



**WOLMOS**  
ENSEMBLE  
**MADE IN  
GERMANY**



Ruth Schonthal (1924-2006)

1. **Theme & Variations** for solo flute (2004) 9:49

Rudolf Tillmetz (1847-1915)

2. **Nocturne** for Flute, Horn and Piano, Op. 31 (1898)\* 6:28

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

**Don Quixote**, Op. 35 (arr. Laszlo Varga (1924-2014)) (1898/1997)\*\*

- |     |   |      |
|-----|---|------|
| 3.  | Introduction                                      | 6:06 |
| 4.  | Don Quixote, der Ritter von der traurigen Gestalt | 2:10 |
| 5.  | Variation I                                       | 2:31 |
| 6.  | Variation II                                      | 1:39 |
| 7.  | Variation III                                     | 7:59 |
| 8.  | Variation IV                                      | 1:49 |
| 9.  | Variation V                                       | 4:04 |
| 10. | Variation VI                                      | 1:11 |
| 11. | Variation VII                                     | 1:08 |
| 12. | Variation VIII                                    | 4:26 |
| 13. | Finale  | 5:19 |

Total playing time 54:46

\* First Professional Recording

\*\* World Premiere Recording (of arrangement)



### **Ruth Schonthal - *Theme and Variations* for Solo Flute**

German-born Jewish composer, Ruth Schonthal (1924–2006), fled Nazi persecution early in her life, first moving to Mexico and later America to study with Paul Hindemith at Yale. Much of Schonthal's distinctive neo-Romantic style developed from subtle cultural influences drawn from her European heritage. Ruth Schonthal's late-career *Theme and Variations* distills her lifelong commitment to melodic expressiveness and emotional narrative into a unique work for solo flute. A concise, evocative, chant-like theme is followed by six variations that draw on spiritual influences and medieval modality. In the variations, Schonthal subjects the material to metamorphosis through rhythmic shifts, chromatic inflections, dynamic contrasts and varied textures. Nothing returns unchanged; each variation reflects her philosophy that musical ideas, like lived experience, evolve organically. Composed in her late seventies, the piece invites listeners to hear the flute's pure voice do what it does best, project a chant-like serenity.

### **Rudolf Tillmetz - *Nocturne* for Flute, Horn and Piano, Opus 31**

Rudolf Tillmetz (1847–1915) was a German flutist, pedagogue, and composer who studied with Theobald Boehm, the inventor of the modern flute. After his appointment as Principal Flute of the Royal Bavarian Opera Orchestra at age eighteen, Tillmetz was invited to teach at the Royal Bavarian Music School in Munich during which time he wrote a large body of music focused on flute performance and education. Among these works is the *Nocturne* for Flute, Horn, and Piano, Op. 31, published in 1898, the same year as Strauss's *Don Quixote*. One of the few Romantic-era trios for this unusual instrumentation, the piece reflects the salon music tradition of late 19th-century Germany, emphasizing lyrical writing and equal interplay between instruments. Though not widely known or performed today, it remains a valuable work in the horn and flute chamber music repertoire. This is the first professional recording of the *Nocturne*.

### **Richard Strauss - *Don Quixote*, Opus 35**

Born in 1864 Germany, Richard Strauss received his earliest musical training from his father Franz Strauss, principal horn player at the Court Opera in Munich. As a young boy, Strauss attended the rehearsals of the Munich Court Orchestra and received lessons in music theory and orchestration from the orchestra's assistant conductor. At age 8, Strauss began private violin lessons; by age 16, he had become a published composer; two years later, assistant conductor at the Meiningen Orchestra.

Although he continued conducting until the end of his life, Strauss is best known for his voluminous oeuvre of symphonies, lieder, concerti, and tone poems. Recognized most for his operas and tone poems, Strauss composed *Don Quixote* in 1897. Based on the novel by renowned Spanish writer, Miguel de Cervantes, the story follows a fanciful nobleman who decides to become a knight-errant to correct the wrongs of the world.

Originally hailed as a comedy, the work has become interpreted much more darkly over the centuries for its exploration of sanity vs. insanity. Strauss' tone poem chronicles select tales of the chivalrous knight, Don Quixote (represented by cello), and his trusty squire, Sancho Panzo (viola). Strauss would later come to describe the work to audiences as the favorite of his compositions.

The performance heard on this album is a highly regarded arrangement by Laszlo Varga for six instruments: clarinet, French horn, violin, viola, cello and piano. As the original primary voices in the larger orchestrated work (all but piano), these six instruments work wonderfully together in recreating the thrilling tale of *Don Quixote*.

Olmos Ensemble is proud to have been given permission to be the first group to record this work. Varga, a Hungarian-born cellist who escaped from a Nazi labor camp, rose to become principal cellist of the New York Philharmonic, where he performed under the distinguished conductorship of Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein. He was known for his arrangement of works for solo cello, cello and piano, and cello with ensembles of varied instrumentation.



Over the course of more than three decades Olmos Ensemble has established itself as one of the premier chamber music organizations in Texas and has gained national recognition for its world class performances, broadcasts and on-line concert archive. Founded as a chamber music showcase for San Antonio Symphony principal players in 1994, Olmos Ensemble's core group now includes leading musicians from across the United States, including several with San Antonio roots. Olmos Ensemble's programming has won plaudits for its innovative programming, showcasing neglected works by female composers, forgotten Baroque gems and challenging contemporary pieces alongside insightful interpretations of standard chamber repertoire from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Musicians Eric Gratz, Mark Teplitsky, Ilya Shterenberg, Jeff Garza and Julian Schwarz make up the ensemble's core membership.



## Biographies

Violinist **Eric Gratz** enjoys a multifaceted career as soloist, concertmaster, chamber musician, curator, and educator. He is Artistic Director of the American Chamber Music Society in Chicago. He previously served for nine seasons as concertmaster of the San Antonio Symphony, where he frequently appeared as soloist in repertoire ranging from Bach to Bartok. He has performed as soloist and concertmaster with over two dozen orchestras, including Cleveland, Louisiana, Phoenix, Tucson, Santa Fe Opera, and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. Gratz made his Kennedy Center recital debut at 17 and has since performed widely in chamber music and recital on four continents.

**Mark Teplitzky**, Artistic Director of Olmos Ensemble, is currently Assistant Principal Flute of the Naples Philharmonic. Previously Principal Flute of the San Antonio Symphony and Second Flute of the Houston Symphony, Mark has performed as a guest with orchestras across the country, including the New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony and Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Solo engagements have included performances of major concertos by Mozart, Boulez, Reinecke, C.P.E. Bach, J.S. Bach, Ibert and Nielsen. Solo recitals include performances of Poulenc's *Sonate pour flute & piano* with Jeffrey Kahane, Prokofiev's Opus 94 with Anton Nel and Baroque flute sonatas with harpsichordists Jeannette Sorrell and Ian Pritchard.

**Ilya Shterenberg**, Acting Principal Clarinet of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (Canada), Principal Clarinet of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra (Columbus, OH), Principal Clarinet of the San Antonio Philharmonic (TX), and Principal Clarinet of the Music in the Mountains Festival (Durango, CO), he has performed extensively in the United States and abroad, in broadcasts on National Public Radio and Chicago's WFMT classical music network.

Hailed by the press: *"He possesses that miraculous gift of innate musical sense...music seemed to flow toward the infinite, as if divinely ordained"*, he has been featured as Principal Clarinetist with the Baltimore, Cincinnati and Seattle Symphonies, the Florida Orchestra, and the Houston Grand Opera and continues to be in demand as a recitalist and chamber music artist with Olmos Ensemble, Cactus Pear Music Festival, and the North Shore Chamber Music Festival. Ilya is a Buffet Group USA performing artist.

**Jeff Garza** is principal horn of the Oregon Symphony and the Bellingham Festival of Music. He previously held principal positions with the San Antonio Symphony and

Houston Grand Opera and has served as guest principal horn with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Utah Symphony, New Zealand Symphony, and Melbourne Symphony. Jeff is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy and Rice University, and currently serves as Adjunct Professor of Horn at Oregon State University and the University of Portland.

Cellist **Julian Schwarz** was awarded first prize at the inaugural Schoenfeld International Competition in 2013 and has since made over 250 concerto appearances in the US and abroad. Julian performs in a duo with Marika Bournaki as winners of the 2016 Boulder International Competition's "The Art of Duo", is a founding member of the Frisson Ensemble and the newest core member of San Antonio's Olmos Ensemble.

A devoted teacher, Mr. Schwarz serves as Associate Professor of Cello at Shenandoah Conservatory, Distinguished Artist In Residence at Lynn Conservatory, and on the artist faculty of New York University. He received BM and MM degrees from The Juilliard School under Joel Krosnick. A Pirastro artist, he endorses Pirastro "Perpetual" cello strings. [julianschwarz.com](http://julianschwarz.com)

Praised by the San Francisco Chronicle for her "elegance and verve," pianist **Elizabeth Dorman** enjoys performing music both new and old as a soloist and chamber musician. A prizewinner of the 2018 Leipzig International Bach Competition, Elizabeth has been widely recognized as a leading performer for her inquisitive interpretations of Bach's music on the modern piano. Elizabeth has appeared as soloist with orchestras including the Louisville Orchestra, the Leipzig Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra, the California Symphony, and as a soloist for interdisciplinary projects at New World Symphony. She can be heard regularly performing as guest Keyboard at the San Francisco Symphony. She has recorded for Navona and Delos records, including as a soloist with Santa Rosa Symphony.

Praised as "master of the strong lines", violist **Colin Brookes** is a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he made his solo debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony at 17. As founding member of the award-winning Ulysses Quartet, he performed with them from 2015-2023.

Colin holds a Bachelor of Music from the Juilliard School and a Master of Music, Artist Diploma from Yale. His mentors include Ettore Causa, Heidi Castleman, Misha Amory, Nicholas Cords, Larry Dutton, Marylene Gingras-Roy, Roger Chase, Jeffrey Irvine, and Carolyn Hills. He currently plays a 19th-century Italian viola on loan from Maestro Foundation, and a Thomas Tubbs bow.



Eric Gratz, violin



Mark Teplitsky, flute



Ilya Shterenberg, clarinet



Jeff Garza, horn



Julian Schwarz, cello



Elizabeth Dorman, piano



Colin Brookes, viola



Recording session

Recorded at University of Portland, Mago Hunt Center Recital Hall on January 3rd & 4th 2026  
Executive Producers: Steven Alan Bennett & Dr. Elaine Melotti Schmidt  
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Recording Engineers: Jordan Walsh, Elise Etherton  
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Olmos Ensemble photography: Josh Huskin  
Elizabeth Dorman portrait: CM Howard  
Colin Brookes portrait: Russ Rowland

Olmos Ensemble:

Eric Gratz, violin •

Mark Teplitsky, flute \*†

Ilya Shterenberg, clarinet •

Jeff Garza, horn †•

Julian Schwarz, cello •

with Elizabeth Dorman, piano †• and Colin Brookes, viola •

\* Schontal

† Tillmetz

• Strauss/Varga

Ruth Schontal: *Theme and Variations* for Solo Flute — published by Furore-Edition 4620 (2004)

Rudolf Tillmetz: *Nocturne* for Flute, Horn and Piano, Op. 31 — published by Leipzig: Fr. Kistner, (n.d.1898).  
Plate 8976

Richard Strauss: *Don Quixote*, Op. 35 (1898/1997) (arrangement by Laszlo Varga) - MusiCelli Publications  
(1997)

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