

NAXOS

Ferdinando and Gustavo CARULLI

Music for Guitar and Piano • 1

Franz Halász, Guitar • Débora Halász, Piano



Ferdinando Carulli (1770–1841) and Gustavo Carulli (1801–1876) Music for Guitar and Piano • 1

Of all the early nineteenth-century guitarist/composers, such as Sor, Giuliani, and Aguado, the music of Ferdinando Carulli has been the most neglected. Despite his huge output Carulli has come to be regarded as primarily a pedagogue rather than as a composer of concert works. This Italian maestro, originally from Naples, settled in Paris in 1808, where his comprehensive *Guitar Method*, Op. 27, was written and published with enormous success. His creative contribution to the guitar was underestimated until a thematic catalogue by the Italian scholar Mario Torta appeared in 1993, describing him as 'a composer, virtuoso and successful teacher who played a decisive rôle in moulding the future of his instrument...There is a wealth of invention in his finest solo compositions and great instrumental variety and strength in his chamber music'. Carulli composed some four hundred works for the guitar, including solos, duos and trios, guitar ensembles, chamber music and concertos as well as many studies and exercises. On two of the pieces presented here, *Op. 233* and *Op. 134*, the original editions acknowledged that Ferdinando's son, Gustavo Carulli, guitarist, composer and singing teacher, shared in the composition.

Carulli's reputation as a worthwhile composer was considerably enhanced in the twentieth century when recordings by Julian Bream and John Williams of his *Duo in G*, *Op. 34*, and *Serenade in A*, *Op. 96*, were issued in the early 1970s. Prior to that, Carulli's most popular works had been his *Guitar Concerto*, *Op. 14*, and the *Serenade in A*, *Op. 96* (recorded by the Presti/Lagoya guitar duo).

The present selection is dedicated to Carulli's unique attentiveness to the guitar and piano repertoire, a combination of great appeal to Parisian salons and family gatherings. Although several other guitarists of his era were also attracted to this medium, particularly his compatriot, Mauro Giuliani (1781–1829), who worked with the virtuoso pianist, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Carulli's prolific expertise in bringing together two apparently disparate instruments was widely appreciated

by his contemporaries as the publication of more than twenty such works surely demonstrates.

Variations for guitar and piano, *Op. 169*, are Carulli's re-working of Beethoven's *Twelve Variations on 'Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen' from The Magic Flute by Mozart, for pianoforte and cello*, *Op. 66*. The main emendations are to change the cello part to textures and patterns appropriate to the guitar but also to alter the sequence of variations including two sections written by Carulli. (The piano part, except in the first half of *Variations IV* and *VII*, which is Carulli's original, elsewhere follows Beethoven's text.) Thus the sequence of variations is as follows:

Carulli	Beethoven
II	IV
III	V
IV (Carulli's original until halfway)	Then X
VI	VIII
VII (which is Carulli's original)	
VIII	VI
IX	XI
X	XII

The early nineteenth century maestros were deeply attracted to the music of Rossini (1792–1868) as a source for transcriptions. The great Italian guitarist Mauro Giuliani, for example, produced his six *Rossinians*, *Op. 119–124*, selections of Rossini melodies introduced as part of an extended virtuosic solo as well as further arrangements from operas such as *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella) and *Semiramide*. Carulli's *Duo in A major on Themes of Rossini*, *Op. 233*, brings in arias from *La donna del lago*, an opera in two acts after Sir Walter Scott's narrative poem, *The Lady of the Lake*. The melody, *Oh! mattutini albori* (Oh! morning dawn) comes from the beginning of Act I where the scene is set on the shores of Lake Katrine with the Ben Ledi mountains in the

background. Four variations follow. The arias heard include *Qual suono* (What a sound) and *Ahi! Qual colpo* (Ah! what a blow), from *La gazza ladra* (The Thieving Magpie).

Grand Duo Concertant in A major, Op. 65, in three movements, first published in 1814, is one of Carulli's most ambitious works for the guitar and piano, evoking striking and eloquent themes in the first movement, a sense of poignant drama in the slow movement and Mozartean lyricism in the concluding *Allegretto*. The intention throughout is to convey an almost orchestral splendour in a substantial work which illustrates the composer's ingenuity and inventiveness at full stretch.

Dedicated to his pupil, Monsieur Abramowicz, *Nocturne in G major, Op. 127* (first published 1819), is of course very different in structure and intention from Chopin's famous later representations of the genre. The first section of the work, *Largo*, begins with *pianissimo* octaves and gentle dotted rhythms but soon gives way to a *Moderato*, where the guitar and piano take turns with the theme. This is followed by a *Larghetto*, a brief melody subjected to increasingly rapid variations. The final *Moderato* recapitulates the earlier movement in an exciting coda.

Duo in D major, Op. 134, first published in 1820, opens

with a lyrical *Larghetto*, the pianoforte providing an introduction before the guitar's entry after eight bars. This is a prime example of Carulli's most expressive writing with ingenious combinations of plucked and keyboard sonorities. The *Rondo* is skittish and whimsical, requiring considerable dexterity from both players.

The final three items offer an elaborate panorama of the various themes deployed in Rossini's Overtures to *The Thieving Magpie*, *Armida* and *The Barber of Seville*. These three overtures are part of a collection of twelve published by Carulli's friend and favourite publisher, the Neapolitan Raffaele Carli, in Paris, around 1825. These overtures (without opus numbers) were also arranged for violin and guitar, flute and guitar and guitar duo. During Carulli's era this kind of transcription was a convenient method of importing in miniature the glories of the opera into the intimacy of the home or salon. Nowadays the scaling down of such masterpieces may seem like viewing the orchestra through the wrong end of the telescope, sometimes with unexpectedly amusing moments. Yet the charm and integrity of Carulli's imagination remain intact in this vital small corner of guitar history.

Graham Wade

*Acknowledgements are made to the kind assistance of
Mario Torta in the compilation of these notes*

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Franz Halász

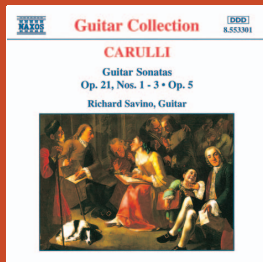
The American-born German guitarist Franz Halász is among the most outstanding artists in his field. He began his career in 1993, winning first prizes at the Andrés Segovia Competition in Spain and the Seto Ohashi Competition in Japan. A guest performer at major festivals and events such as the Rose Augustine Series in New York, the Toru Takemitsu Memorial Concert in Tokyo, and in Germany the Kissinger Sommer, Brandenburgische Sommerkonzerte and Mecklenburg Vorpommern, and in England, Portugal, Brazil and elsewhere, he has also shared the stage with well known artists such as Siegfried Jerusalem, Patrick Gallois, Robert Aitken, Alban Gerhard and Boris Pergamenschikov among others. He is professor at the Nuremberg Musikhochschule and offers master-classes at prestigious institutes all over the world, including the Manhattan School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory, the Academy of Music in Oslo, and São Paulo University. His many recordings for BIS include among others the complete guitar music by Joaquín Turina and Toru Takemitsu.

Débora Halász

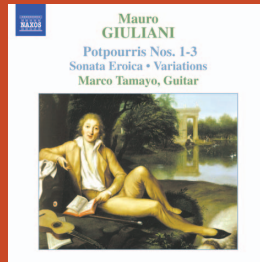
Praised by critics in her début recordings, the Brazilian Débora Halász is among the leading South American pianists of her generation. Winner of the most important competitions in her native country, she made her début with the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra at the age of fifteen. Four years later the Critics Prize (APCA) named her the best soloist of the year for her interpretation of Rachmaninov's *Third Piano Concerto*. In 1989 she went with a DAAD scholarship to Germany, and since then has been invited to many European, South and North American Music Festivals and Concert Series. With her husband she established in 1993 the Duo Halász, for guitar and piano / harpsichord, arousing further critical acclaim. She has also partnered musicians such as Lavard Skou Larsen, Sebastian Hess and Patrick Gallois. Her ambitious recording of the complete piano music of Heitor Villa-Lobos, a project of some eight CDs, has been enthusiastically acclaimed by the international press. She has also recorded for BIS works by Ginastera, Shostakovich and Castelnuovo-Tedesco. Her passion for baroque music led her to search for a historically accurate instrument for that repertoire, and she plays a historic copy of a Haas instrument, dated 1734, specially made for her. It is on this instrument that she has embarked on the recording of the complete works for harpsichord by the Portuguese baroque composer Carlos Seixas, a co-production between Naxos and Bavarian Radio.



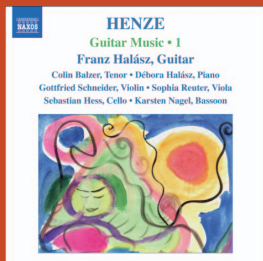
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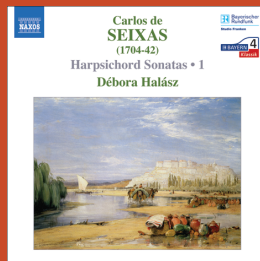
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Born in Naples, Ferdinando Carulli wrote the first complete classical guitar method, which continues to be used today. From among his more than 400 guitar pieces come several transcriptions with operatic associations, including those of Beethoven's *Variations on an aria by Mozart* and several Rossini overtures. His son, Gustavo, also enjoyed a successful career as a guitarist and teacher. Franz and Débora Halász have been praised as "a young and exciting team ... that persuasively combines piano and guitar" (*American Record Guide*).



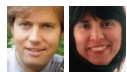
**Ferdinando
CARULLI**
(1770–1841)

**Gustavo
CARULLI**
(1801–1876)



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- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN
(arr. Ferdinando CARULLI)
- 1 Variations in F major on 'Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen' from Mozart's 'Die Zauberflöte', Op. 169 7:43
- Ferdinando and Gustavo CARULLI
- 2 Duo in A major on themes of Rossini, Op. 233 6:35
 - Grand Duo Concertant in A major, Op. 65 15:52
 - 3 I. Moderato 7:37
 - 4 II. Adagio 3:22
 - 5 III. Allegretto 4:49



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- Ferdinando CARULLI
- Nocturne in G major, Op. 127 10:31
 - 6 I. Largo 5:08
 - 7 II. Larghetto 3:31
 - 8 III. Moderato 1:51
- Ferdinando and Gustavo CARULLI
- Duo in D major, Op. 134 9:56
 - 9 I. Larghetto 3:36
 - 10 II. Rondo: Poco allegretto 6:19
- Ferdinando CARULLI
- 11 Overture to Rossini's 'La Gazza Ladra' 9:46
 - 12 Overture to Rossini's 'Armida' 5:27
 - 13 Overture to Rossini's 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia' 7:15

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A co-production with Bayerischer Rundfunk

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Playing Time
73:34



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