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SUPER AUDIO CD

FRANZ LISZT (1811-1886)

Années de Pèlerinage
—Troisième Année

YORAM ISH-HURWITZ
—piano





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1. Angelus! (Prière aux anges gardiens)
Andante pietoso
2. Aux Cyprès de la Villa d'Este (Threnodie)
Andante
3. Aux Cyprès de la Villa d'Este (Threnodie)
Andante, non troppo lento
4. Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este
Allegretto
5. Sunt lacrymae rerum (En mode hongrois)
Lento assai
6. Marche funèbre (En mémoire de Maximilien I)
Andante: Maestoso, funebre
7. Sursum corda (Erhebet eure Herzen)
Andante maestoso, non troppo lento

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God

If one were to characterize the third volume of the *Années de Pèlerinage* in two words, they would be 'religion' and 'depression'. And while much can be said about the first, one can mostly speculate about the latter. The premature deaths of his son Daniel and daughter Blandine may well have caused his despair; so could the thwarted marriage with Princess Carolyne Wittgenstein in Rome on top of his inability to realise his artistic ambitions concerning the 'Music of the Future' in the small-minded Weimar during the 1850's. Fact is that on his fifty-first birthday Liszt was entering the blackest and most troubled phase of his life.

To escape the hurly-burly of Rome where he was living at the time, he moved into a nearby monastery, the Madonna del Rosario, in June 1863, which was to remain his home for the next five years. Liszt was given a small cell with a wooden bed, a worktable, a bookcase and a small upright piano with a missing D. The windows compensated much for this austerity since they offered a beautiful view of Rome.

It was in this peaceful haven that his lifelong wish to become a priest made him decide finally to enter the lower order of priesthood. When he did, in 1865, both his close relatives and the cultural world were stunned by this seemingly sudden decision. Some accused him of insincerity, because of his anything but virtuous past with Marie d'Agoult and his worldly life during his 'Glanzzeit' that followed. Others even called it a brilliant publicity stunt. Still, when looking back at Liszt's life, everything had been pointing in this direction.

The story begins even before his lifetime when, in 1795, his father, Adam Liszt, entered the Franciscan order as a novice in the monastery at Malacka, near Pressburg, only to leave it within less than two years. Nevertheless, he did not forget the Franciscans. He baptized his only child Francis and took him regularly to the monastery where he had spent his formative years and had endured his first religious crisis. These visits made a strong impression on the young Liszt and their powerful memories formed the



foundation of his religious nature. The influence of his father combined with his lonely youth as travelling prodigy caused him to suffer from a mental crisis and religious mania, desperately wanting to follow in his father's footsteps as a cleric. The death of his father during his adolescence and the unhappy love with the aristocratic girl Caroline de Saint-Cricq made him beg to enter seminary and die the death of the martyrs. Fate ordained it otherwise, and during his numerous concert tours in the 1840's he became worldly wise and his religious devotion diminished. It was Princess Carolyne Wittgenstein, with whom he lived in Weimar for more than a decade, who encouraged his return to orthodox Catholicism and re-discover his religious faith. In 1858 he was admitted to the order of Saint Francis as a 'confrater' in the very same monastery he had known from his childhood, with no premonition of the fact that only a few years later he was to enter the four minor orders of the priesthood. He did not complete this process towards priesthood, however, since its obligations would interfere with his main interest, which

became more important to him every day: composing.

The works that form the *Troisième Année* of the *Années de Pèlerinage* were written between 1867 and 1877 and can be considered as a gateway to modern music. They were originally conceived as individual pieces, but because of the many features that they shared, including Liszt's state of mind and the way he shaped them, he gathered them together in this great cycle. The first four pieces originate from 1877 when he was staying at the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, just outside Rome, during which his depressions had once again plumbed the depths. In the years that followed his entering the lower clergy, Liszt had developed a threefold life in which he constantly travelled between Weimar, where he taught numerous piano students from all over the world, Budapest, where he presided over the Royal Academy of Music, and Rome, where Carolyne still lived. From the outside his manifold activities gave the impression of a man with boundless energy and unlimited enthusiasm, but in reality they wore him out to the point where he



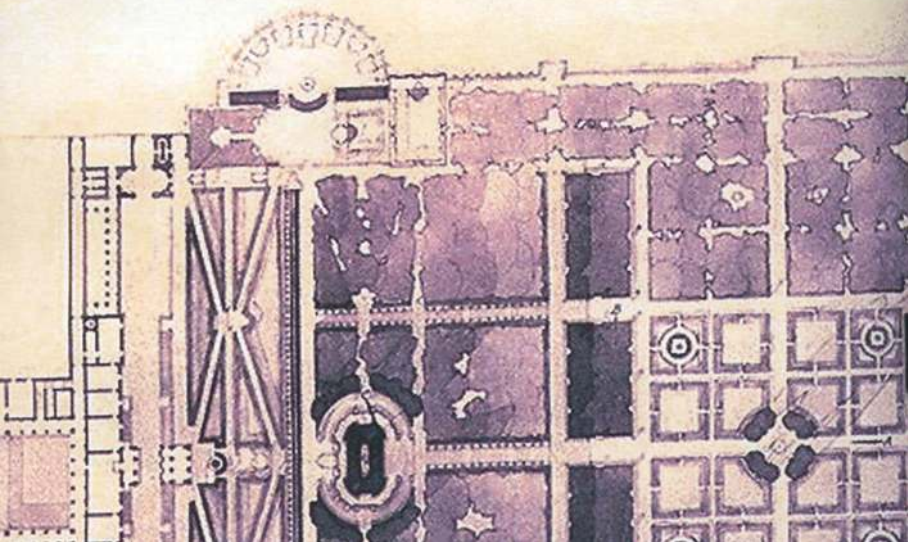
stood on the brink of nervous collapse. In 1876 the first symptoms of a mental depression announced themselves, and for the first time Liszt entertained the thoughts of suicide. At the **Villa d'Este**, where he usually stayed when visiting the eternal city, he searched for solace by wandering among the cypresses in the garden and admiring the beautiful fountains. He worked incessantly on two Threnodies, feeling haunted by these old trees, their branches weighed down by their unchanging leaves, which he heard singing and weeping. The fountains found their way into the brilliant *Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este*, a masterpiece of musical impressionism so advanced for its time that for thirty years it had no successor until Ravel composed his own *Jeux d'eau*. In the score he quotes in Latin the well-known verse from the Gospel According to St. John (4:14): *Sed aqua quam ego dabo ei, fiet in eo fons aquae salientis in vitam aeternam* ("But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst [but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting

life]"), thus indicating that the composition is really a religious work and much more than just a piece of water music. Other religious elements can be found in *Angelus!*, which denotes prayer to a guardian angel, and *Sursum Corda* (Lift up your hearts), a fixed element in Catholic mass. These pieces begin and end the series and form each other's counterweight in character, while sharing the same key of E Major. With the closing piece of the cycle, *Sursum Corda*, built more or less throughout on a single pedal point and leading to a big climax, Liszt seems to say that, no matter how heavy his spirit and how torn his nerves, there is always hope glimmering on the horizon.

—Yoram Ish-Hurwitz

Sources used for the liner notes:

Franz Liszt - The Virtuoso Years 1811-1847; The Weimar Years 1848-1861; The Final Years 1861-1886, by Alan Walker. Cornell University Press 1983, 1989 and 1996

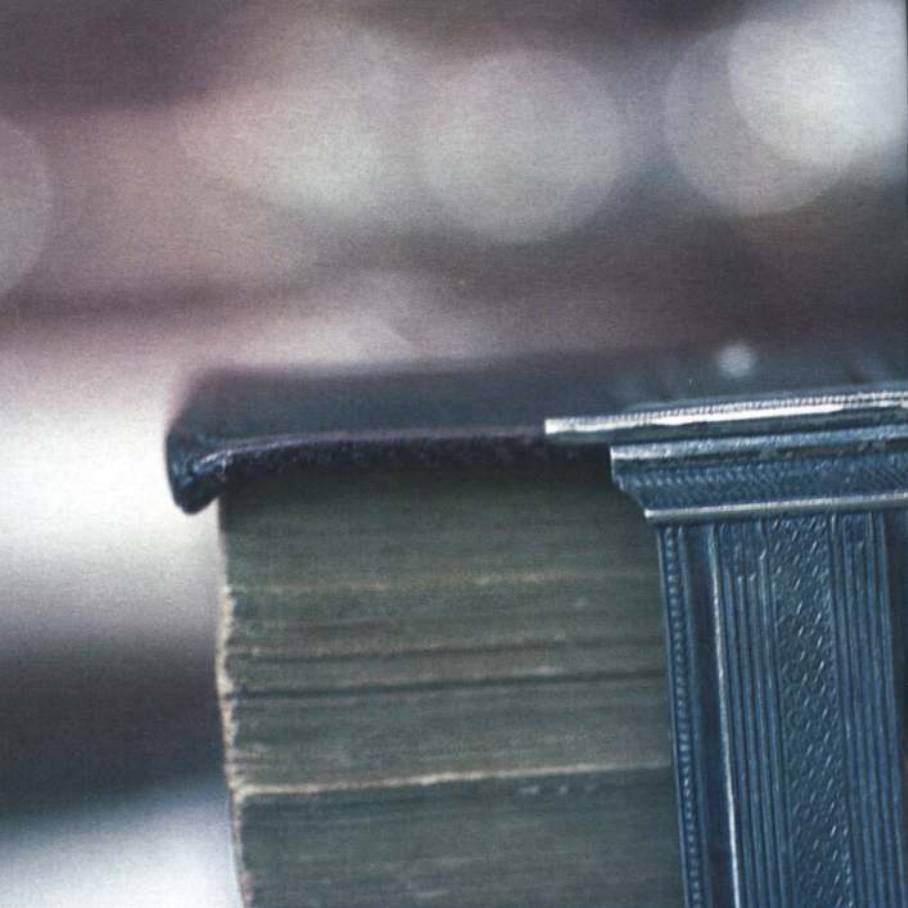


Sed aqua quam ego
dabo ei, fiet in eo fons
aquae salientis in
vitam aeternam.

—*Johannes* (4:14)

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall
give him, shall never thirst but the water that I
shall give him shall be in him a well of water
springing up into everlasting life.

—*St. John* (4:14)



1992

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Recording Equipment:
Microphones: Sonodore RCM-402 Active Omnidirectional Microphones
Amps & Mixer: Rens Heijnis Custom Built
Converters: dCS 904
dCS 954

dCS 974 samplerate/format converter for downsampling
to CD-layer from DSD original

Loudspeakers: Avalon Professional Mixing Monitor
Headphones: AKG K1000 with custom built amplifier

Amplifiers: PASS LABS X-5
Cables: Siltech Professional Pro-S3

DSD Recorder: Pyramix / Merging Technologies

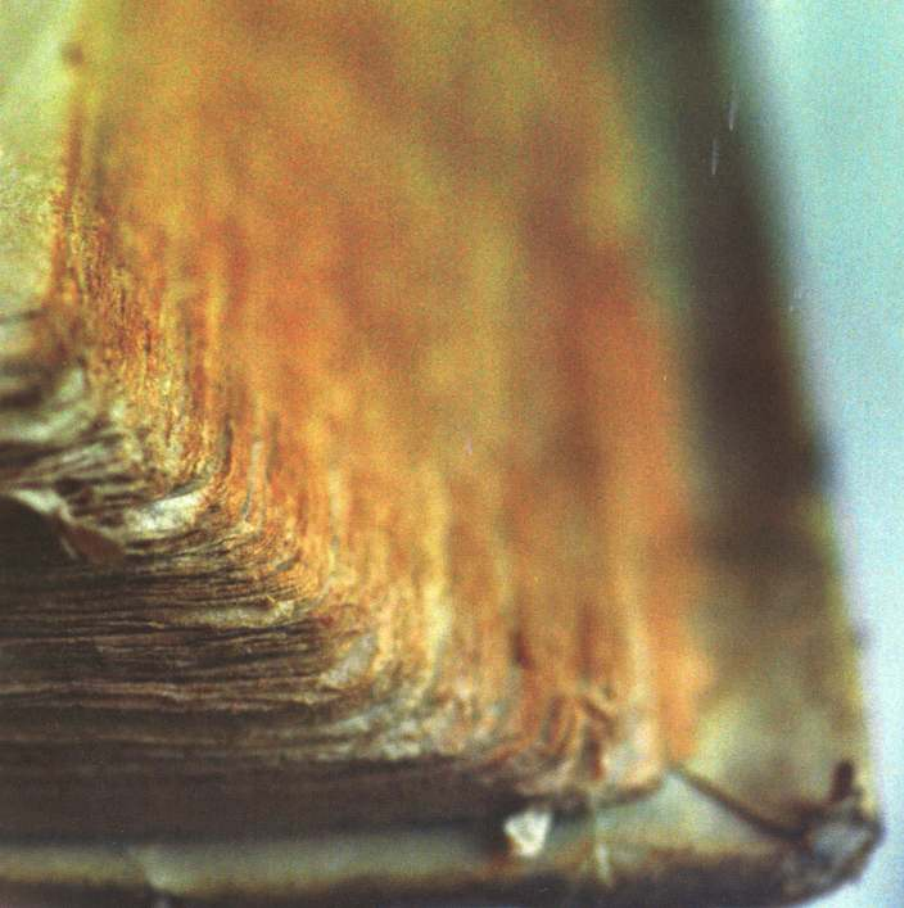
SACD surround sound requires multi-channel SACD player and compatible surround sound system. SACD stereo requires SACD player. CD audio can be played on CD and DVD players.

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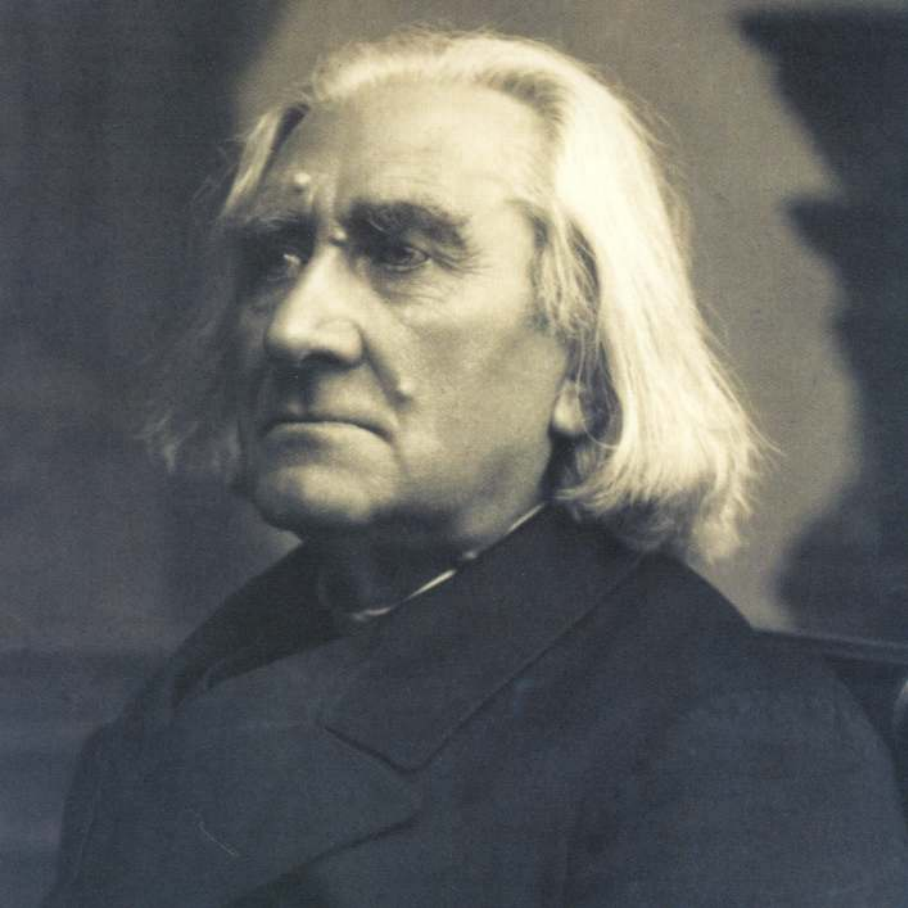


TRSA 0022



Sed aqua quam ego
dabo ei, fiet in eo fons
aquae salientis in
vitam aeternam.

—*Johannes* 4:14





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