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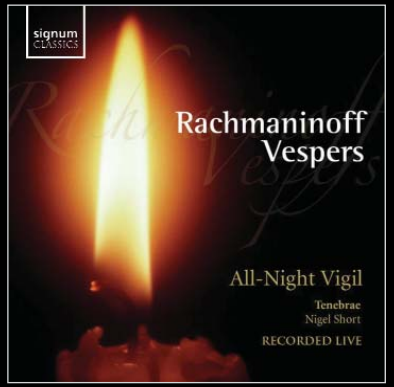


**Rachmaninoff Vespers: All-Night Vigil**
**Tenebrae, Nigel Short**
SIGCD054

The exceptional professional chamber choir Tenebrae, led by Nigel Short, perform Rachmaninoff's setting of the all-night vigil; a powerful work that reflects the composers deep understanding of the musical tradition of the orthodox church.

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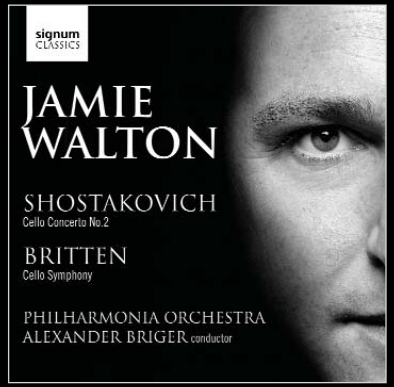


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# Rachmaninov

## For Violin and Piano

Sonata in G minor Op.19
and other selections

**Hideko Udagawa** violin
**Konstantin Lifschitz** piano

includes **World Premiere Recordings**

# RACHMANINOV FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Sonata in G minor Op. 19** * | transc. V. Mikhailovsky | |
| 1 | Lento: Allegro moderato | | [12.31] |
| 2 | Allegro scherzando | | [6.20] |
| 3 | Andante | | [5.43] |
| 4 | Allegro mosso - Meno mosso - Moderato - Piu vivo | | [10.27] |
| 5 | **Romance in A minor Op. Posth (original)** * | | [4.23] |
| 6 | **Danse Orientale Op. 2, No 2** * | transc. V. Mikhailovsky | [5.20] |
| 7 | **Daisies Op. 38, No 3** | transc. F. Kreisler | [3.25] |
| 8 | **Etude-Tableaux Op. 33, No 7** | transc. J. Heifetz | [1.50] |
| 9 | **Prelude Op. 32, No 5** | transc. J. Heifetz | [3.00] |
| 10 | **Melody Op. 21, No 9** | transc. J. Heifetz | [3.15] |
| 11 | **Oriental Sketch** | transc. J. Heifetz | [1.50] |
| 12 | **Etude-Tableaux Op. 33, No 2** | transc. J. Heifetz | [2.20] |
| 13 | **Vocalise Op. 34, No 14** | transc. M. Press | [5.35] |
| 14 | **Danse Hongroise Op. 6, No 2 (original)** | edited S. Dushkin | [3.55] |

* World Premiere Recording

Total Timings [69.54]

HIDEKO UDAGAWA VIOLIN
KONSTANTIN LIFSCHITZ PIANO

**www.signumrecords.com**

**Artist's Note**

I have always adored the music of Sergei Rachmaninov, and I rather envied pianists who have such a wide range of his music at their disposal.

He did compose a few pieces for string instruments when he was young ; two pieces for cello and piano Op.2, two pieces for violin and piano Op.6, the Trio Elegaique Op.9 and one of his finest chamber music works, the Sonata for cello and piano Op.19.

This work I have always loved and found that the 3rd movement (Andante) sounded very well on violin. This discovery led me to ask Viktor Mikhailovsky to transcribe the entire Sonata for violin and piano. He has made some excellent violin transcriptions including Khachaturian pieces for my CD (Khachaturian works for violin and piano).

I found other fine transcriptions by great violinists; Kreisler and Heifetz etc.

I had sufficient material for a whole CD of Rachmaninov and I have enjoyed immensely the making of this record.

Hideko Udagawa, 2009.

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'My constant desire [is] to give tonal expression to my thoughts … I have no sympathy with the composer who produces works according to preconceived formulas or preconceived theories. Or with the composer who writes in a certain style because it is the fashion to do so. Great music has never been produced in that way ... A composer's music should express the country of his birth, his love affairs, his religion, the books which have influenced him, the pictures he loves. It should be the product of the sum total of a composer's experiences. Study the masterpieces of every great composer, and you will find every aspect of the composer's personality and background in his music. Time may change the technique of music, but it can never alter its mission ... In my own compositions, no conscious effort has been made to be original, or Romantic, or Nationalistic, or anything else ... I am a Russian composer, and the land of my birth has influenced my temperament, and outlook. My music is the product of my temperament, and so it is Russian music ... What I try to do, when writing down my music, is to make it say simply and directly that which is in my heart when I am composing. If there is love there, or bitterness, or sadness, or religion, these moods become a part of my music, and it becomes either beautiful or bitter or sad or religious' (David Ewen, 'Music Should Speak from the Heart', *The Etude*, December 1941).

**Sonata in G minor Op 19** (summer 1901) *transc Viktor Mikhailovsky* (2005). Among High Romanticism's crown jewels - dedicated to the cellist Anatoli Brandukov (1858/59-1930), best man (with Siloti) at the composer's wedding in 1902, and Piatigorsky's teacher - the G minor Sonata, a duo demanding of both players, with a concerto-like piano part, was the third masterwork of a year which saw also the completion of the Second Suite for two pianos and the C minor Concerto. Like those scores it symbolised for its composer a renewal of life, a regaining of confidence and creativity, following the failure and rejection of his First Symphony under Glazunov in 1897. Like them it traces a darkness-to-light, depression-to-hope, scenario - finale in the major, slow movement in E flat, C minor scherzo (Brahmsian 12/8) placed second. Like them it's criss-crossed with shared thematic likenesses and pianistic figurations. In its original form it was premiered by Brandukov and the composer in Moscow, 2/15 December 1901. Later, far away in another world and climate, it climaxed the last but one of the charity concerts closing Rachmaninov's first American season, played by Casals, April 1919.

**Romance in A minor, Op posth** (?1888-89) *ed Louis Persinger* (1951). Several 'romances' are found among Rachmaninov's chamber juvenilia. Noted in Bertensson and Leyda (1965), this one, published in New York over half a century ago from a Moscow manuscript, and subsequently in the USSR, takes the guise of a ternary *andante cantabile* with a *con moto/*cadenza episode and an elaborated reprise, the whole framed by a lento prelude and postlude, closing on a *tierce de picardie.* 'Influenced by Tchaikovsky' (Hideko Udagawa).

**Danse Orientale, in A minor, Op 2 No 2** (1891-92) *transc Mikhailovsky* (2005). The second of two cello pieces inscribed to Brandukov - the sinewy melody and augmented seconds, the *con moto* action and rhythmic accents of the middle section, justifying the Borodinesque/Rimskyian 'orientale' of the title.

**Daisies [Margaritki], Op 38 No 3** (1916) *transc Fritz Kreisler* (1926). Among the last and finest of Rachmaninov's songs, dedicated to the Ukrainian (American naturalised) soprano Nina Koshetz (1891-1965) - a colourful lady who'd had an affair with Rachmaninov in her early twenties, upheld an extravagant lifestyle, ran a restaurant in Hollywood, leading to bankruptcy, and appeared in a sprinkling of minor films. In Chicago in 1921 she created the role of the witch Fata Morgana in Prokofiev's *Love of Three Oranges*. *Daisies* sets a poem by Igor Severyanin (Igor Lotaryov, 1887-1941), an admirer of Oscar Wilde who captured 'popular imagination and reached stardom with his slick pomaded hair parted in the middle; his melancholy, darkly circled eyes; his impeccable tails; and an ever-present lily in his hands' (Anna Lawton, Herbert Eagle, *Words in Revolution: Russian Futurist Manifestoes 1912-1928).* Kreisler (1875-1962), 'the best violinist' of the age, and Rachmaninov were friends and collaborators, transcribing each other's music, and famously recording Beethoven, Grieg and Schubert sonatas for RCA in 1928.

**Étude-tableau in E flat major, Op 33 No 4 [7]** (30 August 1911), *transc Jascha Heifetz* (1972). The two sets of *Études-Tableaux* Op. 33 and 39 combine the art-study tradition of Chopin-Liszt-Liapunov-Scriabin with the narrative vision of Mussorgsky. To Respighi, Rachmaninov confided some programmatic ideas in 1930 but as a rule preferred to remain un-drawn. As John Culshaw commented in his study of the composer (London 1949), Rachmaninov was a man who 'cared little for what we might call "physical" programme music [in the Straussian understanding] ... [but he] liked an external influence; he liked to be captivated or inspired by a picture or a poem, but the inspiration having been found he relegated the actual subject to the background and rarely revealed its identity'. The E flat, one of the composer's own favourites (he recorded it in March 1940) is in the style of 'a fiery march' (HU).

**Prelude in G major, Op 32 No 5** (23 August / 5 September 1910) *transc Heifetz* (1946). 'Ambiguous' and 'hazy' in quality (Geoffrey Norris, 1976), 'a serene piece, soaring phrases of melody alternating with delicate arabesques' (HU).

**Melody [Melodiya], Op 21 No 9** "On slumber-laden wings" (April 1902) *transc Heifetz* (1956). A song, to words by Semyon Nadson (1862-87), dating from between the Second Piano Concerto, Cello Sonata, and Op 23 Preludes.

**Oriental Sketch, in B flat major** (14/27 November 1917) *transc Heifetz* (1945). Together with the Piece in D minor and Fragments for piano (written the following day), this was the last music Rachmaninov wrote in Russia before leaving Petrograd for Scandinavia and then America (where he gave his first concerts in December 1918). He presented it in New York, 12 November 1931.

**Étude-tableau in C major, Op 33 No 2** (16/29 August 1911) *transc Heifetz*. The genre at its most 'predominantly serene' (HU), recorded by Heifetz in 1946.

**Vocalise, Op 34 No 14** (April 1912, rev 21 September 1915) *transc Michael Press* (1916). This wordless song, dedicated to the Ukrainian coloratura soprano Antonina Nezhdanova, has attracted a number of transcribers - Rachmaninov himself arranging it for violin, cello, voice/small orchestra, and winds, horns and strings (recording this last version with his favourite US orchestra, the Philadelphia, in April 1929).



**Danse Hongroise, in D minor, Op 6 No 2** (September 1893) *ed Samuel Dushkin.* Rachmaninov dedicated his *Morceaux de Salon* Op 6 to his friend Julius Conus (who in 1928 was to publish an arrangement of the *Vocalise* for piano trio). *Danse Hongroise,* second of the pair, follows a typical scheme: *Vivace-Un poco meno mosso-Meno mosso/Vivace-Un poco meno mosso.* Especially associated with Stravinsky, Dushkin (1891-1976) was an American-naturalised Polish violinist who studied at the Paris Conservatoire, and with Auer and Kreisler. He made his New York debut under Damrosch in 1924.

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# BIOGRAPHIES

## HIDEKO UDAGAWA

Hideko Udagawa has performed extensively throughout the world and captivates international audiences with her artistry and enthusiasm. Critics have acclaimed her performances, commending her passionate commitment, dazzling agility and refinement of taste. As a protégée of Nathan Milstein, she has inherited the great Russian romantic tradition of violin playing. Her performances have spanned thirty countries across Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific, and more than one hundred cities and towns in the United Kingdom alone.

Ms Udagawa made her orchestral debut in London with the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Charles Mackerras, playing Bruch's G minor concerto at the Barbican Hall. Highlights from her other engagements include performances with the Philharmonia under Leonard Slatkin, Royal Philharmonic under Paavo Jarvi, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic under Marek Janowski, City of Birmingham Symphony under Okko Kamu, London Mozart Players under Matthias Bamert, Russian National under Paavo Berglund, Moscow

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Philharmonic under Fedor Glushchenko, as well as English Chamber, National Symphony and Bavarian Radio orchestras.

In addition, she has made a twelve-city tour in North America with the Mozarteum Orchestra of Salzburg and tours in Japan with Warsaw Philharmonic under Kazimierz Kord and with Japan Philharmonic. She has also toured as a guest soloist with many visiting orchestras to the United Kingdom, including Berlin Symphony, Polish Chamber and Bucharest Philharmonic.



Invitations to many international festivals have included the George Enescu, City of London, Norfolk & Norwich, Perth, Brno, Ankara and Assisi festivals.

In addition to live performances, Ms Udagawa has made a number of recordings that draw on her wide-ranging repertoire of over forty concerti. She is particularly enthusiastic about discovering great unrecorded works. A recent CD, of works by Aram Khachaturian with the pianist Boris Berezovsky, for Koch International, includes seven world premiere recordings. She has developed several more world premiere programmes, to be recorded in the future.

Other recordings include the Bruch and Brahms Violin Concerti with London Symphony under Sir Charles Mackerras for Chandos and Glazunov's Violin Concerto, together with other works by Tchaikovsky, Chausson, Sarasate and Saint-Säens, with London Philharmonic on Carlton Classics.

As the great-granddaughter of one of Japan's historically most influential prime ministers, she enjoys the international performer's role as a cultural ambassador. Among several performances for the United Nations, she played at its 50th anniversary concerts in Vienna's Konzerthaus and the Victoria Hall in Geneva. She has also presented a recital in Tokyo in the presence of their Imperial Highnesses, the Crown Prince and Princess of Japan.

**www.hidekoudagawa.com**

## KONSTANTIN LIFSCHITZ

Konstantin Lifschitz was born on December 10, 1976, in Russia. As a very small child, he became irresistibly attracted to the piano, playing by ear and improvising with total absorption for hours on end. This aptitude for his chosen instrument was so remarkable that at age five he enrolled in the renowned Moscow Gnessin Special Middle School of Music, studying with Tatiana Zelikman. In future years of studies in Russia, England and Italy his teachers included Alfred Brendel, Fou T'song, Leon Fleisher, Rosalyn Tureck and Charles Rosen.

In the early 1990s the Russian Culture Foundation awarded him a scholarship. Soon afterwards he performed in Paris, Munich, Milan and other prominent music centres in Europe. The "New Names" programme brought Konstantin Lifschitz to the attention of renowned conductor Vladimir Spivakov, who immediately arranged for him to perform as soloist with the Moscow Virtuosi in Moscow and on tour in Japan performing Bach's Concerto in D minor in Tokyo, Osaka, Hiroshima and Sapporo. Following this tour, he performed with Spivakov in Monte Carlo and Antibes in performances of Chopin's *Piano Concerto No. 1* with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo.

In 1994, Konstantin presented his graduation recital from the Gnessin School - his program commenced with Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. Denon Nippon Columbia recorded the 17-year-old in this deeply felt interpretation of his beloved Bach. The recording, when released in 1996, was nominated for a Grammy Award and moved critic Edward Rothstein of The New York Times to acclaim Konstantin's performance "the most powerful pianistic interpretation since Glenn Gould's." In 1995 he won the German Echo Classic Record Prize, as a "New Young Artist" of the year.



Konstantin is also a dedicated chamber musician, performing with major artists including the violinists Gidon Kremer, Dmitry Sitkovetsky and Maxim Vengerov, and the cellists Misha Maisky, Mstislav Rostropovitch and Lynn Harrell.

In Autumn 2008 Konstantin played the Schostakowitch *Piano Concerto No. 2* with the Theater Philharmonie Essen under Constantinos Carydis. Following these concerts he toured Germany with the Musica Viva Orchestra. Konstantin Lifschitz's recordings for the label Orfeo contain Bach, *Musical Offering*, BWV 107, *Praeludium and Fugue*, BWV 552 and Frescobaldi *Three Toccatas* in 2007. In 2008 he recorded Gottfried von Einem's *Piano Concerto Op. 20.*

**www.konstantinlifschitz.com**

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