

NIGHTMOODS

Music of
Debussy
Fauré • Granados
Griffes • Liszt
Chopin

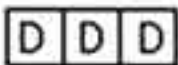
CAROL
ROSENBERGER
piano

DE 3030



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D/CD 3027

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major / Klavierkonzert Nr. 4 In G Dur / Piano Concerto No. 4 en Sol, Op. 58 (35:20)

- 1 Allegro moderato (19:46)
- 2 Andante con moto (9:58)
- 3 Rondo: Vivace (9:50)

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor / Sinfonie Nr. 5 In C Moll / Symphonie No. 5 En Do Mineur, Op.67 (34:32)

- 4 Allegro con brio (7:50)
- 5 Andante con moto (9:58)
- 6 Allegro (5:23)
- 7 Allegro (11:07)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME / GESAMTSPIELZEIT / DUREÉ TOTALE: 70:02

CAROL ROSENBERGER, Piano / Klavier / Piano
GERARD SCHWARZ, Conductor / Dirigent / Chef d' orchestre
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

EVENING HARMONY

The time has come when swaying on its stem
Each flower offers its fragrant incense,
Sounds and scents revolve in the evening air,
Melancholy waltz and languid giddiness!

Each flower offers its fragrant incense,
The violin quivers like a heart in anguish,
Melancholy waltz and languid giddiness!
The sky is sad and lovely like a great altar.

The violin quivers like a heart in anguish,
A tender heart, that shrinks from void and darkness!
The sky is sad and lovely like a great altar,
The sun has drowned in its clotting blood.

A tender heart, that shrinks from void and darkness
Hoards every trace of past radiance.
The sun has drowned in its clotting blood.
Your memory, like a monstrance, glows in me!

Baudelaire

MOONLIGHT

Your soul is a chosen landscape
That masked players will charm,
Playing the lute and dancing and somewhat
Sad under their fantastic disguises.

While singing in the minor mode
Triumphant love and fortunate life,
They do not seem to believe in their happiness
And their song mingles with the moonlight.

With the calm moonlight, sad and beautiful,
That makes the birds dream in the trees
And the fountains weep with ecstasy,
The great slender fountains among the marble statues.

Verlaine

HARMONIE DU SOIR

Voici venir les temps où vibrant sur sa tige
Chaque fleur s'évapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!

Chaque fleur s'évapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Le violon frémit comme un cœur qu'on afflige;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir.

Le violon frémit comme un cœur qu'on afflige;
Un cœur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir;
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige.

Un cœur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir,
Du passé lumineux recueille tout vestige!
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige...
Ton souvenir en moi luit comme un ostensor!

Baudelaire

CLAIR DE LUNE

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

Verlaine

The white moon
Shines in the woods;
From every branch
A voice calls out
Beneath the arbor...

Oh my darling.

The pool reflects,
A deep mirror,
The silhouette
Of the black willow
Where the wind weeps

Let's dream, it's the hour.

A vast and tender
Calm
Seems to descend
From the firmament
Which the star makes iridescent...

It's the exquisite hour.

Verlaine

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée...

O bien-aimée.

L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure...

Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...

C'est l'heure exquise.

Verlaine

Night Moods—pieces for twilight, for the settling darkness, for the fullness of evening, for deep into the night, when imagination and sensitivities reach their farthest frontiers, almost forgotten in daylight hours... In his writings, Debussy could well represent the creative spirit of all of the composers on this album, and their aesthetic ties to the natural world. "Music is the expression of the movement of the waters, the play of curves described by changing breezes. There is nothing more musical than a sunset... Everything that a keen ear perceives in the rhythm of the surrounding world can be represented musically... perfumes, colors, and sounds correspond to one another." Debussy explains that music is not intended "to reproduce nature more or less exactly, but to receive the mysterious accord that exists between nature and the imagination... Of all the arts, music is closest to nature — offers her the most subtle attraction... To musicians only is it given to capture all the poetry of night and day, of earth and heaven, to reconstruct their atmosphere and record the rhythm of their great heart-beats..."

The composer most identified with the quintessential night piece is certainly Chopin, whose improvisatory, passionate **Nocturne Op. 55 No. 2 in E Flat** (1843) opens this program. A quotation from Franz Liszt's review of one of Chopin's rare public appearances (*Revue et Gazette Musicale*, 1841) expresses this identification, and is a touching tribute from one great Romantic master of the piano to another: "He has seldom allowed himself to be heard in public; the eminently poetic nature of his talent is not suited to that. Similar to those flowers which open their fragrant calyces only in the evening, he requires an atmosphere of tranquillity and composure in order to yield up the melodic treasures which repose within him... He did not play any concerto, sonata, fantasy, or variations but rather preludes, études, nocturnes, and mazurkas.

Addressing himself to society rather than the public, he could, with impunity, reveal his true nature, that of an elegiac poet, profound, pure, and pensive."

Debussy called Fauré "that Master of Enchantments," and referred to "the play of the graceful, fleeting lines described by Fauré's music." Fauré, whose composing was largely restricted to summer holidays due to the demands of his teaching and church activities, wrote the **Nocturne No. 6**

in D Flat in the late summer of 1894. Robert Orledge calls it "the apotheosis of the starlit night with no virtuosity for its own sake... profound, pure and contemplative... the Nocturne sings forth in long musical paragraphs of timeless serenity." The great French pianist Alfred Cortot felt that "Few works in the piano literature can be found to compare with this... The emotion in this Nocturne goes far beyond personal sentiments to arrive at a universality which is the mark of a masterpiece."

Clair de lune ("Moonlight") from Debussy's *Suite Bergamasque*, inspired by Verlaine's poem of the same title and considered to be the first example of impressionistic music, was composed around 1890 and revised before its publication in 1905. Its moonlit scene is quiet but far from motionless, taking its shape from the faint outlines of a slow dance. The double-triple alternations set up gentle motions, along with the murmuring figures in the bass—here a breeze, there a murmur. It has both the sense of spacious quiet and tender longing, and its upper-register sonorities lend sheen to the picture. E. Robert Schmitz describes its atmosphere as "half-shades and half-lights... the peace of the transparent and soft light..."

Granados weaves a passionate Spanish tale in **Quejas ó la Maja y el Ruiseñor**

("Laments, or the Maiden and the Nightingale"), the gem of the suite *Goyescas*, which was inspired by paintings of Goya and subtitled *Los Majos Enamorados* (The Enraptured Lovers). Dedicated to the composer's wife Amparo, this most personal and poetic utterance was completed in 1911, when Granados had reached his artistic peak. Tragically, Granados was drowned just five years later while trying to save his wife when their ship was torpedoed in the English Channel. Pedro Morales maintained that "rarely has the Spanish soul manifested itself so clearly in cultured music as in the initial theme of *La Maja y el Ruiseñor*." The maiden's haunting, richly ornamented lament and the nightingale's enchanting cadenza-like song at the end give, in the words of Ernest Newman, "the voluptuous sense of passing the fingers through masses of richly colored jewels."

"The images in the moonlit waters of the *albercas* adjoining the Alhambra" was Spanish composer Manuel de Falla's description of Debussy's *La soirée dans Grenade* ("Evening in Granada") from the set of *Estampes* (1903) and subtitled "Mouvement de Habanera" ("In the rhythm of a Habanera"). Falla paid Debussy the supreme compliment: "The power of evocation concentrated in those few pages of the Evening

in Granada approaches the miraculous when one realizes that this music was composed by a non-Spaniard, guided by the insight of genius... it is Andalusia itself that we see; truth without authenticity, so to speak, since not a bar of this music is borrowed from Spanish folklore, and yet the entire composition, to its smallest detail, conveys, most admirably, the essence of Spain." (*Revue Musicale*) The sensuous Habanera rhythm blends many moods—the languid opening of a Moorish melody (Debussy suggests "Start slowly in a rhythm nonchalantly graceful"), the casual strumming of a guitar, an extroverted dance, a sinuous duet...

The lovely *Notturmo* from *Fantasy Pieces Op. 6* (1915) creates its own nostalgic magic as it takes us to the New England/international "interior landscape" of the American composer Charles T. Griffes. Griffes, who spent his study years in Germany and was much taken with the French Impressionists, developed his own brand of musical impressionism and blends the late Romantic and the Impressionistic elements in his highly individual music. The *Notturmo*'s quietly murmuring night scene is infused with very personal emotions as the melodic and harmonic intensity builds, only to yield again to the refreshing tranquillity of the setting. Griffes generally found poetic titles and

descriptive passages as introductions to his works after he had written them; and for the Notturmo, he chose poetry of Verlaine.

“The undeniable beauty of Liszt’s work is I believe due to the fact that he loved music to the exclusion of every other sentiment,” wrote Debussy of the inventor of modern piano playing—the greatest pianist of his, or perhaps any, time. The wonderfully expressive **Harmonies du soir (“Evening Harmonies”)** is from the collection of *Transcendental Etudes* (1838-39, revised 1851). Ever the innovator, Liszt was intrigued by then-new pedal effects, by the mingling of “foreign” harmonies in new combinations—characteristics associated with Impressionistic music. Liszt’s evening scene is almost orchestral in scope, from the low tolling in the bass at the beginning to the massed harmonies, in all registers of the piano, which support the melodic climax. There is a tender serenade with harp accompaniment, and there are moments of hushed grandeur when a cloud of harmonies is suspended in mid-air. After the pouring forth of such pianistic riches, the repose at the end of this musical canvas is almost a meditation.

La terrasse des audiences au clair de lune (“The Terrace for Moonlight Audiences”) from *Preludes, Book II* epitomizes Debussy’s ability to make the piano “the poetic instru-

ment of a wandering imaginative spirit, able to seize upon and define the soul of far-off countries and their peoples” (Edward Lockspeiser). *La terrasse...* was probably written in 1912, its title deriving from a description of the 1912 Indian Durbar—the ceremonies for the coronation of King George V as Emperor of India. Debussy was evidently struck by the phrase describing “the hall of pleasure, the garden of the sultaneses, the terrace for moonlight audiences...” His uncanny evocation of India, “an altogether imaginary India, though how original and authentic” (Lockspeiser), is spellbinding with its sinuous, gliding, chromatic lines, its placement of harmonies that give the impression almost of motionlessness, of perfumed air, and, as the impression takes shape, of palatial grandeur.

Debussy’s early **Réverie and Nocturne In D-flat** are both from around 1890. By the time they were published, Debussy was considerably beyond them in the development of his individual style, and therefore not happy to see them appear. Nevertheless, both of these Fauré-like pieces retain their appeal. **Réverie’s** dreamy melody became such a favorite that it was made into a popular song, *My Reverie*, in the 1930s. E. Robert Schmitz comments: “it is truly a dream-song, and ideal in the sense of immaterial; the impression is preciously guarded by the long periods of modal sus-

pense, by the fluidity and breadth of the melodic line, by the supersensitive ability to avoid any gross evidence of hackneyed patterns in the accompaniment." The Nocturne is improvisatory in style, with sweeping arpeggios, a relaxed, engaging melody and a dreamy middle section, which is marked with the suggestion "in the spirit of a popular tune" and has just a hint of the informality of the café. At the end, we are whisked lightly off into a star-studded night.

"Chopin carried you with him into a dreamland, in which you would have liked to dwell

for ever" wrote Charles Hallé, after hearing Chopin play. He could surely have been writing about the **Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2 In D Flat** (1835), which carries the "Night Moods" program to a dreamlike conclusion with its gentle melody, its "harmonic daydream," its "profusion of delicate fiorature." James Huneker called this piece "a song of the sweet summer of two souls." In his edition of Chopin works, Debussy sums up the enchantment of Chopin's music as certainly "amongst the most beautiful ever written... [which] often takes flight towards the forest of *As You Like It*, where the

fairies alone hold sway over our minds..."

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Bösendorfer Imperial Concert Grand Piano

Design: *TriArts, Inc.*

Graphics: *Steven Dudeck*

Recorded at the First Congregational Church, Los Angeles, California, July 24-26, 1988.

For Billie and Rosey Rosenberger

Recording

Microphones: Brüel and Kjaer 4004

Console: Soundcraft Series 200B

Digital Recorder: Sony PCM-1630 / DMR-4000

Monitor Amplifier: Threshold Stasis 2

Monitor Loudspeakers: JBL 4313B

Editing

Digital Editor: Sony DAE-3000

Monitor Amplifier: Threshold S/500

Monitor Loudspeakers: B & W Matrix 801 Series 2

Special thanks to:

Monster Cable; Brüel & Kjaer



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