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Do You Hear What I Hear?

## **Ken Elkinson Generations of Yuletide (2008)**

Summary: *Nifty contemplative arrangements*

Ken Elkinson's *Generations of Yuletide* is an expansive, contemplative tribute to the season. Comprising sixteen mostly traditional melodies and spanning a solid hour, in an era of long, intricate playlists, *Generations of Yuletide* is a nifty instrumental playlist all by itself.

I liked the beautiful Gabriel's Message, a song I don't often hear. Elkinson's arrangement of In The Bleak Midwinter was unusually pleasant; I don't usually enjoy this song all that much, but his rendition made me reconsider it, somewhat. Liberally embellishing the theme with his own style, I felt as if I were being treated to an entirely new song.

Overall, Elkinson's pensive stylings took the edge off the set, which works fine for me as I listen to it months in advance of the holiday extravaganza. At the same time, it did not feel overly "new agey" or contrived. What I heard was a musical and sincere tribute to Christmas.

--Richard Banks  
(Reviewed in 2008)