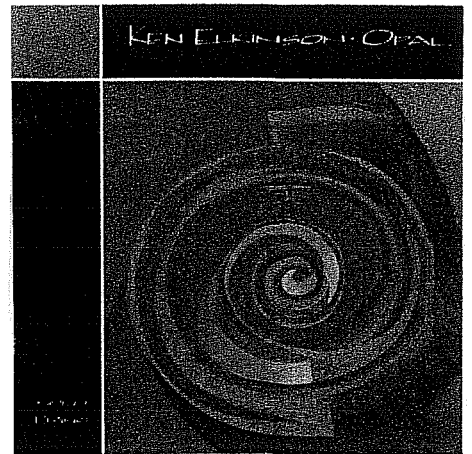


Opal
Ken Elkinson
2004 / August Son Productions
40.5 minutes



“Opal” is pianist/composer Ken Elkinson’s third release to date. Both jazzy and reflective, the album sustains an even-tempered mood from start to finish. The pieces are varied, but the tone of the music is similar throughout, with no rough edges or jarring discordance. Like “Revelry” and “Midnight Conversation,” “Opal” is solo piano and contains all original music.

The big surprise here is that Elkinson is offering “Opal” and its cover artwork as a free download - at least initially - from www.kenelkinson.com and www.opalcd.com! He will be selling 100 copies of the CD autographed by himself and the artist who did the cover artwork to help cover his costs. This is a really novel approach to introducing more people to his music, and I encourage everyone to check it out!

All of the tracks are appealing and easy to listen to. “Circle” is an upbeat piece whose form goes in a circle - how about that? “Opal” has a cheerful sparkle like its namesake gemstone - or is it an aging sports car? “Augustine” has a lovely, gentle flow and an introspective feeling. “Change” is much darker and moodier, and there seems to be a lot of soul-searching going on - a very interesting piece! “Orchid” is much more carefree and forward-moving. As the title implies, “Indigo” is very dark and pensive - a piece that could have been composed in the middle of a sleepless night. The closing track, “Afterglow” is my favorite on this CD. Pensive but warm, there is a sense of calm and serenity - a very nice way to finish!

Whether you trust my opinion or not, checking out “Opal” is completely risk-free! While you are visiting Ken Elkinson’s sites, but sure to read the liner notes for this CD - there are many life-enhancing promises (tongue-in-cheek, but very funny!). There is something here for everyone to enjoy, so don’t miss this opportunity for some great music and some chuckles as well!

- Kathy Parsons
Solo Piano Publications

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