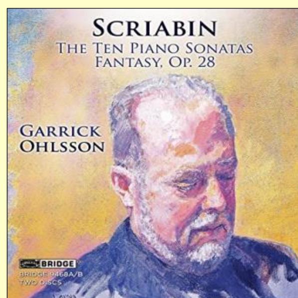
Phil's Classical Reviews

Audio Video Club of Atlanta March, 2017



Scriabin: Complete 10 Sonatas, Fantasy – Garrick Ohlsson, piano (Bridge)

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915) was unique in the history of music. He was a visionary who sought to transform the world through his own highly personal synthesis of complex chords and harmonies based on a color-coded circle of fifths. His mysticism, influenced by his readings of Madame Blavatsky, reached the point where he considered himself inspired to lead humanity from the chaos of a dissolving world. He almost certainly experienced synesthesia, a rare phenomenon by means of which musical tones can be experienced as colors, and vice versa.

Well, you get the idea: Scriabin was not your average kid on the block. But trying to explain him in psycho-analytical terms, besides being as sporting as shooting fish in a barrel, would be to discount the remarkable acievements that took him far beyond any other composer in his passion for ever-more briiliant musical colors and harmonies. As Sergei Prokofiev observed upon hearing the premiere of Sctiabin's Poem of Ecstasy in 1909, "Both the harmonic and thematic material, as well as its contrapuntal voice-leading, resembled nothing we had ever heard before."

That business about counterpoint provides a major clue in interpreting Scriabin. As he became increasingly obsessed with his passion for ever-increasing luminosity of color,

Liszt: 2 Sonatas for 2 Pianos
Ludmila Berlinskaya, Arthur Ancelle (Melodiya)

Arthur Ancelle is a celebrated graduate of the Ecole normale de musique de Paris - Alfred Cortot. Ludmila Berlinskaya is Russian, an honors graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, and was a piano four hands partner of her mentor, the late Sviatoslav Richter. She is also the daughter of the cellist Valentin Berlinsky, founding member of the famed Borodin String Quartet. Both pianists have received numerous awards in international competitions and are co-artistic directors of the festival Le Clé des Portes in the Château region of the Loire.

Therefore, the exalted musicianship and demon technique we witness in the present release by Melodiya of Russia should come as no surprise. Additionally, we have Ancelle's remarkable skill as an arranger, on which his partner comments on a number of occasions in the very insightful booklet interview. The task of transcribing, arranging, and even re-imagining the works by Liszt and Saint-Saëns on the present program was daunting, and involved the skills of more than one musical figure. Saint-Saëns' tone poem *Danse Macabre* (Dance of Death) is heard at the beginning of the program in the composer's own version for two pianos, and at the end in Franz Liszt's paraphrase, to which we have virtuoso touches added by Vladimir Horowitz and Ancelle's own efforts to make the end result seem lighter and more

Enescu: Music for Violin and Piano
Daniel Rowland, violin; Natacha Kudritskaya, piano (Champs Hill)

Violinist Daniel Rowland and pianist Natacha Kudritskaya, natives of London and Kiev, respectively, have a great time with three major works for violin and piano by George Enescu (1881-1955). In doing research for the present review, I was shocked to find how little of the Roumanian composer's music I had in my own listening library – basically only the two Roumanian Rhapsodies for orchestra and his Suite No. 2 for piano. Enescu is, in fact, probably the most under-represented of all the world's great composers in concert programs and recordings.

There are several reasons for this scarcity. One obvious explanation is that Enescu was much in demand as a performing artist. He was world-class as both a violinist and a pianist, something I cannot recall to be the case of any composer since Mozart. His pupils and protegés included the likes of Yehudi Menuhin, Arthur Grumiaux, and Ivry Gitlis. He was also a conductor of some note. But perhaps the most important reason we don't hear more of Enescu is that he was so very meticulous in the care with which he approached any new work of music.

Violin Sonata No. 3 in A minor, heard on the present program, will give even the most casual listener an impression of how carefully Enescu approached his art. It is extremely densely annotated in terms of the small details one is expected to

Scriabin paid less attention to the matter of thematic development, or themes themselves for that matter. The main thing to note here is that harmony and counterpoint go hand-in-hand in music. To divine the contour of any work by someone as strange as Scriabin, you have to keep these two concerns in mind. Otherwise, you are likely to view this composer's music as little more than incontinent rhapsodizing (as many observers have done). Scriabin himself was particularly proud of his contrapuntal artistry in his last three Sonatas, Nos. 8 - 10.

That's where an artist such as Garrick Ohlsson, with his grasp of counterpoint already well-honed in the course of a justly renowned cycle of the Beethoven Sonatas, has a distinct advantage in interpreting Scriabin. Adding to his sensitivity to the musical values in the ten Sonatas and the Fantasy in B minor, presented here, his far-reaching technique helps him overcome the immense difficulties in many passages that other pianists (including Scriabin himself) have dubbed "unplayable." We cannot overestimate his achievement in presenting these works, which represent our surest key to understanding their composer, as a comprehensible body of work in which Scriabin's artistry took him where others dared not venture.

It is a long and adventuresome journey from Scriabin's Lisztian Piano Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 6, of 1892 and his Sonata No. 10, op. 70, with its sensational trills and evocations of insects: "[They] are born of the sun ….they are the sun's kisses," wrote Scriabin. (Please remember that the next time you are tempted to swat a mosquito.) In the process, the composer jettisoned sonata form, or rather subsumed it into his single-movement works (as are all of the Sonatas 5-10) in interesting ways that can't be described in terms of a traditional formal analysis. As his harmony and chord structures got to be more complex, it became impossible to assign them a key signature. Of the last five sonatas, only No. 6 in F-sharp major, the so-called "White airy despite the work's fiendish difficulties. Ancelle's comments on the lack of "daring" in Saint-Saëns' original duo piano arrangement notwithstanding, I marginally prefer the composer's version because it lays bare the grand architecture underlying a fantastic work that has so often been rudely parodied in the popular culture.

When we get to Saint-Saëns' two-piano transcription of Liszt's great Piano Sonata in B minor, we have issues of a different magnitude. Berlinskaya and Ancelle are keenly aware of the need for treating the sound, articulation of phrases, breathing, and pedaling that demonstrate their individuality as well as the overall intellectual and sensory concept of the score. In their hands, the work turns out to be amazingly transparent, permitting us not only to hear the individual voices but to judge the patterns of tension and relaxation that make such a difference in this sonata.

The grand design of a work of symphonic scope, covering just less than 30 minutes' playing time, becomes abundantly clear. So does the clarity and richness of the counterpoint, which does not allow even the slightest shift by the performers. (One notes that the production credits, in addition to sound engineering and mastering, include the notion of "montage," a cinematically derived term that seems so very appropriate here. (Leave it to the Russians to think of something like that!)

That leaves Liszt's After a Reading of Dante, in Ancelle's two-piano transcription of a work that is cyclical in form, a trait which it shares in common with the Sonata, but presents problems in terms of connecting individual episodes and providing an organic impression of its overall design. Berlinskaya's comment on how Ancelle "doesn't aim to separate the registers, imbricating them instead" had me scurrying for the dictionary. (To "imbricate" means to carefully overlap, as when laying tiles on a roof or dressing a wound –analogies to both of which seem appropriate.) negotiate in order to achieve the improvisatory sound of folk fiddling and the essentially Roumanian character of the music – indications as to which part of the bow to use on which strings, the precise degree of vibrato, and how to execute the many ornaments the composer calls for. As Rowland has expressed it, "One needs an accountant's attention to detail coupled with the fiery, limitless abandon of a gypsy!"

Other qualities which make this sonata distinctive, and which it also shares to some degree with Violin Sonata No. 2 in F minor, include its dreamlike quality and the tendency toward melancholy and minor keys, even in fast sections where you least expect it. Unless my ears are playing tricks on me, Enescu even explores semitones, at a time when few other composers concerned themselves with them.

Consider also Enescu's fascination for the sounds of nature. Like Bartok in Hungary, he seemed to have had a preternatural sensitivity for nocturnal sounds – the chirrping of birds, the sussurient sounds of crickets. These traits reach an apex in Impressions d'enfance (Impressions of Childhood, Op. 28), in which Rowland claims to detect evocations of a street fiddler, a pitiful beggar, birdsong, a cuckoo clock, and moonlight streaming through the curtains of the child's bedroom at night.

All of which calls for the remarkably close partnership between violin and piano that Rowland and Kudritskaya show in these recordings. Close miking, in which we can even hear the violinist's sympathetic breathing, allows us to hear a wealth of vital details.

Mass," an ecstatic and voluptuous work that was a personal favorite of its creator, has such a signature.

The vibratory power of trills, as is particularly evident in the last three sonatas of 1912-1913, seemed to excite Scriabin. On the other hand, the dark, shadowy world of Sonata No. 6, a precursor of No. 9, the so-called "Black Mass," so terrified him that he refused to perform it in public. Happily, Garrick Ohlsson has no such fears. In his hands, the amplified force and frenzy in such moments and the intoxicating qualities he explores in such a work as the great Fantasy in B minor of 1900, characterize Scriabin's music in no uncertain terms.

I have heard Liszt's solo piano version on occasion, but it never made much of an impression on me until now. Liszt does not seem to have helped matters by specifying *which* reading from Dante he had in mind. (Presumably it is from the Inferno, in which case the tragic tale of Paolo and Francesca would obviously suggest itself.) Here, Berlinskaya and Ancelle give us a fluid, consistent performance in which they do not deviate from their initial musical decisions, making this work more comprehensible than had previously been my experience.

Schubert: Winterreise – Alan Bennett tenor; Albert Tiu, piano (Centaur)

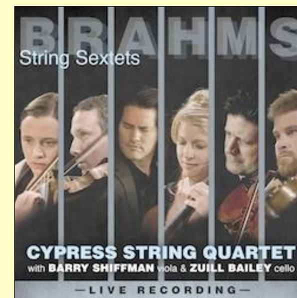
Tenor Alan Bennett and pianist Albert Tiu show a requisite close partnership in interpreting Franz Schubert's great cycle of 24 lieder (art songs) known as *Winterreise*. The title which means "Winter Journeys," resonates on two levels, the inward life of a lonely traveler on foot and the bleak wintry landscape through which he moves. Schubert himself termed these songs "dreadful" (*fürchtenmachen*), as the traveler's thoughts often gravitate towards self-destruction, although the cycle itself ends in resignation and even a glimmer of ironic optimism.

Winterreise is based on a poetic cycle by Wilhelm Müller. He is not exactly one of the great lights of German literature, but his poetry proved just the thing to inspire the best in Schubert's art. Initially, these poems created a problem for the composer because they tend to be

Brahms: Piano Quartet No. 2, Op. 26 + Mahler - Eldar Nebolsin, piano; Anton Barakhovsky, violin; Alexander Zemtsov, viola; Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt, cello (Naxos)

Barakhovsky. Zemtsov. Schmidt. Nebolsin. This is the very same foursome whose fine recording of Brahms' Piano Quartet No. 1, Op. 25, I reviewed with much pleasure in last month's Classical Reviews. As in the earlier release, their excellent rapport and their delight in new discoveries proved to be vital qalities here, as Brahms' Second Piano Quartet proves even more problematical, and more prone to meanderings filled with pleasant hazards, than had the First. For its interpreters, the rewards are also proportionately great.

As I've hinted, the freshness and zest for exploration these musicians displayed in the earlier release is also present here in Piano Quartet No. 2 in A major, Op. 26. The fact that it is of some length (48:21 in the present performance) and makes



Brahms: The String Sextets -Cypress String Quartet, with Barry Shiffman, viola; Zuill Bailey, cello (Avie)

These recordings were made before a live studio audience on 26-30 April 2016, just before the Cypress String Quartet, consisting of Cecily Ward and Tom Stone, violins; Ethan Filner, viola; and Jennifer Kloetzel, cello, made their farewell appearances at the Sitka Summer Music Festival and their own "Beethoven in the City" concerts at various San Francisco venues. In a sense, however, these two Brahms sextets, symphonic in scope and breadth (76 minutes combined) and filled with a wide range of emotions, make for an even more satisfying valedictory.

The two sextets contain some of Brahms' most attractive and deeply affecting music. Early-on, he must have realized the advantages in terms of enriched harmony that he could realize by adding an additonal viola and cello to the basic string quartet, particularly in his handling of the first cello, freed from its bass role

doggedly regular, four lines to the stanza, eight syllables to the line, creating a dreary impression. They are undeniably maudlin in mood, as the protagonist reflects on the fickleness of his beloved, who has wed a wealthier man than he, and his subsequent exile from a town which once seemed so hospitable. (That much of this contempt and alienation doubtless exists in his mind, as is usually the case, makes no difference, it only reinforces the rejection the feels as he moves through a drear snowbound setting.)

All occasions conspire against the traveler. Even the animal kingdom gets into the act, as village dogs strain on their chains barking at him (*Im Dorfe*) and crows caw derisively as he passes (*Die Krahe*), and even, to his overheated imagination, throw snowballs at him – something that is anatomically impossible for an avian species. He derives a momentary surge of hope in the sound of the mail carriage (*Die Post*), but, alas, it brings no missive from his beloved. His heart leaps at the sight of a wayside inn (*Das Wirtshaus*) which is really a graveyard, promising rest of a different nature – but all the "rooms" have been spoken for! He derives momentary comfort from the sight of the Linden tree in whose bark he had once carved his love's name when he was courting her (*Die Lindenbaum*), but the tree, leafless in the bleak midwinter, can only offer the bare consolation, "Here you will find peace" (in the context, a temptation to suicide).

In real life, someone who "carries a torch" as *Winterreise*'s protagonist does would be an object of comedy or derision. It is to Schubert's credit that he raised Müller's maudlin poetry to the level of high art. Varying the sameness of tempo and emphasis, bringing about subtle changes in mood and emotion, he overcame the monotony of the poetry itself. Listen to the moment in "*Frühlingstraum*" (Dream of Spring) when the traveller awakes from a pleasant dream of springtime and love, with the lilting strains of a waltz completing the illusion, to discover the green leaves of his dream are considerable use of sonata form, even when we might not customarily expect it, gives this work a really noticeable symphonic breadth. The opening movement, Allegro non troppo, is characterized by a mood of gentle sadness and wamth, with a chordal theme and a winding thematic element, first heard in the cello (which has a role of considerable persuasiveness to play in this work) and then the violin. Cross-rhythms and deft layerings that you will hear in your dreams add to the general mood of dreamy sadness and tenativeness. The music seems rather "under wraps" in this opening movement, a typical procedure for Brahms.

The slow movement, Poco Adagio, ptogresses from the warmth of melancholy to the elation of lyricism. There is a wonderful moment when the strings, muted at the opening, become unmuted again after a contrasted secondary theme. The Scherzo, unusually in sonata form, has a trio that derives its material from the scherzo section. Again, the general mood moves from one of pensiveness to joy, preparing us for more vigorous material, reminiscent of Hungarian music, in the Allegro finale. Even here, there is a slight melancholic drift (Brahms *will* be Brahms) before the final wind-up.

For the record, this Piano Quartet has a longer duration than any of Brahms' symphonies, reflecting its symphonic scope. Yet it doesn't seem tedious for a single minute, thanks to Brahms' very careful structuring of events and the deeply insightful permance by the present artists, all of whom currently enjoy distinguished solo careers of their own. As with the earlier recording of Piano Quartet No. 1, the sessions occurred at Wyastone Concert Hall, Monmouth, Wales, with producer Joe Kerr and engineer Andrew Lang doing the honors.

In contrast to the Brahms work, which has his fingerprints all over it and could have been written by no other composer, Gustav Mahler's 11-minute Piano Quartet in A minor of 1876 would prove to be the ultimate "stumper" in a spirited and allowed to take the lead in the first theme of the opening Allegro of Sextet No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 18. This movement has a noticeably jaunty, adventuresome mood, reflecting the heady optimism of youth.

The slow movement, an Andante, takes its theme from the famous bass line from the Baroque era known as "*La Folia*." Variations follow one another with increasing rapidity, becoming almost demonic in mood before finally subsiding. Brahms' subtle and masterful writing for the two violas in Variation 6 is but one highlight here. An energetic Scherzo and its dance-like Trio are succeeded by a lyrical Rondo finale that booklet annotator Jan Swafford considers to be "like a re-imagining of the first movement."

As effective as the B-flat Sextet is, Sextet No. 2 in G major, Op. 36 is more compelling. As Swafford puts it, "The B-flat is four winning and lovely movements, but there is no sense among them of an unfolding story," whereas four years later, Brahms had discovered that "a whole piece of music should be a unified emotional narrative."

A lot had happened to him, as man and composer, in the intervening years, including a failed love affair with one Agathe Siebold, for which he assuaged his feelings with an opening melody in which the notes spell out her name: A-G-A-H-E (where H is standard German notation for the key of B natural), with a suspended D beneath the melody standing for the missing T in her name and a final three-note pattern A-D-E (*ade*, "farewell") at the end. There is a certain confessional mood at work in this opening movement, with shifting tonalities adding ambiguity and a second subject of remarkable beauty.

The next movement, Allegro non troppo, is a Scherzo with a vigorous Trio. It is succeeded by the slow movement, a Poco Adagio that has an unusual emotional range. It is in the form of set of variations in the relative key of E minor, sometimes keening, at other times almost bleak, before a mood of gentle wistfulness, warmth, and beauty asserts itself at

only frost etchings on the window pane, and he is mocked by sharp discords from a chorus of crows.

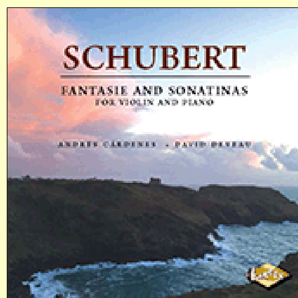
In a cycle such as this, intelligent interpretive insight and the close rapport of both singer and pianist count for more than sheer vocal prowess (thought Bennett is not exactly shabby in that department, either!) For his part, the pianist is often called-upon to play a *de facto* postlude after the vocal part has ended, extending the emotion of a poem as it resonates in our minds.

(Contunued below ==➔

game of Name That Composer. Written at the end of his first year at the Vienna Conservatory, it is unlike anything else I can think of by Mahler: dark, moody, and with an element of mystery. It was re-discovered by the composer's widow Alma sometime in the 1960's in a manuscript consisting of a completed first movement and 24 bars of an intended scherzo. In its present form, it takes on the character of a tone poem for piano quartet. It deserves a hearing as a persuasive example of the road not taken by its composer.

the end. A coda in a very positive vein leads naturally into the Poco Allegro finale, songlike and joyful. As the Cypress Quartet and their buddies, violist Barry Shiffman and cellist Zuill Bailey, realize it, the G major sextet emerges as a complete human and musical experience, replete with melodies that are worth dying for.

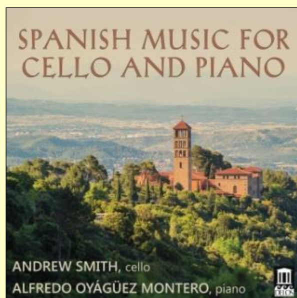
The cycle reaches its apotheosis in the final song, *Der Leierman,* as the exile encounters an old, threadbare hurdy-gurdy man. His fingers are frozen on the crank, and his begging bowl is empty. No one stops and listens to his music, the eeriness of which is reinforced by the drone bass and a missing key in his instrument. No matter, he never stops playing. Rather than being depressed, as we might imagine, the traveller is elated to discover a kindred spirit: "Come with me, and accompany my songs!"



Schubert: Fantasie & Sonatinas – Andres Cardenes, violin; David Deveau, piano (Artek)

The distinguished Cuban-American violinist Andres Cardenes, with pianist David Deveau, who has been on the music faculty of MIT for more than a quarter-century as his partner, undertakes a program of works by Franz Schubert that cannot fail to hit the mark with music lovers. In a well-filled 79-minute CD in which the listener is too busy being echanted to care about something as mundane as time, we are given the Sonatinas in D major, D384; A minor, D385; and G minor, D408, and the Fantasie in C major, D934. All reveal Schubert in his most lyrical and most inventive vein.

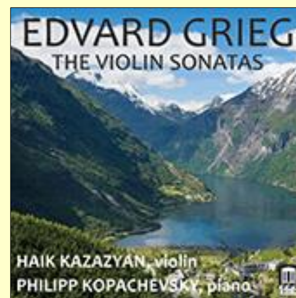
The three "Sonatas for Piano with Violin Accompaniment," as Schubert described them, have attracted little attention from concert violinists until fairly recently. Written in 1816 when Schubert was 19, they were never



Spanish Music for cello and Piano Andrew Smith, cello; Alfredo Oyágüez Montero, piano (Delos)

American cellist Andrew Smith, a native of California, joins forces with Spanish pianist Alfredo Oyágüez Montero, who has distinguished himself as head of the conducting and orchestral programs at the Conservatorio Superior de las Islas Baleares, in a program of Spanish music that both young men find very congenial to their feeling for singing melodies, markedly dark and moody tone colors, and alert rhythms. The program includes really inspired arrangements of music by Enrique Granados, Gaspar Cassado, Xavier Montsalvatge, Joaquin Turina, and Manuel de Falla, concluding with the spiritually satisfying setting by Pablo Casals of the Catalonian traditional "*El Cant dels Ocells*" (The Song of the Birds).

Granados is heard from first, in the exated Intermezzo from Goyescas



Grieg: Violin Sonatas 1 -3 Haik Kazazyan, violin; Philipp Kopachevsky, piano (Delos)

Haik Kazazyan, native of Yerevan, Armenia and currently an esteemed member of the faculty of the Moscow Conservatory, continues to enjoy an international career as a concert violinist. His partner in this recital, Moscow-born Philipp Kopachevsky, has aready been an international prizewinner, even as he pursues his further studies at the Moscow Conservatory. The close rapport they demonstrate in the present recording of the three Violin Sonatas of Edvard Grieg, makes them ideal interpreters of music that sounds wonderful in the hands of lesser artists but takes on greater significance with performers of their calibre.

Grieg (1843-1907) always had a warm spot for these three sonatas, and even a cursory listening reveals the reasons why. Violin Sonatas No. 1 in F major, Op. 8 (1865) and No. 2

published until eight years after his death. Their publisher re-named them "Sonatinas" with a shrewd eye toward the home music market. And certainly, they would have appealed less to the virtuoso than they did the skilled amateur or the professional interpreter who can respond to their innate lyrical beauty for its own sake. For those who grasp the difference, insightful musicianship counts for a lot more than sheer virtuosity in these works.

That isn't to say the Sonatinas are lacking in technical challenges. The opening movement of the A minor contrasts pounding chords in the piano with a gentler, songlike second subject, calling for close rapport between piano and violin. The G minor Sonatina makes much of a contrast between the reflective beauty of its Andante and the light-hearted gaiety of its finale. The sunny warmth of the opening Allegro molto and the concluding Allegro vivace in the D major are further instances in which secure technique must be aligned with consummate musicianship of the caliber we have here.

The Fantasie in C major is one of Schubert's best works in any genre. In particular, his set of variations on the melody of his song *Sei mir gegrüsst, sei mir geküsst (*I greet you, I kiss you) in the Andantino is a favorite with audiences. But the greatness doesn't end there. The slow introduction to the opening section, Andante molto, marked by colorful tremolos and repeated chords in the piano, over which the violin spans the music with a long soaring arch, is masterfully done here. Schubert treats the folk-like melody in the Allegretto canonically, providing much delight even as the tonality swings playfully from A minor to A major. After the set of variations we mentioned above, the opening tremolo is heard once again, the music builds in tension, and the final section bursts forth in a mood of radiant joy. Cardenes and Deveau are attuned to all the moods in a work which, played continuosly, assumes a symphonic dimension.

in which the emotion rises above the poised, steady rhythm to the first of several passionate orations. Cassado, a great cellist as well as composer, shows a free imagination in his gracious, baroque-inspired Sonata in the Ancient Spanish Style and a surprising modern approach in his use of modal music in Dance of the Green Devil (*Danse du Diable Vert*), while unexpected moods lurk beneath the courtly surface of *Requiebros* (polite compliments).

Falla is represented by Suite Populaire Espagñole, based on popular Spanish songs that are often, as in *Asturiana* and *Jota*, as much dance as they are song, thus giving both our artists plenty of opportunity for expression. Smith, in particular, credits this work with inspiring him to play vocal music on the cello. The original songs range in tone from the playfulness of a muleteer chiding a ficke lover in *Seguidilla murciana* ("I compare you to money that passes from hand to hand") to an anguished lover's complaint in *Polo* "Love be damned, damned, and damned him who made me know it. *¡ Ay !*"

Montsalvatge's Cuba-themed *Cinco Canciones Negras* (5 Negro Songs) is another work that brings out Smith's vocal style and Montero's deft close accompaniment in song transcriptions that range from soft gentleness in *Cancion para dormir a un Negrito* (Lullaby for a little black child) to sheer exuberance in the concluding *Canto Negro.* Turina's *El Jueves Santo a Medianoche (*Holy Thursday at Midnight*)* captures the solemnity and expectation of the faithful in a religious procession in which sounds of distant trumpets are suggested by harmonics in the cello and those of muted drums by the piano accompaniment.

in G major, Op. 13 (1867) were products of his twenties, an important time in which he was trying out his fledgling lyrical skills (which were to prove immense) as he introduced audiences to the musical idiom of his native country, Norway.

Both sonatas have passages that capture the droning, chuckling sound of the hardanger fiddle, a favorite Norwegain folk instrument, plus the spirit of the *Springar* (Spring Dance), a name that refers to its leaping steps, rather than the springtime of the year – when many of us are accustomed to do a little springing of our own! The Second sonata goes beyond the First in its mood shifts between poignant lyricism and soaring rhapsody.

Like his contemporaries Dvořák and Tchaikovsky, Grieg was remarkably prolific in terms of lyricism and preferred to write his own folk style melodies, indistinguishable from the originals, rather than borrow them from the folk culture. We find this abundance in the opening movement, *Allegro molto ed appassionato*, of Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 45 (1887) where Grieg blends no fewer than four themes to create a movement of great beauty.

He then surpasses himself with a really radiant melody in the slow movement, an *Allegretto espressivo* in the style of a romance. The finale, *Allegro animato*, is in the form of a march with continually urgent back-and-forth dialog between violin and piano, building recklessly in speed and followed by a virtuosic coda. By turns bold and exuberant, yearning and reflective, the Third Sonata went a step beyond the folk-inflected First and Second, and was in fact Grieg's calling card to the larger world stage. As Kazazyan And Kopachevsky show us in their eloquent account of this work, he succeeded admirably.