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Tsai YiFang

FRENCH HORN SENIOR RECITAL

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RICHARD STRAUSS: HORN CONCERTO NO. 2 IN E-FLAT MAJOR (1943)

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949) COMPOSED HIS HORN CONCERTO NO. 2 IN E-FLAT MAJOR WHILE LIVING IN VIENNA IN 1942. HE DEDICATED HIS CONCERTO TO HIS FATHER FRANZ STRAUSS - A CELEBRATED HORN VIRTUOSO. THE WORK PREMIERED AT THE SALZBURG FESTIVAL IN 1943 AND EXEMPLIFIES STRAUSS' MASTERY OF THE ELEMENTS OF COMPOSITION. THE SECOND CONCERTO WAS WRITTEN TOWARDS THE END OF STRAUSS' LIFE, AS IF REMINISCING HIS YOUTH, WHERE HE HAD COMPLETED MANY MASTERPIECES IN HIS LIFE. ITS COMPLEXITY AND BEAUTY HAVE MADE IT REVERED AS ONE OF THE MOST HIGHLY REGARDED PIECES OF THE HORN REPERTOIRE. THE PIECE THEN PROGRESSES INTO A SERIES OF VIRTUOSIC FIGURES THAT RANGES FROM LIGHT AND PLAYFUL EXCHANGES WITH THE ORCHESTRA TO GRANDIOSE FANFARES, ALL OF WHICH REQUIRE A HIGH LEVEL OF MASTERY OF THE INSTRUMENT. DESPITE IT BEING COMPOSED IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD, HE FOLLOWS THE TYPICAL FAST-SLOW-FAST STRUCTURE OF A CLASSICAL CONCERTO, WITH THREE MOVEMENTS IN E-FLAT MAJOR, A-FLAT MAJOR, AND E-FLAT MAJOR. WITH THE COMBINATION OF CLASSICAL STRUCTURE AND ROMANTIC PHRASING, HIS WORK BECOMES ONE OF THE MOST PERFORMED AND RECORDED HORN CONCERTOS OF THE 20TH CENTURY. IT IS AN HONOUR AND A DREAM COME TRUE TO PRESENT THIS MASTERPIECE IN MY FINAL RECITAL, I AM VERY EXCITED TO PRESENT IT ON THE STAGE.

VINCENT LUDWIG PERSICHETTI: PARABLE VIII FOR SOLO HORN, OP. 120 (1973)

PARABLE WAS COMPOSED BY VINCENT PERSICHETTI (1915-1987) IN 1973. HE WAS A PHILADELPHIA BORN COMPOSER. THIS PARTICULAR PIECE IS THE EIGHTH INSTALLMENT OF A SERIES OF TWENTY PARABLES FOR SOLO INSTRUMENTS. HIS PARABLES ARE NON-PROGRAMMATIC MUSICAL ESSAYS ABOUT A SINGLE GERMINAL IDEA. IT CONVEYS A MEANING INDIRECTLY THROUGH THE USE OF COMPARISONS OR ANALOGIES, AND THEY ARE USUALLY QUOTED WITH MATERIALS FROM HIS OTHER WORKS. THIS PIECE QUOTES SEVERAL MEASURES FROM PERSICHETTI'S SEVENTH SYMPHONY (LITURGICAL) BY TAKING A THEME GIVEN TO A HORN SECTION THAT TRADES OFF WITH ITSELF AND MAKING IT ONE LINE FOR THE SOLOIST. IT IS A PIECE THAT IS MUSICALLY STIMULATING, AND DRAMATICALLY WRITTEN FOR SOLO HORN. THIS UNACCOMPANIED WORK IS RATHER DEMANDING, IT INCLUDES TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES SUCH AS DIFFICULT INTERVALS, DRAMATIC DYNAMIC CHANGES AND LARGE LEAPS. LYRICALLY, EACH PHRASE DEMANDS MATURITY FROM THE PERFORMER. THIS PIECE CHALLENGES THE PERFORMER AND THE AUDIENCE; NEVERTHELESS, IT IS A STANDARD SELECTION IN THE CONTEMPORARY REPERTOIRE.

EUGÈNE JOSEPH BOZZA: SUR LES CIMES POUR COR EN FA ET PIANO (1960)

SUR LES CIMES (ON THE SUMMITS) WAS COMPOSED BY EUGÈNE JOSEPH BOZZA (1905-1991) FOR HORN AND PIANO IN 1960. HE WAS A FRENCH COMPOSER AND VIOLINIST. THIS PIECE IS A HOMAGE BY BOZZA, TO HONOUR THE HORN'S HISTORY AS A HUNTING INSTRUMENT. THIS WORK DOES NOT FOLLOW A TRADITIONAL FORM. IT IS FREE-COMPOSED, TO ELICIT THE RUSTIC ELEMENTS, WHILE SHOWCASING THE SOLOIST'S TECHNICAL ABILITIES. SUR LES CIMES CATALOGUES ALL TECHNICAL ELEMENTS THAT A HORN SOLOIST SHOULD POSSESS, FROM LONG FLOWING MELODIC LINES TO EXTREME RANGE AND ARTICULATED PASSAGES. AS WELL AS VARIOUS EXTENDED TECHNIQUES INCLUDING LIP TRILLS, GLISSANDI, STOPPED AND MUTED PASSAGES, PUSHING HORN PLAYERS TO THEIR LIMITS. MOREOVER, THERE IS A CADENZA-LIKE SECTION THAT REQUIRES A LOT OF BRAVADO FROM THE PERFORMER TO HERALD THE HEROIC HUNTING MOTIVES.

RICHARD STRAUSS: ANDANTE (1888)

THIS LYRICAL, ROMANTIC WORK WAS COMPOSED BY RICHARD STRAUSS IN 1888, AS A DEDICATION TO HIS FATHER FOR HIS SILVER (25TH) WEDDING ANNIVERSARY. THE WORK REMAINED UNPUBLISHED UNTIL 1973, AT THE REQUEST OF THE STRAUSS FAMILY. THOUGH IT MAY SEEM STRAIGHTFORWARD, THE LONG AND EXTENSIVE PHRASES IN THIS PIECE PROVIDES A SENSE OF GRANDEUR, WITH APPROPRIATE TENSION AND RELEASE AS IT REACHES THE CLIMAX. THE BEAUTY OF THIS PIECE COMES FROM THE INTRICATE SIMPLICITY OF ITS MELODY, WHERE THE PIANO'S TRIPLET AND SEXTUPLET PATTERNS INTERTWINE SEAMLESSLY WITH THE HORN'S SIXTEENTH-NOTE AND EIGHTH-NOTE RHYTHMS, CREATING A CONSTANT FEELING OF FORWARD MOTION. PERHAPS STRAUSS WROTE IT THIS WAY TO SYMBOLIZE HIS PARENTS' ENDURING AND FULFILLING MARRIAGE.