

Solo Piano  
**LIZ STORY**

**ESCAPE  
OF THE  
CIRCUS  
PONIES**



Cherry  
Lane  
Music

*Edited by Milton Okun*

# LIZ STORY

ESCAPE

OF THE

CIRCUS

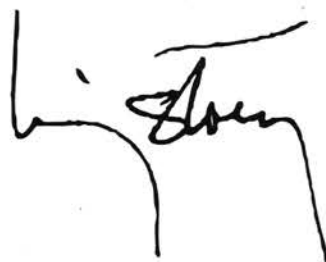
PONIES

*Edited by Milton Okun*

*This book and recording are dedicated to my best friend, Lydia Herboldt,  
Yellow Self-existing Star, who continues to show me amazing avenues of  
escape and renewal—the lands that magic reveal.*

I would like to thank all of the people at Cherry Lane Music,  
the transcribers, and my friend Joel Di Bartolo for all the  
support they have given me. This project, which occurred  
during a difficult transition in my life, required a depth  
of patience and understanding from everyone  
involved.... I thank you all.

Peace On Earth,



Transcriptions by Donald Sosin and Edwin McLean  
Production: Daniel Rosenbaum/Rana Bernhardt  
Art Direction: Rosemary Cappa-Jenkins/Art Brooks  
Director of Music: Mark Phillips

*Some transcriptions are abridgements of the recorded versions*

*Cover Painting by: Mary Shivers  
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Finale notation software was used  
to engrave the compositions in this book

# LIZ STORY



Liz Story has established herself as one of the most distinctive composers and pianists of the new instrumental music that emerged in the 1980s. The California native seemed destined to piano stardom when she mastered Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 11 at the age of eleven. But during her teens, Liz's interest in music had to compete with her passion for softball. Moreover, when her family moved to Germany during her high school years, she devoted herself to the study of languages, philosophy, and poetry.

After returning to the U.S., Liz reaffirmed her commitment to music. She studied at the Juilliard School of Music and had enrolled at Hunter College when a pivotal night spent listening to pianist Bill Evans at the Bottom Line in New York City affected her profoundly. Struck by Evans' magical way with improvisation, Liz recalls, "It was suddenly clear how I was to study music." Upon Evans' recommendation, she became a student of Sanford Gold. Then, moving back to Southern California, she attended the Dick Grove Music Workshops in Studio City.

When she landed a gig playing solo piano in a French bistro, Liz underwent another conversion. The old upright at the restaurant had no place to hold her music, so she was forced to improvise every night. Her spontaneously conceived pieces developed into the compositions that found their way onto tape and into the hands of Windham Hill's Will Ackerman, who immediately signed Liz to record *Solid Colors*. Liz's career continued to take shape through such albums as *Unaccountable Effect* and two recordings for Novus/RCA, *Part of Fortune* and *Speechless*. Since her return to Windham Hill Records she has released two albums, *Escape of the Circus Ponies*, which she ranks as one of her favorites, and her most recent, *My Foolish Heart*, a collection of her arrangements of jazz standards, resulting from her collaboration with Dick Grove.

Ms. Story prefers the solitary artistic life, and currently lives in the geodesic dome she built atop a mountain in a remote, forested region of Arizona.



## R e f l e c t i o n s

### **Broken Arrow Drive**

This piece was written while I was living with two friends in a large house on Broken Arrow Drive. We were all in transition, and there were a lot of open and unfurnished spaces. In contrast to this emptiness, it was a time of exceptional closeness and intimate friendship. This piece is dedicated to Hal Sciotto, the one who provided a sense of haven (and an actual living space!) for two friends and the basis for life-long friendship.... Thanks again, Hal!

### **Inside Out**

This piece describes an interior space that is like reading a book of poetry in a warm, deep library. Some reviewers of my work have commented that while this piece is in C major, it sounds like minor. T.S. Eliot commented once that all composition involves bringing into language or *translation* what lies in the realms beyond language, beyond sound. I feel this piece has the contour of this struggle to bring the inside out. It is dedicated to my friend, my aunt, Amina Costas.



### Escape Of The Circus Ponies

I began this as a variation on an old Spanish Christmas carol, "Enter The Stable Gently." After many shifts of rhythm, however, it began to evolve away from the quieter carol setting into a livelier dance. I imagined animals in a stable running out into a field to celebrate their freedom—an escape from trained or routine behavior to a joyous Spanish dance. The title *Escape Of The Circus Ponies* is borrowed from a wonderful painting by a Colorado artist, Mary Shivers. This painting is the cover art of this book and the CD. Her work has been called "little operas of expressionism."

### Church Of Trees

This is a hymn dedicated to the beauty and intelligence of trees. The ancient Celts understood that groves of trees were the original churches—oracles and healing places. The Mayans spoke of history as being recorded and held as true memory in trees. Both traditions warn that if too many old trees are cut down, the human race will disappear. I sense this to be true. This piece is also a prayer that we remember who the trees are and reconnect with them.

### The Sounding Joy

The carol "Joy To The World" was the original inspiration for this piece. I was working on the idea of a Christmas album, and, as is the case with the piece "Escape Of The Circus Ponies" (which began as a variation of a Spanish carol), "The Sounding Joy" took another direction altogether. While working on this piece, I was touring with the Irish band Nightnoise. As a result, it took on a jig-like character. This piece is dedicated to Nightnoise.

### Another Shore

This title came from the end of an Antonio Machado poem. The song is about a move I made

from Arizona to New York and back to Arizona rather quickly. This piece is dedicated to a marvelous poet and essayist, Ben Howard.

### Incision

The title refers to a cut in my left hand that I got by pitching an old coffee cup against the side of a building. I used to pitch left-hand windmill softball. I had a brief but brilliant softball career—in my best game I struck out 13 batters in a row! The orthopedic surgeon told me that the slice in my finger was a very straight, clean cut, almost surgical in nature. I dedicate this piece to my ex-husband, Mark Duke, who'd inspired me to throw the cup. He is a good friend now. I don't throw things as casually now.

### Worth Winning

I wrote this for the film of the same name. I worked with Madeline Stowe as she played a concert pianist in performance. This was an interesting experience, as I was dressed up as her "look alike" all day on the set so my hands could be filmed during close-ups. When the film was finished, I thought that the footage of Madeline's hands looked more realistic than my own! She became a great friend—a pleasure to work with.

### The Empty Forest

I live in the forest in a fairly remote location. The first few months living there, I was surprised to find that I was uneasy walking around in the forest at night away from the light of my home. Even full moonlight, which creates an eerie quality of very deep, dark shadows among well-lit trees, seemed stranger than no moon at all. A friend very familiar with the area told me that I shouldn't be afraid, that the forest is empty. I don't agree that the forest is empty, but he helped me lose my fear.



*W. J. Stone*

ESCAPE

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CIRCUS

PONIES





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