



Golliwog's Gymnopedia

Reviewed by **Dan Landrum**
in the *Dulcimer Players News*
Volume 36, Number 2, Spring 2010

Playing Classical music on hammered dulcimer can be a challenge. Just looking at the sheet music can be intimidating—so many notes! In *Golliwog's Gymnopedia*, Rick Fogel has done a great job of breaking out the melodic lines of familiar pieces, without over simplifying the recognizable structure, and he plays it all on fine instruments he builds himself. Dulcimer players who prefer learning by ear will notice that these arrangements are learnable and playable. This is not a recording filled with stylistic fireworks, rather it is a straightforward approach that is mostly true to the original melodic lines. I say mostly, because Rick also offers a few surprises along the way, like beginning the well known *Clare de Lune* with opening phrases pulled straight from Led Zeppelin's *Stairway to Heaven*. This works well and will leave a smile on your face.

While I enjoy the recognizable classical pieces on this CD, my favorites are the original songs. Track nine, *Marcia at Folklife*, is a sweet piece of music that captures the simple joy of a day well spent. I was also quite impressed with his song, *Incline*, which struck me as the most intimate on the CD.

Rick Fogel is a treasure in the dulcimer community who's home in Seattle, WA has separated him geographically from the eyes and ears of many dulcimer players. Rick has been building and playing hammered dulcimers since 1975, and he continues to innovate with his music, his instruments, and his latest CD.