the melody with dissonant chordal punctuation, while in "Berceuse" David Vayo produces an instant mood through human voicing and whistling juxtaposed with guitar, an extremely clever listening adventure. David Leisner's "Disturbed, A Lullaby" begins on a low A and then follows a single 12 tone-like pattern in playful movement, creating an intricate and thought-provoking experience that finds its final resting place on high A. Eric Schwartz travels yet another area in his interesting compositional conception. "Song Softly Sung, in Trying Times" opens with the sound of the ocean, builds a beautiful theme through the harmonic circle, silence, and the ocean once more. Finally, Ryan Vigil focuses on the "other-worldly" timbre of the harmonic in "Shhhh," an innovative composition calling for scordatura tuning.



[Ordering Information](#)
New Lullaby: Fourteen Enchanting Ways to Fall Asleep

[Amazon Price](#)
MP3 Download,
14 Songs, 2010, \$8.99

Audio CD, 2010, \$17.00

Performer:
Aaron Larget-Caplan

Composer:
Lynn Job, Jonathan Feist,
Francine Trester, Scott Wheeler,
Kevin Siegfried, et al.

Number of Discs: 1
Label: Six String Sound
ASIN: B003MSRBPO
In-Print Editions: MP3 Download

About the Artist

Aaron Larget-Caplan is a graduate of the New England Conservatory and has been a pupil of Dmitry Goryachev, David Liesner, Eliot Fisk, and flamenco guitarist Juanito Pascual. His artistic achievements have been recognized by the D'Addario Foundation, American Composers Forum, Massachusetts Cultural Council, New England Conservatory, and Mu Phi Epsilon. His previous CD *Tracing a Wheel on Water* was released in 2006. Currently on the faculty at the New School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he also maintains an active performing schedule and private studio. His guitar was crafted of rosewood and German spruce by Stephan Connor.