



HISTORY

OF THE

SALON

Morceaux caractéristiques
(1823-1913)

VAUGHAN JONES violin

MARCUS PRICE piano

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- TOTAL TIMING 82:50

Tracks 9–13, 17–19 Première Recordings

VAUGHAN JONES violin *~* **MARCUS PRICE** piano

History of the Salon

Morceaux caractéristiques (1823–1913)

Listening to the 1913 acoustical recordings of the great Belgian violinist Eugene Ysaÿe affords us a rare glimpse into the world of the 19th-century virtuoso-performer. An adherent of the Franco-Belgian school of violin playing and a pupil of both Henryk Wieniawski and Henri Vieuxtemps, Ysaÿe was nonetheless an individualist through and through. The fifteen short recordings reveal an impetuous flamboyance, an almost pantomime-like characterisation of mood and the fire, pathos and charm of the gypsy; but what is also striking is that the majority of the pieces recorded emanate from what we would describe as the salon: arrangements of character pieces by Fauré, Dvořák and Chabrier, as well as the obligatory opera excerpt and showpieces by Wieniawski, Vieuxtemps and Kreisler. They also demonstrate that salon music remained popular up until the outbreak of the First World War.

It would be difficult to overestimate how popular and widespread salon music was during the 19th century. As a form of musical composition (regardless of how nebulous the term ‘salon’ is) it dominated the oeuvres of many lesser composers of the period and was a facet of musical expression that almost all of the eminent 19th-century composers contributed to (from Beethoven’s *Bagatelles* to Schubert’s *Impromptus*, Mendelssohn’s *Lieder ohne Worte*, Grieg’s *Lyric Pieces*, Schumann’s *Kinderszenen*, Brahms’s *Ungarische Tänze* and much of Chopin’s solo piano repertoire).

A cursory glance over the output of many of the 19th century’s composers often throws up such terms as *Albumblatt* (or the French version, *Feuille d’album*), *Salonstücke* and the various usages of the term *morceaux*.

The term ‘salon music’ itself often has disparaging overtones, denoting undemanding character pieces of a predominantly superficial nature (although this reputation has sadly gone hand in hand with a form of musical condescension that derides all but the most weighty and ‘serious’ of musical forms). In truth though, the relative merit of much of this music resides in the skill and depth of expression of the individual composers, as I hope this album amply displays.

Although the word *salon* derives from a room in a domestic dwelling, it also came to refer to private gatherings of composers and well-to-do members of society congregated in order to appreciate musical performances of a shorter and more varied nature, as distinct from those of longer chamber works. By the 1830s, the musical salon emerged as a vehicle for virtuoso performers who encapsulated the romantic ideals of enhanced emotional subjectivity and greater artistic individuality, with the piano at the centre of it all. Despite his music transcending categorisation, Frédéric Chopin encapsulated the spirit of the salon in this period perfectly. The musical repertoire (and indeed quality) of the salons varied as greatly as that of the audiences. In



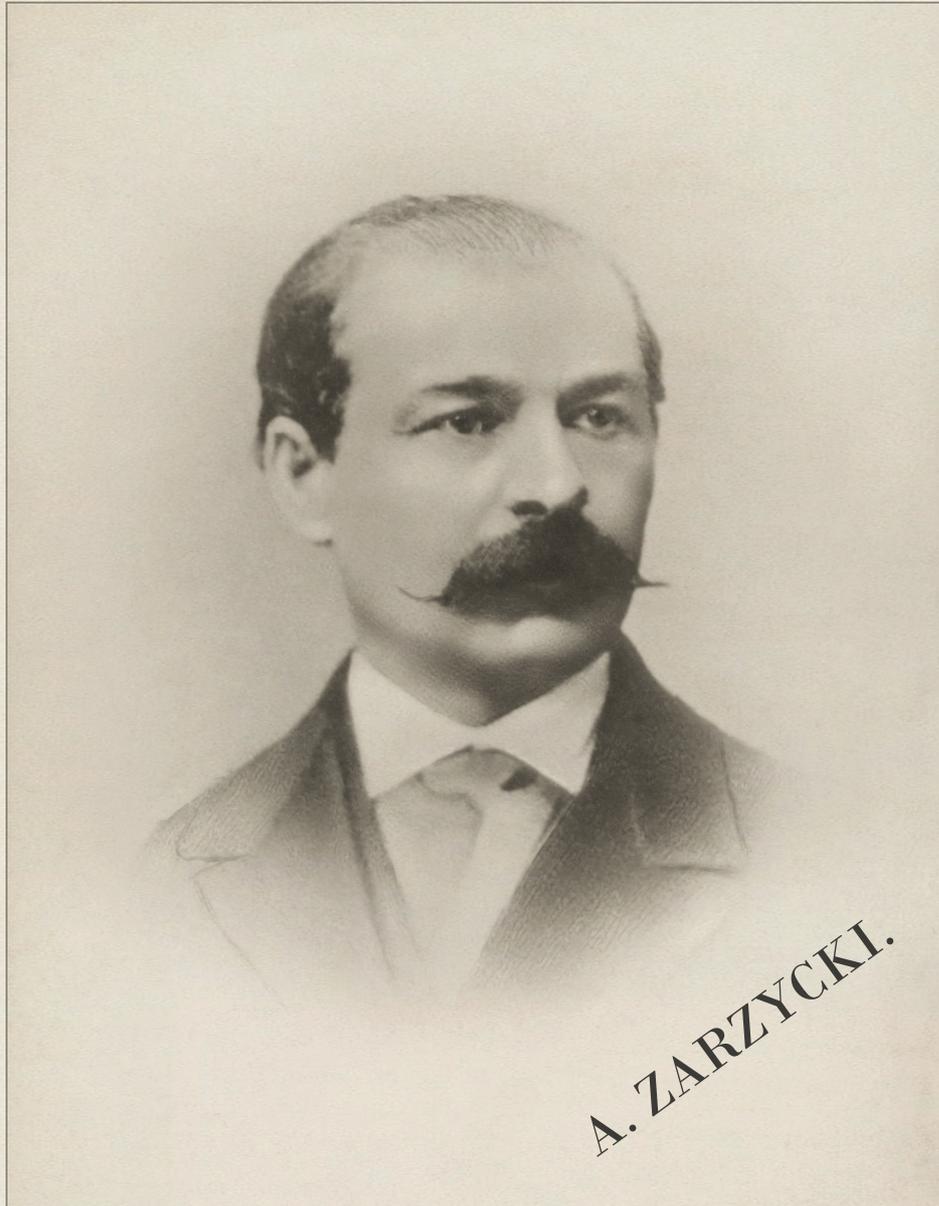
1836, Robert Schumann referred to *Salonmusik* (a term he incidentally coined) as a ‘*combination of sentiment and piano passage*’ but although there was undoubtedly much music written of a dubious quality, Johann Christian Lobe asserted that although ‘. . . *nobody would deny that there are cheap and inelegant compositions among the Salonmusik. . . we must not disregard the entire genre because of such indifferent compositions*’. It’s also worth noting that many of the most illustrious musicians of the 19th century (some of whom have fallen down the cracks of musical history) contributed greatly to what we now refer to as salon music. These included Ferdinand Hiller, Joachim Raff and Moritz Moszkowski.

At its best, *salon music* is highly evocative and wears its evident skill lightly. It is rich in melody, often harmonically adventurous and able to paint a vibrant landscape (albeit in miniature) of contrasting themes and moods. Above all, it is able to transport us above the melancholy and pathos, the ambition and drama of much of the 19th century’s larger scale masterworks.

A century on from Ysaÿe’s recordings and the musical climate could hardly be more different, with a preponderance of weightier works dominating musical programming and the edging out of smaller, less ambitious music. The charming, off-the-cuff pieces that so delighted audiences up until relatively recently seem to have faded away with the last performers of the romantic tradition. Hopefully this disc will serve to illuminate the brilliant music that many of these underrated yet highly talented 19th-century composers gave us. The Polish pianist and

composer **Aleksander Zarzycki** (1834–1895) studied the piano in Berlin under Rudolf Viöle and composition with Reinecke in Paris before embarking on tours of Germany, Austria and England. He settled in Warsaw in 1865 and became a prominent figure in that city’s musical life, becoming the first director of the Warsaw Music Society (1871–1875) director of the Music Institute (1879–1888) and choirmaster of St John’s Cathedral. Nowadays, his first *Mazurka in G major, Op 26* for violin and piano, published in 1884 is the only composition that is still regularly performed. It is an inspired work of dazzling virtuosity and a wonderfully impulsive turn of phrase and was memorably recorded by both Maud Powell (in c. 1914) and Bronisław Huberman (in 1929). His second *Mazurka in E major, Op. 39* for violin and piano, however, was published a decade later in 1894 and has remained in obscurity ever since. It possesses a yearning, passionate quality with moments of tender introspection and a fiery ending.

Alfredo D’Ambrosio (1871–1914) was a Neapolitan composer and violinist who studied under Pablo de Sarasate in Madrid and August Wilhelmj in London, before settling in Nice, thereafter dedicating himself to his compositions and work as a teacher. He wrote an opera *Pia de’ Tolomei*, based on an episode from Dante’s *Divine Comedy* (Donizetti also wrote an opera of the same name), the ballet *Hersilia*, two violin concertos (the second of which was premièred by George Enescu in Paris in 1913, conducted by the composer), a string quartet and a string quintet, as well as various concert pieces for violin and piano, some of which



achieved a certain popularity in the early 20th century. His best-known work are his *Canzonetta*, *Op. 6*, which he recorded in 1907, as well as his delightful *Serenade*,

Op. 4 which was dedicated to the wife of his publisher in Nice, Paul Decourcelle, in 1897. Also on this album is the ravishing *Aria*, *Op. 22* which the composer inscribed to the Czech violinist Jan Kubelík.

When the great Genoese violin virtuoso **Niccolò Paganini** (1782–1840) died, the overwhelming majority of his compositions were still unpublished. This was partly due to the fact that they were written exclusively for his own use and like treasures, he jealously concealed them from all potential rivals. It was not until the latter part of his life (when Paganini had forsaken his career as a concert artist) that he showed greater willing in publishing his works, but although a Parisian publishing firm offered him a large sum of money, the plan failed due to the exceedingly high demands of the composer. The *Cantabile e Valzer in E major* was originally written for violin and guitar in 1823 and dedicated to Paganini's only known pupil, Camillo Sivori. The guitar part is extremely basic and the piano transcription includes some imitative effects in the *valzer*, courtesy of a Professor Dacci of Parma. The piece contains a suave cantabile section and a whimsical waltz, which seems to represent an untrustworthy lover, beginning playfully, before in turn becoming impassioned, angry and self-pitying! No doubt it would confirm Louis Spohr's opinion that '*. . . in his composition and his style there is a strange mixture of consummate genius, childishness and lack of taste that alternately charms and repels.*'

The remarkable German pianist and composer **Moritz Moszkowski** (1854–1925) was born into a wealthy Jewish family and displayed an exceptional musical talent from an



early age. In 1865 the family moved to Dresden, before moving to Berlin in 1869. Here he studied at Theodore Kullak's Neue Akademie der Tonkunst and made such an impression that

while still only 17, he accepted Kullak's invitation to join the staff at his academy, where he taught for over 25 years. Among his early compositions (many of which are now lost) is the *Piano Concerto in E, Op. 3*, first performed in Berlin in 1875 and admired by Liszt, who subsequently arranged a special concert in which he and Moszkowski performed the work on two pianos. During the 1880s Moszkowski began to suffer from a nervous disorder which resulted in a premature end to his activities as a travelling virtuoso. Thereafter he appeared only occasionally as a pianist and concentrated more on composition. In 1897, while at the height of his fame, he settled permanently in Paris, having married the sister of Cécile Chaminade. By this time he had become considerably wealthy, mainly due to the immense popularity of his piano music. From about 1910, however, Moszkowski's fortunes went into decline. He began to suffer from ill health, lost both his wife and daughter and invested his considerable fortune in securities that became worthless after the outbreak of World War I in 1914. He also saw his popularity fade as musical tastes changed and his remaining years were spent in poverty, eventually dying a pauper in Paris from stomach cancer. The two works on this disc exemplify two facets of Moszkowski's lighter side: one, a poignant *Mélodie* and the other (in a transcription by Sarasate) a glittering *Guitarre* (published in 1890), revelling in the atmosphere and flavour of Spain.

Benjamin Louis Paul Godard (1849–1895) displayed considerable musical talent at an early age, sufficient to be enrolled at the Paris Conservatoire at the age of ten. Although

an accomplished violinist (a pupil of the famed Belgian virtuoso Henri Vieuxtemps), it was as a composer that his fame spread in his native France, as well as in Germany and Spain. His output runs to a formidable 450 works, covering every genre, with the exception of sacred music. He wrote three symphonies, eight operas, much chamber music, a huge stock of salon pieces (many displaying a brilliance in piano writing peculiar for a string player) and over one hundred songs. His talent as a poet found expression in his *Symphonie légendaire*, combining elements of a symphony with that of a song cycle and including poems by the composer himself. Of his operas, *Jocelyn* and *La vivandière* have had the most success, with the latter sadly being completed after his death from tuberculosis at the age of 45.

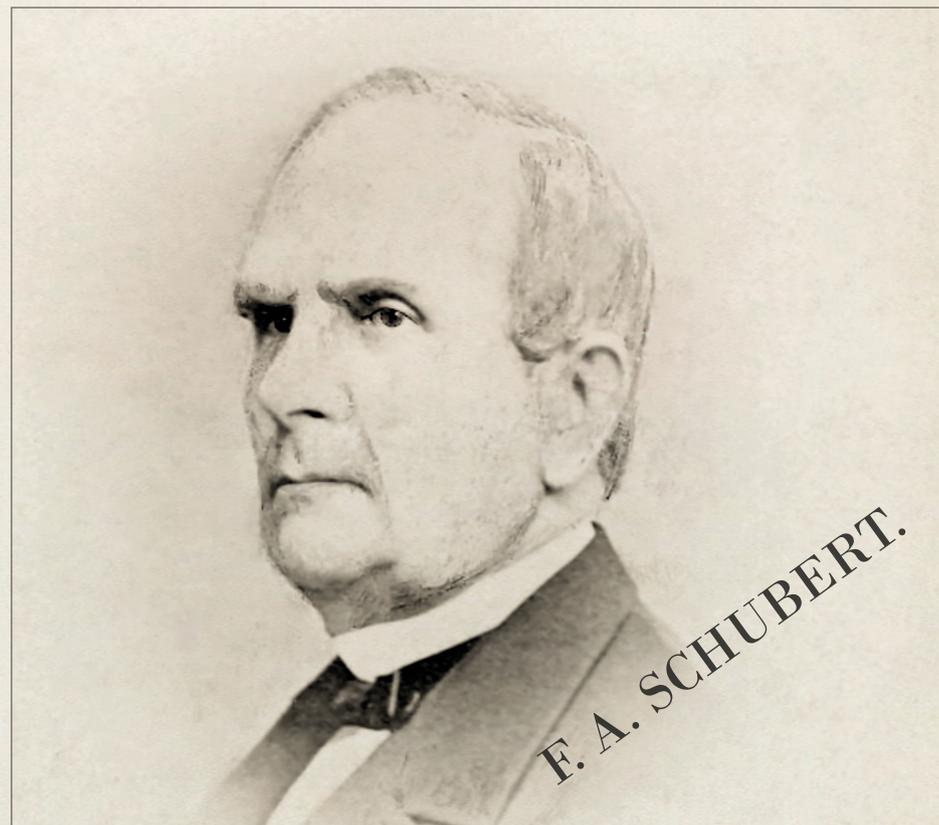
In many ways, **Joseph Joachim Raff** (1822–1882) experienced a similar fate to that of Benjamin Godard, in that his reputation suffered a dramatic decline in the years after his death. There was a generally held perception that his prolificacy resulted in a certain superficiality, borne out by the substantial quantity of salon piano pieces he wrote. And yet Raff was a composer of lofty aspirations, the writer of 11 symphonies, including a quartet of symphonies (Nos. 8–11) programmed around the four seasons. Although in 1843, Raff had come to the attention of Mendelssohn (who recommended him to the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel), it was his meeting with Liszt in 1845 that had a decisive effect on his career. Liszt secured the young composer employment in Cologne, before making him his deputy in Weimar, where he often advised on orchestration as well as assisting in the

copying and preparation of manuscripts. The benign though towering figure of Liszt eventually proved suffocating for Raff and he exchanged Weimar for a more independent life in Wiesbaden. It proved a fruitful move, with the majority of his numbered compositions dating from the years 1857 to 1878. His last four years were spent as director of the new Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt. Today, there is a renewed if limited interest in his orchestral works and in some ways, the sheer scale of his output has prevented a more rounded assessment of this highly skilled composer.

František Alois Drdla (1868–1944) was a prominent Czech violinist and composer of light violin music. He studied at the Prague Conservatory and later at the Vienna Conservatory where his teachers (such as the legendary Fritz Kreisler) included Josef Hellmesberger for violin and Anton Bruckner for music theory. From 1890 to 1893 he played violin in the orchestra of the Vienna Court Opera, and from 1894 to 1899 he pursued his career as the director and Konzertmeister of the Theater an der Wien. By then a well-known concert violinist, Drdla toured throughout Europe (1899–1905) and later the United States (1923–1925). Although he composed three operettas, a violin concerto, several orchestral works and two piano trios, international fame came to Drdla as a result of composing lighter music in the late romantic style. His compositions were popularized by violinists such as Jan Kubelík (the dedicatee of the 1901 *Serenade* on this disc), Marie Hall, Mischa Elman, Joseph Szigeti and Josef Suk but has fallen out of favour among violinists over the last 50 years.

Gaetano Braga (1829–1907) was an Italian cellist and composer. A native of the Abruzzi, he entered the Naples Conservatory in 1841 to study the cello with Ciandelli and composition with Mercadante and left in 1852 with the title ‘Maestrino di violoncello’ before making many concert tours of Europe and the USA. Between 1853 and 1873 Braga wrote a total of nine operas (starting with *Alina*) and these were staged in Vienna, Paris, Lisbon as well as in Naples. None established itself in the repertory and the opera *Ruy Blas*, after being initially turned down in 1868 by La Scala, remained unperformed and unpublished. Braga also composed orchestral works (including two cello concertos), chamber and vocal music, as well as salon pieces that enjoyed popularity during his lifetime. Still known is his *Légende valaque* (under the name ‘*La Serenata*’ or ‘*The Angel’s Serenade*’), originally a song with cello or violin obbligato and recorded by such prominent artists as Efreim Zimbalist, Luisa Tetrazzini, John McCormack and Fritz Kreisler.

The violinist/composer **Franz Anton (François) Schubert** (1808–1878) suffered from the unfortunate circumstance of sharing the same name as one of the greatest composers who ever lived. This quirk of fate would not have become apparent until the 1830s when the other Franz Schubert became universally recognised (alongside Beethoven and Weber) as one of the most significant lights in early Romanticism. As a result, he became known as François Schubert, or Franz Schubert of Dresden. It is apparent however, that he was a prominent figure in that city, succeeding Karol Lipiński



as leader of the Dresden orchestra in 1861. His slender reputation now rests solely on the ninth of *Twelve Bagatelles*, *Op. 13* for violin and piano, entitled *L’abeille (The Bee)*. This disc contains the first recording of the composer’s original 1860 version (as opposed to August Wilhelmj’s universally popular transcription), as well as four of the other *Bagatelles*, all of which have been out of print for most of their existence.

The Italian composer, pianist and conductor **Giovanni Sgambati** (1841–1914) is of unquestionable historical significance as he represents the late-19th-century resurgence



BAGATELLES

Morceaux détachés

pour

VIOLON avec Accompagnement de PIANO.

composées

PAR

Franois Schubert.

Chambre de Concert de

S. M. le Roi de Saxe.

ŒUVRE: 13.

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|------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| N° 1. Impromptu | Prix 7½ Ngr. | N° 7. Le Papillon | Prix 10 Ngr. |
| 2. Cantabile | 7½ | 8. Le Desir | 10 |
| 3. Allegretto grazioso | 12½ | 9. L'abeille | 10 |
| 4. Allegretto agitato | 7½ | 10. Tyrolienne | 10 |
| 5. Andantino | 7½ | 11. Chant plaintif | 7½ |
| 6. Romanza espressiva | 7½ | 12. Barcarola | 10 |

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of non-operatic music in Italy. Born in Rome, he first played the piano in public at the age of six and soon afterwards began to compose. After the death of his father in 1849 he studied in Trevi, before returning to Rome in 1860, receiving the Diploma di socio onorario of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in 1866. Meanwhile in 1862, he met and became a protégé and pupil of Franz Liszt, who at once recognised his talent and inclination towards the various types of non-operatic music then neglected in Italy. In 1869 the pair travelled to Germany, where he was introduced to the music of Wagner, whom he was to meet in 1876 in Rome. Wagner was particularly impressed by Sgambati's two piano quintets and recommended them to Schott for publication. Sgambati though, remained a Roman at heart and with Ettore Pinelli, founded the Liceo Musicale (later Conservatorio) di Santa Cecilia linked to the much older Accademia, where he continued to teach until his death. There is much to discover in his music, which occasionally reveals an adventurous and original streak – nonetheless, his talents seem to find a natural home in works of a lighter, less serious vein. The one exception is his setting of the *Requiem Mass* (first performed in Rome in 1901) which is still used at Italian state funerals.

A contemporary of the great Polish violin virtuoso Henryk Wieniawski, the Czech violinist and composer **Ferdinand Laub** (1832–1875) was one of the foremost virtuosos of his day, renowned for his beautiful tone and unfailing sense of style. These qualities shine through his music, much of which requires an uncommon mastery of the instrument to overcome the manifold technical difficulties they contain.

He enjoyed a distinguished career becoming acquainted with Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (who later dedicated to Laub one of his *Mehrstimmige Studien*) and Berlioz, who invited him to Paris. From 1848 to 1850 he worked in Vienna as a soloist with the orchestra of the Theater an der Wien before succeeding Joseph Joachim as Konzertmeister in Weimar in 1853, where he came to know Franz Liszt (with whom he played chamber music). Thereafter, he appeared as soloist in all the major European cities, including with Clara Schumann, Hans von Bülow, Rubinstein, Leschetizky, Smetana and Patti. In 1866 he accepted the post of violin professor at the conservatory in Moscow, where he was acclaimed as soloist, chamber player and conductor and was much in demand as a teacher. He made deep friendships with the foremost Russian artists and contributed significantly to the high standard of the city's musical life; Tchaikovsky dedicated his *Third String Quartet, Op. 30* to Laub's memory in gratitude for the performances of his first two quartets.

Benoit “Benno” Hollander (1853–1942) was a Dutch violinist, composer and conductor who studied composition in Paris with Camille Saint-Saëns and the violin under Lambert Massart. It was at the latter's house that he encountered Hector Berlioz in person. In 1874, after completing his musical education, he left for England at the age of 21 and continued his career there, starting in Birmingham. He conducted many orchestras, including a local orchestra in Kensington and in June 1910 he conducted three concerts at the Wigmore Hall, with his teacher Saint-Saëns as soloist during the performance of a number of piano concertos by

Mozart. He was also a teacher at the Guildhall School of Music, where one of his students was Philip Martell.

Louis Spohr (1784–1859) was one of the foremost violinists, composers and conductors of his day, in the 1820s being considered second only to Beethoven in his stature as a composer. His music, like that of Cherubini and Weber is seen as pivotal in the development of early Romanticism and yet his reputation dwindled after his death and has never fully recovered, despite a renewed interest over the last 50 years. Spohr was a prolific composer and wrote ten operas, four oratorios, ten symphonies, eighteen violin concertos, four clarinet concertos, a large body of chamber music (including thirty six string quartets) as well as songs. Spohr is credited with inventing the violin chinrest and the orchestral rehearsal mark. He was a personal friend of Beethoven and, from 1822 until his death, was the director of music at the court of William II, Elector of Hesse, in Kassel (the appointment suggested by Carl Maria von Weber). Spohr's *Barcarole* was originally composed in 1845 as a one-off composition. It was part of a miscellaneous collection, published in the Netherlands by the *Maat schappij tot bevordering der toonkunst* (*Society for the promotion of musical art*). The success of this publication inspired the composer to write five other pieces, publishing them in 1848 under the title of *6 Salonstücke, Op. 135*.

Franz von Vecsey (1893–1935) was a Hungarian violinist who studied with Hubay, as well as having lessons from Joachim, who conducted his performance of Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* in Berlin in 1904. He made débuts in London in 1904 and in New York in 1905 with great success. Sibelius

dedicated his *Violin Concerto* to the 12-year old Vecsey, who played the work in Berlin and Vienna and was its most brilliant early interpreter. He served in the Austro-Hungarian army during World War I and made an acclaimed reappearance in Berlin in the 1920s. His playing was said to be technically perfect and of classical purity, but was regarded by Flesch and others as being musically undistinguished. During his later years he rarely appeared in public. He composed a number of short pieces for the violin, including this *Valse triste* which he wrote in 1913.

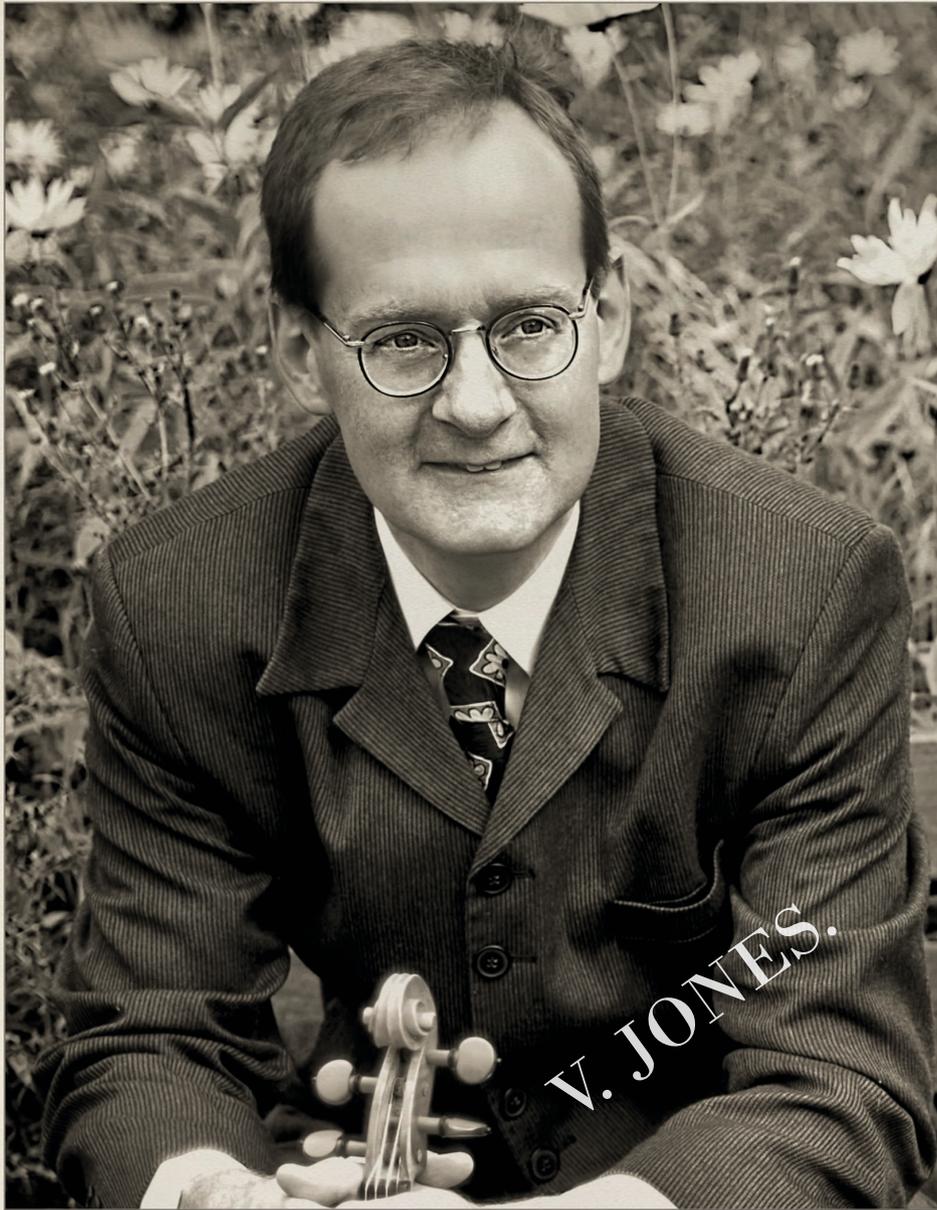
Enrique Granados y Campiña (1867–1916) was a Catalan composer and pianist. Though largely self-taught, he spent two years (1887–1889) as an 'auditeur' at the Paris Conservatoire classes of Charles-Wilfrid Bériot and became an outstanding pianist. He later toured Europe, performing with Camille Saint-Saëns, Jacques Thibaud and fellow Catalan Pablo Casals, and becoming well known for his impromptu improvisations, as a result of which concert performances of his works often varied considerably from the printed score. In 1900 he founded a classical concert society, and in 1901 his music school, the Academia Granados opened, which was also to become an important venue for chamber music. In 1909 he began work on what was to become his best-known composition, the piano suite *Goyescas*, inspired by Goya's idealistic tapestry cartoons Granados had seen in the Prado in Madrid. The success of these pieces encouraged Granados to adapt them (with much new material) into an opera. Granados was the first important Spanish composer to visit America when he attended the New York Metropolitan

Opera première in 1916. Despite the mixed reviews, he was honoured by an invitation to the White House from President Wilson, as a result of which he missed his scheduled sailing. On the second leg of his subsequent journey back to Spain, his boat, the SS Sussex was torpedoed, throwing many of

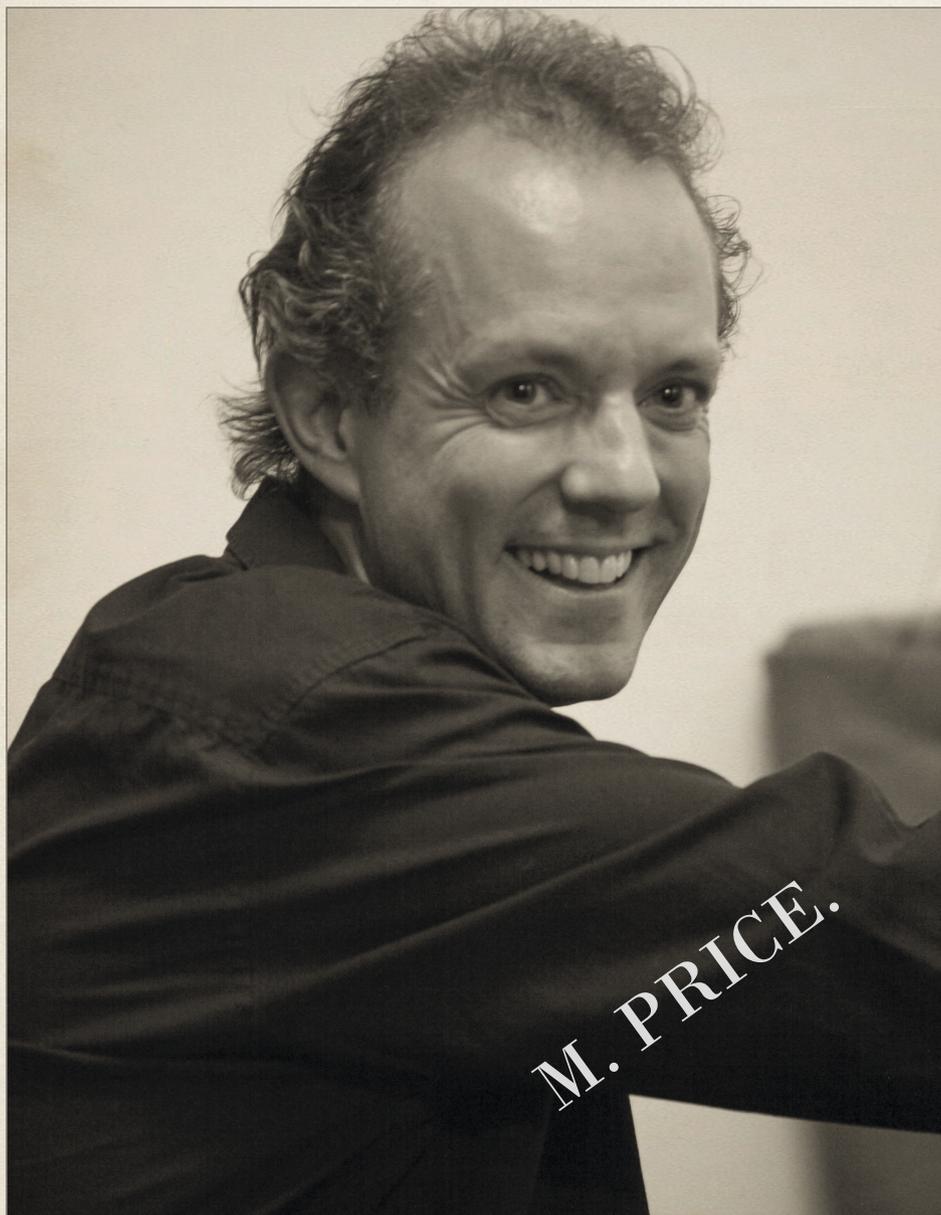
the passengers into the water. Granados was among those picked up by a life raft, but seeing his wife struggling he made a vain attempt to save her, and both drowned together. The beguiling *Oriental* is the second of twelve solo piano pieces written in 1890 entitled, *Danzas españolas*.

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Vaughan Jones was born in 1970 and started learning the violin at the age of 8. Between the ages of 10 and 16 he was guided by David Gregory before attaining a Music Scholarship to Charterhouse School. This led to studies at the Birmingham Conservatoire and the Royal College of Music and latterly, with the renowned Hungarian teacher Kató Havas O.B.E.. Jones spent many years working with orchestras in London, including the Philharmonia and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (with whom, Vaughan participated in recording sessions for *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy of films under composer Howard Shore). As an orchestral musician he played under such conductors as Sir Simon Rattle, Pierre Boulez, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, Valery Gergiev and Yehudi Menuhin. In 2014 he released an album entitled *The Hidden Violin* [FHR29] which included première recordings of Benjamin Godard's two solo *Violin Sonatas* as well as Christian Sinding's *Chaconne* from his *Suite in D minor*. This was followed in 2015 by a 2 album set of the first complete recordings of the *Six Partitas for Solo Violin* [FHR38] by the Salzburg composer Johann Joseph Vilsmaÿr (1663–1722). He also arranged and performed on the soundtrack for the 2015 biopic of Gertrude Bell entitled *The Queen of the Desert*, directed by Werner Herzog. Jones plays on two violins (one made in 2007 and the other in 2011) by the luthier Martin McClean from Moneymore, Ireland.



Marcus Price is a pianist, chamber musician, accompanist and répétiteur based in Paris. He studied with Frank Wibaut in Birmingham and London, performing throughout the UK before relocating to France in 1999. Here, Price continued his career as a soloist and chamber musician, working with the pianists Jeff Cohen and Noël Lee (at his composition academy at Villecroze) and the baritone François le Roux (at the Académie Francis Poulenc in Tours). Price has worked at the École Normale de Musique de Paris and is currently head of piano accompaniment at the Conservatoire de Levallois. Since 2017 he has accompanied and directed the Maîtrise des Hauts de Seine (children's choir of the Paris Opera) and has toured with them to India, Myanmar and Armenia. Price has accompanied such prestigious ensembles as Le Concert Spirituel, Opéra d'Avignon and Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles as well as performing at the Opéra de Lille, the Acropolis in Nice and the Cité de la Musique in Paris. He is joint artistic director (with violinist Anton Martynov) of the chamber music series, Les Méridiennes in Levallois and is involved each year in the international festival, Le Printemps du Violon, presided by Ivry Gitlis. Price has recorded with record labels Alpha and Solstice to high critical acclaim.

Recorded at Plumcroft Primary School, London, UK, 27–28 and 30 December 2019

Produced by **John Croft** and **Vaughan Jones**

Engineered, edited and mastered by **John Croft** (Chiaro Audio)

Booklet notes by **Vaughan Jones**

Artwork by **David Murphy** (FHR)

Painting on page 5 *Hush! (The Concert)* by **James Tissot**, 1875

Page 12 facsimile of François Schubert's *12 Bagatelles, Op. 13*, first edition, published in 1856

Photos by: Page 15 **John Croft** • Page 16 **Leigh Haggerwood** • Page 17 **Marina Ivanicenko**

Piano: Steinway Model B

Piano technician: **Branko Pajevic** (courtest of Steinway & Sons, London)

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Dedicated to Kató Havas O.B.E. (1920–2018). A great musician and inspirational teacher.

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VAUGHAN JONES

also on FHR

[FHR29]



The Hidden Violin

Romantic Virtuoso Works for Solo Violin

‘Vaughan Jones plays all these pieces with unfailing technical command and interpretative clear-sightedness’ (The Strad)

‘...placed down with great care by technically pristine playing’ (Gramophone)

[FHR38]

J.J. VILSMAYR

Six Partitas for Solo Violin (1715) etc

‘... played with a purity, profundity and sense of dramatic architecture that truly stops you in your tracks. Really, bravo.’
(Gramophone, ‘Editor’s Choice’)

‘Every note is crystal-clear, hanging in the recorded acoustic in a rather wonderful manner.’
(Gramophone, Audio Editor’s pick of the month)

