



CHAMPS HILL
RECORDS

MYTHES | JIYOON LEE

JIYOON LEE *violin*
HENRY KRAMER *piano*



I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to David and Mary Bowerman, Martin Denny, Alexander Van Ingen and the Windsor Festival for giving me this wonderful opportunity, and huge compliment to producer Matthew Bennett, sound engineer Dave Rowell and the whole team at Champs Hill for their excellent teamwork in creating this CD.

The “Mythes” album is all about feelings, emotions and imagination which are the most crucial elements of music-making. The entire process of recording this disc with the one and only Henry Kramer has been a pure joy, and I sincerely hope it will lead you to a journey full of adventures and fantasies.



Jiyoong Lee

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)

SUITE ITALIENNE

- | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------------------------|------|
| 1 | <i>i</i> | Introduzione: Allegro moderato | 2'20 |
| 2 | <i>ii</i> | Serenata: Larghetto | 3'30 |
| 3 | <i>iii</i> | Tarantella: Vivace | 2'17 |
| 4 | <i>iv</i> | Gavotta con due Variazioni | 3'53 |
| 5 | <i>v</i> | Scherzino | 1'21 |
| 6 | <i>vi</i> | Minuetto e Finale | 4'50 |

HENRYK WIENIAWSKI (1835–1880)

LÉGENDE OP.17

- | | | | |
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| 7 | | | 7'10 |
|---|--|--|------|

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)

RHAPSODY NO.1 SZ.86

- | | | | |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|------|
| 8 | <i>i</i> | Lassu: Moderato | 4'25 |
| 9 | <i>ii</i> | Friss: Allegretto moderato | 6'08 |

KAROL SZYMANOWSKI (1882–1937)

MYTHES, 'TROIS POÈMES' OP.30

- | | | | |
|----|------------|------------------------|------|
| 10 | <i>i</i> | La Fontaine d'Arethuse | 5'28 |
| 11 | <i>ii</i> | Narcisse | 7'37 |
| 12 | <i>iii</i> | Dryades et Pan | 7'45 |

MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937)

- | | | | |
|----|--|----------------|-------|
| 13 | | TZIGANE | 10'38 |
|----|--|----------------|-------|

Total playing time: **67'27**

Produced and edited by Matthew Bennett

Engineer: Dave Rowell

Recorded 25th – 27th July 2017 in the Music Room, Champs Hill, West Sussex, UK

All photographs by Kaupo Kikkas

Executive Producer for Champs Hill Records: Alexander Van Ingen

Label Manager for Champs Hill Records: Joanna Wilson

It was during a gentle stroll around the Place de la Concorde, Paris, in the Spring of 1919, that celebrated impresario Serge Diaghilev suggested to Stravinsky that he compose a ballet score based on the music of 18th-century composer, Giovanni Pergolesi. Although initially unenthusiastic, Stravinsky 'looked and fell in love', beginning what he considered his 'discovery of the past, the epiphany through which the whole of my later works became possible.'

For the scenario, Stravinsky and Diaghilev consulted a book of stories the latter had discovered in a Rome bookshop based on the character from popular Neapolitan commedia dell'arte stories – Pulcinella. They eventually hit upon one entitled 'The Four Pulcinellas', a hilarious tale of disguises and misunderstandings, in which Pulcinella dupes four young men into believing they have successfully murdered him, and then re-emerges in time to prevent them from marrying their respective sweethearts, while he wins his one true love, Pimpinella.

Stravinsky first played through everything then thought to be by Pergolesi in order to whittle down his final selection: 'I began by composing on the Pergolesi manuscripts themselves as though I were correcting an old work of my own,' he later explained. 'The remarkable thing about Pulcinella is not how much but how little was added or changed.' Indeed, Stravinsky left the melodies and their attendant bass lines almost exactly as they were originally conceived.

Five years after the 1920 Paris ballet premiere, Stravinsky arranged a suite of pieces from Pulcinella for violin and piano entitled *Suite d'après des thèmes, fragments et morceaux de Giambattista Pergolesi*. This was originally intended for Polish virtuoso Paul Kochanski (see Szymanowski below), but was then adapted in 1932 in six sections under the less grandiose title *Suite italienne* for Polish-American violinist Samuel Dushkin, who had premiered Stravinsky's Violin Concerto the previous year.

Most of the music on this disc originated during the early 20th century, the one exception being the 1860 *Légende* by Polish violinist-composer Henryk Wieniawski. A sensational child prodigy, despite being just nine years of age with only a rudimentary knowledge of French, Wieniawski was awarded a place at the Paris Conservatoire in 1843. He re-emerged five years later as one of the finest virtuosos of his age, composing a series of brilliant showstoppers designed to showcase his highly individual technique, based on a firm, tightly controlled bowing action.

Such was the dazzling impact of Wieniawski's playing that in 1860 Anton Rubinstein invited him to become the first principle professor at the newly created St. Petersburg Conservatory. That same year he composed his *Légende* (originally for violin and orchestra), a work so expressively potent that it melted away his future parents-in-law's resistance to his marrying their beautiful daughter, Isabella Hampton. The wedding was an all-star affair, during which Rubinstein walked Isabella to the altar, retired opera-supremo Giacomo Rossini served as witness to the marriage and celebrated violinist Henri Vieuxtemps provided the music during the reception.

Like many other composers struggling to find their creative feet during the first two decades of the 20th century, Bartók composed music in a bewildering array of styles. One minute he might become obsessive about the motoric nature of rhythm (*Allegro barbaro for piano*, 1911), the next galvanise the attention with emotionally superheated outbursts of instrumental and vocal colour (*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, also 1911). He could delight in unpretentious folksong arrangements, including the popular *Romanian Folkdances* for violin and piano of 1915, and then produce a surreal chiller such as the ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1919). Throughout this period Bartók constantly peered into the abyss of atonality (keylessness) yet he invariably shrank back from abandoning the tonal tradition altogether.

It was during the late 1920s that all these seemingly conflicting elements began fusing in a stream of indisputable masterpieces, ranging from the breathtaking rhythmic propulsion and ear-tweaking sonorities of the *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* (1927), to the two blazingly inventive violin rhapsodies of 1928, composed originally for violin and piano and orchestrated the following year.

It appears the rhapsodies were composed in virtual secrecy, as the first anyone knew about them was when Bartók nonchalantly showed them to his violinist friend Zoltán Székely one Spring day in 1928. The Second Rhapsody was dedicated to Székely, while the First went to legendary Hungarian virtuoso, Joseph Szigeti. Cast in two movements, designed to be played independently as well as together, Bartók typically offsets a deeply introspective *Lassu* (literally 'slow') against a highly exuberant *Friss* ('fast') in the manner of the *verbunkos*, a dance played originally to accompany army recruitment.

The fact that Karol Szymanowski composed some of the most important violin music of the last century is due almost entirely to his friendship with Paul Kochanski, who in 1901 (aged just 14) was appointed concertmaster of the newly founded Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra. Szymanowski's First Violin Concerto was composed especially for him, so too his three *Mythes* for violin and piano, whose intoxicating musical flow, freed from the tyranny of the bar line, creates a series of enraptured phrases of heightened lyrical intensity.

The three movements, all linked with scenes from Greek mythology, are entitled 'Arethusa's Spring' (the story of the eponymous nymph, who when fleeing Alpheus is turned into a stream), 'Narcissus' (whose intoxication with his own reflection led to his becoming a flower) and 'Dryads and Pan' (which encapsulates the dancing of the dryads and Pan playing his pipes).

Szymanowski later paid tribute to Kochanski, declaring at his memorial that he was 'indebted to him alone for imparting to me his profoundly penetrating, secret

knowledge of the violin.' It is a sign of the high esteem in which he was held that at his memorial service the pallbearers included such musical legends as Arturo Toscanini, Frank and Walter Damrosch, Jascha Heifetz, Vladimir Horowitz, Fritz Kreisler, Serge Koussevitzky, Leopold Stokowski and Efrem Zimbalist.

Maurice Ravel was a meticulous craftsman, the fastidious creator of some of the most exquisite music in existence. He believed that there was a perfect solution to every musical problem and that it was his responsibility to polish each new piece until it sparkled like a piece of iridescent jewellery. This attention to detail extended to all parameters of his life. He was always immaculately presented, wearing the latest snappy fashions topped off by a pair of black patent leather shoes that he couldn't bear to be parted from.

Igor Stravinsky once referred to Ravel as 'the most perfect of Swiss clockmakers', and in a sense he was right. However, the cool exterior and careful organisation of Ravel's day-to-day existence was little more than a dazzling facade behind which lay a personality of extraordinary complexity – and passion. Ravel declared himself 'of the same type as the Romantics', while emphasising that 'one doesn't need to open one's chest to show that one has a heart.'

Tzigane is the only work Ravel intended specifically as a virtuoso showpiece, a dazzling encore written in 1924 in the popular gypsy style, constantly enlivened by the composer's inimitable harmonic palette. The dramatically imposing introduction for solo violin leads directly to the helter-skelter pyrotechnics of the main orchestral section. The latter clearly fired the imagination of the dedicatee, gypsy violinist Jelly d'Arányi, leading Ravel to remark excitedly: 'I don't know what she's doing – but I like it!'

I JIYOON LEE *violin*

South Korean violinist Jiyoong Lee is rapidly building an international reputation as an emerging young soloist, winning praise for her confident, communicative and soulful playing and for her natural poise as a concerto soloist.

Jiyoong's talent and endeavour in violin are decorated with numerous prizes and distinctions throughout her career. She won the David Oistrakh International Violin Competition in 2013 and was subsequently a prize winner of the Indianapolis Violin Competition in 2014 and the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2015. In April 2016, she was awarded the first prize at the Carl Nielsen Violin Competition.

Jiyoong Lee is an aspiring soloist, performing with renowned orchestras ranging from the Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre National de Belgique, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Odense Symphony Orchestra, Poznan Philharmonic Orchestra, Navarra Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra de Cámara Galega, ECCO Ensemble, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, KBS Orchestra and Korean Symphony Orchestra and has collaborated with prestigious musicians including Nikolaj Znaider, Marin Alsop, Jac van Steen and Martin Fröst. She has performed in Berliner Philharmonie, Konzerthaus Berlin, Wigmore Hall, Tonhalle Zurich, Bozar Brussels and Bolshoy Hall.

Born in 1992 in Seoul, her career as a violinist commenced at the age of four. She studied at Korean National University of Arts and with violinist Kolja Blacher at Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin. At the age of only 24, she became the first concertmaster of Staatskapelle Berlin and regularly works with world renowned conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, and Christoph von Dohnányi.



I HENRY KRAMER *piano*

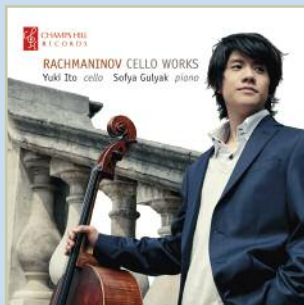
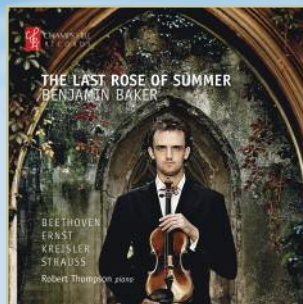
The winner of the Second Prize at the 2016 Queen Elisabeth Competition and the 2015 William Petschek Recital Debut Award from The Juilliard School, pianist Henry Kramer is establishing himself as one of the most exciting American musicians of his generation. His performances have been praised by critics as “triumphant” and “thrilling” (*The New York Times*), and “technically effortless” (*La Presse*, Montreal). A Maine native, Mr. Kramer has also earned top prizes in the 2015 Honens International Piano Competition, the 2011 Montreal International Music Competition. He is a winner of Astral’s 2014 National Auditions.

Henry has been invited to play with orchestras across the globe including the National Belgian Orchestra, Brussels Philharmonic, Calgary Philharmonic, Shanghai Philharmonic, Bilkent Symphony Orchestra in Ankara, Turkey, the Orchestre Métropolitain du Montréal, and the Yale Philharmonia. He has soloed under the batons of preeminent conductors Marin Alsop, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Hans Graf and Stéphane Dénève.

Mr. Kramer has been a guest performer in recitals at Portland Piano International (Oregon), The Van Cliburn Foundation, and the National Chopin Foundation in Miami and in important venues such as Carnegie Hall (Zankel and Wiell), Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Queen Elizabeth Hall in Antwerp (Belgium) and Bozar in Brussels. Deeply committed to the chamber music repertoire, he has been featured in performances at Lincoln Center, Ravinia, Music@Menlo, and the Verbier Festival. He has performed with Daishin Kashimoto, Emmanuel Pahud, Paul Meyer and Karine Deshayes. His debut recording of Liszt’s *Oratorio Transcriptions* was released in 2017 on the Naxos label.

Mr. Kramer holds both a Master’s and a Bachelor’s degree from The Juilliard School and an Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music. He is currently the Associate Professor of Piano at the University of Missouri Kansas City Conservatory of Dance and Music.





Champs Hill Records is proud to be associated with the Windsor Festival International String Competition, giving the winners an opportunity to make a recording: Jiyeon Lee won the fifth WFISC in 2015. The competition is held biennially in spring in the unique surroundings of Windsor Castle, by gracious permission of Her Majesty The Queen, and seeks to find exceptional string soloists from all around the world. The winner receives an opportunity to perform a concerto with the renowned Philharmonia Orchestra during the following autumn's Windsor Festival, and a number of other important prizes.

Other recordings on Champs Hill Records from WFISC winners include works by Fauré and Saint-Saëns by Brian O'Kane (CHRC0113), Benjamin Baker's *The Last Rose Of Summer* (CHRC0096), Rachmaninov Cello Works from Yuki Ito (CHRC0044), and Diana Galvydyte's exploration of contemporary works for violin, *A Different World* (CHRC0039).

www.windsorfestival.com