

New Release: Phoenix Classical

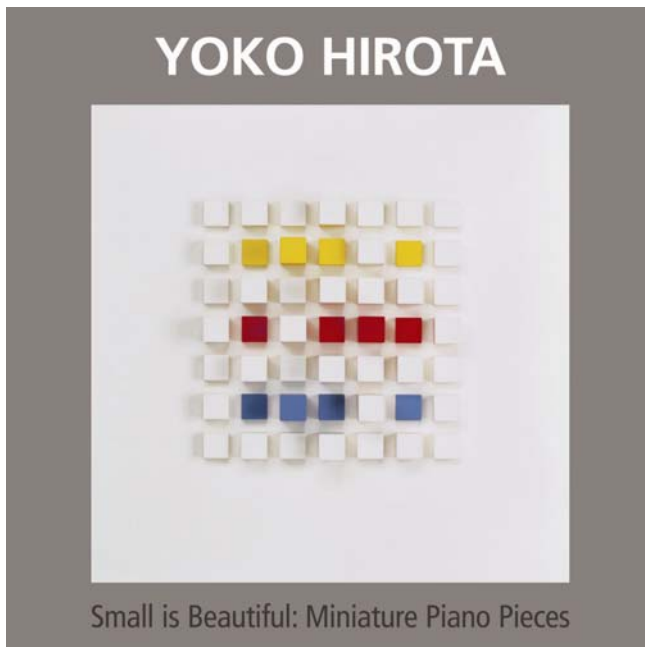
Small is Beautiful: Miniature Piano Pieces.

Yoko Hirota, piano

Phoenix Records PHC95252 (2009)

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Small is Beautiful: Miniature Piano Pieces is the latest release from pianist **Yoko Hirota** and features a wide variety of contemporary miniature works for solo piano from composers such as Schoenberg, Krenek, Ligeti, Berio & others. **Ms. Hirota** has won wide acclaim for her interpretation of contemporary music, and in each of these works she not only showcases her remarkable virtuosity, but also her deep artistic and musical insight into each piece. Krenek's "Eight Piano Pieces" certainly roam the realm of atonality, but there is distinction in each

movement, real character and a clear overall sense of direction and unity; the same is true of Schoenberg's Op. 19, which also displays a wide spectrum of moods, ranging from the delicate ("Leicht, zart") to the brisk ("Rasch, aber leicht"); one of the real surprises on the disc is Berio's "Erdenklavier" – a hauntingly beautiful work which evokes echoes of another world, performed with great sensitivity and gentleness; also featured are works by Canadian composer Robert Lemay – his "Ushebtis No. 2" utilizes a remarkable new technique for the piano whereby the piano simulates the sound of a rich, ringing bell, creating a beautiful, otherworldly atmosphere. In every work, **Yoko Hirota** shows a consummate mastery of her instrument – whether in movements of fiendish difficulty or in moments of tender gentleness, **Ms. Hirota** brings out the heart and soul of each work. ***Small is Beautiful: Miniatures for Piano*** from **Yoko Hirota** is a treasure trove of contemporary miniatures for solo piano, performed by an incomparable artist with a clear love for these works.

For more information and sample track please visit www.yokohirota.com