



Giuseppe Austri
(1823-1884)

Capriccio Fantastico

Works for Violin and Piano

Marco Rogliano, violin
Marco Alpi, Chiara Cipelli, piano



Giuseppe Austri (Piacenza, 1823 - 1884)

CAPRICCIO FANTASTICO

Works for Violin and Piano

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| 01 <i>L'addio a Lisbona (Farewell to Lisbon)</i> Capriccio fantastico Op. 4 (1851) (dedicated to the famous tenor Carlo Negrini) | 10:17 |
| 02 <i>Capriccio Op. 9 No. 2 (1852) for solo violin</i> Cantabile - Tempo di polacca (Allegretto) (dedicated to Earl Giacomo Costa) | 04:13 |
| 03 <i>Les Noces du Diable (The Devil's Marriage)</i> Fantasia for violin and piano (1844-45) | 09:00 |
| 04 <i>La Calma (Calm)</i> Andante sostenuto Op. 11 (1854) | 02:54 |
| 05 <i>La veglia notturna (The Nocturnal Vigil)</i> Scherzo fantastico Op. 12 (1855) | 07:11 |
| 6 Capricci for solo violin (1863-65) (dedicated to the distinguished piano teacher and composer Pietro Perny) | 09:22 |
| 06 <i>La Solitudine in A minor (Solitude)</i> | 01:12 |
| 07 <i>Il Mattino in C major (Morning)</i> | 01:03 |
| 08 <i>La Preghiera in A flat major (Prayer)</i> | 01:57 |
| 09 <i>Il Buon Umore in C major (Good Mood)</i> | 01:23 |
| 10 <i>La Pazzia in D major (Folly)</i> | 01:48 |
| 11 <i>Il Telegrafo in E minor (The Telegraph)</i> | 01:59 |
| 12 <i>Un sogno lusinghiero (A Flattering Dream)</i> Capriccio fantastico Op. 8 (1852) (dedicated to Tito Ricordi) | 07:42 |
| 13 <i>Souvenirs d'Espagne (Souvenirs of Spain)</i> Capriccio Op. 6 (1851) (dedicated to Maria Luigia Fernanda Queen of Spain) | 06:27 |
| 14 6 Walzer (1861) | 07:22 |
| 15 <i>Rimembranza (Remembrance)</i> Andante in A flat (1861) | 03:37 |
| 16 <i>Tutto ha fine quaggiù (1863-65) (Everything Comes to an End Down Here)</i> Capriccio for violin and piano | 03:31 |
| Running Time | 71:44 |

Marco Rogliano, violin

Violin Nicola Bergonzi, Cremona 1790 trusted by Maggini Foundation - Basel (Switzerland)

Bow Francois Lupot, Paris 1830 ca

Marco Alpi, piano (tracks 01, 03, 04, 12, 14, 15, 16)

Chiara Cipelli, piano (tracks 05, 13)

The most creative and significant period in the artistic life of violinist Giuseppe Austri was that between 1845 and 1865, well exemplified by the works of this programme in a world première recording. Born and died in Piacenza, Austri's artistic life was rather condensed, marked by successes that progressively tapered off while he was still alive, which is why his name today is unknown to us, unlike that of other musicians, his contemporaries, such as Paganini, Sivori and Bazzini. The recovery of his repertoire not only brings back his rich and varied output for violin but also allows us to get a glimpse of the life of a person who died in misery and isolated from the world. Introduced to music by his family when still very young (his father Antonio was the director of the choirs of Piacenza's Teatro Municipale and a harpsichordist, as his elder brother Gaetano), he studied violin with Giuseppe Jona - first violin and director of the theatre, as well as first teacher/director of the nascent Music School - and with the Cremona virtuoso Carlo Bignami, then active in Parma and in a working relationship with Paganini.

Austri debuted in Piacenza in 1841 and was soon hired as instrumentalist by various European orchestras (beginning with that of Milan's Santa Radegonda theatre, then in Dijon, Paris, Odessa, St. Petersburg, Madrid, Lisbon), while he also carried out a career as a soloist, with performances in concert or during the intervals of operas, or in soirées for the benefit of virtuoso singers. Highly regarded by Rossini and Verdi, to mention only two eminent composers of the day, when he was at the apex of his career and consolidating his teaching activity in Nice Austri fell into a deep depression caused by the separation from his wife. He returned to his native city, where he died alone and in poverty.

During his numerous tours in Italy and abroad, Austri's performances invariably received enthusiastic reviews even from the most severe critics, and in the columns of "Gazzetta musicale di Milano", "L'Italia musicale" and several other newspapers comments were always positive. They underlined the ease with which "he can overcome the hardest technical difficulties. Perhaps from no other have we heard the flute-like notes he can draw from his violin with such incredible confidence and precision." And, "few concert violinists have given us greater pleasure than Austri: even complex compositions, played by him, become clear to all, enjoyable and moving"; "rarely have we met a concert performer that not only arouses in us a deep and sincere admiration but also entertains us with the smoothness of his performances and spontaneity of his melodies"; "variety, the peerless mastery of his instrument, the exquisitely good taste of his compositions, the fluency and clarity in his notes, so distinct and strong: it is enough to define, in my opinion, one of the best concert performers of our times." His interpretations often aroused deep emotion and "such enthusiasm as no other violinist has been able to kindle in us. Imagine a clarity of performance which borders on the daring; a fire, in the passion that animates his bow, which gives the notes irresistible power both in the joyous and melancholy motifs."

If Austri is considered "certainly one of the best concert performers" of his day, he is also regarded as a "composer of excellent taste". Some of his original works with orchestra in this programme received warm reviews, when they first appeared. About the Capriccio Fantastico Op. 8 entitled *Sogno lusinghiero*, the critics said, "an imitation of Paganini's Carnival of Venice, a delightful and enticing composition, and it was so well-liked that its talented author, urged by the listeners' warmest acclaim, had to give an encore of it." *L'addio a Lisbona*, Capriccio Fantastico for violin with piano accompaniment Op. 4 (arrangement by the author) was well liked for its originality; and finally, one of his fortes, the Capriccio *Souvenirs d'Espagne* Op. 6, was the object of more articulated comments, such as: the composition is "graceful, cantabile and clear, and contains some passages not easy to perform. The *Allegretto* has character, and the coda stands out for the contrast of two movements that alternate passionately and to a fine result. Clarity goes hand in hand with conciseness"; "In *Souvenirs d'Espagne*, a bizarre composition that has the merit of an altogether new uniqueness, [Austri] overcame the greatest of difficulties without ever falling in the bad habit of some concert performers, who cannot blend the roughness with the pleasant."

The more evident elements of his composing are therefore originality of invention, extravagance of traits, which blend strongly contrasting progressions and articulations that only a virtuoso worthy of that name can tackle, and pleasantness of melody. The main role is indisputably played by the solo violin, while the piano (an instrument Austri knew well) creates the suitable harmonic environment and rhythmically supports the melody, being moreover entrusted with the introduction and the ending.

Austri's repertoire, therefore, is that of an itinerant virtuoso, that marvellous and devilish figure which amazes the crowds with his transcendent skills, not only with the re-elaboration of other composers' themes (which, nonetheless, are an important part of his repertoire) but also with his own original works. The Capriccio and the Scherzo, sometimes followed by the adjective "fantastic", and the Fantasia are forms most congenial to this type of original creativity, perfectly in character with the romantic climate in which free imagination dominates over form and defines it. Austri's perfect integration in the artistic and aristocratic society of his day is also confirmed by the dedications that often accompany his works. *L'addio a Lisbona* is dedicated to "the eminent operatic artist Carlo Negrini", a famous tenor from Piacenza, privileged interpreter of Verdi's and Donizetti's operas; the *Capriccio* Op. 9 No. 2 to Count Giacomo Costa, latest heir of a noble family of Genoese origins that between 1680 and 1800 had settled in Piacenza; *Les noces du diable* to C. Pirazzi, and performed during a Liszt concert in Dijon; *La calma* Op. 11 to "the Doctor in law Francesco Parolini, most distinguished amateur" from Piacenza; *La veglia notturna* to an unspecified Paolo Verani; the *Sei capricci per violino solo* to Pietro Perny, author of methods and piano works published by Ricordi; *Un sogno lusinghiero* to the publisher Tito Ricordi; *Souvenirs d'Espagne*, predictably, to Maria Luisa of Spain; *Rimembranza* to Miss Maria Abbazzà; the very tender *6 Walzer* to the lawyer Antonio Meneghelli; and the Capriccio *Tutto ha fine quaggiù* to the artist Giuseppe Sala.

In our day Austri has only been bestowed a marble slab in the street where he lived, but in February 1845 the Piacenza dialectal poet Vincenzo Capra extolled, in a poem dedicated to him, his heavenly sound, and defined him "the only genius | who managed to gladden my downcast spirit. | With his most sweet | divine ways | that remind us | of Paganini." The comparison is undoubtedly well-chosen because of some similarities in these two musicians' lives, and quite true for the prodigious violin writing that unites them, as well as for the impulse which the virtuoso from Piacenza shows to have absorbed from the "great Genoese", giving further momentum to his transcendent Paganini-like writing.

Mariateresa Dellaborra

Translated by Daniela Pilarz

"An exceptional violinist under every aspect" (*Ruggiero Ricci*)

"Rogliano has all the qualities of an ideal Paganini interpreter"

(*J. M. Molkhou, Diapason*)

"His technical and musical qualities are unique"

(*Salvatore Accardo*)

"Rogliano established a high dramatic standard for the next generation of Paganini followers"

(*R. Maxham, Fanfare*)

"And excellent soloist"

(*Le Monde de la Musique*)

"Rogliano displays a brilliant and highly communicative virtuosity, supported by the soundest technique and intonation"

(*G. Tasso, Giornale della Musica*).

These are only a few of the significant comments made on Rogliano's artistic personality. His brilliant career places him by right among the best artists of today's music scene.

Marco Rogliano is the only Italian violinist who has been invited to perform as soloist at the Grosser Saal of Berlin's Philharmonie, and the first who, in 2009, performed Paganini's Concerto No. 4 at the Auditorium of Cultural

Centre of Macao with the Macao Symphony Orchestra.

In 2020 he appeared as soloist with the Orchestra of the Professors of Naples' San Carlo theatre at the Chamber of Deputies.

Rogliano graduated with honours from Rome's S. Cecilia Conservatory under the guidance of Antonio Salvatore, then furthered his studies with Ruggiero Ricci, Riccardo Brendola and Salvatore Accardo. In 1989 he debuted as soloist, performing Sibelius's Concerto with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ari Rasilainen.

His successes in important violin and chamber music competitions - such as the V. Bucchi of Rome, ARD of Munich, East and West Artists of New York - led him to some of the finest venues of the world, among them New York's Carnegie Hall, the Grosser Saal of Berlin's Philharmonie, the Herkulesaal in Munich, Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, Casals Hall in Tokyo, Sala S. Cecilia in Rome, S. Carlo theatre in Naples, Politeama theatre in Palermo; and to work with conductors and musicians such as E. Bushkov, G. Takacs-Nagy, L. Shambadal, S. Accardo, M. Angius, T. Ceccherini, E. Dindo, A. Lonquich, A. Lucchesini, I. Turban.

Dedicated, in particular, to the promotion of the Italian 19th- and 20th-century repertoire, and an appreciated interpreter of Paganini both in Italy and abroad, Rogliano has made numerous recordings, with some premières of works by authors such as Paganini, Rolla, Respighi, Zanella, Thuille and Sciarrino.

In 2011 the magazine *Amadeus* dedicated to Rogliano its cover and a CD dedicated to Franz Liszt on the bicentenary of his birth, in duo with pianist Andrea Dindo.

A former professor at the Conservatories of Rovigo and Fermo, Rogliano currently teaches Chamber Music at the Conservatory of Piacenza. He has held master classes in numerous Italian Conservatories, at Salzburg's Mozarteum, Pavia's Music Academy, and at Verona's Steinway Academy. He plays a magnificent Nicola Bergonzi instrument (Cremona, 1790) entrusted to him by the Maggini Foundation of Langenthal (Switzerland).

His latest album for solo violin, released by Dynamic, "Paganini and Italian Genius", featuring some premières by Paganini and other Italian 19th-century authors highly regarded by the Genoese virtuoso, such as Onorio De Vito, Giuseppe Austri, Bernardo Ferrara, Ferdinando Giorgetti and Carlo Bignami, was enthusiastically received by the critics in prestigious music magazines such as *Musica* and *Diapason* (reviews by Giuseppe Rossi and J.M. Molkhou).

"All in all, Rogliano gives us one of the most impressive, persuasively interpreted accounts of this almost impossibly challenging music." ("Paganini 25 caprices" - D. Druce, *Gramophone*)

"Hats off to Marco Rogliano, true heir to the great Ruggiero Ricci, for this prodigious display of fireworks."

("Paganini and Italian Genius" - J.M.Molkhou, *Diapason*)

After earning his piano diploma at the Conservatory of Milan in the class of Isa Gorini and winning numerous awards in piano competitions, **Marco Alpi** completed his artistic formation in direct contact with figures such as Paul Badura-Skoda, György Sandor, Joachim Achucarro and, more than anyone else, Sergio Fiorentino.

With the experience acquired, he channelled his energy not only into a committed concert activity but also in two other directions. The first and more important one is research in the educational field. At the Conservatory of Piacenza, where he has taught since 1990, he has promoted and supported several cultural events through series of concerts and multidisciplinary projects. His educational commitment, matured in the cultural stream of personal interests, goes alongside his intense research investigation aimed at the re-evaluation of obsolete or forgotten repertoires, among them those of interesting Italian composers from the 19th and 20th centuries such as Amilcare Zanella, Pietro Alessandro Yon, and Giuseppe Austri, whose works for solo piano and in duo with the violin, cello, and organ he has recorded for the labels Tactus, Discantica, and Dynamic. He also recorded CDs dedicated to Schumann and Poulenc.

Alpi is also a sound engineer, and in this capacity he has worked for record labels such as Tactus, Discantica, Musitalia, Sheva, Etera, Decca Italia, Dark Companion, Academy, Da Vinci, Dynamic.

He teaches piano at the Conservatory of Piacenza, where in the past he held various roles: vice Director, Head of department, member of the Academic Board (which he still is) and of the Board of Directors. He has moreover contributed to the development of D.A.T. (Dipartimento Aggiornamento Tecnologico del Conservatorio), which he still manages.

Chiara Cipelli studied at the Conservatory of Piacenza, the Musikhochschule of Freiburg im Breisgau, and the Ecole Normale de Musique Alfred Cortot in Paris, where she received a scholarship from the Albert Roussel Foundation and earned a "Diplôme Supérieur" in piano. The winner of numerous awards in national and international competitions, she has held concerts in Italy and abroad appearing at prestigious venues, among them: Piacenza's Teatro Municipale and Palazzo Farnese, Auditorium del Carmine in Parma, Piccolo Teatro in Milan, Darmstadt Theater, Steinway Haus Düsseldorf, Auditorium Haydn in Bolzano, Salle Cortot and Schola Cantorum in Paris, St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, Taipei Zhong Shan Hall and Taichung Chung Hsin Concert Hall in Taiwan, always to public and critical acclaim.

Her first recording, "Bettinelli Piano Music", released by Brilliant Classics, and her latest one dedicated to Olivier Messiaen's Preludes, published by the Piano Classics label, have received excellent reviews from international critics and were both chosen by *Musica* magazine as best new releases. Chiara Cipelli teaches piano at the Conservatory of Piacenza.



Marco Rogliano



Marco Alpi



Chiara Cipelli
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