

ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: VIRTUOSO PIANO ARRANGEMENTS BASED ON
OPERA, SONG AND WALTZ

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Piano arrangement refers to piano music that borrows and reworks from existing music. As a result of its popularity and vast publications, this particular genre was established during the nineteenth century. This performance dissertation concentrates on virtuosic piano pieces that originally based on opera, song or waltz. From the perspective of musical form, this selection of works aims to show the diversification, as the originals of the three types – opera, song and waltz – contrasts drastically in length, format, and the performing force.

The operatic arrangements are generally characterized with technical brilliance and luxurious sonority. Among the nine arrangements, Liszt's *Réminiscences de Norma* stands out as the only fantasy that embodies its unique dramatic view to the entire opera. The other eight pieces took shape from instrumental and vocal music of single operatic scenes by Brahms, Backhaus, Liszt, Moszkowski, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, Sgambati and Tausig.

The second selection includes ten pieces originated from art songs and arranged by Liszt, Thalberg, Grainger, Godowsky, and Grieg. Liszt's works are emphasized in this selection for the seamless union of poetry, music, and virtuosic technique serves as the aesthetic basis. When transcribing from other composers' songs, a distinct feature of confrontation between two contrasting personalities and alteration of musical styles are often clearly evident.

The third selection consists of waltz arrangements by Dohnányi, Friedman and Grünfeld, which perfectly express the gallant and glamorous Viennese spirit. These simple waltz melodies or themes charm through the effectiveness of brilliant piano texture.

In retrospect, these piano arrangements reveal tremendous possibilities of the piano, including the piano's capacity to approximate orchestral effects, incorporate different vocal elements, and mimic the style of nineteenth-century improvisations. They suggest challenges beyond virtuosic technique and inspire the performer's sense of drama, poetry, color, and imagination.

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PROGRAM

Disc 1 (total time 72:28)

1. Franz Liszt (1811-1886):
Réminiscences de Norma de Bellini 20:18
2. Franz Liszt:
Sonetto 123 del Petrarca 7:36
3. Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) / Percy Grainger (1882-1961):
Nell 2:40
4. Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787) / Giovanni Sgambati (1841-1914):
Mélodie 3:44
5. Christoph Willibald Gluck / Johannes Brahms (1833-1897):
Gavotte 4:08
6. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) / Wilhelm Bachaus (1884-1969):
Serenade (Don Giovanni) 3:22
7. Franz Schubert (1797-1828) / Franz Liszt:
Der Wanderer 7:08
8. Maurice Ravel (1875-1937):
À la manière de Emmanuel Chabrier. Paraphrase sur un air de Gounod 2:10
9. Robert Schumann (1810-1856) / Franz Liszt:
Widmung 4:30
10. Carl Tausig (1841-1871):
Siegmunds Liebesgesang aus der Walküre von Richard Wagner 4:38
11. Edvard Grieg (1843-1907):
I Love Thee 3:12
12. Moritz Moszkowski (1854-1925):
Isoldens Tod. Schluß-Szene aus Tristan und Isolde von Richard Wagner 9:02

Recorded at Joseph & Alma Gildenhorn Recital Hall at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, College Park on September 8 & 14, 2007
Recording Engineer: Antonino d'Urzo, Opusrite™ Audio Productions

Disc 2 (total time 69:01)

1. Franz Liszt:
Am stillen Herd. Lied aus Richard Wagners Meistersinger 8:44
2. Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921):
La mort de Thaïs. Paraphrase de concert sur l'opera de J. Massenet 8:40
3. Ignaz Friedman (1882-1948):
Alt-Wien II 4:44
4. Sigismond Thalberg (1812-1871):
Fantaisie sur des mélodies de F. Schubert 8:26
5. Franz Schubert / Franz Liszt:
Das Wandern 2:13
6. Franz Schubert / Franz Liszt:
Der Müller und das Bach 5:41
7. Franz Schubert / Franz Liszt:
Wohin? 3:35
8. Ignaz Friedman:
Alt-Wien I 4:02
9. Franz Schubert / Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938):
Morning Greeting (Die Schöne Müllerin) 3:50
10. Johann Strauss II (1825-1899) / Ernő Dohnányi (1877-1960):
Schatzwalzer (Ziegeunerbaron) 8:25
11. Eduard Gärtner (1801-1877) / Ignaz Friedman:
Viennese Dance No.5 3:36
12. Alfred Grünfeld (1852-1924):
Soirée de Vienne. Concert Paraphrase on Joh. Strauss Waltz Themes 7:05

Recorded in ArchiMusic Studio on February 28, March 2, August 8, 17 & 29, 2008
Recording Engineer: Jui-shun Jao, ArchiMusic Production Co., Ltd.

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