

NAXOS

Joseph Martin
KRAUS

Fiskarena (The Fishermen)
(Ballet)
Pantomimes

Swedish Chamber Orchestra • Petter Sundkvist



Joseph Martin KRAUS

(1756-1792)

Pantomime in D (VB 37)

1 Allegro

2 Adagio

3 Presto

Fiskarena (VB 40)

4 Overture: Larghetto però
con moto – Allegro

5 No. 1: Andante

6 No. 2: Allegro

7 No. 3: Andante con moto

8 No. 4: Allegretto ma non troppo presto

9 No. 5: Allegretto

10 No. 6: Andante con moto

11 No. 7: Allegretto

12 No. 8: Angloise

13 No. 9: Allegro

14 No. 10: Angloise

15 No. 11: Allegro

16 No. 12: Allegro

7:41 17 No. 13: Allegretto

2:57 18 No. 14: Con più di moto

2:47 19 No. 15: (no tempo indication)

1:57 20 No. 16: Andante con moto

21 No. 17: Allegro

50:25 22 No. 18: Allegretto grazioso

23 No. 19: Ungherese

3:35 24 No. 20: Contradanza Finale

1:26

1:38

1:26

4:42

1:41

2:38

4:12

1:45

0:51

1:06

1:34

1:34

3:59

0:48

3:08

3:23

0:57

1:41

2:55

5:28

Pantomime in G (VB 38)*

7:56

25 Allegro

2:38

26 Tempi di marcia

2:20

27 Adagio

1:31

28 Allegro

1:27

Ballet Music for Gluck's *Armide* (VB 39)

3:38

29 No. 1: Act I, Scene 3 - Fieramente

1:58

30 No. 2: Act IV, Scene 1-

Allegro moderato

1:40

*Reconstructed by Bertil van Boer

Joseph Martin Kraus (1756-1792)

Ballet Music

Joseph Martin Kraus, one of the most talented and unusual composers of the eighteenth century, was born in the central German town of Miltenberg am Main, the son of a local state official. He received his earliest formal education in nearby Buchen and at the Jesuit Gymnasium and Music Seminar in Mannheim, where he studied German literature and music. Following additional schooling at the universities in Mainz and Erfurt, Kraus spent a year at home in Buchen from 1775 to 1776, while his father was undergoing an inditement for misuse of office, a charge later dropped, before resuming his studies in law at Göttingen University. There he came under the influence of the remnants of the Göttinger Hainbund, a *Sturm und Drang* literary circle. In 1778 he published his treatise *Etwas von und über Musik*, which is one of the few actual theoretical works devoted to the adaptation of *Sturm und Drang* literary philosophy to music.

In 1778 with the encouragement of fellow student Carl Stridsberg, Kraus decided to dedicate his life to music and to seek employment in Sweden at the court of Gustav III. Although promised a position, he found it difficult to break into the cultural establishment of Stockholm, and for the next two years he faced dire economic circumstances as he attempted to overcome the political obstacles in his way. In 1780 he was commissioned to compose a trial opera, *Proserpin*, the text of which had been drafted by the king himself and versified by the poet Johan Kellgren. Its successful private performance at Ulriksdal in 1781 brought an appointment as deputy Kapellmästare and in 1782 a grand tour of Europe at Gustav's expense to observe the latest in musical and theatrical trends. This took him throughout Germany, Austria, Italy, England, and France, where he met major figures of the period such as Gluck and Haydn, gaining their respect and admiration.

Kraus returned to Stockholm in 1787 and the following year was appointed First Kapellmästare and director of curriculum at the Royal Academy of Music.

For the next several years he achieved a reputation in Stockholm for his disciplined conducting, his activities as a composer, and his rigorous pedagogical standards. He was a participant in the Palmstedt literary circle and contributed much to the establishment of Stockholm as one of the leading cultural centres of Europe. Nine months after the assassination of Gustav III in 1792, Kraus succumbed to tuberculosis and died at the age of 36.

As a composer Kraus can be seen as one of the most innovative of the entire century. His earliest training brought him the Italian style of the Mannheim composers, the contrapuntal rigour of Franz Xaver Richter and J.S. Bach, as well as the dramatic style of C.P.E. Bach, Gluck, and Grétry. A man with many talents, he was also a theorist, pedagogue and author (a book of poetry and a tragedy). His compositional style features the unexpected, as well as the dramatic, and it is not surprising therefore to find many forward-looking stylistic devices that anticipate music of the next century. His talent for thematic development, his colourful orchestration, and his penchant for a theatrical flair in his works caused Haydn to proclaim him one of only two 'geniuses' he knew (Mozart being the other one).

Kraus's main interest was in music for the stage, a subject that occupied him from both a practical and theoretical standpoint for virtually his entire life. His treatise is particularly devoted to the expression of passion in music, especially opera. One of his earliest compositions was the 'half of a musical play (*Musik-Spiel*)' that the Jesuit composer Alexander Keck allowed him to write in Mannheim in 1772-1773 as part of his training. According to a note written thirty years later, Keck described it as having succeeded admirably. The details of this now-lost composition are lacking, but it is known that the young Kraus was good enough vocally to perform in a principal rôle in another of Keck's small operas, *Das triumphierende Christentum*

(Christianity Triumphant), indicating practical experience that stood him in good stead in his future career. Indeed, over the next two decades of his all too short life, Kraus focused on music for the theatre, from full-length monumental operas to insertions into various comedies and spoken plays. Among these, his ballet music can be documented as a small but vital portion that ran not only the chronological gamut of his life, but the repertorial as well.

Apart from the now-lost *Musik-Spiel*, which most likely contained some ballet or dance movements, the earliest compositions in this genre are a pair of works written most likely during his student years at the Jesuit Gymnasium and Music Seminar in Mannheim between 1769 and 1772, the *Pantomime in D major* (VB 37) and the *Pantomime in G major* (VB 38). The circumstances for which these two pieces were written are not known, but they may well have been composed as occasional works for the improvisatory scenes performed by the students during Carnival. The second appears to have been the earlier composition, possibly by as much as one or two years, since it is stylistically more primitive. Indeed, it has survived in only fragmentary form: the sole source, a copy made by Kraus biographer Fredrik Silverstolpe in Vienna in 1802 is lacking the viola throughout, as well as the bass in the final movement. This circumstance was noted in a handwritten commentary in the source, which states: 'These works were scored from the parts. Because the viola and occasionally bass parts are missing in the manuscript provided, they were not able to be included, something which occurs with many of Kraus's early works, according to what his heirs have related.' For this recording, these have been reconstructed/recomposed by the present editor.

The *Pantomime in G* differs from its companion in that it includes a brief march that interrupts the otherwise normal three-movement Italianate sinfonia form. It is characterized in the first movement by a typical Mannheim musical device, the threefold hammerstroke chords and layered crescendo that begins with the violins and expands to include full winds. The

contrasting theme is a brief interlude with the oboes above unison violins before the entire orchestra returns with a fast-paced contrasting section replete with clarion horn calls, skirling strings, and ostinato driving basses. The musical development of this cheery work is simple, yet dramatically effective. The second movement is a brief, even perfunctory march, no doubt to introduce some of the characters in the following more plaintive adagio. Here the oboes have a lilting chromatic melody that serves as an antecedent to the strings. It is more or less through composed, an episode that gives the winds a brief opportunity for some solo work. The finale is a quick contradance with some contrapuntal interludes, no doubt a manifestation of Kraus's study there with Franz Xaver Richter, one of the foremost contrapuntists of the time. The *Pantomime in D major*, on the other hand, is a more polished work, more akin to an opera overture of the period. The strong unisons in the opening bars are a typical attention-grabber which tell the potential audiences of the start of the action. Here too one immediately discerns Mannheim devices, such as the "steamroller" layered crescendo, the violins running up and down the scale, the so-called *coup d'archet*, and the contrasting sighs in the second section. The orchestra is only slightly expanded by the addition of a flute to the first oboe, giving the texture some additional support. The second movement, by contrast, is an excerpt from a concerto with the solo oboe above softly pizzicato strings. The lyrical theme provides a welcome interlude to the surrounding movements. The finale is brisk and brings in the famed hammer-stroke to support the unisons. The entire piece is a well-crafted work that demonstrates a professional competency of this most promising student.

When Kraus moved to Stockholm in 1778, he entered a world in which the ballet was completely integrated into the theatre. Several years earlier, the first Swedish opera, Uttini's *Thetis och Pelée*, incorporated a large corps de ballet, led by the French choreographer Louis Gallodier. By the time Kraus arrived, he had hired one of the leading dancers of the time, Jean Marcadet, a pupil of the famed Noverre, as well as establishing a

credible ballet school at the Royal Academy of Music. This was further supplemented in 1782 with the arrival of Antoine and Julie Bournonville, who had experience with both Noverre and Gasparo Angiolini, thus combining the two latest trends in the *ballet d'action*. During this period, the principal focus was on integrating ballet into the many large operas, but other independent works in this genre were also performed with some degree of regularity. For instance, in 1776 Gallozier produced an expansive work entitled *The Four Elements*, which was received well by audiences.

For Kraus, the opportunities both for ballet insertions and separate self-contained works came upon his return to Sweden following his four-year Grand Tour of continental Europe, during which he was able to witness the latest theatrical trends. His first works were impromptu insertions into Gluck's opera *Armide*, which was produced in early 1787 at the Stockholm Opera. As principal conductor, his main job was the preparation of the musical portions of the production. The Stockholm score is evidence of the Herculean task of revising and reorchestrating portions to adapt it to Swedish tastes, and among the various interventions can be found two miscellaneous ballet movements. These are not related to each other, but rather represent the sort of generic movements that allowed such a large-scale opera to be expanded through extraneous dance. The first piece was inserted into the third scene of the first act. It consists of an F major *Fieramente* in the form of a minuet. The nod towards the French style is seen in the use of dotted rhythms and the pompous orchestration of this minuet, in which the sorceress *Armide* extols her triumph over the crusaders. The second piece, a stormy G minor interlude, occurs in the fourth act at a point in the drama where the knights force their way into *Armide's* demonic kingdom in search of their bewitched master. The tremolos and heavy brass orchestration give the work a sense of gloomy urgency, showing musically the powerful demonic magic at work. As a side note, this movement is also found in a Prologue by Kraus's colleague Abbé Vogler, written about the same time; the musical style is clearly Krausian with its *Sturm und*

Drang content, not to mention the use of the autograph in the *Armide* score and the fact that Vogler was not above plagiarising music from others, all of which seem to be a testament to Kraus's authorship.

The most important work in this genre, however, is Kraus's music to *Fiskarena*, an independent dramatic ballet choreographed by Antoine Bournonville, the father of August Bournonville, the founder of the Romantic ballet. It was first staged on 9th March 1789 at the Royal Opera and immediately become one of the most successful works of its day. In May, over a year later, the assistant director of the opera, Abraham Clewberg-Edelcrantz, noted: 'Bournonville caused a sensation among the Swedish audience, which broke into applause and cries of "Bravo!" and "Hurrah" without the prompting of the police.' It remained in the repertory for over forty years and was his first work for the stage to be revived in the twentieth century.

Neither the plot nor the choreography have survived, but from indications in the sources it would appear that it was derived from a comic opera by de la Salle entitled *Les Pêcheurs*, localised in Stockholm under the name *Skårgårds Flickan* [The Girl from the Skerries]. This allows for a likely scenario to be given for the music.

The daughter of a local fisherman loves Jack, an English sailor, but her father wishes to marry her off to Herr Ambrosius, a wealthy merchant. Jack and his companions get wind of the plot and entrap Ambrosius into an illicit liaison with wanton gypsies. In order to support this simple, but situation-rich plot, Kraus wrote an overture and twenty ballet movements that demonstrate both the national character of the main figures and their various dramatic actions. The overture consists of two sections, a slow introduction that begs the depiction of a simple fishing village in the Swedish archipelago followed by a lively gavotte, all in C major. The latter is fast-paced and filled with accentuations that are geared towards orienting the dancers to the steps, even if monothematic musically. The work proper opens with a solemn entrance, a rolling dominant ascent that depicts a certain pomposity, no doubt the venerable

Ambrosius condescendingly viewing the early morning catch as he patrols the marketplace. The next two are 6/8 sectional dances in D and G major, both of which seem to depict him waving off the attentions of the fishmongers in favour of the one old ambitious fisherman and his wife with an eligible daughter. In the D major fourth movement, the low horns signal the clumsy wife falling for the attentions of Ambrosius, while the running string passages show the daughter attempting to escape her fate by trying to ignore the pact being sealed. Kraus's E minor interlude contains a certain strictness in the relentless long-short rhythms as the deal is presented. Of particular interest in this scene is the seventh movement, which begins with deliberate A major syncopations punctuated by the horns, before devolving into an A minor section consisting of a running bassoon line beneath a frantic oboe solo, accompanied by pizzicato strings. This signals the entrance of Jack and his fellows to a sprightly F major *Angloise*. They dance for the crowd, to a second sailor's hornpipe that shows Kraus's acute awareness of the English folk idiom; the rollicking tune, supported by a high flute, is one that is familiar to anyone who dreams of a sailor's life. Needless to say, the daughter is captivated and in a nervous dance characterized by *viola bariolage* accompaniment (i.e. playing the same note alternating between two strings), it is clear that she implores his help to aid her plight. The next two movements are light and airy, featuring good rhythmic motion, no doubt an expression of conspiracy. Suddenly the turn to A minor with unisons in the strings announces the arrival of Ambrosius and the father, who chase Jack and his fellow sailors away with stern warnings. A D major *alla polacca* announces the arrival of the foreign gypsies, who proceed to entertain the crowd with their dancing. Here Kraus uses the ostinato bass and off-set rhythmic punctuation to give a flavour

of their foreignness. In the central movement of the entire work, a long multi-sectional dance that includes the special timbres of four horns and flutes in their highest registers, the sailors get the gypsies to join their scheme. Long sustained suspensions in the wind indicate deliberation, while in the second section, a flowing 6/8 theme over an ostinato bass probably shows Herr Ambrosius being lured into a special private performance by one of the gypsy girls (really one of Jack's friends in disguise). As he is enticed into a compromising position, an A major fanfare announces the sudden arrival of the fisherman, who appears in time to see a debauched Ambrosius in the arms of his supposed gypsy lover. (It is at this juncture that one finds the only connecting stage direction 'Mr. Ambrosius falls' in the original source.) Disgusted, the fisherman and his wife present their daughter to her sailor in a poignant A major *pas de quatre* featuring a flute doubling the lilting violin line. With all resolved, the gypsies are invited to celebrate along with the townspeople in a vigorous *Ungherese*, whereupon the work ends with a perpetual motion contradance featuring trumpets and timpani.

Fiskarena can be considered one of the first ballets written particularly with fast-paced action in mind. Kraus provides a rapidly-evolving underpinning for the movement that is always new and original, but which alludes to the musical spice of foreign dances, from England to Hungary, that in turn give the work an international flavor. It is pure comic dance that is active and familiar to an audience steeped in the *commedia dell'arte*, at the same time pointing the way towards the type of action ballets developed by Bourmonville's son for great nineteenth-century dancers such as Maria Tagliani.

Bertil van Boer

Swedish Chamber Orchestra

The Swedish Chamber Orchestra, founded in 1995, is based in the historic city of Örebro on the Black River where the Örebro Concert Hall is the orchestra's home. From this base it gives over a hundred performances a year divided between subscription concerts and tours, national and international. Thomas Dausgaard has been the Principal Conductor of the orchestra since 1997. The rapid development of the Swedish Chamber Orchestra under his leadership, attracting attention from leading international conductors and soloists, has focused on intensive recording and increasingly on touring. The orchestra has toured six times in Germany (Berlin, Munich, Dresden, the Schleswig Holstein Festival). Concerts also in the United States (Lincoln Center, Ravinia festival, Kennedy Center), Spain, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Holland (Concertgebouw), Switzerland, Great Britain (BBC Proms, Barbican Centre) and Japan. There is collaboration with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra over various composers in residencies and co-commissions. The Swedish Chamber Orchestra has made critically acclaimed recordings for labels such as BIS, Hyperion, Simax and Naxos. Its earlier recording of Kraus symphonies for Naxos (8.553734) was named record of the month in *Diapason* and was awarded the Cannes Classical Awards prize for best recording of eighteenth-century music.

Petter Sundkvist

Born 1964 in Boliden, Petter Sundkvist has rapidly achieved a leading position on the Swedish musical scene and is today among the most sought after of young Swedish conductors. Having completed his training as a teacher of cello and trumpet at the Piteå College of Music, he studied conducting at the Royal University College of Music in Stockholm under Kjell Ingebretsen and Jorma Panula. After graduating in 1991 he also studied contemporary music with the Hungarian composer and conductor Peter Eötös. He has created for himself a broad and eclectic range of repertoire and styles. He has conducted more than twenty productions at Swedish opera houses, and has also devoted himself to contemporary music and given over forty first performances of Nordic composers. He has conducted all the Swedish orchestras and orchestras in Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Russia and Slovakia, and from 1996 to 1998 was Associate Conductor of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Petter Sundkvist is currently artistic director of the Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra and principal guest-conductor of the Gävle Symphony Orchestra. Until 2003 he was chief conductor of the Östgöta Wind Symphony and principal guest-conductor of the Swedish Chamber Orchestra. In 2004 he was appointed chief conductor of the Musica Vitae chamber orchestra. His Naxos recordings of works by Stenhammar with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and of Kraus with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra have been much acclaimed in the international press, with the first Kraus release (8.553734) receiving the Cannes Classical Award.

The orchestral parts and scores of the following works are available from:

www.artaria.com

Sources

The sources upon which the editions used in this recording have been made are:

Fiskarena (VB 40)

Edited by Bertil van Boer

– Artaria Editions AE370

Uppsala, Universitetsbibliotek: Capsula 35

Pantomime in D (VB 37)/

Pantomime in G (VB 38)

Edited by Bertil van Boer

– Artaria Editions AE344/345

Uppsala, Universitetsbibliotek, Capsula 24 (score)

Ballet Music for Gluck's 'Armide' (VB 39)

Edited by Bertil van Boer

– Artaria Editions AE279

Uppsala, Universitetsbibliotek, Capsula 36 (score)

Stockholm, Operansbibliotek, Operor A8 (parts)

Available soon: *The Complete Ballet music by Kraus* as Volume 9 in the new critical edition of *The Musical Works of Joseph Martin Kraus*, published by Artaria Editions in conjunction with the Centre for Eighteenth Century Music





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DDD

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Joseph Martin Kraus was one of the most gifted and unusual composers of the eighteenth century, whose talent for thematic development, colourful orchestration and theatrical flair caused Haydn to proclaim him one of only two 'geniuses' he knew (Mozart being the other one). Kraus's main interest was in music for the stage, a subject that occupied him from both a practical and theoretical standpoint for virtually his entire life. This disc couples Kraus's two earliest surviving ballets (*Pantomimes*) and impromptu insertions for Gluck's opera *Armide* for a production at the Stockholm Opera in 1787, with his most important work in this genre, *Fiskarena*. This fast-paced ballet is notable for its dramatic and forward-looking stylistic devices as well as frequent allusions to foreign dances, from England to Hungary.



Joseph Martin
KRAUS
(1756-1792)
Ballet Music

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|-------|---|-------|
| 1-3 | Pantomime in D (VB 37) | 7:41 |
| 4-24 | Fiskarena (The Fishermen) (VB 40) | 50:25 |
| 25-28 | Pantomime in G (VB 38) | 7:56 |
| 29-30 | Ballet Music for Gluck's <i>Armide</i> (VB 39) | 3:38 |

Swedish Chamber Orchestra • Petter Sundkvist

A detailed track list can be found on page 2 of the booklet

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Cover picture: *View of Stockholm from the Fersen Terrace* by Martin, Elias (1739-1818)

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