

## New Age Piano: Capturing the Beauty of Nature

Landscape artists do it. So do nature photographers and wildlife artists. They capture the beauty of nature in their art. Now we have New Age piano. A beautiful style of piano playing that very gently guides the listener on a quiet journey into nature's wonders. Using music to describe nature is nothing new. Composers have been doing it for centuries. But nothing really contemporary and accessible to the average listener has been produced until the "New Age" genre hit the scene in the early 1980's. Led by pianist/composer George Winston, his album "December" revolutionized piano playing and allowed millions of people to experience something with more substance than the average pop song. There was something about the music that immediately put you in a trance. Here was music where the spaces between the notes were as important as the notes themselves. The "December" album cover featured a stark winter landscape and was very minimalist in design. This was done on purpose since the music itself is minimalist. Focus is not on sophisticated harmonies or fast melodic runs. Instead, unique atmospheres are created by the use of letting notes ring out. This was something that seemed a perfect match for nature itself. A relaxed ambient approach became a perfect marriage to nature's own quiet beauty. On Winston's album Autumn, titles like "Road," "Moon," and "Woods" allowed listeners to journey into the composer's interpretation of these places. Thoughts of long walks in the woods or memory of a special place seemed to come up easily as you listened to the music. George Winston was a pioneer for the simple reason that he introduced a whole new genre of music to the listening public. He combined his two loves of music and nature into what has now become known as New Age piano.

## About the Author

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