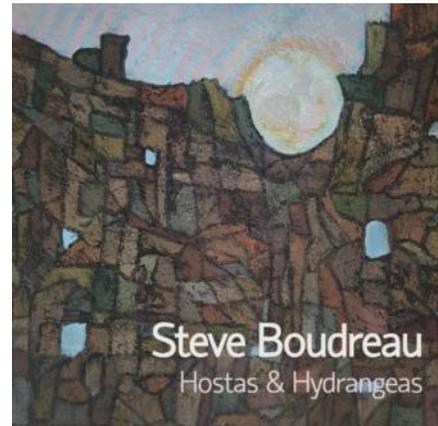


## Hostas and Hydrangeas (Home Tapes Vol. 2)

### Steve Boudreau - piano

- 01 Couldn't Be 5:12 (S. Boudreau)
- 02 Embedded 5:11 (S. Boudreau)
- 03 Step Tempest 4:10 (H. Nichols)
- 04 Threading the Needle 5:19 (S. Boudreau)
- 05 MTT 4:32 (S. Boudreau)
- 06 Blissing Me 5:04 (B. Gudmundsdottir)
- 07 Quick Draw 3:22 (S. Boudreau)
- 08 Mazurka I 1:52 (A. Tansman)
- 09 Mazurka II 1:01 (A. Tansman)
- 10 Mazurka IX 2:04 (A. Tansman)



Recorded in Ottawa, Canada on May 20, 2020 by Steve Boudreau.  
Mixed and Mastered by Philip Shaw Bova at Bova Lab Studio  
Released July 15, 2020.

This second album in the series of five home recordings I made in 2020 was recorded without the idea that I would ever release it. After a couple of months in isolation, I had planned to record these tracks, but found something off with the piano's tuning, and I ended up recording most of these tracks in one uncomfortable sitting, assuming I would come back later and redo everything. In the end, I ended up rather liking almost everything from that day, which didn't happen in any of the other sessions. The tuning is better than I remembered and it reminds me how much your mood can affect your perception. The resulting album gave me the energy I needed to go through with preparing more pieces for the rest of the summer, and completing the planned five albums.

**Couldn't Be** is an older piece that went through many iterations. Over ten years I brought the framework and different drafts of this piece to different teachers who offered suggestions that varied greatly from each other, as well as from my original idea. In the end, this piece was a lesson in trusting my own judgement as a composer and a performer.

**Embedded** was written when I was an undergraduate student at Carleton University, I wanted to immortalize characteristics of two of my close friends at the time through musical devices. Looking back on it now, the strongest character I see in it is one of my teachers, and I see a lot of myself in there too.

**Step Tempest** is a piece by lesser known jazz pianist Herbie Nichols that showcases why he is such an interesting figure. There are parts of an older style of piano playing implied in the composition as well as a kind of recklessness and modernity that I really identify with. It lends itself to being that rare piece that holds both the composer's and the performer's individuality.

**Threading The Needle** was a piece that came from the idea that even one note could be a melody. After re-working it a few different ways, a second note snuck into many of those phrases, but putting myself into that box was the inspiration that helped everything else fall into place.

**MTT** is a piece I wrote this year that draws inspiration from the harmonically sophisticated Bill Evans tunes that are often studied more than played, as well as from the creative spark that gets reignited whenever I reconnect with my peers. After not having written much for a few years, this piece reminded me how much I enjoy puzzling out the details once I've started and conceptualized a new tune.

**Blissing Me** – Bjork was a huge favourite of mine during my high school years. I've heard people say that nostalgia overrides your desire to find new music as you get older- and I know of musicians who live off of discovering great new music they haven't heard before. I was really happy to find that Bjork's 2017 record “Utopia” resonated with me with the same freshness as “Post” did 22 years earlier (I had a giant poster of the album cover on my wall). Despite all of the years dedicated to analyzing and understanding music, I'm glad it doesn't get in the way of hearing a great song and just instinctively reaching for the replay button to hear it again when it ends.

**Quick Draw** is a short piece that I wrote as part of a project to showcase a trio with my good friends Dave Schroeder and Jeff Asselin. The recording never materialized, but a handful of short improvisation vehicles built off of things we all enjoy playing are still waiting in the wings to be played.

Alexandre Tansman's **Recueil de Mazurkas** are quirky simple pieces I initially borrowed from the uOttawa library when I was in my early teens. When my mother was a fine arts student there, I would often go with her to the library when she had some work to do and I would browse for awhile and pick a few piano scores to take out that I would have never checked out otherwise. The first one presented here is the one that I keep coming back to – it has the most consonant version of a cluster of three semi-tones that I have ever heard.

I'm happy to say that I received the Canada Council Digital Originals grant to continue to share my original piano music with you. The plan is to release five albums over the summer, the following three albums will be made up of almost entirely original compositions.

This project is dedicated to Jennifer Giles, who I met while studying at Carleton Univeristy in 1999. I think of her every day whether I'm playing or teaching.

*[We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.](#)*



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