Composing identity, fiddling with (post) ethnicity: Liz Carroll’s “Lake Effect”

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Abstract:
This paper analyses the title track of the 2002 CD Lake Effect, as composed by Chicago fiddle player Liz Carroll and arranged by Evan Price (featuring the Turtle Island String Quartet), positing the degree to which it is suggestive of post-ethnic identification (Bohlman 2004; Hollinger 2005). Beginning with a nuancing of the various identities performed and negotiated by Liz Carroll the musician and first generation Irish American and Chicagoan, Lake Effect is ultimately understood in terms of its transgressive and transformative features. Generated from melodic and rhythmic motifs that the composer identifies as Irish, or American, or jazzy, Lake Effect juxtaposes and interpolates sonic indices of different identities in a hybrid, cosmopolitan and potentially post-ethnic structure.

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