

Ambient 1: Music for Airports

ByteNoise

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Artist

[Brian Eno](#)

Label	Virgin EG Records Ltd
Year	1978
Summary	Absolutely sublime music, as essential as it is timeless.

I'm not even going to pretend to be objective about this one. Ambient 1: Music for Airports is one of my favourite albums of all time. It is both a timeless classic, and historical as taking music in a completely new direction. At a time when most records were getting louder and louder, Brian Eno was starting to release music designed to be played quietly, based on the furniture music of classical composer Eric Satie. Music for Airports is one of the first ambient albums, and certainly the first to use that phrase.

It would be worth finding this album for the first track alone, especially as it is over sixteen minutes long. This piece mainly consists of a gentle, repetitive melody played on a piano, with other instruments interweaving with it. The result is completely calming. Just having it on in the background gives the room a warm feeling, much like ambient lighting does (hence the name of the genre). When you actually sit down and listen to it, however, it doesn't appear too simple or repetitive. It remains tranquil, warm and inviting.

The second piece of music is played on some sort of synthetic choir. It is gentle and breathy, and invokes the feeling of floating. The price for this is a loss of the familiarity that the first track provides. Instead of making you feel safe in a warm, familiar place, this piece takes you on a strange and unfamiliar journey.

The only problem I have with the second track is that it has a lot of silence. It constantly feels like it has gone, only to return

again, but never staying. Thankfully, the piano returns to join the choir in the third track. This eliminates the awkwardness of the second piece, as it quietly sustains notes throughout the choir's silences.

The fourth track consists solely of a synthetic pad, but is still warm and played in a natural, organic way. I'm convinced that this piece of music in particular must have influenced Robyn Miller when he wrote the soundtrack for the computer game *Myst*, as it has a very similar vibe.

In general, this album is relaxing and meditative. It's great to listen to while lying down with your eyes closed after a particularly stressful day, and it's equally useful for brightening up the room in which you are working or resting.

I'm not saying that everyone should own *Music for Airports*, but every music fan should at least listen to a few minutes of the first track in their lifetime.