



CRÈME DE LA CRÈME

PURE STEREO HI-FI ANALOG RECORDINGS

By JEAN DE LA DURANTAYE

BACH
CHOPIN
BIZET
BRITTEN
BARTÓK
ROSSINI
COUPERIN
LISZT



DSD

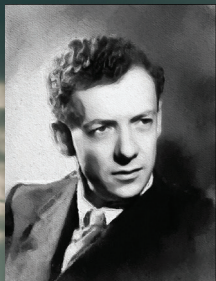
Direct Stream Digital

DXD

Digital eXtreme Definition

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BENJAMIN BRITTEN

(1913-1976)

Young Person's guide to the Orchestra – excerpts (Tk 1)

The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34, is a 1945 subtitled *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell* was based on the second movement, 'Rondeau' of the *Abdelazer* suite. It was originally commissioned for the British educational documentary film called *Instruments of the Orchestra* released in November, 1946. Britten takes you on an epic tour of the instruments of the orchestra, with some of the catchiest and most charming music ever composed. It's the piece that is recommended to anyone wanting the perfect introduction to classical music. a great way to get to know the individual components of the orchestra, and it's also a fantastic listen.



GEORGES BIZET

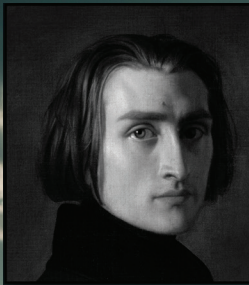
(1838-1875)

Carmen Suite – Intermezzo (Tk 2)

Carmen: Les Toréadors – suite (Tk 18)

Best known for his operas in a career cut short by his early death, Bizet achieved few successes before his final work, *Carmen*, which has become one of the most popular and frequently performed works in the entire opera repertoire. In the 20th century, his works began to be performed more frequently and later commentators have acclaimed him as a composer of brilliance and originality whose premature death was a significant loss to French musical theatre.

The *Carmen Suites* are two suites of orchestral music drawn from the music of Bizet's 1875 opera *Carmen* and compiled posthumously by his friend Ernest Guiraud. They adhere very closely to Bizet's orchestration. However, the order of the musical allusions is in reverse chronological order and does not adhere to the operatic versions entirely, although the Suite is directly inspired by Bizet's opera.



FRANTZ LISZT

(1811-1886)

The Dreams of Love (Liebestraum) No. 3 (Tk 3)

Liebestraum is an example of Frantz Liszt's invention of the 'symphonic poem for orchestra', an orchestral equivalent of an opera in that it brought together drama and music in the cause of representing a source from outside music, whether it was a painting, a story, or a poem. The title was used for a Hungarian Soviet epic musical/drama film, based on the biography of Liszt

Étude Paganini no. 5 in E major, "La Chasse" (Tk 4)

The *Grandes études de Paganini*, S. 141 are a series of six études for the piano by Franz Liszt, revised in 1851 from an earlier version (published as *Études d'exécution transcendante d'après Paganini*, S. 140, in 1838). It is almost exclusively in the final version that these pieces are played today.

Etude Paganini no. 5 La Chasse, Is the fifth of the six *Grandes études de Paganini*. The pieces are all based on the compositions of Niccolò Paganini for violin, and are among the most technically demanding pieces in the piano literature (especially the original versions, before Liszt revised them, thinning the textures and removing some of the more outrageous technical difficulties). The pieces run the gamut of technical hurdles, and frequently require very large stretches by the performer of an eleventh (although all stretches greater than a tenth were removed from the revised versions).



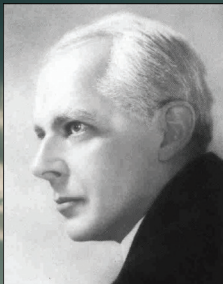
JOSEPH HAYDN

(1732-1809)

Concerto for Trumpet 2MVT (Tk 5)

Concerto for Trumpet 3MVT (Tk 6)

One of Haydn's most popular works today is the *Trumpet concerto in E flat major*, which he wrote in 1796 for his good friend, Anton Weidinger, who had developed a keyed trumpet with could play chromatically throughout its entire range. Before this, the trumpet was valveless and could only play a limited range of harmonic notes by altering the vibration of the lips; also called 'natural trumpet'. Most of these harmonic notes were clustered in the higher registers, so previous trumpet concertos could only play melodically with the high register (e.g., Bach's Brandenburg concerto No. 2) Haydn's concerto includes melodies in the middle and lower register, exploiting the capabilities of the new instrument.



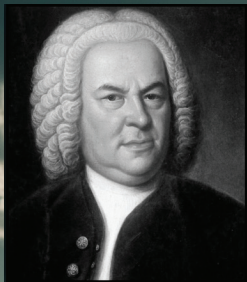
BÉLA BARTÓK

(1881-1945)

Music for Strings, Percussions & Celesta (Tk 7)

Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta, Sz. 106, BB 114 would be recognized as one of Bartók's greatest masterpieces. It is one of the purest and most perfectly proportioned distillations of Bartók's mature style, a summing up of all that he had accomplished. The Music embodies many of the contradictions that make Bartók's art so fascinating: it is simultaneously primitive and sophisticated; wild and controlled; serene and terrifying; serious and slapstick.

One of the piece's most immediately striking features is its unique instrumentation: Bartók calls for two string orchestras arrayed on opposite sides of the stage—one is the mirror image of the other. In the middle and toward the back is an array of percussion and keyboard instruments: xylophone, snare drum, cymbals, tam-tam, bass drum, timpani, piano and celesta. Bartók specified the positions of the instruments on stage with a diagram in the score. This unusual set up allows for antiphonal effects from the strings as musical ideas zoom back and forth across the hall.



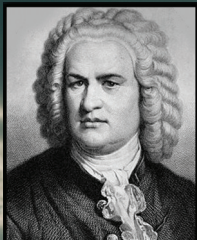
J.S. BACH

(1685-1750)

Schübler chorale: Wachet auf ruft uns die stimme BWV 645 (Tk 8)

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme ('Awake, calls the voice to us'),^[1] BWV 140, also known as *Sleepers Wake*, is a church cantata regarded as one of J.S. Bach's most mature and popular sacred cantatas. He composed the chorale cantata in Leipzig for the 27th Sunday after Trinity and first performed it on 25 November 1731.

Bach composed this cantata to complete his second annual cycle of chorale cantatas, begun in 1724. The cantata is based on the hymn in three stanzas "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme" (1599) by Philipp Nicolai, which covers the prescribed reading for the Sunday, the parable of the Ten Virgins. The text and tune of the three stanzas of the hymn appears unchanged in three of seven movements (1, 4 and 7). An unknown author supplied additional poetry for the inner movements as sequences of recitative and duet, based on the love poetry of the Song of Songs. Bach structured the cantata in seven movements, setting the first stanza as a chorale fantasia, the second stanza in the central movement in the style of a chorale prelude, and the third stanza as a four-part chorale. He set the new texts as dramatic recitatives and love-duets, similar to contemporary opera. Bach scored the work for three vocal soloists (soprano, tenor and bass), a four-part choir and a Baroque instrumental ensemble consisting of a horn (to reinforce the soprano), two oboes, taille, violino piccolo, strings and basso continuo including bassoon. Bach used the central movement of the cantata as the basis for the first of his Schübler Chorales, BWV 645. Bach scholar Alfred Dürr notes that the cantata is an expression of Christian mysticism in art, while William G. Whittaker calls it "a cantata without weaknesses, without a dull bar, technically, emotionally and spiritually of the highest order, its sheer perfection and its boundless imagination rouse one's wonder time and time again".^{[2][3]}



J.S. BACH

(1685-1750)

Chorale: Jesus, Meine Zuversich BWV 728 (Tk 9)

This work dates to Bach's years in Köthen (1717 - 1723), a period that was a mixture of tragedy and happiness in the composer's life. In 1720, his wife Maria Barbara suddenly died, leaving behind four young children. Bach married soprano Anna Magdalena Wilcke in December 1721, beginning a happy and rewarding relationship that produced many children, only five of whom would survive childhood. This Chorale prelude "Jesus, meine Zuversicht" (Jesus, My Sure Defense), like most Bach works, reflects the happier side of his life. It is serene and confident, a testament to the sense of religious contentment the composer so often expressed in his works. "Jesus, meine Zuversicht" offers a lovely chorale theme whose slow tempo and less-active contrapuntal features give the work a sense of confidence, but almost of flotation, too, as if its music is hovering in some celestial mist. The thematic trajectory is often on the ascent, further reinforcing the angelic mood of the work. Many will recognize this chorale theme and most listeners will find the music here quite enchanting. This is one of Bach's less technically demanding keyboard works for the performer, though a deft interpretive sense is certainly requisite.

Chorale: O mensch, beweine dein Sünde grosse WV622 (Tk10)

"O Mensch, beweine dein' Sünde groß" (O man, bewail thy sin so great) is a Lutheran Passion hymn with a text written by Sebald Heyden in 1530.

The organ chorale prelude BWV 622 by Johann Sebastian Bach from the *Orgelbüchlein* has remained one of his most celebrated. In the second version of his *St John Passion*, Bach began the work with a chorale fantasia on the first stanza of the hymn, which he later modified to conclude Part I of his *St Matthew Passion* as movement 29.



FRANÇOIS COUPERIN

(1668-1733)

The mysterious barricades
(Les barricades mystérieuses) (Tk 11)

The Gnat (Le moucheron) (Tk 12)

La Menetou (Tk 13)

French composer and harpsichordist François Couperin was Court musician to Louis XIV. The early-music expert Jordi Savall has written that Couperin was the "poet musician par excellence", who believed in "the ability of Music [with a capital M] to express itself in prose and poetry", and that "if we enter into the poetry of music we discover that it carries grace that is more beautiful than beauty itself".^[4]

Many of Couperin's keyboard pieces have evocative, picturesque titles such as "*The mysterious barricades*" and express a mood through key choices, adventurous harmonies and (resolved) discords. They have been likened to miniature tone poems.



FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

(1810-1849)

Chopin has a reputation for being an exquisite miniaturist, but he was much more than that: his approach to playing and composing for the piano and his remarkable imagination for keyboard colour and texture – as well as his often startlingly original treatment of harmony and form – left their imprint on piano music

Balade No. 1 in G minor OP 23 (Tk 14)

The ballade dates to sketches Chopin made in 1831 during his eight-month stay in Vienna. It was completed in 1835 after his move to Paris, where he dedicated it to Baron Nathaniel von Stockhausen, the Hanoverian ambassador to France

Étude No. 2 in F minor OP 25 (Tk 15)

Étude Op. 25, No. 2, in F minor by Frédéric Chopin, was marked 'Presto'. It was preceded by a relative major key. It is based on a polyrhythm, with pairs of eighth note (quaver) triplets in the right hand against quarter-note (crotchet) triplets in the left. The étude is sometimes known as "the Bees"

Étude No. 11 in F minor (Winter Wind) (Tk 16)

Étude Op. 25, No. 11 in A minor, often referred to as the Winter Wind in English is a solo piano technical study composed by Chopin in 1836. It was first published together with all études of Opus 25 in 1837, in France, Germany and England. The first French edition indicates a common time, time signature, but the manuscript and the first German edition both feature cut time. The first four bars that characterize the melody were added just before publication at the advice of Charles A. Hoffmann, a friend. Winter Wind is considered one of the most difficult of Chopin's 24 études.



GIOACHINO ANTONIO ROSSINI

(1792-1868)

The Barber of Seville - overture (Tk 17)

Rossini set new standards for both comic and serious opera before retiring from large-scale composition while still in his thirties, at the height of his popularity. His two act opera buffa the *Barber of Seville* has proven to be one of the greatest masterpieces of comedy within music and has been described as the opera buffa of all "opere buffe". After two hundred years, it remains a popular work.

Jean De Le Durantaye

[1946 - 2022]



During his 50 years as audiophile recording engineer, Jean has amassed a vast catalogue of classical recordings. Just before his passing, Jean and his close friend 2xHD's René Laflamme decided to prepare a collection of some of Jean's favorite recordings. This collection demonstrates the versatility of Jean's work during his long career.

All the recordings in this collection were recorded in 2-track analog 15 ips tape, using two microphone technique.

René Laflamme, 2xHD Technical director



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The 2xHD mastering chain consists of a selection of high-end vacuum tube equipment. For the recordings on this album, the original ¼" 15 ips Nagra Master curve, master tapes were played on a Nagra-T tape recorder, modified with high-end tube playback electronics, wired with OCC silver cable from the playback head direct to a Nick Doshi tube head preamplifier.

The resulting signal is then transferred into high resolution formats by recording it in DXD using a custom 2xHD Technologies A to D converter. All analog and digital cables that are used are state-of-the-art Siltech. The 2xHD FUSION mastering system is powered by a super capacitor power supply, using a new technology that lowers the digital noise found in the lowest level of the spectrum. A vacuum tube NAGRA HD DAC X is used as a reference digital playback converter to A and B with the original analog master tape, permitting the fusion of the warmth of analog with the refinement of digital.

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1. BENJAMIN BRITTEN

A Young Person's guide to the
Orchestra – excerpts (1:42)

2. GEORGES BIZET

Carmen Suite – Intermezzo (2:40)

3. FRANTZ LISZT

The Dreams of Love
(Liebestraum) No. 3 (4:37)

4. FRANTZ LISZT

Étude Paganini no. 5 in E major,
"La Chasse" (3:02)

5. JOSEPH HAYDN

Concerto for Trumpet 2MVT (2:44)

6. JOSEPH HAYDN

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7. BÉLA BARTÓK

Music for Strings,
Percussions & Celesta (7:30)

8. J.S. BACH

Schübler chorale: Wachet auf ruft
uns die stimme BWV 645 (4:11)

9. J.S. BACH

Chorale: Jesus, Meine Zuversich
BWV 728 (2:55)

10. J.S. BACH

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Sünde grosse WV622 (5:17)

11. FRANÇOIS COUPERIN

The mysterious barricades
(Les barricades mystérieuses) (2:05)

12. FRANÇOIS COUPERIN

The Gnat (Le moucheron) (1:26)

13. FRANÇOIS COUPERIN

La Menetou (3:10)

14. FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

Balade No. 1 in G minor OP 23 (8:58)

15. FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

Étude No. 2 in F minor OP 25 (1:33)

16. FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

Étude No. 11 in F minor (Winter Wind) (3:18)

17. GIOACHINO ANTONIO ROSSINI

The Barber of Seville – overture (7:18)

18. GEORGES BIZET

Carmen: Les Toréadors – suite (2:28)

Produced and recorded with two microphones
on analog master tapes, by Jean De La Durantaye

2XHD MASTERING: RENÉ LAFLAMME

2XHD EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ANDRÉ PERRY

Album cover & booklet concept & artwork: André Perry

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