

THE AQUARIAN

50 YEARS OF ROCK WEEKLY

Mike Greenblatt October 30, 2019 Columns, Rant 'N' Roll

Pure Genius



She might look like a K-Pop teen idol but Hiromi is more Chick Corea (with whom she's collaborated) than the "Gangnam Style" of South Korea's Psy. At 29, she put out her first solo piano record *Place To Be* in 2009 which encapsulated the artistic growth of her twenties. Now, nearing forty, she's done a masterful job with *Spectrum* (Telarc/Concord) which chronicles the artistic changes of her thirties. Her compositions veer in angular cadences, be it the minimalism of "Kaleidoscope" or the ethereal "Whiteout," which approximates the surreal hush of walking through deep freshly-fallen snow. Think Ravel or Debussy. "Yellow Wurlitzer Blues" is her idea of fractured funk while McCartney's 1968 "Blackbird" is stunningly gorgeous. The highlight here is easy. Would you believe a 22:45 version of George Gershwin's 1924 "Rhapsody In Blue" wherein she incorporates vestiges of John Coltrane's "Blue Train" and The Who's "Behind Blue Eyes"? Believe it.