

Noriko Hisada

Led By the Yellow Bricks CD review

A powerful evocation of childhood

Andrew Clements, August 2017, the guardian

It seems as though Noriko Hisada prefers to let her music speak for itself. Other than the year and place of her birth – 1963, Tokyo – and a list of her works to date, it is hard to find out much about Hisada or her musical background. We do know, however, if you hadn't guessed it from the title, that *Led By the Yellow Bricks* – her seven-movement suite for an instrumental sextet of two strings, two woodwind, piano and percussion, which was first performed by the Ensemble für Neue Musik Zurich last year – was inspired by Frank Baum's children's classic *The Wizard of Oz*. Hisada's work does not attempt to tell "seven consecutive stories", she insists, nor to portray the events in Baum's book. It is more an attempt to suggest the childhood memories that reading the book evoked, which her music does in gestures of increasing power. Tiny ideas become kernels for much larger ones. The gigantic climaxes she extracts from the ensemble are balanced against textures and solos of much quieter intensity and interrupted a couple of times by a child's voice. It is approachable and a bit mysterious.

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/aug/31/hisada-led-by-the-yellow-bricks-cd-review-a-powerful-evocation-of-childhood>