



HANNEL CLASSICS

CCS 16798



Paolo Giacometti

PIANO STREICHER 1847

ROBERT SCHUMANN

Humoreske in B flat major, opus 20

Toccata in C major, opus 7

Phantasiestücke, opus 12

Paolo Giacometti

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| 1 | Humoreske in B flat major, opus 20 (1838) | 28.18 |
| 2 | Toccata in C major, opus 7 (1829-1832) | 7.26 |
| | Phantasiestücke, opus 12 (1837) | |
| 3 | <i>Des Abends</i> | 3.13 |
| 4 | <i>Aufschwung</i> | 3.11 |
| 5 | <i>Warum?</i> | 3.09 |
| 6 | <i>Grillen</i> | 3.33 |
| 7 | <i>In der Nacht</i> | 4.08 |
| 8 | <i>Fabel</i> | 2.42 |
| 9 | <i>Traumes Wirren</i> | 2.32 |
| 10 | <i>Ende vom Lied</i> | 4.59 |

Total time 63:39

Piano *Johann B. Streicher, Vienna 1847*

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Production & Distribution

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recording session

Paolo Giacometti was born in Milan in 1970 and came with his parents to the Netherlands the next year. When he was nine years old he started piano lessons at the Music School in Hilversum with Joke Dekker-Vroons. He continued his studies with Jan Wijn at the Amsterdam Sweelinck Conservatory, where he was admitted directly to the 'Performance Musician Program'. He graduated with honors in 1995.

Paolo Giacometti has followed a number of Masterclasses with such eminent pianists and teachers as György Sebök, Karl-Heinz Kämmerling, Marie Françoise Bucquet, Lazar Berman, John Perry and Detlef Kraus.

He has successfully participated in various National and International Piano Competitions. In 1987 he was awarded First Prize at the Steinway Competition in The Netherlands qualifying thereby to take part in the International Steinway Festival the following year as the representative of the Netherlands. This in turn led to an invitation to participate in the German Parke-Davis Förderpreis in Germany in 1990, which he won. In 1992 he participated in the prestigious International Brahms Competition in Hamburg where he was awarded the Second Prize. In 1995 Paolo Giacometti was again awarded First Prize at the Postbank Sweelinck Competition and was invited to perform Brahms' 2nd piano concerto together with the Amsterdam Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Kenneth Montgomery at various famous Dutch concert halls, including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

Apart from many concerts in The Netherlands, Paolo Giacometti has given recitals in Italy, Germany and France. The last years he has also performed abroad together with the Dutch cellist Pieter Wispelwey.

In the spring of 2001 he received the Dutch Edison Award for his Rossini project.



Robert Schumann (1810-1856) is unquestionably one of the greatest exponents of 19th-century Romantic piano music. Some of the most important reasons for this judgment lie not only in the breadth and importance of his oeuvre, but also in the unusually personal character of his music, which displays a capricious nature, full of peaks and valleys, emotionally unsparing, ranging from wildest exaltation to deepest depression. So it is with the Humoreske op. 20, whose title, not to be confused with 'humor' in the current English sense of the word, refers to the older meaning of 'humor' as 'emotional state'. It is a masterpiece, intended as a supreme example of self-expression, no longer confined to a fixed form, and liberated from any kind of framework. The result is an inexhaustible sequence of emotional fragments. Only now and then does a motive return, in remembrance, as it were, a signpost which is quickly abandoned as suddenly as it appeared when a new path opens into the world of Schumann's emotions.

The Toccata op. 7 is a very different affair, and gives a picture of Schumann the virtuoso.... or at least the virtuoso that he had always wanted to become. It is still tragic to recall how the young Schumann, in his obsessive ambition to become a pianist, constructed an apparatus to strengthen his 4th finger in order to speed up the study process. Alas, it led only to permanent damage to his hand, destroying his dreams.

Fortunately, his passion for the instrument and its possibilities remained, and found its greatest expression in the Toccata. In fact, it was his intention to com-

pose the most difficult piece that had ever been composed for the piano up to that date, and the piece does not skip a single technical hurdle, from alternating double-stops to rapid-fire parallel thirds and sparkling passages in octaves. Cast in strict sonata form, the piece has an inexorable, manic, energizing quality, leading to a surprise ending, a conclusion which floats off into nothingness like a dream: an understated summing-up of the whole dazzling firework display.

We return to the world of the Humoreske with the Phantasiestücke op. 12. These are eight short pieces, almost improvisatory in style, full of expressive contrasts and each with an individual title. Titles like 'Aufschwung', 'Warum?', or 'Traumes Wirren' refer directly to an emotional state, and titles like 'Des Abends', 'Fabel', and 'Ende vom Lied' are more evocative, intended only to call up an association. It is striking how clearly Schumann's two alter egos, Eusebius and Florestan, are present in these brief works. 'Eusebius' represents the dreamy, melancholic introvert, while 'Florestan' is the untamed, whimsical extrovert. The extremes are clearly displayed in the contrast between the first and second pieces, 'Des Abends' and 'Aufschwung', but they can also be found within individual pieces. A beautiful example of this is in 'Ende vom Lied', a noble and joyful song in which Schumann depicts a country wedding-party, with a gloomy and enigmatic conclusion.

Who could better explain this than Schumann himself, in the letter that he wrote to his far-off beloved Clara Wieck, whom he would marry a year later: *"At first I thought that the conclusion would end with a happy wedding-party, but towards the end I thought of you and I was filled with sadness-and that is why the joyful ringing of the bell, messenger of good things to come, mingles at the end with the tolling of the passing bell...."*

Translation: David Shapero

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Liner notes

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Technical information

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DISCOGRAPHY

Paolo Giacometti solo

- CCS 10697 Franz Schubert: Sonata in a minor opus 42, 4 Impromptus opus 142
CCS 12398 Rossini: L' Album pour les enfants adolescents - Complete works for piano vol.1
CCS 13898 Rossini: L'Album pour les Enfants dégourdis - Complete works for piano vol.2
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Paolo Giacometti & Pieter Wispehwey

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CCS 9696 Schubert: Arpeggione, Sonatinas
CCS 10797 Chopin, Fauré, Poulenc
CCS 11097 Robert Schumann, Paul Hindemith