



KORNGOLD

Violin Sonata

Die tote Stadt • Much Ado About Nothing

(Transcriptions for Violin and Piano by the Composer)

Joseph Lin, Violin

First Prize: 2001 Michael Hill World Violin Competition

Benjamin Loeb, Piano



Erich Wolfgang von Korngold (1897-1957)

Music for Violin and Piano

Together with Mozart, Mendelssohn, Busoni and Enescu, Erich Wolfgang Korngold was a notable prodigy as a composer. Born in Brünn (now Brno) on 29th May 1897, the second son of the music critic Julius Korngold, he impressed Mahler with his music when he was only nine, and consolidated this with the score for the ballet-pantomime *Der Schneemann* (The Snowman), first given at the Vienna Court Opera in 1910. A series of orchestral, chamber and operatic works followed, culminating with the dual première in 1920 in Hamburg and Cologne of his opera *Die tote Stadt* (The Dead City) (Naxos 8.660060-61). The work brought him international fame at the age of 23. The success of his next opera *Das Wunder der Heliane* (The Miracle of Heliane) was blighted, however, by the worsening political situation, while *Die Kathrin* was not heard in Vienna because of the *Anschluss*, the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany.

In 1934 Korngold moved to Hollywood at the invitation of Max Reinhardt. There he embarked on a series of film scores over the next decade, including *Captain Blood* (1935) (Marco Polo 8.223607), *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938) and *King's Row* (1941), bringing his music to an audience of millions. After the Second World War Korngold returned to the concert hall, but, apart from a *Violin Concerto* (Naxos 8.553579), championed by Jascha Heifetz, his effulgent late-Romantic style found little favour in post-war Europe, and his death on 19th November 1957 attracted little attention. Recent decades, however, have seen a resurgence of interest in his music, with a number of performances and recordings marking the centenary of his birth in 1997.

A pianist by training, Korngold, like his older contemporary Richard Strauss, clearly identified the violin with the human voice, and the instrument features prominently in his operas and orchestral works. At the prompting of the violinist Carl Flesch and the pianist Artur Schnabel, in 1912 he wrote his *Violin Sonata in G major*, with the première being given by these musicians in Berlin the following year. The first movement, *Ben moderato, ma con passione*, opens with a suave melody shared between the instruments. A second theme, following at much the same tempo, is more wistful and inward-looking. An interesting feature of the development is the piano's taking over the rhythm of the first theme in the left hand, over which the violin has snatches of *sul ponticello*. The recapitulation is mainly allotted to the second theme, before the movement tapers off in a gentle coda. The lengthy *Scherzo, Allegro molto, con fuoco*, opens with cavorting passage-work, followed by a capricious subsidiary theme and much wide-ranging motivic transformation. The trio, *Moderato cantabile*, features an expressive melody taken from the *Vier kleinen fröhlichen Walzern* for piano. Marked 'with deepest feeling', the *Adagio* initially has a slightly rhetorical feel, the muted second theme and its lapping piano accompaniment providing subtle contrast. A passionate climax is reached, before the music glides to an ethereal close. The Finale, *Allegretto quasi Andante, con grazia*, is a sequence of variations on an amiable theme taken from the 1911 song *Schneeglöckchen* (Snowdrops). Reference to earlier movements is made as the finale reaches its expressive apotheosis, and the work ends in quiet understatement.

In 1918, Korngold composed incidental music for a production of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* at Schönbrunn Castle in May 1920. Realising that the orchestra would be required elsewhere before the run had been completed, the composer collaborated with the violinist Rudolf Kolisch in an arrangement of the score for violin and piano. Four numbers published from this version quickly entered the repertoire of some of the greatest virtuosos of the day. *Mädchen im Brautgemach* (Maiden in the Bridal Chamber) depicts Hero preparing for her wedding with uncertainty, yet with undeniable emotion. *Holzappel und Schlehwein* (Dogberry and Verges) is a humorous march for the two drunken night-watchmen, while the expressive *Gartenszene* (Garden Scene) underlines the reluctant but growing love of Beatrice for Benedick. *Mummenschanz* (Masquerade) concludes the incidental music in robust good spirits.

The remaining pieces on this disc are all arrangements made to further the appeal of some of Korngold's biggest successes, though not all of them enjoyed currency in his lifetime. The *Serenade from Der Schneemann* is a simply lyrical piece whose bitter-

sweet nostalgia made it an ideal salon item. Surprisingly, a similar success was not enjoyed by the *Caprice fantastique*, Korngold's scintillating 1932 arrangement for Rózszika Révay of the piece *Wichtelmännchen* (The Goblins) from his 1910 set of piano miniatures *Märchenbilder* (Fairy Tale Pictures), which remained unheard until recent years. The aria *Ich ging zu ihm* (I went to him) is one of the high-points in Korngold's fourth opera *Das Wunder der Heliane*. Here the heroine vainly protests her innocence with regard to the young Stranger, who has brought hope to a dictatorship where all manifestations of love have been banned.

Of the two transcriptions from *Die tote Stadt*, *Pierrots Tanzlied* finds a member of Marietta's dance troupe singing of his unrequited love for the dancer, and became a favourite of Fritz Kreisler. Little known in this arrangement, *Mariettas Lied* is an enchanting aria of self-expression, and helped to keep Korngold's name alive in the unfavourable cultural climate of the years either side of his death.

Richard Whitehouse

Joseph Lin

The young violinist Joseph Lin has earned broad recognition for his mature artistry. In 1996 he was awarded First Prize at the Concert Artists Guild Competition, and was named Presidential Scholar in the Arts the same year. In 1999, he received the Pro Musicus International Award, the youngest musician to be chosen for the award since its inception. This was followed in 2001 by First Prize at the inaugural 2001 Michael Hill World Violin Competition in New Zealand, and a top prize at the 2000 Hanover International Violin Competition. Joseph Lin has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras, including the Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa, the Boston Pops under Keith Lockhart, the Fort Worth Symphony and Auckland Philharmonia under Miguel Harth-Bedoya, and the Orchestra of St Luke's under Peter Oundjian. Other orchestral performances include appearances with the Grand Rapids Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, and the Harvard-Radcliffe



Orchestra. An active chamber musician, he has performed regularly at the Marlboro Festival, and tours extensively with Musicians from Marlboro. Other festival appearances include Ravinia, Caramoor, and Tanglewood, where he participated in Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project. His career has brought a recital and orchestral tour of New Zealand, a tour of Japan with the Kiev Soloists, a tour of Germany with the Moravian Philharmonic, and chamber music concerts in Taiwan, with further concerts in San Diego, Paris, and Hong Kong, as well as an orchestral tour of historical landmarks in the Boston area. His repertoire has grown to include several works by contemporary composers, and he has worked with and performed new pieces by such composers as Richard Wernick, Richard Danielpour, Alexander Goehr, Dan Coleman, John Peel, Vladimir Martynow, and Noam Elkies. Joseph Lin began studying the violin with Mary Canberg at the age of four, and in 1996 graduated from the Juilliard School Pre-College Division, where he studied with Shirley Givens. While at Harvard, he continued his violin studies with Lynn Chang. In 2000, he graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College.

Benjamin Loeb

Benjamin Loeb, a native Texan, is an accomplished conductor, accompanist, and soloist. His widely varied projects range from the classical to the contemporary. He is Assistant Conductor for the Haddonfield Symphony (NJ) and more recently has become Assistant Conductor of the Rutgers (NJ) University Orchestra. He is also the Founder and Administrator of the International Conducting Workshop. In 2002 he completed his Graduate Performance Diploma at the Peabody Conservatory as a student of Gustav Meier, after having completed a bachelor's degree at Harvard University, a master's degree at the Curtis Institute, and a doctorate at the Juilliard School. Benjamin Loeb's conducting career began at Harvard, where he directed several ensembles, mounting a full production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, and conducting the premières of Noam Elkies' *Chamber Suite* and Russell Steinberg's *War Piece*. His career took off after he conducted performances by the Harvard Concerto Soloists with Yo-Yo Ma as soloist at Sanders Theater in Cambridge and at the John F. Kennedy library in Boston for the "Profiles in Courage" Awards Ceremony. He founded the Benjamin Loeb Ensemble in 1996 to perform chamber orchestra pieces at Juilliard and has since performed many times in Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center and at the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, MA. He has conducted and recorded songs by his sister, the rock star Lisa Loeb, for her three albums, as well as songs that appear on various movie soundtracks. As a pianist, Benjamin Loeb has won critical acclaim, and his concerts have taken him to musical centres throughout the United States, as well as to Tokyo, Seoul and Panama City.






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Erich Wolfgang von
KORNGOLD
(1897-1957)

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|--|-------|----|---|------|
| “Much Ado About Nothing”
Suite for Violin and Piano, Op. 11 | 12:38 | 9 | Ich ging zu ihm from
Das Wunder der Heliane | 4:10 |
| 1 Mädchen im Brautgemach
(Maiden in the Bridal Chamber) | 2:46 | 10 | Serenade from Der Schneemann | 2:05 |
| 2 Holzapfel und Schlehwein
(Dogberry and Verges) | 2:26 | 11 | Tanzlied des Pierrot from
Die tote Stadt, Op. 12 | 4:59 |
| 3 Gartenscene (Garden Scene) | 5:16 | 12 | Caprice Fantastique
(Wichtelmännchen from
Märchenbilder, Op. 3,
arr. by Rózsika Révay) | 3:53 |
| 4 Mummenschanz (Masquerade) | 2:10 | 13 | Mariettas Lied from
Die tote Stadt, Op. 12 | 5:26 |
| Sonata for Violin and Piano
in G major, Op. 6 | 35:55 | | | |
| 5 Ben moderato, ma con passione | 8:52 | | | |
| 6 Scherzo: Allegro molto –
Trio: Moderato cantabile | 10:37 | | | |
| 7 Adagio: Mit tiefer Empfindung | 8:11 | | | |
| 8 Finale: Allegretto quasi Andante | 8:15 | | | |

Joseph Lin, Violin • Benjamin Loeb, Piano

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