Michael Dulin's piano compositions will be immediately embraced by fans of George Winston and of new age music in general; however, where Winston and his ilk tend to play in a discursive and semi-improvisational style, Dulin is more of a deliberate composer, and his best pieces are those that are most clearly structured and carefully thought out. His first solo release on his Equity Digital label demonstrates those strengths admirably: "Way Home" and "First Love," the two pieces that open the album, are both deceptively simple-sounding and thoroughly lovely; "Sailing" and the exquisite "Lullabye for Alexa" offer a similar blend of straightforwardness, grace, and subtle complexity. "Sandcastles" finds Dulin indulging himself just a bit more, rambling at length and rather aimlessly over a more static and less interesting chord progression. Other tracks on the album split the difference between those two approaches, but none of them is less than pretty, and several are downright gorgeous. Highly recommended to any fan of contemporary piano music.

- Rick Anderson

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