

# THOMAS FORTMANN

Piano Trio Prolitheus Suite  
Sonata for Violin and Piano A Southern Diary  
Four pieces for two Violins Con Pepe e Zucchero



ANDRZEJ GRABIEC  
MISHA QUINT  
CARLO A. LAPEGNA  
MANRICO PADOVANI  
AKEMI MASUKO  
NATASHA KORSKOVA

métier

## **Piano Trio     Prolitheus Suite**

The title emerged out of my friendship to the artist O. F. Pfenninger, called Oli (PrOLitheus). He has tirelessly devoted the last 15 years to creating a gigantic work of art, with which he literally steals the fire from the "art-Gods" (PRoMeTHEUS). Despite his difficulties with promoting himself in the art world, he always stays positive, choosing to be for (PRO) something as opposed to against it. Furthermore, the objects and themes he uses are all of proletarian origin (PROL). The result is PROLITHEUS. I've been working with him for some time on a grotesque musical theatre piece titled: "Vaudeville for Leontine". Although the Trio emerges in the musical form of a Suite, the word Suite here mainly refers to his installation as an interior design.

◊ The first movement (Ouverture sacrale) is a composition which features 8 possible derivations of its original motif, consisting of twelve tones that overlap each other. Antagonistic to most twelve-tone theories (but in agreement with the founders of this technique), the series I create are always meant to be a theme. However an analysis is certainly not easy, because even though I mainly appropriate linear scales within this movement, they often switch from one instrument to another, causing a sort of breaking in the line. (PS: Anyhow, twelve-tone analysis is quite a boring and time consuming task; so it can be foregone, trusting that the composer can still count backwards from 12 to 1!)

◊ The 2nd movement (Ecstatic) is built on Skrjabin's mystic chord, as he uses it in Prometheus, which - based on c as its fundamental note - consists of six tones within pure, reduced, and augmented fourths (C/F-sharp/B-flat/E/A/D). Furthermore, the interval from C-to F-sharp is a tritone, which is also the starting point of the 5th movement. The piano begins with the "mystic chord". This ecstatic opening closes in measure 44 with the complementary tones (G/D-sharp/B/G-sharp/F/C-sharp). From the union emerges a twelve-tone scale.

◊ There are two reasons why I chose to write a Blues for the third movement. Firstly, it is a tribute to the South, since this composition was premiered in Texas. Secondly, the theme of the song "Hard strikes the grid of the baby's cot" from the Vaudeville for Leontine is a Blues. And we shouldn't forget how this beautiful and simple style originates from an infinite injustice, dishonoring mankind.

◇ The fourth movement plays again with the twelve tones: the different series which originate from the various techniques are used horizontally in single voices and vertically in multiple voices, with the peculiarity that I (contrary to the dogmas) repeat notes in the series. The Adagio middle section reveals a twelve-tone scale with eight possible conversions, which are the Vaudeville themes of "Time" (past, future, eternity etc.), as I did in the first movement.

◇ The fifth movement – from the Vaudeville song – "From Heaven comes Hell", is built upon the division of the octave in equal intervals. Starting from the tritone, which divides the octave in two, the new division gives origin to a new tritone and all of them together divide the octave into four minor thirds (a diminished 7th-chord). The trisection of the octave leads to three major Thirds, and the hexasection to a whole-tone-scale, which divides the octave into six major Second intervals. However, the most important base for the melodic development are the two tritones C/F-sharp and E-flat/A. The eight complementary notes to those two tritones form the motif, which will appear in its entirety in the center section in a pentatonic scale which gives great sparkling to the theme.

◇ In the sixth movement (Finale) I do not use series as motives. I utilize a musical block that, through the use of mirror and cancrizans technique, develops the entire piece. In my experience I have realized that when a series-theme sounds good to the ear, also its developments (cancrizans, mirror etc.) will sound good. Sometimes it happens that I fall more in love with such a development than with the original motive. That's what happened in this movement since there is a great balance among the three resulting blocks.

Maybe all this seems a bit complicated to the reader; however, it is not because it's in the nature of numbers to become sound in the intervals. It is also my opinion that whatever originates from a constructive type of composing should never be literally accepted, but should somehow be verified by the ear, and if necessary, be corrected: mathematical and musical logic do not match. Music that is purely mathematical is non-sensual. But music without mathematics is nonsense.

## **Sonata for Violin and Piano      A Southern Diary**

In 2009, my second symphony **Etruria** premiered in Houston. After the concert, my wife and I traveled around the Gulf of Mexico as far as St. Petersburg, Fl. From this trip the **Sonata** emerged as a sort of travel diary. It combines two diverse approaches: typical musical genres of the Southern States and my European background as composer.

♦ The first movement is titled **Houston University**. We were living on the campus for ten days and enthusiastically participated in the activities at this truly international and multicultural university. The result of our sojourn is an energetic, 'concealed' twelve-tone composition.

♦ The second movement is dedicated to one of the best jazz clubs in New Orleans. My enthusiasm for the local music scene could be described as follows: "If a musician has never in his life been to N.O., he belongs in hell". At **Fritzel's** is a Dixieland that employs, melodically and in the chords, all twelve tones and all twelve keys in a complementary fashion.

♦ On our onward trip we were unable to find the hotel entered in our GPS. Instead we ended up in an empty plot by the sea. Hurricane Katrina had destroyed the place we had been looking for. Thus we were stranded in a dingy **Motel** in **Biloxi**. It was so bad that we decided not to turn on the light and wait for daylight before having a closer look.

This third movement blends two extreme opposites: while it is a Blues, and no genre is as deeply rooted in tonality as the Blues, this piece more than all others employs the twelve tone techniques, and it is well-known that this approach strives towards a dissolution of a continuous tonality.

♦ The fourth movement, **Alabama Breeze**, is a Ragtime. The title refers to a Scott Joplin piece that theme also appears once in the piano bass. This movement also contains, in parts, all possible twelve-tone emanations.

I much enjoyed working on this musical diary because it allowed me to indulge my love for Jazz and for Modern Classical music, in combining both with my personal way of composing.

## **Four Pieces for two Violins      Con Pepe e Zucchero**

Following the recording of the Sonata, Manrico asked me for a piece for two violins. He wanted it to come with all the hallmarks of my previous compositions, peppy and full of surprises, like pepper with sugar (Con Pepe e Zucchero).

◊ Therefore, already in the first movement I combined the contrasting elements of **Blues** and Fugues, the latter in mirror and cancrizans-forms. The term **Cattolico** I used here means all embracing.

◊ As Manrico was planning to perform this work with Natasha, who is the great-great-granddaughter of Rimsky-Korsakov, and thought that the Sonata's allusion to Joplin was intriguing, he hoped I would also be able to incorporate a quote by Rimsky. I knew further that he likes to play Paganini and that his name originates from Verdi's Traviata.

I combined these three aspects in the second movement: the violin begins with Scheherazade, is gradually supplanted by the 24th Caprice and culminates in the Manrico-Theme from the Traviata. This theme is counterpointed with the missing notes to complete the twelve notes of an octave. **Ri**(Rimsky) - **pa**(Paganini) **Verde**(i) in Italian means: a grassy slope on the shores of a river.

◊ The third movement **Dodecafollia**, the Italian 'follia' signifying madness, consists of a classically executed twelve tone process, while the last **Alinghi** is a type of 'water and wind-fantasy', a homage to the boat which provided me with so many enthralling hours.

### **Thomas Fortmann**

was born in Switzerland and became a successful songwriter during the 70s. He wrote his first "hit" at the age of 16, which was followed by over a hundred titles released in more than 27 countries. Famous German rock stars such as Udo Lindenberg, Love Generation, Jürgen Drews and others, as well as British artists such as Alexis Korner and Italian singer Daniela Davoli have recorded his songs. He composed the music for the musical Tell (1977), which created a scandal in Switzerland. The record made it into all German-speaking charts. At the age of 26, Thomas abandoned his career as a rock musician and dedicated himself to further studies in composition and instrumentation. This period formed the foundation for many chamber works, two symphonies, an Oratorio and three music-plays. He received scholarships and commissions from the towns of Zurich and Bern, the Swiss government, the European Union, the Opera of Zurich, Open Opera St. Gallen, Mozart Festival Trento, University of Houston, Connaissance-vous Basel-Riehen, Espace Nuithonie Fribourg and many others. In the mid-80s Thomas and his family moved to Tuscany where he founded the Accademia Amiata and its Festival "Toscana delle Culture".

The music of Thomas Fortmann does not subscribe to any particular school of thought. He studied the various composition techniques, but maintained a critical point of view towards them. This led to the development of a notably personal style, often uniting different, sometimes even contrary impulses of the modern. Formalistic concepts seem to serve him mainly as a method of transportation and as a play-ground, resulting in very original ideas. It is, however, always important to him, despite the frequent use of complex structures, to directly communicate with the listener and make an emotional impact.

### **Andrzej Grabiec**

was a prizewinner at the Fifth International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition in Poland (1967) and the International Jacques Thibaud Violin Competition in Paris, France (1969). An honored graduate and later professor at the Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, Poland in 1972, Grabiec immediately became a soloist and Concertmaster of the Polish National Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra and

leader of Capella per Musica da Camera. He has been Concertmaster of the Pueblo Symphony Orchestra, the Wichita Symphony Orchestra, and Music Director of the Mozart Festival Chamber Orchestra.

Since moving to Houston in 1995, Mr. Grabiec became Professor of Violin at the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston, and joined the Western Arts Trio. He performed with the Houston Symphony and is a founder and Artistic Co-Director of the Virtuosi of Houston. He served as Artistic Director of an extensive Olympic Arts Tour throughout Australia, New Zealand, and South Pacific islands as a soloist and conductor in 1999.

In 2002 Grabiec performed the world premiere of Concerto for Violin and Orchestra by Peter Lieuwen, dedicated to Andrzej Grabiec. He performed under such conductors as Pierre Boulez, Erich Leinsdorf, Krzysztof Penderecki, Witold Lutoslawski, Kazimierz Kord, Mark Elder, Erich Bergel. He taught and performed at many summer festivals around the world.

### **Misha Quint**

graduated from the Leningrad Special School for the Gifted and the Leningrad State Conservatory. After winning the Boccherini Competition in St. Petersburg, many other prizes and awards followed before he emigrated from Russia to the United States in 1989. Quint has appeared with such celebrated orchestras as Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional do Brasília, The Metropolitan Symphony, New York Chamber Orchestra, The National Irish Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, New York Chamber Symphony and London Soloists Chamber Orchestra at Queen Elizabeth Hall, The Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, The Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Leningrad State Orchestra, Orchestra of Classical and Contemporary Music as well as with the Symphony Orchestras of Latvia and Georgia.

He has worked with an equally illustrious group of conductors including Maxim Shostakovich, Paul Lustig Dunkel, Colman Pearce, Sidney Harth, Ravil Martinov, Camilla Kolchinsky, Yaacov Bergman and Ira Levin.

Misha Quint began to create music festivals in Europe in 1997 (the International Cello Festival in Blonay, Switzerland) followed by the Soesterberg International

Music Festival in Holland (1998-2007). InterHarmony Music Festival, which Quint first established in Geneva, Switzerland Festival in Blonay, Switzerland) followed by the Soesterberg International Music Festival in Holland (1998-2007). InterHarmony Music Festival, which Quint first established in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2000 has subsequently taken place in San Francisco, CA (2009), the Berkshires, MA (2007 & 2008), Schwarzwald, Germany (2008-2011), Sulzbach-Rosenberg (2005 to present) and Arcidosso, Tuscany, Italy (2012 to present). Quint is on the faculty of the Preparatory Division at Mannes College, The New School for Music in Manhattan.  
[www.interharmony.com](http://www.interharmony.com), [www.srimf.com](http://www.srimf.com) [www.mishaquint.com](http://www.mishaquint.com)

### **Carlo Alessandro Lapegna**

was born in Naples. At the age of twelve he moved to Canada with his family. After graduating from high school, he decided to come back to Italy and devote himself entirely to his piano and musical education. He studied piano with Maestro Vincenzo Vitale, the leading piano teacher and Professor at the Santa Cecilia Music Academy in Rome, and composition with Bruno Mazzotta, Dean of the Conservatory of Music in Naples. Even before graduating with full honors and Summa Cum Laude at the Naples Conservatory (1976) he had already become assistant to Maestro Vitale and, due to his outstanding recital and didactic activity, he was appointed Associate Professor at the State Conservatory of Music of Matera in 1974, the youngest teacher in Italy at that time. In 1978 he was appointed Chair Professor of Piano at the Domenico Cimarosa State Conservatory of Music.

C.A.Lapegna has given hundreds of recitals and guest appearances with various orchestras. He has been regularly invited for recordings by the Italian Radio/TV networks both as a soloist, with orchestra and in chamber music groups. In 1979 he founded with Francesco Martucci the Duo Pianistico which, since its debut at the Two Worlds Festival of Spoleto, has toured all over Europe and North America.

### **Manrico Padovani**

acclaimed as one of the most interesting and popular Swiss violin virtuosos of the last years, is also supported by the Anne-Sophie Mutter Foundation. Born in Zürich



to parents of Italian origin he studied in the Masterclasses of Aida Stucki-Piraccini in Winterthur, who decisively influenced him.

He has won a wide range of prizes a.o. at the Vienna International Music Competition at Ruggiero Ricci's International Master Competition in Berlin, at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, three times the Kiefer-Hablitzel Prize of the Swiss Musicians Association, as well as awards from the Julius Bär and the Schuler Foundation and the important Jubilee prize of the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS). His most recent award is the *Artist prize* from the Kuratorium of Aarau (Switzerland) in 2011.

After his debut at the Lucerne Festival the violinist has performed in 3 continents with many renowned orchestras (Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Russian Philharmonic Orchestra Moscow, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra) and conductors (R. Barshai, M. Viotti, A. Boreiko, P. Altrichter). Manrico Padovani has also published numerous CD's and DVD's recordings (a.o. violin concertos by Brahms, Beethoven, Prokofjew nr. 1 and Paganini nr. 1). Forceful lyricist, enchanting, bewitching violin, a rising star, Devil's fiddler, Wizard of the violin are only a few of the words used by the critics to describe the emotions stirred up by Padovani during his performances distinguished by a breathtaking skill united to rhythmic tension.

With violinist N. Korsakova, the artist is testimonial of the foundation Sorella Natura from Assisi and played in November 2011 for Pope Benedictus XVI at sala Nervi. Padovani plays on a violin Stradivarius-Vuillaume - Messiah made in Paris in 1870.

### **Akemi Masuko's**

development as a pianist has taken her across three continents. After first learning the saxophone, she later received a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance from The Osaka College of Music in Japan. She then went to the United States where she undertook further studies in Piano Performance and Accompaniment at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and received two Master of Music degrees under Victor Rosenbaum and Margo Garrett.

Since 1995 she has been living and working in Berlin, Germany. Her other teachers have included Phillip Moll, and Dalton Baldwin. Masuko's extensive concert activities with the cellist Prof. Wolfgang Boettcher (former principal cellist of the Berlin Philharmonic

and Brandis String Quartet) gained her the annual Critics Award of Japan in 1995. As a collaborative pianist, Akemi has worked with such outstanding artists as violinists Ruggiero Ricci, Manrico Padovani and Daniel Bell, flutists Karlheinz Zoeller (former solo flutist of the Berlin Philharmonic), saxophonists Fredericke Hemke and Martin Losert, soprano Ursula Fiedler, and the tenor Andrew Richards. In the field of contemporary music she has taken part in numerous premiere performances in which she collaborated intensively with such composers as Michael Tippett, John Cage, Thomas Fortmann, Toru Takemitsu, and Toshio Akaishi.

### **Natasha Korsakova**

of Russian-Greek decent, is one of most popular violinists of her generation. Born into a music family in Moscow, Korsakova began playing the violin at the age of five. Her first teacher was her grandfather Boris Korsakov. He was followed in her musical education by her father, the well-known Russian violin virtuoso Andrej Korsakov. Her mother is the pianist Yolanta Miroshnikova-Caprarica. After the early death of her father, Natasha studied under the tutelage Ulf Klausenitzer and later with Saschko Gawriloff in Germany.

The award-winning violinist plays with renowned orchestras such as Iceland Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano G. Verdi, the Regina Royal Symphony, the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Dutch Radio Broadcasting, the Mainz Philharmonic, the Orquesta della UNAM, the Cape Cod Symphony Orchestra, Evansville Philharmonic and many others. In 1998, she became *Artist of the Year* in Chile. In 2008, N. Korsakova was awarded the Premio Sirmione Catullo and became *Artist of the Year* in Italy.

Since 2011, she is a cultural ambassador of Fondazione Sorella Natura in Assisi, Italy. Recent highlight was the concert for the Pope Benedict XVI at the Sala Nervi together with the outstanding swiss violinist Manrico Padovani.

Natasha Korsakova plays alternately the violin of V. T. Panormo (1775), on loan by Sinfonima Stiftung of the Mannheimer Insurances (Germany).

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### **Sax Music**

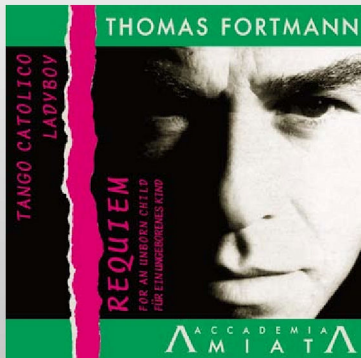
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### **Prolitheus Suite**

<b>Ouverture sacrale</b>	<b>01</b>
<b>Estatico</b>	<b>02</b>
<b>Blue</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Rondo finto</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>Romantico</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Finale con fuoco</b>	<b>06</b>

### **A Southern Diary**

<b>Houston University</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>New Orleans at Fritzel's</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>Biloxi Motel</b>	<b>09</b>
<b>Alabama Breeze</b>	<b>10</b>

### **Con Pepe e Zuccherò**

<b>Blues Cattolico</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Ripa Verde</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Dodecafolia</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Alinghi</b>	<b>14</b>

Brad Sayles recorded **Prolitheus Suite**  
at KUHF - Studios, Houston  
Produced by Franz Anton Krager.  
Valter Neri recorded  
**A Southern Diary** in Basel,  
**Con Pepe e Zuccherò** in Aarau,  
Switzerland.  
All recordings are mixed and edited  
by Valter Neri in Montevarchi, Italy.

Cover object from the installation  
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Divine Art Recordings Group  
UK: Divine Art Ltd  
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