



**Three-Nine Line:
Flute Music of
Nicole Chamberlain
Mary Matthews, Matthew
Angelo, Chamberlain**

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The music of Nicole Chamberlain is exciting and vibrant, and in *Three-Nine Line*, a sam-

pler of her compositions, there are many moments reminiscent of pop and world music and of everyday household sounds like an old fashioned percolator—sounds that would be familiar to anyone with a TV and an imagination. Chamberlain is a rare composer; she uses the flute and piccolo not only in the usual lyrical and technical ways but also as percussion, and she employs the entire body of the musician, from stomping feet and clicking fingers to singing, speaking, and beatboxing.

That in itself is not so rare these days, but with Chamberlain's music, those effects are never without purpose. They build the texture and enhance the timbre without existing solely for their own sake. They become integral to the music, rather than ornamental.

Three-Nine Line features Mary Matthews, Matthew Angelo, Chamberlain herself, and pianist Jessica Nilles. The playing throughout the program is marvelous, expressive, and acrobatic.

There's something very visceral to the blend of traditional flute playing and extended techniques, something intimate and personal about hearing a flutist's voice and breath along with her tone.

One of the highlights of the CD is "Lilliputian," a composition for piccolo and music box. The eerie, archaic sound of the music-box melody, tinny and plaintive, creates a counterpoint to Angelo's piccolo playing. His tone is sweet and pure, his interpretation effectively straightforward. As the piece ends, his pitch bends perfectly compliment the idea of a music box that is winding down.

"Percolate," for flute trio, is both innovative and entertaining. The beatboxing sections sound just like a percolator, while other sections involving foot stomping, pitch bends and a whirling flow of notes remind the listener of an impatient coffee devotee waiting for the machine to finish.

Chatter, for two flutes, is cacophonous, a loud conversation between friends who can't help but interrupt each other. The title piece was inspired by flight. Written for flute and piano and premiered by Matthews and Nilles, the four movements of the work illustrate specific techniques of air flight with driving rhythms, asymmetrical and wild, contrasted with a lovely, lyrical, mysterious second movement. Matthews' playing is lovely and elegant but also aggressively declamatory in places, with a gorgeous dark tone.

Three-Nine Line is a wonderful recording. It's exciting, inspiring, and a wonderful glimpse into the world of flutist and composer Nicole Chamberlain.

— Jessica Dunnivant