



**JILL CROSSLAND**  
piano

plays  
**MOZART**  
**BEETHOVEN**  
**BACH-BUSONI**

Mozart: Fantasia, K.397  
Mozart: Variations, K.265  
Beethoven: "Moonlight" Sonata  
Beethoven: 6 Bagatelles, Op.126  
Bach-Busoni: Chorale Preludes

# MOZART, BEETHOVEN and BACH-BUSONI

1 Mozart: Fantasia in D minor K.397 5.30

2 Mozart: Variations on 'Ah vous dirai-je Maman,' K.265 11.44

## Beethoven: Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor Op. 27/2 (Moonlight)

3 i *Adagio sostenuto* 5.44

4 ii *Allegretto* 1.59

5 iii *Presto agitato* 7.24

## Beethoven: Six Bagatelles Op. 126

6 No.1 *Andante con moto . Cantabile e compiacevole* 3.15

7 No.2 *Allegro* 2.40

8 No.3 *Andante. Cantabile e grazioso* 2.55

9 No.4 *Presto* 3.51

10 No.5 *Quasi allegretto* 2.33

11 No.6 *Presto – Andante amabile e con moto* 4.28

## Bach-Busoni: Chorale Preludes

12 Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (after BWV140) 3.39

13 Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (after BWV62) 4.59

14 Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ (after BWV177) 3.48

Total timing: 64.16

JILL CROSSLAND (PIANO)

## **MOZART: Fantasia K.397 Variations K.265**

It is immensely difficult to convey both simplicity and depth, virtuosity and effortlessness, in Mozart playing; Artur Schnabel's comment: 'Too simple for children, too hard for artists' is apposite, not just to these pieces. The emotional depth of the Fantasy belies its small size. It was probably composed later than its K number suggests – around 1787, at the time of Don Giovanni, whose passion it resembles in miniature. The work was first published in unfinished form (without the final ten bars), and some speculate it was meant to end in the dark D minor in which it begins.

The 12 Variations K.265, are another excellent example where a facile exterior hides unexpected depths. The theme was a French folk song, possibly a bawdy one, which was later adapted to become an English nursery song. Mozart wrote 15 sets of piano variations, often connected with his teaching – it was a form

easy to understand and flexible in demonstrating different techniques. The piece was originally dated to Mozart's visit to Paris in 1778, coinciding with the death of his mother. Later forensic research, however, on the paper Mozart wrote the piece on, suggests that the piece was written later, from the first years Mozart was in Vienna. In any case, as so often with Mozart, there is no necessary connection between life and work. There are, however, two profoundly felt variations – one in the minor, and a slow one just before the end - there is no indication of the isolation and sadness we know he was feeling.

## **BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor Op. 27/2**

Of course this sonata is generally known by its nickname, the 'Moonlight' and must vie with the Fifth symphony as Beethoven's best known work. It was written in 1801 and dedicated to a young aristocratic pupil, the Countess Giulietta Guicciardi.

The composer himself was irritated by how much listeners focused on it at the expense of many others, even though there is no hard evidence that its Romantic nickname dates from Beethoven's lifetime, and the likeliest origin is a statement in 1836 by the poet and critic Ludwig Rellstab that the first movement was like the moonlight on the water of Lake Luzern. Beethoven sub-titled the sonata "quasi una fantasia," and this is generally thought to mean that guides the listener both towards feeling the direct relation with emotion appropriate to a Fantasy and appreciating the formal discipline and characteristics of a sonata.

The funeral march-like first movement, described by Berlioz as a "lamentation" and "one of those poems that human language does not know how to qualify" leads to an innocent middle movement, which has its own famous quote – Liszt's, who said of it that it was a 'flower between two abysses.' The finale bears the virtuosic weight of the sonata, and is of unparalleled power and ferocity.

## **BEETHOVEN:**

### **Six Bagatelles Op. 126**

Civilisation and its discontents struggle with each other in late Beethoven, almost breaking apart each musical work in the conflict of intellect and will. Written in 1823-4, these bagatelles were among Beethoven's last works for piano; they are polished, yet profound miniatures, ideal introductions to the concentration and other-worldliness of that late period. 'Bagatelle' in musical terms meant a small piece that was not connected to any other in a cycle, yet these six make an extremely coherent whole.

No.1 is a lyrical, melodically beautiful introduction, after which come two fast, perpetual-motion like pieces separated by a stately slow movement characterised by the late Beethoven's love of trills and disintegrating melodies. An innocent, ingenuous minuet-like piece leads into the deepest of the set, a 'finale.' Here two virtuoso flourishes, like speeded-up fanfares, flank like bookends a lyrical

meditation of great emotional intensity and sustained suspense.

There are innumerable signatures of the late period, abrupt changes of mood, the use of trills to convey emotional anguish and depth, intense *perpetuum mobile* passages and moments of radiant purity (such as at the start of No 1 or in the melodic line of No 5) which remind us how strongly Beethoven felt Art could truly redeem the human soul.

When Beethoven said these were the best bagatelles he had ever written, however, he was not necessarily saying very much. The other two main sets, Op.33 and Op.119, were much slighter, some of them sounding very like beginners' pieces written for pupils. This set, on the other hand, holds its own with anything in the piano repertoire, a perfect microcosm of the complex journey from despair to spiritual reconciliation Beethoven repeatedly explored in his last compositions.

## **BACH-BUSONI: Chorale Preludes**

Although a modernist, Busoni was much exercised by connecting the tradition of German classical music, which he loved, with his philosophical views on the origins of music as at some fundamental level a transcription from an abstract Idea. While his own compositions expressed music's expansive contemporary flowerings, Busoni retained a lifelong interest in re-presenting older forms. In 1888, Busoni attended an organ recital in Bach's church, the Thomaskirche at Leipzig, and was inspired to transcribe ten of Bach's chorale preludes (pieces during which the organist would explore the hymn tune sung by the congregation in the church service) in the hope the music would become better known. Again, it is likely that the improvisatory character of these pieces – Bach made three versions of the 'Heiden Heiland' tune, for example – was what drew Busoni to them; he saw transcription not as a means of rendering notes, but textures, atmospheres and moods.

## JILL CROSSLAND

Jill Crossland is from West Yorkshire and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, and later in Vienna with Paul Badura-Skoda and Sally Sargent. She now pursues an active concert and recording career.

Jill has played regularly on the South Bank and at the Wigmore Hall in London and at the Sage Gateshead; her appearances have also included Bridgewater Hall, St George's Bristol, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Vienna Musikverein, Vienna Konzerthaus, Cadogan and Fairfield Halls and the National Concert Hall, Dublin. She has been a member of the Arts Council England Musicians in Residence scheme.

Jill's recordings include works by Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, Mozart and Beethoven for the Divine Art and Diversions labels, as well as the Bach Goldberg Variations, on Warner Classics and works by Rameau and the complete Bach Well-tempered Clavier

for Signum Classics. Her recordings have received high critical praise on both sides of the Atlantic. Among many critical plaudits, her Bach Well-tempered Clavier has been described "among the most satisfying recent releases of [his] keyboard music" (Rob Cowan *BBC Radio 3*) and "rank[ing] with the finest previous versions, altogether a remarkable achievement" (*Penguin Guide to CDs*) and her Beethoven as "magnetic" and "delightful" by *American Record Guide*.

Jill has appeared on radio and TV, including live and recorded broadcasts on BBC Radios 3 and 4 and has featured in the Classic FM Hall of Fame.

Jill Crossland writes: "At the exact time the editing for this disc was being completed, a very young pupil of mine, Eli Mintz, who had exceptional enthusiasm, ability and promise, was suddenly taken ill, and tragically passed away within a day with a cancer that had been undiagnosed. I would like to remember him and his great love of the piano with this recording."

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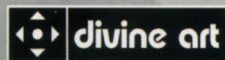
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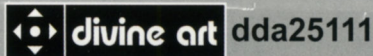
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