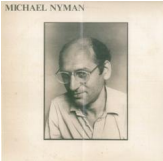
Michael Nyman – Michael Nyman (1981)



1. Bird Anthem (from Act of God) 2:37 2. Initial Treat (from Tree) 2:50 3. Secondary Treat (from Tree) 1:27 4. In Re Don Giovanni 2:48 5. Waltz in F 5:55 6. Bird List Song (from The Falls) 4:19 7. M-Work 21:09 Michael Nyman Band: Rory Allam - clarinet Alexander Balanescu - violin Anne Barnard - french horn Ben Grove - guitar, bass guitar John Harle - saxophone Nick Hayley - rebec, violin Ian Mitchell - clarinet Michael Nyman - piano Elisabeth Perry - violin Steve Saunders - trombone Roderick Skeaping - rebec, violin Keith Thompson - flute, piccolo, recorder, saxophone Doug Wootton – banjo + Peter Brötzmann - bass clarinet, tenor saxophone Evan Parker - soprano saxophone Lucie Skeaping – soprano

This reissue of Michael Nyman's second album from 1981 – effectively his first with a Michael Nyman Band that included Alexander Balanescu and Roderick Skeaping – has aged well.

Its industriously cycling Anglo-minimalism, couched in strings and reeds, is redolent of early Peter Greenaway films: "Bird List Song" is lovely, silly and serious the same time, like the film for which it was written, The Falls. The serio-comic tone helps sustain the music's appeal, compared to the joylessness of much American minimalism: this is music full of affirmative bustle, aware of its lurking pomposity, and not afraid to embrace the free-jazz squawks of Evan Parker and Peter Brötzmann on "Waltz". ---Andy Gill, independent.co.uk

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