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SERGIO CALLIGARIS

"...among the best of piano virtuosos..."

Lo Specchio, Rome

LISZT
FUNERAILLES

RUSCONI
ISTANTANEE SONORE

RAVEL
PAVANE

MADER
PRELUDE, TUNE AND EIGHT MASQUERADES



There are souls who are invincibly drawn, by virtue of their solitude and meditation, toward infinite thoughts, that is to say, to religion. Their entire conscience is absorbed in prayer, their existence a mute hymn to divinity and expectation. They search in themselves and in creation about them a stairway to God, images and expressions by which to reveal themselves to Him, so He may be revealed to them; could I but aid them! There are hearts broken by pain, rejected by all, that seek refuge in a world of their thoughts, in the solitude of their souls, to weep, to await, to worship. May they be visited by a Muse as solitary as themselves, find sympathy in it, and say: we pray with your words, weep with your tears, call forth with your songs! (Alphonse Lamartine (1790-1869): Foreword to "Harmonies poétiques et religieuses")

Funérailles, the seventh work in *Harmonies*, was considered by some to be a funeral ode for Chopin. Although written in October, 1849 (Chopin died October 17th), it was actually composed in memory of a trio of Liszt's friends, Prince Lichnowsky and Counts Batthany and Teleki, all killed in the 1848 Hungarian uprising. The dedication is to the Countess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein (Liszt was her lover). *Funérailles* is a somber, introspective work, grandiose and fittingly stately. There is the inevitable impassioned climax in the middle of the piece, and a tender, almost other-worldly return of the main theme towards the end, an evocation of the spirit, devoid of flesh.

PAVANE POUR UNE INFANTE DEFUNTE (Pavane for a Dead Princess) was the first of Ravel's works to achieve popular success. Composed in 1899 and dedicated to the Princess de Polignac, it was first performed in 1902 by Ricardo Vines, a former classmate of Ravel's at the *Conservatoire*. Ravel felt the piece's popularity was out of proportion to its musical worth, and claimed it showed the influence of Chabrier. He nevertheless orchestrated it (in 1910) — which led to even greater popularity of the work. In time, Ravel grew tired of hearing the *Pavane* performed with such regularity, and not always on the highest level of interpretation, and is reputed to have told a group of young pianists: "What I wrote is a Pavane for a Dead Princess, not a Dead Pavane for a Princess". The work is a masterpiece in miniature, with its haunting melody and gentle, dignified dance rhythm.

GERARDO RUSCONI is one of the leading composers of the modern Italian school. His music has often been performed in leading musical centers of Europe. Most recently his Cantata "Per i semi non macinati" had a highly acclaimed performance by the RAI Chorus and Orchestra of Turin conducted by Piero Bellugi, while his "Moments for Orchestra" was performed in Copenhagen at Tivoli Concertsallen conducted by Heckert-Hansen. His *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra* was given a new performance at the famous Pomeriggi Musicali of Milan in January 1971. Mr. Calligaris gave the USA premiere of *Instantanee Sonore* on December 9, 1970 in a recital at Schoenberg Hall, at the University of California at Los Angeles. This composition consists of six episodes in which Rusconi's extraordinarily clear and definite musical syntax creates these pieces wherein every accent, rhythmic pattern or melodic line corresponds to a most concentrated musical expression.

Grotrian—Steinweg piano

Broken rhythms, enhanced by accents placed with great originality gives the first episode (*Allegretto con accenti*) a remarkably interesting articulation. The following (*Modérato*) is an alternation of insinuated lyrical lines interrupted by restless developments of rhythms. The third (*Allegro*) is a fast figuration alternating between the two hands in a transparent texture, followed by a *Lento Cantabile* of a quiet and lyrical mood. The next piece in contrast (*Ritmico-Drammatico ed ostinato*) is a tense episode based on sharp accents. The last (Commiato) consists of a sequence of mysterious chords moving slowly toward a quiet conclusion in pianissimo.

CLARENCE MADER's musical career began at the age of eleven, when he became organist of an Easton, Pennsylvania church where his father was pastor. When he was sixteen, his family moved to California, where he studied piano with Homer Grunn, and theory with P. Shaul Hallett. These studies were continued in New York, where he came under the influence of America's greatest organist, Lynwood Farnam. This led to a life-long interest in the organ, resulting in upwards of fifty compositions for that instrument, including a Concerto for Organ Solo and a more recent Concerto for Organ and Orchestra. He was organist at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles for thirty seven years and a member of the music faculty at Occidental College. In addition, Clarence Mader enjoyed a long and illustrious career as a concert organist, giving many recitals across the nation. He acted as consultant in numerous installations and rebuilding of organs on the West Coast and in Southern California. He is also chairman of a national committee for the standardization of organ consoles, this made up of organists and members of various organ building firms. Mr. Mader contributes to various periodicals, and his works are widely performed at home and abroad. Besides an opera, choral works and chamber music, there are piano works and songs.

PRELUDE, TUNE AND EIGHT MASQUERADES was composed in 1943 on a commission from the Los Angeles Pianist, Berenice Morrison. The Tune, which follows the serious minded Prelude, is an authentic "Loggers' Song" as heard in the Canadian wilds. (The words were too robust for printing here). The term *Masquerade* is appropriate because the tune is drawn through a series of styles as well as developments. The first masquerade (which follows the tune) is marked *without elegance*. Then, following in order, are: *the mystery of the woods; relaxed and wayward; in waggish mood; the sound of the axe; no more than wind in the trees; the forest comes to life; and finally, hearty and carefree*.

The prelude opens with very simple polyphonic writing, and develops into two big climaxes in fortissimo. Following the second climax, it concludes in the same simple vein in which it opened (with the last three notes of the main subject). The theme is exposed, supported by subtle harmonization. The following masquerades (they are actually variations) present the theme in a vast metamorphosis of moods, from mysterious (No. 1 and 2) to elegant (No. 3), ironic (No. 4), majestic (No. 5), poetic (No. 6), stirring and brilliant (No. 7) and concluding with a spirited fugue.

Timings: Liszt (P.D.) 12:22; Ravel (P.D.) 5:54; Rusconi (Ms) 3:48; Mader (Ms) 15:26

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SERGIO CALLIGARIS was born in Argentina in 1941, of Italian descent. His career was guided by such masters as George Fanelli, Arthur Loesser, Adele Marcus, Nikita Magaloff and Guido Agosti. He concertized extensively in his native Argentina, and launched his international career during the 1967-69 seasons with a highly acclaimed debut at the Brahmsaal of the Musikverein in Vienna, followed by equally successful presentations in Berlin, Madrid and Rome (Società del Quartetto). In 1968 he gave a special recital at the Palazzo Patrici in Rome for the diplomatic representation at the Holy See. The Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française in Paris commissioned him to record a special program, and he was also presented in Paris and London in recitals sponsored by the Argentinian embassies there. Calligaris is an official artist of the Vatican State Radio, with whom he has recorded two albums that met with exceptional critical approval. He holds the coveted Artist's Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he was a member of the piano faculty, a post he also holds at the California State College at Los Angeles.

- VIENNA A particularly fine quality of tone...a thoroughly refined technique and judicious use of pedals enhanced the fascination of his performance.
- MADRID Excellent concept of the Mozart style, served by a highly refined technique...beautiful delineation of the singing line.
- ROME Powerful dynamic effects, wise use of pedals, intensity of accents, in a highly suggestive sonorous atmosphere.
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