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## Winnipeg Free Press reviews "Ragtime in Washington"

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This new release celebrates the quintessentially American art of ragtime, courtesy of Washington, D.C.-based pianist Michael Adcock. The album features 17 tracks that resurrect such favourites as Scott Joplin's Bethena, and The Easy Winners, as well as lesser-known nuggets culled from ragtime's golden age of 1905-1917, including Henry Lodge's Red Pepper Rag.

However, Adcock does not merely set his gaze on the distant past, but actually posits ragtime as a living, breathing art form, thanks to a wide selection of pieces penned by contemporary composers clearly sharing his passion. Four works by William Bolcom — Incinerator Rag, The Brooklyn Dodge, Last Rag and Fields of Flowers — create fascinating context for Joplin's older rags.

Among the most radical offerings is Thomas Benjamin's That Old Second-Viennese-School Rag with its abrupt lapses into jazzier harmonies and even unusual tone clusters that will startle purists. This is tempered by William Albright's Sleepwalker's Shuffle and Scott Joplin's Victory. Even Jelly Roll Morton makes a cameo appearance with Grandpa's Spells, tossed off with aplomb by Adcock. However, the best is saved for last with Joplin's eternal Solace, which still resonates across the ages with its comforting, calming ethos amid its own rocky sea of jagged syncopations. ★★1/2 out of five

— Holly Harris

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