

NAXOS

Avner  
**DORMAN**

Piano Sonatas Nos. 1 to 3  
Moments Musicaux • Azerbaijani Dance

Eliran Avni, Piano



**PRODUCT** Avner Dorman  
Piano Works  
Eliran Avni (pf)

**FROM** Naxos

**CD NO** 8579001

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Avner Dorman's music is billed here as a 'fusion of avant-garde, jazz and ethnic elements'. My heart sank when I read this - 'fusion', in classical speak, normally means 'devoid of discernibly individual content'.

Not with Dorman, fortunately. When the opening movement to his First ('Classical') Piano Sonata scuttles off like Poulenc accompanying a Buster Keaton feature, you know you're in the hands of a sharp and strongly distinctive musical imagination.

Ravel certainly seems a point of reference in the delectable *Andantino a Piacere*, but again Dorman speaks in his own clear and unmistakable accent. Is the movement possibly a touch lengthy given the mordant witticism of the two flanking it?

Piano Sonata No 2 plumbs deeper emotionally in its opening Adagio, and has an explosively percussive second movement finale. Sonata No 3 draws on Dorman's Middle Eastern background (he is Israeli-American), melding contemporary influences in *Techno*, the whirring conclusion.

Dorman is handsomely served in these performances by fellow Israeli Eliran Avni, who weds steely technique with ripe poetic sensibility. Dorman writes tunes (good ones), has ideas (good ones), and speaks in an unapologetically accessible, but not dumbed-down, musical language. Many listeners will, I suspect, be extremely glad to hear it. **TERRY BLAIN**