

## Meredith Monk - Dolmen Music (1981)

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*1.Gotham Lullaby 2.Travelling 3.The Tale 4.Biography 5.Dolmen Music* Artists: Meredith Monk - voice, piano Collin Walcott - percussion, violin Steve Lockwood - piano Andrea Goodman - voice Monika Solem - voice Paul Langland - voice Robert Een - voice, cello Julius Eastman - percussion, voice

Meredith Monk has such a wonderful and unique vocal style that she is able to sing in complete abstraction (no known words or language for much of the album) yet maintain a very emotional and even sentimental quality in these abstractions, at times. Listeners who can get past just how unique and abstract her approach is will find immense joy and sadness deep within her pieces. On Dolmen Music, Monk wavers from being sad to the point of being quite morose (such as the tracks "Gotham Lullaby" and "The Tale") to being happy to the point of hysteria (as on "Traveling" and "Biography") without skipping a beat. Most of the musical accompaniment is minimalist (mainly piano with occasional, sparse percussion, guest vocalists also being prominent on the final six-part track "Dolmen Music"). This minimalist support only furthers Monk's vast vocal language as the prominent focus in the recordings. Listeners will also be very pleased to find that her wonderful voice is not crowded or overshadowed. A true original, Monk's work should be sought by anyone with an interest in vocal exploration. --- Michael G. Breece, Rovi

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